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THE METHOD AND THE MEANS: JAMES BALDWIN AT THE ACTORS STUDIO

In the climactic scene of James Baldwin's 1968 novel *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*, the narrator and protagonist, Leo Proudhammer, appears with his friend and lover Barbara in the living room of a Jewish acting teacher named Saul San-Marquand, the artistic director of the Actors' Means Workshop. Leo and Barbara have been hanging around the small town in New Jersey where the Workshop has decamped for the summer season. At last, they have been given their promised chance to perform a scene for Saul, who will decide on the basis of that scene whether or not they will be accepted as members of the Workshop. They have prepared a scene from Clifford Odets's *Waiting for Lefty* in which Flor and Sid, a young couple, break off their relationship under pressure from Flor's brother. Leo, who is black, and Barbara, who is white, have just admitted their love for each other; their impossible interracial relationship underlies the novel. When they arrive in Saul's apartment, they have just walked through town together to the obscene and threatening jeers of the white townspeople, validating their decision, made in bed hours earlier, that their relationship can never be public.

As they enter Saul's living room, they come upon a young actor performing a monologue from *Othello*. Leo is the only black person associated with The Workshop; Baldwin describes the other actor as "swarthy." His performance is a parody of bad acting: overwrought but emotionally nonsensical, physical but without life, superficial and thoughtless. It is obvious to Leo that this is bad acting, possibly the worst, but Saul and the other students don't seem to think so. When the actor is asked to explain himself, he says that he was trying to make Othello's emotions physical: "Grief, for me, always goes to my stomach." Saul's response is cautiously positive: "We feel . . . that you have made very nice progress since you have been with us. . . . You are less afraid than you were of letting us see your insides, so to say." Saul passes off the actor's flailing as personal revelation.[1] When the discussion turns to the question of Othello's race, the acting student denies—glancing guiltily at Leo—that his race makes a difference. Saul

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congratulates him on his work: "We admire the directness of your approach to your problem—the idea of Othello with, so to say, a bellyache, we do not reject, as others might, no, we find it a very interesting idea."[2]

When Barbara and Leo play their scene, however, Saul is nowhere near as gentle. He is snide, imperious, and caustically vague. He criticizes their choice of scene, doubting they could have any sense of the play. Saul tells Leo that he finds his "equipment for the theater extremely meager." The problem is his body: "An actor's instrument is his body, is himself. Paul Robeson, for example, is an actor who was made to play Othello. The instrument suggests it, the instrument, so to say, demands it. Other actors could never play Othello. The instrument could not carry the illusion." Saul is implying, none too subtly, that race is the intractable limit of acting ability. Leo will never be able to convincingly play a white character; he should therefore follow the example of Paul Robeson's Othello and play black characters exclusively. Saul tells Leo, "You were bombastic, hysterical, and self-pitying"; not only did Leo's black body not go with the part, but there was something excessive about that body in performance, "bombastic, hysterical." Unlike Leo's disdainful summation of the swarthy young actor's Othello, which was so disconnected from the character's emotion that passionate grief turned into a stomachache, Saul's criticism of Leo is that his emotionality was too much, over the top, sentimental—unfitting and unbecoming. The only part of Leo's performance that Saul approves of his Leo's soft-shoe routine at the end of the scene: "Then you seemed free, and, so to say, joyous and boyish. . . . If we decide to continue with you . . . it will be in the hope that we can make such moments come more easily to you."[3] In other words, Leo should stick to minstrelsy.

James Baldwin at the Actors Studio

Saul San-Marquand, of course, is Lee Strasberg and the "Means" is the Method. This is what Baldwin, in 1968, had to say about the Actors Studio. The satire is so bellicose and so thinly veiled that one might wonder at Baldwin's bitterness. Ten years earlier he had felt quite differently. The Actors Studio, founded by Elia Kazan and Robert Lewis in 1947, was the preeminent American acting workshop through the 1950s and the home of what came to be known as Method acting, a training system based on the work of Russian theatre director Konstantin Stanislavsky that was developed in America in the 1920s and 1930s. Though it is little known and little remarked upon in either American theatre history or in Baldwin studies, Baldwin had a long and productive association with the Actors Studio, beginning in 1958, when the Studio tried out a dramatic version of Baldwin's novel *Giovanni's Room.* Shortly after the workshop, Baldwin returned from a trip to Paris to assist Kazan on his direction of two Actors Studio productions: Archibald MacLeish's *J.B.* and Tennessee Williams's *Sweet Bird of Youth.* Kazan hoped that Baldwin would become a full-fledged Studio playwright, and Baldwin participated in the Playwrights Unit that Kazan set up at the Studio for the season of 1959–60, alongside Norman Mailer and Edward Albee.[4] According to both Baldwin and Kazan, it was Kazan's

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suggestion that Baldwin write a play about the murder of Emmett Till; that eventually became *Blues for Mister Charlie*, Baldwin's best-known play, which premiered in an Actors Studio production on Broadway in 1964.[5]

That play and that production are the subjects of this essay. *Blues for Mister Charlie* is located at the hinge of Baldwin's politics, between the liberal Baldwin of the 1950s and the more radical Baldwin of the 1960s and 1970s. *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*, Baldwin's only work of fiction to deal directly with that liminal period, demonstrates the intimate connection between this political transition and Baldwin's experience with the Actors Studio. Both the novel and the play reveal that Baldwin's critique of Method acting and its model of psychological subjectivity catalyzed his growing discontentment with liberal universalism. Both works, moreover, illustrate Baldwin's struggle to articulate a third way between the American universalism that Method acting modeled—and that had characterized Baldwin's own voice as a young writer—and the separatism he would later embrace. In *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*, this struggle yielded a novel that critics found baggy, moralistic, and sentimental.[6] In *Blues for Mister Charlie*, this struggle generated a problematic, even schizophrenic, dramatic structure and tone. It also, however, sparked a searching reflection on the difficulties intrinsic to the performance of racial difference in a theatrical culture that insists on identification. Increasingly discontented with the Method and American realist theatre but not willing to leave behind completely his belief in the power of empathic identification and the individual consciousness, Baldwin wrote a play that engaged the politics of his historical moment through a complex interrogation of theatrical form. The play reveals not only a crucial contour of its author's artistic and political trajectory but also how deeply Method acting was intertwined with the political concerns of its time.

