

NTQ Book Reviews

edited by Bella Merlin

Felicity Rosslyn

Tragic Plots:

a New Reading from Aeschylus to Lorca

Aldergate Publishing, 2000. 245 p. £45.00.

ISBN: 0-7546-0247-8.

Felicity Rosslyn asks what makes tragedy essentially 'tragic'. Her answer is that tragic plots dramatize the deeply ambivalent and painful journey away from the Dionysian blood relations of kinship- and family-oriented societies, at the centre of which stands the figure of the mother, towards the Apollonian law, with its 'masculine' emphases on civic ties, rationality, and individuation. Rosslyn writes with commendably jargon-free clarity, and her book will be accessible to a student readership and valuable to academic specialists. She offers a carefully constructed argument, with detailed analyses of her chosen texts.

Her discussion of Greek tragedy in the context of the rise and fall of Athenian democracy in itself makes the book worthwhile. With reference to Jacobean texts, Rosslyn believes that, among other things, the period's fascination with the demonized figure of the Machiavel betokens 'a strong sense of living at a turning point in the definition of a human being'. Her chapter on Shakespearean tragedy suggests that in *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*, Shakespeare follows the male through the key roles he might play in a lifetime (respectively son, lover, and father), but that, compared to the best of Greek tragedy, he curtails their analyses at the crucial moment because 'these plays are in thrall to the terror they dramatize', and are unable to analyze women's viewpoints with any sympathy. It was only in *Macbeth* and most of all *Coriolanus*, Rosslyn argues, that Shakespeare found his way through to the archetypal tragic subject. Face to face, Coriolanus and Volumnia replay the primary confrontation of the *Oresteia*: 'How can a man live in the world of honour, when his body is rooted in the world of blood ties?'

In the final sections of her book, Rosslyn deals with modern tragedy and the lack of it. She argues that women's emancipation in the late nineteenth century is the critical issue that gets tragic theatre going again, in some of the plays of Ibsen and Strindberg. Her observations on Chekhov, Arthur Miller, and others are stimulating, though there are some strange omissions: for instance, Rosslyn pays no attention to Tennessee Williams. Although she recognizes that countries like South Africa with violently conflictual histories may be

particularly rich in tragic insights, she seems to exclude the possibility that they have theatres and writers equal to the task of generating authentic tragedy. A pity, then, that she omits contemporary post-colonial practitioners of the form such as Wole Soyinka and Derek Walcott. Still, even in its omissions, this is a book that stimulates thought on an important subject.

BRIAN CROW

T. F. Wharton, ed.

The Drama of John Marston

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

233 p. £40.00.

ISBN: 0-521-65136-0.

As T. F. Wharton points out in his informative and highly readable introduction to this book, Shakespeare's dramatic contemporary, John Marston, behaved badly, challenging the censor and his rivals, but was none the less admired as a true wit. It seems unfair, then, that Marston has subsequently been criticized for his lack of 'moral vision' or else neglected. This collection of essays by international scholars endeavours to redress the balance.

Of particular interest are essays by Rick Bowers, Janet Clare, W. E. Slights, Sukanya B. Senapati, and Kiernan Ryan. The dominant concerns are market forces, gender, and politics in the context of Marston's essentially post-modern slipperiness. Bowers considers Marston to have been responsive to commercial demands but on his own terms, using irony to unsettle audience expectation. Clare continues her work on censorship, arguing that Marston was less prepared than his contemporaries to accept state control, and she identifies challenges to monarchical authority in the plays.

Slights, Senapati, and Ryan focus on gender but disagree about the degree of control effected by Marston. Homo-social bonding, male hysteria, and strong female voices are explored in essays of the subtle complexity which Marston's works have long deserved but hitherto seldom received. Michael Scott closes the collection with a demand that the theatre establishment show more courage by producing Marston's plays alongside the classics. This book will further appreciation of Marston's work, but via professional scholars, at whom it is aimed, rather than directly amongst their undergraduates.

JOAN FITZPATRICK

John Lee

**Shakespeare's Hamlet
and the Controversies of Self**

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. 266 p.

£40.00.

ISBN: 0-19-818504-9.

