

the america play

the america play is an influential theatrical work that continues to spark discussion within academic, artistic, and cultural communities. This article provides a comprehensive exploration of the play's history, themes, context, and lasting impact. Readers will discover the origins of "the america play," an analysis of its central themes, a breakdown of its structure and characters, and an overview of its legacy in American theater. The article also examines the play's relationship to race, identity, and historical performance, offering insights for students, theater enthusiasts, and those interested in contemporary literature. Dive into this guide to understand why "the america play" remains a vital study in American drama, and how it challenges conventional narratives while fostering new dialogues in the arts.

- Overview and Historical Context of "the america play"
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Overview and Historical Context of "the america play"

"the america play" is a landmark drama written by award-winning playwright Suzan-Lori Parks. First staged in 1994, the play is renowned for its unique approach to American history and identity. Parks, who is celebrated for her innovative storytelling and poetic language, crafted "the america play" as a meditation on the myths and realities of the American experience, particularly with regard to race and memory. The play is set in a surreal landscape known as "The Great Hole of History," where characters grapple with echoes from the past, notably the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. By reimagining historical events and figures, Parks challenges audiences to reconsider the narratives that shape national consciousness.

The historical context of "the america play" is deeply tied to the late twentieth-century movement of African American theater. During this period, playwrights like Parks sought to redefine how Black stories were told on stage, emphasizing complexity, authenticity, and experimentation. "the america play" emerged as part of this wave, contributing to the evolving discourse on representation and legacy in American theater.

Structure and Characters

Play Structure and Narrative Form

"the america play" is structured in two distinct parts, each exploring different facets of memory and performance. The first part introduces the central character, known as "The Foundling Father," a Black gravedigger who impersonates Abraham Lincoln in a historical sideshow. Through his enactments of Lincoln's assassination, the play interrogates how stories are repeated and remembered, both personally and collectively. The second part shifts focus to the Foundling Father's wife, Lucy, and son, Brazil, as they search for him in the symbolic "Great Hole of History." This dual structure allows Parks to juxtapose public spectacle with private grief, amplifying the play's emotional and intellectual resonance.

Main Characters

- **The Foundling Father:** A Black man who earns a living by reenacting Lincoln's assassination. His character embodies issues of identity, memory, and history.
- **Lucy:** The Foundling Father's wife, characterized by resilience and determination. She represents the enduring search for truth and familial connection.
- **Brazil:** The Foundling Father's son, whose inquisitiveness drives the narrative's exploration of legacy and understanding.

These characters interact within a symbolic landscape, using repetition, ritual, and fragmented dialogue to evoke the complexities of history and personal identity.

Major Themes Explored in "the america play"

Memory and Historical Repetition

One of the central themes of "the america play" is the cyclical nature of history and memory. Parks uses the reenactment of Lincoln's assassination to illustrate how certain events are continually replayed, both onstage and in the collective imagination. The play questions the reliability of historical accounts and the ways in which personal and national memories intersect.

Identity and Representation

The play delves into the complexities of identity, particularly within the context of race and performance. The Foundling Father's impersonation of Lincoln—a figure synonymous with American

ideals—raises questions about who gets to tell history and whose stories are valued. Parks explores the tension between individual identity and societal expectations, encouraging audiences to reflect on their own roles as witnesses and participants in history.

The Power of Storytelling

"the america play" foregrounds the act of storytelling as a means of shaping reality. Through fragmented dialogue and ritualistic repetition, Parks demonstrates how stories can both preserve and distort truths. The play invites viewers to consider the responsibilities inherent in retelling history, and the potential for new narratives to challenge old myths.

Race, Identity, and Historical Performance

Race and American Narratives

Suzan-Lori Parks uses "the america play" to interrogate the place of African American identity within the larger framework of American history. By positioning a Black man as the central figure in the reenactment of Lincoln's assassination, the play subverts traditional narratives and spotlights the marginalization of Black voices. Parks highlights how race influences the construction and recollection of historical events, urging audiences to question whose perspectives are prioritized.

Role of Performance in Shaping Identity

The play's focus on performance—both literal and metaphorical—illuminates the ways individuals navigate their identities in response to historical forces. The Foundling Father's role as Lincoln is a poignant metaphor for the societal pressures faced by African Americans to conform to dominant narratives. Through Lucy and Brazil's journey, Parks illustrates how families and communities continue searching for truth amidst layers of performance and myth.

Stagecraft and Dramatic Techniques

Innovative Use of Language

Parks employs distinctive linguistic strategies throughout "the america play," including repetition, fragmentation, and poetic imagery. These techniques create a rhythm that mirrors the cyclical themes of the play, while also challenging conventional dramatic forms. The language is both evocative and disorienting, prompting audiences to engage actively with the text.

Symbolism and Visual Elements

The setting of "The Great Hole of History" serves as a powerful symbol in the play. It represents both a literal excavation of the past and a metaphorical search for meaning. Props, costumes, and staging are deliberately sparse and suggestive, allowing the actors' performances and Parks's language to command attention. The play's visual minimalism reinforces its thematic emphasis on absence, memory, and discovery.

