Concerning Theory for Performance Studies

Richard Schechner, Timothy K. Beal and William E. Deal, Talia Rodgers, Claire L’Enfant, Judith Butler, Marvin Carlson, Tracy C. Davis, David Savran, Shannon Jackson, Branislav Jakovljevic, Jill Dolan, Phillip Zarrilli, W.B. Worthen, Joseph Roach, Peggy Phelan

As TDR Went to Press

Richard Schechner, and others, received the below email from Talia Rodgers of Routledge just as the following special Comment was at press:

Subject: ‘theory for performance studies’
Date: Wed, 07 Jan 2009 16:52:17 +0000
Thread-topic: ‘theory for performance studies’
From: “Rodgers, Talia” <Talia.Rodgers@tandf.co.uk>
To: Richard Schechner [TDR is withholding the names of other recipients]
dear all
this is just to let you know that we have withdrawn ‘theory for performance studies’ from sale. we will no longer be selling either edition - hardback or paperback - anywhere in the world. (we’ll be pulping existing stock.)
we are doing this at phil's request.
as it's such a busy time of year, I’d be grateful if you would not reply to this message. please feel free, however, to forward it on to anyone who might be interested.
talia
Talia Rodgers
Publisher, Theatre & Performance Studies
Routledge
ziala.rodgers@routledge.co.uk

TDR believes the withdrawal from sales and the destruction of the stored copies of Theory for Performance Studies is the right thing to do. We wish Philip Auslander and Routledge had taken this step many months ago. Their actions, however, do not invalidate the essays that follow. The lessons learned from the ill-considered publication of Theory for Performance Studies does not vanish with the inventory.

—Richard Schechner

Ed. note: When I found out about Theory for Performance Studies I decided to convene a “TDR Forum”—responses written by leaders in the field. I invited TDR’s Contributing Editors and a few others. I also asked editors at Routledge. And I sought a statement from Philip Auslander. As word of the Forum got around, the circle of responders grew. The results are published below. Auslander declined.

Plagiarism, Greed, and the Dumbing Down of Performance Studies

Richard Schechner

On the overleaf of the paperback edition of Philip Auslander’s Theory for Performance Studies: A Student’s Guide (2007) is the following text:

Theory for Performance Studies: A Student’s Guide is a clear and concise handbook to the key connections between performance studies and critical theory since the 1960s. Philip
Auslander looks at the way the concept of performance has been engaged across a number of disciplines.

Beginning with four foundational figures—Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, and Saussure—Auslander goes on to provide guided introductions to the major theoretical thinkers of the past century [...].

Brisk, thoughtful, and engaging, this is an essential first volume for anyone who works in theatre and performance studies today.

The key words in the above proclamation are: “Philip Auslander looks at” and “Auslander goes on to.” The fact is, more than 90 percent of the book is plagiarized from William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal’s 2004 Routledge book, Theory for Religious Studies.  

The theorists discussed in the two books are identical; the order in which they are presented is identical; the wording in the two books is almost entirely identical; the overall length of the two books is identical (168 pages). There is one significant difference: the Deal and Beal book

---

1. Working for several hours, I made a detailed comparison of the two books. I wanted to verify for myself the extent of the plagiarism. It was nearly total.
is “copyright 2004 by Taylor & Francis Books, Inc.” (Routledge’s parent company) while Auslander’s book is “copyright 2008 Philip Auslander.” When I emailed Auslander about it, he replied that it was Routledge’s mistake not to credit Deal and Beal but that the book was not plagiarized because Deal and Beal signed a contract giving Routledge the right to use their material in any way Routledge determined—including, it seems, letting Auslander copy it and then copyright it in his own name (Auslander 2008).

But a rose by any other name smells as sweet.

And this plagiarism stinks.

Whatever the legal determination, ethically what Auslander did was to plagiarize the Deal and Beal book. It would be retail plagiarism if Auslander had taken a paragraph here and there without attribution; but Auslander plagiarized wholesale, taking what amounts to all of Deal and Beal’s book. Auslander and Routledge may be shielded legally by the contract Deal and Beal signed permitting Routledge and anyone Routledge designates to do whatever they want with their text; but what is at stake here is not a question of copyright but of scholarly ethics and practice. What examples ought our senior scholars set for students and younger colleagues? What does this plagiarism say about our field if we just sweep it under the rug? For performance studies, this is a matter we scholars and artists need to deal with, not something we should hand over to lawyers or, worse, hush up. The implications of what Auslander did—and defends—on top of Routledge’s refusal to withdraw Theory for Performance Studies are wide and deep.

The plagiarism came to my attention when TDR Associate Editor Mariellen Sandford passed on an email she received asking her if she had seen an article by Thomas Bartlett in the 5 August 2008 issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education. The article is titled: “2 Authors Say Routledge Recycled Their Work Without Giving Credit.” From the online edition of The Chronicle article:

But this isn’t your average plagiarism case. Back in 2005, Mr. Deal and Mr. Beal signed an agreement with Routledge, allowing the company to use the material in their book however it saw fit, provided they were given credit and royalties. Routledge planned a series of introductory books, dubbed “Theory 4.” Theory for Religious Studies would be the first volume.

Mr. Beal and Mr. Deal never thought the agreement, which they now regret signing, meant that their work could be lifted more or less whole cloth and put under someone else’s name. And the authors received neither the promised credit—nor, initially, the promised royalties, they said. […]

Auslander […] said he sees nothing wrong with copying most of the book and reacted strongly when a reporter asked if he had committed plagiarism. […]

The [Routledge] editor later put in charge of Mr. Auslander’s book, Talia Rodgers, says the failure to credit Mr. Beal and Mr. Deal was an oversight. Ms. Rodgers says she does not think Mr. Auslander’s use of the text—for instance, assiduously changing each “we” to an “I”—was unethical. “If he agrees with a certain statement, then changing the ‘we’ to an ‘I’—I don’t think that’s a problem,” she says.

Besides, she says, she was unable to keep a close eye on the project. “I inherited an enormous number of Bill’s [Germano, a former Routledge editor] books when he left, so there’s a limit to the amount of monitoring I can do,” she says. […]

2. The article originally appeared on The Chronicle’s website on 5 August (http://chronicle.com/daily/2008/08/4114n.htm). The article subsequently appeared in slightly different form in the printed newspaper’s issue dated 15 August. That print article (http://chronicle.com/weekly/v54/i49/49a00601.htm) was posted on The Chronicle’s website, along with all the other contents of the 15 August issue, on 11 August. So there are two versions of the article on The Chronicle’s website.
Since the publication of *Theory for Religious Studies*, there have been four other books in the series (including Mr. Auslander’s). They have all, to some degree, used the first book’s structure, and in some cases its exact words. (Bartlett 2008:6)

Because Routledge is such an important publisher for performance studies; and because Rodgers has been such a supportive editor at Routledge; and because Auslander is a leading figure in performance studies and, until his plagiarism led me to request his resignation, a *TDR* contributing editor,1 I—and I hope not only me—need to go into this more deeply. Let me put my cards on the table right now: We need to oppose and condemn this practice and see to it that *Theory for Performance Studies* is withdrawn, struck from Routledge’s catalog and, insofar as is practicable, taken off library shelves and no longer offered for sale or online reading at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Google Books, and other bookstores, actual and virtual. Only very strong action will guarantee that something like this never happens again.

After days of long phone calls, Rodgers sent me the following, which she asked to be distributed at the PSi 14 conference held from 20 to 24 August in Copenhagen:

This is a deeply regrettable incident—but it must be stressed that it is only that: an isolated incident related to one series, which has now been discontinued. We have never published anything like this before, there are no further books under contract, and we will not publish anything like this in the future. Without wishing to minimize the debate which has developed around this issue, we don’t see any connection to—or implications for—other books published by Routledge, in performance studies or any other field, past or present. We remain committed to innovative, groundbreaking books which contribute significantly to scholarship and pedagogy. (2008a)

Rodgers’s “final” statement on the matter is in this issue of *TDR*.

