

Invalid Representation and Despotism in the Theatre

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Within both professional theatre and the academy today, the prevailing discourse about theatrical representation is concerned with just two types of representation, what political philosopher Hanna Fenichel Pitkin calls “descriptive” and “symbolic” representation. I argue, however, that theatre also provides a third kind of representation, which it shares with government: that of acting *in lieu of*, or *on behalf of*, another person.

The word “representation” comes from *repraesentare*, Latin for “to make present or manifest or to present again,” Pitkin points out, and “representation, taken generally, means the making present *in some sense* of something which is nevertheless *not* present literally or in fact.”¹ In political discourse, according to Ward E. Y. Elliott’s article on representation in U.S. constitutional law, the word has come to mean “standing or acting in the place of another, normally because a group is too large, dispersed, or uninformed for its members to act on their own.”² Clearly, many different styles of governance meet this broad definition, not just the democratic models we tend to associate with the term, and Pitkin’s landmark study *The Concept of Representation* establishes philosophical categories that precisely chart the various types of political representation.

Pitkin’s “descriptive representation” refers to the faithful correspondence between the composition of a representative body and those it represents: a representative legislature is not given this name because it has been authorized to act for the nation, but because it “stands for” its constituents by resembling them.³ Proponents of proportional representation such as John Stuart Mill hold this view that representation requires a descriptive likeness; for them, every group must be reproduced in the legislature in proportion to its size in the state.⁴ Like descriptive representation, Pitkin’s “symbolic representation,” too, describes one entity representing another by “standing for” it, the way a head of state, while not sharing a descriptive likeness with a vast nation, can serve as a living expression of that nation’s unity. As Pitkin describes, a symbol, such as a political leader, expresses a referent, such as a nation, not because of any objective link between the two, but simply because we believe it does, and thus symbolic representation often involves “manipulating affective responses and forming habits.”⁵

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Descriptive and symbolic representation both occur in the theatre in a number of ways. In the case of the former, the dramatic characters can resemble real individuals or classes of people in the outside world, contemporary or historical, like “Soldiers” in *Hamlet*; and they can mirror actual persons in the audience, like Teddy, a professor of philosophy, in Harold Pinter’s *Homecoming*, performed at Harvard University’s American Repertory Theatre. Alternatively, in another form of descriptive representation, the actors themselves, rather than the roles they play, can share a similarity with members of the audience, as with royal attendants taking parts in Renaissance court masques and with student productions throughout the ages. And when the citizens of Athens, gathered in 458 BC at the city’s annual dramatic festival in honor of Dionysus, watched the original performance of Aeschylus’s *Oresteia* trilogy, the theatrical production as a whole served as a symbolic representation of the (ideological construct of) the unity of the polis.

Analyses of “representation” in theories of the theatre conventionally treat both descriptive and symbolic representation. We are all familiar with studies of the “representation” of women in drama, which treat the descriptive portrayal of women, or analyses of the “representation” of imperialism on the stage, which treat the symbolization of imperialism. When Herbert Blau, addressing ideological issues of theatre, writes of “those who, within the system of representation, have not been represented *as they see themselves*” (emphasis added),⁶ he refers to a lack of descriptive likeness between how people perceive themselves and how they are portrayed on stage. When Lawrence Levine asserts that the passionate, charismatic, acting style and populist views of the nineteenth-century American tragedian Edwin Forrest stimulated working-class Americans to feel that he was a “symbol” for them,⁷ he refers to a matter of symbolic representation.

Beyond both descriptive and symbolic representation, however, exists another important form of representation manifest in the political realm and the theatre alike, which most dramatic critics have failed to address explicitly. Adopting Pitkin’s conceptual categories, I call this form of representation by her term “*acting for*.”⁸ Audience members authorize the actors in their dramatic roles to experience the events of the play *on their behalf* the way members of a polis delegate the conduct of affairs of state to their representatives in the government. The conferring of the responsibility to take action entailed in vicarious, projective experience constitutes the heart of the theatrical enterprise, just as the conferring of the authority to govern constitutes the basis of the state, according to traditional Western political philosophy.⁹

Political thinkers, from Plato to Hobbes and Rousseau to Hannah Arendt, perceive structural similarities between representation in the theatre and

representation in government. Rousseau, for example, equally opposes the playgoer's practice of watching actors perform noble deeds on stage and the citizen's practice of sending legislators to vote at a national assembly: in both cases, he deplores the abdication of the delegator and the abnegation of the representor that he sees as inherent in the act of representation itself.¹⁰ And this kinship between government and stage, so evident to political philosophers, is also visible from the opposite vantage point, from the perspective of those working within theatre and observing the political world. Numerous playwrights in the western tradition, from Aeschylus and Aristophanes to Genet and Müller, elaborate the resemblances between *acting for* in theatre and *acting for* in government.

In Jean Genet's *The Blacks*, for instance, Archibald, the chief spokesman for the group of blacks testifying about a murder to "the Court," announces to the spectators:

This evening we shall perform for you. But, in order that you may remain comfortably settled in your seats in the presence of the drama that is already unfolding here, in order that you be assured that there is no danger of such a drama's worming its way into your precious lives, we shall even have the decency—a decency learned from you—to make communication impossible. We shall increase the distance that separates us—a distance that is basic—by our pomp, our manners, our insolence—for we are also actors.¹¹

The audience, or *delegators*, will stay safely seated, delegating the enactment of what the words "danger" and "worming" suggest is an unpleasant story, to the actors, or *representatives*, who take the stage and unfold the drama *in their stead*. In the same way, members of the polis may remain safely in the private sector while their political representatives manage public affairs *in lieu of* them.

The processes of theatre, however, do not always operate as we expect them to. In the theatre as in the state, individuals are driven by a host of competing motives, by short-term as well as long-term interests, by irrational urges as well as rational calculations. Rulers abuse their power or fail to provide what their citizens have a right to expect; citizens exhibit lawless behavior or are unwilling or unable to delegate authority to their rulers. Here I wish to attend to instances in government and on stage when *acting for* cannot or does not occur, examples of flawed and invalid representation and outright despotism on the part of the theatrical performance, as well as failures of delegation on the part of the theatre audience.¹²

I begin with a problem of theatrical *acting for* that has previously been approached only as a problem of “*standing for*” (to use Pitken’s term for both descriptive and symbolic representation). Solving this problem, I contend, requires understanding the function of the stage as action *on our behalf* or *in our stead* (*acting for*), rather than simply as depiction or symbolization (*standing for*). In his study *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms*, Bert O. States considers a set of stage entities that pose problems of descriptive representation in theatre. He begins with Walter Benjamin’s example in “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” of the working clock: “A clock that is working will always be a disturbance on the stage.”¹³ By “disturbance,” Benjamin means a challenge to the illusion of the stage, to the audience’s ignoring, or even forgetting for periods of time, that they are watching a play rather than real life. Disagreeing with Benjamin that the disruption is caused by real time’s contradiction of stage time, States proposes that it is due to a clock’s being an entity “that is visibly obeying its own laws of behavior,”¹⁴ and he groups fire, running water, children, and dogs in the same category of phenomena. Children, for example, create disquiet because “they are conspicuously *not* identical with their characters,” States professes;¹⁵ children are obviously themselves and not mere descriptive likenesses of their roles. For all the items in his set of representational disturbances, States posits the following explanation:

We arrive, inevitably, at something like a law of complementarity: to the extent that something on stage arouses awareness of its external (or workaday) significations, its internal (or illusionary) signification is reduced.¹⁶

States holds that if a stage entity trumpets its real-world identity too loudly, the audience cannot concentrate upon its dramatic identity, upon what it is intended to *stand for*.