Critical Reception and Legacy

Reception by Critics and Audiences

Since its premiere, "the america play" has been acclaimed for its bold experimentation and incisive commentary on race and history. Critics praise Parks's originality, noting her ability to blend humor, tragedy, and philosophical inquiry. While some audiences find the play's nonlinear structure challenging, many recognize its significance as a transformative work in American theater.

Awards and Recognition

- Finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize
- Recipient of Obie Award for Playwriting
- Widely produced and studied in academic settings

These honors reflect the play's enduring impact and its critical role in reshaping conversations about theater and cultural memory.

Impact on Contemporary Theater

Influence on New Playwrights

"the america play" has inspired a generation of playwrights to experiment with structure, language, and representation. Its focus on marginalized perspectives and its willingness to challenge theatrical conventions have made it a touchstone for contemporary dramatic literature. Parks's work encourages artists to interrogate history and identity through innovative forms.

Ongoing Relevance

The play continues to resonate with modern audiences, especially in discussions about race, historical memory, and the power of performance. Productions and academic studies of "the america play" are ongoing, as new generations discover its urgent messages and artistic achievements. As part of Suzan-Lori Parks's celebrated body of work, "the america play" remains a vital force in American theater and cultural discourse.

Questions and Answers about "the america play"

Q: What is the main plot of "the america play"?

A: The play follows the Foundling Father, a Black gravedigger who impersonates Abraham Lincoln, as he reenacts Lincoln's assassination in a sideshow. The second part centers on his wife and son searching for him in the "Great Hole of History," exploring themes of memory, identity, and historical repetition.

Q: Who wrote "the america play"?

A: "the america play" was written by Suzan-Lori Parks, a renowned American playwright known for her innovative storytelling and exploration of race and history.

Q: What are the major themes of "the america play"?

A: The major themes include memory, historical repetition, identity, representation, race, and the power of storytelling.

Q: What is the significance of "The Great Hole of History" in the play?

A: "The Great Hole of History" symbolizes the gaps and absences in recorded history, as well as the characters' search for truth and meaning beneath layers of personal and collective memory.

Q: How does "the america play" address issues of race?

A: The play centers on African American experiences, challenging dominant historical narratives and highlighting the marginalization of Black voices in American history.

Q: What dramatic techniques does Suzan-Lori Parks use in

"the america play"?

A: Parks uses repetition, fragmented dialogue, poetic imagery, and symbolism to create a unique dramatic structure that mirrors the themes of memory and history.

Q: Why is "the america play" considered an important work in American theater?

A: Its innovative approach to storytelling, focus on race and identity, and influence on subsequent playwrights make it a cornerstone of contemporary American drama.

Q: What awards has "the america play" received?

A: The play was a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, received an Obie Award for Playwriting, and is widely recognized in academic and theatrical circles.

Q: How has "the america play" influenced modern playwrights?

A: The play's experimental structure and focus on marginalized perspectives have inspired many contemporary playwrights to explore new forms and themes in their work.

Q: Is "the america play" still performed today?

A: Yes, "the america play" continues to be produced and studied, maintaining its relevance in discussions about race, history, and performance in American theater.

[The America Play](#)

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The America Play: A Deep Dive into Suzan-Lori Parks' Masterpiece

The America Play. The title itself evokes a sense of both grand ambition and unsettling ambiguity. Is

it a celebration of American ideals, a critique of its flaws, or something more nuanced and complex? This post offers a comprehensive exploration of Suzan-Lori Parks' groundbreaking work, delving into its themes, characters, and enduring legacy. We'll examine its unique theatrical techniques, its historical context, and its continuing relevance in today's world, providing you with a robust understanding of this essential piece of American theatre.

Exploring the Central Themes of The America Play

Suzan-Lori Parks masterfully weaves together multiple potent themes in *The America Play*. It's not a straightforward narrative, but rather a tapestry of interwoven ideas that demand careful consideration.

The Burden of History and National Identity:

The play confronts the complex legacy of slavery and its enduring impact on American identity. It questions how a nation grapples with its past, specifically the painful and often overlooked aspects of its history. The gravedigger's obsessive focus on Lincoln's assassination and his attempt to create a "living history" speaks directly to this struggle to reconcile the present with the painful realities of the past.

The Search for Authenticity and Self-Discovery:

Both the gravedigger and the Foundling grapple with questions of identity and belonging. The gravedigger, yearning for authenticity, seeks to connect with a history he feels personally responsible for. The Foundling, a young Black man, is caught between different cultural narratives, struggling to define himself within the confines of a society that has continuously sought to define him.

The Power of Performance and Storytelling:

Parks utilizes meta-theatrical elements throughout the play, blurring the lines between reality and performance. The gravedigger's reenactments of Lincoln's assassination are not mere historical recreations but rather powerful acts of artistic creation and self-expression. This emphasizes the role of storytelling in shaping our understanding of the past and our present selves.

Analyzing the Key Characters and their Roles

The characters in *The America Play* are not simply archetypes; they are complex individuals grappling with the weighty issues at the heart of the play.

The Gravedigger:

The gravedigger is the central figure, a man consumed by his obsession with Lincoln's assassination. He embodies a desire to excavate not only the past but also his own identity. His act of repeatedly digging and refilling the grave reflects a relentless search for meaning and resolution, a search that never fully reaches its intended destination.

