

DRAMA

C R I T I C I S M

V O L U M E

7





DRAMA

C R I T I C I S M

Criticism of the Most Significant and Widely Studied
Dramatic Works from All the World's Literatures

VOLUME 7

Lawrence J. Trudeau, Editor

江苏工业学院图书馆
藏书章



GALE

DETROIT • NEW YORK • TORONTO • LONDON

STAFF

Lawrence J. Trudeau, *Editor*

Kathy D. Darrow, Debra A. Wells, *Assistant Editors*

Susan Trosky, *Permissions Manager*

Kimberly F. Smilay, *Permissions Specialist*

Sarah Chesney, *Permissions Associate*

Stephen Cusack, Kelly Quin, *Permissions Assistants*

Victoria B. Cariappa, *Research Manager*

Michele P. LaMeau, *Research Specialist*

Julie C. Daniel, Tamara C. Nott, Tracie A. Richardson,

Norma Sawaya, Cheryl L. Warnock,

Research Associates

Mary Beth Trimper, *Production Director*

Deborah Milliken, *Production Assistant*

C.J. Jonik, *Desktop Publisher*


Randy Bassett, *Image Database Supervisor*

Michael Ansari, Robert Duncan, *Scanner Operator*

Pamela Reed, *Photography Coordinator*

Since this page cannot legibly accommodate all copyright notices, the acknowledgments constitute an extension of the copyright notice.

While every effort has been made to ensure the reliability of the information presented in this publication, Gale Research Inc. neither guarantees the accuracy of the data contained herein nor assumes any responsibility for errors, omissions or discrepancies. Gale accepts no payment for listing, and inclusion in the publication of any organization, agency, institution, publication, service, or individual does not imply endorsement of the editors or publisher. Errors brought to the attention of the publisher and verified to the satisfaction of the publisher will be corrected in future editions.

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984. 

This publication is a creative work fully protected by all applicable copyright laws, as well as by misappropriation, trade secret, unfair competition, and other applicable laws. The authors and editors of this work have added value to the underlying factual material herein through one or more of the following: unique and original selection, coordination, expression, arrangement, and classification of the information.

All rights to this publication will be vigorously defended.

Copyright © 1997
Gale Research
835 Penobscot Building
Detroit, MI 48226-4094

All rights reserved including the right of reproduction in whole or in part in any form.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 92-648805

ISBN 0-8103-5532-9

ISSN 1056-4349

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Preface

D*rama Criticism (DC)* is principally intended for beginning students of literature and theater as well as the average playgoer. The series is therefore designed to introduce readers to the most frequently studied playwrights of all time periods and nationalities and to present discerning commentary on dramatic works of enduring interest. Furthermore, *DC* seeks to acquaint the reader with the uses and functions of criticism itself. Selected from a diverse body of commentary, the essays in *DC* offer insights into the authors and their works but do not require that the reader possess a wide background in literary studies. Where appropriate, reviews of important productions of the plays discussed are also included to give students a heightened awareness of drama as a dynamic art form, one that many claim is fully realized only in performance.

DC was created in response to suggestions by the staffs of high school, college, and public libraries. These librarians observed a need for a series that assembles critical commentary on the world's most renowned dramatists in the same manner as Gale's *Short Story Criticism (SSC)* and *Poetry Criticism (PC)*, which present material on writers of short fiction and poetry. Although playwrights are covered in such Gale literary criticism series as *Contemporary Literary Criticism (CLC)*, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism (TCLC)*, *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism (NCLC)*, *Literature Criticism from 1400 to 1800 (LC)*, and *Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism (CMLC)*, *Drama Criticism* directs more concentrated attention on individual dramatists than is possible in the broader, survey-oriented entries in these Gale series. Commentary on the works of William Shakespeare may be found in *Shakespearean Criticism (SC)*.

Scope of the Series

By collecting and organizing commentary on dramatists, *DC* assists students in their efforts to gain insight into literature, achieve better understanding of the texts, and formulate ideas for papers and assignments. A variety of interpretations and assessments is offered, allowing students to pursue their own interests and promoting awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

Each volume of *DC* presents:

- 8-10 entries
- authors and works representing a wide range of nationalities and time periods
- a diversity of viewpoints and critical opinions.

Organization of an Author Entry

Each author entry consists of some or all of the following elements, depending on the scope and complexity of the criticism:

- The **author heading** consists of the playwright's most commonly used name, followed by birth and death dates. If an author consistently wrote under a pseudonym, the pseudonym is listed in the author heading and the real name given in parentheses on the first line of the introduction. Also located at the beginning of the introduction are any name variations under which the dramatist wrote, including transliterated forms of the names of authors whose languages use nonroman alphabets.
- A **portrait** of the author is included when available. Most entries also feature illustrations of people,

places, and events pertinent to a study of the playwright and his or her works. When appropriate, photographs of the plays in performance are also presented.

- The **biographical and critical introduction** contains background information that familiarizes the reader with the author and the critical debates surrounding his or her works.
- The list of **principal works** is divided into two sections, each of which is organized chronologically by date of first performance. If this has not been conclusively determined, the composition or publication date is used. The first section of the principal works list contains the author's dramatic pieces. The second section provides information on the author's major works in other genres.
- Whenever available, **author commentary** is provided. This section consists of essays or interviews in which the dramatist discusses his or her own work or the art of playwriting in general.
- Essays offering **overviews and general studies of the dramatist's entire literary career** give the student broad perspectives on the writer's artistic development, themes and concerns that recur in several of his or her works, the author's place in literary history, and other wide-ranging topics.
- **Criticism of individual plays** offers the reader in-depth discussions of a select number of the author's most important works. In some cases, the criticism is divided into two sections, each arranged chronologically. When a significant performance of a play can be identified (typically, the premier of a twentieth-century work), the first section of criticism will feature **production reviews** of this staging. Most entries include sections devoted to **critical commentary** that assesses the literary merit of the selected plays. When necessary, essays are carefully excerpted to focus on the work under consideration; often, however, essays and reviews are reprinted in their entirety.
- As an additional aid to students, the critical essays and excerpts are often prefaced by **explanatory annotations**. These notes provide several types of useful information, including the critic's reputation and approach to literary studies as well as the scope and significance of the criticism that follows.
- A complete **bibliographic citation**, designed to help the interested reader locate the original essay or book, precedes each piece of criticism.
- The **further reading list** at the end of each entry comprises additional studies of the dramatist. It is divided into sections that help students quickly locate the specific information they need.