But what Auslander did was not “an isolated incident,” it is part of Routledge’s pattern of bringing out new books that are short and simple as well as recycling well-known materials in multivolume compendiums. The short books, such as the Theory 4 series, are available in paperbacks aimed at undergraduates. The compendiums, available only in hardback, are aimed at libraries that buy them at preposterously high prices ranging from $1,050 to $1,690 per set of four or five books. Granted that Routledge is not the only publisher trawling these waters. And granted also that Rodgers’s Theatre and Performance Studies division at Routledge continues to bring our field “innovative, groundbreaking books,” her editing is also bringing us short, smoothed-out, dumbed-down, surfacy books. This is part of the increasingly dominant corporate culture at Routledge as it becomes more the creature of Taylor & Francis which, in turn, is owned and controlled by Informa, a very large global media and book empire. More on this later.

At PSi 14, *TDR* Books section editor Branislav Jakovljevic convened a Town Hall meeting to discuss the Auslander situation. Jakovljevic’s take on the plagiarism, the reactions of other PS scholars, and Deal and Beal’s answers to questions I put to them are in this *TDR* issue.

Rodgers’s statement does not end the matter because Routledge is still selling Auslander’s book—as well as the other Deal and Beal knock-offs that comprise the Theory 4 series.4 As of this moment, 21 October 2008, the Auslander title is listed on Routledge’s site this way:

Theory for Performance Studies: A Student’s Guide
Adapted from Theory for Religious Studies, by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal
By Philip Auslander (Routledge 2007)

3. Because of this incident I have asked Auslander to resign from his position as a *TDR* contributing editor.

The “adapted from” was added only after the plagiarism became widely known—in September 2008.

But the book attributed to Auslander is no adaptation. Nor did Routledge say it was until after the Chronicle article let the cat out of the bag. Previously, the book, its advertisements, and the email from Routledge’s theatre and performance studies development editor Minh Ha Duong to Gabrielle Cody asking for an endorsement named Auslander as the sole author.5

Labeling Theory for Performance Studies an adaptation is absurd. Adapting means using an original as the basis for a new work. The Brecht-Weill 1928 Die Dreigroschenoper (The Threepenny Opera) is an adaptation of John Gay’s 1728 Beggar’s Opera—and said so on the program of the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm when the piece first opened (Kurt Weil Foundation 2008).6 West Side Story is an adaptation of Romeo and Juliet. Plagiarism is fundamentally different from adaptation. Plagiarism is claiming someone else’s written work as one’s own—which is what Auslander did. Was Routledge deceived in this? Is Auslander the sole perpetrator? I don’t think so. Rodgers claims in an 8 September email to Cody (which Rodgers cc’d to me; I’ve reproduced it here from Rodgers’s email):

I’m so sorry about this (minh ha has left routledge, but in any case it was my responsibility). There was absolutely no intention to misrepresent phil’s book to you or anyone else—only a case of “more haste less speed”—we were trying to keep bill’s publishing programme on track and were overwhelmed with manuscripts to put into production quickly on top of our own workload. We should of course have explained the basis of the series to you, just as we should have credited the series and the original authors of the book. (Rodgers 2008b)

But Rodgers’s mea culpa + her haste-makes-waste explanation = pasting a new label on Theory for Performance Studies. Furthermore, this new label—saying the book published under Auslander’s name is “adapted from” Deal and Beal—is inaccurate, simply continuing the deception. It corrects nothing from the ethical point of view. The true “basis of the series” (as Rodgers puts it) is plagiarism. And that’s not OK. I say for the series because Auslander’s is not the only book in the Theory 4 series that is plagiarized. As of now, I have read only Theory for Education (2006) “by” Greg Dimitriadis and George Kamberelis which, though not so totally pillaged from the Deal and Beal, contains many paragraphs of identical prose with no credit or attribution given. Marvin Carlson has read them all and in a 10 September email wrote: “First, I have looked at all the books in the notorious Theory 4 series and [...] all follow the same pattern of essentially repeating the same material” (Carlson 2008). Auslander’s plagiarism was no accident or the result of lax editing. Didn’t editors as savvy as William Germano, Claire L’EEnfant (Routledge’s humanities editorial director), and Tália Rodgers know what they were doing? Probably Rod-

5. In her email to Cody, Duong wrote: “This summer we will be publishing the above book by Philip Auslander, an introductory handbook to the key connections between theatre and performance studies and critical theory. Phil looks at the way the concept of performance has been engaged across a number of disciplines, providing guided introductions to the major theoretical thinkers of the past century, from Althusser to Žižek. I’m writing to ask if you would be interested in reading the manuscript, and perhaps providing an endorsement, if you think it merits one” (2007). Duong has since left Routledge and I was unable to contact her so that she could comment. However, Cody, in a 17 August 2008 email to me, wrote (the capital letters are in her email): “In terms of the AUSLANDER mess, I would ask you to add somewhere in your piece—since this is part of Routledge’s malpractice—that the manuscript was presented to me as Auslander’s. NOWHERE is there any indication in the manuscript which I still have, of these other two authors, OR ANY SENSE THAT THIS WAS ANYTHING BUT AN ACADEMIC GUIDE by Auslander. I remember actually wondering why he would want to do such a book, but it was presented as a guide for undergraduates, and as such, seemed useful though in no way progressive. Please consider adding a sentence about this, I do feel that I was duped by Routledge and now have my name on something that, yes, stinks” (Cody 2008).

6. Also credited on the program were François Villon and Rudyard Kipling.
gers, the overworked low woman on the totem pole, did not know about Auslander’s thievery because she didn’t know about Deal and Beal. But her bosses knew. According to L’Enfant in her 21 August email to me, “After Bill Germano left the company, we decided to allocate the four contracted titles to subject editors [Rodgers was one of these], rather than keeping them together as a series” (L’Enfant 2008). But why do that except to hide what the real nature of the Theory 4 series was? Routledge’s contract with Deal and Beal is very specific with regard to recycling their book:

The authors of *Theory for Religious Studies* grant to Routledge use of all material in the volume for the purposes of creating a series of similar books. Routledge may contract author or authors to revise, adapt, delete or supplement the material in *Theory for Religious Studies* and publish the resulting volume under the names of those new authors. William Deal and Timothy Beal will be credited on the copyright page of the resulting work but not otherwise in the volume.

From a scholarly perspective, this is an unacceptable agreement. At the editor’s level, if Rodgers didn’t know that Auslander’s book was plagiarized, it was because her bosses at Routledge intentionally kept the left hand from knowing what the right hand was doing.

Maybe some will think: Now that Rodgers has apologized, and she and L’Enfant have promised there will be no more books like Auslander’s, and Routledge has discontinued the Theory 4 series, let’s just move on. After all, so many scholars and artists are published by Routledge, me included, that a stain on the publisher dirties us all—so what’s to be gained by hanging dirty laundry where everyone can see it?

I disagree.

It is precisely because Routledge is so important to performance studies that we need to probe further toward the roots of what happened. We need to see Theory 4 as something systemic, not incidental. The Theory 4 series was hatched by then Routledge editor William Germano working with Deal and Beal. Germano left Routledge in September 2005 before Auslander’s book was in print, but as Deal and Beal indicate, after the template for the series was set, *Theory for Art History* already published, and other volumes in the series in the works. As deviser of the Theory 4 series template, Germano obviously knew that the books in the series were not original pieces of scholarship but ripoffs of *Theory for Religious Studies*. That’s what they were supposed to be. It’s a new level of no-shame academic publishing for profit. When I emailed Germano detailing the extent of Auslander’s plagiarism, Germano passed the buck. On 15 August 2008, he emailed me that the management of the Theory 4 series “long ago passed to Routledge UK” (2008a). On 16 August, he wrote: “Do please speak with Talia [Rodgers]. She and I have discussed this in the past couple of days. I think she can provide you with a more useful description of the series’ working assumptions and intentions” (2008b). Very slippery because Germano well knew what the “working assumptions and intentions” of the Theory 4 series were, having helped devise them himself. Rodgers entered the picture later. When I asked Germano how much Rodgers knew, he emailed me on 27 September that “I didn’t pass projects along to Talia, or to any other editor. I can only presume those decisions were made by managers elsewhere in the company after my departure” (2008c). Germano knows how to cover his ass.

