

## Editor's Introduction

In the past several years there has been an increasingly varied and dynamic exchange among theatre scholars and practitioners in the area of feminist theory and criticism. That this exchange has moved—at least in a limited way—into the mainstream of academia is reflected in the increasing number of articles, anthologies and book-length studies that are now widely available. Notable highlights in this movement include contributions by Gayle Austin, Sue-Ellen Case, Jill Dolan and Lynda Hart, as well as special issues on feminism offered by publications such as *Modern Drama* and *Theatre Journal*.

This special supplement to *JDTC* is, I believe, a worthy addition to that trend, as it presents a broad array of essays that utilize multiple strategies from feminist theory and apply them in a variety of ways. Patricia R. Schroeder's and Juli Thompson Burk's essays provide an opening polemic, with each taking a position regarding the place of pluralism within feminist discourse. The next two articles illustrate strategies for engaging with playtexts; Mary-Karen Dahl uses Althusser to investigate the functions of ideology and subjectivity in Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, while Assunta Kent explores Maria Irene Fornes' strategies for foregrounding her politic in *And What of the Night?* The centerpiece to the supplement is Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka's discussion of the function of black feminist theory in dramatic criticism.

The three final articles examine the impact and application of feminism on theatrical production, from performance art, to playwriting, to acting style. Angelika Czekay explores the position of author's intent *vis a vis* audience reception in Annie Sprinkle's *Still in Search of the Ultimate Sexual Experience*, Kim Marra examines gender production in American acting style, and Gayle Austin discusses the making of a "feminist theory play."

Ultimately, my hope is that the questions these essays raise will expose readers to the many potential applications of feminist theory, and provoke those already utilizing feminist strategies to submit their efforts to *JDTC*.

Sarah V. Becker

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Sarah Becker is the Assistant Editor of *JDTC*. Her essays have appeared in *Theatre Insight* and *New England Theatre Journal*, and she is currently compiling an anthology with Assunta Kent on collective and consensus in directing. Sarah is a doctoral candidate at the University of Kansas and is completing a dissertation utilizing feminist theoretical approaches to Sam Shepard's plays.

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