Other Features

- A **cumulative author index** lists all the authors who have appeared in *DC* and Gale's other Literature Criticism Series, as well as cross-references to related titles published by Gale, including *Contemporary Authors* and *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. A complete listing of the series included appears at the beginning of the index.
- A **cumulative nationality index** lists each author featured in *DC* by nationality, followed by the number of the *DC* volume in which the author appears.
- A **cumulative title index** lists in alphabetical order the individual plays discussed in the criticism contained in *DC*. Each title is followed by the author's name and the corresponding volume and page

number(s) where commentary on the work may be located. Translations and variant titles are cross-referenced to the title of the play in its original language so that all references to the work are combined in one listing.

A Note to the Reader

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume in *Drama Criticism* may use the following general formats to footnote reprinted criticism. The first example pertains to material drawn from periodicals, the second to materials reprinted from books.

¹Susan Sontag, "Going to the Theater, Etc.," *Partisan Review* XXXI, No. 3 (Summer 1964), 389-94; excerpted and reprinted in *Drama Criticism*, Vol. 1, ed. Lawrence J. Trudeau (Detroit: Gale Research, 1991), pp. 17-20.

²Eugene M. Waith, *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden* (Chatto & Windus, 1962); excerpted and reprinted in *Drama Criticism*, Vol. 1, ed. Lawrence J. Trudeau (Detroit: Gale Research, 1991), pp. 237-47.

Suggestions are Welcome

Readers who wish to suggest authors to appear in future volumes of *DC*, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor.

Acknowledgments

The editors wish to thank the copyright holders of the excerpted criticism included in this volume and the permissions managers of many book and magazine publishing companies for assisting us in securing reproduction rights. We are also grateful to the staffs of the Detroit Public Library, the Library of Congress, the University of Detroit Mercy Library, Wayne State University Purdy/Kresge Library Complex, and the University of Michigan Libraries for making their resources available to us. Following is a list of the copyright holders who have granted us permission to reproduce material in this volume of *DC*. Every effort has been made to trace copyright, but if omissions have been made, please let us know.

COPYRIGHTED EXCERPTS IN *DC*, VOLUME 7, WERE REPRODUCED FROM THE FOLLOWING PERIODICALS:

American Journal of Philology, v. 107, Spring, 1986; v. 166, Summer, 1995. Copyright © 1986, 1995 by The Johns Hopkins University Press. All rights reserved. Both reproduced by permission. —*Artforum*, v. XXIII, March, 1985 for a review of “Swimming to Cambodia” by John Howell. © 1985 Artforum International Magazine, Inc. Reproduced by permission of the publisher and the author. —*Australian Journal of French Studies*, v. XXI, January-April, 1984 for “Marivaux’s ‘Jeu de l’amour et ‘de la raison’” by Thomas M. Carr. Copyright © 1984 by *Australian Journal of French Studies*. Reproduced by permission of the publisher and the author. —*California Studies in Classical Antiquity*, v. 1, 1968. Reproduced by permission. —*CLA Journal*, v. XXXII, December, 1988. Copyright, 1988 by The College Language Association. Used by permission of The College Language Association. —*The Classical Journal*, v. 62, October, 1966. © Classical Association of the Middle West and South, Inc., 1966. Reproduced by permission. —*The Classical World*, v. 70, January, 1977; v. 73, December, 1979-January, 1980. Copyright © 1977, 1980 by The Classical Association of The Atlantic States, Inc. Both reproduced by permission. —*Drama and Theatre*, v. 12, Spring, 1975 for “‘Equus’: Modern Myth in the Making” by Russell Vandenbroucke. Copyright 1975 by the State University of New York. Reproduced by permission of the author. —*Drama: The Quarterly Theatre Review*, n. 135, January, 1980 for a review of “Amadeus,” by John Russell Taylor. Reprinted by permission of the Peters, Fraser & Dunlop Group Ltd. —*Educational Theatre Journal*, v. 25, December, 1973. © 1973 University College Theatre Association of the American Theatre Association. Reproduced by permission. —*ELH*, v. 23, March, 1956. Copyright © 1956 by The Johns Hopkins University Press. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission. —*Financial Times*, November 5, 1979. © Financial Times Limited 1979. Reproduced by permission. —*Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, v. 9, 1968. Reproduced by permission. —*The Hudson Review*, v. XXXIV, Summer, 1981. Copyright © 1981 by The Hudson Review, Inc. Reproduced by permission. —*The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, v. XVII, 1982 for “Big Night Music: Derek Walcott’s *Dream on Monkey Mountain* and the ‘Splendours of Imagination’” by Robert Elliott Fox. Copyright by the author. Reprinted with the kind permission of Bowker-Saur, a division of Reed-Elsevier (UK) Ltd. —*MLN*, v. 82, May, 1967. © copyright 1967 by The Johns Hopkins University Press. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission. —*The New Republic*, v. 184, March 28, 1981. Copyright © 1981 The New Republic, Inc. Reproduced by permission of The New Republic. / v. LXII, April 16, 1930. Copyright 1930, renewed 1956 The New Republic, Inc. Reproduced by permission of The New Republic. —*The New Statesman*, v. 86, August 3, 1973; v. 98, November 9, 1979. © 1973, 1979 The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd. Both reproduced by permission. —*Newsweek*, v. LXXIX, June 19, 1972; v. LXXXIII, June 10, 1974. Copyright © 1972, 1974, Newsweek, Inc. All rights reserved. Both reproduced by permission. —*New York Magazine*, v. 5, June 26, 1972; v. 7, June 17, 1974; v. 14, March 2, 1981; v. 19, March 24, 1986. Copyright © 1977 K-III Corporation. All rights reserved. All reproduced with the permission of New York Magazine. —*The New York Times*, March 15, 1971; March 21, 1971; April 4, 1971; June 18, 1972; September 3, 1973; June 3, 1974; November 16, 1984; March 9, 1986. Copyright © 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1984, 1986 by The New York Times Company. All reproduced by permission. —*The New York Times Magazine*, March, 8, 1987. Copyright © 1987 by The New York Times Company. Reproduced by permission. —*The New Yorker*, v. XLVII, March 27, 1971; v. XLVII, June 21, 1971; v. XLVIII, June 24, 1972; v. L, June 10, 1974; v. LXII. Copyright © 1971, 1972, 1974 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. All reproduced by permission. / March 24, 1986 for “Murder Most Foul” by Brendan Gill. Copyright © 1986 by the author. Reproduced by permission. —*Performing Arts Journal*,