Plucking out the heart of Hamlet's mystery has for two centuries constituted a substantial sub-genre of Shakespearean commentary. Part of John Lee's brief is to show that, while focus may have shifted from Hamlet to *Hamlet*, protagonist to play, this particular war-horse shows no sign of flagging. In appropriately self-conscious fashion, Lee undertakes at once to add to the volume of debate about Hamletian subjectivity while at the same time surveying the field of criticism of which he is the latest example. It is perhaps too easy, and a little unfair, to suggest that he is more successful at the latter task than the former, yet this is precisely the strength of the book and arguably the reason for its inclusion in the excellent and increasingly prolific 'Oxford Shakespeare Topics' series.

Beginning 'in the middle', the author reviews the recent new historicist and cultural materialist tendency to question interiority in Renaissance concepts of the subject, before locating his second part in neoclassical, romantic, and nineteenth-century attempts to prove just the opposite. Given this structure, the emphasis of the third part of forwarding a notion of Hamlet's selfhood that exists between the two comes as no surprise, but is no less thoughtful and careful for that.

Having excluded both the transhistorical and the heavily contextual notions of subjectivity, Lee leaves himself little room to manoeuvre, and his reliance on etymological evidence for an understanding of Shakespearean characterization is at times a little strained. If it lacks the insight and subtlety of, for example, Katherine Eisaman Maus's recent *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance*, Lee's work remains refreshingly scholarly, giving a comprehensive and balanced overview of a topic that often is neither of these things.

JONATHAN HOLMES

Robin Headlam Wells

Shakespeare on Masculinity

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

xi, 249 p. £35.00.

ISBN: 0-521-66204-4.

To be trendy, Headlam Wells could have used the preposition 'in' instead of 'on' for his title, but the book is most determinedly not fashionable. Recent criticism has read Shakespeare and his contemporaries as symptomatic of their age, as the spoken not the speakers of its discourses. However, Headlam Wells insists that Shakespeare had a

point of view about masculinity which we can recover from his works.

Initially, Shakespeare had to tread carefully when Essex's attempt to subdue rebellion in Ireland looked, for a time, likely to revive the macho chivalric idea. So, in *Henry V*, we see the engaging young hero only subtly undermined by structural and narratorial contradictions, such as the oft-noted anticlimax after each chorus. With Essex's downfall, Shakespeare was freer to dramatize in *Troilus and Cressida* and *Hamlet* the political danger posed by powerful young men with essentially pre-civilized notions of personal honour.

In the martial heroes of *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare explored the dangerous tensions created by social ideals of martial manhood. Headlam Wells's readings of the plays' engagement in a contemporary debate about heroism are exceptionally insightful and, unlike much recent work, entirely intelligible, with a clear-sighted logic and refreshing contempt for blather. Headlam Wells's play criticism certainly could be read by intelligent A-level students through to undergraduates and their teachers.

The final chapter ('Afterword: Historicism and Presentism') reflects rather more theoretically upon recent developments in historicist literary studies that misrepresent or ignore the scholarship of the mid-twentieth century. On the evidence of the readings here, Wells's kind of historicism will, on the other hand, remain useful for a long time indeed.

GABRIEL EGAN

Maggie B. Gale and Viv Gardner, ed.

Women, Theatre, and Performance:

New Histories, New Historiographies

Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.

xii, 243 p. £45.00 (hbk), £14.99 (pbk).

ISBN: 0-7190-5712-4 (hbk), 0-7190-5713-2 (pbk).

This collection of twelve essays by British and American scholars, both established and new, is an evolution of the always-interesting series 'Women and Theatre: Occasional Papers' which appeared between 1991 and 1997. It is the first volume in a new Manchester University Press series on 'Women, Theatre, and Performance', and the editors tempt the reader with planned issues on 'Auto/biography and Identity', 'Women and Theatre Design', 'Women Theatre Managers', and 'Women Directors'. Where, perhaps, these forthcoming titles might appear to have the advantage over the present one is in clarity of theme, focus, and purpose. Despite the editors' suggestion that the volume 'deliberately seeks to disturb the notion of progression . . . by juxtaposing historical and contemporary subjects', I found that when taken together its contents did not easily build up to a discernible argument or respond to an identifiable proposition. Whilst this first volume of the series

certainly contains much to inform and challenge, it struggles to communicate a sense of wholeness.

