

In the *I* of the Storm: The Problems With Pluralism

Juli Thompson Burk

On Friday, 11 September 1992, at 5:30 a.m. Hawaii time, Civil Defense sirens alerted Hawaii residents to impending disaster—Hurricane Iniki was headed directly for us. "Turn on your radios" the blare of the siren insisted, "identify today's particular danger and prepare to batten down the hatches." A class-four hurricane, Iniki's weapons included sustained winds of 165 miles per hour and the memory of Hurricane Andrew not far from our minds. Though it will take years to recover from the loss of life, property, and employment wreaked by these two hurricanes, the power of a hurricane dissipates relatively quickly. The infrastructure of American society works rapidly through agencies such as FEMA and the Red Cross. While there is incredible damage to external manifestations of the structure (houses, hotels, worksites), the structure itself remains unchanged.

On Friday, 31 July 1992, at 1:00 p.m. Atlanta time, Lynda Hart sounded an equally important siren. As she closed her presentation on the Looking at Seeing Panel of the 1992 Women and Theatre Conference, she cited a recent Operation Rescue attack on an abortion clinic in New York where sidewalk counselors for the "right to life" were saying "Abortion is the new holocaust. The only people who should be going in there are Blacks and Jews." As the conference participants gasped in horror, Hart asked us, "How much more evidence do we need to see that race and gender and class can't be theorized discretely?" (10). As we tuned in more closely for details of this impending disaster and how to prepare for it, she implored us to look carefully, to remember that every looking has to be a looking *again*, a constant process of remembering what we've forgotten, and forgetting what we remember. The crisis in feminist theory that Hart identified—the crisis more devastating and certainly more sustained than the fury of a hurricane—is the exclusive location of gender discrete from issues of race, class, and sexuality as the defining element of feminist inquiry. This is not a danger against which we, as feminists, can fortify ourselves and then emerge

Juli Thompson Burk is an Associate Professor of Theatre and Dance at the University of Hawaii. She is President of the Women and Theatre Program and Associate Vice President for Conferences of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Her book, *The Impact of Feminism on Theatre & Performance*, is forthcoming from Twayne Publishers.

in the aftermath of the storm to rebuild existing structures when it is precisely those structures that feminism seeks to subvert.

In her article "American Drama, Feminist Discourse and Dramatic Form: In Defense of Pluralism," Patricia Schroeder offers a solution to what she views as the critical over-emphasis on politically correct playwriting, calling for a healthy pluralism in defining feminist drama. For me, the crisis in feminist theory concerns not what is or what is not feminist drama and/or who might be admitted to an alternative canon, but rather the well-intentioned liberal humanist position of much feminist theoretical work which strives towards pluralism. The problems of feminist pluralism derive from the foundational identity politics which authorize the mostly white, middle-class, heterosexual feminist to admit the non-white, underclass or gay playwright into the fold.

The concept of pluralism defended in Schroeder's essay is symptomatic of a broader problem within contemporary Western theatre scholarship and pedagogy. Her essay requires acceptance on concomitant ideological strategies that undermine its good intentions, goals and effectiveness. In this essay, I address the danger to feminist dramatic theory that ensues from the centrality of gender politics. The history of feminist studies in literature and drama reveals how gender emerged as such a focal point, setting in motion the atmospheric conditions conducive to a major storm. Then I examine the power of pluralism, the authority assumed by those in the academy to invite cultural others into the canon of artifacts considered worthy of study and analysis, establishing that position as the peaceful, temporary eye of a storm emerging in popular culture. Building on the role of gender as the problematic object of feminist inquiry and on the white, middle-class heterosexual mainstream of so much feminist writing, I locate the issue of identity as the *I* of the storm. The final section of this essay illuminates the ways that constituting gender as the focus of feminist inquiry discrete from issues of race, class, and sexuality ignites the storm by disenfranchising feminists with concerns other than those of white, middle-class heterosexual scholars.