Although States considers children part of his group of problematic signifiers, “infants and toddlers” would be a more consistently accurate term here than “children,” for many skilled young actors can project a dramatic identity effectively. We may wonder at an evening performance if the child actors are out past their bedtimes, but no more than we might wonder at a Sunday matinée if the adult actors will find it tedious to perform again that night. With an infant or toddler, on the other hand, we are indeed preoccupied with its “external significations,” its state of infancy: we wait for it to cry, wet its clothes, and the like. That aside, States’s “law of complementarity” is quite right as far as it goes: it explains well the limits on the capacity for *standing for* of properties and persons on stage such as a fountain of running water or a baby. States, however,

makes some additional observations about the sentient beings in his group, children and dogs, that indicate the presence of a “disturbance” that the attributes of descriptive representation alone cannot fully explain. The stage items States isolates pose problems not only for signification, but also for the interactions of *acting for*.

States notes that we wonder of the child actors playing in *Medea*, “Do they *understand* the play?,” and that with the stage animal “[t]here is always the fact that it doesn’t know it is in a play . . .”¹⁷ Both comments relate to the intellectual awareness of the actor, a primary factor in the process of *acting for* other people, whether for spectators or for political constituents. Hobbes affirms an infant’s or mentally-impaired adult’s lack of capacity to *act for* others, stating that “it is an inconvenience in monarchy, that the sovereignty may descend upon an infant, or one that cannot discern between good and evil”; in such cases, Hobbes observes, a protectorate must be established.¹⁸ A. Phillips Griffiths, too, notes in his essay “How Can One Person Represent Another?” that “we should not allow lunatics to be represented by lunatics. . . . because this is not a good way, indeed is not any way of ensuring that the interests of lunatics are represented”¹⁹; lunatics do not have the ability to act *in the interest of* other persons, even other lunatics. Of course the activities delegated to an actor are quite different from those delegated to a monarch, and an infant actor may fulfill the responsibilities of his or her position to an extent an infant monarch could never achieve. Nevertheless, the lack of rational consciousness that prevents a baby or an insane person from functioning as a legal or political representative also problematizes their functioning as a theatrical representative, as Peter Weiss suggests in his drama *Marat/Sade*.

Weiss’s play, officially titled *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade*, depicts a theatrical performance in a mental home staged by the patients for an audience of aristocrats. During the performance of the play-within-the-play, a number of the inmate-actors fail as representatives because they persist in acting *on behalf of* themselves rather than for others. The inmate playing the part of Duperret, for example, is an “erotomaniac,”²⁰ and refuses to stop the genuine molestation of the actress who plays his lover. At one point, the stage directions tell us, “Duperret *approaches* Corday, *pawing her furtively*. *The Herald raps him on the hand with his staff*” (20). Against all direction to the contrary, the erotomaniac insists upon furthering his private sexual interests rather than taking the public, dramatic actions his part calls for. Disrupting the story line of the play-within-the-play, Duperret fails to act *in the interests of* the director de Sade’s audience—that is, the audience’s interest in *having* performed for them the play they came to see.

Of course, others of the patients, who do not appear to be insane at all, quite consciously insist upon forsaking their dramatic roles in order to voice their own interests, such as those who chant “Who keeps us prisoner/ Who locks us in/ We’re normal and we want our freedom” (27). As Una Chaudhuri remarks, “they begin to challenge the ideological structure within which their alleged lunacy is established.”²¹ Here Weiss depicts a conscious refusal, rather than an incapacity, to *act for* those who serve as jailors.

Concurrent with these failures of theatrical *acting for* is a failure of political representation, *Marat/Sade* shows us. Marat’s assassination in the play-within-the-play occurs in 1793, “Four years after the Revolution/ and the old king’s execution” (22); the performance of that play by the inmates of the asylum of Charenton takes place in 1808 when Napoleon Bonaparte is emperor. In the 1793 inner time frame, the sovereign has been deposed in an initial breakdown of political representation, and the revolutionary leaders who are now governing France do not appear to be acting *in the interests of* the people any more than the king did. As the characters of the “Four Singers” report in song, “We’ve got new generals our leaders are new/ They sit and argue and all that they do/ is sell their own colleagues and ride on their backs/ and jail them and break them or give them all the axe” (25). The leaders willfully refuse to provide proper representation for the people of France. In the 1808 outer time frame, the new sovereign delivers the same old war and poverty:

. . . he has promised us peace eternal
and gives us work in the arsenal
and in honour of the revolution
he calls himself emperor Napoleon
It is we can tell you a feast for the eye
and with rumbling bellies we watch it go by . . . (144)

Napoleon’s use of spectacle, “a feast for the eye,” fails to satisfy the physical hunger of his people. As Griffiths proposes, “it is only correct to *call* [acting on the principal’s behalf] representation, and not gift, abdication, etc., if it is presupposed that to act properly the representative must consider the principal’s interests”²²; in the terms of the play-within-the-play, the constituents’ interests are the social welfare of the common people of France, and both Robespierre and his cohorts and Napoleon Bonaparte do a poor job of considering those interests.

In *Marat/Sade*, Weiss makes a choice to portray this inadequate political representation through the medium of a play staged in a mental asylum. For his critique of Napoleon’s rule, the dramatist could have chosen to depict a burgher at home with his family or villagers trading in a marketplace; rather than a

familial or a commercial metaphor for government, however, he selects a theatrical metaphor, and, furthermore, he selects mentally imbalanced protagonists. This choice exposes both the structural affinity between theatre and politics and the flawed nature of the theatrical representation provided by those who lack the requisite level of perspicacity.