Nevertheless, the parts of the whole do convince. As ever, I learned much from Jackie Bratton, Viv Gardner, John Stokes, Maggie Gale, and Charlotte Canning, writing on topics as diverse as the careers and works of playwrights Susan Centlivre and Clemence Dane, the role of the female audience in turn-of-the-century London, and the contrast between French and English acting styles in the nineteenth century. I was particularly intrigued by a couple of useful neologisms: 'intertheatrical', which Bratton uses to describe her careful contextualization of Centlivre's work in relation to theatre convention, practice, economics, fashion, and style; and 'spectatrice', Gardner's theatre-going sister to *flâneuse*.

It is frequently difficult in anthologies of all kinds to maintain a throughline or a sense of building to and/or from a clear idea of thesis, and this is certainly my concern here. While one is not looking for the thematic and stylistic coherence of a work (even a collection of essays) written by just one or two authors, I cannot help but see this collection as a little too much of a gallimaufry.

ADRIENNE SCULLION

Susan Croft

**She Also Wrote Plays:
an International Guide to Women Playwrights
from the Tenth to the Twenty-First Century**
London: Faber, 2000. £9.99.
ISBN: 0-571-20602-6.

This is a long awaited and important resource book. Croft acknowledges the difficulties in selecting materials; who to include, which elements of their work to foreground, and so on. She also points to the fact that the purpose of such a publication is to make visible the hitherto invisible, and that this in itself can work against the limitations of publishers' requirements when a book is being published for a popular market.

Croft has included a diversity of playwrights whose work falls into a range from 'boulevard to performance art'. There are a number of playwrights who have fallen outside Croft's system for inclusion but these omissions will no doubt (to some extent) be rectified by her forthcoming *Critical Bibliography of Women Playwrights in the English Language 1390–1914* (Manchester University Press). *She Also Wrote Plays* includes listings for practitioners such as Joan Littlewood and Ariane Mnouchkine, as well as for writers like Paula Milne or Debbie Horsefield, better known perhaps for their television and screen writing than for their stage plays.

At times the organizing principle is not clear, nor indeed are the guidelines upon which the choices were made. Although the omission of an

index is also somewhat surprising, this will be a useful handbook to all involved in the theatre, whether professionally or educationally.

MAGGIE GALE

Rüdiger Schaper

**Moissi. Trieste. Berlin. New York.
Eine Schauspielerlegende**

Berlin: Argon Verlag, 2000. 256 p. DM39.90.
ISBN: 5-87024-515-1.

Noëlle Guibert, ed.

Portrait(s) de Sarah Bernhardt

Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2000.
208 p. F190.00.
ISBN: 2-7177-2113-4.

Claudette Joannis

Sarah Bernhardt, 'Reine de l'Attitude'

Paris: Payot, 2000. 235 p. F120.00.
ISBN: 2-228-89357-9.

Three valuable books on two European stage legends address the nature of stardom in the early years of the twentieth century. Rüdiger Schaper presents an imaginative portrait of Alexander Moissi, who between 1910 and 1930 was probably the best-known German actor. Born in Albania and brought up in Trieste, he became a disciple of Joseph Kainz in Vienna and transformed himself into a leading player in German-speaking theatres. Taken up by Max Reinhardt, he became a world-class peripatetic star, remarkable for his 'singing' tones, exotic accent, and striking looks.

During the First World War he volunteered for the German forces, and received the Iron Cross. In the 1930s, no longer *persona grata* in Germany, he sought Italian citizenship from Mussolini. In 1931, Moissi's own play about Napoleon failed in Berlin, and in 1935 he died in Vienna, at the age of 55. Schaper considers the way in which legends accumulate around such figures. This is not a conventional academic work: there is little documentation, beyond a concluding chapter in which the available sources, published and in archives, are surveyed in order to demonstrate the tenuousness of the record.

However, the author's account of Moissi's performances give a vivid sense of the corporeal existence behind the voice preserved on sound recordings, with its uncanny and operatic shaping of every word and line, luxuriously elongated vowels, and trilled *r*'s. Moissi is compared to Chaplin, Valentino, and Nijinsky, not so much on account of his acting, but because he was as remarkable for being Moissi as for impersonating Hamlet, Fedya, or Oswald.