In her essay, "Feminist Criticism and Postmodernism," Carolyn Allen reminds her readers that American feminist criticism was born in the streets during the second wave of feminist activism (the first being the suffrage movement early in this century [278]). Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, published in English in 1953, had argued that woman's situation was the result of her economic, social and historical conditioning. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, had analyzed post World War II pressures on housewives and began to explore what she termed "the problem with no name." That same year Rosa Parks's refusal to give up her bus seat brought the Civil Rights movement to the attention of mainstream America. Groups of white

middle-class women whose privilege granted them the time to do so investigated their shared feelings of despair and oppression in what would eventually be referred to as consciousness-raising and would lead them to street demonstrations in favor of women's liberation.

Committed to material and social change in women's lives, many in this early phase of the second wave of American feminism seldom paused to consider the nature of the subject they set out to liberate. But as Michel Foucault pointed out, political structures *produce* the subjects they subsequently come to represent. From women's liberation, American feminism inherited without investigation until much later the assumption that the term "women" denoted a common gendered identity.¹ As women in diverse professions took to the street to protest their servitude to phallogocentric social, economic, and sexual power structures, women in the academy launched their investigations of literature and drama. The few women who had gained admittance to the academy were predominantly white, heterosexual and middle-class and while they focussed their attention on gender these biases (to be generous) unwittingly informed their work. In 1970, Kate Millet published an important ground-breaking book, *Sexual Politics*, in which she categorized images of women in literature written by men, illustrating how these images were unshakably misogynistic. In 1978, Judith Fetterley's *The Resisting Reader* identified the need to read against the text in order to begin to understand the patriarchal bias of literature. In 1980, Annette Kolodny detailed the minefield through which the feminist reader must pass as she approaches the literary text.

In 1984, bell hooks's *Feminist Theory From Margin to Center* addressed another minefield, the position of privilege from which the majority of feminist theory emerged, proposing new directions to encompass the lived experience of those outside the center. Lesbians and women of color identified their respective positions as discrete issues within feminism, challenging what Sue Ellen Case has called the presumed homogeneity of voice and vision within the women's movement. Case's *Feminism and Theatre*, published in 1988, examined in part the ways in which a materialist critique of class is central to women of color. "The understanding of the hierarchical nature of classes under capitalism," she wrote, "is essential to understanding the oppressive nature of racism. When ethnic identity is used to relegate people of color to the role of surplus value in the labour force, race becomes identical with class in the market place" (97).

But the works of hooks, Case, Hart and others such as Teresa de Lauretis and Judith Butler who have challenged the notion of gender as the central concern of feminism remains in the minority of feminist work in literature and theatre. As Kate Davy has pointed out, while Tania Modleski's recent book, *Feminism Without Women*, is otherwise insightful, Modleski "reinscribes the

hegemony of whiteness by ignoring it as an ethnicity" (2). Returning to Schroeder's essay, the reader is promised that controversies within the field will be illustrated, as well as the value of maintaining a well-informed pluralism in approaching feminist drama (104). Each of the three strategies for feminist analysis discussed—the autonomous woman, the female form, and materialist feminist studies—is grounded in the assumption of gender as unchallenged concept. The first two unquestionably set gender as a prerequisite for investigation; even in the third, where Schroeder identifies the central critical premise of the materialist feminist strategy, she writes "gender is a cultural construct produced by material conditions" (13).

I do not disagree with Schroeder's conclusions regarding these three types of feminist analysis (though I am painfully aware of the whiteness of this discourse). I do wonder why the essay which promises "a critique of the benefits and dangers of each [approach]" (104) fails to identify the centrality of gender among the dangers of feminist inquiry. And, while she justifiably chafes against the value judgements inherent in her professors's narrow definition of American drama, nowhere in the essay is there the sense that political action and consequences underlie feminist analysis whether it problematizes gender or not. Citing Teresa de Lauretis, Schroeder discusses the social subject as an object of inquiry emphasizing the presentation of "this complex and mutable feminist subject in a theatrical context," (110) but never as the individual participating in the inquiry. Had her focus been more politically directed to the position or location of the feminist scholar, Schroeder might have investigated de Lauretis's concept of the feminist subject.