The Foundling:

The Foundling, discovered as a baby in a box, represents the unknown and the potential for new beginnings. His journey mirrors that of the nation, grappling with an uncertain future amidst a fraught past. He offers a contrasting perspective to the gravedigger, representing a younger generation grappling with the legacy of its history.

The Women:

While less prominent, the women in the play – the gravedigger's wife and the Foundling's mother – represent the supporting structures and the often unspoken narratives of those who are directly impacted by history but may not have their own voices amplified.

The Unique Theatrical Techniques of Suzan-Lori Parks

Parks' innovative approach to playwriting extends beyond the themes and characters. She employs various unique techniques to enhance the impact of her work.

Repetition and Variation:

The play is marked by the repetition of phrases and actions, often with subtle variations. This

stylistic choice underscores the cyclical nature of history and the repeated patterns of oppression and resilience.

Brevity and Fragmentation:

The play is characterized by fragmented scenes and dialogue, mirroring the fragmented nature of both history and memory. These brief, almost cinematic moments allow for a unique rhythm and pacing.

Meta-theatricality:

As mentioned, the play frequently blurs the lines between reality and performance, inviting the audience to reflect on the nature of theatre itself and its capacity to engage with history and identity.

The Enduring Legacy and Relevance of The America Play

The America Play, while written decades ago, continues to resonate powerfully with contemporary audiences. Its exploration of racial identity, historical trauma, and the search for authenticity remains highly relevant in our ongoing national conversation. The play challenges us to confront the uncomfortable truths of our past and to actively engage in shaping a more just future. Its exploration of performance and storytelling highlights the vital role of art in navigating complex historical narratives.

Conclusion

Suzan-Lori Parks' The America Play is more than just a play; it's a profound meditation on American identity, historical reckoning, and the power of storytelling. Its enduring power lies in its ability to provoke thought, challenge assumptions, and inspire dialogue about our collective past and future.

FAQs

1. What makes *The America Play* unique compared to other historical dramas? *The America Play* utilizes unconventional theatrical techniques like repetition and fragmentation to create a fragmented yet powerful representation of history, moving beyond a linear narrative to explore its complexities.
2. How does the play address the legacy of slavery in America? The play doesn't explicitly depict slavery but rather alludes to its enduring impact through the gravedigger's obsession with Lincoln's assassination and its connection to the unresolved issues of race and justice in America.
3. What is the significance of the Foundling character? The Foundling represents the potential for new beginnings and a different perspective on American identity, contrasting with the gravedigger's preoccupation with the past.
4. How does the play use meta-theatricality to enhance its message? The play's use of meta-theatricality highlights the constructed nature of historical narratives and the role of performance in shaping our understanding of the past and present.
5. Why is *The America Play* still relevant today? The play's exploration of racial identity, historical trauma, and the search for authenticity remains incredibly pertinent to contemporary issues of race, justice, and identity formation in a constantly evolving America.

the america play: The America Play and Other Works Suzan-Lori Parks, 2013-10-15 Parks has burst through every known convention to invent a new theatrical language, like a jive Samuel Beckett, while exploding American cultural myths and stereotypes along the way.... She's passionate and jokey and some kind of genius.--Vogue A collection of plays and essays by one of America's premier playwrights. Includes the essays *Possession*, from *Elements of Style*, and *An Equation for Black People Onstage*, and the plays *Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom*, *Betting on Dust Commander*, *Pickling*, *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*, *Devotees in the Garden of Love*, and *The America Play*.

the america play: The America Play Suzan-Lori Parks, 1995 THE STORY: Once upon a time there was a theme park called the Great Hole of History. It was a popular spot for honeymooners who, in search of post-nuptial excitement, would visit this hole and watch the daily historical parades. One of these visi

the america play: Venus Suzan-Lori Parks, 2012-12-15 Suzan-Lori Parks continues her examination of black people in history and stage through the life of the so-called Hottentot Venus, an African woman displayed semi-nude throughout Europe due to her extraordinary physiognomy; in particular, her enormous buttocks. She was befriended, bought and bedded by a doctor who advanced his scientific career through his anatomical measurements of her after her premature death.

the america play: The General from America Richard Nelson, 2003 In 1780, America's most successful General believed the War of Independence had lost its way. He decided to surrender his soldiers, hand over George Washington to the British and end the war. In America today, General

Benedict Arnold is considered one of the most heinous men the world has ever known; in London, a plaque celebrates the house where he lived out his years in exile. Richard Nelson's haunting play presents a richly emotional portrait of a man searching for love and country, and finding only compromise and despair.