v. 6, 1981. © copyright 1981 Performing Arts Journal. Reproduced by permission.—*Philological Papers*, v. 25, February, 1979 for “Derek Walcott’s Theater of Assimilation” by Robert D. Hamner. Reproduced by permission of the author.—*Post Script: Essays in Film and the Humanities*, v. 9, Fall, 1989-Winter, 1990. Copyright © 1990 by Post Script, Inc. Reproduced by permission.—*Proceedings of the Comparative Literature Symposium*, v. IX, 1978 for “The Chinese-American Literary Scene: A Galaxy of Poets and a Lone Playwright” by David Hsin-Fu Wand. Copyright 1978 Texas Tech University Press. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the publisher.—*Romance Quarterly*, v. 238, August, 1991. Copyright © 1991 by The University Press of Kentucky. Reproduced by permission.—*The Spectator*, v. 243, November 10, 1979. © 1979 by The Spectator. Reproduced by permission of The Spectator.—*Studies in American Jewish Literature*, v. 8, Spring, 1989. © 1989 by The Kent State University Press. Reproduced by permission.—*Theatre Journal*, v. 38, December, 1986; v. 39, March, 1987; v. 41, March, 1989. Copyright © 1986, 1987, 1989, University and College Theatre Association of the American Theatre Association. All reproduced by permission.—*Theatre Research International*, n.s. v. VIII, Autumn, 1983. © Oxford University Press 1983. Reproduced by permission.—*The Times*, London, July 27, 1973. © Times Newspapers Limited 1973. Reproduced from The Times, London by permission.—*Transactions of the American Philological Association*, v. 108, 1978. Copyright © by The American Philological Society. Reproduced by permission.—*Variety*, March 4, 1981; March 19, 1986. © 1981, 1986 by Cahners Publishing Company. Both excerpted with permission from Variety.—*The Village Voice*, June, 1972 for “Portnoy’s Chinese Complaint” by Michael Feingold. Copyright © The Village Voice, Inc., 1972. Reproduced by permission of the author./ February 25-March 3, 1981 for “Home Fronts” by Michael Feingold; v. XXXIX, November 27, 1984 for “With the Stream” by Elinor Fuchs. Copyright © News Group Publications, Inc., 1981, 1984. Both reproduced by permission of the respective authors.—*West Virginia University Philological Papers*, v. 25, 1979. Reproduced by permission.

COPYRIGHTED EXCERPTS IN DC, VOLUME 7, WERE REPRODUCED FROM THE FOLLOWING BOOKS:

Betsko, Kathleen and Rachel Koenig. From an interview in *Interviews with Contemporary Women Playwrights*. Beech Tree Books, 1987. Copyright © 1987 by Kathleen Betsko and Rachel Koenig. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of Beech Tree Books, a division of William Morrow and Company, Inc.—Bevington, David. From an introduction to “Sappho and Phao,” in *Campaspe: Sappho and Phao*. By John Lyly, edited by G. K. Hunter and David Bevington. Manchester University Press, 1991. *Sappho and Phao* Copyright © David Bevington 1991. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Brandon, James R. From “Japanese Noh,” in *Staging Japanese Theatre: Noh & Kabuki*. Edited by John D. Mitchell & Miyoko Watanabe. Institute for Advanced Studies in the Theatre Arts Press, 1994. Copyright © 1994 by Institute for Advanced Studies in the Theatre Arts (IASTA). All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Brothers, A. J. From an introduction to *Terence: The Self-Tormentor*. Edited and translated by A. J. Brothers. Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1988. Reproduced by permission.—Cannon, Derek F. From “The Servant as Master: Disguise, Role-Reversal, and Social Comment in Three Plays of Marivaux,” in *Studies in the Commedia dell’Arte*. Edited by David J. George and Christopher J. Gossip. University of Wales Press, 1993. Copyright © The Contributors, 1993. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Cismaru, Alfred. From *Marivaux and Moliere: A Comparison*. Texas Tech Press, 1977. Copyright © 1977 by Texas Tech Press. Reproduced by permission of the publisher.—Fiet, Lowel. From “Mapping a New Nile: Derek Walcott’s Later Plays,” in *The Art of Derek Walcott*. Edited by Stewart Brown. Seren Books, 1991. The essays copyright © the essayists, 1991. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the author.—Forehand, Walter E. From *Terence*. Twayne, 1985. Copyright © 1985 by G. K. Hall & Company. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of Twayne Publishers, a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.—Gianakaris, C. J. From *Peter Shaffer: A Casebook*. Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991. Copyright © 1991 C. J. Gianakaris. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Gray, Spalding. From *Swimming to Cambodia*. Theatre Communications Group, Inc., 1985. Copyright © 1985 by Spalding Gray. All rights reserved. Used by permission of the publisher —Houppert, Joseph W. From *John Lyly*. Twayne, 1975. Copyright © 1975 by G. K. Hall & Co. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of the Literary Estate of the Joseph W. Houppert.—Hunter, G. K. From an introduction to “Campaspe,” in *Campaspe: Sappho and Phao*. By John Lyly, edited by G. K. Hunter and David Bevington. Manchester University Press, 1991. *Campaspe* © G. K. Hunter 1991. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Jenkins, Ron. From *Acrobats of the Soul: Comedy and Virtuosity in Contemporary American Theatre*.

