

early modern stage, musical notation was never included in play texts, making it difficult—and often impossible—to recreate the original performance. To the rescue comes Ross Duffin's *Some Other Note: The Lost Songs of English Renaissance Comedy*. A companion to Duffin's *Shakespeare's Songbook* (Norton, 2004), *Some Other Note* presents the result of detailed and painstaking musical excavation, as Duffin searches through surviving early modern tunes to identify the music that is sung or alluded to in approximately a hundred plays. (Shakespeare, having been covered in the earlier book, is not represented here.) To his investigation into core repertory, Duffin adds chapters on the music of fifteenth-century mystery and morality plays; sixteenth-century interludes of the court, St. Paul's, the Chapels Royal, and the Inns of Court; and continental influences. The book concludes with a section on jigs, the "farfical song-and-dance playlets that were often inserted at the end or between the acts of more serious drama" (xxix).

As in *Shakespeare's Songbook*, Duffin begins with the premise that early modern English playwrights, rather than having music newly composed for their songs, simply appropriated tunes that were already in circulation. Well-known settings by composers such as Alfonso Ferrabosco, he argues, were often written after the play had been produced for the first time, and thus cannot offer clues as to the original performance. Duffin's hypothesis permits and rewards "informed guesswork," because "when a playwright creates a new lyric, it is often with some recognizable song in mind, and there is almost a compulsion to use some of the same key words, or rhyming words, that are in the original song" (xxvii, xxv). Armed with these clues, Duffin is able to come to persuasive conclusions about which ballad tunes fit with which play lyrics. In a number of cases, he offers two or more possibilities. The result is a compellingly rich compilation of early modern tunes, matched and re-matched to different lyrics as form and associations dictate. While some of Duffin's inferences may be more persuasive than others, there can be no doubt that his work provides an immensely valuable guide to the intersection between playhouse and popular music.

The attractive volume includes a foreword by Tiffany Stern, a glossary of key terms, and access to a companion website containing an extended bibliography, lists of all cited materials, and links to the English Broadside Ballad Archive. With this book, Duffin seeks "to bring musical life" (xxx) to early modern comedy, and it is to be hoped that future producers of these plays will take note.

Anti-Black Racism in Early Modern English Drama: The Other "Other," by Matthieu Chapman. New York: Routledge, 2016. Pp. 200. Hardback. \$150.

Reviewer: NOÉMIE NDIAYE

Anti-Black Racism in Early Modern English Drama: The Other "Other," Matthieu Chapman's thought-provoking first book, boldly intervenes in the

field of early modern race studies by redefining race as a category that served in early modern England not only to define identity, but also to define subjectivity, the pre-condition for having an identity. The “other Other” to which the title refers is blackness, a condition which, in Afro-pessimist scholarship, excludes people from the domain of subjectivity, thereby denying them humanity. Within Black studies, Afro-pessimist theorists, influenced by Orlando Patterson’s foundational definition of Slavery as a “social death,” see blackness not as an “identity,” but as a “structural positionality” (18), an ontological condition predicated upon incommunicability, which constitutes “the abject of humanity” (19). Mobilizing that theoretical lens for the first time in the field of early modern race studies, Chapman argues that, on the early modern English stage, black characters were, in Lacanian terms, excluded from the symbolic order, as they manifested the “metaphysical absence” that is blackness (6).

Chapman aims at re-orienting the exploration of the white/non-white antagonism that has been prevalent in early modern race studies towards a black/non-black paradigm. According to him, unlike non-white Others such as Moors, Indians, Jews, or Turks whose humanity was recognized by the English even when they were denigrated, black people were not seen as humans. Thus, *Anti-Black Racism in Early Modern English Drama* undertakes to study representations of black people in isolation from other non-white ethnic groups, despite the pervasive overlaps characterizing the lexicons, representational strategies, and prosthetic techniques used to depict them in early modern English theater. In chapter 2—which includes a particularly original and compelling reading of Robert Greene’s *The History of Orlando Furioso*—Chapman attempts to disentangle blackness from Moorishness by focusing on plays that “position blacks as the abject to Moorishness” (73). Similarly, in chapter 4, he contrasts black difference with Native American difference as they feature in the travel writings of John Hawkins and in Sir William Davenant’s *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*. I appreciated Chapman’s refreshing commitment to exploring understudied texts in those two chapters, and I wondered how the latter would have dealt with Davenant’s other colonial Interregnum piece, *The History of Sir Francis Drake*, which pairs Native Americans with Symaroons—black people who have escaped slavery and who vocally claim subjectivity.

