

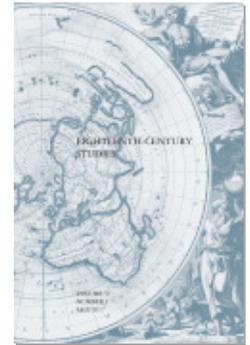


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Performance and Print

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SOUNDING BLACK-ISH: WEST INDIAN PIDGIN IN LONDON PERFORMANCE AND PRINT

Roxann Wheeler

In almost any week of the 1790s, a Londoner could hear and see a range of antiracist and antislavery performances in either standard English or stylized West Indian pidgin. Although they appeared independently of a connection to the stage, so-called Negro songs and pidgin speech were customarily part of farces, two-act afterpieces or one-act musical dramas, which means that they occurred second or third after the main dramatic piece. Popular actresses and young actors singing Negro songs in blackface makeup could be heard at Covent Garden, Drury Lane, the Haymarket, and the Royal Circus in Lambeth. Charles Dibdin's table entertainments in central London, playing about half the year from 1789 through 1805, usually featured at least one ballad in pidgin, and his signature collections of songs also included them.¹ To hear the latest songs and see favorite or new singers was the main reason some Londoners attended theater; the addition of new songs could refresh any play already in the repertoire. The early century popularity of ballad operas and the midcentury introduction of comic operas established high expectations for vocal, musical, and dancing entertainment. Negro songs began appearing regularly in 1790s' songsters, which featured old favorites and current stage hits, and in individual play texts with lyrics, both for at-home entertainment. Although Negro song originally meant a song sung by an African in his own language, and so incomprehensible to Britons, these latter century ballads and airs, sung by impersonators of slave characters, typically criticized slave owners' un-Christian chicanery: "Massa one bit of ground bestow, / Make negro

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work a Sunday, / Soon something good begin to grow, / Take it away a Monday: / Chingaring, Chingaring, never mind, / No use to fret about it; / Buckra yam, yam, but negro kind / Forced to go without it.”²

The sudden ubiquity of Negro songs is one of several forms of popular evidence that belies Wylie Sypher’s influential but erroneous claim: “From 1791 to 1800 there is a decisive ebb in anti-slavery writing, except in doctrinaire prose fiction. Defenders of slavery become active, and the new generation is not much concerned with the sorrows of the Negro. Events in France are too momentous.”³ Sypher’s archival research has been unmatched by subsequent scholars, but he overestimates the impact of the French Revolution on antislavery, undervalues juvenile fiction, which was reliably antiracist and antislavery and which outsold most other forms of the novel, and miscalculates the commercial and symbolic significance of pidgin on the comedic stage. Sypher was bothered by the artificiality of generic conventions when it came to the representation of Africa and Africans, but it is to these stylized practices that we should attend if we wish to understand the way that genre and innovation interrelate or the way that art and politics intersect. Studying the stage itself—the repertoire, the actors, the roles, and the prevalence of singing—yields significant insight into entertainment practices that have been misconstrued today.⁴

Most historical West Indian pidgin speakers were slaves or former slaves and therefore of the lowest social order; they belonged to a larger group, nonetheless, that encompassed regional-dialect and foreign speakers for whom standard English was a second language. Unlike other regional and ethnic dialects, however, West Indian pidgin was a new language. Derived from forced labor and global profit networks, and spoken mainly on plantations, pidgin combined words and syntax from both West African and British regional dialects. Long the sole interest of antiquarians and linguists, pidgin only recently has commanded sophisticated literary-historical investigation. Dialect, region, and ethnicity functioned in multiple ways in eighteenth-century representation, and most academics no longer accept without qualification the notion that a character’s nonstandard English serves merely to demean. The most convincing scholarship demonstrates the way that dialect in print and performance usually signaled both the otherness and vitality associated with “bad English.”⁵ As a phenomenon of the midcentury London stage, the representation of West Indian pidgin has not been analyzed separately but instead folded into recent studies of Irish, Scottish, and Jewish characters. Black characters frequently shared the stage with other dialect speakers, and they all sounded more or less alike.⁶ A slave’s speech differed from a Yorkshireman’s mainly by “additional lexical accessories, such as ‘massa’ or ‘buckra.’”⁷ Assimilating all regional, religious, and foreign dialects into one invented comic stage dialect produced a rough equivalence among nonstandard English speakers.⁸ The representation of West Indian pidgin is best regarded, then, as one of several related theatrical and print culture practices.

As suggestive as this multiethnic context is, a narrower focus better illuminates a new practice. West Indian pidgin, I argue, became the form in which writers expressed the common slave experience. Everyday characters and ordinary plights belong to the genre of comedy; these characters usually spoke regional dialect, slang, insult, and other kinds of nonstandard English. By contrast, theatri-

cal noble Negroes and powerful Moors, such as Othello, Oroonoko, and Zanga, uttered blank verse in tragedies; at stake was the downfall of exceptional figures, not their common plight with other slaves. Aural and visual elements of comedy trade in cartoonish types: understandably, farce, in particular, has not seemed to be fertile ground for antiracist or antislavery study.⁹ Both serious novelists and comedic playwrights came to employ West Indian pidgin as a sign of the speaker's common, or low class, origin and experience of slavery—as much as a marker of race. The impetus was equally to establish the speaker's typicality and authority. Recent critics have claimed that eighteenth-century black characters, like race itself, were overdetermined phenomena, being either ambiguous or ambivalent, and based in Britons' anxiety about racial intermixture, slavery, or empire.¹⁰ On the contrary, comedic black characters arguably were underdetermined in pidgin-speaking roles because of their persistent connection to a small number of contemporary antislavery codes. First represented at length in the didactic prose fiction of Daniel Defoe, West Indian pidgin became a staple of a serious juvenile fiction and a commercial hit on the comedic stage for the next 150 years only in the late 1780s. As the pre-eminent sound of transatlantic black speakers, “dialect ceased to be a major form [only] in the Harlem Renaissance.”¹¹

For most of the century, pidgin-speaking slave and servant characters had little commercial purchase; suddenly, however, Negro songs became all the rage, and the stock slave character assumed a prominent place in entertainment culture. “A New Negro Song” (1790) begins with an adult casting back to his African childhood when he was sold into slavery and forcibly transported to a sugar colony; this typical slave character sings the narrative of his life to a concerned but uninformed Briton: “Me be one poor slave, brought into Barbado, / Ven one pickaninny, such de cruel trado; / How me vetch and carry, now go here and dere, sir, / Dey no let me rest, dey for black man no care, sir, / Now chain'd like de horse, and de weder hot, / Vipt along de road, poor negro go to pot.” The owner's hard heartedness is echoed by his children who treat the slave contemptuously; the singer relates his humiliation: “De Pickaninnies too, de littel [sic] boy and miss, sir, / De[y] laugh and call me name, and tump [sic] me wit dere fis, sir; / Yet me must not complain, poor negro must endure it.”¹² Unusually, the song writer makes the pidgin word pickaninny the thematic connection between the two stanzas to make the conventional antiracist argument that black and white are the same, only differentiated by slavery.¹³ “Here and dere” and “me wish dat I was dying,”¹⁴ the trademark lyrics and refrain, respectively, from the slave character Mungo's most popular song in Isaac Bickerstaff's frequently performed comic opera *The Padlock* (1768), are re-articulated in a serious tone.

Attributed to Mr. Johnson of Norwich, “A New Negro Song” was to be sung to the old country dance tune “Bobbin Joan.” His choice of this familiar music conveys that the slave speaker was for British audiences imagined as “one of us,” and, as I will argue, so does the sound of the pidgin.¹⁵ By the late 1780s, pidgin functions as a special kind of regional British dialect. Negro songs in pidgin tell essentially the same story as those in standard English but with additional “low” details about forced labor and dehumanizing violence. In the present, scholars have tended to belittle the power of poetry or performance that does not call outright for the end of slavery, but we misunderstand the codes of the era: the preponder-

ance of songs pitch the terrible conditions of West Indian slavery and either the slave's grim endurance or his wish for death, which were widely understood to be antislavery, not just anti-slave trade, sentiments.¹⁶ Simply representing the point of view of enslaved people was sometimes tantamount to an antislavery perspective.¹⁷ Popular culture rarely plays by the same rules as legislation, judicial decision, or financial markets.

It is the pidgin form of Negro songs, rather than their content, that was new in the late 1780s. Pidgin-speaking characters most frequently functioned as satiric agents and moral exemplars. Some Negro songs resemble the literature of complaint, which harks back to the Middle Ages. Rural types had long criticized the luxury of the court and servants their unfeeling masters: slave figures followed suit and added the specificity of racism to the pernicious effects of some pride-filled, avaricious, tyrannical, and excessively corrupt nominal Christians. In this kind of song, the slave points to a grave defect that must be remedied.¹⁸ Other Negro songs, however, represented the flip side of this same coin: free black servant characters praised ideal masters, specifically for the slave's emancipation, education, and dignified treatment. A tenant, child, or servant's gratitude was universally considered the appropriate return for a father or master's benevolence and had been standard in the philosophy of the passions and governance as well as in religious and conduct literature from Locke onward. The preferred social glue of patriarchy, gratitude, in the audible and gestural forms of praise and obedience, was the only recompense a dependent could offer a benefactor for material assistance.¹⁹ In this same vein, some dramatic plots, especially in prose fiction, imagine a benevolent master's employment of his own former slave, a model that stems from Roman practice and that was well known from classical literature.²⁰ All of these deeply engrained practices and beliefs gave rise to what sounding black sounded like to readers and audiences.