States is right that the workaday signification of certain actors, say infants and dogs, overwhelms their illusionary signification by impairing their capacity for descriptive representation. Something else States notes about infants and dogs, however,—their lack of consciousness that they are acting in a play—also disrupts their ability to *act for*; as we see in *Marat/Sade*, those who lack this consciousness act for themselves and cannot consistently *act for* an audience. Actors regularly performed drunk during the 1974 season of the Theater am Turm (TAT) in Frankfurt, and they were wont to abandon the stage entirely in favor of fighting each other in the aisles.²³ The TAT actors' awareness that they were in a play was no doubt impaired by their inebriation, and they failed to *act for* their spectators. Similarly, during Peter Brook's production of *Marat/Sade* itself, in London in 1964, the inmates' riot at the end of the play was performed so rigorously that sometimes actors were knocked unconscious²⁴; after that, the actors could not be said to be acting at all. We can still delegate the authority to act *in our stead* to the dramatic characters whom the mentally-incapacitated adult and the infant and the dog portray, but the simultaneous delegation to the actors themselves is not possible here. Actors who lack rational consciousness cannot properly fulfill the conditions of theatrical *acting for*.

The prime concern of this study is, of course, certain instances of human interaction, whether in the theatre or the state. Our inquiry into delegation and representation by persons may, nevertheless, help to illuminate the problematic representation of States's insentient stage entities. The props States analyzes—a working clock, fire, and running water—are all moving by themselves. Of course no object can know that it is in a play, but these moving objects advertise their ignorance by innocently carrying on with their customary, private activity. We do not feel that these props, so obviously acting by and for themselves, are undertaking public action, *acting for* us, and thus our political relationship with the stage is disturbed. I can imagine objects of great workaday signification that can move, but cannot move independently, such as a bicycle, and thus do not similarly advertise their lack of dramatic awareness. The bicycle may emphasize its external signification, for example, its condition of being a brand new twenty-four-speed Specialized Stumpjumper, to the detriment of its illusionary signification as a battered three-speed Raleigh, but leaning against a wall or ridden across the stage by an actor, the bicycle is an integral part of the performance: it acts only for us, the spectators, rather than by, and thus apparently for, itself.

States, then, has arrived at a set of stage entities that create particular uneasiness in the theatre because they threaten *two* kinds of theatrical representation, both *standing for* and *acting for*, although his own explicit formulation extends only to the problem with the former.

Just as individuals who lack rational consciousness cannot fulfill the conditions of theatrical *acting for* as representatives, neither can they be full-fledged delegators. Hobbes asserts that “children, fools, and madmen that have no use of reason, may be personated by guardians, or curators; but can be no authors, during that time, of any action done by them . . .”²⁵ As Hobbes sees it, a guardian may be appointed by a third person (“he that hath right of governing them”) to act *on behalf of* someone without sufficient acuity to act in the legal world, such as a child, but the actions of the guardian cannot be ascribed to the child, because the child lacks the consciousness necessary to undertake the act of legal delegation. The child-guardian relationship clearly departs from Hobbes’s model of political representation, according to which the people are

. . . authors, of every thing their representative saith, or doth in their name; every man giving their common representative, authority from himself in particular; and owning all the actions the representer doth . . .²⁶

In the case of political representation, the actions of the representative are indeed attributed to the people represented; or, as Griffiths more precisely phrases it, the principals “may be regarded as being committed to the consequences of acts” performed by their representatives.²⁷ Hobbes rightly observes that this cannot be true of “children, fools, and madmen”—although I will again add the caveat that we will substitute “infants and toddlers” for “children” so as to avoid the case of the particularly acute child. The polis does not consider infants or mentally incapacitated adults fully bound by legislation passed by their political representatives: ordinarily, for example, their legal transgressions may earn them institutionalization, but not criminal liability. Since infants and mentally incapacitated adults are not committed to the consequences of their representatives’ actions, they cannot be full delegators in the process of political representation. Neither, we might add, can dogs, for the same reason, although dogs may have human guardians.

Acknowledging the substantive differences between undertaking an act of legal delegation and going to see a play, we must allow that an audience composed of toddlers, or severely mentally-impaired adults, could have a satisfying experience at the theatre. On the other hand, we can envision such an audience, whose members enjoy the entertainment offered by the sights and sounds

of the performance, but who are not intellectually aware enough to delegate authority to the stage. Toddlers and unaware adults are unlikely to give up their own vocalization and physical movement in favor of the speech and action on the stage; they lack the consciousness to commission the actors and dramatic characters to *act for* them. In *Marat/Sade*, for instance, the inmates who are not themselves on stage are unable to participate as spectators. Instead, “*Any not required in the play devote themselves to physical exercises. . . . They make habitual movements, turn in circles, hop, mutter to themselves, wail, scream and so on*” (11). The mental patients lack the capacity to delegate action and speech to the performers; unaware that the performers could act *on their behalf*, they do not even follow the events on stage consistently.

In Weiss’s play, the lack of rational consciousness among the parties involved imposes limits on representation and delegation such that the acts of the representative cannot be ascribed to the so-called delegator. In other words, when Duperret paws Corday, his fellow patients in the audience cannot be said to have pawed her vicariously, both because Duperret is behaving privately rather than *on behalf of* his audience and because the other inmates who are not themselves actors do not have sufficient perspicuity to undertake a vicarious, projective experience. In a more extreme case, the acts of the representative cannot be attributed to the delegating party because the latter ceases to exist at all. An actor’s soliloquy in the third scene of a play, for instance, cannot be attributed to the play’s spectators if they all walked out of the theatre during the second scene. If we switch from the theatre to political history this outcome is clear. In 1989 when there were no longer any residents of East Germany, for example, because the inhabitants of that region had all become residents of a united Germany, the government of the former East Germany lost its legitimacy. The men and women who formerly *acted for* the people of East Germany now acted only for themselves. The demise of the delegating party provokes a crisis in the dynamic of representation, as *The Task* by Heiner Müller, anticipating the fall of his nation’s government by a decade, makes clear.

Examining Müller’s pronouncements about theatre in the dramatist’s interviews and essays, Robert Weimann writes that “[w]hat Müller has in mind is, literally, a strategic refusal to authorize meaning, to preclude representations in which material and idea, signifier and signified, are brought together meaningfully at all.”²⁸ Weimann may be right that it is Müller’s intent to disrupt the relation of “signifier and signified” in the theatre, and hence the operation of *standing for*. However, in *The Task* he goes a step further and disrupts the relationship between delegator and representative, in other words, the operation of *acting for*. Indeed, Müller’s play is one of the most thorough explorations of *acting for* in contemporary drama and merits an extended analysis.

The play opens with a depiction of political history. The audience quickly learns that after sending three emissaries to Jamaica to incite a slave revolt there, the Assembly of the post-revolutionary Republic of France has been terminated. The emissaries eventually discover this by letter:

DEBUISSON *hands Galloudec a piece of paper. Galloudec and Sasportas read.* The government which gave us the task to organize a rebellion of the slaves here in Jamaica isn't in office anymore. The General Bonaparte has dissolved the Directorate with the bayonets of his grenadiers. France is called Napoleon.²⁹

In a two-step political transaction, the people of France delegated sovereignty to the Assembly, and the Assembly then delegated a specific political function, the incitement of a slave rebellion, to a representative body composed of Debuissou, Galloudec, and Sasportas. Now, however, the Assembly no longer possesses governing authority; hence, it cannot delegate powers to agents. In a third-step act of delegation, the emissaries commission yet another party, a sailor, to track down a member of the former Assembly for them, a man named Antoine. The sailor succeeds in locating Antoine: "I am the Antoine you've been looking for. . . . I was there when the people stormed the Bastille. I was there when the head of the last of the Bourbons dropped into the basket" (86), the ex-Assemblyman confesses. Nevertheless, Antoine denies all knowledge of the Jamaican mission, maintaining, "I don't know of any task. I don't assign tasks, I don't have the power" (86). The erstwhile delegator, now powerless, repudiates his act of delegation.