Where the female form or subject of dramatic texts, as Schroeder points out, stands squarely within the ideology of gender by universalizing the experience of women, de Lauretis's feminist subject occupies a position both inside and outside of that ideology. As de Lauretis theorizes it in her article "The Technology of Gender," the key to the position of the feminist subject is the possibility for self-determination. Working on and beyond the writings of Foucault and Althusser, she identifies the central bonds of the female subject as those which tie her inextricably to heterosexuality. For de Lauretis, the assumed but unwritten heterosexual context of previous work on the female subject binds it to a position within the terms of men and not in context of other women. The feminist subject, on the other hand, is:

[a] subject constituted in gender, to be sure, though not by sexual difference alone, but rather across languages and cultural representations; a subject en-gendered in the experiencing of race and

class, as well as sexual, relations; a subject, therefore, not unified but rather multiple, and not so much divided as contradicted. (2)

The importance of the feminist subject for this essay lies in the opportunity for political agency as well as the necessary expansion of feminist inquiry to the consideration of the matrices of race, class, and sexual orientation. Dependent on the notion of universal sex opposition, gender as the sole focus of feminist inquiry creates the universalization of woman not only as difference, but as a unified category itself, erasing the importance of differences between women. The feminist subject, from her position both inside and outside ideology, exists as a field of vision that acknowledges the vital differences among women.

Writing from the position of the feminist subject, not delimited by sex or social class, Schroeder might have provided the reader of dramatic texts with the opportunity to look beyond both traditional Aristotelian bounds and the tendency of the bulk of feminist theory dependent on gender to analyze the implications of representation. Unveiling the theatrical text demands a search beyond that of its universal gender relations, imagery, meaning or message. Instead, the feminist subject must look to what Catherine Belsey, in describing theatrical texts, has argued is "the organization of the discourses which constitute it"; I would include feminist discourse and "the strategies by which it smooths over the . . . ideology inscribed in it" (129). While locating gender as the central concern of feminist theory irrespective of race, class, and sexuality might be the legacy of early American feminist theory, it is time to challenge not only the prescriptiveness of the three strategies outlined in Schroeder's essay, but also the basis of those strategies. By preserving the place of gender as a universal category in feminist theory we set ourselves up for the storm that inevitably rises when race, gender, sexuality and class are theorized discretely.

Characterized by an eerie calm, the eye of a tropical storm tranquilly hovers in contrast to the havoc that surrounds it. But the false sense of security at the peaceful center of a hurricane is ultimately its most dangerous moment and can lead to extraordinary losses. As the eye of Hurricane Iniki passed over the island of Kauai, one resident decided to emerge from his shelter only to find his lung pierced with flying glass when the storm moved on. Currently in vogue as the United States approaches the new millennium, cultural pluralism appears to be the effort of a dominant phallogocentric order to brace itself against the maelstrom of the disenfranchised who seek representation, both economic and social. It takes as its base liberal humanism, assuming a transcendent universality that deigns to admit others. This desire, as Judith Butler has argued, is homosocial, utilizing the tactics of the hyphen and the token to symbolize its inclusion of the other who threatens it. By naming the ethnic, class, or sexual other without similarly

claiming its own perspective (for example, the tendency to refer to playwright Ntozake Shange as a Black American playwright while neglecting to always identify Sam Shepard as a White American playwright), cultural pluralism mystifies its agenda. These others are generally tokenized by their inclusion in the canons of great literature or ghettoized by creating alternative canons without investigating the assumptions which underlie canon formation in the first place. As Schroeder's essay seeks to define feminist drama however multiple or plural the approaches, it too assumes certain foundational principles and ultimately participated in canon formation.