Negro songs performed on the comedic stage helped to normalize the notion of free black servants thriving in enlightened British households. A number of these roles were played by singing actresses. Songs in praise of a benevolent master, like rural songs generally, were supposed to be delivered simply but feelingly; the singer's appearance of youth and innocence was key to success, which partially may explain the habit of casting young actresses in these roles. Nineteen when she was Rosario in James Cobb's three-act comic opera *Love in the East; or, Adventures of Twelve Hours* (1788), Miss Romanzini played what for her was a typical servant role but cross-dressed, in copper or black textiles or makeup, and speaking pidgin. A reviewer noted approvingly of "little Romanzini" that she "played her part with great innocence and *naivete*, and sung her airs in a most pretty and pleasing manner."²¹ Despite being a free "Indian servant" to Warnford in Calcutta, Rosario introduces the topicality of slavery. Alone on stage, he praises his absent employer's actions and words: "He be good massa—give me money for my poor father—never say to me rogue—rascal—but always speakee kind, and call my own name."²² Rosario then repeats his gratitude in an air. Materially generous, Warnford also declines to use common insults of masters to male servants (on and off the stage); he treats Rosario with dignity. Rosario's brief monologue is also a code that equates a master's kind deeds with gentle words and violent gestures with abusive speech. This specifically antislavery code recurs in Archibald Maclaren's

The Negro Slaves (1799) when the plantation slave Quaco responds to his owner who has just struck him for inattention: "I did not think you spoke to me: rogue and villain is not my name."²³

Theatrical black servants who introduce the topicality of slavery frequently praise an ideal master figure that excludes all slave owners. Also originally played by Miss Romanzini (now Mrs. Bland), Juba sings "The Poor Black Boy" to the strumming of a guitar in the opening scene of Prince Hoare's *The Prize; or, 2, 5, 3, 8* (1793). Juba's song simply relates his love of and fidelity to his master; it is the just reward for the man who had purchased his freedom and tended him when he was ill. A reviewer commented that the song "excit[ed] the tender sentiments [of the audience] for which it was written."²⁴ Subsequently, Miss Grainger, Mrs. Harlowe, Mrs. Roffey, Master Welsh, and Master de Camp all played Juba in this frequently performed musical farce. At the beginning of her Drury Lane career, Romanzini/Bland had taken over the singing chambermaid parts from a retiring actress; her mezzo-soprano voice most commonly lent itself to the English ballad style. The servant roles and the ballad form in which she excelled both helped to domesticate as "one of us" the pidgin-speaking foreign servant, or slave stand-in, characters that she played.

The comedic stage sometimes presented slaves themselves as quintessentially English in their desire for freedom—again, modeling the way that ordinary black characters were "just like us" and therefore worthy of regard. A love of Britain was code for patriotic love of freedom from slavery. Mrs. Martyr sang "an entire new Negro Boy's song," composed by William Shield, for her 11 May 1797 benefit performance at Covent Garden. During the evening, Martyr played the young Cymbalo, the beleaguered slave of the blocking figure, the Spanish sergeant Gasper, in John Cartwright Cross's one-act *The Surrender of Trinidad; a Dramatic Piece* (1797). The master and slave duo operate in the farcical mode, but the tone shifts briefly to sentiment whenever Cymbalo criticizes Gasper and whenever the English heroine is introduced. Cymbalo sympathizes with Susan's captivity: "I have feel de lash of severity too bitterly myself, not to pity de sufferings of others."²⁵ On the surface, Cymbalo's role is to help Susan escape from the Spanish jailor; on a deeper level, the slave figure is amusingly didactic. About his lecherous master, who aims to seduce Susan, Cymbalo exclaims: "Ah! your Heart blacker dan poor negro's face."²⁶ Typical of farce, this pun is ironic: it plays on Britons' common color prejudice by inverting it. Initially calculated to raise the audience's laughter about the multiple negative connotations of black color, the pun highlights Gasper's white complexion as in tension with his evil intentions and Cymbalo's black appearance as in tension with his good heart. The pun is in the spirit of the satiric adage that appearances can be deceiving. Unbeknownst to him, Cymbalo reassures Susan when she overhears him promise: "poor Blacka Boy bring comfort bye and bye—me love you—me love your Countree." He exits the scene, and the jailed heroine Susan exclaims approvingly to the audience: "Love my Country! Then your Heart beats in unison with mine."²⁷ Cymbalo's monologue and song, as well as Susan's expression of sentimental kinship, firmly situate Cymbalo as "one of us." Cymbalo's ensuing song is the vocal centerpiece that precedes his helping Susan escape by blacking her up and passing her off as his twin, another way of making the two characters appear to be the same. Cymbalo's name works on at least

two levels. Roughly meaning “noise,” cymbals, although originating in Turkey, had been musical instruments associated with European military bands since the midcentury. The night’s patriotic entertainment concluded with the cast singing “Rule Britannia!” Both the visual and aural cues are unmistakably symbolically inclusive of the foreign slave character.²⁸

Cross wrote Negro songs for more than one audience, and Cymbalo serves again as a generic, antislavery character, but with a different tone and subject matter, later that summer at Jones’s Royal Circus. For one month, Young Standen sang “The favourite Negro Song” in Cross’s *In Love, in Debt, & in Liquor; or, Our Way in Wales* (1797), a musical drama that explored various social ills. This one song, Cymbalo’s humorous but satirical complaint about English racism among a set of trendy, aspirational young men, was so popular that it continued to be heard as a standalone performance until 16 September 1797, long after the burletta closed on July 3.²⁹ Several similar practices demonstrate how ubiquitous antislavery was in sight and sound. Known for introducing satirical, antislavery dialogue in his other popular Dublin and London productions, John O’Keeffe updated his old musical farce *The Son-in-Law* (1780) by adding a new, nonspeaking Negro boy character; Miss Standen appeared in the cast of the 30 July 1791 and 15 June 1792 Haymarket productions.³⁰ Similarly, in *The Merchant of Venice* of 7 June 1799, Miss Sims played the role of Nerissa, Portia’s servant; later that night, she sang Thomas David Rees’s “The Negro Boy,” with music composed by Thomas Attwood, “in character,” which meant that she was cross-dressed, wearing black textiles or makeup on her face and arms, and singing in pidgin. Because it was a benefit night for Rees, Hill, and Sims herself, the house was likely full.³¹ The generic Negro boy was a comedic type, not an individual: Sambo, Juba, Pompey, Caesar, Rosario, and Cymbalo had typical slave names, no matter their country of birth, because they all fulfilled the same function: visual and aural testaments to an antislavery argument, they were all either free or freed during the play; they all spoke and sang in pidgin either about British racism, the wish to be free, or how to be a model master. This content in that form was “in character.”

The stage and masquerade practice of being “in character” helps to explain the new prevalence of pidgin speakers by the late 1780s. It also tells us that stage decorum, not realism per se, was the primary explanation of the proliferation of these characters.³² Actors in makeup and costume delivering lines were “in character.” At other moments, an actor might be “out of character” and bow to a friend in the audience or move about the stage while other actors delivered their lines to the audience.³³ By midcentury, “in character” announced that a character sang or danced during the performance in the style of his/her role. Previously occurring between acts or scenes, dance and song did not necessarily pertain thematically to the play itself, so “in character” announces a new practice. Mainpiece roles repeatedly advertised as “in character,” with new songs, include the low comedic role of gravedigger in *Hamlet*, the mixed but technically comedic role of Shylock’s daughter Jessica and her Christian lover Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*, and younger son and sailor Ben in William Congreve’s comedy *Love for Love* (1695). Contemporary politics could figure in comedic ethnic roles; Teague from *The Committee; or, the Faithful Irishman* (1747) usually had “in character” songs.³⁴ Popular actors Ned Shuter and John Edwin performed “in character” songs for most of

their farcical roles. Over the century, common sailors appear as “in character” singers because Britain was so frequently at war.

“In character” was not just something Britons watched and heard on the stage; it was something they did if they could. Performed by Dibdin to wide acclaim, *The Padlock*’s Mungo immediately became a popular masquerade character. Even more generically, Mr. Turnbull, part of the Prince of Wales’s entourage, was judged “excellent” “in a negro girl.”³⁵ Elite and aspirational prejudices of gender, rank, country, and beauty emerged ironically in the masquerade; costumes frequently worked through antithesis because the habit “ideally represented an inversion of one’s nature.”³⁶ Participants customarily selected characters from low life, such as chimney sweepers, milkmaids, and rat catchers; exotic or “barbaric” foreign characters, including elite and common Turks, Chinese, Indians, and blackamoors.³⁷ If irony was typical, sympathy, or other motives, also induced some masqueraders to choose a costume so that they might proselytize seriously especially after 1789.

During a masquerade, “in character” entailed the attendee not only wearing the dress and assuming the gestures of a particular stage or novel character but also performing appropriate verse, song, or even the character’s actual lines. A satirical newspaper item, possibly apocryphal, about East End nouveaux riches illustrates the way that “in character” works topically. It reports, with distaste, that the eccentric hostess of Sutton House, in Hackney, where many East India Company directors and other city merchants lived, was reclined on a sofa at the head of the supper table as she listened “to a Hebrew Broker, who, in the character of a *poor Negro Man*, was repeating to her the story of *Inkle and Yarico* in verse; the talk was *new to her*, and the Jew, we may suppose, did ample justice to its poetic beauties, for she melted at the sufferings of her countrywoman Yarico.”³⁸ Betrayed by her lover, the English merchant Inkle, the free American Yarico was sold into slavery for profit. While the gossip draws satirical attention to the rude behavior and ignorance of the hostess, with an anti-Semitic swipe at her interlocutor, the 1772 date suggests that the broker’s costume and performance pertained to the months-long preamble to and deliberation of the Somerset Case. The timing is just after the intervention of James Somerset’s godparents, when the former slave was returned from being illegally sold and transported on a ship. In a different example, a disjunction between masquerade character and characteristic speech prompts the complaint: “A Wowski attired *a la caractere*, how if she had even read the play, or seen it represented, knew not how to utter a sentence in character.”³⁹ Yarico’s free black attendant Wowski originally appeared in the farcical scenes of George Colman the younger’s opera *Inkle and Yarico* (1787); as the topical index to the ills of slavery, she spoke stage pidgin. Commitment to comedic aesthetic decorum technically entailed an author’s writing a quotidian character uttering prosaic speech.