Theatre Communications Group, 1988. Copyright © 1988 by Ron Jenkins. All rights reserved. Used by permission of the publisher.—Keene, Donald. From *Twenty Plays of the No Theatre*. Edited by Donald Keene with Royall Tyler. Columbia University Press, 1970. Copyright © 1970 Columbia University Press, New York. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of the publisher.—Kim, Elaine H. From *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context*. Temple University Press, 1982. Copyright © 1982 by Temple University. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Konstan, David. From *Roman Comedy*. Cornell, 1983. Used by permission of the publisher, Cornell University Press.—Mandel, Oscar. From an introduction to *Seven Comedies*. By Marivaux, edited by Oscar Mandel, translated by Oscar Mandel and Adrienne S. Mandel. Cornell, 1968. Copyright © 1968 by Cornell University. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the author.—Mason, H. T. From “Women in Marivaux: Journalist to Dramatist,” in *Women and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*. Edited by Eva Jacobs and others. Athlone Press, 1979. Copyright © Athlone Press 1979. Reproduced by permission.—McDonald, Dorothy Ritsuko. From an introduction to *The Chickencoop Chinaman and The Year of the Dragon*. By Frank Chin. University of Washington Press, 1981. Introduction copyright © 1981 by the University of Washington Press. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Meyers, Kate Beaird. From “Bottles of Violence: Fragments of Vietnam in Emily Mann’s Still Life,” in *America Rediscovered: Critical Essays on Literature and Film of the Vietnam War*. Edited by Owen W. Gilman, Jr. and Lorrie Smith. Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990. Copyright © 1990 Owen W. Gilman, Jr. and Lorrie Smith. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Parker, Douglass. From an introduction to “The Eunuch” in *The Complete Comedies of Terence: Modern Verse Translations*. Edited by Palmer Bovie. Rutgers University Press, 1974. Reproduced by permission.—Perry, Henry Ten Eyck. From *Masters of Dramatic Comedy and the Social Themes*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939. Copyright 1939 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. Excerpted by permission of the publisher.—Stevenson, David Lloyd. From *The Love-Game Comedy*. Columbia University Press, 1946. Copyright 1946 Columbia University Press, New York. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of the publisher.—Ueda, Makoto. From an introduction to *The Old Pine Tree and Other Noh Plays*. By Zeami, translated by Makoto Ueda. University of Nebraska Press, 1962. Copyright © 1962 by the University of Nebraska Press. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Valency, Maurice. From *The Breaking String: The Plays of Anton Chekhov*. Oxford University Press, 1966. Copyright © 1966, 1983 by Maurice Valency. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the author.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS APPEARING IN DC, VOLUME 7, WERE RECEIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

“Amadeus,” movie still. The Kobal Collection. Reproduced by permission.—Bust of Terence, photograph. The Granger Collection Ltd. Reproduced by permission.—Gray, Spalding, photograph. AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.—Man in wire horse mask, holding woman, from the play “Equus,” 1974, photograph by Zoe Dominic. Reproduced by permission.—Mann, Emily, photograph. AP/Wide World Photos, Inc. Reproduced by permission.—Turgenev, Ivan, photograph. The Bettman Archive. Reproduced by permission.—Walcott, Derek, photograph by Jerry Bauer. Reproduced by permission.—Shaffer, Peter, photograph. Jerry Bauer. Reproduced by permission.

List of Playwrights Covered in *DC*

Volume 1

James Baldwin
William Wells Brown
Karel Čapek
Mary Chase
Alexandre Dumas (*films*)
Charles Fuller
Nikolai Gogol
Lillian Hellman
Christopher Marlowe
Arthur Miller
Yukio Mishima
Richard Brinsley Sheridan
Sophocles
Thornton Wilder

Volume 4

Pierre-Augustin Caron de
Beaumarchais
Aphra Behn
Alice Childress
Euripides
Hugo von Hofmannsthal
David Henry Hwang
Ben Jonson
David Mamet
Wendy Wasserstein
Tennessee Williams

Volume 7

Frank Chin
Spalding Gray
John Lyly
Emily Mann
Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de
Marivaux
Peter Shaffer
Terence
Ivan Turgenev
Derek Walcott
Zeami

Volume 2

Aristophanes
Albert Camus
William Congreve
Everyman
Federico García Lorca
Lorraine Hansberry
Henrik Ibsen
Wole Soyinka
John Millington Synge
John Webster
August Wilson

Volume 5

Caryl Churchill
John Pepper Clark
Adrienne Kennedy
Thomas Middleton
Luigi Pirandello
Eugène Scribe
Lucius Annaeus Seneca
Sam Shepard
Paul Zindel

Volume 3

Bertolt Brecht
Pedro Calderón de la Barca
John Dryden
Athol Fugard
Langston Hughes
Thomas Kyd
Menander
Joe Orton
Jean-Paul Sartre
Ntozake Shange

Volume 6

Amiri Baraka
Francis Beaumont and
John Fletcher
Ed Bullins
Václav Havel
Beth Henley
Clifford Odets
Plautus
Tom Stoppard

Contents

Preface vii

Acknowledgments xi

List of Authors xv

Frank Chin	1
Overviews and General Studies	2
<i>The Chickencoop Chinaman</i>	12
<i>The Year of the Dragon</i>	18
Spalding Gray	21
Author Commentary	22
Overviews and General Studies	24
<i>Swimming to Cambodia</i>	28
John Lyly	47
Overviews and General Studies	48
<i>Campaspe</i>	79
<i>Sappho and Phao</i>	84
<i>Endimion</i>	92
Emily Mann	99
Author Commentary	100
<i>Still Life</i>	104
<i>Execution of Justice</i>	113
Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux	122
Overviews and General Studies	123
<i>The Game of Love and Chance</i>	165
Peter Shaffer	181
Overviews and General Studies	182
<i>Equus</i>	189
<i>Amadeus</i>	199

Terence	212
Overviews and General Studies	213
<i>The Girl from Andros</i>	221
<i>The Mother-in-Law</i>	226
<i>The Self-Tormentor</i>	236
<i>The Eunuch</i>	244
<i>Phormio</i>	255
<i>The Brothers</i>	261
Ivan Turgenev	276
Overviews and General Studies	278
<i>A Month in the Country</i>	301
Derek Walcott	307
Author Commentary	308
Overviews and General Studies	310
<i>Dream on Monkey Mountain</i>	325
Zeami	335
Overviews and General Studies	336

Literary Criticism Series Cumulative Author Index 363

Drama Criticism Cumulative Nationality Index 445

Drama Criticism Cumulative Title Index 447

Frank Chin

1940-

(Full name Frank Chew Chin, Jr.)