the america play: The Book of Grace Suzan-Lori Parks, 2016-03-01 [Suzan-Lori Parks'] dislocating stage devices, stark but poetic language and fiercely idiosyncratic images transform her work into something haunting and marvelous.—Time An original whose fierce intelligence and fearless approach to craft subvert theatrical convention and produce a mature and inimitable art that is as exciting as it is fresh.—August Wilson Named one of the 100 Innovators for the Next New Wave by Time magazine, Suzan-Lori Parks is a truly original voice of the American theater. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and a MacArthur Genius Award, Parks is renowned for her groundbreaking language, theatricality, and an aesthetic that continues to evolve in unexpected ways. Her first full-length play since her award-winning *Topdog/Underdog*, *The Book of Grace* is a scorching three-person drama in which a young man returns home to south Texas to confront his father, unearthing deep-seated passions and ambition. The play premiered in spring 2010 at the Public Theater, where Parks is in the midst of a three-year residency as the first recipient of the theater's master writer chair. Suzan-Lori Parks is a playwright, screenwriter, songwriter, and novelist. Her plays include *Topdog/Underdog* (winner of the 2002 Pulitzer Prize), *In the Blood* (a 2000 Pulitzer Prize finalist), *Venus* (OBIE Award winner) and *Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom* (OBIE Award, Best New American Play).

the america play: *Father Comes Home From the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)* Suzan-Lori Parks, 2015-06-01 By turns philosophical and playful, lyrical and earthy, *Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)*, swoops, leaps, dives and soars, reimagining a turbulent point in American history through a cockeyed contemporary lens . . . The finest work yet from this gifted writer.—The New York Times Thrilling. . . . A masterpiece . . . A story that engages the deepest possible issues in the most gripping possible ways.—New York Offered his freedom if he joins his master in the ranks of the Confederacy, Hero, a slave, must choose whether to leave the woman and people he loves for what may be another empty promise. As his decision brings him face to face with a nation at war with itself, the ones Hero left behind debate whether to escape or wait for his return, only to discover that for Hero, freedom may have come at a great spiritual cost. A devastatingly beautiful dramatic work, *Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2, & 3)* is the opening trilogy of a projected nine-play cycle that will ultimately take us into the present. Suzan-Lori Parks became the first African American woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for her play *Topdog/Underdog* in 2002. Her other plays include *The Book of Grace*, *In the Blood*, *Venus*, *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*, *Fucking A*, *Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom* and *The America Play*. In 2007 her *365 Days/365 Plays* was produced at more than seven hundred theaters worldwide. Parks is a MacArthur Fellow and the Master Writer Chair at the Public Theater.

the america play: *365 Days/365 Plays* Suzan-Lori Parks, 2006 On November 13, 2002, the author decided to write a play every day for a year. She began that same day. The result, completed exactly one year later, is this collection of 365 plays.

the america play: *Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom* Suzan-Lori Parks, 1995 Length: 4 parts.

the america play: *Topdog/underdog* Suzan-Lori Parks, 2002 THE STORY: A darkly comic fable of brotherly love and family identity is Suzan-Lori Parks' latest riff on the way we are defined by history. The play tells the story of Lincoln and Booth, two brothers whose names were given to them as a joke, foret

the america play: *White Noise* Suzan-Lori Parks, 2019-08-13 From the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright of *Topdog/Underdog* comes a play about race and friendship in a deeply flawed society.

the america play: *100 Plays for the First Hundred Days* Suzan-Lori Parks, 2018-06-26 In reaction to the extraordinary events of the first hundred days of the presidency of Donald J. Trump, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Suzan-Lori Parks has created a unique and personal response to

one of the most tumultuous times in our recent history—a play diary for each day of the presidency, to capture and explore the events as they unfolded. Known for her distinctive lyrical dialogue and powerful sociopolitical themes, Parks's 100 Plays for the First Hundred Days is the powerful and provocative everyman's guide to the Trumpian universe of uncertainty, confusion, and chaos.

the america play: Getting Mother's Body Suzan-Lori Parks, 2004-04-13 Pulitzer Prize winner Suzan-Lori Parks's wildly original debut novel, *Getting Mother's Body*, follows pregnant, unmarried Billy Beede and her down-and-out family in 1960s Texas as they search for the storied jewels buried—or were they?—with Billy's fast-running, six-years-dead mother, Willa Mae. *Getting Mother's Body* is a true spiritual successor to the work of writers such as Zora Neale Hurston and Alice Walker—but when it comes to bringing hard-luck characters to ingenious, uproarious life, Suzan-Lori Parks shares the stage with no one.

the america play: The Red Letter Plays Suzan-Lori Parks, 2012-12-15 *In the Blood* is an extraordinary new play...It is truly harrowing...we cannot turn away, and we do not want to. The play strikes us as Hawthorne claimed his first glimpse of the scarlet letter struck him, with a sensation not altogether physical yet almost so, as of a burning heat, as if the letter were not of red cloth but of red-hot iron.'—Margo Jefferson, *The New York Times* The playwright who has burst through every known convention to invent a new theatrical language, like a jive Samuel Beckett, while exploding American cultural myths and stereotypes along the way [John Heilpern, *New York Observer and Vogue*], has written two haunting riffs on Hawthorne's *The Scarlett Letter*: *In the Blood* and *Fucking A*. Hester La Negrita of *In the Blood* is an unapologetic mother of five illegitimate children—my treasures, my five joys—who practices writing the alphabet to help herself one day get a leg up. The letter A is as far as she gets. Hester Smith of *Fucking A* works the only job available—abortionist to the lower class, in order to save for a reunion picnic with her imprisoned son. Her branded A bleeds afresh every time a patient comes to see her. These are two mature, beautifully crafted, inventive and poetic plays by one of the most unique voices writing for the stage today. Suzan Lori-Parks is also the author of *The America Play and Other Works* and *Venus*, both published by TCG. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