If stylized stage pidgin was “in character” for black servants and slaves because of their common origin either in Africa or the sugar colonies and the comedic genre in which they appeared, it is intriguing to note that historical pidgin shares some lexical traits with it. Various Atlantic pidgins and creoles spoken in coastal trading factories, ports, ships, and plantations filtered into Britain through sailors, military men, and slaves themselves. Linguistic scholars no longer regard pidgin as a derivative, or a combination of two “pure,” established languages, one high

(English) and one low (non-English); rather, scholars view pidgin as a compressed language arising from contact between two or more groups with no common language under the conditions of trade, slavery, or colonization.⁴⁰ Now considered the newest and most modern of languages, pidgins and creoles are especially associated with Britain, the most successful nation in implanting its language globally: English has spawned more pidgins and creoles than any other language.⁴¹ Pidgin compresses several African, native Caribbean, European, and British Isles lower class and regional ways of speaking; Arawak and Carib languages were the first to disappear from this mixture. Pidgin's original purpose was to enable intra- and cross-plantation communication among slaves who came from different language groups and between them and managerial whites.⁴² One theory of transmission is that as a first-generation contact language, pidgin develops into an evolving creole language in subsequent generations.⁴³

Historical pidgin is attached to several low conditions that made the speaker seem extremely unlike Britons: unfree or potentially enslaveable, non-Christian, and usually non-white. Pidgin also lacks the geographical specificity of other British dialects; it may conjure up a colonial location, but not one more specific than "somewhere in the Caribbean or Americas," a region that not all Britons believed was either similar to or even compatible with England.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, historical West Indian pidgin and stage pidgin both conjured up some of the same sounds. Demonstrative pronouns *dis*, *dat*, and *dose* entered West Indian pidgin by way of East Sussex and Kent; *dem* for *those* preceding a noun is common to some regions of West Africa and Britain. *Dere* for *there* entered by way of Ireland; indentured servants contributed distinctive sounds, such as *trote* for *throat*. *Ting* for *thing* and *teef* for *teeth* are English: the "th" sound is not part of West African dialects either. The first person singular *me* or *mi* means *I* in Ewe, Fante, and Ga dialects, as it did in some British regions.⁴⁵

Runaway advertisements for slaves and servants in London newspapers frequently mention their accent as a means of identification: John Pye "speaks very bad English," a servant to Commodore George Walker speaks "broken English," and Orford "speaks bad English."⁴⁶ To combat this association, black men placing employment-wanted advertisements noted the range of their language skills, including their fluency in a second language of Dutch, German, or French, or, more rarely, all three. Intriguingly, a number of these men state a preference to work for single gentlemen, often specifically in the military. Appearing beginning in 1742, the advertisements increase in frequency during the early 1770s. A typical one reads: "Wants a Place, a black Servant, who can shave and dress, is about 25 Years of Age; has no objection to go abroad, as he speaks Dutch very fluently, and knows French enough to carry him through that Country."⁴⁷ The failure to command standard English was a liability for any servant who wanted to move up in the world. Servants and slaves alike, in fact and fiction, were commonly believed to be the source of linguistic contamination that could occur in the influential early years of an elite young Briton's life when he or she was not at all or rarely in the company of parents and older siblings. Wet nurses, either on or off site, were the cause of most concern. The state-of-the-art advice recommended wet nurses' ideal medium breast size and body type as well as their cheerful temper, and it also counseled readers to avoid those who stammered or those who had a heavy regional accent,

“those that speak clownish, boorish, broad or broken English.” Instead, readers were advised to find one “as delivers her words well and distinctly.”⁴⁸ The command of standard English was also material for male servants in well-off households because most wore livery; they were the public status symbol of their employers.

That West Indian pidgin ever became a commercially successful entertainment language is surprising, then, for a number of reasons. From 1430, the standard language for literature was based on a dialect of London.⁴⁹ Restoration authors routinely represented Moorish, West African, Native American, and Caribbean figures of all ranks as speaking in standard English. Narrators conventionally mention that a person or character actually speaks “broken English,” even as they depict her or him speaking in standard English. Derived from aesthetic decorum, this habit continues through the eighteenth century sometimes also as a political decision. The very few Restoration authors who represent African or American languages deem a word or two sufficient to establish local color.⁵⁰ Thomas Tryon’s *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen Planters of the East and West Indies* (1684) is one of the first English “fictional non-fictions” to imagine a slave’s first-person criticism of slavery.⁵¹ An English hatter who set up business in Barbados, Tryon stages an extended satirical dialogue between a fictional master and slave. The slave condemns the overwork and underfeeding, hypocrisy (religious and secular), and violence of Barbados. The single foreign word that Sambo utters is “*Bacchararo*.”⁵² The accompanying side note reads: “So the *Negro*’s [*sic*] in their language call the *Whites*.” *Bacchararo*’s context is significant: the master has just condemned his interlocutor, and all slaves, as “a dark ignorant *Heathen*, scarce capable of *common Sense*.” Sambo slyly responds: “I confess we are poor silly dark ignorant Creatures, and for ought I find, so are many of the *Bacchararo*’s too, as well as we.”⁵³ Tryon imagines Sambo as the son of a priest, so his standard English accords with his elite African birth and education as well as with the seriousness of Tryon’s satire of the slave owners’ shocking behavior. Sambo’s exploration of the fine points of Christian doctrine and behavior with the master establishes the blueprint for later pidgin speakers contesting slave owners’ claims to any superiority, a legacy that persists for over 150 years.

Defoe’s didactic, satiric *Family Instructor* (1718), his romance *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), and W. P.’s farcical, satiric *The Jamaica Lady* (1719) have the distinction of representing the first extensive dialogue of West Indian pidgin-speaking characters; remarkably, no other novelists or playwrights followed suit for decades.⁵⁴ The first writer to specialize in pidgin speakers, Defoe creates his earliest slave character Toby in *The Family Instructor*, volume 2 (1718). Assuming the form typical of practical divinity, the extensive informal dialogue occurs between Jacky, a young, religious boy of an un-Christian family, and Toby, a young Barbadian boy who has been gifted to the London family.⁵⁵ In the spirit of Tryon, it details the slave owners’ violent behavior as well as expatiates Christian belief and practice.⁵⁶ The first words that Toby utters are “dam him,” and the father explains to his shocked son that because Toby is not a Christian, he does not know that these words are sinful. The cursing seems to reflect poorly on Toby, but, we are informed, he merely imitates the common phrase of island white people.

A prototype for subsequent slaves in performance and novels, Toby serves an initial function of informing the reader about corrupt masters and abused slaves.

In response to Jacky's question, Toby observes about Barbadian custom: "the *white Mans* say GOD Prayers; no much know GOD." The lesson drawn is that they are hypocrites. Jacky asks, "And what do the black Mans do?" Toby replies: "They *much Work, much Work*; no say God Prayers";⁵⁷ masters keep the slaves in perpetual labor and ignorance. By contrast, Toby notes that the white men feast and pay social visits to each other on Sundays, but they do not attend services either. Jacky asks why the black men do not attend church, and Toby explains that masters forbid them to know God because they believe that baptism will elevate the slaves, resulting in their freedom and in the consequent loss of their profit. Toby's innocent answers eventually lead the horrified Jacky to denounce the planters. Later, when Jacky's mother chimes in that they should not have Toby baptized because he will run away, her perspective is instantly dismissed as un-Christian (*FI*, 308).

Toby's linguistic role exceeds the pages of *The Family Instructor*; he popularizes the trope of the talking book, which Henry Louis Gates, Jr. identifies as the "ur-trope of the Anglo-African tradition."⁵⁸ In a dialogue frequently repeated over the next century in children's literature (and in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* [1759–1766]), Jacky questions his cousin and then his father about whether Toby has a soul, why Toby is black, and whether his soul is also black (*FI*, 317). Defoe's blending of the old form of practical divinity with topical material is evident by a glance at *The British Apollo* (1718), a thrice-weekly newspaper, which had just reprinted a question about the cause of black complexion in people.⁵⁹ Satisfied that Toby has a soul like his own, Jacky resolves to teach Toby to read so that he may access God's word directly. Toby fears that God will not hear him if he prays; Jacky reassures him that God bids him to pray. Toby retorts with the bluntness children are known for: "You bid me [pray]; GOD no bid me." Jacky points to the Bible: "all that is said in that Book, GOD says," which prompts Toby to wonder, "How GOD speak to me? me no can read" (*FI*, 322). Although James Albert Gronniosaw, John Marrant, Ottobah Cugoano, Olaudah Equiano, and John Jea all wrote their captivity and slave narratives in standard English, and published them between 1770 and 1815, it is likely that Gronniosaw, at least, drew from Defoe's text: *The Family Instructor* went into sixteen editions by 1766 and was reprinted regularly thereafter through 1800 on both sides of the Atlantic.

Toby calls himself a "poor black Boy" before his baptism and education (*FI*, 323), a catchphrase that became ubiquitous only in the Negro songs of the 1790s. Defoe's narrator remarks that baptism made Toby a Christian and "gave him a Title to his Liberty, so as that he was no more a Slave to serve without Wages; yet he would never accept of that Advantage, nor by any Means leave his Master [Jacky], or become a Servant for Wages, till his Master was grown up and voluntarily gave him his Dismiss" (*FI*, 352). Toby's Christian forbearance is the rare, exemplary response to the kindness of the father and son. As a character in a didactic genre, he delays his independence because of its economic uncertainty and his gratitude: he has been improved through religious instruction, and he is well treated (if Toby had left a good master after his baptism, it would discourage owners from baptizing their slaves). Victims of global economic forces, but beneficiaries of Christian conversion, Defoe's slaves and native Caribbean characters exist to inform and convert avaricious, tyrannical, and ignorant Britons.