Epistemologically, for pluralism of any sort to be accomplished, there must be a center or base into which to admit those designated for inclusion. The social subject who has the privilege to invite others into the tenuous eye of the storm occupies a position built on what Butler argues is a humanist conception that assumes "a substantive person who is the bearer of various essential and non-essential attributes" (10). These attributes invariably coincide with those of the dominant phallogocentric order—white, middle-class, heterosexual, and male. In her essay "On Being White," Marilyn Frye provides an example of how white supremacist society galvanizes its forces through the power of definition. She argues that:

The group to which I belong, presumably by virtue of my pigmentation, is not ordained in Nature to socially and politically recognized as a *group*, but is so ordained only by its own members through their own self-serving and politically motivated hoarding of definitional power. (117-118)

The hegemony of white culture informs liberal tenants of humanism that underpin the current move toward cultural pluralism.

Pluralism, then, defines a relationship that is cemented through the inclusion or, more precisely, the exchange and distribution of cultural others. One might even see it as closely related to exogamic kinship practices among patrilineal clans, which Gail Rubin's influential essay, "The Traffic in Women: The 'Political Economy' of Sex," links to compulsory heterosexuality.² But to see the exchange of brides as merely upholding the taboo against incest is to ignore the homosocial desire it expresses. As Butler explains it, "the bride functions as a relational term between groups of men; she does not *have* an identity, and neither does she exchange one identity for another. She *reflects* masculine identity precisely through being the site of its absence" (39). The cultural other, invited to join the mainstream, functions in much the same way within the canon. By reflecting the qualities of traditional phallogocentric literature and drama she

becomes a token of exchange conferring authority on the non-others who include her.

One strategy that marks both the resistance to assimilation and the simultaneous move in that direction is identity hyphenation, a process symptomatic of the drive towards cultural pluralism. In her presentation at the 1992 Women and Theatre Conference, Jennifer Brody investigated the notion of the hyphen as a marker of either/or neither/nor propositions that eventually collapse into one in the steady evolution of language. Hyphenated identities presently abound in the United States. Women seeking to maintain connections to their past hyphenate surnames upon marriage. People of African, Japanese, Chinese, Jewish and other racial heritages adopt the position of hyphenated "-Americans," often for the same reason. At the level of grammar, Brody argued, the hyphen "marks the unstable space between two distinct terms and simultaneously holds them in tension—marking a space of (distantly) connected difference" (1). At the same time, she pointed out Strunk and White's caution in their classist work, *The Elements of Style*: While the hyphen marks a space of difference it can also play tricks on the unwary as it marks a process culturally designed to move towards amalgamation of assimilation.

A second function of the tokenized, hyphenated identity within cultural pluralism provides the mainstream with the opportunity to explore marginalized cultures. Under the guise of educating the center about the margin, the white middle-class heterosexual becomes a tourist³ engaging in what Trinh T. Minh-Ha has termed legitimized voyeurism. Assuring the hegemony of the phallocratic order, the tourist gaze posits cultural others as the site of an archaeological dig wherein racial identities are distanced as objects of study. In *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*, Patricia Williams describes a walking tour of Harlem she attended shortly after moving to New York where a group completely white save herself decided to stop in, unannounced, at some churches. Their tour guide advised then, we'll probably get to see some services going on . . . Easter Sunday in Harlem is quite a show." Williams points out that regardless of their apparent lack of malice in this behaviour, for this group, "no one existed . . . who could not be governed by their intentions" (71). This colonizing mentality naturalized the position of the token as the only means of inclusion and authority available to the marginalized, hyphenated other within carefully constructed brackets. When feminist dramatic theory identifies gender as its central concern discrete from issues of race, class, and sexuality, it constructs a white, middle-class, heterosexual subject with the authority to recognize, study and include the drama or working-class, non-white or lesbian playwrights. Even while this subject may reflect the structures of phallocratic society, she reinscribes them through her

participation in the project of pluralism, a position dangerously located in the eye of the storm.