The Actors Studio production of *Blues for Mister Charlie* was, by all accounts, a deeply turbulent experience for all involved. Strasberg became the artistic director of the Studio in 1951, and by 1960 Kazan had left and was working on a new production company at Lincoln Center. Kazan wanted Baldwin to do *Blues for Mister Charlie* there, but Baldwin decided to give it to the new directors of the Actors Studio instead. Whatever Baldwin's motives for doing so—his biographer James Campbell suggests that Baldwin was playing out an Oedipal conflict with Kazan, and musical coordinator Robert Cordier opined at the time that Baldwin "wanted the Actors Studio badge"—it was an ill-starred match from the first.[7] The rehearsal process was plagued with endless conflict: the Studio directors thought the play was too long (the original script ran at five hours), too confusing (the action moves back and forth in time without clear delineation), too offensive (Studio producer Cheryl Crawford was particularly upset about all the curse words), and most of all, too polemical. Baldwin fought back at every point—he refused to relinquish control, against protocol for a playwright, and insisted that Frank Corsaro be fired as director and that Burgess Meredith replace him—and everyone disliked each other by the end. Baldwin was discontented enough with his experience to remark that he wouldn't give the Actors Studio another play of his "unless I'm attacked with leprosy of the brain."[8]

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This falling out was dramatic but not incidental. Baldwin had dedicated his play to Medgar Evers and "the dead children of Birmingham," and he told *Playbill* that he had written the play "on pads in planes, trains, gas stations" while traveling for the civil rights movement. Whether or not this is true, it speaks to his concern that the play be taken as the authentic statement of an artist *engagé*.[9] Baldwin had never been shy about declaring that mainstream American theatre was depressingly apolitical. He had disliked Edward Albee's "race problem" play, *The Death of Bessie Smith*, when he had seen it in workshop at the Actors Studio several years earlier, and he had concluded that the central problem of the American theatre was its ineptitude at handling the real lives of blacks.[10] Thus, Baldwin articulated the problem with American theatre as a problem of theatrical realism. American realist theatre had failed to represent realistically a major segment of the American population and was therefore a failure outright.

Blues for Mister Charlie represents Baldwin's attempt to introduce a counterhegemonic realism: a realism from a black perspective. What happens to that realism by the third act of the play, however, reveals his increasing skepticism that its terms could achieve his political goals. *Blues for Mister Charlie* aligns realism with the liberal humanism of Rev. Meridian Henry, who has dedicated himself to the Christian ethic (and early civil rights movement strategy) of passive resistance and "turn the other cheek." When Meridian's son Richard is murdered by a white man, Lyle Britten, Meridian begins to question the wisdom of his philosophy, and the play moves away from realist convention. By the time we arrive in the third act, which takes place entirely in the courtroom where Lyle is acquitted of Richard's murder, *Blues* has dispensed with realism almost entirely. This signals the play's abandonment of the conciliatory humanism for which Meridian has stood; its increasing expressionism signals its increasing militancy. Baldwin uses theatrical form to dramatize a contemporary political problem: the ideological conflict between strategies for dealing with racial discrimination and inequality, with integration and conciliation on the one hand, separatism and militant revolt on the other.

It is not surprising that *Blues for Mister Charlie* "marks the end of [Baldwin's] season as white liberal America's black darling."[11] It would be a mistake, however, to see *Blues for Mister Charlie* as an allegory for the birth of black militancy. The play's ideology is deeply ambivalent, just as its author was clearly ambivalent about his decision to give the play to the nearly all-white Actors Studio to be produced on white Broadway. Who was this play for? Even the title is ambiguous: is the play *for* Mister Charlie (is Mister Charlie the white Broadway audience)? If so, how does that complicate the representation of race in the play, if it is, in some sense, a performance of blackness for whites? Could the title be ironic? Or is the play about the blues *of* Mister Charlie, a mourning song for Mister Charlie's moral and emotional failings? Despite his insistence that ticket prices be kept down to attract a less affluent black audience, Baldwin in part chose the Actors Studio and its Broadway theatre because he wanted to appeal to an audience of liberal whites, and appeal to them he did. Howard Taubman wrote a laudatory review in the *New York Times:* comparing the play to Clifford Odets's *Waiting for Lefty*, he described *Blues* as "a summon to arms in this

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generation's burning cause."[12] Keeping the show running when it failed to make money became a liberal cause célèbre: Baldwin took out an ad in the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* that was signed by celebrities both black and white, including Lorraine Hansberry, Marlon Brando, Sidney Poitier, Tennessee Williams, Studs Turkel, and Lillian Hellman. This eventually generated a gift of $10,000 from two Rockefeller heiresses.[13] The ad itself articulates both the passion and the ambivalence behind the production:

> Once in a very great while, a play transcends its form and becomes an experience—as real, as imposing, as true, as experience itself. This is "BLUES FOR MISTER CHARLIE." But when experience is cathartic, for a human being or for a group, it is also threatening—especially to the cult of indifference which is a pale plague on our cultural life. So this play's value is beyond entertainment, and beyond the cause with which it is connected. It is a gift of great value to the American heart out of which comes the only art worth saving. If it can be saved, more than it will be saved.[14]

The advertisement exemplifies not only Baldwin's ambivalent universalism but also the ambivalent view of theatricality in the middle of the century. It first asserts that the play is as much an experience as actual experience, as if other theatre were somehow less of an experience because less "imposing," less "true," but then it changes course with a charged theatrical term: the experience of the play is true, but it is also "cathartic." Samuel Weber has argued that what is purged in Aristotelian catharsis is the uncanniness of the "borderline case."[15] This might explain why *Blues* would be threatening to "the cult of indifference which is a pale plague on our cultural life": it would be so if the audience does not want to recognize that the black characters are not uncanny and that their experiences are akin to their own. This suggests that identification in *Blues* is a highly political issue, but here politics are severely curtailed: the play is apparently "beyond the cause with which it is connected." Why would Baldwin, arguing for his play's importance, downplay its political relevance so completely that all we're left with is the "American heart"?