With *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe is the first author to exploit West Indian pidgin for its ludic potential. In two scenes that occur several years apart, Friday's pidgin mysteriously intensifies rather than attenuates. On the island, when Crusoe asks Friday what his nation does with the men that they take in war, the Caribbean Islander Friday replies: "my nation eat man's too, eat all up." Years later in the Pyrenees, Friday's pidgin is more exaggerated in the thematically linked bear-baiting episode in which Defoe strangely introduces the double "ee" for the first time appended to Friday's verbs. Friday boasts of what he will do to the bear: "me shakee te hand with him . . . Me eatee him up: Me Make you good laugh."⁶⁰ In essence, Defoe writes a pantomime-like farce afterpiece to the island episode that inserts Crusoe and Friday into the stock comedic duo of master and man, in which Friday assumes the customary servant/slave role of entertainer.⁶¹

Defoe's contemporaries objected to the way that he represented his characters' speech. Charles Gildon's *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Mr. D___ de F__* (1719), which went into three editions, criticized Defoe's command of realistic principles. Gildon faults Defoe for having the Morisco Xury speak broken English and for failing to have Crusoe speak broken Arabick when they are both enslaved in Morocco.⁶² Gildon's Friday reproaches Defoe: "Have injure me, to make me such Blockhead, so much contradiction, as to be able to speak *English tolerably well* in a Month or two, and not to speak it better in Twelve years after." Disingenuously, Gildon's Defoe offers a literary and market-driven rationale to Friday, one that proposes that his pidgin "authenticates" the fiction of Friday's speech for the common reader: "I did not make you speak broken English to represent you as a Blockhead, incapable of learning to speak it better, but merely for the Variety of Stile, to intermix some broken English to make my Lie go down the more glibly with the Vulgar Reader."⁶³ Friday's pidgin remains a sticking point for subsequent revisers of *Robinson Crusoe* for didactic purposes.⁶⁴

As if taking a cue from Gildon, William Chetwood's knock-off novel *Captain Richard Falconer* (1720) accounts in realistic terms for the standard English of William Plymouth: an African gifted to a West Indian merchant turned pirate, raised as a slave in England, he was baptized, and, on his own, became a good Christian. He ends up as a musician with a pension for life, a waged servant with security, to a far more elite and worthy character, the governor of Cuba. A playwright and a prompter at Drury Lane, Chetwood also wrote *Captain Robert Boyle* (1726), which was reprinted into the next century. The protagonist is given two South American natives as a gift; providing a model for readers, he has them instructed in Christianity and literacy, names them Robert and Joseph (after family members), frees, hires, and dresses them in modern (rather than fancy) habits so that they will fit in.⁶⁵ Their English, readers are informed, improves over time. Realism also guides *The Voyages, Travels, of William Owen Vaughan* (1760) in which Chetwood has an English character enslaved in Tunis learn the "Moorish tongue" in order to communicate with his master. Chetwood's revisions make a case for form and content elevating his African- and American-born characters to the status of fellow Christian Britons. Similarly, Penelope Aubin's black slave characters, originally from Angola and Northern Africa, are represented as freeing themselves or being freed by Europeans; the slaves speak the same standard English of the European characters in *The Noble Slaves* (1722) and *Charlotta du Pont* (1723). Aubin hints

that their shared diction is more suited to her didactic purpose, which represents a small group of characters of various origins and stations who all act selflessly to help each other—the opposite of the Crusoes of the world. Possibly Defoe registers, if stubbornly, the critique of his competitors when the pidgin-speaking Negum of *Religious Courtship* (1722) is characterized as “a sensible inquisitive fellow,” who reads both Italian and English, an accomplishment far beyond the ability of most Britons.⁶⁶ Whether to create black characters speaking pidgin or standard English was a debate that resurfaces in the outpouring of didactic, juvenile fiction. By 1788, a majority of juvenile fiction writers were deciding in pidgin’s favor, even as Thomas Day’s rapidly reprinted *History of Sandford and Merton* (1783–89) and Laetitia Barbault and John Aiken’s influential *Evenings at Home* (1792–96) both feature free, standard English-speaking slave characters.⁶⁷ The choice of speaking style does not map onto authorial politics, since most juvenile fiction argues against racism and slavery.

The commercial viability of West Indian pidgin was not, then, immediately apparent to writers until the late midcentury. Vocal, dancing, and sartorial impersonation of Greek, Roman, Russian, Moorish, and American slaves has a long, popular European history on the stage, in parades, and at masquerades. The most popular, such as the London Lord Mayor pageants, featured mythological, royal, and common black characters, all costumed according to their respective ranks, but all singing in standard English following georgic and pastoral conventions. A 1743 advertisement for the famous actor Tony Aston promises that he “exhibits his learned comic demonstrative Oratory on the Face, with English, Irish, Scotch, and Negroe Songs, in proper habits” at the Temple Punch-House.⁶⁸ The quondam soldier and sailor had served in Jamaica and several coastal North American colonies; since 1716, he had performed with his wife and son, mostly in taverns between Edinburgh and London. The aging, impoverished Aston was attuned to the commercial potential of impersonation, so it is noteworthy that no print evidence exists that he sang Negro songs until the 1740s, and, even then, most of his advertised performances omit that hook while mentioning impersonations of popular stage characters in English, Irish, and Scottish dialect and song.⁶⁹ The syntax of the complete advertisement of Aston’s performance notably nestles “Negro” alongside of ethnic and geographic regions of the British Isles.

For most of the century, neither visual nor aural blackface impersonation was as popular as other kinds of entertainment. In Aston’s era, pidgin-speaking male and female slave characters occurred only in a handful of contemporary farce theatricals, none of which were performed publically, including the twice-printed London-based ballad opera *The Jew Decoy’d* (1733), one of six plays derived from Hogarth’s *The Harlot’s Progress* and the only one with a speaking role for the Negro boy character; *The Fancy; a Comedy as it Was Acted Between Two Jamaica Families, during the Time They Resided in London, until They Returned into Their Own Country* (1744); and *The Sailor’s Opera; or, a Trip to Jamaica* (1745), printed for the author.

With James Townley’s farce afterpiece *High Life Below Stairs* (1759), the cadences of West Indian pidgin likely could be heard on the London main stage for the first time in the accent of at least one of the two slave characters from Jamaica: Kingston, a footman, and Chloe, a kitchen wench. The thoughtless, spoiled master,

also born in Jamaica but now resident in London, reforms by the play's conclusion, which entails his learning to manage his household and not be managed by his favorites, the butler and the housekeeper, who are both cheating him. While the farce itself was frequently performed for over a century, the characters Kingston and Chloe were not copied in other productions. The original Kingston was John Moody, Irish by birth, who had been part of a company of players in Jamaica between 1745 and 1758. An actor in the mold of Aston, Moody introduced a distinctly Jamaican sound to the stage the year after he returned to London.⁷⁰ On the printed page, the footman Kingston's dialogue differs orthographically very little from the white coachman's, but it would have sounded new. Moody's input is most noticeable when the snoozing, drunken Kingston is forced awake by his master, in disguise as a fellow servant, who grabs his nose. Kingston yells at him confusedly: "Oh! Oh! What now? Curse you!—Oh, Got tam you!" His drinking buddy the coachman, also rudely awakened by the master's slapping him, yells out in standard English, "Damn you!"⁷¹ The numerous printed versions of *High Life Below Stairs* all replicate Kingston's accent as "Cot tam you"; only the much shorter (by about half) 1780 version, taken from the Drury Lane's manager's performance book, retains the more formal sounding "Curse you" and expunges the rest.⁷² Such variations suggest an ongoing debate about the appropriate representation of black characters' speech in performance and written texts.

When Isaac Bickerstaff came to write the role of Mungo for *The Padlock* (1768), a hit comic opera farce, he consulted Moody on vocabulary and syntax. Listed as Mungo in the Larpent Manuscript, which was submitted to the censor eight days before the initial production, Moody was replaced subsequently by Charles Dibdin, who was the more adept singer. Dibdin recalls: "the part would never have been written as it is but for Moody's suggestions, who had been in the West-Indies, and knew, of course, the dialect of the negroes."⁷³ Moody's authoritative input shows up when the amanuensis crossed out his initial rendering of Mungo's three utterances of "damn" and replaced them with "tam." It may be pure coincidence that both Kingston and Mungo repeat in the farcical register Defoe's Toby's first shocking words.

The character of Mungo cemented the sound of a pidgin-speaking role but did not originate it, as several scholars erroneously have argued.⁷⁴ Even though the quotable, wily West Indian slave was not sufficient to make other pidgin-speaking characters popular, his longevity on the stage was important to transforming pidgin into the default entertainment language. Bickerstaff was inspired by Cervantes's short novel *The Jealous Husband of Estremadura* (1640), which had been reprinted six times in England, most recently in 1766.⁷⁵ Mungo's original was Lewis, "an old Negro," a music-loving eunuch character who serves in a household in Seville with four white servants and two black female slaves, all of whom speak standard English in the translations. Importantly, in Bickerstaff's version, Mungo acts as an agent of satire.⁷⁶ Satire is the mode of writing that connects pidgin speakers in didactic novels to those of stage farce.

