

sentence descriptions are readily available on Wikipedia. Along similar lines, some judicious pruning of the articles would have ameliorated the book's turgidity (do we really need, for instance, a description of George C. Scott's living room?). Finally, Senelick reports that Edith Isaacs, one of the journal's editors, dedicated "the August 1942 issue of *Theatre Arts* to 'the Negro in American theatre'" (xvi). This important issue was later expanded into a book published by *Theatre Arts* in 1947. Why, then, were none of the comments about African American acting made in the 1942 issue reprinted in this collection? Other than Young's essay on Mei Lan-Fang, the anthology lacks contributions beyond the white establishment. Despite misgivings, the significance of this collection is evident, and Laurence Senelick has done a great service to the scholarly and professional community.

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Honor and Violence in Golden Age Spain. By Scott K. Taylor. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. 320 pp. \$55.00 cloth.

Scott K. Taylor's *Honor and Violence in Golden Age Spain* offers a fresh approach to understanding the Spanish concept of honor and its prominence in the cultural landscape of seventeenth-century Spain. Although Taylor is an early modern historian, his work is interdisciplinary in its breadth of scholarship as it touches on literary criticism, cultural anthropology, legal studies, and theatre history. In this book, he challenges the dominant theory that Spanish honor was a rigid social code based on shame and cultural anxieties as depicted in early modern Spanish drama and literature.

In contrast to the strict "code of honor" traditionally ascribed to Spanish culture, Taylor introduces his concept of the "rhetoric of honor," which he defines as "the conscious use of phrases, gestures, and actions—including elements of the duel—to convey information about the issues in contention while simultaneously advancing a violent confrontation" (21). Finding the term "code" too limiting in its implication of a formal process, Taylor's "rhetoric" creates a loose template of action that establishes an accretion of shame which can then rise to violent confrontations—a fluid and performative approach to honor as a construct in early modern society and literature.

Taylor presents his theory in juxtaposition to the previously published

theories of social anthropologists Julian Pitt-Rivers, J. G. Peristiany, and Jane Schneider, who have explained honor as a strict code that supported a family-centered morality, acting in and influenced by a larger sense of community. Taylor asserts that their concept of honor developed in part by using the “honor plays” of Lope de Vega and Pedro Calderón de la Barca and discussions of dueling in fencing manuals as examples of actual behavior. Taylor contends, however, that social interactions involving violence in dueling manuals, law books, and “honor plays” of the period do not accurately depict Spanish behavior. For him, these printed accounts of violence depict Spanish life in an imagined or idealized form where two wronged parties duel in accordance to a strict code of actions. He therefore places de Vega, Calderón, and other Spanish playwrights in the ranks of early modern moralists and an “elite culture” of Spanish authors.

Rather than relying solely on dramatic and other literary representations, such as novels or dueling manuals, to illuminate the workings of “honor” and “violence” during the era, Taylor focuses on legal documentation of actual historical events. He does employ the plays, however, as tools for an intellectual discourse of honor contrasted with the factual events documented in legal records, by introducing each chapter with a dramatic scene treating the chapter’s topic, followed by an explication of the topic gleaned from his research into the courts. Through this methodology he deconstructs the romanticized anthropological and artistic concepts of honor by comparing them with descriptions of real-life confrontations involving civil matters of “honor” in early modern Spain.

For example, in chapter 4, titled “Men,” which explores the anxieties of masculine honor and its dependency on the behavior of others, Taylor presents the opening scene of Calderón’s *El pintor de su deshonra* (The Painter of His Dishonor). He then contrasts the fictional anxiety of Calderón’s Don Juan, cursing that his honor has been stained by his wife, Serefina, with the historical legal misadventures of Juan Camacho, a tailor from Yébenes who was involved in eight separate criminal cases involving honor from 1609 to 1618. Although Don Juan’s troubles are theatrically exciting, the details of Camacho refusing to give up his sword to the *alcades*, his violent confrontations over perceived public insults, and his seeking sanctuary from the courts in a church cemetery creates a vivid understanding of the practical invocation of honor in Spanish society.