Baldwin's ambivalence was not exclusively the ambivalence intrinsic to his tricky position as a black intellectual who gained much of his cultural standing through his esteem in the white world. It is in fact related to two fundamental theatrical problems: the relationship between representation and identification, and the value of such identification for politics. The kind of acting practiced at the Actors Studio—Method acting—took the position that near-complete psychological and emotional identification between actor and character is the best way to represent the human. The possibility of this identification rests on a universalist view of humanity: a faith in the translatability of human emotion and psychology. Konstantin Stanislavsky built his system on the basis of this faith in Moscow at the turn of the twentieth century (though he moved toward a more historically differentiated view later in his life).[16] In the United States of the 1960s, however, its political valences were wildly different than they had been in Moscow. American universalism was proving not only a pernicious ruse for the disregard of de jure

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and de facto state racism but also an all-excusing rationale for the silencing of political dissent in the cold war.[17]

Baldwin did not write his play in a theatrical vacuum: he wrote it for a certain kind of actor, the kind of actor he had helped Kazan direct in 1958 and knew would be cast in an Actors Studio production—a Method actor. But Baldwin's play was also written *against* the Method actor, or at least against the terms of universalism the Method put forth. Both his behavior during the production process and, more important, his play itself, suggest that though Baldwin was ready to use the appeal of universalism to his advantage, he was far from ignorant of its problems. *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* demonstrates Baldwin's view that the Method's value system based on universalist identification—the backbone of its psychological realism—failed when it came to identification across racial lines. *Blues for Mister Charlie* suggests the political implications of this failure and a potential way around it.

Blues in Context

The psychology of Method acting's psychological realism was a contentious issue from the earliest stages of the performance genre's development. Though heavily based on Stanislavsky, Method acting has a unique genealogy in the United States and owes its success to its resonance with ascendant American concerns. The fact that psychology and psychoanalysis came into vogue in the United States in the 1920s, especially in New York, is a key piece of this context. As Jonathan Pitches has argued, when Richard Boleslavsky, a director and member of Stanislavsky's Moscow Art Theatre, came to New York and began teaching Stanislavsky's system, he cannily shifted its terms to appeal to an American audience saturated with "'the new psychology and psycho-analysis.'"[18] Coming on the heels of the Moscow Art Theatre's triumphant debut in New York in 1923 and capitalizing on the current popularity of Freud, Boleslavsky was a hit. In 1924, with fellow MAT alum Maria Ouspenskaya, he founded the American Laboratory Theater, where he emphasized the inner psychological work of the actor, and, like Stanislavsky, encouraged emotional and psychological identification with the role.

Harold Clurman, Lee Strasberg, and Cheryl Crawford founded the Group Theatre in 1931 to put into practice what they had learned from the American Laboratory Theater and the Moscow Art Theatre. They formed an ensemble company and used Stanislavsky's system to perform realist dramas with political import, such as the socialist early plays of Clifford Odets. But the Group members' disparate interpretations of Stanislavsky led to increasing discord. Strasberg, who taught the Group's acting classes, focused even more on psychological work than Boleslavsky had. Many members of the company were dissatisfied with this approach; most famously, Stella Adler, an actress in the company, went to Paris to meet Stanislavsky and returned to tell Strasberg that he was wrong about everything: Stanislavsky had moved away from his early focus on psychological training, she said, and toward training based on physical action, script analysis, and characterization. By the end of the 1930s, the Group had dissolved.

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The Adler–Strasberg dispute, which roughly corresponded to the divergence between the "inside-out" model of psychology (the psychoanalytic model) and the "outside-in" model (the behaviorist model), endured; a disagreement about psychology led to the defining split in American realist acting.

When Robert Lewis and Elia Kazan founded the Actors Studio in 1947, they were explicitly opposed to Strasberg's approach. In contrast to both Strasberg and Adler, Lewis and Kazan emphasized action and objective: for them, each line an actor speaks must be motivated by a desire to enact change. One of Kazan's exercises involved asking actors to come up with twenty different actions for a single, simple line (expressed as an infinitive verb, such as "to convince") or asking them to perform a nursery rhyme with various objectives attached. Actors were also often required to put their actions into conflict with each other in improvised scenes.[19] Still, when Kazan became too busy with his directing career to teach at the Studio (Lewis had already left), he called on Strasberg, and the Actors Studio shifted its focus to inner life. Strasberg's key exercises were individual: the private-moment exercise required the actor to do what she would do if she were alone, and the emotional-memory exercise asked the actor to recall and thus reexperience a memory with strong emotional content.[20] As Strasberg's actors were taught to create characters from the inside out, their actions were secondary; action would emerge from psychology. Thus, whereas the split in the Group occurred around models of psychology ("inside-out" versus "outside-in"), the bifurcated history of the Actors Studio reveals an argument about action. Is action a secondary effect of the individual psyche, a product of unconscious and subconscious impulses, as Strasberg would have it, or a break from the entrapment of the unconscious, a conscious decision of a free will, as modeled by Kazan?

Baldwin's engagement with these philosophical issues is most immediately clear in his portrayal of Richard Henry. Richard is the ghostly center of *Blues for Mister Charlie*, and he represents what I take to be Baldwin's key question. For although the play ultimately critiques psychological hermeneutics of social conflict, it is also suspicious of activism that ignores the psychology of the individual. The most fully drawn and psychologically complex character in the play, Richard, a singer who returns to the South from New York, is the opposite of the patient, passive believer. Swaggering and using slang, he refuses to play the Jim Crow game. He carries a gun, brags about sleeping with white women in New York, scoffs at the cowering of the town's black population, and doesn't hide his disdain for Lyle Britten or dodge his threats. For these reasons, Richard continues to strike critics as problematic: some have even thought the play suggests that Richard got lynched "because he 'asked for it.'"[21] However, these readings fail to register the complexity of Richard's motivations. The promise of northern equality was not kept; the North was just as beset with racism, anger, and hopelessness as the South. Baldwin portrays Richard, the artist, as sensitive, lost, and inscrutable to himself. He is the most individualist character in *Blues*, the one who most struggles with group identification.

Richard is a provocation, and not just for the play's white racists (and critics appropriately sensitive to racial stereotypes). His resistance to identification with a collective also means that he is a troubling symbol for the town's black activists.