Moody's rendition of West Indian pidgin, accepted as realistic by those who knew of his contribution, is the conduit for Mungo's criticism of Don Diego, the master who overworks and beats him in the typical cartoonish manner of farce and pantomime. Smarter than his master and thwarting him at every turn, Mungo

utters conventional complaints about his treatment, enabling audiences to enjoy his performance. The point of farce was not to make the audience worry about a character's fate; that was the job of tragic, heroic, or sentimental plays featuring characters of elevated rank. Farce's only apparent goal was to divert the audience. Mungo is no pushover. Don Diego asks, "Can you be honest?" Mungo replies innocently: "Me no savee Massa, you never ax me before." Diego specifies: "Can you tell truth?" Hedging for money, Mungo demands: "What you give me, Massa?" Diego complies: "There's a pistreen . . . do you know of any ill going on in my house?" by which the elderly master means is the young Leonora true to him? In a purposeful misdirection, Mungo states knowingly: "Ah, Massa, a damn deal." Diego, startled, responds: "How! That I'm a stranger to?" Mungo's punch line has satirical umph: "No, Massa, you lick me every day with your rattan: I'm sure Massa, that's mischief enough for poor Neger man."⁷⁷ All reviewers agreed that Mungo kept audiences laughing uproariously at his quintessentially bad servant behavior, the zingers delivered to his faulty master, and his stock complaints of the life of a slave—the common tropes of slave and servant roles since Plautus and Terence and reappearing in force since the Restoration.

Mungo's two solo songs offer an unexpected emotional depth, a momentarily plaintive modulation of the purely humorous conflict of the farcical plot. Sung at the conclusion of Act 1, Scene 4, with Don Diego overhearing, Mungo's first song was widely reprinted: "Dear heart, what a terrible life am I led, / A dog has a better that's sheltered and fed; / Night and day 'tis the same, / My pain is dere game ;/ Me wish to de Lord me was dead. / What e'er's to be done, / Poor black must run; / Mungo here, Mungo dere, / Mungo every where."⁷⁸ Mungo's second song features less pidgin; it seems to be an innocuous ditty about his love of music, but the final line, which hinges on the single pidgin word that signifies the owner of humans, abruptly introduces a sinister tone that concludes Act 2, Scene 2 with a vision of servant revelry and his owner's death. Mungo sings: "We dance and we sing,/ Till we make a house ring, / And, tied in his garters, old Massa may swing."⁷⁹ Men and women alike wore garters, and they were devices of suicide and impromptu hanging in stage comedies.⁸⁰

The Drury Lane manager David Garrick recalls the metropolitan "rage" that followed in the wake of Mungo's debut, especially how his pidgin entered the common parlance: "The object of this passion was a black servant, named *Mungo*, well enough drawn, and speaking English as the African negro invariably does; for the rest, frolicksome, drunken and faithless, and always ludicrous. A common question in life was soon answered, 'No Massa'—'me lilly tire' displaced 'I am a little tired'—the weary porter sat down to rest upon his load, with the exclamation of Mungo—'You damn hamper! you carry me now.' Nay, the very Senate roared with laughter, when an honourable member ejaculated the darling sounds, '*Mungo here, Mungo there.*'"⁸¹ The play's reception elevated Mungo to a type.⁸² Crusoe's Friday, by contrast, does not attain generic status until the nineteenth century, and, when he does, it is as Man Friday, a servant.

Arguably, stage satire found a specific vehicle to criticize racism and slavery with the Somerset Case. This crucial event, adjudicated the spring before the 23 October 1772 debut of Garrick's afterpiece *The Irish Widow* (1772), announced the distinctiveness of Britain from its slave colonies. Lord Mansfield eventually argued

that slavery had never been authorized by positive law in England and Wales and that it was unsupported in common law. An exchange about legal equality versus racial precedence comprises the play's sole reference to Somerset. In a brief episode, typical of what critics called temporary satire, or topical allusion, the eponymous protagonist instructs her servants: "Follow me, Pompey; and Skips [another footman] do you follow him." Pompey, played by the seventeen-year-old Master Cape, complains: "The Baccararo whiteman no let blacky boy go first after you missis, they pull and pinch me."⁸³ The footman sententiously agrees in the only standard English spoken: "It is a shame, your ladyship, that a black negro should take the place of English christians—we can't follow him indeed." The widow dispatches with the footman's racism in a comic comeuppance when she threatens to fire him: "Then may you follow one another out of my my sarvice [sic]; if you follow me, you shall follow him, for he shall go before me; can't I make him your superior, as the laws of the land have made him your aqual [sic]? therefore resign as fast as you plase [sic], you shan't oppose government and keep your places too, that is not good politics in England or Ireland either, so come along Pompay [sic], be after going before me."⁸⁴ The two-act comedy, performed regularly through the early nineteenth century on both sides of the Atlantic, was a hit initially because Mrs. Barry spoke stylized brogue "humorously" and maintained a vivacious bodily presence, two of the hallmarks of any successful comedy.⁸⁵ The two dialect speakers are the moral center of the play, and the visual symbolism of Pompey preceding his mistress would not have escaped audiences.

Garrick was not alone in making a pointed, brief allusion to English racism and slavery on stage. A steady trickle of private and public farce theatricals ensued that featured a single pidgin-speaking blackface character, usually in a small satirical role that criticized the pretensions of aspirational Britons. A significant group of famous actors, playwrights, and London theater managers solidified pidgin's ascendance on the stage from the late 1760s through 1790s: on the creation/managerial side, Bickerstaff, Garrick, Samuel Foote, Dibdin, O'Keeffe, Colman the younger, and Cross wrote the parts and controlled the repertoire. On the acting side, Moody, Dibdin, John Edwin, John Fawcett, and female actresses who could sing, including Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. Martyr, Mrs. Love, Miss George, and Miss Romanzini played the parts of both young black male and female slaves and servants from the Americas, Caribbean, and East Indies—a trend that intensified in the 1790s.

Most influential in popularizing stage pidgin was Colman's *Inkle and Yarico* (1787), a main piece opera of five acts. The timing of the play coincided with Parliamentary debates about the slave trade and the formation of an anti-slave trade lobby: its plot was highly topical. Arguably, the love match between the black American servant Wowski and the Cockney servant Trudge was the innovation that most contributed to pidgin's longevity as an entertainment staple; they were the comedic but moral center of an otherwise sentimental play. While not the first representation of an interracial couple on the comedic stage, Trudge and Wowski, even more than the standard English speaking Yarico and Inkle, had an unprecedented, immediate impact. Colman displayed how pidgin could conjure up the topicality of slavery through sound and sight and denote status distinction within the same ethnic group. The heroine, a copper-complexioned native American, speaks in standard English, a contrast to her black attendant Wowski's pidgin; Yarico's

lines operate in the register of sentiment, and Wowski's occur in the registers of satire and farce. As the only speaking black character (the others were nonspeaking slave extras), Wowski, a low comic version of Yarico, is the untutored outsider and moral barometer who is the didactic contrast to perverted Britons and Barbadians. With short lines, Wowski is the "straight man." Her interlocutor, the wisecracking, big-hearted Cockney servant Trudge, carries out the satirical thrust of their dialogue. For instance, Trudge warns Wowski to guard her furs and feathers because some one might steal them at the Barbados port. Wowski innocently asks: "Steal! What that?" and Trudge ironically comments to the audience: "Oh Lord! see what one loses by not being born in a Christian country."⁸⁶ Later, Wowski worries that now that they are in Barbados, Trudge will no longer love her. Wowski inquires: "What make you love me now?" Trudge responds sincerely: "Gratitude, to be sure." Wowski: "What that?" Again, Trudge ironically turns the satire on hypocritical Britons, not Wowski, as he addresses the audience: "the poor dull devils of her country are all in the practice of gratitude without finding out what it means; while we can tell the meaning of it, with little or no practice at all— Lord, Lord, what a fine advantage Christian learning is!"⁸⁷ This satirical dialogue, a comic inversion of received knowledge, was so well regarded that it appears under the serious heading of gratitude in *The Beauties of Modern Dramatists* (1800).⁸⁸ Although Wowski's speech is entirely in pidgin, most of her songs are not. A serious testament to her love of Trudge, "White man, never go away" is in standard English; it is her only song that was popular, appearing in six songsters, almost all of which were published only after the 1789 production.⁸⁹ For the more sentimental moment captured in song, pidgin gives way to standard English.

In the wake of Wowski and Trudge, playwrights and librettists engaged in rapid experimentation with pidgin as a way to denote aurally all kinds of differences, including female gender and enslaved status. Male English sailor and servant figures routinely fall in love with pidgin-speaking female characters in the 1790s. These symbolic English everyman figures befriend, free, and marry black and copper female slave or servant characters from the Americas, Caribbean, Africa, and the East Indies. The couples' witty banter and their songs, with an occasional sentimental moment, focus the satiric energy on deconstructing English racism and slavery. Usually initiated through a low pun on complexion, and thereby introducing word play about dark complexion, color prejudice had been stock in comedies throughout the century; these plays, however, aim to subvert it. Visually and aurally, these mixed couples were powerful symbols: their fictional union was a patriotic statement of unity. Comedy plots involving marriage entail the formation of a fictional but ideal new community (with either the expulsion or conversion of the powerful blocking character), as C. L. Barber, M. M. Bakhtin, and Northrop Frye variously demonstrate.⁹⁰

Versions of Colman's Trudge and Wowski recur in afterpieces that played frequently throughout the rest of the century, including William Macready's *The Irishman in London; or, The Happy African* (1792); the anonymously authored musical drama *The Death of Captain Faulknor* (1795), set in the Caribbean; and J. G. Holman's *The Votary of Wealth* (1799), set in Warwickshire. Mariana Starke's *The Sword of Peace* (performed 1788; printed 1789), set on the coast of Coromandel, adapts the formula to the London servant Jeffreys, who purchases the freedom

of the black, pidgin-speaking slave Caesar. Possibly because the play is a mainpiece comedy, Jeffreys's conversion from a thoughtless, racist Briton is signaled by his suddenly speaking in standard English: the moment that he perceives that Caesar's enslavement is an undeserved plight, he stops speaking in an insult-laden slang. Colman innovates with his own formula in *The Mountaineers* (1793) and in *The Africans* (1808). In the latter, the comedic slave Sutta is the sole pidgin speaker, which marks both her ethnic and status difference from all of the other characters, comic and serious alike. Under the guise of low entertainment, the pidgin speaker anchors antislavery and antiracist sentiment in plays set outside the Caribbean.