What do Deal and Beal say? On 18 August I emailed them questions, which they responded to on 28 August. Distilling their response (see full text in box):

---

7. Germano became Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences as well as a professor of English at the Cooper Union in New York. Germano’s Cooper Union bio states: “For over twenty years he directed programs in scholarly publishing, first as editor-in-chief at Columbia University Press and then as vice-president and publishing director at Routledge” (Cooper Union 2008).
We never expected or even imagined that other authors would copy-and-paste our text verbatim, with or without credit. We never dreamed that a scholar would do so. We were flabbergasted to see it. We assumed that the essential structure and concept of our book would be the model for the others, and that there would be some content overlap (e.g., in biographical information, representation of key concepts, etc.). But we never imagined we’d be copied and pasted. […]

The clear understanding [with Routledge] was that ours was to be a model and template for the others in order to maintain consistency within the series. It was a rather unique book idea—ours—and it was right to credit us as the basis for the series. Moreover we assumed that other books would likely include some of the same theorists, and that it would be important to avoid contradictions in basic biographical information, representations of key ideas, and so forth. We never imagined that whole sentences, paragraphs, and pages of our text would simply be copied and pasted, word for word, into other books. […]

Bill Germano and the two of us really developed the series idea together […]. Tim also worked with Germano on Religion and Its Monsters. He considers him to be one of the best editors he knows. Many others will gladly attest to his outstanding reputation. None of this would have happened under his watch. We both trusted him, and we would again. But he left Routledge even before our book was published. […]

The right responses to this terrible mess would have been (1) to publicly acknowledge the wrong (not only in neglecting to credit us but in allowing such inappropriate use of our text), (2) to pull Auslander’s book permanently, and (3) to reprint the others with the proper credit to our work. […] As we said to Routledge, whether or not this is a legal scandal, it is certainly a professional-ethical one.

To parse the implications of the Theory 4 plagiarism we need to distinguish among “sampling,” “borrowing,” and/or “creative stealing.” One shoe can’t fit all feet. What is creative theft in art is improper in scholarship. Constructing a collage or complexly recycling materials within artworks is fundamentally different than lifting 90 percent of someone else’s book, copyrighting it in your own name, and publishing it as your own work. Artists who sample or deconstruct-reconstruct are quoting/collaging in ways that make the sources clear, or they totally deconstruct or absorb the sources to make them into something new and different. This is true in my own work (Dionysus in 69 [1968]; Commune [1970]; and Prometheus Project [1985] for example); in the Wooster Group’s various renditions of classic and modern literary, dramatic, and performance texts; in hip hop’s sampling of previously recorded songs; and in the many instances of referencing or appropriating in visual and performance art. But even if source materials are bootlegged, disguised, and misrepresented, the “rules” of artmaking are different than the codes governing scholarship. I put “rules” in quotation marks because the history of the avantgarde, as distinct from the various canons, is to change or ignore so-called rules. Again, not so in scholarship.

At one very important level, scholarship is about citation, referencing, acknowledging, and building on the work of predecessors. Scholars give a historical-processual account of the emergence of their own ideas. Scholars recycle and repeat, of course, but with due credit given. What makes a piece of scholarship significant is the addition of new materials and/or insights and/or critiques of existent works. This process is precisely what the Auslander book and the other bogus volumes in the Routledge Theory 4 series do not provide. So why did Routledge want Auslander, and the others, to “write” such books? Follow the money.

It costs less to take one book and issue it under several titles. Amazon tells me that a hardcover copy of Auslander’s 168-page book (I use the possessive ironically) costs $110.00 (the paperback goes for $27.95). Many libraries will buy the hardcover because it will withstand use. When assigned as a text, students will buy the paperback. The book will sell because Auslander is an important name in performance studies and Routledge is a respected press. But who is Routledge? It is no longer an independent entity. Like so many other once free-standing
William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal Answer
Richard Schechner’s Questions


SHECHNER: What exactly does your contract say about who owns the copyright on your book? The book is not copyrighted in your names, but by Routledge. In all my years as an editor—and I have been in the business of editing journals and book series for more than 40 years—I have never seen an authored book copyrighted by anyone other than in the author(s’) name(s). So the copyright on your book is if not unique, unusual. It states, in its own way, that Routledge and not you own the material. That is the basis on which the material was used by Auslander.

DEAL and BEAL: The copyright is in the publisher’s name, granted by us, the authors. This is somewhat common in academic publishing. Four other of Tim’s books (including Religion and Its Monsters [2001], also from Routledge) are copyrighted in the publisher’s name (the other three are from the University of Chicago Press, Liturgical Press, and Fortress Press). In trade publishing, it almost never happens (we doubt that any good literary agent would allow it). But it is done by a number of academic presses.

The copyright question was originally completely separate from the series issue. We signed our contract, with the copyright agreement, on 17 May 2002. About two years later, when we had a full draft of the manuscript, we began talking with our editor about the idea of a series based on our book (as model, not as verbatim text). We signed the (unfortunately very vague) letter of agreement for the series on 26 January 2005, two years and eight months after we signed the contract. Putting the copyright in the publisher’s name had nothing to do with the series idea, developed much later. No one talked about a series at that stage.

Of the four books that Tim has published with Routledge, the two coming out of the NY office have the copyright in the publisher’s name, whereas the two coming out of the UK office have it in the author’s name. Likewise with the other four Theory 4 books: Education and Art History come from NY, and have the copyright in the publisher’s name; Performance Studies and Classics come from the UK, and have it in the author’s name. That makes for a bizarre situation: Auslander’s book, which is the most problematic in its use of our text, is copyrighted in his name, whereas our own book is not copyrighted in our name.

SHECHNER: Did you expect that another author or authors—Auslander or someone else—would take your writing and call it his/her own? As you know, Auslander took about 90 percent of your text, augmented it with a paragraph here, a paragraph there, and put the book out under his name alone. I have read the Chronicle of Higher Education article, but want to know if you have anything to add to that.

DEAL and BEAL: We never expected or even imagined that other authors would copy-and-paste our text verbatim, with or without credit. We never dreamed that a scholar would do so. We were flabbergasted to see it. We assumed that the essential structure and concept of our book would be the model for the others, and that there would be some content overlap (e.g., in biographical information, representation of key concepts, etc.). But we never imagined we’d be copied and pasted. We agree entirely with University of Chicago Press’s director, Garret Kiely, who told the Chronicle, “An author’s words are an author’s words [...] That seems to be a very bright line to me.”

SHECHNER: If you knew that your book would be the template for another book or books, what did you expect would be acknowledged, and where? Were you expecting coauthorship (with Auslander or someone else) on the cover? Or were you expecting a notice somewhere inside the book? What exactly and precisely did you expect would happen?

DEAL and BEAL: The idea that Routledge would publish a series of similar books based on our book was developed in conversation with us around the time we finished the manuscript for our book. The clear understanding was that ours was to be a model and template
for the others in order to maintain consistency within the series. It was a rather unique book idea—an introduction to theoretical perspectives outside the field that are influential within it—and it was right to credit us as the basis for the series. Moreover we assumed that other books would likely include some of the same theorists, and that it would be important to avoid contradictions in basic biographical information, representations of key ideas, and so forth. We never imagined that whole sentences, paragraphs, and pages of our text would simply be copied into other books.