INTRODUCTION

Chin has played an important role in the development of Asian American literature. In his plays and other works, Chin has sought to overthrow the demeaning stereotypes imposed on Chinese Americans by white society. In *The Chickencoop Chinaman* and *The Year of the Dragon* he presents characters who struggle with the history (written from the perspective of white culture) of Asians in the United States, and who strive to forge an essentially American identity that nevertheless recognizes their cultural roots.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Chin was born in Berkeley, California, and was raised in the Chinatowns of Oakland and San Francisco. He attended the University of California at Berkeley and won a fellowship to the Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa before receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1965. After graduation, he took a job with the Southern Pacific Railroad, becoming the first Chinese American brakeman in the company's history. Chin left the railroad in 1966 and began writing and producing documentaries for KING-TV in Seattle, Washington. Chin began his dramatic career in the early 1970s, staging *The Chickencoop Chinaman* in 1972 and *The Year of the Dragon* two years later. Both plays were produced off-Broadway by the American Place Theatre, making Chin the first Asian American to have work presented on a mainstream New York stage. In 1973 Chin formed the Asian American Theatre Workshop in San Francisco, and he remained its director until 1977. Since the 1980s Chin has had little involvement with theater, preferring to write fiction and essays on Chinese and Japanese history, culture, and literature. He has taught courses on Asian American subjects at San Francisco State University, the University of California at Berkeley, Davis, and Santa Barbara, and at the University of Oklahoma at Norman. He has also received a number of awards and fellowships throughout his career.

MAJOR WORKS

Chin's best-known plays, *The Chickencoop Chinaman* and *The Year of the Dragon*, were staged early 1970s, and the latter was aired on PBS television in 1975. *The Chicken-*

coop Chinaman concerns Tam Lum, a documentary filmmaker in search of his own identity as a Chinese American. Tam feels alienated from both Chinese and American cultures: American born, he knows Chinese culture only indirectly, and can speak little of the language; being of Chinese ancestry, however, he is isolated from and stereotyped by white American society. In the course of the play he lashes out verbally with wit and anger, rejecting the myths surrounding Asian Americans but finding nothing to replace them. However, as the play ends, Tam is shown preparing Chinese food and reminiscing about the Iron Moonhunter, a train in Chinese American legend, built from materials stolen from the railroad companies. Thus Chin suggests Tam's first efforts toward building an identity based on elements of the Chinese American experience. *The Year of the Dragon* also focuses on the search for identity but does so in the context of a Chinese American family. In this play Fred Eng, as a tour guide to San Francisco's Chinatown, panders to stereotypes of Chinese Americans. He also plays the role of dutiful son to his father, Pa Eng, a domineering figure who is now dying. Fred longs to leave Chinatown but has sacrificed his desires in order to earn money to pay college expenses for his sister, who has moved to Boston and married a white man. Fred's younger brother Johnny, meanwhile, is descending to a life of crime. Fred wants his brother to get away from Chinatown, but Pa Eng opposes the idea. In a confrontation between Fred and his father on this issue, Pa Eng dies, never having publicly acknowledged his son's worth. The play closes with Fred still in Chinatown, continuing to play the hated role of Chinatown tour guide.

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Chin is recognized as an important voice in Asian American drama, even though he has withdrawn from active participation in the theater. Regarding his rejection of the contemporary theatrical scene, Chin has remarked, "Asian American theatre is dead without ever having been born, and American theatre, like American writing has found and nurtured willing Gunga Dins, happy white racist tokens, with which to pay their lip service to yellows and call it dues. . . . I am out of theatre. I will not work with any theatre, producer, writer, director, or actor who has played and lives the stereotype." Such views, expressed within his plays as well as in essays and interviews, have made Chin a controversial figure. Some reviewers have been put off by the bitterness of Chin's outlook and have criticized his plays as strident. John Simon has likened Chin's plays to soap opera and censured his "tendency to attitudinize." Elaine H. Kim has detected an ambivalence on Chin's part toward his characters. In his plays, she states, "Chin flails out at the emasculating effects of op-

pression, but he accepts his oppressors' definition of 'masculinity.' The result is unresolved tension between contempt and desire to fight for his Asian American characters." David Hsin-Fu Wand, on the other hand, has interpreted this ambivalence as reflective of Chin's own internal conflicts: "The voices of his characters in the plays are basically the conflicting voices of his Chinese and American identities." Dorothy Ritsuko McDonald has placed this division within the context of the playwright's concern with history; Chin, she argues, possesses a "sense of Chinese American history as a valiant, vital part of the history of the American West, a history he believes his own people, under the stress of white racism, have forgotten or wish to forget in their eagerness to be assimilated into the majority culture." Chin's work, then, attempts to reverse this process, rejecting assimilation and recuperating what historically was cast off by Asian Americans: their differences from the dominant culture.