Standard English came to denote a leading black male character, especially one who was either a literate or Christian slave. A Highlander and former soldier in North America, MacLaren penned *The Negro Slaves* (1799), a one-act drama with songs, set on a plantation. Taught to read by the recently dead servant "English Tom," the virtue-loving male slave Quako speaks and sings in standard English; his equally appealing love interest Sela speaks in pidgin. The play ends with the newly freed slaves expressing a desire to go to England: almost all fictional pidgin speakers are quite glad to be or become Christian and/or free British subjects. Found to be demeaning by recent scholars, first and foremost, this sentiment was a patriotic dog whistle to the audience; the slave characters' wish for freedom or desire to live in Britain was a common device that allowed slavery to be criticized as un-Christian and un-British.

Extremely well regarded for its scenery and acting, John Fawcett's pantomimical drama *Obi, or, Three-Finger'd Jack* (1800), based on a historical episode, has the leading man, the rebellious slave and eponymous anti-hero three-fingered Jack, speak standard English, but all of the other slaves speak and sing in pidgin. The one air that was singled out as exceptional, and reprinted fully in the newspaper reviews, was Mrs. Mountain's Negro song. Her role is as wife to the "courageous Negro" Quashee, who had previously converted to Christianity to obviate the power of Obi. Subsequently renamed James Reeder, Quashee dies helping to vanquish Jack. Her role as grieving wife also doubles to conjure up a generic, bereaved slave. The third stanza reads: "My love be kill'd; how sweet he smil'd; His smile again me never see; / Unless me see it in the child / That he have left poor Ulalee./ Poor Negro woman, Ulalee!"⁹¹ At the new Royal Circus, Cross's *King Caesar* (1801) represented a complex tale of love, jealousy, and slave rebellion set in Saint-Domingue. While most of the characters use African words during their dialogue and songs, translated in print versions at the bottom of the page, an innovation, Cross assigns standard English to the dramatic star, the Obeah-trained and eventually rebellious Mackandal, who was, like three-fingered Jack, a historical figure. The lesser male and female characters, both serious and comic, speak in pidgin.

What seems like literary pidgin's most troubling qualities—its generic lowness and its static nature—turn out to its most politically productive traits. Transferable among common characters who were survivors of the same global processes—deracinated native Caribbean Islanders and Americans, East Indian servants, and African-descended characters in slavery or servitude—West Indian pidgin in fact and fiction did not, like other literary British regional dialects, conjure up the vitality of a shared, cross-rank local community in a slave colony or the orality of a simpler society untouched by commercial forces. On the contrary, pidgin was a modern language brought into being because of global actors united

by trade, the profit motive, and slavery, which made it an appropriate form for the purposes of satire within both the didactic and comedic traditions.

In late twentieth-century marketing, the term *genericide* emerged to describe the process that occurs when an individual brand, such as Xerox, Kleenex, or Hoover, comes to stand in for all other similar products and consequently wipes out the unique qualities of competitors. For generations, the generic brand dominates the market in consumers' imaginations and linguistic habits. As a critical term, *genericide* speaks to the way that generic black characters, usually by way of the West Indies, linguistically and visually overwrote the representation of native American, East Indian, and South Pacific characters on the stage. It is an artistic strategy that goes against the grain of an age known for its newfound scientific commitment to the taxonomy of racial difference. Through well-known stage codes of genre, dialogue, and song, common black characters were symbolically transformed into common Britons.⁹² To study stage pidgin as a form of *genericide* is to acknowledge the homogenizing forces of acculturation. Scholars before me have documented the world-changing economic and political forces at work, but we have yet to understand fully how managers, writers, and actors participated in another, related process. Neither the didactic nor the comedic forms of commercial entertainment have received the kind of attention that they warrant because scholars have often taken both at face value.

NOTES

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1. No single person did more than Charles Dibdin, a main stage actor, singer, playwright, and solo performer, to popularize pidgin. Even though Dibdin's stated politics on the slave trade and slavery were equivocal in his memoir, *The Musical Tour of Mr. Dibdin; in which—Previous to his Embarkation for India—He Finished his Career as a Public Character* (Sheffield: John Gales, 1788), his performances over the next twenty years were less so: auditors or readers could not attend to the content without the takeaway that slavery was unnatural, un-English, and brutal.

2. Charles Dibdin, "Ballad," in *The General Election (1796), A Collection of Songs; Selected from the Works of Mr. Dibdin* (London: Printed for the Author, 1799), 5:19–20. The first Negro song that I have found mentioned in print, about war and fighting in Africa, occurs as part of "Plantation News" in *The London Evening Post*, 22–24 July 1742. The singing slave was on his way to be executed for murdering his master.

3. Wylie Sypher, *Guinea's Captive Kings: British Anti-Slavery Literature of the XVIIIth Century* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1942), 10; also 19–20.

4. Genre, and the way that class difference structures it, has languished in recent literary and historical analyses of the stage, race, and slavery. Lisa Freeman's *Character's Theater: Genre and Identity on the Eighteenth-Century Stage* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2002) persuades that stage characters are best interpreted as genre-driven (8) and as always mediated by actors (36). K. Dian Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1700–1840* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2008), 78–79, and throughout, offers a full consideration of genre and class difference as they relate to race and racism in visual culture. Distinguishing between caricature and type, she defines a caricature as a charged deviation from an ideal that may exist outside the text; a type is a discontinuous collection of recognizable physical attributes and character traits deriving from generic convention (101).

The conventions of farce comprise slapstick, cartoonish violence, low word play, and stock characters in formulaic plots; none of these elements, however, rules out innovation. The bawdy and harrowing satirical literatures of low urban and rural life, as well as pastoral and georgic verse, all bear on the function and sound of pidgin-speaking characters. Pastoral and georgic were old forms that sanctioned

the inclusion of regional (and other dialect) languages. See Janet Sorensen, "Dialect Poetry," in *The Encyclopedia of Romantic Literature*, ed. Frederick Burwick (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 1.

5. On the vitality of nonstandard English, see Andrew Elfenbein, *Romanticism & The Rise of English* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2009), 87; and Janet Sorensen, "'Strange Orthography and Singular Diction': Scott's Use of Scots in *The Heart of Midlothian*," in *English Literature and the Other Languages*, ed. Ton Hoenselaars and Marius Buning (Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), 63–74. These and Sorensen's "Dialect Poetry" all represent the more recent trend of analyzing the print orality of dialect as multivalent. On standard English, Olivia Smith, *The Politics of Language, 1791–1819* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), explains the binary of standard English versus dialect: in polite circles, "[the correctness of] language revealed the mind," and "Only the refined language was capable of expressing intellectual ideas and worthy sentiments, while the vulgar language was limited to the expression of the sensations and passions" (2). James Mulholland, *Sounding Imperial: Poetic Voice and the Politics of Empire, 1730–1820* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2013), discovers surprising intersections of bardic voice, poetic form, print orality, and empire in the standard English tradition to unfold the value of "inauthentic archives." My essay title derives from his book title—by way of ABC's satirical comedy *Black-ish*.

6. Elfenbein, *Rise of English*, 77–78; Michael Ragussis, *Theatrical Nation: Jews and Other Outlandish Englishmen in Georgian Britain* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 43–53. These two have led the way in suggestive, multiethnic studies of stage dialect.

7. Elfenbein, *Rise of English*, 78. For an archival approach that treats the sound as "a believable likeness of the real thing," see David Paisey, *Electronic British Library Journal* 2015, Article 12, 1.

8. Ragussis, *Theatrical Nation*, 72. He identifies "a new effort at legitimately reproducing the various dialects of Great Britain" after midcentury (71).

9. Dorothy Couchman, in "'Mungo Everywhere': How Anglophones Heard Chattel Slavery," *Slavery & Abolition* 36, no. 4 (2015): 1–17, is attentive to stage convention, including song, and breaks with dominant scholarly convention of the past few decades. Several influential scholars have doubted whether any play could be either abolitionist or antiracist in this era; the conversation has centered mainly on George Colman, Jr.'s opera *Inkle and Yarico* (1787). A preoccupation with political realism, rather than an understanding of how generic convention tackles politics, seems to underwrite their claims that echo Wiley Sypher's. Brychan Carey, "To Force a Tear: British Abolitionism and the Eighteenth-Century Stage," *Affect and Abolition in the Anglo-Atlantic, 1770–1830*, ed. Stephen Ahern (Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate Press, 2013), opines: "it is difficult to see the play [*Inkle and Yarico*] as a deliberate intervention in the [abolition] debate. It does not appeal to its audience to take a political stance in the real world, nor does it engage very convincingly with the realities of the slave trade or plantation life. . . . Ultimately, it would be difficult to describe it as an abolitionist play" (123). Felicity Nussbaum, "The Theatre of Empire: Racial Counterfeit, Racial Realism," *New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660–1840*, ed. Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), states: "These plays [with blackface actors], in spite of being produced as the abolition movement gathers force and succeeds, are not really anti-slavery plays" (74). David Worrall, *Harlequin Empire: Race, Ethnicity and the Drama of the Popular Enlightenment* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), offers a broader sample and corrective.

10. On Britons' ambivalence about race, especially on the stage, see Felicity Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003), 233 and 213–56 generally. On Britons' ambiguity about slavery, see Catherine Molineux, *Faces of Perfect Ebony: Encountering Atlantic Slavery in Imperial Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2012), 16. On the overdetermination of empire, nation, and race, see Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003), introduction. These three inspiring studies excel at identifying and analyzing the convergence of complex phenomena.

11. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *Figures in Black: Words, Signs, and the "Racial" Self* (1987; New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), 180. Worrall, *Harlequin Empire*, is a careful historical analysis of blackface impersonation on the British stages in the mid-eighteenth century through the 1820s; blackface roles, including makeup and costuming, are on a spectrum with other contemporary theatrical practices.