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The final scene in the courtroom, in which the gross injustice of the proceedings catalyzes the black characters' increasingly overt resistance, has been read as the failure of Baldwin the writer in the face of Baldwin the activist, but in fact, Baldwin undercuts the polemics of his characters. After all, whether they know it or not—and Baldwin leaves this purposefully ambiguous—their defiant characterizations of Richard are untrue: Richard *did* have a gun; he *did* brag about pictures of himself with white women. This underscores the ambivalence of Richard's martyrdom. Is Richard an individual or a symbol? The play keeps knocking against the question, not content to have it either way. Baldwin does more than demonstrate the horror of the white self-justifications for racial oppression; he also, more subtly, questions the militant black response as well. The movement needs a heroic image, not an imperfect, psychological man. But what is lost in that transmutation?

As this reading suggests, Baldwin's view of psychology is shot through with politics. Indeed, though the link may not be intuitive today, in the mid-twentieth-century United States, psychology had real political significance, especially for the issue of racial inequality. Race and psychology have a long and vexed history in the United States. Arguments based on eugenics and scientific racism endured through the turn of the twentieth century; by the 1910s, they had evolved into *race psychology*, the study of psychological differences between races. The political impetus for this movement was the so-called Negro education debate, an offshoot of the segregation debate, and the conclusions of race psychology—not surprisingly, given the highly ideological nature of its project as well as its dubious methodology—overwhelmingly jibed with standard racist stereotypes (blacks were unintelligent, lazy, overemotional, etc.). By the 1930s, many left-wing psychologists were beginning to denounce race psychology as explicitly or implicitly racist—perhaps even in its foundational assumption that racial difference exists. This critique of race psychology led to a crucial development: a widespread shift in focus from the psychology of race to the psychology of racism. There were two sides to this well-meant inversion, which did lead to research on the psychology of white racists but more commonly resulted in study of the detrimental effects that racism had on black psychology.[22] During World War II, this discourse centered on the question of whether or not blacks, pitifully damaged by racism, could properly identify as Americans, as military psychologists labored over the question of how to diminish racial prejudice in order to increase black soldiers' identification with the American cause. Thus, the field of psychology continued to imply that the problem was black difference.

After the war, these views carried forward, just as the increasingly important role of psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, and psychologists in the war effort carried forward into postwar policy and ideology. Policy makers in the postwar period embraced psychology as the answer to both social and individual problems, and the study of racism and prejudice focused more and more on the negative effects of racism on the black psyche. By the mid-1960s, however, there was a backlash against this "damaged Negro" model. The Moynihan Report of 1965, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," which cast the problem of racial inequality as the failure of the black family, provoked a wave of criticism for turning the

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state-sanctioned and broad cultural prejudice black Americans faced into problems of their own egos, self-images, and gender identities.[23] As historian Ellen Herman puts it, "After decades of performing as walking, talking examples of racism's psychological destruction, black Americans had had enough."[24] Herman's language here is telling: part of what was so problematic about postwar psychological theories of race was the way they imposed all-encompassing hermeneutics of performance. To base all action—for instance, the revolt of the Watts, Detroit, and Newark riots—on psychological motivation is to leave no room for moral decision making or dissent: in short, to deny the possibility of action itself.

The Politics of Theatrical Form

Throughout the first and second acts of his play, Baldwin subtly signals the artificiality of realist convention by contrasting it with an alternative theatrical logic: the logic of ritual. Interspersed with realist scenes and dialogues, these rituals break the representational space of the theatre. The first ritual is Richard's murder, which, in the play's first moments, occurs without context and without individuation: "in the darkness we hear a shot."[25] It is a symbolic murder, a ritual performance, standing for the history of lynching symbolized by the murder of Emmett Till. It is also symbolic, like lynching, from the point of the view of the perpetrator ("And may every nigger end like this nigger" [2]). The scene then cuts to the black church and "the sound of mourning" (2). Like ritual, song is both representational (Richard, the character, is a singer, and the characters sing in the onstage church) and nonmimetic (you can't pretend to sing). As ritual, it is both of the world of the play and the real world, both representational and performative. The church music, which weaves in and out of the play, transforms the representational space of the theatre into a ritual space, like a church. This is also what Meridian's sermon accomplishes at the end of act 2. When Meridian preaches from his pulpit, the audience is really listening to a sermon, as Baldwin's stage directions specify at the top of the play: "the pulpit is downstage, at an angle, so that the minister is simultaneously addressing the congregation and the audience" (1). In these moments, Baldwin brings the audience into the action, including them as participants in his story. Breaking the realist "fourth wall," such moments hint at the transformation that will take place in act 3 and throw into relief the realist dialogues that surround them.

For Baldwin juxtaposes these ritual performances with the representational performances of realist theatre. The scene that follows the ritual murder and vocal "sound of mourning" is a metatheatrical scene about playing character:

> MERIDIAN: No, no, no! You have to say it like you mean it—the way they really say it: nigger, nigger, nigger! *Nigger!* Tom, the way *you* saying it, it sounds like you just *might* want to make friends. And that's not the way they sound out there. Remember all that's happened. Remember we having a funeral here—tomorrow night. Remember why. Go on, hit it again.
>
> TOM: You dirty nigger, you no-good black bastard, what you doing down here, anyway?
>
> MERIDIAN: That's much better. Much, much better. Go on. (2)

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Reverend Meridian is coaching Tom, Ken, and Arthur (the black students) on their acting. He is ostensibly instructing them in passive resistance, on what they will have to withstand when they protest Richard's death and racial injustice: they must practice ignoring the insults and taunts of white people and inoculate themselves from their venom. However, what is striking about this opening scene is how much it is about acting a part. Meridian is coaching them on good acting: "say it like you mean it," say it "the way they really say it,"—say it, also, the way we've just heard the actor playing Lyle Britten say it, in the play's opening line. Even more interestingly, he coaches them to say it "the way they really say it" by referencing their own emotions. Instead of asking them to imagine the mentality of the white racists who would say such things, Meridian recalls the students to their own present trauma—the trauma of Richard's murder—to incite an emotional response: "Remember we having a funeral here—tomorrow night. Remember why." This emotional response need not have a direct correlation to the emotions of the white racists they are performing: in this acting class, emotion is a blank slate, on which the particulars of character and motivation can be superimposed. Good acting requires metonymic identification between one's own experience and that of the character. Meridian is teaching them Method acting.