Obviously, we should never have signed such a vague agreement (written in an addendum almost three years after the contract). Like many academic authors, we naively assumed that our agreement was a scholarly one with an editor (whom we trusted and still trust) rather than a commercial and legal one with a company. None of this would have happened had Mr. Germano remained with Routledge. But editors move on, and contract agreements remain with publishing companies, who may not deserve the trust that authors invest in their editors.

SCHECHNER: Do you get royalties on Auslander’s book? Or were you entirely bought out by your first contract? What are the financial arrangements?

DEAL and BEAL: The agreement was that we and our book would be credited in subsequent volumes. As the Chronicle indicated, Routledge did not credit us in any of the books. Furthermore, the agreement stipulated that we would receive half royalties (further divided between the two of us) on those subsequent books. Those small royalties, which they neglected as well, were obviously not our primary concern (because that was easily fixed).

SCHECHNER: What was your relationship to William Germano, the Routledge head editor in New York, who conceived of the Theory 4 series? How did Germano explain the series to you? What did he say the place of your book would be in the series? Did you have contact with any other Routledge editors, such as Talia Rodgers or Claire L’Enfant (both in London)?

DEAL and BEAL: As we mentioned earlier, Bill Germano and the two of us really developed the series idea together, in conversation, around the time we had finished our book manuscript (over two years after our initial contract). The idea of our book was our own, he liked it, and it seemed like similar books would be valuable in other fields. It would have been wrong to have published a whole series based on our idea without crediting us as the basis for the others. Moreover, as we already indicated, it was expected that there would be some content overlap, and consistency in the series was important.

Tim also worked with Germano on Religion and Its Monsters. He considers him to be one of the best editors he knows. Many others will gladly attest to his outstanding reputation. None of this would have happened under his watch. We both trusted him, and we would again. But he left Routledge even before our book was published.

It’s foolish to assume that an editor will remain at a press for very long, especially these days. Again, as we’ve learned, contracts are relationships between authors and publishing companies.

SCHECHNER: What, if anything, can make it “right”? Do you want the Auslander book withdrawn? Or if it is kept in print do you want a new cover and front piece? Or would you be satisfied with a smaller notice on the inside of the book somewhere?

DEAL and BEAL: The right responses to this terrible mess would have been (1) to publicly acknowledge the wrong (not only in neglecting to credit us but in allowing such inappropriate use of our text), (2) to pull Auslander’s book permanently, and (3) to reprint the others with the proper credit to our work. That would not undo the damage already done (i.e., books already sold). But we never made it past #1. As we said to Routledge, whether or not this is a legal scandal, it is certainly a professional-ethical one. So we are happy to share our experience and perspective, and to let the larger academic public evaluate the case.

(cont.)
publishers, Routledge was swallowed and then the swallower was swallowed. In 1998, Routledge was acquired by Taylor & Francis; in 2004 T&F merged with Informa, a multilayered corporate entity that demands (pardon the irony), “performance.” Informa is big and proud of it. On its website, the company proclaims:

Informa has over 150 offices in more than 40 countries and employs 10,000 staff around the world. Informa is the largest publicly owned organiser of conferences and courses in the world with an output of over 10,000 events annually [...] Informa’s book business has more than 40,000 academic and business titles in print. Informa’s products [...] range from the arts and humanities through social sciences to physical science and technology; from the professional domains of finance and the law through to commercial fields such as telecommunications, maritime trade, energy, commodities, and agriculture. (Informa 2008b)

According to Informa’s website, the corporation has seven “core values,” which make the acronym “INFORMA”: INNOVATIVE, NON-BUREAUCRATIC, FOR PROFIT, OPEN, REWARDING, MARKET-FOCUSED, ABOUT QUALITY. Although these “values” are boilerplate corporate propaganda, two are of particular interest regarding the Theory 4 case:

**For profit.** Unapologetically, we are here to make money. But sustainably. We are here for the long term.

We have got to be very market-focused. If we are not we will soon fall behind. The world is changing fast and the old mentality of just produce and sell is no longer enough. We have to think more, ask more, anticipate more and do more to meet our customers’ needs than was the case even three years ago. (2008c)

---

8. Informa describes its history this way: “Informa plc [public limited company] is made up of several constituent businesses which include some of the longest-standing brands in world publishing. Informa was created from the merger of IBC Group plc and LLP Group plc in December 1998. LLP Group plc was the publishing division of the Lloyds insurance market until 1995 when it was subject to a management buy-out. [...] In May 2004 Taylor & Francis and Informa went independently into a merger with strong prospects for growth both organically and from acquisitions they had made in the previous 12 months. [...] Taylor & Francis has grown very rapidly over the last two decades to become a leading international academic publisher. [...] Informa Plc takes great pride in the standing of all our information brands and in the focus of their content. [...] Adaptability, close attention to detail, and the willingness to embrace change are some of the key features that ensure that our specialist publications persist over time” (Informa 2008a).
Theory 4 was developed to satisfy the needs of undergraduate students. The series was also developed—though no one says so out loud—to satisfy the for-profit requirements of Informa. The Theory 4 series is part of a larger move within Routledge/Taylor & Francis/Informa toward bigger and more lucrative markets than high-level, complex scholarship can deliver. The expansion is in two directions: toward simpler dumbed-down books such as Theory 4 aimed at a potentially large undergraduate population; and hugely expensive encyclopedic volumes aimed at library sales. An example of the latter is the Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies series. One entry in that series of 16 is *Performance* (2003) edited by...Philip Auslander. This four-volume hardback set sells for a neat $1,300 (the Critical Concepts books are hardcover only). All but one of the Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies sets are five volumes (the exception is four volumes). As noted earlier, prices per set range from $1,050 to $1,690. The series comprises anthologies of previously published materials. An enterprising graduate student using JSTOR, Project Muse, and other online resources could assemble similar if not identical collections. What the libraries are paying for is the expertise of whoever selects a particular suite of entries, informed introductions to the materials, and the physical objects: books. Probably before too long this kind of publishing will pass out of existence as tailor-made course packets posted online replace bound volumes and the venerable photocopied “reading packet.” But for the time being, there is a lot of money to be made in publishing these kinds of anthologies. Routledge has 151 books in its overall Critical Concepts series, ranging in subject matter from *World Islam* (Rippin 2008), *Human Rights* (Falk, Elver, and Hajjar 2007), and *Democracy* (Saward 2006) to *Myth* (Segal 2007), *Subcultures* (Gelder 2007), and *Comparative Grammar* (Roberts 2006). Fifty-eight of these were published since 2006, evidencing an accelerating if ultimately doomed project. Sets like Critical Concepts are easier to put together than original, researched, primary source–based scholarship. Even a modest library sale of multivolume sets of three to five books selling for more than $1,000 each will turn a very big profit fast. No doubt Informa believes in making lots of hay while the sun shines.

Clearly, then, the Theories 4 series did not erupt in a vacuum; it is not an aberration but part of a system. Granted that book publishers are under pressure, even university presses are. Granted that Rodgers and other editors are overworked. Granted that information is easily available on the internet and hackers can efficiently rip off content. Adding these up means not only a decline in sales for serious books and journals—but also the production of fewer well-edited scholarly books. But does this admittedly deplorable situation justify the debasement of scholarship? And if not, what can be done, recognizing both the economic/technical realities and the standards of scholarship that ought to be maintained? Developing an effective and ethical program will take thought and I look forward to participating in that process. But for now, I want to focus on the immediate problem at hand.