As Rousseau points out, a citizen's "private interest may speak to him quite differently from the common interest,"³⁰ and the play emphasizes from the first that the three agents believe they are acting on behalf of the Assembly and not in their own interests. Debuissou is the heir apparent to his family's huge slave plantation in Jamaica, so he will suffer tremendous financial loss if the slaves win their freedom; Galloudec says he has "learned to hate the Revolution in the bloody rains of the Guillotine" and is "a loyal servant to his gracious lord Debuissou who believes in the holy order of monarchy and church" (89), positions unlikely to be compatible with a slave revolt; and Sasportas, a former slave, declares: "Fleeing the successful black revolution in Haiti, I attached myself to Master Debuissou since God has created me for slavery" (89), an ironic statement that nevertheless indicates that Sasportas is ambivalent about his mission in Jamaica. All three men put aside their personal interests or feelings in order to *act for* the body that they represent; all face a crisis when the delegating party ceases to exist.

Debuisson responds to the news by ripping up the letter and announcing, "I free us of our task" (96); his position is that the absence of the delegator erases the representative's responsibility. Boasting, "I laugh at the nigger who wants to wash himself white with Liberty. I laugh at the peasant who struts about in the mask of Equality. . . . I want my piece of the cake of the world" (99), he renounces the interests he has undertaken on behalf of the Assembly (freeing Jamaican blacks from slavery) and turns back to his own interests (his "piece of the cake" in the form of a wealthy plantation). Galloudec, however, takes the opposite stand:

I have risked my neck for a year and more now, preached till my tongue was shredded during secret meetings, smuggled arms through cordons of bloodhounds, sharks, and informers . . . and all that for this lazy mass of black flesh that won't move except when kicked by the boot, and what business of mine is the slavery in Jamaica, anyway, I'm a Frenchman after all—Wait, Sasportas—but I want to turn black on the spot if I understand why all that shouldn't be true anymore and cancelled and no task for nothing anymore, because in Paris a general is getting cocky. (97)

While reaffirming his lack of a personal stake in the cause of the Jamaican slaves ("what business of mine"), Galloudec resists the notion that his mission is void ("no task for nothing anymore") just because the delegator has been eliminated. While Dubuisson holds that a representative's fidelity is to the delegating party alone, Galloudec believes that a representative owes fidelity to the delegated function itself, as does Sasportas, who protests "What's a general's coup in Paris got to do with our task, the liberation of slaves in Jamaica" (97). In the absence of the delegator, the representative body in Müller's play is unsure of its function, divided amongst itself as to its proper course of action. (And in a parallel episode of *The Task* that mirrors the principal plot, a twentieth-century office worker experiences a crisis regarding his own task when his boss, the delegator, commits suicide.) Like actors abandoned by their audience, the emissaries are at a loss.

The uncertainty regarding the delegated function in *The Task* may be due to an even deeper problem than the dissolution of the delegating party, however. The emissaries, as we discovered above, are acting on behalf of the French Assembly, not *on behalf of* the slaves themselves. The British Crown, which rules Jamaica, has certainly not commissioned revolutionary activities, but neither have the Jamaicans themselves. Using theatre as an analogy for the political situation, *The Task*, we shall see, hints that the function the Assembly has delegated, the

stirring up of a rebellion amongst people who are not its constituents against the sovereign of a foreign polis, is not within the Assembly's power to delegate. The representatives' task is illegitimate even before the demise of the delegating body.

Galloudec, Sasportas, and Debuissou are not only political representatives, they are also actors. Müller presents the three in an overtly theatrical manner. Following a racial argument among the representatives upon their arrival in Jamaica, for instance, Debuissou says, "That was a bad beginning. Let's put on our masks" (88), referring to a classic symbol of theatre; moments later, he accuses Galloudec of "act[ing] twice out of character" (89), using the language of dramatic performance. Galloudec in turn remarks, "It shouldn't be hard for you to play the slave, Sasportas, in your black skin" (89), employing the same theatrical terminology. And later in the scene the emissaries become actors in a play-within-the-play, as "*Debuissou Galloudec Sasportas are undressed by slaves and bedecked with costumes. Debuissou as Slaveholder, Galloudec as Overseer with his whip, Sasportas as Slave*" (90).

The slaves draft the agents into acting roles in this performance called the "Theatre of the Revolution." They do not, however, then sit back and assume the function of audience; instead, they manipulate the three representatives throughout. At various moments in the inset play, according to the stage directions, "*Slaves as dogs chase Debuissou*" (91), "*Slaves strike the Dantonhead off Galloudec's shoulders, chuck it to each other*" (92), and "*Slaves drag [Debuissou] from the throne and put Sasportas on it, Galloudec as footstool*" (93). With the play-within-the-play, the slaves stage their own revolution: in terms of plot, the Slaveholder played by Debuissou is dethroned in favor of the Slave played by Sasportas; in terms of theatrical structure, no one is a passive audience—rather, everyone participates in the dramatic action; and in terms of offstage politics, slaves use free men for their own devices. In the "Theatre of the Revolution," the slaves refuse to delegate power to the three emissaries, just as politically, they have not delegated the authority to organize an uprising to the three men, who instead *act for* the French Assembly.

"Since no man has natural authority over any other, and since force creates no right," Rousseau explains, "we can only conclude that agreements are the basis of all legitimate authority among men."³¹ Failing to seek the mandate of the Jamaicans themselves, the emissaries lack legitimate authority to act on their behalf, however worthy the abolition of slavery may be. The three protagonists of Müller's play fail to perform a legitimate act of representation because the delegating party (the French Assembly) is defunct, but also because, even when the delegating party existed, it lacked the right (to incite a slave rebellion in Jamaica) that it tried to delegate. Representation is illegitimate, *The Task* suggests, due to non-possession by the would-be delegator of the power to perform a certain act.

“If a principal has an act ascribed to him or is regarded as being committed to the normative consequences of an act on the basis of an act of his representative,” Griffiths tells us, “then the principal must already have the right to do or avoid doing the act so ascribed to him.”³² In other words, if I delegate an *individual* illegal act such as a murder, then of course I am responsible for it. On the other hand, if I delegate a *category* of action, such as all my national policy-making or all my acting on stage, then I am not responsible if my representative commits a specific illegal act within that category. I am not committed to the consequences if my representative the U.S. senator passes a law establishing a state religion or if my representative the actor robs a spectator at gunpoint. Because those deeds violate constitutional or statutory law, I do not possess the right to do them. And, because I do not possess the right to do them, I cannot delegate that right to someone else.