In *Cinematic Identity*, Cindy Patton demonstrates that Method acting as practiced by black actors in postwar "race problem" films such as Elia Kazan's *Pinky* substantially contributed to a progressive shift in white conceptions of black humanity: "the Method style" (as she calls it)[26] represented psychological complexity and made it possible for white audiences to recognize black characters as human and to identify with their plight. According to Patton, we should not underestimate how much Method acting changed the racial imaginary and how intertwined the transformation of cinematic representation of blacks, via Method acting, was with the political goals of the civil rights movement, in which "the power of authentic presence was understood to be capable of decentering inauthentic and inauthentically held prejudice."[27] Although Patton restricts her analysis to film and suggests that the film genre most suited to Method acting is melodrama, her argument resonates with the point of view Rev. Meridian represents in this opening scene. Insofar as Meridian represents an earlier generation of civil rights leader, *Blues for Mister Charlie* supports Patton's estimation. Baldwin, however, ultimately came to different conclusions.

Blues begins with psychological identification as an ethical imperative, but the play quickly presents the limit of such identification, as the acting, directed by Meridian, suddenly turns real:

MERIDIAN: Why you all standing around there like that? Go on and get you a nigger. Go on!

(A scuffle.)

MERIDIAN: All right. All right! Come on, now. Come on.

(Ken steps forward and spits in Arthur's face.)

ARTHUR: You black s.o.b., what the hell do you think you're doing? You mother—!

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MERIDIAN: Hey, hold it! Hold it! Hold it!

(Meridian wipes the boy's face. They are all trembling.) (3)

Method acting supposedly wanted to create real life onstage—but how real is too real? Ken so completely identifies with his role as a racist that he spits in Arthur's face, but this physical violence, the effect of a truly successful performance of character, is so real that it destroys the logic of character acting itself: it breaks the scene. It also introduces the threat that hangs over the rest of the play: the threat that theatrical violence could turn into real violence. Like the music, like the nonmimetic spaces of the church and courtroom, Ken's spit breaks the representational logic that underlies realist acting. It confuses the border between fact and fiction that Method acting was intended to complicate but finally to control.

Blues aligns this Method acting with the ineffective form of universalist identification practiced by Rev. Meridian. The play challenges that identification both on the level of content and in the play's continued rupture of representational space, which, by the time we get to the third act in the nonrealist courtroom, has completely taken over. The opening stage directions specify that "each witness, when called, is revealed behind scrim and passes through two or three tableaux before moving down the aisle to the witness stand" (81)—a far cry from the realist, "fourth wall" directions at the top of the second act: "Jo and an older woman, Hazel, have just taken a cake out of the oven" (45). Baldwin pointedly places the witnesses in the same positions in relation to the audience as he did Meridian ("the witness stand is downstage, in the same place, and at the same angle as the pulpit in Acts I and II"), with the same performative effect: the witnesses are both in the scene and in the real space of the theatre, addressing the real audience. Again, Baldwin highlights this performance with a song, heard before the curtain rises, to further emphasize that whatever is going on onstage is real, not virtual, action.

The formal differences between the tableaux that precede the characters' testimonies correspond to these different levels of theatricality. In Jo Britten's tableau, her monologue diegetically sets her at the church social where Lyle first paid attention to her, then at their wedding. In these expressionistic scenes, she performs the memories that will influence her psychological state during her testimony, causing her to lie and say that Richard tried to rape her in order to absolve her husband of his crime. Crucially, however, the tableaux given to the characters after Jo do not, like hers do, take us away from the event of the play but rather dramatize hidden parts of it: when Papa D., the black owner of a juke joint, takes the stand, we flash back to the moments in his juke joint before Richard's murder. Similarly, when Lorenzo, a black student and Richard's friend, is called, we flash to a scene of him and Pete in jail for protesting Richard's murder.

Juanita's flashback, which follows Lorenzo's, is, like Jo's, in monologue and includes a stage direction that places her in the scene. Unlike Jo's monologue, however, Juanita's speech does not place her in the same scene as the stage direction does: it situates her in real time describing a past event, the night she and Richard had sex. In contrast to Jo's memory, which is represented as involuntary—jerky,

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without warning, without control—Juanita's is deliberate. She is the first character whose tableau scene is delivered directly to the audience: "I'm not afraid. I hope I'm pregnant. I *hope* I am! One more illegitimate black baby—that's right, you jive mothers! And I am going to raise my baby to be a man. A *man*, you dig?" (94). In addition to this monologue, another mimetic scene accompanies Juanita's testimony, but unlike Papa D.'s or Lorenzo's flashbacks, which open their testimonies yet stand apart from them as discrete scenes, Juanita's flashback is intrinsic to her testimony, emerging directly and seamlessly from her dialogue:

THE STATE: You met whom?
JUANITA: I met—Richard.

(We discover Meridian.)

MERIDIAN: Hello Juanita. Don't look like that. (97)

Juanita's testimony transforms the convention of the tableaux–courtroom scenes. Previously the internal narration moved back and forth from past to present in order to represent the characters' psychic states. Jo Britten's memory of the church basement, for instance, is not on the same level of dramatic action as her testimony. The false dialogue in which we hear her voice alone and her confessional tone—she is obviously not really saying half the things she "says"—serves to emphasize that what we are seeing belongs to her character exclusively: Jo's tableau is meant to give us insight into her individual psychological makeup. In contrast, Juanita's tableaux and testimony fuse present action and past experience, blurring the boundary between the two. Now the represented memory and the stage event are on the same level. Just as the musical interludes and Meridian's sermons fuse mimetic action with real action, the temporal collapse of past and present in Juanita's testimony directs us not to a fictional play-world but to the reality of the theatrical event at hand.