Although – oddly – he never mentions her, Sarah Bernhardt would fit well into Schaper's discussion of international actors. Noëlle Guibert,

responsible for a remarkable exhibition on Bernhardt at the Bibliothèque Nationale, has edited a handsome volume of essays, documents, and illustrations, providing valuable insights into the range and vitality not only of Bernhardt herself, but also of the industry that celebrated her. Bernhardt, like Moissi, began as an outsider, the illegitimate daughter of a Jewish *demi-mondaine*, and her relationship to official theatre culture was always problematic. Her enactments of women, her *travestie* roles, and her death scenes had – and retain – an iconic quality.

In the exhibition, a video montage segued from her being borne offstage as the dead Hamlet to newsreel footage of her funeral cortège. The book includes analyses and eye-witness accounts of Bernhardt's acting, her work as a *metteur en scène*, her impact on other artists, her costumes on and off the stage, and her appearances on film. The illustrations are richly varied, including portraits that range from a literally hagiographic, gold-leaf encrusted rendering of an early photograph by Nadar to a half-length photograph of her in the nude, her eyes hidden by a fan and her pose more challenging than coquettish.

Claudette Joannis's *Sarah Bernhardt, 'Reine de l'Attitude'* covers much of the same ground, but has only a handful of illustrations. It is not a biography, but a series of essays on related aspects of Bernhardt, notably her childhood and youth, her touring, her plays and roles, and her managerial activities. The author is strong on the social and economic situation of women in the acting profession, and on the ease of movement between the stage and various more or less refined varieties of prostitution during the period.

International tours freed Bernhardt from performing before a sometimes hypercritical Parisian public, but obliged her to 'act' as a celebrity. Her hyperactive life became indistinguishable from performance, and her performances were characterized as translating an array of feelings into a single paroxysm. At the same time, her art generated enthusiasm for *Phédre*, as well as *La Dame aux camélias*, in audiences without French. It was, after all, a visual art (hence Edmond Rostand's phrase as quoted in Joannis's subtitle), supporting the accessibly abstract appeal of the *voix d'or*. Strict verbal comprehension was a bonus rather than an essential for most of her foreign audiences.

RUSSELL JACKSON

Vera Gottlieb and Paul Allain, ed.

The Cambridge Companion to Chekhov
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
293 p. £13.95.
ISBN: 0-521-58917-8.

Essentially, this series seems to be geared towards the student text-book market. It was from this

perspective that I approached *The Cambridge Companion to Chekhov*, emerging with the view that although the cross-section of contributors reflected a variable range of stylistic modes and practices, in general this was no bad thing. The book is divided into three sections: 'Chekhov in Context', 'Chekhov in Production', and 'Chekhov the Writer', and many contributors consider the prose writings as well as the plays, although ultimately the emphasis is on drama, stage, and screen.

The specialist reader will not find much that is new within these pages, with the exception perhaps of Braun's detailed analysis of *Platonov* across the decades and Leonid Heifetz's highly engaging discussion of *Uncle Vanya* from a Russian director's perspective. For the novice, the range of essays provides an excellent overview and insight into the major plays and key issues of context, content, and comedy. However, it is a shame that two potentially very interesting contributions from British practitioners – Trevor Nunn and Ian McKellen – have not been fully developed by the editors from rather informal interviews to more structured and informed articles. The two chapters in question illustrate how academia and practice still do not fit together comfortably, although the fluency of Heifetz's *Vanya* chapter suggests that perhaps the unease is more prevalent in Britain than abroad.

None the less, this in itself provides valid discussion material for students analyzing the difficulties of articulating theatre practice. All in all, *The Cambridge Companion to Chekhov* is a worthy, hands-on guide to the man and his work, primarily for students, with a compelling introduction justifying why another book on Chekhov is both needed and valuable.

BELLA MERLIN

Barry Grantham

Playing Commedia

London: Nick Hern Books, 2001. 272 p. £14.99.
ISBN: 1-85459-466-4.