Taylor’s strengths lie in the meticulous detail of his primary research in the archives of the *fiel del juzgado* (faithful to the court) of Yébenes from 1600 to 1650 and the *Indultos de Viernes Santo* (Good Friday Pardons) issued by the

king of Spain from 1618 to 1652. His catalog of actual violent confrontations in Spain is a treasure trove of primary documentation for scholars of law, history, anthropology, and martial practices. Taylor also creates an exciting paradigm by juxtaposing specific legal cases involving violence against the introductory theatrical scenes for each chapter. Although antithetical to his purpose of using dramatic scenes to illuminate contemporary misperceptions of honor, for theatre practitioners this approach explores Spanish honor in both a practical and artistic sense, as it pertains to his chapter topics of dueling, law, men, women, and adultery. Taylor's approach in contrasting historical and dramatic accounts of violence unintentionally offers directors, fight choreographers, and actors exciting choices for performance that are grounded in a sense of authority and respect for early modern Spanish playwrights and culture.

Although perhaps not Taylor's intent, this discussion of Castilian society also illustrates the performative elements of legal trials. Here two parties (actors) come together before the court (audience) to describe past events (plot or action), intending to resolve the conflict (denouement). As Taylor notes: "The judicial authorities tended to expend less ink describing the actual combat than they did on the verbal and gestural posturing that preceded, and often accompanied, the fighting" (50). This description highlights the absence of specific actions for combat in early modern plays known for their limited stage directions.

My only criticism of Taylor's impeccable scholarship is that he relegates plays to an "elite" printed world of literature, with minimal consideration of what these plays might have conveyed *beyond* the printed word, in performance. What Taylor ignores is that *comedias*, Spanish plays of the Golden Age, were written primarily as pieces of theatrical entertainment intended for performance in the *corrales* of Madrid. If Taylor had regarded the printed texts as examples of performed dialogue, he might have seen in the evidence of his historical research the connections between his theory of the "rhetoric of honor" and the verbal banter that leads to the stage direction "Riñen" (They Fight). In his conclusion, Taylor reaffirms his theory of the "rhetoric of honor" by stating that affairs of honor involved a series of improvisational signifiers as opposed to a strict set of actions. "Instead of locking participants into a code of behavior," he notes, "honor offered tools to be picked up and used at the discretion of the user—insults, gestures, symbols such as hats and moustaches, and violence were all part of a loose but well understood repertoire of moves and emblems that allowed early modern Castilians to pursue disputes over truth and reputation" (227). Each descriptor Taylor employs has a theatrical element that may have been further manifested through blocking and gesticulation in performance.

BOOK REVIEWS

Honor and Violence in Golden Age Spain significantly broadens our understanding of its subject by exploring aspects of “honor” as a social construct with mutable application and behavior. Although a social history, Taylor’s work is immediately applicable for early modern theatre historians and practitioners attempting to analyze, research, teach, or stage the plays of Spain’s Golden Age. More importantly *Honor and Violence in Golden Age Spain* opens new lines of inquiry for early modern scholars of multiple disciplines.

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Branding Texas: Performing Culture in the Lone Star State. By Leigh Clemons. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008. xi + 173 pp. \$40.00 cloth.

I have said that Texas is a state of mind, but I think it is more than that.
It is a mystique closely approximating a religion.

John Steinbeck

In *Branding Texas: Performing Culture in the Lone Star State*, Leigh Clemons uses her native state of Texas to investigate how nations and regions develop a sense of identity through performance. She explores the emergence of a dominant narrative of “Texanness” over more than 170 years through performative pedagogy reinforcing a selective paradigm. Clemons examines issues ranging from the acceptance of pseudo-historical events in the inclusion of “official” history to the types of Texans featured as “authentic” in plays and television. This process includes the “branding” of a specific Texas cultural image as a commodity for statewide, national, and international consumption. This brand—as embodied in the “prototypical” Texan—she calls the “Lone Star.” The Lone Star is almost exclusively white, male, and on the wealthy side, and is exemplified by the most famous example at the time of printing, George W. Bush.

Clemons makes clear in her first chapter why the case of Texas is relevant to a wider audience. Texas holds a unique place in American regional identity and, through politics and economics, has a strong impact on America and the rest of the world. More to the point, the Texan example is emblematic of how *any* cultural identity is formed and reinforced through performative (and frequently exclusive) means. Her second chapter addresses the manipulation of cultural geography and history. Examining historical markers, battle sites, mu-