The rest of the play links this transformation of representative logic to the increased theatrical power of the black characters. When Rev. Meridian takes the stand, he delivers his "memory" directly to the audience. Likewise, when the state lawyer's questioning becomes pointedly sexual, as he tries to push Meridian toward a pseudo-Freudian explanation of Richard's deviance in terms of Oedipal conflict and perversion, Meridian refuses to discuss psychology or psychological motive at all: "Your judgment of myself and my motives cannot concern me" (105). Instead, he uses the stand as a pulpit (further blurring the line between the memory interlude and the present scene), and polemicizes against "*your* guns, *your* hoses, *your* dogs, *your* judges, *your* law-makers, *your* folly, *your* pride, *your* cruelty, *your* cowardice, *your* money, *your* chain gangs, and *your* churches!" (103). His anger has catapulted him out of passivity. When the final witness, Parnell, the white liberal who finds himself caught between loyalties, returns in his tableau to a scene that is as psychologically explanatory as Jo Britten's—an episode of impotence with a white woman reminds him of his erotic obsession with blackness that dates to an adolescent romance with a black girl—the distinction becomes clear. The white characters are the ones stuck in their psychology, replaying the memories that

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explain their motives in the terms of psychosexual wounds and desires. The black characters, in contrast, are no longer determined by their psychology or required to abide by representational realism's "fourth wall." They speak directly to the audience and literally take control of the theatre. So when Lyle Britten is called to the stand, he is given two mimetic tableau monologues—one in the woods and one in Papa D.'s juke joint—but no cross-examination at all: "*As Lyle approaches the witness stand, the lights in the courtroom dim*" (115). No speech, no action, just explanatory memories: pushing Lyle out of the present stage action and back into character psychology, Baldwin leaves him in the weakest position of all.

Baldwin's point is not to deny the psychological impact of racism and racist ideology, but in the end, his play asserts that sympathizing with the trauma of racism is no longer enough. How do we break the cycle of trauma and stop living as our damaged psyches have supposedly determined? How do we stop (Method) acting—and start really *acting*? Baldwin's experience working with the Actors Studio could only have furthered his sense that the Method's theatre of psychological realism and its accompanying universalism was not the kind of theatre contemporary politics required. Perhaps this is the reason why producer Cheryl Crawford believed that *Blues for Mister Charlie* heralded "the Studio's demise as a force in American theatre."[28]

"Human Emotions"

When the Actors Studio took *Blues for Mister Charlie* to London and the World Theatre Festival in 1965, it was an unambiguous disaster.[29] The London critics were vitriolic: one called the play a "straggling, overloaded propaganda tract."[30] There was a strong current of bald racism in the audience response to the production: on opening night, members of the fascist British National Party heckled the actors, "Filth, why don't you go back to Africa?"[31] Instead of confronting the British critics with their own country's racist reactions, Strasberg gave an infamous press conference in which he apologized for the play and its author: "There is a confusion between Mr. Baldwin's dynamic anger at the racial situation and the human involvement beneath it. . . . It is partly his fault, partly ours, if the human emotions are not sufficiently conveyed in the production."[32] Strasberg also explained that many of the actors in the London production were not regular Studio actors, and therefore the Studio should not be judged by their failings. Indeed, it was the black actors in the production who were not regular Studio members.[33] In separating the sheep from the goats, Strasberg divided his actors along racial lines. The notorious incident is likely what pushed Baldwin's opinion of Strasberg over the edge and led to the vituperative portrait in *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* with which I began this essay.

Strasberg's behavior reveals a deep insecurity: the press conference was a flailing attempt to preserve the reputation of his life's work, the Method. What is truly telling in his remarks, however, and is related to their racist undercurrents, is his ready-at-hand division of "dynamic anger" and what he terms "the human involvement beneath it."[34] Anger, clearly, was an emotion present in the production, but here Strasberg distinguishes between emotion in the service of politics

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("dynamic anger *at the racial situation*," emphasis mine), and the apolitical "human involvement"—that is, universal "human emotions." Some emotional responses—here, it would seem, the emotional responses of those who would not have a reason to be angry, not have a stake in the play's politics—are "human." Others are not. Revealingly, this facile racism also accommodated what would seem to be the opposite view of Baldwin's play: that rather than including too few emotions, it deployed too many. In his *New York Review of Books* review of *Blues*, Philip Roth memorably wrote, "If there ever is a Black Muslim nation, and if there is a television in that nation, then something like Acts Two and Three of *Blues for Mr. Charlie* will probably be the kind of thing the housewives will watch on afternoon TV."[35] Roth imagines a future nation whose politics have already become so hegemonic that they have become sentimental kitsch: too simplistic, too histrionic, too effeminate, and too emotional.

Roth's comment is fascinatingly reactionary. How frightening the masculinist rhetoric of the Black Muslim Nation must have been to require the marshaling of a set of housewives to emasculate it. Indeed, like Strasberg's division of human and nonhuman emotion, this is a version of the exclusionary politics of identification that the Workshop scene in *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* is meant to expose: "You were bombastic, hysterical, and self-pitying." In that climactic scene in San-Marquand's living room with which I began this essay, Baldwin demonstrates the implicit racism of the Method's ideology of performance. Opening with the white actor's insultingly simplistic identification with Othello and finishing with Saul San-Marquand's citation of Paul Robeson's Othello as evidence that black actors should not attempt to understand the white class struggle, the scene reveals that the Method's identification involves a power relation that only goes one way: white is universal, whereas black is always particular.

The third act of *Blues* is highly emotional, and it does enter what Eve Sedgwick called "the circumference of sentimental danger."[36] However, this was clearly intentional: Baldwin wanted the plight of the black characters to activate an emotional response in his largely white audience, one that racism had previously foreclosed. The third act of *Blues* incites a different kind of identification than that supported by psychological realism, the kind of psychological realism represented in the white characters' flashbacks. Urgent, direct, and unapologetically theatrical, the black characters' speeches, especially Juanita's, aim at an emotional identification that is more powerful and awe-inspiring than that roused by psychology. When Juanita, during the theatrical break in her testimony, talks to the audience about Richard, her speech is deliberately *general:* "My God, the smell, the touch, the taste, the sound, of anguish! … I want a lover made of flesh and blood, flesh and blood, like me!" (94). Her speech is full of abstract nouns; there are very few adjectives, and none of them describe Richard or their specific situation. In fact, almost nothing in the speech is specified or particularized, and this all-inclusiveness is the point: when suddenly she breaks in with "one more illegitimate black baby—that's right, you jive mothers!" (94), the effect is nothing if not jarring.[37] Directing that line to the white audience, she interrupts and contrasts their identification with her nonspecific experience of anguished love

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to the historically determined connotations ("one more illegitimate black baby") of her race. Despite Baldwin's critique of the Method, his play does employ a certain system of identification to overcome the very division between black particularity and white universality that would shortly prove the basis for the play's dismissal by critics. Indeed, with Juanita's climactic speech, Baldwin thus does Method acting one better, challenging the audience's identification by refusing to "whitewash" her difference.