Grantham's book is a hands-on, how-to-do manual of unusual accessibility and excellence. Any teacher who wants to explore this fascinating and endlessly exciting *genre* should keep a copy very near at hand. *Playing Commedia* makes clear the distinction between *commedia*, a creative form of improvising and playmaking suitable for use in modern actor-training, and *commedia dell'arte*, the traditional Italian form which flourished in the market places and pub yards of Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. *Commedia dell'arte* inspired and fed the ideas of many twentieth-century artists, the best of whom were led back to the fundamental artificiality of art, which existed long before the nineteenth

century discovered realism and naturalism. It embodied and – uniquely – combined what Peter Brook calls ‘rough theatre’ and ‘holy theatre’, and modern *commedia* probably holds that potential too.

Grantham’s new training guide plots a pathway to the *Commedia*’s heart, largely through a superb range of warm-up games, mime and movement games, word games, and more. I have tried many of them with my students – and they work! But Grantham is careful to point out that technical proficiency comes through hard work as well as imagination, and he never sells his subject short. His descriptions and suggestions are remarkably clear, and the line drawings and diagrams exceptionally well-executed and comprehensible.

My only query about the book is the lack of emphasis on narrative. The movement, the tricks, the characteristic walks, and all the other outrageous and amusing attributes of the genre are as nothing if the narrative does not grip, entertain, and provoke the audience. There is not much here about how to make the story do that. Perhaps this is not part of the book’s task. Certainly, the author succeeds triumphantly in what he does attempt. Every teacher who wants to get away from the tyranny of naturalism, and every actor who wants to find the eternal fount of the drama’s appeal, needs a copy of *Playing Commedia*.

ROBERT LEACH

Philip C. Kolin

**Williams: A Streetcar Named Desire
(Plays in Production Series)**

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
229 p. £35.00 (hbk), £13.95 (pbk).
ISBN: 0-521-62344-8 (hbk), 0-521-62610-2 (pbk).

The aim of the series ‘Plays in Production’ is to take an individual dramatic text and explore its historical context in relation to its initial performance and subsequent production on the stage and in other media. This is a formidable task, but one that Philip Kolin approaches with panache. In this careful, detailed examination of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Kolin traces a critical view of performances, actors, and settings. He catalogues critical disputes and offers his own analysis of productions.

My one criticism of the text is that he often appears to be tougher on female actors than male actors, and while this is partially explicable by the fact that he cites critical reactions, it is not always so. Tandy, Leigh, and Danner, all noted by critics as spectacular Blanches, fall short of Kolin’s expectations. Although male actors suffer by comparison with Brando’s iconic Stanley, Kolin is careful to indicate the strengths of other actors’ interpretations. This mismatch between assessments of the actors, based on gender, is uncomfortable.

That said, Kolin does praise various interpretations of Stella, so critical discrimination is not entirely clear cut.

Productions are addressed chronologically in each chapter, the first of which opens with an appraisal of Kazan’s Broadway premiere. Chapter Two focuses on national premieres in Mexico, Italy, Sweden, France, England, and Japan; as Kolin notes, ‘No one country, no one culture ever owned *Streetcar*.’ Chapter Three examines revivals on the English-speaking stage, while Chapter Four focuses on marginalized black or gay productions, including an examination of *Belle Reprise*. The final chapter focuses on the play in other media: film, television, ballet, and opera. The book will be of interest to students of theatre history as well as American drama, and is a valuable resource for critical reactions to the play over the last fifty years.

HEIDI SLETTEDAHL MACPHERSON

Matthew Goulish

39 Microlectures, in Proximity of Performance

London; New York: Routledge, 2000. £12.99.
ISBN: 0-415-21393-2.

Matthew Goulish is a founder member of the Chicago-based performance group, Goat Island. A performer and writer, he has collaborated on the creation of seven performance works with the company to date. This is a book about writing, about the imagination, about life, and above all, about the process of devising performance work, told from the artist’s perspective. The term ‘microlectures’ refers to Goulish’s system of composition which employs the cutting and pasting of seemingly unrelated fragments of writing, both by himself and others, from philosophers to scientists, into a series of miniature essays designed to encourage and to inspire.

Goulish has created a truly performative text that continuously and subtly challenges its own identity as a book. In the introduction to the index, he warns us: ‘We must remain aware of the small ways in which language imprisons us and plan our escapes accordingly.’ Goulish’s escape mode is to challenge accepted academic methods of presentation, be it essay or book or lecture, from the inside, initiating small structural changes that maintain a strong connection with tradition. More overtly, he tells the reader to ‘read this book as a creative act’, so placing a different emphasis on content. He asserts that we can begin anywhere: we do not have to read the whole thing, we are an active component in the creation of the text.