The hyphenated other, placed in the position of tour guide for those from what Rosemary Curb has referred to as the dead center of privilege (3), solidifies the authority of the mainstream scholar. By ignoring or refusing to name whiteness as an ethnicity or heterosexuality as sexual orientation such a scholar appropriates the universal. But the white feminist subject, for example, as a scholar who occupies a position both inside and outside ideology, can refuse to wield the concept of whiteness. She can refuse to participate in the mechanisms designed to uphold the social and political construct of whiteness, which Marilyn Frye has identified as "something elaborated upon conceptions of kinship or common ancestry and upon ancient ethnocentric associations of good and evil with light and dark" (114). As this subject position is en-gendered in race, class, and sexual relations, the need for pluralism disappears with the rigidly defined center it is designed to maintain.

Schroeder's essay warns against reproducing the limitations of traditional scholarship that effectively fended off inclusion of literature and drama written by women for so many years (104). Arguing that prescriptive criticism causes unnecessary divisiveness among feminist drama theorists and scholars, a no-holds-barred approach to canon formation appears to be the answer for feminist dramatic theory. But canons, no matter how broadly inclusive, remain powerful weapons of oppression. Who has the authority to draw the boundaries of feminist drama, to name a theatrical text as such? If it is the scholar, feminist or not, then due to the class privilege of higher education, this scholar is statistically overwhelmingly white and heterosexual. Perhaps feminist investigation of theatrical texts should focus instead on expanding its own awareness of race, class, and sexuality in approaching dramatic literature and encounter the text from this perspective. A second influential essay by Lynda Hart, "Canonizing Lesbians?", which appeared in June Schlueter's anthology titled, *Modern American Drama: the Female Canon*, effectively problematizes the issue. Noting the mystification of the terms for inclusion in traditional canons through establishing aesthetic criteria, Hart identifies the paradox of trying to create an alternative canon. "A female canon," she writes,

might simply reverse the terms that feminist critics have demystified whereby women have been excluded and men included in canons, not because of their biology only, but because of a massive inscription of characteristics imposed on those bodies that construct the binary oppositional category of gender. (278)

I would extend the argument to include the project of understanding or creating a feminist canon. When issues of gender underlie the alternative canon of feminist dramaturgy, as is evidenced in the three categories examined in Schroeder's essay, any canon shaped around this issue is at risk. Realigning feminist inquiry with the politics of pluralism that the phallogocentric model deploys locates it within the perilous eye of the storm.

Most feminist theory, enmeshed in the politics of gender and flirting with the mainstream of academic tradition, creates its own threatening hurricane as it constructs its I-identity. Assuming that "there is some existing identity, understood through the category of women, who not only initiates feminist interests and goals within discourse, but constitutes the subject for whom political representation is pursued" (Butler 1), feminist theory posits an *I* in the eye of the storm. When the subject of feminist theory is entrenched as a stable position, only that which can be recognized within established boundaries can be represented. Further, the stability of the subject depends on the creation of a culturally intelligible identity based on concepts of the sex/gender relation. And the sex/gender distinction ultimately rests on the fictive notion that sex is a prediscursive, knowable or "factic" reality of the body upon which gender operates. But when identity politics bound to gender, bound to the body, bound to the concept of self dictate the center of feminist theoretical endeavors, feminism courts disaster. Schroeder writes convincingly of the dangers of prescriptiveness in the application of feminist theory as scholars "construct a definition of feminist drama and then assess plays written by women according to how well the playwrights have followed the critic's prescribed definition" (18). The danger lies in the prescriptiveness of gender ideology in much feminist theorizing.