Thus Baldwin wavers about the implications of the failure of Method acting. Is the Method's racist universalism a sign that psychological realism itself is racist (or contributes to the maintenance of the racist status quo)? Or should its terms simply be renovated? Should theatre therefore abandon the goal of cross-cultural identification entirely? Or is the Method's goal—collapsing external difference through psychological and emotional identification—a noble one, one that fails only because of the personal failures of its practitioners and the historical failures of their national cultures? Might there therefore be a nonracist Method yet to be found, with terms of identification that would allow for difference?

For what is so interesting is that, despite his scorn for Saul San-Marquand and the Actors Means Workshop, Leo Proudhammer, the protagonist of *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*, is definitely, unquestionably, a Method actor. Even in the novel's third and final section, "Black Christopher," which takes place long after Leo has proven Saul wrong and successfully played numerous characters written as white, Leo views theatre on the Method's terms:

> I don't think I'd have minded if I could have found a role which had some relation to the life I lived, the life I knew, some role which did not traduce entirely my own sense of life, of my own life. But I played waiters, butlers, porters, clowns; since they had never existed in life, there was no conceivable way to play them. And one learned, therefore, and long before one had learned anything else, the most abject reliance on the most shameful tricks, one learned before one learned anything else that contempt for the audience which is death to art. One was imitating an artifact, one might as well have been an icon, and one's performance depended not at all on what one saw—still less, God forbid, on what one felt—but on what the audience had come to see had been trained to see.[38]

The roles he is consigned to play as a commercial actor are lifeless racial stereotypes because the audience does not want to understand the real lives of blacks: they want to be comforted by the affirmation of their cozy racism. In opposition to this, Leo takes a position that is the Method's: the actor must be able to connect the role to his life experience, must abhor "tricks" and instead really live onstage, must, above all, not imitate, but actually feel. The sharp distinction Leo Proudhammer makes between the imitation of racist stereotypes and the truthful portrayal of "my own sense of life" is at the heart of Method acting, which locates authenticity in the actor's individual psychological and emotional life. Whatever his dismay at the racist undercurrents of Strasberg's Studio, Baldwin did not dismiss Method acting's guiding theory. Perhaps this is why there is something

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disheartening in the otherwise galvanizing end of *Blues:* the sense that, in the clearly necessary move toward direct political action, something might be lost. Richard's complexity, his contradictions, his artist's nonconformity—these are what we mourn, alongside our anger at the institutional and cultural racism that allows white murderers to go free. Leo Proudhammer, perhaps speaking for his author, is constantly bewildered by the political role he feels it is his duty to take. *Blues* previews what in *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* feels like regret. If things were as they should be, Leo could focus on "my own sense of life"—in other words, could just be an artist.

Race and Modern Acting

Did Baldwin ever read Stanislavsky? If he did, *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* is not only about Strasberg but also about Strasberg's Russian progenitor; if he didn't, his clairvoyance is startling. For Stanislavsky's *An Actor Prepares* opens with an almost identical scene to the one Baldwin sets up in *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* in Saul San-Marquand's workshop: an incompetent performance of Othello.[39]

An Actor Prepares, Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood's 1936 translation of Stanislavsky's early writings on acting, recounts the story of an acting company learning a new acting system from their director, Tortsov. On the first day of class, Tortsov tells the young actors to work on a scene playing any character in dramatic literature, and Kostya, the first-person narrator, somewhat randomly chooses a scene from *Othello*. At home, he finds the costume and props he thinks the Moor would have: he tucks a paper cutter in his belt like a dagger, wraps a towel around his head as a turban, makes a gown out of his sheets, and uses a dinner tray as a shield. But he is not satisfied: "My general aspect was modern and civilized, whereas Othello was African in origin and must have something suggestive of primitive life, perhaps a tiger, in him."[40] Rehearsing again the next day, he smears chocolate cake on his face to make it black and flashes the whites of his eyes and teeth.

The description of Kostya's attempts to play another race takes up the first nine pages of *An Actor Prepares.* His struggles model the struggles of an actor without the tools of Stanislavskian "craft": he begins from externals, instead of interior logic; he is incapable of adapting what he had rehearsed at his home to the stage of the theatre; he is more concerned with pleasing the audience than with playing the character. The only thing that seems to crack his superficial performance is a long discussion with a friend about Othello's emotions, which Kostya has not even considered. Alone again, Kostya goes over his part and is emotionally moved as never before: "I almost wept."[41] When it is his turn to perform once more, Kostya has a curious experience. At first, unable to perform as he could alone in rehearsal, he freezes: "The effort to squeeze out more emotion than I had, the powerlessness to do the impossible, filled me with a fear that turned my face and hands to stone." Then, unexpectedly, his frustration becomes something else: "I was making a failure, and in my helplessness I was suddenly seized with rage. For several minutes I cut loose from everything about me. I flung out the

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famous line 'Blood, Iago, blood!'"[42] The character of Othello is instantaneously brought to life by the actor's real emotion.

It makes no difference that his emotion, the frustration of an actor in the middle of a bad performance, bears only tangential relation to the emotion of his character, the rage of a betrayed general. His performed emotion works as an empty signifier, ready to be filled with whatever context the accoutrements of text and play-world provide. This metonymic emotion provides the only successful moment of Kostya's performance; the rest is drivel. In the next chapter, we find out why. The student actors discover that Tortsov found all their performances mechanical and clichéd, contributions to what he calls "the art of representation," as opposed to true art, which never imitates. He turns to Kostya:

> You are an intelligent person, yet why, at the exhibition performance, were you, with the exception of a few moments, absurd? Can you really believe that the Moors, who in their day were renowned for culture, were like wild animals, pacing up and down a cage? The savage that you portrayed, even in the quiet conversation with his ancient, roared at him, showed his teeth, and rolled his eyes. . . .You were tempted by the external appearance of a black man in general, and you hastily reproduced him without ever thinking about what Shakespeare wrote.[43]

Kostya didn't play a person, he played a stereotype; he didn't play inner life, he played external appearance. This external acting style, disconnected from both authentic human experience and the given circumstances of the play, is just as unacceptable when one is playing another race as it is when one is playing a part more physically similar to oneself. For Stanislavsky, theatre that is real art portrays real human experience, not stereotypes or clichés. The example of Othello is so instructive because nowhere do stereotypes become more obviously activated than in a European's idea of "the external appearance of a black man in general."