The Theory 4 series is very bad for performance studies. The key theorists of performance studies are not identical to those in religious studies. Yet lazy Auslander didn’t bother to add or subtract a single name to/from the list Deal and Beal supplied. Therefore, missing from theorists of performance studies are J.L. Austin, Joseph Roach, Peggy Phelan, Dwight Conquergood, Herbert Blau, Barbara Kirshenblatt–Gimblett, Diana Taylor, Victor Turner, Erving Goffman, Bertolt Brecht, Antonin Artaud, Eugenio Barba, Gregory Bateson, Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Augusto Boal, Mihály Csikszentmihalyi, Rebecca Schneider, Allan Kaprow, John Cage, Shannon Jackson, Michael Kirby, Brian Sutton-Smith, D.W. Winnicott, Jon McKenzie, Peter Burger, Amelia Jones, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Patrice Pavis, Roger Caillois, Johan Huizinga,...Richard Schechner. You may want to add or subtract luminaries. But the bottom line remains: Deal and Beal’s body with Auslander’s head is not a definitive book of performance studies theorists. It is mostly the Frankfurt School and the post-structuralists. It is almost entirely European—despite the fact that performance studies, so designated, originated in North America. And it is 24 men out of a total of 29 people.
I believe I was the first author professing performance studies to be recruited by Routledge. My *Performance Theory* came out in 1988. That book was an updated edition of my *Essays on Performance Theory* published in 1977 by Drama Books Specialists. Even though I am the author of both books, I was transparent about the similarities and differences between the two. The title page of the Routledge book clearly announces “Revised and expanded edition”; and the very first sentence in the 1988 book states: “The differences between this edition of *Performance Theory* and the one published in 1977 are considerable” (Schechner 1988). I detail not only the differences, but where the essays first appeared. Auslander is worse than opaque. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that he and at least some of his editors at Routledge were intentionally deceptive.

Rodgers claims, in effect, that the Auslander *Theory for Performance Studies* slipped through the cracks; that its publication is a one-time mistake; and that the book is her sole responsibility. Rodgers takes too much on her shoulders. It is entirely plausible that Rodgers did not know that *Theory for Performance Studies* was plagiarized. As L’Enfant informed me, Routledge divided the books in the Theory 4 series among several editors. Can this be accidental? Aren’t series usually handled by the same editor or editorial team? “Routledge,” whoever that is, either doesn’t know what’s going on—not a good sign; or did know—an even worse sign. Whichever the case, what happened must be comprehended within the larger context of a corporate culture that demands quick-to-market books produced with minimal hands-on editing. This is an accelerating shift in values signaling a decline at Routledge. The urge to repackage and recycle already published materials is strong. The trend toward short “introductory” guides such as the Routledge Performance Practitioners series and the Theory 4 series shifts already stretched editorial resources away from harder-to-edit, longer, original high-level scholarship based on primary research. Plagiarism is an extreme example of this “use it over and over again” mentality.

We should take to heart the warning Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett emailed me on 11 August after she heard about the Auslander plagiarism:

Auslander puts forward a vision of performance studies that basically reverse engineers it to a core of foundational texts shared by virtually all humanities fields. That’s why Routledge can just change the covers and sell the same stuff. That makes PS a “me too” field, rather than a field for which we could really write a thoughtful intellectual history that would be more than the boilerplate for any field’s foundations and history. Show me a field that does not owe something significant to Freud and Marx and the other luminaries in the volume. This is a student’s guide through boilerplate, which is why it doesn’t matter if the title of the book says “religion” or “performance studies.” And, the boilerplate is basically cultural studies and critical theory to which PS has been reduced or with which it has been conflated to the point of disappearance as a field with its own multi/inter/disciplinary history. What Routledge is saying is that all the “first volumes” that they intend as guides for students are basically the same, so it does not matter if the same material is packaged and marketed to different niches, whether religion, education, art, or performance, etc. (2008)

The Theory 4 series is part of the Wikipedization of scholarship. That a senior scholar of Auslander’s standing should collaborate in producing a piece of lipsynch scholarship is, I fear, more a harbinger than an aberration.

What should be done? In the short run, Auslander’s book must be withdrawn. And now that Routledge is playing in the corporate big leagues it needs to conform to the corporate ethos with regard to faulty or misrepresented goods. Along with recalling the Auslander (and other plagiarized books), Routledge should reimburse individuals, libraries, and booksellers who return these bogus volumes. Some of my colleagues suggest boycotting Routledge until/unless the Auslander is withdrawn. Because so many core performance studies texts that we want our students to read carry the Routledge imprint, a boycott would be academically self-defeating. However, authors should seriously consider refusing to publish with Routledge until/unless.
Just going on as if nothing has happened is a denial that will come back to bite us. Acknowl-
edging a “serious error” but not withdrawing the Auslander is unethical. But this is exactly
what Routledge is doing (still making hay even when it’s raining), as evidenced by Routledge’s
Humanities Editorial Director Claire L’Enfant’s 21 August email to me:

This was a serious error on our part which we have now addressed by inserting an
addendum with the proper credit into the book:

“Theory for Performance Studies” is adapted from Theory for Religious Studies by
William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal.

The Publishers accept full responsibility for failure to ensure proper credit in the
first edition of this work. This in no way reflects on the work undertaken by the author
on behalf of the Publisher.

The first paragraph is the wording that Professors Deal and Beal requested Routledge
to use in conjunction with all the titles in the series.

This series was very much a one-off experiment—we have never published anything
of this kind before, we will not be adding to the series, and we will not be publishing
anything of the kind in the future. (L’Enfant 200)

Not acceptable. I have tried to show how the Auslander plagiarism is not a “one-off experiment”
but a particularly egregious example of an underlying pattern driven by corporate for-profit
needs. Be that as it may, L’Enfant’s assertion that the problem has been “addressed” by dubbing
the Auslander “adapted from” is bizarre. Even if Deal and Beal agree to it, it is a lie. If I were
to receive a plagiarized term paper or dissertation in which there was an “addendum” from the
author of the original that she/he gave permission to plagiarize...well, you know what would
happen. I cannot condone in senior scholars and publishers what I condemn in junior colleagues
and students. Nor am I satisfied with words to the effect of “it won’t happen again but we are
going to keep selling plagiarized books.” Take a simple analogy: I steal something and get
cought. I promise, “It won’t happen again, but do you want some of what I stole?” Routledge
(and any other publisher cut from the same cloth) has to stop rushing stolen goods to market.
And what should be done in the long run? Better even if maybe fewer books. Books that are
superbly researched, written, and edited.

Information we’ve plenty of, it’s thought that’s lacking.

References
Auslander, Philip
2008 Personal email to author, 10 August.
Auslander, Philip, ed.
Bartlett, Thomas
2008 “2 Authors Say Routledge Recycled Their Work Without Giving Credit.” The Chronicle of
Carlson, Marvin
2008 Personal email to author, 10 September.
Cody, Gabrielle
2008 Personal email to author, 17 August.
Cooper Union
Deal, William E., and Timothy K. Beal  

Dimitriadis, Greg, and George Kambarakis  

Duong, Minh Ha  
2007  Personal email to author, 28 August.

Emerling, Jae  

Falk, Richard, Hilal Elver, Lisa Hajjar, eds.  

Fuchs, Elinor  

Gelder, Ken, ed.  

Germano, William  
2008a  Personal email to author, 15 August.

2008b  Personal email to author, 16 August.

2008c  Personal email to author, 27 September.

Hitchcock, Louise  

Informa plc  


2008c  “Informa Values.” http://www.informa.com/about/informa_values (20 August).

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara  
2008  Personal email to author, 11 August.

Kurt Weil Foundation  

L’Enfant, Claire  
2008  Personal email to author, 21 August.

Rippin, Andrew, ed.  

Roberts, Ian, ed.  

Rodgers, Talia  
2008a  Personal email to author, 14 August.

2008b  Personal email to Gabrielle Cody, copied to the author, 1 September.