A much-used and controversial phrase of the feminist movement in America, "the personal is political," points to one aspect of this problem. When politics emanate too directly from personal experience, the subject position is enmeshed in identity. Exposing the artificial and ideological divide between the private and the public has been an important outcome of feminist activism. Understanding lived experience as influential in intellectual and political endeavors and seeking the experiences of those shut out of the phallogocentric domain informs feminist research in literature and the arts. This instinct drives the search for a dramaturgy based on the autonomous woman or female form that Schroeder's essay examines and problematizes. And as she points out, an important difference exists between "patriarchal prescriptiveness, which assumes universal values, and the work of feminist critics . . . who are careful to inscribe their analyses with their own subjectivity" (113). But while we must remember that feminist criticism in America began in the sharing of lived experience in

consciousness-raising groups, we must also be careful not to universalize any particular woman's experience into "women's" experience, not to allow our new I/eyes to create an exclusive "we." This is where "the personal is political" risks recuperating phallogocentric strategies within feminist practice.

In its almost monogamous relationship with gender, feminist theory has instituted a hierarchy in the personal. Reifying gender as the genus of the personal impedes the fluidity of the social subject as Schroeder has described it (110), creating for feminists a female subjectivity as opposed to the feminist subjectivity that de Lauretis described. Where the female subject is constituted in gender by sexual difference, the feminist subject position provides the possibility to stand both inside *and* outside racist, classist, homophobic gender ideology. From this positively precarious perch, the feminist subject explodes the shackles of the personal. The viability of this subject does not depend on a "stable existence prior to the cultural field that it negotiates" (Butler 142). The calm in the eye of a tropical storm, while experientially real, belies the devastating conditions that surround it. It creates a boundary within which only the fictive security can be recognized. Yet its stability, like that of the subject, hinges on a flaw. This discursive tradition, as Butler has pointed out, is a strategy of domination that pits an *I* against an "Other," and "eye" against a storm.

Accepting gender as an artificial construct, most feminist theory rejects a natural sex/gender relationship. However, the *I*-identity of the subject is still partially rooted in this relationship when the personal is understood to define experience/politics. Both de Lauretis and Butler have argued persuasively that the sex/gender distinction, while valuable on one level, works to naturalize an understanding of sex that establishes the body as a neutral surface and anatomical sex as prediscursive. As Butler has pointed out, "gender is not to culture as sex is to nature." (7) If gender is perceived as distinct from sex, than any experience of the body proceeds from the very gender ideology that feminism seeks to dismantle and identifying personal experience as foundational ironically reinscribes the traditional epistemological frame.

When identity proceeds from the concept of a prediscursive body on which culture acts, it binds subjectivity to the personal. And while the idea that the personal is political no longer dominates feminist activity as it once did, any concept of a prediscursive body implies a site for identity politics. This in turn leaves us in a situation that bell hooks has classified as unduly linked to lifestyle. Using the phrase "I am a feminist" hooks argues, engages us "in the either/or dualistic thinking that is the central ideological component of all systems of domination in Western society" (29). She proposes, instead, the phrase "I advocate feminism" to indicate an act of will, a looking *through* feminism rather

than *from* a feminist identity. In this way we can reject the fictitious safety of the eye of the storm and begin to look again, as Lynda Hart suggests, at the storm that surrounds us. Where the "I" in "I am" creates artificial boundaries that exclude the feminist from cultural others, replacing "I am" with "I do" removes identity from the body and establishes it within practices of signification. As such, the epistemological account of identity is open to analysis and relieves the scholar from what Butler has called the embarrassing accounts of identity wherein one must start any exploration of the work of a cultural other with a phrase which in my writing would be, "writing as a white, heterosexual . . ." In the shift from looking from within what I do as opposed to what I am, this writer can shed the shackles of identity politics that are mired with racist, classist, heterosexual values.