All this is not new; other books – for example Crickmay and Tufnell’s *Body Space Image* – have approached structure and content in a similar manner, and the interaction of reader and text is highly desirable. This small book validates devised

theatre and exposes the vision of the artist. It may be that its content will have more resonance for some than for others; it may be best appreciated if one has had some experience of the work of Goat Island. None the less it encourages the creative reader to follow their instincts in the search for new structures and methods through which to present their ideas and to express their relationship to the world.

Reading the book is in itself a creative experience, as we encounter the placement of words upon the page alongside the meaning of the words themselves. The act of devising and performing is reflected in the act of writing; the act of writing itself becomes performative. 39 *Micro-lectures* may seem geared towards a specialist audience: artists, teachers, students, academics, and critics working within performance. That said, I would recommend it to those working creatively in *all* fields, from surgeons to architects and beyond.

HEATHER RUTLAND

Anna Buruma

Fashions of the Past

London: Collins and Brown, 1999. 128 p. £14.99.
ISBN: 1-85585-727-8.

This extremely attractive and beautifully illustrated history of costume is clearly intended for a wide audience, from costume- or design-student to the reader with a general interest in theatre history. The illustrative plates have appeared previously with only very brief descriptions; here, however, they are presented thematically and in chronological order, supported by Buruma's useful introductions, contextualizing the illustrations and illuminating them with pertinent descriptions.

Taken from the *Costume of all Nations*, published in Britain in 1901 and 1907, the selection of plates first appeared in *Munchener Bilderbogen* between 1848 and 1898, and were executed by a number of accomplished German artists of the time. The importance of a worldwide knowledge of styles in dress and textiles certainly helps the student and the designer observe many influences from the respective origins. The illustrations herein present a range of groups from a variety of classes and professions, thus enhancing the book's value, with plates covering Europe, Turkey, the Middle East, India, the Far East, and Africa.

The detail is excellent and the information on colour and textiles is also invaluable to tutors and designers. While the illustrative quality of the book will attract students at all levels, *Fashions of the Past* will be of particular use to a readership

equipped with a significant awareness of costume history. Aileen Riberio's lively and informative foreword to the book combines with Buruma's own introductions and descriptions to balance appropriately information and stimulation.

JO THACKWRAY

Mary F. Brewer

Race, Sex, and Gender in Contemporary Women's Theatre: the Construction of 'Woman'

Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1999. 218 p.
£45 (hbk), £16.95 (pbk).
ISBN: 1-902210-18-2 (hbk), 1-902210-19-0 (pbk).

This study of British and American theatre texts by women addresses problems of exclusion in the 'movement personality' of mainstream feminist theory and practice. It is an ambitious task which highlights the symbiotic and dialectic relationship between culture in its widest socio-political sense and theatre as a cultural artefact. Brewer's contextual analysis of plays dating from the 1980s and 1990s indicates how feminist discourse remains white, affluent, educated, and heterosexual, often inadvertently serving to perpetuate racial, class-based, and sexual hierarchies within the category of 'woman'.

Through the exploration of representations of mothering, beauty myths, working patterns, family structures, rape, and the construction of self-identity, Brewer shows not only how lesbians and black women have been further marginalized by dominant ideologies embraced by mainstream feminism, but that race, gender, and sexuality are in themselves unstable indicators of identity. Her argument is clear and persuasive as she classifies the cultural products she discusses as either progressive or non-progressive feminist works, and evaluates their potential for political efficacy.

In the process, Brewer draws our attention to performance texts which are still under-exposed, pointing toward a wealth of source materials for students and more experienced scholars of gender and sexuality in performance. Similarly, she offers new perspectives on more established plays within this canon, such as Churchill's *Top Girls* and Split Britches' *Belle Reprieve*. Although the stated focus is on dramatic texts, those readers interested in the construction of meaning through performance rather than as literature might find this book occasionally frustrating. Examining how more of the scripts discussed have been embodied and encoded would certainly have added further richness to an argument which contributes to the building of a progressive feminist 'house of difference'.

ROBERTA MOCK