Routledge  

Saward, Michael, ed.  
Schechner, Richard
1977  
1988  
Segal, Robert, ed.
2007  

**Routledge Responds**

**Statement by Talia Rodgers**

*Publisher, Theatre and Performance Studies, Routledge*

A full and honest debate about the relationship between scholarship, academic publishing, higher education, and intellectual integrity is necessary and helpful for the kind of cultural work we do. I would welcome such a debate. Unfortunately that doesn’t seem to be happening in this instance. It seems as though the facts have not been allowed to get in the way of a good story.

We have acknowledged our errors and apologised in full to those we unintentionally wronged. We have specifically said we have no intention of repeating such an exercise. The issue of whether or not the Theory 4 series was an intellectually credible project (in terms of the relationship of critical theory to a discipline such as performance studies) is separate to the serious allegation of plagiarism. It seems to me to be crucial that the basis of the series be understood for what it is, otherwise any discussion about its value—or indeed its mishandled execution—is meaningless.

A debate about publishing standards is particularly important given the changes we’re witnessing in the commercial landscape: changes which are not recent but part of a gradual and ongoing pressure on institutional and individual book-buying budgets. Routledge has been responding to those changes in a responsible and thoughtful way for many years. Our recent publication *Theatre Histories* (2006) has been highly acclaimed within the field. It also won an in-house award from our parent company, Informa. To my mind this signifies a system of values within publishing which applauds long-term investment in projects with serious and ambitious pedagogical intent. We also continue to sign up research-based projects by both emergent and established scholars, and to translate key texts into English to facilitate the circulation of ideas from elsewhere in the world.

My colleagues and I are proud to have been involved in the development of performance studies and to have published several of the discipline’s foundational texts at both research and classroom levels. Our commitment to the field, and to the teachers and scholars who work so hard to maintain it, remains as strong as ever.

**Statement by Claire L’Enfant**

*Humanities Editorial Director, Routledge*

A few statements of fact:

1. The Theory 4 series addresses pedagogical not scholarly needs.
2. *Theory for Performance Studies* is not and was not intended to be “a definitive list of performance studies theorists.”

To quote from Bill Germano’s original brief to authors:

Like the volumes we are now commissioning, the first book provides brief overviews of the major 20C theorists (about 30 of them) as well as a couple of foundational figures.
(Marx, Freud, Nietzsche). It’s a list that is explicitly not discipline-specific e.g. Foucault, Althusser, Levinas—our idea is to particularize the major theorists just a little so as to show the utility of major thinkers’ ideas for students in a given field.

3. The series was commissioned by Bill Germano. *Theory for Religious Studies* was published in 2004. Bill developed the series, agreed the concept with series editors Deal and Beal, and briefed all the authors, including Philip Auslander, before he left the company in 2005.

4. Due to human error during the production process we did not credit the series editors as contractually agreed.

5. Deal and Beal called our attention to the oversight in February of this year. Routledge apologised unreservedly and immediately met all their demands relating to the way in which they and the series should be credited. We rejected their claim of plagiarism on the basis of what we consider to be unequivocal wording in the contract they signed with us. We were subsequently contacted by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

6. Royalties due to Deal and Beal were paid in full. They continue to be paid as per the agreement for their own book, and series royalties on all of the books authored by others.

7. They have never asked us to withdraw the series.

8. The series represents an isolated example of our publishing. We have never published anything like it before, and will not do so again.

9. Routledge and Taylor & Francis merged in 1997. Taylor & Francis gained a greatly expanded book publishing division; Routledge gained the benefit of a vastly increased range of journals, and the financial stability to continue with the publishing strategy we already had in place.

10. Routledge has been publishing multivolume sets of material similar to Critical Concepts for more than 20 years. They are one major strand of our publishing, alongside textbooks, student reading, and scholarly monographs. They are explicitly designed to provide collections of previously published content, for which full author and publisher recognition is given.

---

**Scholars Comment**

**If the Commodity Could Speak...**

*Judith Butler*

Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature, affiliated faculty in Theater, Dance and Performance Studies, University of California, Berkeley

I was dismayed to learn that my name and a discussion of my work was included in this volume on “performance theory” for a number of reasons, and the entire event opens up many issues for us to contemplate. Of course, I am pleased to be part of performance theory, or “theory for performance studies,” but I am dismayed both by the shoddy ethics of this kind of book and by the intellectual ramifications of such a book, especially when it so egregiously fails to actually include the most important theoretical texts in the field.

Let me first address the financial and ethical dimensions of this crisis and then offer some of my thoughts on “theory” and performance.

Routledge maintains copyright over much of what I have written (since the publication of *Gender Trouble* in 1989), so they are technically within their rights to decide where and how to reproduce that material. The discussion of my work does not require my permission, especially if quotations are kept to the legal minimum. It is, however, telling to me that they did not send me this book, and I presume that the four other living authors were not sent the book either. It is in a way sad to have to take one’s writing more seriously as “property” since one wants to give
it away, to let it circulate in ways that are not in one’s control. But some forms of losing control are clearly better than others, and the issue here is not only a corporate seizure of one’s material, but a profit-making activity that has an egregious effect on how fields of study and disciplines are defined and taught.

It is dismaying as well to realize that Philip Auslander and the “authors” of the other disciplinary variants of this text have agreed to produce books under such conditions; the royalties from such books go to the “author” who is largely reproducing the texts of prior authors, but who receives royalties for his “work.” I do not know what function my name serves in this context, but “I” am become a name, to be sure, and one that suits me not at all. But can the commodity still speak? If so, I object to the logic of reproducibility here, which is the logic of the commodity, as if the same work could be “retooled” and “repackaged” for any and every disciplinary need. It is an obvious and chilling example of how the market exercises the power to rewrite the disciplines and the interdisciplines (on a continuum with donors linking gifts with changes in the curriculum or with certain decisions on tenure).

Intellectually, such books are a fiasco. The process is mainstreamed, so the same theorists who form the background for religious studies are supposedly the ones who form the background for performance studies. Where are Schleiermacher and Schussler-Fiorenza in the Religious Studies student guide? And where are Richard Schechner and Sue-Ellen Case in Theory for Performance Studies? Are such fields thinkable without such names? If we were to ask, what kinds of theory ought performance studies students read, we would have to think carefully about the various legacies that have informed that field. The idea that “theory” is a toolbox that can be “applied” to various disciplines not only belongs to a highly problematic view of theory as instrument, but misses the “instrumentalist” critique that critical theory itself can perform (cf. Adorno) as part of its very critique of capitalism. Both the approach to theory as “tool” and as “great thinkers” misses the fact that theory emerges in a dynamic and crucial relation to the various disciplinary modes of thinking, popular culture, art, and performance. In other words, those theories that would be crucial for thinking about performance studies would be substantially different from those that are needed to think about geography, and where there are intersections (which is interesting), these exist for a reason. But theory cannot be “exterior” to what it thinks about; it has its own multiple histories and trajectories, but it also is always engaged with the work that is going on in ostensibly nontheoretical domains: Benjamin and Barthes on photography, Derrida on Mallarmé; de Man on Rousseau; Marx on liberal political economy; Geertz on ritual; Johnson on Poe; Phelan on Freud; Jameson on Brecht. Even to start such a list risks the kind of canonization that does not quite work, since what is most important are not the “names” of theorists but the problems of performance studies. How does one theorize performance to the side of the proscenium stage, and how does that come to redefine our understanding of the stage, of public space, of public movement? What is the relation of performance and ritual? How do we understand the body, gesture, movement, and stillness? And how do we understand cultural action and practice in new ways? How do notions of performance in military, economic, and aesthetic contexts converge or fail to converge? How do we think about racial meanings in performance, and what does this tell us about how theories of race need to be developed? There are so many questions that performance studies has introduced to theory. There is no theory for performance studies, in this sense, but only a set of implicit and explicit theoretical challenges that are posed by the field itself, and which have already enriched and revised the field of theory. So any book that sought to think about critical theory for performance would have to really start with a different beginning: What does performance bring to critical theory?; and, Where do we find performance within critical theory; and, indeed, my favorite, What form of critical theory do we find in performance?
Everyone Suffers

Marvin Carlson

Sidney E. Cohn Professor of Theatre, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York

The whole unfortunate Theory 4 affair involves a wide range of issues, but I would like to share my thoughts briefly on three that especially concern me. The first is the simplest, though each is impacted by the other two. This is the fact that, because it relies in large part on material assembled for another project entirely, *Theory for Performance Studies* (2007) is almost wholly unsuitable for its announced use. All other issues aside, how could anyone have assumed that essentially the same introduction to theorists as complex and influential as Freud, Marx, and Saussure would be satisfactory for students in fields so diverse as religious studies, education, art history, and performance studies? Perhaps even more troubling, Auslander presents exactly the same 29 theorists for performance studies that Deal and Beal present for religious studies. At least the two intervening volumes made some adjustments in this selection, adding John Dewey for education, for example. Not only is the text boilerplate, but so are the selections, with a corresponding loss to the specificity of the discipline. Of course if this were the only problem, the matter could have been dealt with in a conventional way, when this shortcoming would surely have been noted and roundly condemned in reviews of the book.