the america play: In the Blood Suzan-Lori Parks, 2000 *THE STORY*: In this modern day riff on *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester La Negrita, a homeless mother of five, lives with her kids on the tough streets of the inner city. Her eldest child is teaching her how to read and write, but the letter A is

the america play: The American Play Marc Robinson, 2009-01-01 In this brilliant study, Marc Robinson explores more than two hundred years of plays, styles, and stagings of American theater. Mapping the changing cultural landscape from the late eighteenth century to the start of the twenty-first, he explores how theater has--and has not--changed and offers close readings of plays by O'Neill, Stein, Wilder, Miller, and Albee, as well as by important but perhaps lesser known dramatists such as Wallace Stevens, Jean Toomer, Djuna Barnes, and many others. Robinson reads each work in an ambitiously interdisciplinary context, linking advances in theater to developments in American literature, dance, and visual art. The author is particularly attentive to the continuities in American drama, and expertly teases out recurring themes, such as the significance of visibility. He avoids neatly categorizing nineteenth- and twentieth-century plays and depicts a theater more restive and mercurial than has been recognized before. Robinson proves both a fascinating and thought-provoking critic and a spirited guide to the history of American drama.

the america play: Children at Play Howard P. Chudacoff, 2008-09 Introduction: Play -- Childhood and play in colonial America -- Domesticating children, 1800-1850 -- The arrival of toys, 1850-1900 -- The invasion of children's play culture, 1900-1950 -- The golden age, 1900-1950 -- The commercialization of children's play, 1950 to the present -- Children's play goes underground, 1950 to the present -- Conclusion

the america play: Angels in America Tony Kushner, 2017-04-13 America in the mid-1980s. In the midst of the AIDS crisis and a conservative Reagan administration, New Yorkers grapple with life and death, love and sex, heaven and hell. This edition, published alongside the major revival at the National Theatre in 2017, contains both plays, Part One: *Millennium Approaches*, and Part Two:

Perestroika.

the america play: It's How You Play the Game Brian Kilmeade, 2009-10-13 In life as in sports, it's how you play the game that matters You don't have to be a star athlete to take away valuable lessons from the world of sports, whether it's learning how to get along with others, to never give up, or to be gracious in victory and defeat. In this companion volume to his New York Times bestseller, *The Games Do Count*, Brian Kilmeade reveals personal stories of the defining sports moments in the lives of athletes, CEOs, actors, politicians, and historical figures—and how what they learned on the field prepared them to handle life and overcome adversity with courage, dignity, and sportsmanship.

the america play: America At Play Mathias Svalina, 2020-03 *America At Play* is a collection of instructions for children's games. Part poetry, part whimsy, part despair, games such as Freight Train Tag, Baptism, & World War teach valuable lessons, such as how to play & how to be American. It is, Heraclitus said, reality's nature to remain hidden, but its rules are easily observed.

the america play: Serious Play Monica Obniski, Darrin Alfred, 2018-01-01 A lively exploration of eclecticism, playfulness, and whimsy in American postwar design, including architecture, graphic design, and product design This spirited volume shows how postwar designers embraced whimsy and eclecticism in their work, exploring playfulness as an essential construct of modernity. Following World War II, Americans began accumulating more and more goods, spurring a transformation in the field of interior decoration. Storage walls became ubiquitous, often serving as a home's centerpiece. Designers such as Alexander Girard encouraged homeowners to populate their new shelving units with folk art, as well as unconventional and modern objects, to produce innovative and unexpected juxtapositions within modern architectural settings. Playfulness can be seen in the colorful, child-sized furniture by Charles and Ray Eames, who also produced toys. And in the postwar corporate world, the concept of play is manifested in the influential advertising work of Paul Rand. Set against the backdrop of a society that was experiencing rapid change and high anxiety, *Serious Play* takes a revelatory look at how many of the country's leading designers connected with their audience through wit and imagination.

the america play: Exploring the History of Childhood and Play through 50 Historic Treasures Susan A. Fletcher, 2020-05-15 A full-color trip through the treasures of American Childhood from 1650 to today. Remember the toys you played with when you were growing up? Each of those objects has a story to tell about the history of American childhood and play. Construction toys like Lincoln Logs and Erector Set offer insight into America's booming urban infrastructure in the early 1910s and 20s, and the important role toys played in preparing children for future careers in engineering and architecture. A stuffed toy monkey from Germany tells the story of young Jewish refugees to the United States during World War II. The board game Candyland has its origins in the dreaded polio epidemic of 1950s. *Exploring Childhood and Play Through 50 Historic Treasures* brings together a collection of beloved toys and games from the last two centuries to guide readers on a journey through the history of American childhood and play, 1840-2000. Through color photographs and short essays on each object, this book examines childhood against the backdrop of culture, politics, religion, technology, gender, parenting philosophies, and more. The book features ten categories of objects including board and electronic games, dolls, action figures, art toys, optical toys, animal toys, construction sets, and sports. Each essay tells the story of the individual object its historic context, and each passage builds upon one another to create a fascinating survey of how childhood and play changed over the course of two centuries.