12. *The Songster's Miscellany* (Kidderminster and London: G. Gower, 1792), 150; it also appears in *Parsley's Lyric Repository* (1790). Various renderings of Bob and Joan, Bobbing Joan, and Bobbin Joan, the tune appears in English, Irish, and Scottish collections of lyrics and dances from the mid-seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. The tune could be heard in John Gay's *Polly* (1728; performed 1777), Henry Fielding's *The Author's Farce* (1730), and Isaac Bickerstaff's *Love in a Village* (1763). It was a favorite of Squire Western in Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749).

13. The *OED* claims that *pickaninny* enters print in 1653 already as Atlantic pidgin. A compression perhaps of the Portuguese *pequeno niño*, or small child, this pidgin word left the largest footprint in British arts and letters. Morgan Godwyn, *Negro's and Indians Advocate, Suing for their Admission to the Church, or, a Persuasive to the Instructing and Baptizing of the Negro's and Indians in our Plantations Shewing that as the Compliance therewith Can Prejudice no Mans Just Interest, so the Wilful Neglecting and Opposing of it, Is no Less than a Manifest Apostacy from the Christian Faith* (London: J. D., 1680), situates the word within the terrible reality of slavery: "Picaninnies, or young Negro-children," usually die because their mothers cannot look after them when they are working in the fields (84).

14. *Songster's Miscellany*, 150.

15. Standard English-singing slave figures were also common. "The Negro's Complaint," a favorite song by William Cowper (1788), connects the slave trade to Englishmen's profits. William Reeve's "The Desponding Negro," a "favorite new song" (1792), tells the slave's narrative: begging the listener for a spare halfpenny, he relates that he was stolen from his home, subjected to the middle passage, and doomed never to return to his family. "The Negro Boy" (1791), frequently reprinted, is sung from the point of view of an African slave dealer who now regrets selling "a guiltless Negro Boy" for a metal watch. Standard English and pidgin songs coexisted for decades.

16. Historically-minded scholars tend now to treat abolition of the slave trade and antislavery as completely separate political and temporal phases; unfortunately, the distinction has become a way to make all theatrical and literary culture seem equivalent to the cautious political decisions of Thomas Clarkson and others. Thomas Bellamy's *The Benevolent Planters* (1789), August von Kotzebue's *The Negro Slaves* (1796; printed not performed), and Maria Edgeworth's *The Grateful Negro* (1802) stand out for their standard English-speaking slave characters. Recent critics view Bellamy and Edgeworth as being insufficiently antislavery because their plantation plot frees only one couple, but Rose Zimbaro's introduction to Sarah Scott's *Sir George Ellison* (1766) rightly argues that if there is even one emancipation scene, it is an index to the author's preferred politics. Bellamy and Edgeworth write didactic tales with a symbolic, not realistic, orientation.

17. See Worrall, *Harlequin Empire*, 27, for the practice in the contemporary U.S. South of representing slaves neither on stage nor in media because it would seem to endorse their importance.

18. Molineux, *Faces of Perfect Ebony*, 184, 251.

19. On the affective economy of Locke, see Virginia Cope, *Property, Education and Identity in Late Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 42–44. On gratitude and slavery, see George Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008).

20. Found in Addison and Steele's fictional Sir Roger de Coverley's habit of manumitting, with a stipend, his best servants to his estate's neighborhood, this model also appears in 1790s' antislavery novels in which an emancipated slave serves as the ideal overseer of the reformed plantation. See *The Political Works of Andrew Fletcher, Esq[uires]* (London: A. Bettesworth et al., 1732): "When the antients gave freedom to a slave, they were obliged to give him wherewithal to subsist, or to put him into a way of living. And how well and faithfully they were served by those they had made free, (whom from a long experience of their probity and capacity, they often made stewards of their estates) all antient history does testify." Fletcher adds that Britons should not expect fidelity from today's servants because they do not pay enough for them to maintain their family when independent of the master (143).

21. *Morning Chronicle*, 26 February 1788.

22. James Cobb, *Love in the East; or, Adventures of Twelve Hours: a Comic Opera, in Three Acts* (London: W. Lowndes, 1788), 15.

23. Archibald Maclaren, *The Negro Slaves; a Dramatic Piece, of One Act, with Songs* (London, 1799), 9.
24. *Morning Herald*, 20 March 1793.
25. John Cartwright Cross, *The Surrender of Trinidad; a Dramatic Piece. In One Act*, 3 May 1797, Larpent Manuscript Collection #1166, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, 3.
26. *Ibid.*, 5.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Jenna Gibbs, *Performing the Temple of Liberty: Slavery, Theater, and Popular Culture in London and Philadelphia, 1760–1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2014) claims that Cymbalo is an apologist for slavery: “a puerile, comic character . . . [who] makes no attempt to escape his own enslaved condition” (70).
29. John Cartwright Cross, *In Love, In Debt, & In Liquor; or, Our Way in Wales; A New Musical Drama* (London: T. Burton, 1797).
30. The 1781 second edition and the 1785 fourth edition, print versions of John O’Keeffe’s *Airs, Duets, Trios, &c. in the Musical Farce of The Son-in-Law* (London: T. Cadell, 1780), do not list the role in the *dramatis personae*.
31. On antislavery politics, O’Keeffe’s plays, and benefit nights, see Worrall, *Harlequin Britain*, 49.
32. By contrast, see Sypher, *Guinea’s Captive Kings*, and Hans Nathan, “Negro Impersonation in Eighteenth Century England,” *Notes*, 2nd ser., vol. 2, no. 4 (1945): 245–54.
33. Unlike Freeman, *Character’s Theater*, 37, I find that the evidence amply supports the appeal of professional and amateur actors, perhaps especially comedic ones, being “in character,” even for short periods of time.
34. Comic actors and ethnic impersonators John Barrington and John Moody usually had “in character” songs, and not just for their benefit nights, as was common.
35. *General Evening Post*, 12–14 April 1785.
36. Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth-Century Culture and Fiction* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1986), 5.
37. *Ibid.*, 29–31, 60, 41. Broadsheets and elegant publications alike depicted stock character types that were transformed into masquerade costumes (Castle, *Masquerade*, 70).
38. *General Evening Post*, 9 January 1772.
39. Helena Whitford, *Constantia Neville; or the West Indian*, 3 vols., 2nd ed. (London: C. Whittingham, 1800), 1:258.
40. John Holm, *An Introduction to Pidgins and Creoles* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000), 1; Nicholas Faraclas and Marta Bellido de Luna, “Marginalized Peoples, Racialized Slavery, and the Emergence of the Atlantic Creoles,” *Agency in the Emergence of Creole Languages*, ed. Nicholas Faraclas (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2012), 1–40, 39.
41. Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles*, 91. Wai Chee Dimock, “African, Caribbean, American: Black English,” in *Shades of the Planet: American Literature as World Literature*, ed. Wai Chee Dimock and Lawrence Buell (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2007), 274–300, urges us to look beyond nation as an organizing concept for vernacular language. The debate about the relationship among *lingua franca*, pidgin, and creole is ongoing; see Salikoko S. Mufwene, “English Pidgins: Form and Function,” *World Englishes* 7, no. 3 (1988): 255–67.
42. Natalie Zemon Davis, “Creole Languages and their Uses: The Example of Colonial Suriname,” *Historical Research* 82, no. 216 (2009): 268–84, offers a nuanced study of the several creole languages spoken in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and their variation in countryside versus town, between Jewish owners versus Christian, and the abiding influence of English despite the subsequent Dutch takeover of the colony.

43. Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles*, 7, 68.
44. On the geographical specificity of regional accents, see Sorensen, “Strange Orthography,” 65–67; the dialect speaker Jeanie expresses her moral superiority, however, in standard English (68). Elfenbein, in *Rise of English*, rightly notes that “Not all eighteenth-century slave and Jewish speech is in dialect” (80), but he erroneously claims that “good pronunciation has a high mortality rate” (80) and that “sympathetic representations of impure English . . . have virtually no precedent before 1790s” (83). The problem is that his sample of texts is too small.
45. Peter Roberts, *West Indians and their Language* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988), 126–30.
46. *Daily Post*, 4 January 1722; *General Advertiser*, 8 August 1748; *General Evening Post*, 20–22 August 1751.
47. *Daily Advertiser*, 6 January 1774.
48. W. S., *A Family Jewel, or the Womans Councillor* (London: A. Baldwin, 1704 [1705]), 22. This text went into at least twelve editions by midcentury. *The Importance of Jamaica to Great-Britain Consider'd* (London: A. Dodd, c. 1722–48) makes the same observation: planters’ children are breast fed by slaves, “which causes those that have not an opportunity of a better Education, in their Pronunciation, to speak in a drawing broken *English* like the Negroes” (7–8).
49. Graham Shorrocks, “Working-Class Literature in Working-Class Language: The North of England,” in *English Literature and the Other Languages*, ed. Ton Hoenselaers and Marius Buning (Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), 87–96, 87.
50. Nonfiction authors mention that foreigners speak “broken English” but do not represent it; see William Stephens, *A Journal of the Proceedings in Georgia* (1742), and O. Sedgewick, *The World Turn'd Inside-Out, or, Humankind Unmask'd* (1737). David Brainerd, *Mirabilia Dei Inter Indicos, or The Rise and Progress of a Remarkable Work of Grace Amongst a Number of the Indians* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1746) records the “broken English” and in a footnote offers the translation “In proper English” (92).
51. Thomas Krise, *Caribbean: An Anthology of English Literature of the West Indies, 1657–1777* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1999), 51.
52. Richard Bailey, *Speaking American* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012), 53; and Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles*, 115. *Bucra*, or people with power and knowledge regardless of race, derives from the Efik language of West Africa; it also means *demon*. OED notes *bakra* is black patois of Surinam for *master*. In old Calabar, *makara* was a white man.
53. Philotheus Physiologus [Thomas Tryon], *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen Planters of the East and West Indies In Three Parts* (London, Andrew Sowle 1684), 151, 150, 150–51.
54. Defoe’s *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (London: W. Taylor, 1719) was first published in April. *Jamaica Lady; or, the Life of Bavia* (London: Thomas Bickerton, 1719) is often erroneously cited as a 1720 publication; advertised as “this day published” on November 27, 1719 for about one month, it appeared in advertisements of Richard Steele’s *The Spinster in Defense of the Woolen Manufacturers* (1719) and was advertised through the mid-1720s. The slave Quomina and the mestee Holmesia are the only speakers of the “Negroish Tongue” (85–86), a fact that is buried deep within *Jamaica Lady*, since Holmesia’s speech is initially rendered in standard English by the narrator. Only when she lands in England is her speech, and the locals’ incomprehension of it, presented as part of the satirical argument that Jamaicans’ immorality and lowness makes them akin to criminal gypsies. Also see Carol Barash, “The Character of Difference: The Creole Woman as Cultural Mediator in Narratives about Jamaica,” special issue on “The Politics of Difference,” ed. Felicity Nussbaum, *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 23, no. 4 (1990): 407–23.
55. On practical divinity form, see Paula Backscheider, *Daniel Defoe: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1989), 141.
56. Similar to Defoe, writers who had not visited the colonies complained about these issues. William Nicholls, “The Duty of Inferiours towards their Superiours,” in *Five Practical Discourses* (London: E. Evets and T. Bennet, 1701), pauses from his inquiry into the condition of English servants to consider