When Lynda Hart reminded participants in the 1992 Women and Theatre Program that every looking had to be a looking again, she enjoined us to remember what we had forgotten. Much feminist theory has forgotten or has refused to remember that we are not, as Wendy Wasserstein's Heidi had thought, "all in this together"—we are not all sisters. While this may seem obvious on one level, on another it problematizes the centrality of gender within feminist studies. When gender is the base of feminist inquiry, we willfully ignore the fact that the concept of gender is built on the heterosexual contract, a system of domination which preserves white supremacy. Within the terms of the heterosexual contract, the lesbian, as Marilyn Frye has pointed out, is logically impossible (159). Advocating racial, sexual, and class pluralism within gender studies simply attests to the storm that is building around the eye of privilege. In examining the wreckage in the wake of Hurricane Iniki, journalists revealed that damage would have been far less if building standards relevant to hurricane survival had been enforced. On the very same day these stories appeared, the county of Kauai announced that building codes would be waived in order to facilitate the rebuilding on the island. The irony here must not be missed by those of us who advocate feminism. Patching in cultural others through pluralism, without addressing the structural power relations of feminist inquiry centered on gender, serves only to bolster the transitory eye of the storm. And this strategy results in "add one and stir" mentality which reinscribes the privilege of those with the authority to offer inclusion.

Hurricanes result from atmospheric conditions outside of human control; the storm raging around feminist inquiry, however, is of our own making. There is obvious value to the argument in Schroeder's essay that "different versions of feminism can all offer something valuable to the study of feminist drama" (104). At the same time, it is crucial for feminism to investigate its own ideological identity. We must hear the call of Lynda Hart and others who have insisted on

refiguring feminist inquiry away from gender politics and toward the imbricated matrices of race, class, gender, and sexuality. We cannot let feminism become an abortion clinic, in the way Schroeder has described the exclusion of texts which don't adhere to various manifestations of political correctness. If we do, the pluralistic inclusion of cultural others in any feminist canon aligns us with those "right to life" counselors outside the abortion clinic. However well-intentioned our moves to include and recognize the other might be, by virtue of asserting our power to make those decisions we annihilate the other. The eye of this storm, as real as Hurricane Iniki, is incredibly dangerous.

Notes

1. It is important to note at this juncture that while Anglo-American feminism focused on women's experience and lived oppression, French feminism directs its attention along more intellectual lines with its attention to psychoanalytic notions of female subjectivity, creating the appearance of an originary distinction between (French) theory and (American) practice.

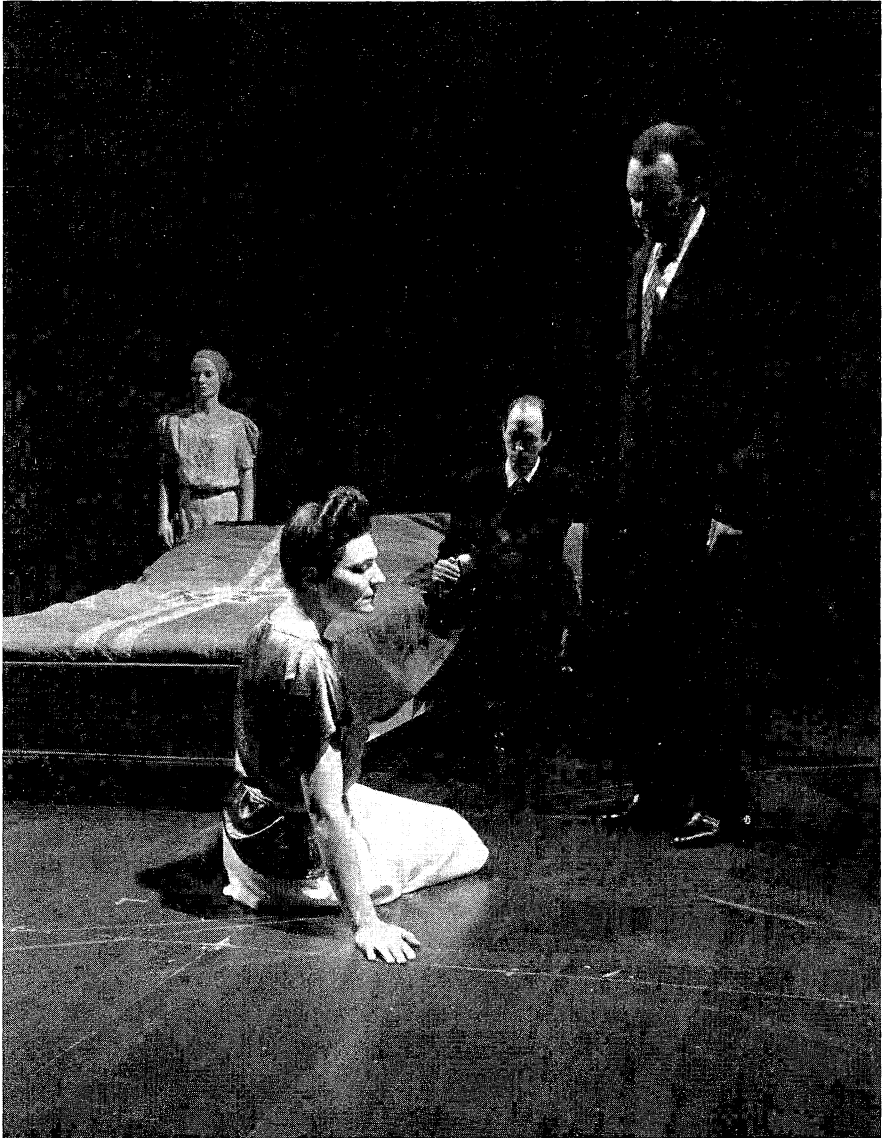
2. Published in 1975, Rubin's essay argues effectively that the incest taboo is a primarily productive prohibition that founds the subject and presupposes "a prior, less articulate taboo on homosexuality" (180). However, for a discussion of Rubin's assumptions about a discrete and prior ontological reality of sex as distinct from gender, see Judith Butler 72-75.