the america play: Angels in America Tony Kushner, 2017-04-13 *America* in the mid-1980s. In the midst of the AIDS crisis and a conservative Reagan administration, New Yorkers grapple with life and death, love and sex, heaven and hell. This edition, published alongside the major revival at the National Theatre in 2017, contains both plays, Part One: *Millennium Approaches*, and Part Two: *Perestroika*.

the america play: Hold These Truths Jeanne Sakata (author), 2018

the america play: *Playing in the Dark* Toni Morrison, 1992 Morrison brings her genius to this personal inquiry into the significance of African-Americans in the American literary imagination. Through her investigation of black characters, narrative strategies, and idiom in the fiction of white American writers, Morrison provides a perspective sure to alter conventional notions about American literature.

the america play: *Communities in Action* National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Health and Medicine Division, Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice, Committee on Community-Based Solutions to Promote Health Equity in the United States, 2017-04-27 In the United States, some populations suffer from far greater disparities in health than others. Those disparities are caused not only by fundamental differences in health status across segments of the population, but also because of inequities in factors that impact health status, so-called determinants of health. Only part of an individual's health status depends on his or her behavior and choice; community-wide problems like poverty, unemployment, poor education, inadequate housing, poor public transportation, interpersonal violence, and decaying neighborhoods also contribute to health inequities, as well as the historic and ongoing interplay of structures, policies, and norms that shape lives. When these factors are not optimal in a community, it does not mean they are intractable: such inequities can be mitigated by social policies that can shape health in powerful ways. *Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity* seeks to delineate the causes of and the solutions to health inequities in the United States. This report focuses on what communities can do to promote health equity, what actions are needed by the many and varied stakeholders that are part of communities or support them, as well as the root causes and structural barriers that need to be overcome.

the america play: *Understanding Suzan-Lori Parks* Jennifer Larson, 2012-11-15 *Understanding Suzan-Lori Parks* is a critical study of a playwright and screenwriter who was the first African American woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Suzan-Lori Parks is also the recipient of a MacArthur Genius Award, a Whiting Writers Award, a CalArts/Alpert Award in the Arts, two Obie Awards, and a Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts. In this book Jennifer Larson examines how Parks, through the innovative language and narratives of her extensive body of work, investigates and invigorates literary and cultural history. Larson discusses all of Parks's genres—play, screenplay, essay, and novel—closely reading key texts from Parks's more experimental earlier pieces as well as her more linear later narratives. Larson's study begins with a survey of Parks's earliest and most difficult texts including *Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom* and *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*. Larson then analyzes *Venus, In the Blood*, and the *Lincoln Plays: The America Play* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *TopDog/Underdog*. Larson also discusses two of Parks's most important screenplays, *Girl 6* and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. In interpreting these screenplays, Larson examines film's role in the popularization and representation of African American culture and history. These essays suggest an approach to all genres of literature and blend creativity, form, culture, and history into a revisionary aesthetic that allows for no identity or history to remain fixed, with Parks arguing that in order to be relevant they must all be dynamic and democratic.

the america play: *Between the World and Me* Ta-Nehisi Coates, 2015-07-16 Winner, Kirkus Prize for Non-Fiction, 2015 In the 150 years since the end of the Civil War and the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, the story of race and America has remained a brutally simple one, written on flesh: it is the story of the black body, exploited to create the country's foundational wealth, violently segregated to unite a nation after a civil war, and, today, still disproportionately threatened, locked up and killed in the streets. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can America reckon with its fraught racial history? *Between the World and Me* is Ta-Nehisi Coates' attempt to answer those questions, presented in the form of a letter to his adolescent son. Coates shares with his son the story of his own awakening to the truth about history and race through a series of revelatory experiences: immersion in nationalist mythology as a child; engagement with history, poetry and love at Howard University; travels to Civil War battlefields and

the South Side of Chicago; a journey to France that reorients his sense of the world; and pilgrimages to the homes of mothers whose children's lives have been taken as American plunder. Taken together, these stories map a winding path towards a kind of liberation—a journey from fear and confusion, to a full and honest understanding of the world as it is. Masterfully woven from lyrical personal narrative, reimagined history, and fresh, emotionally charged reportage, *Between the World and Me* offers a powerful new framework for understanding America's history and current crisis, and a transcendent vision for a way forward. Ta-Nehisi Coates is a national correspondent for the Atlantic and the author of the memoir *The Beautiful Struggle*. Coates has received the National Magazine Award, the Hillman Prize for Opinion and Analysis Journalism, and the George Polk Award for his Atlantic cover story 'The Case for Reparations'. He lives in New York with his wife and son. 'Coates offers this eloquent memoir as a letter to his teenage son, bearing witness to his own experiences and conveying passionate hopes for his son's life...this moving, potent testament might have been titled Black Lives Matter.' Kirkus Reviews 'I've been wondering who might fill the intellectual void that plagued me after James Baldwin died. Clearly it is Ta-Nehisi Coates. The language of *Between the World and Me*, like Coates' journey, is visceral, eloquent and beautifully redemptive. And its examination of the hazards and hopes of black male life is as profound as it is revelatory. This is required reading.' Toni Morrison 'Extraordinary...Ta-Nehisi Coates...writes an impassioned letter to his teenage son—a letter both loving and full of a parent's dread—counselling him on the history of American violence against the black body, the young African-American's extreme vulnerability to wrongful arrest, police violence, and disproportionate incarceration.' David Remnick, *New Yorker* 'A searing meditation on what it means to be black in America today...as compelling a portrait of a father-son relationship as Martin Amis's *Experience* or Geoffrey Wolff's *The Duke of Deception*.' *New York Times* 'Coates possesses a profoundly empathetic imagination and a tough intellect...Coates speaks to America, but Australia has reason to listen.' *Monthly* 'Heartbreaking, confronting, it draws power from understatement in dealing with race in America and the endless wrong-headed concept that whites are somehow entitled to subjugate everyone else.' *Capital* 'In our current global landscape it's an essential perspective, regardless of your standpoint.' *Paperboy* 'Impactful and poignant.' *Reading With Jenna*