According to Chapman, blackness uniquely fulfilled a psychic need for an early modern English population that was just starting to produce notions of subjectivity based on binary oppositions. In short, at the subconscious level, the early modern English saw themselves as humans and subjects by contrast with black people long before the development of the transatlantic slave trade. This subconscious activity, Chapman argues, is particularly palpable on stage where “beginning with the devils in medieval pageants and continuing through the Interregnum, English drama contains a continuum of repre-

sentations of blackness as equivalent to nonhumanity” (25). Reading the well-known black devils of medieval drama as an incarnation of the concept of evil abject blackness first developed by Manichean philosophers, Chapman’s book, together with Robert Hornback’s recently published *Racism and Early Blackface Comic Traditions* (2018), expands the field’s understanding of the diabolism attached to early modern black characters in new and exciting directions. Being diabolical meant much more than being simply evil on the early modern stage, and the field has not attended yet to all the semiotic capabilities of the black devil. Chapman explains in chapter 1 that black characters took over the function of abjection after the English encountered Sub-Saharan Africans. From then on, blackness, understood as the abject of humanity, was constructed on stage through human-presenting characters performed in blackface, explicitly identified as slaves, unable to maintain filial relations, and lacking the “capacity for interlocution with civil society” necessary to partake in the symbolic order (51).

This specific construction of blackness, however, applies to a finite segment of the trove of plays featuring black characters. Wrestling with an archive that will hardly conform to any single theoretical model, Chapman acknowledges—sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly—that many early modern Afro-diasporic characters performed in blackface do not fit the Afro-pessimistic bill of ontological blackness. For instance, in chapter 3, Chapman demonstrates that Othello, despite his black skin, is not ontologically black, rightfully reminding us that race was not mapped onto the body in early modern English culture any more systematically than it is now. Othello works as a counter-example, and Aaron as an “anomaly” (159). Indeed, in chapter 5—in my opinion the most brilliant section of the book—Chapman reads *Titus Andronicus* as a play that mobilizes the trope of the abject black Slave only to shatter it to pieces. Aaron starts the play in the position of the Pattersonian Slave, but he quickly claims subjectivity and puts his Master enemies in the position of the Slave, thereby provoking “the destruction of Roman civil society” (157), a thinly veiled version of early modern English society in its racial epistemology. Chapman’s argument is at its most powerful when it shows that early modern drama did not only mobilize the paradigm of the Slave as incarnation of black abjection but also messed with it and pushed against it. Such pushing was not Shakespeare’s prerogative, and a more diverse sample of plays would certainly have yielded more “anomalies.”

A sample of plays including some of the Jacobean female characters that took over English racial dramaturgy until the Interregnum would have been particularly welcome in this respect. Indeed, black women figure only fugitively in Chapman’s book—intentionally so. Based on the Afro-pessimistic notion that claiming a body and a gendered identity is a privilege bestowed upon humans and not upon abject Slaves, Chapman proposes that there is no

such thing as an ontologically black woman in the early modern repertoire (144), and consequently pays little attention to the numerous non-ontologically black women of that same repertoire. That proposition will probably disappoint feminist early modern race scholars, such as myself, who consider intersectionality to be the way forward. Intersectionality and Afro-pessimism have never been incompatible, far from it. As Hortense Spillers herself powerfully asserted over thirty years ago, “the problematizing of gender places her [the enslaved black woman], in my view, out of the traditional symbolics of female gender, *and it is our task to make a place for this different social subject*” (emphasis mine).¹

Perhaps the greatest payoff of Chapman’s intervention lies in the connections that it fosters between early modern race studies, animal studies, and post-human studies. Indeed, within a theoretical framework that defines the black Slave as a non-human non-subject creature made of “sentient flesh” (143), where is the boundary between the black Slave and the animal? That interrogation comes most acutely to the fore in Chapman’s analysis of the little known Caroline piece, *Mr. Moore’s Revels*, which directly links black people to apes. If, as Henry Turner recently suggested, we have reached a worrying point where, quite systematically, “race drops away from ecocritical and new materialist approaches to the post-human,”² a book like *Anti-Black Racism in Early Modern English Drama: The Other “Other”* points out new avenues to explore in order to start bridging that gap.

Notes

1. Hortense J. Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book,” *Diacritics*, 17.2 (1987): 64–81(80).

2. Henry Turner, “Recent Studies in Tudor and Stuart Drama,” *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 58: 2 (2018), p 473–537, quotation on p. 480.

Shakespearean Intersections: Language, Contexts, Critical Keywords, by Patricia Parker. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018. Pp. 424. Hardback, \$59.95.

Reviewer: JENNY C. MANN

Have your thoughts ever lingered on the name “Brabantio” while reading or watching a performance of *Othello*? Likely not, since Desdemona’s father appears only briefly in the first act of the play. But even if you had the requisite historical knowledge to notice the name’s evocations of the Brabant, a region of the Low Countries, you might be prevented from making the connection because many modern editions of the play print the character’s name

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