Matters become more troubling and more serious however when we turn to the second issue, of the mechanics of this duplication. The second volume in the series, on education, has a paragraph-long footnote at the end of its introduction, openly saying the “task at hand” for this book was “to rewrite” the first volume in the series, a rewriting that in many cases “preserved most of the entry’s narrative, only adding remarks, sometimes brief and sometimes longer” (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis 2006:x). Whatever one may think about this project, at least this footnote confesses what is going on. Unfortunately this caveat disappears later in the series, and Philip Auslander’s contribution on *Theory for Performance Studies* bears no evidence of the fact that almost all of the book published under his name is in fact, word-for-word, the work of others. This of course is what is known as plagiarism.

It would be presumptuous of me to speculate about Auslander’s motives, but I can certainly attest to the fact that this publication has been a source of considerable anguish in the field as a whole, and not only for the obvious moral reasons. Auslander is one of our most innovative, influential, and respected colleagues, and this lapse is not an easy matter for any of us to deal with. Moreover, Routledge, the press involved, has a formidable and well-deserved record for its encouragement of important new work in theatre and performance studies. I am only one of many who have been encouraged and supported by Routledge editors, especially Talia Rodgers, to a degree impossible to express adequately. There is a bright side to all this gloom, however, and that is that the field has attained the maturity and ethical responsibility to confront such painful matters as the Theory 4 affair openly. Such was not always the case. Scholars of my generation will probably recall a very prominent figure in the field in the past who was widely known to have published plagiarized material, a fact never spoken of openly, apparently out of a misplaced sense of collegiality or friendship. This situation was made worse by the fact that we all knew of cases of untenured scholars or students whose careers were compromised or even ruined on account of similar lapses. Unpleasant as the current situation is, it seems to me to indicate on the whole a healthier state of the profession.

The third issue involves the press, and especially this series and its operation. Everyone knows that presses, like students, researchers, and libraries, are under tremendous and increasing financial pressures today. This does not however provide an adequate excuse for duplicity or outright deception to help meet the bills. Some decades ago, when I began teaching at Cornell, the library as a matter of course would order several copies of books they expected to be in high demand. With ever greater expenses this helpful practice has long since disappeared, but what
the library still does is have standing orders with major presses like Routledge to buy automatically an entire series or books in certain areas. Routledge has, in my opinion cynically, exploited this policy by issuing what claims to be a series but is in fact a group of almost identical books, conning the library into buying multiple copies against its own policy. The result is that less money is available to buy other individual books that would in fact broaden the library’s holdings as these do not. Everybody suffers except the press—the library, the readers, smaller publishers, and those researchers whose books are not bought because funding is low. Even the press ultimately suffers, if word gets out, as it has done on this series, that this publisher is indulging in this sort of academic con game.

Clearly there is plenty of blame, and plenty of sorrow to go around, but let us hope for all parties involved that this unhappy chain of events will come to be seen as an aberration, and that lessons will have been learned that will benefit all of us and the field as a whole in the future.

References

Auslander, Philip

Dimitriadis, Greg, and George Kamberelis

Who Missed the Plagiarism Lecture?

Tracy C. Davis
Barber Professor of Performing Arts, Northwestern University; President, American Society for Theatre Research

I suspect this practice—or something like it—gained impetus with the Routledge Readers, which plundered Routledge texts and reprinted chapters, sections, or smidgeons on thematic grounds. I recall being overruled in my objection to how Lizbeth Goodman chose to truncate my work for The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance (1998), and felt powerless to stop it. It felt like dumbing down, but I rationalized it as making the work more accessible. Perhaps I was too hasty. In any case, the Auslander controversy sent me scrambling to the bookcase to see who holds the copyright to Actresses as Working Women (1991): I do. Whew. But what is that worth?

Schechner proposes getting Auslander’s book “struck off” Routledge’s list. The key word in Routledge’s compromise promotion is “adapted,” but we do not have consensus on what adaptation means. We freely use several synonyms in literary and performative contexts: derived, based, inspired, utilized, updated, riffed off (you get the idea) in addition to what Schechner cites as “sampling,’ ‘borrowing,’ and/or ‘creative stealing.’” Did Routledge make an honest mistake? I doubt it. Are performance scholars and artists in any way culpable in creating a gray zone because we lack clear definitions of spolio, celebrating it in some (creative) contexts but getting incensed at others, such as scholarly plundering? Maybe. I would like to hear a copyright expert weigh in, especially one with a long historical view on the issue and a solid grasp of postmodernist theory. We can try to protect ourselves by insisting on holding copyright to our books in our own names. Were Beal and Deal naive in giving copyright to Routledge, or were they the hapless victims of boilerplate language on the contract? That’s not a question that has been put to them, and perhaps it is unanswerable. Would this happen again? I hate to think so: publicizing this scandal should make (almost) everyone in the humanities aware of the case, and warier when it comes time to sign a contract. Yet we can empathize with authors, especially first-time authors, just grateful to get a contract, any contract, that gives them one more step up on the ladder toward tenure.

What is particularly galling in this case is that both the named author and the press colluded on the plagiarism. Where do we diagnose the system’s collapse: corporation, commissioning
editor, or author? This is not just an instance of a rogue scholar “gone bad” or a freshman who was absent from class the day that plagiarism was cautioned against, and then proceeded through graduate school and the tenure ranks until one day this mess blossomed. It was calculated, planned for, and an economic decision on the part of scholar and publisher. The peer reviewer, whom we collectively entrust to call out an intellectually faulty book was, presumably, not privy to any of the details that are so vexing now. The system of peer review was designed to fail in this case. Is there reason to think that this thievery was enabled by the corporate structure of book publishing, or the independence of the proverbial right and left hands in the absence of a series editor—a bona fide academic with a reputation to protect—throughout the genesis and realization of Theory 4? Germano’s publishing expertise notwithstanding, his role is nothing like the one I undertook when I coedited a series for Routledge (perhaps I was too discerning—perhaps that contributed to that series’ cancellation?) or in the work I now do as a series editor for Cambridge University Press (a press that goes overboard to satisfy academic scruples). Nor is his role like the one I have as a member of Northwestern University Press’s Board, a sage group of faculty who convene regularly and put the brakes on any project, or series editor, when we detect work that is hasty or sloppy, and who would never proceed without a set of credible and affirmative readers’ reports. What we cannot do—and presumably what Germano and Rodgers could not do either—is to quench the finance director’s appetite for a healthy bottom line.

What is the next step for us? Certainly we should keep Theory for Performance Studies off our course lists, insist that our libraries send back their copies, and patiently counsel any students—in perpetuity—who may haplessly cite the book. We cannot tarnish all of Routledge’s efforts—Schechner’s excellent work, Marvin Carlson’s, and Jon McKenzie’s bulwark an impressive list—but on the other hand is it safe to assume that the now-infamous practices of Theory 4 are limited to that series?