When a number of characters expire at the end of Genet’s *The Blacks*, they can be said to die for us, the audience—that is, to *act for* us when they die—because the deaths occur only within the dramatic fiction. Legal limits on artistic expression vary among Western societies, most of which set restrictions on whatever they define as defamatory, obscene, or likely to incite violence. However, no Western society outlaws the portrayal of death per se (that is, death that is not also defamatory, or obscene, or likely to incite violence) in fiction. Since we, the audience, have the right to depict murder and suicide in art or fiction, then any murder or suicide on the part of our representatives within the dramatic fiction can legitimately be attributed to us, the delegators. The death scene in Philip Massinger’s Renaissance drama *The Roman Actor*, by contrast, portrays a murder that cannot be attributed to its audience and thus is invalid as theatrical representation.

Some of the best analyses of failures of representation and delegation (like some of the best analyses of successful representation and delegation) occur precisely in works written for the stage. Like *Marat/Sade* and *The Task*, *The Roman Actor* examines lapses in representation and delegation both in politics and in theatre and does so in part by means of a play-within-the-play. Massinger’s Caesar employs genuine theatre—drama written for the stage—as a means of government. Twice he resorts to rule-by-theatre, commissioning the staging of a particular play and enforcing the attendance of certain spectators. The emperor uses theatre in the two performances to conduct two roles of government, respectively: in *The Cure of Avarice*, the education of a citizen, the miser Philargus; and in *The False Servant*, the execution of a criminal, the would-be-adulterous Paris. Here, then, we have theatre (*The Roman Actor*) about a political representative (Caesar) who employs theatre (*The Cure of Avarice* and *The Roman Actor*) as a method of political governance. Fusing political governance and

theatrical production, Caesar's manipulations emphasize the rich correspondence between the two even as they violate the limits of both.

Caesar, prior to a truly "command" performance of *The False Servant*, tells Aesopus, who played the part of the jealous husband in previous productions,

Thou didst not
Do it to the life. We can perform it better.
Off with my robe and wreath; since Nero scorned not
The public theater, we in private may
Disport ourselves.³³

Caesar takes the role himself and does it "to the life," genuinely stabbing Paris, who is acting the part of the adulterous servant. (For Caesar's on-stage audience, Aesopus and Latinus, Paris's death is real, even if for Massinger's real-life audience it is only an event within the illusionary story.) The emperor tells the expiring Paris, "as thou didst live/ Rome's bravest actor, 'twas my plot that thou/ Shouldst die in action . . ." (4.2.296-98), and die Paris does.

Caesar exceeds the limits of theatrical representation by killing a player rather than just a character; his violation is revealed by the immediate disintegration of the performance. Stabbing his fellow actor, the emperor says, "I should talk now,/ But I have forgot my part" (4.2.281-82); Paris understandably abandons his dramatic role to cry "Oh! I am slain in earnest" (4.2.283); and whatever concluding sequences the script of *The False Servant* may contain are precluded as the enactment ends abruptly, with Caesar hypocritically delivering a eulogy for his victim.

In part, Caesar's murder of Paris breaks the bounds of theatrical representation because the action is equivalent in nature to States's set of persons and props with such strong workaday signification that they overpower their illusionary signification—clocks, dogs, infants, fire, and running water. Latinus and Aesopus can hardly concentrate upon the death throes of the fictional adulterous servant when confronted with Paris's genuinely bleeding wound: acts of bodily harm overwhelm the descriptive representation of theatre. Indeed, the two men abandon their function as spectators and proceed to gather up the body of their murdered comrade. But when Caesar as actor slays Paris, he also violates the tenets of theatrical *acting for*, just as Caesar as emperor repeatedly breaks the law of Rome, despising "[m]onarchs that dare not do unlawful things" (1.2.85) as he says through "his instrument" Parthenius (1.2.71).

Although the dramatic characters of a play have the right to perform an enormous set of acts (within legal restraints on artistic expression, as noted above) including to murder or to die, the actors have authority to undertake only the more

limited range of acts that the audience can delegate to actual persons in the real world; murdering a man is not one of these acts. Speaking of the polis, Locke states in his *Treatise of Civil Government*, “nobody can transfer to another more power than he has in himself; and nobody has an absolute arbitrary power over himself, or over any other to destroy his own life, or take away the life or property of another.”³⁴ Different communities define murder differently, of course, but every instance of theatre, existing as it must within some particular state, is subject to that state’s laws regarding the taking of human life. Constrained by those laws—and Massinger makes clear Caesar’s disregard for those of Rome—playgoers can no more authorize acts of real murder on stage than they can authorize an actor to kill the audience.

When Henry stabs Belcredi at the end of Pirandello’s *Henry IV*, his onlookers become convinced that he cannot be acting, pretending to be a crazy man who believes he is the medieval German king Henry IV, but must be actually crazy. (The “onlookers” to which I refer are Henry’s on-stage observers, dramatic characters themselves; for Pirandello’s real-life audience, of course, Henry is from first to last a dramatic character played by an actor.) As Eric Bentley explains, “How can the jealous rival prove he is not joking, not play-acting? By using a real sword and producing a real death.”³⁵ “He’s mad, mad,” Donna Matilda cries,³⁶ for genuine murder can never be a theatrical act. When Caesar kills a man in “actuality” within Massinger’s fictional drama, he ceases to act for any audience and acts only for himself. In a discussion of covenants, Hobbes observes, “as when the authority is evident, the covenant obligeth the author, not the actor; so when the authority is feigned, it obligeth the actor only; there being no author but himself.”³⁷ In a similar way, surely Paris’s death at Caesar’s hands cannot be ascribed back to an audience; the illegitimacy of Caesar’s act forces the dissolution of the play-within-the-play.