Kostya's Othello provides a fascinating counterpoint to the Workshop actor's Othello in Baldwin's novel. What the comparison first and foremost brings to light is that the problem of performing racial difference is foundational to modern acting—not a tangential or ephemeral question, but a deep and abiding concern. In both Baldwin's novel and in Stanislavsky, the performance of blackness is the litmus test for the white actor's ability to remain truthful while playing character: the paradox at the core of Stanislavskian acting. In both cases, the actors fail, but, revealingly, they fail for nearly opposite reasons. Whereas Kostya exoticizes and primitivizes Othello, the Workshop actor brings the character so close to himself that he becomes illegible. Stanislavsky's problem was getting the actor away from external theatrical clichés and toward the kinds of emotion that are universal to humanity; Baldwin's problem is that this universalist mandate has become what Cindy Patton calls "milquetoast humanism [that] promotes tolerance, but understands tolerance to be the property of white, Christian males who use it to reestablish their position as the Universal from which are distinguished the particulars who need to be tolerated."[44] Baldwin's novel throws down the gauntlet: racism cannot be overcome merely by acknowledging our shared humanity.

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This critique of universalism, found in both *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* and *Blues for Mister Charlie*, is inconclusive: both the novel and the play reveal their author's uncertainty as to how to proceed without it. Neither text is proscriptive. However, in the end, it is Baldwin's equivocation—his willingness not to know—that is so productive. The end of *Blues for Mister Charlie*, which breaks off as the black townspeople are about to march, leaves its audience not with ideological certainty but with a political potentiality: the possibility that new kinds of identification could produce new kinds of alliance. Both Baldwin's play and his novel give this sense of a theatre on the verge—a theatre for a collectivity yet to come.[45]

ENDNOTES

1. James Baldwin, *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* (New York: Dell, 1968), 221.
2. Ibid., 223.
3. Ibid., 228–30.
4. James Campbell, *Talking at the Gates: A Life of James Baldwin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 126–7.
5. James Baldwin, *Blues for Mister Charlie* (New York: First Vintage International, 1995), xiii–xv.
6. See Mario Puzo's painful review in *The New York Times*: "This is a simpleminded, one-dimensional novel with mostly cardboard characters, a polemical rather than narrative tone, weak invention and poor selection of incident." Mario Puzo, "Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone," *New York Times*, 23 June 1968.
7. Campbell, 192–3.
8. Ibid., 196. See also David Garfield, *A Player's Place: The Story of the Actors Studio* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 230–3.
9. Campbell, 174.
10. Ibid., 127.
11. Ibid., 192.
12. Howard Taubman, "Theater: 'Blues for Mister Charlie,'" *New York Times*, 24 April 1964.
13. Sam Zolotow, "$10,000 Reprieve for Mr. Charlie," *New York Times*, 28 May 1964, 42.
14. Display Ad 41, *New York Times*, 28 May 1964, 43.
15. Samuel Weber, *Theatricality as Medium* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 255.
16. For an overview of Strasberg's Method and its midcentury career, see Louis Scheeder, "Strasberg's Method and the Ascendancy of American Acting," in *Training of the American Actor*, ed. Arthur Bartow (New York: Theater Communications Group, 2006), 3–16. See also David Krasner, ed., *Method Acting Reconsidered: Theory, Practice, Future* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000). For a full analysis of Stanislavsky's system, see Rose Whyman, *The Stanislavsky System of Acting: Legacy and Influence in Modern Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
17. Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black Is a Country* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), introduction and chaps. 1 and 4.
18. Jonathan Pitches, *Science and the Stanislavsky System of Acting* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 85; the quotation is originally from Boleslavsky's "Fundamentals of Acting," *Theatre Arts Monthly* (February 1927).
19. Garfield, 58–9.
20. Lee Strasberg, *A Dream of Passion: The Development of the Method* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987), 94–122; idem, *Strasberg at The Actors Studio: Tape-Recorded Sessions*, ed. Robert

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H. Hethmon (New York: Viking Press, 1965), esp. 108–19; idem, *The Lee Strasberg Notes*, ed. Lola Cohen (New York: Routledge, 2010), 26–36.

21. For an analysis of the controversy over the characterization of Richard, see Meredith M. Malburne, "No Blues for Mister Henry: Locating Richard's Revolution," in *Reading African American Drama: Fragments of History, Fragments of Self*, ed. Trudier Harris and Jennifer Larson (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 39–57, quotation at 40.

22. Graham Richards, *"Race," Racism and Psychology: Towards a Reflective History* (London: Routledge, 1997), 68–113.

23. Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 199–204. The report, issued by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Policy Planning and Research, was written by sociologist (later, U.S. Senator) Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

24. Ibid., 204.

25. Baldwin, *Blues for Mister Charlie*, 2. Subsequent citations from the script are given parenthetically in the text.

26. Cindy Patton, *Cinematic Identity: Anatomy of a Problem Film* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 14.

27. Ibid., 88.

28. Campbell, 196.

29. Ibid., 199.

30. Garfield, 242.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Garfield, 243.

34. Ibid., 242.

35. Philip Roth, "Channel X: Two Plays on the Race Conflict," *New York Review of Books*, 28 May 1964. Quoted in Campbell, 197.

36. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 148.

37. Her only line with adjectives is a line about God in "His icy, snow-white heaven" (94): supposedly "snow-white" God is the only particularized figure Baldwin uses.

38. Baldwin, *Tell Me How Long*, 264.

39. Baldwin was certainly referencing Paul Robeson's famous performance of Othello, which opened on Broadway in 1943. See Lindsey R. Swindall, *The Politics of Paul Robeson's Othello* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010).

40. Constantin Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares*, trans. Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood (New York: Theater Arts, 1945), 2.

41. Ibid., 8–9, quotation at 9.

42. Ibid., 10.

43. Ibid., 26.

44. Patton, 3.

45. I am indebted to Una Chaudhuri for this formulation, which draws from Deleuze and Guattari's conception of "the coming collectivity." See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

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