the america play: Performing America J. Ellen Gainor, 1999 *DIV* How theatrical representations of the U.S. have shaped national identity /div

the america play: America Before Graham Hancock, 2019-04-23 *The Instant New York Times Bestseller!* Was an advanced civilization lost to history in the global cataclysm that ended the last Ice Age? Graham Hancock, the internationally bestselling author, has made it his life's work to find out--and in *America Before*, he draws on the latest archaeological and DNA evidence to bring his quest to a stunning conclusion. We've been taught that North and South America were empty of humans until around 13,000 years ago - amongst the last great landmasses on earth to have been settled by our ancestors. But new discoveries have radically reshaped this long-established picture and we know now that the Americas were first peopled more than 130,000 years ago - many tens of thousands of years before human settlements became established elsewhere. Hancock's research takes us on a series of journeys and encounters with the scientists responsible for the recent extraordinary breakthroughs. In the process, from the Mississippi Valley to the Amazon rainforest, he reveals that ancient New World cultures share a legacy of advanced scientific knowledge and sophisticated spiritual beliefs with supposedly unconnected Old World cultures. Have archaeologists focused for too long only on the Old World in their search for the origins of civilization while failing to consider the revolutionary possibility that those origins might in fact be found in the New World? *America Before: The Key to Earth's Lost Civilization* is the culmination of everything that millions of readers have loved in Hancock's body of work over the past decades, namely a mind-dilating exploration of the mysteries of the past, amazing archaeological discoveries and profound implications for how we lead our lives today.

the america play: The Addams Family (Songbook) Marshall Brickman, Rick Elice, 2010-09-01 (Vocal Selections). The creepy and kooky Addams Family hit Broadway in April 2010

with this musical adaptation of the characters created by cartoonist Charles Addams in his single-panel gag cartoons for The New Yorker starting in 1938. This songbook features piano/vocal arrangements (with the melody in the piano part) for 14 musical numbers from the Tony Award-nominated show: The Addams Family Theme * Crazier Than You * Happy/Sad * In the Arms * Just Around the Corner * Let's Not Talk About Anything Else but Love * Live Before We Die * The Moon and Me * Morticia * One Normal Night * Pulled * Waiting * What If * When You're an Addams.

the america play: Outrageous Fortune Todd London, Ben Pesner, Zannie Giraud Voss, 2009

the america play: The Paranoid Style in American Politics Richard Hofstadter, 2008-06-10 This timely reissue of Richard Hofstadter's classic work on the fringe groups that influence American electoral politics offers an invaluable perspective on contemporary domestic affairs. In The Paranoid Style in American Politics, acclaimed historian Richard Hofstadter examines the competing forces in American political discourse and how fringe groups can influence — and derail — the larger agendas of a political party. He investigates the politics of the irrational, shedding light on how the behavior of individuals can seem out of proportion with actual political issues, and how such behavior impacts larger groups. With such other classic essays as “Free Silver and the Mind of 'Coin' Harvey” and “What Happened to the Antitrust Movement?”, The Paranoid Style in American Politics remains both a seminal text of political history and a vital analysis of the ways in which political groups function in the United States.

the america play: Slave Play Jeremy O. Harris, 2024-07-11 The Old South lives on at the MacGregor Plantation - in the breeze, in the cotton fields... and in the crack of the whip. Nothing is as it seems, and yet everything is as it seems. Jeremy O. Harris's Slave Play rips apart history to shed new light on the nexus of race, gender and sexuality in twenty-first-century America. It opened at New York Theatre Workshop in November 2018, and transferred to Broadway the following year. This edition is published alongside the West End production in 2024. 'How to explain Harris? He is like Tennessee Williams, if Williams had been Prince. Or Truman Capote, if Capote had been Paradise Garage. He is a firebrand writer with whipcrack humour. He has two brilliant plays under his belt, Slave Play and Daddy. He is such a queer hero of our times that the New York neighbourhood he lives in has become fleetingly famous. One of Jeremy O. Harris's plays coming to London is a major event' Evening Standard