To the best of my knowledge, an actor has never committed a genuine murder on stage in the history of Western theatre. Even the widespread conviction that the makers of some pornographic movies torture their female leads to death on film is unsupported by the available facts. Many people believe that the 1976 movie *Snuff* includes footage of the genuine torture and murder of a woman by a fellow actor in a film studio, but in fact it does not.³⁸ While the movie’s promoters capitalized on the rumors, *Snuff* contains a simulated slaying, not a real one, Avedon Carol explains. The actress in question has given interviews to prove her continued existence—the persisting rumors are simply more persuasive than the truth.³⁹ However nicely such a movie would fit into our discussion of murder on stage, it is reassuring to learn that reprehensible films of this sort probably do not exist: by 1993, “no ‘snuff’ movie (i.e., where actors are actually killed) has been

discovered by police anywhere in the world,” according to feminist critic Nettie Pollard.⁴⁰

One of the most notorious murders in theatre history, however, that of Abraham Lincoln at Ford’s Theatre in Washington in 1865, does come very close to being an onstage murder committed by a performing actor. The actor John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln’s assassin, was not part of the cast for the evening’s fare, *Our American Cousin* by Tom Taylor, although he had acted in the play several years earlier.⁴¹ But, he did jump down onto the stage from the President’s box after shooting Lincoln. After landing onstage, Booth delivered a performance of his own, brandishing a knife and roaring, “Sic semper tyrannis!” and “The South is avenged!,” historian Gene Smith relates.⁴² The audience mistook both the gunshot and Booth’s unexpected entrance for part of the farce, according to Smith, which is hardly surprising given that a handsome, well-known actor had taken the stage and was behaving in melodramatic fashion. Booth fled the stage, and still the spectators waited for the play to resume.⁴³ When guests in the Presidential box began to yell “Stop that man!,” Smith reports, “[s]ome spectators hesitantly stood up, and those behind them who thought it was all part of the play called, ‘Sit down!’ and ‘Down in front!’”⁴⁴

Even one of *Our American Cousin*’s actors, backstage at the time, mistook the detonation of Booth’s gun for some new piece of stage business just added to the production. However, the actor who was at that moment legitimately onstage, Harry Hawk, recognized Booth and ran after him. Like Hawk, the actress Laura Keane abandoned her dramatic role upon Booth’s invasion of the performance. Keane, who had been waiting in the wings to make her entrance, now walked onto the stage out of character and asked the occupants of the President’s box what the matter was.⁴⁵

The audience’s misunderstanding of Booth’s deadly performance ended abruptly as someone near the President replied that Lincoln had been shot, and Mary Lincoln began to scream horribly. Spectators shrieked and rushed toward the front of the theatre, smashing the orchestra’s equipment on their way; a mob mounted the stage and ran around in a directionless frenzy, according to Smith’s vivid account.⁴⁶ The actress Helen Trueman, part of the cast that evening, later described the horror she witnessed: “Mrs. Lincoln’s screams turned the house into an inferno of noise. There will never be anything like it on earth. The shouts, groans, curses, smashing of seats, screams of women, cries of terror, created a pandemonium.”⁴⁷ With the knowledge that the gunshot they had heard in the theatre had been that of a real bullet wounding a real man, *Our American Cousin*’s audience cut short its conventional relationship with the stage, abandoning sitting quietly in favor of rushing around and yelling.

In its horror and rage, the crowd shouted not only “Kill him!,” presumably referring to Booth, but also “Burn the theatre!”⁴⁸ As observed above, although dramatic characters may undertake an enormous range of acts on behalf of playgoers, actors themselves may not murder within the theatre anymore than they may outside it. Even if Booth had been legitimately performing in the play that evening and had assassinated Lincoln onstage, his deed (morally abominable under any circumstances, of course) would have violated the laws of the theatre just as it violated the laws of the state. Ford’s Theatre was not burned, but it was shut down for a century following the assassination, as if within Ford’s walls the theatrical contract had been so badly damaged it could not be quickly repaired.

Not only murder, but all acts of genuine physical wounding within a theatrical performance break the terms of the theatrical compact. Such acts falls outside the spectrum of deeds that the audience can delegate to persons in the real world, and thus these acts cannot be delegated to actors. When a collaborator of performance artist Chris Burden shot Burden in the shoulder in a piece called *Shoot*,⁴⁹ the performance certainly was not theatre. Burden’s associate was not acting for the members of *Shoot*’s audience; lacking the right to shoot Burden themselves, the spectators could not delegate it to an actor. Similarly, “the shedding of real blood and the breaking of real teeth,” which were sometimes incurred by the actors in Brook’s 1964 production of *Marat/Sade* during the inmate-riot scene,⁵⁰ could not be ascribed back to the playgoers and thus violated the compact between stage and audience.

Massinger’s Caesar not only abrogates the theatrical compact with his own audience by shedding Paris’s “real” blood, but also violates the social contract with the citizens of Rome by encroaching upon the senate. Both in his dual office of stage manager and actor and in his position as emperor, Caesar turns his every whim into law: “When power puts in its plea the laws are silenced,” Parthenius explains (1.2.44). Caesar coerces his fellow players and the senate alike into supporting roles: a dissenting senator complains, “The flattering senate/ Decrees him divine honors” (1.2.110-11). In Locke’s view, such behavior clearly transgresses the social contract, the implicit agreement between citizens and government whereby the former agree to obey the laws of the polis in return for protection by the latter:

the supreme executor, who having a double trust put in him, both to have a part in the legislative and the supreme execution of the law, acts against both when he goes about to set up his own arbitrary will as the law of society. He acts also contrary to his trust when he . . . employs the force, treasure, and offices of

the society, to corrupt the representatives and gain them to his purposes . . .⁵¹

Locke holds that when the sovereign executive forsakes his side of the contract, holding himself above the existing laws of society, this is “effectually to dissolve the government,”⁵² and Rousseau concurs. For Locke, the violation by the prince lies in the abuse of his sovereignty, or supreme power, while for Rousseau, who locates sovereignty with the people and not their rulers, the violation lies in the usurpation of the sovereign power, but the latter agrees that “when the prince no longer administers the state in accordance with the law,” it causes the “dissolution of the state.”⁵³ By the standards of the social contract theory of Locke and Rousseau, Caesar’s behavior is defined as despotism, and that despotism effectively dissolves the political transactions of both Rome and the performance of *The False Servant*.

While Caesar violates his responsibility towards the spectators of a play-within-a-play, Peter Handke’s twentieth-century drama *Offending the Audience* flirts with tyrannizing Handke’s own real-life audience. The actors announce to the audience that they will not perform any of the traditional functions of theatrical representation for them: “You will see no spectacle./ Your curiosity will not be satisfied. . . . You are sharing no experience.”⁵⁴ In addition to the famous insulting of the playgoers (“You were a sight to have seen, you ass-kissers. . . . you small-timers. . . . You educated gasbags” [29-32]), the performance issues edicts to the audience that overstep the laws of theatre:

Don’t blink. Don’t salivate. Don’t bat your eyelashes. Don’t inhale. Don’t exhale. Don’t shift in your seat. Don’t listen to us. Don’t smell. Don’t swallow. Hold your breath. (21)

These commands infringe upon various small-scale but biologically crucial physical freedoms; they infringe upon the right to private acts which spectators retain even as they delegate authority for public speech and action to their representatives on stage. Many spectators may perceive these orders as just an illusion; for them, *Offending the Audience* is theatre despite its putative attempts not to be. But if a production of Handke’s play ever convinced an audience that it must try to stop blinking, salivating, breathing, that production would truly succeed in abrogating the theatrical contract through behavior which, due to the properties it shares with political despotism, I will term “despotic.”