3. I am indebted to Susan Bennett for the concept of the tourist gaze, developed in her presentation at the 1992 Women and Theatre Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Works Cited

- Allen, Carolyn J. "Feminist Criticism and Postmodernism." *Tracing Literary Theory*. Ed. Joseph Natoli. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987.
- Belsey, Catherine. *Critical Practice*. London and New York: Methuen, 1980.
- Brody, Jennifer. "Shifting Positionalities: Hyphenated Identities in Contemporary American Culture." Unpublished conference paper presented at the 1992 Women and Theatre Program Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.
- de Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. Trans. H.M. Parshly. New York: Knopf, 1953.
- Case, Sue Ellen. *Feminism and Theatre*. New York: Methuen, 1988.
- Curb, Rosemary. "Resisting the 'Tourist Gaze' As a Means of 'Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness.'" Unpublished conference paper presented at the 1992 Women and Theatre Program Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.
- Davy, Kate. "Shifting Interrogations: A Feminist Interplay." Forthcoming in *Theatre Topics*, Spring 1993.

- Foucault, Michel. "Right of Death and Power Over Life." *The History of Sexuality, Volume I, An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage, 1980. Originally published as *Histoire de la sexualité 1: La volonté de savoir*. Paris: Gallimard, 1978.
- Frye, Marilyn. *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory*. Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1983.
- Hart, Lynda. "Canonizing Lesbian?" *Modern American Drama: The Female Canon*. Ed. June Schlueter. London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1990.
- _____. Unpublished paper delivered at the 1992 Women and Theatre Program Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.
- hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: from margin to center*. Boston: South End Press, 1984.
- Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1963.
- Kolodny, Annette. "Dancing Through the Minefield: Some Observations on the Theory, Practice, and Politics of Feminist Literary Criticism." *The New Feminist Criticism*. Ed. Elaine Showalter. New York: Pantheon, 1985.
- de Lauretis, Teresa. *Technologies of Gender*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Modleski, Tania. *Feminism Without Women: Culture and Criticism in a 'Post-Feminist' Age*. New York and London: Routledge, 1991.
- Rubin, Gail. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." Ed. Rayna R. Reiter. *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. New York: Monthly Review, 1975.
- Williams, Patricia. *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1991.



And What of the Night? by Maria Irene Fomes, Trinity Repertory Company, directed by the author.
Photo by Del Bogart.