the america play: The Apartment Complex - Seven One-Act Plays William Inge, 2016-05-16 THE STORIES: MARGARET'S BED. Elsie picks up Ben at the symphony and brings him back to the apartment she shares with Margaret, who is away for the night. Ben assumes that this is a prelude to sex, but truly Elsie is just desperate for Ben to sleep in Margaret's empty bed, because she has a pathological fear of sleeping in an empty apartment. (1 man, 1 woman.) THE KILLING. Mac meets Huey at a bar and brings him home to his apartment to share a bottle of whiskey, but this isn't the kind of pick-up you might think. Mac, who is a religious man and fears damnation, hopes to convince Huey, who does not believe, to kill him. (2 men.) THE POWER OF SILENCE. Teachers at the same school, Emma and Louise have been receiving mysterious phone calls, and when Emma answers, no one speaks. Louise is less disturbed by the calls, but they make Emma frantic, and she is sure that one of her students is responsible. After several silent calls, someone rings their door buzzer repeatedly. But who's there? (2 men, 2 women.) PRODIGAL. Terry is a troubled teen who's been arrested multiple times and is on probation. In fact, if his mother won't let him stay with her, Terry has to turn himself in and go back to "the farm." Nancy has a chance at a new life with a new husband, though, and she can't handle her son anymore. But her decision has dire consequences for others. (1 man, 2 women.) THE CALL. Joe has traveled to New York City from Billings, Montana for a Shriners-like convention and parade, but he is weighed down by his sense of failure and fear of a changing world. He can't even bring himself to stay with his successful actress sister and her husband in their tony apartment, preferring to drag his heavy suitcase to find a hotel room on a low floor. (2 men.) THE LOVE DEATH. Byron is a successful writer, living alone in a well-decorated apartment, who makes a series of calls to his mother, friends, and the critic who gave his last book of short stories a terrible review to let them know that he is about to commit suicide. (1 man,

voices.) MOVED-IN. The super of the apartment complex, Mr. Flicker, is leaving, and the board has offered his job to Carlton. But Carlton, an African American who struggled to get admitted to the complex in the first place, isn't sure he wants to take the job and give up the hate he feels for many of his fellow tenants. (2 men, 1 woman.)

the america play: *Angels in America* Tony Kushner, 2013-12-24

the america play: *The American Play* Marc Robinson, 2009-05-26 In this brilliant study, Marc Robinson explores more than two hundred years of plays, styles, and stagings of American theater. Mapping the changing cultural landscape from the late eighteenth century to the start of the twenty-first, he explores how theater has--and has not--changed and offers close readings of plays by O'Neill, Stein, Wilder, Miller, and Albee, as well as by important but perhaps lesser known dramatists such as Wallace Stevens, Jean Toomer, Djuna Barnes, and many others. Robinson reads each work in an ambitiously interdisciplinary context, linking advances in theater to developments in American literature, dance, and visual art. The author is particularly attentive to the continuities in American drama, and expertly teases out recurring themes, such as the significance of visuality. He avoids neatly categorizing nineteenth- and twentieth-century plays and depicts a theater more restive and mercurial than has been recognized before. Robinson proves both a fascinating and thought-provoking critic and a spirited guide to the history of American drama.

the america play: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* J. K. Rowling, Jack Thorne, John Tiffany, 2017 As an overworked employee of the Ministry of Magic, a husband, and a father, Harry Potter struggles with a past that refuses to stay where it belongs while his youngest son, Albus, finds the weight of the family legacy difficult to bear.

the america play: *The Complete History of America. Abridged* Adam Long, Martin Reed, Austin Tichenor, 2007 This play interprets the past as a breathlessly-paced sequence of silly vaudeville sketches ... puns and crude parodies of movie and television genres.

the america play: *Fair Play* Eve Rodsky, 2021-01-05 AN INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A REESE'S BOOK CLUB PICK Tired, stressed, and in need of more help from your partner? Imagine running your household (and life!) in a new way... It started with the Sh*t I Do List. Tired of being the "shefault" parent responsible for all aspects of her busy household, Eve Rodsky counted up all the unpaid, invisible work she was doing for her family—and then sent that list to her husband, asking for things to change. His response was...underwhelming. Rodsky realized that simply identifying the issue of unequal labor on the home front wasn't enough: She needed a solution to this universal problem. Her sanity, identity, career, and marriage depended on it. The result is Fair Play: a time- and anxiety-saving system that offers couples a completely new way to divvy up domestic responsibilities. Rodsky interviewed more than five hundred men and women from all walks of life to figure out what the invisible work in a family actually entails and how to get it all done efficiently. With 4 easy-to-follow rules, 100 household tasks, and a series of conversation starters for you and your partner, Fair Play helps you prioritize what's important to your family and who should take the lead on every chore, from laundry to homework to dinner. "Winning" this game means rebalancing your home life, reigniting your relationship with your significant other, and reclaiming your Unicorn Space—the time to develop the skills and passions that keep you interested and interesting. Stop drowning in to-dos and lose some of that invisible workload that's pulling you down. Are you ready to try Fair Play? Let's deal you in.

the america play: *The Americans* Jack Kerouac, 1969

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