PRINCIPAL WORKS

PLAYS

The Chickencoop Chinaman 1972
The Year of the Dragon 1974
Gee, Pop! . . . A Real Cartoon 1974
America More or Less [with Amiri Baraka and Leslie Marmon Silko] 1976
Lullaby [with Silko] 1976
American Peek-a-Boo Kabuki, World War II and Me 1985
Flood of Blood: A Fairy Tale 1988

OTHER MAJOR WORKS

Seattle Repertory Theatre: Act Two (television documentary) 1966
The Bel Canto Carols (television documentary) 1966
A Man and His Music (television documentary) 1967
Ed Sierer's New Zealand (television documentary) 1967
Seafair Preview (television documentary) 1967
The Year of the Ram (television documentary) 1967
And Still Champion . . . ! The Story of Archie Moore (television documentary) 1967
Mary (television documentary) 1969
Rainlight Rainvision (television documentary) 1969
Chinaman's Chance (television documentary) 1971
Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers [editor, with others] (anthology) 1974
Yardbird Reader, Volume 3 [editor, with Shawn Wong] (anthology) 1974
The Chinaman Pacific & Frisco R.R. Co. (short stories) 1988
Rescue at Wild Boar Forest (comic book) 1988
The Water Margin, or Shui Hu (comic book) 1989
Lin Chong's Revenge (comic book) 1989
Donald Duk (novel) 1991

The Big Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Chinese American and Japanese American Literature [editor, with others] (anthology) 1991
Gunga Din Highway (novel) 1994

OVERVIEWS AND GENERAL STUDIES

David Hsin-Fu Wand (essay date 1978)

SOURCE: "The Chinese-American Literary Scene: A Galaxy of Poets and a Lone Playwright," in *Proceedings of the Comparative Literature Symposium*, Vol. IX, 1978, pp. 121-46.

[In the excerpt below, Wand asserts that in his plays Chin has "projected onto the stage his own internal conflicts."]

Although Frank Chin has written prose-fiction and some occasional poems, he is first and foremost a dramatist. Like the protagonists (or heroes), Tam Lum in *The Chickencoop Chinaman* and Fred Eng in *The Year of the Dragon*, "his own 'normal' speech jumps between black and white rhythms and accents." Sometimes, he probably feels like Tam Lum that he has "no real language of my own to make sense with, so out comes everybody else's trash that don't conceive." The protagonists of his two plays are both in conflict, obsessed with the problem of identity. Tam (short for Tampax) Lum in *The Chickencoop Chinaman*, who has been victimized by the white world that surrounds him, is ambivalent toward the Chinese, as characterized by the following dialogue couched in irony:

Robbie: You're Chinese aren't you? I like Chinese people.

Tam: Me too. They're nice and quiet aren't they?

This ambivalence is further shown by Tam Lum's acceptance of the Lone Ranger as a hero. In his list of characters, Frank Chin describes the Lone Ranger as follows:

A legendary white racist with the funk of the West mouldering in his blood. In his senility, he still loves racistly, blesses racistly, shoots straight and is coocoo with the notion that white folks are not white folks but just plain folks.

In the action of the play, the Lone Ranger not only gets away with shooting a silver bullet into Tam Lum's hand, but also lectures him, as he rides away:

China boys, you be legendary obeyers of the law, legendary humble, legendary passive. Thank me now and I'll let you get back to Chinatown preservin your culture.

He further insults Tam Lum by making him a “honorary white” and relegates him to the company of Pearl Buck, Charlie Chan, and Helen Keller. To Frank Chin, Helen Keller, who lacks a voice of her own, is the image of a passive Oriental. Early in *The Chickencoop Chinaman*, Tam Lum has remarked about Helen Keller ironically:

Helen Keller overcame her handicaps without riot!
She overcame handicaps without looting! She over-
came handicaps without violence! And you Chinks
and Japs can too.

Not contented with being an “honorary white” or white-men’s pet Chinaman, Tam Lum tries to find a voice of his own to articulate his own consciousness. He lashes out at the synthetic Chinamen, “who are made, not born—out of junk imports, lies, railroad scrap iron, dirty jokes, broken bottles, cigar smoke, Cosquilla Indian blood, wino spit, and lots of milk of amnesia.” He articulates his own agony by shouting:

[I was] no more born than nylon or acrylic. For I am
a Chinaman! A miracle synthetic. Drip dry and ma-
chine washable.

In *The Chickencoop Chinaman*, Tam Lum has only one close friend, Kenji, a Japanese-American “research dentist” who lives in the depth of Pittsburgh’s black slum called “Oakland.” Kenji, who gathers around him some bizarre characters living at his expense, shares with Tam Lum the problem of identity. Nicknamed “BlackJap Kenji,” the dentist denies that he is a “copycat,” that he is imitating black people:

I know I live with ‘em, I talk like ‘em, I dress . . .
maybe even eat what they eat and don’t mess with, so
what if I don’t mess with other Orientals . . . Asians,
whatever, blah, blah, blah . . .

He also goes on to state:

I’m not Japanese! Tam ain’t no Chinese! And don’t
give me any of that “If-you-don’t-have-that-Oriental-
culture, -baby, -all-you’ve-got-is-the-color-of-your-
skin,” bullshit. . . .

Living in a black ghetto and going to a school where the majority were black, Kenji had to adapt in order to survive:

Schools was all blacks and Mexicans. We [Kenji and
Tam Lum] were kids in school, and you either walked
and talked right in the yard, or got the shit beat outa
you every day, ya understand? But that Tam was
always what you might say . . . “The Pacesetter.”
Whatever was happenin with hair, or the latest color,
man—Sometimes he looked pretty exotic, you know,
shades, high greasy hair, spicurls, purple shiney shirt,
with skull cufflinks and Frisko jeans worn like they
was fallin off his ass. “BlackJap Kenji” I used to be
called and hated yellow-people. You look around and
see where I’m livin . . . and it looks like I still do,
Pittsburgh ain’t exactly famous for no Chinatown or
Li’l Tokyo, you know.

Here Kenji has given a brilliant explanation of his strange identity. Having lived as a minority in the heart of a black ghetto, he has adopted the values and *mores* of his immediate environment. From the psychological point of view, introjection is what made him more black than Japanese in behavior.