the plight of slaves: "I will not say it is absolutely unlawful to continue them in that sort of Servitude, if it be managed with that Moderation and goodness, which is agreeable to our own Religion." He immediately qualifies the ideal of Christian-influenced slavery with reference to the common planter cruelty and lack of religious instruction of slaves, settling on the fact that planters "keep them purposely from Embracing the Gospel, that they may the better Apologize for the hardships they make them undergo" (64).

57. Daniel Defoe, *The Family Instructor*, vol. 2 (1718): 304, henceforth cited parenthetically in the text as "FI."

58. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988), 131. Gates's interest is in the ways that five early slave narratives invoke this trope between 1770 and 1815 (*Figures in Black*, xxxii). In *Signifying Monkey*, he seems to find the origins of the trope in a native American author whose text was last translated into English in 1688 (130–31). Defoe could easily have read this text, but his *Family Instructor* seems a more obvious source.

59. *The British Apollo: Containing about Two Thousand Answers to Curious Questions in Most Arts and Sciences*, 3rd ed. (London: John Isted and Richard King, 1718), 2. The second edition, with the same question, had appeared in 1711.

60. Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 254, 349.

61. Servants were frequently called upon to play music or hired to do so, which explains why Equiano wished to improve on the French horn. Two formulaic types of male domestic servants, from the slave figure in Plautus and Terence's Roman comedies, were the clever trickster and the faithful servant. All of these characters looked after the best interests of their young masters. See Mark Thornton Burnett, *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture: Authority and Obedience* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 80.

62. Charles Gildon, *The Life and Strange Surprizing adventures of Mr. D__deF__ of London, Hosier, who Has Liv'd above Fifty Years by Himself, in the Kingdoms of North and South Britain* (London: J. Roberts, 1719), 13.

63. *Ibid.*, ix, xvi–xvii.

64. Also insisting on realism, the narrator of Joachim Heinrich Campe's *The New Robinson Crusoe; an Instructive and Entertaining History, for the Use of Children of Both Sexes*, 4 vols. (London: John Stockdale, 1788) notes that it takes Friday six months "to express himself tolerably well in English" (3:79); Friday is represented as speaking only when he can do so in standard English (3:81 ff).

65. William R. Chetwood, *The Voyages and Adventures of Captain Robert Boyle* (London: John Watts, 1726), 283.

66. Daniel Defoe, *Religious Courtship: Being Historical Discourses, on the Necessity of Marrying Religious Husbands and Wives* (London: E. Matthews, 1722), 281.

67. Pompey speaks pidgin in M. P. [Dorothy Kilner]'s *The Rotchfords: or, the Friendly Counselor. Designed for the Instruction and Amusement of the Youth of Both Sexes*, 2 vols. (London: John Marshall, 1785), a key revision of Defoe's *Family Instructor*: the twelve-year-old slave character speaks authoritatively about slavery in both Barbados and England. In *The History of a Schoolboy. With Other Pieces* (London: John Stockdale, 1788), the narrator comments on the former slave's "broken English," and the plot has a few bad boys make fun of his English and French, but the slave tells his harrowing life narrative in it. Hannah More, "A True Account of a Pious Negro," *Cheap Repository Tracts* (1795), *Rewards for Attentive Studies* (1800), Amelia Opie's *Savanna in Adeline Mowbray* (1804), and her *Negro Boy* (1824) all feature pidgin speakers.

68. December 1743, *The London Stage* 3.2. By contrast, a similar advertisement makes no mention of Negro songs in *Daily Advertiser*, 2 August 1744.

69. Between December 1743 and February 1744, Aston regularly performed this show but did not usually advertise the Negro component. Both the *London Stage* and *Burney Collection* databases confirm that the drunken man and Teague were his most popular impersonations.

70. At Drury Lane, Moody specialized in low comedic roles, especially Irish, and was a favorite with both boxes and gallery; see Philip Highfill, Kalman Burnim, Edward Langhans, eds., *Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers, and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, 10 vols. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1984): 10:292. Kathleen Wilson, “Introduction: Three Theses on Performance and History,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 48, no. 4 (2015), 381–82, mentions Moody’s transatlantic career.

71. James Townley, *High Life Below Stairs*, 23 October 1759, Larpent Manuscript Collection #161, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, 13r.

72. James Townley, *High Life Below Stairs, Written by David Garrick, Esq. Taken from the Manager’s Book at The Theatre Royal Drury-Lane*. London: R. Butters, [1780?], 12.

73. Dibdin wanted the part and deliberately made the songs too musically difficult for Moody, who was not a trained vocalist. See *The Professional Life of Mr. Dibdin, Written by Himself*, 4 vols. (London: the Author, 1803), 1: 70. John Fiske, *English Theatre Music* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973): Moody finally played Mungo at the Haymarket on 5 July 1773. Performed over 100 times in three years, including 54 the first season, its popularity lasted well into nineteenth century. By 1788, about 28,000 copies of the libretto were sold (352).

74. Elfenbein, *Rise of English*, 78. J. R. Oldfield, “The ‘Ties of Soft Humanity’: Slavery and Race in British Drama, 1760–1800,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (1993): 10–11.

75. Reprinted several times in the 1720s, it appeared in *The Novelist*, a 1766 miscellany.

76. Jacques Georges Deyverdin and Edward Gibbon, eds., *Memoires Litteraires de la Grande Bretagne*, 2 vols. (London: C. Heydinger, 1769): “il ya surtout un negre, Mungo, dont le Rolle est neuf, naturel, & comique” [above all, there is a Negro, Mungo, whose role is new, natural, and comical] (2: 217).

77. Isaac Bickerstaff, *The Padlock* (London: W. Griffin, 1768), 10.

78. *Ibid.*, 11. Mungo’s refrain, “here, there, and everywhere,” was first popularized in Spencer’s *Faerie Queene*, bk. 3 (1590) and comes to the stage through Shakespeare’s *Henry the Sixth, Part 1* (1592) and *Troilus and Cressida* (1609) and Ben Jonson’s *The Devil is an Ass* (1631).

79. Bickerstaff, *Padlock*, 20.

80. In Mary Pix’s *The Spanish Wives. A Farce* (London: R. Wellington, 1696), the Governor’s lady threatens to hang herself “in my own garters” if her husband locks her up (41). See Susanna Centlivre, *The Beau’s Duel* (1702), 54, for another example. In Thomas Bridge’s *Dido and Aeneas*, the queen hangs herself in her own garters. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Pyramus threatens to hang himself by Thisbe’s garters. *The Guardian Outwitted* (1764) had recently employed this phrase.

81. David Garrick, *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick, with the Most Celebrated Persons of his Time . . . And a New Biographical Memoir*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 1: xlvi.

82. Elfenbein, *Rise of English*, rightly claims that *The Padlock* is a watershed moment for the popularity of slave dialect (78), and he sees Mungo’s pidgin as a language of resistance to violent authority (79).

83. David Garrick, *The Irish Widow. In Two Acts* (London: T. Becket, 1772), 26.

84. *Ibid.*

85. Garrick, *Biographical Memoir*, 1: lii.

86. George Colman, Jr., *Inkle and Yarico: An Opera, in Three Acts* (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1787), 34.

87. *Ibid.*, 35.

88. Walley Chamberlain Oulton, *The Beauties of Modern Dramatists; Containing all the Interesting Characters, Sentiments, Speeches &c. in the Most Favourite Dramas of our Present Authors*, 2 vols. (London: West and Hughes, 1800), 1:227.

89. *The Festival of Momus* (London: W. Lane, [1780? misdated; likely 1787 or 1789]); *The New Vocal Enchantress* (London: C. Stalker, A. Cleugh, and C. Couch, 1789); *The Busy Bee*, vol. 1 of 3 (London: J. S. Barr, 1790?); *The New Olio* (London: Champante and Whitrow, 1790?); *The Whim of the Day (for 1791)*, 2nd ed., (London: J. Roach, 1791).

90. Jack, 3d ed. C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and Its Relation to Social Custom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1959); M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (1965; Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1984); Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (1957; Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1990).

91. John Fawcett, *Songs, Duets, & Choruses, in the Pantomimical Drama of Obi, or, Three-Finger'd* (London: T. Woodfall, 1800), 20.

92. Sabri Ben-Achour, "The English Language is One Big Brand Graveyard," *Marketplace*, National Public Radio, 12 May 2014.