When Brook brought his production of *Marat/Sade* to New York’s Martin Beck Theatre, audience members occasionally did experience impaired physical functioning. David Richard Jones reports that “spectators became ill, and at least

one spectator, the German actress Ruth Yorick, died in the auditorium during a performance."⁵⁵ While we cannot attribute every theatregoer's fainting, illness, or death to despotic behavior on the part of whatever performance that theatregoer is attending when stricken, Brook's *Marat/Sade* certainly bombarded its audience with horrific images in Artaudian style, attempting "to make contact with the madhouse that is the world," in Jones's words.⁵⁶ At the end of the final scene of Brook's *Marat/Sade*, that of the inmates' riot, "the massed lunatics, wildly singing, begin a menacing procession toward the audience," according to Charles Marowitz⁵⁷—surely an effort to terrify the spectators, if not a deliberate attempt to violate their bodily freedoms.

In government, a representative becomes a despot not only by violating certain protected freedoms of the people, but also by encroaching upon the authority or liberty of other representatives. Massinger's Caesar, who coerces the senators of Rome into exempting their emperor from the law and who executes two who dissent (Junius Rusticus and Palphurius Sura), behaves despotically. In theatre, the analogous phenomenon is the behavior of a director who pressures actors into aversive or illegal actions and who beats them when they refuse, thus infringing upon the liberty of other representatives. Theatre and film directors often have reputations as tyrants, and directors frequently persuade actors to suffer emotionally or physically for art's sake. A number of actors under the direction of German theatre and film artist Rainer Werner Fassbinder, however, were subjected to such harsh methods of persuasion that their consent to perform certain deeds was not freely given. Fassbinder stands apart from most other demanding directors in the coerciveness of his regime and the illegality of some of the deeds he tried to impose upon his actors.

Ronald Hayman's *Fassbinder: Film Maker* describes its subject as "obsessive about winning power over other people,"⁵⁸ and Fassbinder was extraordinarily successful in his obsession. Due in part to Fassbinder's talent and industry (which enabled him to make enormous sums of money), and in part to the sheer force of his personality, the director's control over the group of people who worked on most of his plays and films was "as certain as the divine right of kings," as his biographer Robert Katz puts it.⁵⁹ Like many kings before him, the director used this great power to impair the freedoms of others. During the filming of *Whity*, producer Peter Berling recounts, Fassbinder got mad at actor Ulli Lommel and vented his anger by staging a beating in front of the camera:

There was a character in the script who was a nymphomaniac not averse to beating her grown, mentally retarded stepson. So Rainer cast Ulli's wife, Katrin, as the nympho-sadist and Ulli as the half-wit, and in one scene Rainer made her strike Ulli so

many times that they both dropped to the ground weeping for mercy.⁶⁰

The blows the director commanded Lommel's wife to give her husband were genuine. Fassbinder pressured his actors into incurring not just severe discomfort, like that many actors endure, but real physical harm, thus infringing upon one of the liberties theatrical representatives retain when they enter the theatrical contract: the fundamental right not to incur bodily harm while acting.

For *Whity*, Fassbinder contrived to have one actor hit another; on other occasions, he delivered the blows himself. For years, actress Irm Hermann was one of Fassbinder's most devoted followers, but eventually even she denied some of his demands. Her first rebellion came when, acting in one of Fassbinder's plays, she refused the director's request to remove her underpants, climb up a ladder, and display herself.⁶¹ Fassbinder would not accept her insubordination, Hermann remembers:

He couldn't conceive of my refusing him, and he tried everything. He almost beat me to death on the streets of Bochum . . . Then, in the very next film, he wanted me to play a whore in a garter belt, and when I said no, he came around early the next morning holding a bottle of milk, and he hit me on the head with it.⁶²

Subjecting Hermann to violent physical assault in an attempt to make her submit to his direction on stage and in a film (a failed attempt on both occasions), Fassbinder encroached upon the actress's liberty in what I am calling a despotic manner.

Exposing herself on stage as Fassbinder wanted Hermann to do may have been antipathetic for her, but it was apparently not illegal in Berlin in the 1970s. Prostitution, however, was against the law in 1960s Munich, as was cocaine use in the same city in 1976; Fassbinder pressed actors to engage in both activities. The first theatre company Fassbinder joined (and quickly dominated), the Action Theater of Munich's Müllerstrasse, was perpetually short of cash, recounts Katz. So Fassbinder persuaded a number of the group's women to work as prostitutes in order to earn extra money for him, thus getting them to break the law for his own ends.⁶³ While Katz does not tell us how the women felt about this arrangement, he does record the great reluctance of actor Kurt Raab to take cocaine on the set of the movie *Bolwieser*, as well as the relentlessness of the director in pushing Raab to do so. At the very outset of filming, Raab recalls, Fassbinder suggested to the actor that he use cocaine in order to improve his acting and help him to

“create a Bolwieser far beyond [his] normal range.”⁶⁴ Raab, an alcoholic, refused, arguing that he might develop an addiction to cocaine. Nevertheless, Fassbinder hounded him for three weeks until Raab finally succumbed, taking cocaine every day for the rest of the shooting.⁶⁵ Raab may have been more concerned about his health than about staying within the law; nevertheless, the director did conspire to make Raab break the law. Taking a psychological approach to his subject, Hayman concludes that “[s]ome of the best directors work sadistically, while some of the best actors are masochistically in need of someone who can goad them . . .”⁶⁶ Hayman may or may not be correct; however, in terms of the theory of representation I am advancing here, we can categorize Fassbinder’s behavior—whether inflicting physical injury on actors or pressuring them to defy the law—as despotic.

I have attempted here to show that western theatre involves not only the familiar descriptive and symbolic forms of representation, but also a third kind of representation, that of *acting for*. As useful as it is to consider how a theatrical performance can create descriptive likenesses of certain people and things, or how it can provide symbols of certain cultural constructs, it is useful too to consider how it can act *in lieu of* its spectators. If working clocks, fire, running water, babies, and dogs create a “disturbance” on the stage, it may be in part because these things lack the rational consciousness to act *in the interest of* others and can thus provide only incomplete representation. If the shooting of a performance artist by his collaborator seems to a spectator to be a daring performance but not really theatre, it may be because the spectator does not possess, and thus cannot delegate, the right to shoot Burden. The collaborator is not acting *on behalf of* the spectator, so the shooting is invalid as representation. And by using the concept of *acting for*, we can understand the behavior of theatrical representatives in a particular political light. That is, we can interpret a performance’s violation of the rights of theatregoers or a director’s infringement upon the liberty of actors as corresponding to the behavior of a political despot.⁶⁷

Notes

1. Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1967) 241, 8-9.
2. Ward E.Y. Elliott, “Representation,” *Encyclopedia of the American Constitution*, ed. Leonard W. Levy, Kenneth L. Karst, and Dennis J. Mahoney (New York: Macmillan, 1986) 1549.
3. Pitkin 60-61.
4. 61, 63.
5. 92-94, 100-1.
6. Herbert Blau, *To All Appearances: Ideology and Performance* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 77.

7. Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1988) 63.

8. Pitkin 113-26.

9. I am deeply indebted to Elaine Scarry for her important lectures on "Political Theatre and the Structure of Drama" (Harvard University, 1990), which inspired this article.

10. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts: Letter to M. d'Alembert on the Theatre*, trans. Allan Bloom (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1960) 24, and *The Social Contract*, trans. Lowell Bair, *The Essential Rousseau* (New York: NAL-Meridian, 1975) 78.

11. Jean Genet, *The Blacks*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York: Grove P, 1960) 12.

12. While I hope to make my use of these terms clear through illustration in what follows, it may be helpful to define what I mean by them now. For the purposes of this paper, I use "invalid representation" to refer to instances where principals delegate authority which they do not possess, or representatives exercise authority which has not been delegated to them. I use "despotism" to refer to instances where representatives infringe either upon the rights the principals have retained (have not delegated) or upon the rights of other representatives. Both the possession of authority by principals and the delegation of authority to representatives differ from case to case, of course.

13. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968) 247, n. 11.

14. Bert O. States, *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms: On the Phenomenology of Theater* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1985) 30.

15. States 32.

16. 36.

17. 31-32.

18. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Cleveland: World-Meridian, 1963) 189.

19. A. Phillips Griffiths, "How Can One Person Represent Another?," *The Aristotelian Society*, supplementary vol. 34 (1960): 187-208. Rpt. in *Representation*, ed. Hanna Fenichel Pitkin (New York: Atherton, 1969) 137.

20. Peter Weiss, *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton Under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade*, English version by Geoffrey Skelton, verse adaptation by Adrian Mitchell (New York: Pocket, 1966) 10. Subsequent page references are to this edition.

21. Una Chaudhuri, "Marat/Sade and the Politics of Interpretation," *Reading Plays: Interpretation and Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991) 223.

22. Griffiths 143.

23. Robert Katz, *Love Is Colder Than Death: The Life and Times of Rainer Werner Fassbinder* (New York: Random, 1987) 91.

24. David Richard Jones, *Great Directors at Work: Stanislavsky, Brecht, Kazan, and Brook* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1986) 261.

25. Hobbes 170.

26. 171.

27. Griffiths 139.

28. Robert Weimann, "(Post)Modernity and Representation: Issues of Authority, Power, Performativity," *New Literary History* 23 (1992): 958.

29. Heiner Müller, *The Task, Hamletmachine and Other Texts for the Stage*, ed. and trans. Carl Weber (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publication, 1984) 96. Subsequent page references are to this edition.

30. Rousseau, *Social Contract* 19.

31. 12.

32. Griffiths 145. Griffiths applies this principle to "representation without consent"; I believe it applies also to what he calls "cases where consent is given to being represented with regard to some limited or unlimited range of acts" (143), which I consider to be true of politics.

33. Philip Massinger, *The Roman Actor: Drama of the English Renaissance*, ed. Russell A. Fraser and Norman Rabkin, 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1976) 4.2.222-6. Subsequent act, scene, and line numbers are to this edition.

34. John Locke, *Treatise of Civil Government: Treatise of Civil Government and a Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. Charles L. Sherman (New York: Meredith-Appleton, 1937) 89. Rousseau explains how despite this the polis can still execute murderers: "Everyone has the right to risk his life in order to preserve it. . . . It is to avoid being a murderer's victim that each man consents to die if he should become a murderer himself" (*Social Contract* 31), and this logic also explains how citizens can delegate to soldiers the right to "risk" their lives.

35. Eric Bentley, "Enrico IV: The Tragic Emperor," *Tulane Drama Review* 10.3 (1966). Rpt. in *Luigi Pirandello*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1989) 21.

36. Luigi Pirandello, *Henry IV*, trans. Edward Storer, in *Naked Masks: Five Plays by Luigi Pirandello*, ed. Eric Bentley (New York: Dutton, 1952) 208.

37. Hobbes 170.

38. Ronald Berger, Patricia Searles, and Charles E. Cottle, *Feminism and Pornography* (New York: Praeger, 1991) 32-3.

39. Avedon Carol, "Snuff: Believing the Worst," *Bad Girls and Dirty Pictures: The Challenge to Reclaim Feminism*, ed. Alison Assiter and Avedon Carol (London: Pluto, 1993) 128.

40. Nettie Pollard, "The Small Matter of Children" 106, in Assiter and Carol.

41. Albert Furtwangler, *Assassin on Stage: Brutus, Hamlet, and the Death of Lincoln* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1991) 101.

42. Gene Smith, *American Gothic: The Story of America's Legendary Theatrical Family—Junius, Edwin, and John Wilkes Booth* (New York: Simon, 1992) 153-4. This is the standard account of Booth's actions; however, at least one witness claims that while Booth may have "hissed" the Latin phrase when still in the presidential box, he did not speak as he crossed the stage. See W. J. Ferguson, *I Saw Booth Shoot Lincoln* (Boston: Houghton, 1930) 39.

43. Smith 153-5.

44. 155.

45. 154-5.

46. 155.

47. 155.

48. 156.

49. Anthony Kubiak, *Stages of Terror: Terrorism, Ideology, and Coercion As Theatre History* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1991) 143.

50. Jones 261.

51. Locke 148.

52. 146.

53. Rousseau, *Social Contract* 72.

54. Peter Handke, *Offending the Audience, Kaspar and Other Plays*, trans. Michael Roloff (New York: Farrar, 1969) 7-9. Subsequent page references are to this edition.

55. Jones 263.

56. 263.

57. Charles Marowitz, "The Marat/Sade: A Review by Charles Marowitz," *Peter Brook: A Theatrical Casebook*, ed. David Williams (London: Methuen, 1988) 71.

58. Ronald Hayman, *Fassbinder: Film Maker* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984) 17.

59. Katz 50.

60. Peter Berling, Appendix 1: "The Making of *Whity*" 210. In Katz.

61. Katz 82.

62. Irm Hermann, qtd. in Katz 82-3.

63. Katz 33.

64. Kurt Raab, qtd. in Katz 115.

65. Katz 115-6.

66. Hayman 85.

67. The concept of *acting for* can also, I argue, illuminate theatre riots. See Athenaide Dallett, "Protest in the Playhouse: Two Twentieth-Century Audience Riots," *New Theatre Quarterly* 12:48 (1996): 323-32.

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Illusion Theater's 1994 production of Ping Chong's *Undesirable Elements*. Left to right: Sharon Day, Nkaj'lis Lyfound, Alberto Panelli, Elsa Batuca, Dennis Hines, Nilgun Tuna, Ariada Magari.
Courtesy Illusion theater.