The plot of *The Chickencoop Chinaman* revolves around Tam Lum’s coming to Pittsburgh to make a documentary film about a black boxer and to interview Charley Popcorn, whom the boxer has claimed to be his real father. But Charley Popcorn, who runs a pornographic movie house in Pittsburgh, denies that he is the father and claims that he was only the boxer’s manager. Here we find another case of the problem of identity. Perhaps the boxer has chosen to live with the myth, just as Tam Lum, since his childhood, has chosen the Lone Ranger as his cultural hero and expected to find Chinese eyes behind his mask. The problem of identity is never resolved for either Tam Lum or Kenji in the course of the play, but in the last scene Tam Lum ends up in the kitchen, whetting his meat cleaver. This meat cleaver, like Frank Chin’s own pen, may chop away much nonsense about white America’s stereotyped images of the silent and docile Orientals.

As compared with *The Chickencoop Chinaman*, Chin’s second play, *The Year of the Dragon*, has more recognizable Chinese characters, because all the conflicts and headaches take place in an old apartment located in San Francisco’s Chinatown. Fred Eng, the protagonist of the play, shares with Tam Lum his eloquence and he uses it to “badmouth” tourists who come to gawk at Chinatown. Making his living as a Chinatown tour guide, he still lives at the Chinatown apartment of his parents. Although he is already in his forties, he cannot get away from his parents, partly because of the antiquated Chinese tradition of filial duty and partly because of self-doubts and internal conflicts. Fred finds his antagonist in his father, who rules the family with an iron hand. The family affair is further complicated by the arrival of “China Mama,” the first wife Pa left behind in China in 1935. Ma Eng, American-born and raised, tries hard to be a peacemaker in the family, but it is a thankless task because there is a real conflict of three cultures. The three cultures are represented by the traditional Chinese ways of Pa Eng and “China Mama,” the Chinese-American ways of herself and Fred, and the assimilated American ways of Sissy and Johnny, Fred’s younger sister and brother. Sissy manages to escape from the problem of identity by marrying a white American and living away in Boston. But when she visits her parents in San Francisco, she finds herself caught in the storm of the conflict. Johnny, who can hardly speak a word of Chinese, has become a tough street kid, plagued by a sense of displacement. Fred Eng, born in China but raised in America, tries to help his younger brother and urges him to move away from home. Torn by filial piety for his parents on the one hand and hatred for the iron-clad Chinese tradition on the other, he lashes out at Pa Eng, the family patriarch, who retaliates by threatening to die. The generation gap or lack of communication between the generations may remind some

Chinese readers of that in Pa Chin's novel, *Family* (1931). The protagonist in *Family* tries to discover his identity and chart a new course for his own generation. He rejects the tradition of the past as irrelevant to his time.

As Bernard Shaw once said, "Without conflict there is no drama," Frank Chin has projected onto the stage his own internal conflicts in the two plays, *The Chickencoop Chinaman* and *The Year of the Dragon*. The voices of his characters in the plays are basically the conflicting voices of his Chinese and his American identities. . . . Frank Chin shows a sense of humor. His humor is shown through the dialogue and the characterization in his plays. . . . His humor is mordant and bitter. In this respect, he might be more American than Chinese, an heir of Mark Twain, who wrote such dark tales as "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" and "The Mysterious Stranger," rather than a literary descendant of Chuang Tzu and the classical Chinese poet-drunkards. But his contribution to the stage is substantial: for the first time in the theater there is an authentic Chinese-American voice. He has demolished the stage Chinaman with his plays and succeeded in articulating his own consciousness. In a strange but different way, Frank Chin's work in the theater reminds us of the effort of that Irish genius, James Joyce, who tries to "forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race," and, in Frank Chin's case, "the race" is neither the Chinese of the distant land nor the American of the white establishment, but the hitherto unheard and unsung world of the Chinese-Americans.

Dorothy Ritsuko McDonald (essay date 1981)

SOURCE: An introduction to "*The Chickencoop Chinaman*" and "*The Year of the Dragon*": *Two Plays by Frank Chin*, University of Washington Press, 1981, pp. ix-xxix.

[In the essay below, McDonald analyzes Chin's treatment of Chinese American history in his plays.]

1. THE AUTHOR'S SENSE OF HISTORY

"I was born in Berkeley, California in 1940, far from Oakland's Chinatown where my parents lived and worked," begins Frank Chin in his own profile. "I was sent away to the Motherlode country where I was raised through the War. Then back to Chinatowns Oakland and San Francisco. . . ." When offered a fellowship in 1961 for the State University of Iowa's Writer's Workshop, Chin accepted, but soon he was back in the West. "I was the first Chinese-American brakeman on the Southern Pacific Railroad, the first Chinaman to ride the engines. . . . fine riding but I left the rails."

Chinatown, Motherlode country (the Sierra Nevadas), railroads, Chinaman—these are key words for Frank Chin, for they denote his sense of Chinese American history as a valiant, vital part of the history of the American West, a history he believes his own people, under the stress of white racism, have forgotten or wish to forget in their eagerness to be assimilated into the majority culture. But the cost of acceptance has been great, especially for the Chinese male, who finds himself trapped by a stereotype: supposedly lacking in assertiveness, creativity, and aggressiveness, he is characterized as passive, obedient, humble, and effeminate.

For Chin, however, the Chinese men ("Chinamans" as distinguished from assimilated Chinese Americans) who left their families for the New World in the nineteenth century were masculine and heroic, like other "explorers of the unknown—seekers after gold, the big break, the new country . . ." ["Back Talk," *News of the American Place Theatre* 3 May 1972]. But the Chinese pioneers encountered a systematic and violent racism which by now has been well documented. Even Mark Twain, who harbored his own prejudice against the Indians of the West, remarked [in *Roughing It*] on the unjust treatment of the Chinese:

Any white man can swear a Chinaman's life away in the courts, but no Chinaman can testify against a white man. Ours is the "land of the free"—nobody denies that—nobody challenges it. (Maybe it is because we won't let other people testify.) As I write, news comes that in broad daylight in San Francisco, some boys have stoned an inoffensive Chinaman to death and although a large crowd witnessed the shame-ful deed, no one interfered.

To Chin, Chinatowns were also the products of racism. That the Chinese themselves clustered together to preserve their alien culture is for him a myth: "The railroads created a detention camp and called it 'Chinatown.' The details of that creation have been conveniently forgotten or euphemized into a state of sweet confusion. The men who lived through the creation are dying out, unheard and ignored. When they die, no one will know it was not us that created a game preserve for Chinese and called it 'Chinatown'" ["Confessions of the Chinatown Cowboy," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 4, Fall 1972].

Given this historical perspective, is it any wonder that echoes of the West would resound in the work of this fifth-generation American, imbued with the aborted dreams of the hardworking, manly goldminers and railroad builders of his past? In Chin's first play, *The Chickencoop Chinaman*, the hero, Tam Lum, tells his children of the pioneers' old American dream:

Grandmaw heard thunder in the Sierra hundreds of miles away and listened for the Chinaman-known Iron Moonhunter, that train built by Chinamans who knew they'd never be given passes to ride the rails they laid. So of all American railroaders, only they sung no songs, told no jokes, drank no toasts to the ol'

iron horse, but stole themselves some iron on the way, slowly stole up a pile of steel, children, and hid there in the granite face of the Sierra and builded themselves a wild engine to take them home. Every night, children, grandmaw listened in the kitchen, waiting, til the day she died.

The Iron Moonhunter, that seeker after the dream, carries the memories and hopes of the proud Chinamen who laid rails across the West.

Chin's grandfather worked as a steward on the Southern Pacific and owned a watch with a train engraved upon it. "I took my grandfather's watch and worked on the Southern Pacific," says Chin. "I rode in the engines up front. . . . I rode in the cabooses where no Chinaman had ever ridden before. I was hired with the first batch of blacks to go braking for the SP, in the 60s when the fair employment legislation went into effect. (Ride with me grandpa, at least it's not the steward service. You get home more often now.)"

In his essay "Confessions of the Chinatown Cowboy," from which the previous quote was taken, Chin describes that rare Western breed, the modern-day Chinaman, in poet and labor-organizer Ben Fee: "a word of mouth legend, a bare knuckled unmasked man, a Chinaman loner out of the old West, a character out of Chinese sword-slingers, a fighter. The kind of Chinaman we've been taught to ignore, and forget if we didn't want America to drive Chinatown out of town."

It was Ben Fee who called Chin the "Chinatown Cowboy" for the dramatic black outfit he wore during their first meeting. "A Chinaman dressed for a barndance," says Chin of his younger self, "solid affectation."

Despite the self-irony displayed here, the black-garbed, two-fang-buckled Chin is obviously no assimilated Chinese; he is declaring his aggressive masculinity and claiming the history of the American West as his own. For the unwary reader, then, who rigidly associates Asian Americans with Asian culture and not American history or culture, some passages in Chin's plays can be disconcerting if not downright incomprehensible or offensive. To such a reader, the meaning of Tam's lyrical monologue on the Iron Moonhunter would be lost. And what of the Lone Ranger metaphor that dominates the balance of the play? Aware that Asians were excluded from American heroism, Tam Lum during his boyhood had idolized the black-haired Lone Ranger, whose mask, he thought, hid his "slanty" eyes. But in a farcical scene the Ranger is revealed to be a broken-down white racist. A train whistle is heard, and the young Tam recognizes it as that of the Iron Moonhunter. But the Ranger cautions Tam and his friend: "Hear no evil, ya hear me? China boys, you be legendary obeyers of the law, legendary humble, legendary passive. Thank me now and I'll let ya get back to Chinatown preservin your culture!"

Chin's historical perspective is similarly found in his next play, *The Year of the Dragon*, set in San Francisco's

Chinatown. The theme of the West is sounded by the family in various ways, especially in the climactic last scene when Pa Eng dies suddenly while struggling with Fred, who later says, "I woulda like to have packed him up into the Sierras and buried him by the railroad . . . I was saving that one for last. . . ."

2. AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

If Chin seeks to preserve the history of the first pioneering Chinamen, he nonetheless looks forward in time and sees—as does Fred Eng in *The Year of the Dragon*—the Chinese Americans as an "endangered species." Not only are the Chinese women like Mattie marrying out white at a rapidly increasing rate, in part no doubt due to the present "sissy" image of the Chinese male, but women have always been outnumbered by men. Historically, the series of discriminatory exclusion laws (1882-1924) made it difficult, then impossible, for both alien and American Chinese to bring their wives from China. Chinatown was therefore essentially a bachelor society. In addition, an American-born woman lost her citizenship when she married a person ineligible for citizenship; and by the Exclusion Act of 1882, immigrant Chinese could not be naturalized. These laws were repealed in 1943 during the Second World War when China was an ally of the United States.

In *The Year of the Dragon*, it is mainly through the American-born Ma Eng that the reader discerns this historical discrimination. She tells Ross: "My grandmother, Ross . . . she used to tell me she used to come home oh, crying like a sieve cuz all she saw was blocks and blocks of just men. No girls at all. She was very lonely." Moreover, she says of her daughter: "You know . . . my Sissy is a very limited edition. Only twenty Chinese babies born in San Francisco in 1938." When she discovers that the mysterious visitor in her home is her husband's first wife, who had to be left in China because of the Exclusion Act of 1924 and now could enter America because of its repeal, she says: "I coulda been deported just for marrying your pa. The law scared me to death but it make your pa so thrilling to me. I'm American of Chinese descent. . . ."

However, had Ma Eng, by some stretch of imagination, desired to marry a white American, it would have been illegal at that time, for in California such an intermarriage was forbidden in 1906 by a law which was not nullified until 1948. But at the time of the play not only are the Matties marrying out white, so are the males. Thus, Fred tells Ross, "it's a rule not the exception for us to marry out white. Out in Boston, I might even marry me a blonde." Later, while urging his juvenile-delinquent brother, Johnny, to leave Chinatown for Boston and college, he adds, "Get a white girl while you're young. You'll never regret it."

This urge toward assimilation and extinction is similarly found in *The Chickencoop Chinaman* when Tam Lum,