Each of us has our preferred version of the theoretical pantheon, and I add to this in (shameless plug...) my Cambridge Companion to Performance Studies (2008), but Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett’s observation about reverse engineering performance studies may be a useful prompt for us to collectively think about what work we do (and un-do) when representing “the field” to novice readers. Or is it premature to undertake this historiography? How can we do this?

Neoliberalism and the Education Industries

David Savran

Distinguished Professor of Theatre, Vera Mowry Roberts Chair in American Theatre, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York

Informa [the conglomerate that owns Routledge] is a niche information specialist and the end consumers trust that the information and guidance they receive has been expertly researched and checked; is balanced, truthful and reliable; that commercial affiliations are made clear; and that any errors of judgment are speedily corrected. (“Informa Corporate Responsibility Report,” 2007:12)

By copying the words of another and passing them off as his own, Philip Auslander is unquestionably guilty of plagiarism. That Routledge not only sanctioned but encouraged this practice does not excuse him. I cannot imagine what would have led one of the leading scholars in performance studies to embark on such an intellectually fraudulent project. Unless it was the money. Yet we all know that writing academic books, even reference books and textbooks, is unlikely to provide an entrée to the Forbes 400. The contents of the volume that lists Auslander as its sole author, its relationship to the other books in the lamentable Theory 4 series, and Routledge’s feeble attempts to explain, justify, and exonerate itself have been lucidly rehearsed by other contributors to this issue. And while I hardly believe Auslander should be excused for what is, at best, a serious lapse in judgment, I am less concerned with his actions than those of his publisher. Indeed, I see him as a pawn in a cynical scheme by Routledge and Informa to
defraud students, professors, and libraries of $27.95 (if they purchase the book in paperback) or $110.00 (if they opt for hardcover). Even if Auslander and Routledge are able to sidestep litigation, they are still guilty of deception. For all the while that the publisher professes to provide “quality information and knowledge,” it is actively contributing, as Richard Schechner argues, to the dumbing down not only of performance studies, but of all the fields at which Theory 4 has taken aim (Taylor & Francis 200). Schechner is right to call this trend the Wikipedization of scholarship. And although there is a long history of books that explain, condense, and simplify, legitimate academic publishers until recently could be clearly distinguished from the purveyors of the likes of Cliffs Notes and Reader’s Digest. But with the increasing privatization of the education industries in the name of neoliberalism, that line of demarcation is becoming less and less distinct. And it seems to me that the real scandal of Auslander’s plagiarism is that it is forcing us to confront what I would call the neoliberalization of higher education.

One way to understand this new dispensation is to look, as Schechner does, at the history of Routledge, which, like a rat dangled before a boa constrictor, was swallowed in 1997 by Taylor & Francis, which was itself swallowed in 2004 by Informa, a UK-based publishing, conference, and consulting conglomerate listed on the FTSE 250 Index of corporations traded on the London Stock Exchange (along with EasyJet and Domino’s Pizza). Informa represents a new breed of information specialists. With its global reach, it aims for nothing less than to monopolize the production and, more importantly, the distribution of knowledge. The corporation prides itself on its ability to deliver units of information worldwide through myriad outlets. It produces goods: books, journals, newsletters, and reports (both hard copy and online) on an array of subjects including “food, telecoms, life sciences, pharmaceuticals, finance, insurance, tax and law” (Informa plc 2008 “News and Information”). And it provides services: “12,000 events per year, from Conferences, Exhibitions, Large Scale Events, [and] Managed Events, [to] Partner Events and Seminars” on every imaginable subject (2008 “Events”). Yet these activities represent only a part of Informa’s totalizing project, which includes its own pseudo-university, the Informa Professional Academy, that offers “highly specialised [...] professional distance learning courses [...] designed to meet industry specific needs,” courses that lead “to a recognised postgraduate qualification” (2008 “Distance Learning”). Even more relevant for readers of TDR is Informa’s Performance Improvement arm whose “companies provide organisations with a total learning solution” through “customised private classes” as well as “upfront consulting and assessment through training, mentoring and reinforcement” (2008 “Performance Improvement”).

Like all corporations that distribute vital information about a volatile global economy whose every hiccup produces shock waves felt round the world, Informa is deeply concerned about its public image. Its website, which includes hyperlinks to its countless subsidiaries, is written in a kind of mind-numbing corporate-speak that attempts to overwhelm the reader with boasts of its quality control, rigorous code of ethics, matchless efficiency, and totalizing vision. Informa’s downloadable 32-page “Corporate Responsibility Report” is designed to assure clients that Informa dispenses “intelligence with integrity” (2007:1). This report—which I would describe as a virtuoso performance of bad faith—presents the conglomerate as a utopian preserve in the capitalist marketplace, “Britain’s 52nd most admired company,” and an island of “social, ethical, and environmental” integrity, loved by its employees and its “incredibly loyal customers” (6, 9). The report commends Routledge for publishing only “the best content by the best authors” and it notes that the “integrity of the researcher/authors is generally very high: careers can be ruined,” it warns, “on what is published” (14).

Although the word “integrity” echoes relentlessly through the report, Routledge’s policies have not been quite as exemplary as Informa would like us to believe. Like some commercial presses (and unlike most university presses), it publishes both legitimate scholarship and volumes it identifies as textbooks and student reference books. Its 2008/2009 theatre and perfor-
The performance studies catalogue lists 12 books (all except two published since 2005) that are composed almost entirely of previously written material and range in price from $17.95 to $49.95 in paperback and from $100.00 to $135.00 in hardcover. Although many of these books include important essays, the volume purportedly authored by Philip Auslander, *Theory for Performance Studies*, is in reality closer to being a highbrow and very expensive version of Cliffs Notes (which, in point of fact, celebrated its 50th birthday in 2008). Recycling the words of Timothy K. Beal and William E. Deal, Auslander’s Introduction claims that the book is intended for both students and “teachers and scholars of theatre and performance” (2007:2). But it is unlikely to be cited in legitimate scholarship, even if it were not plagiarized, because, like Cliffs Notes, it presents simplified and reductive summaries of the work of canonical authors—but in Theory 4, Derrida substitutes for Dickens, Barthes for Balzac. Cliffs Notes, moreover, seems almost to alert users of its marginal intellectual status with its distinctive yellow and black warning stripes. *Theory for Performance Studies*, on the other hand, aims to seduce readers with a mysterious, artsy cover.

The hodgepodge of summaries that the volume offers is symptomatic of the changes that have taken place as a result of the “theory” revolution of the 1980s and emblemizes the post-structuralist consensus that emerged during those years. Just as the so-called free market allegedly provides producers and consumers with an unprecedented wealth of choices, so does the list of 29 theorists allegedly offer the student a smorgasbord from which to choose his or her approach to cultural performance. “Today I’ll have a big plate of Foucault with some Lacan and Butler on the side. Oh yes, and a dollop of Said.” Such an approach is unlikely to foster a real understanding of the fundamental questions with which these theorists wrestle.

Although countless books have appeared (since Jonathan Culler’s *Structuralist Poetics* in 1975) that aim to explain theory to students, Routledge has violated Informa’s code of ethics by publishing a book that is emphatically not “expertly researched and checked.” Moreover, adding a note to its website and catalogue that Auslander’s book is “adapted from” the Deal and Beal volume hardly qualifies as a speedy correction of “errors of judgment.” But Routledge and Informa are unapologetically profit-making enterprises that aim, first and foremost, to provide a constantly growing stream of revenue to its shareholders who, if they take the “Corporate Responsibility Report” seriously, would fancy they are invested in an altruistic enterprise. For the whole point of Informa seems to be to blur the line between the commercial and the not-for-profit by taking on more and more functions that historically have been the province of universities and both governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Informa is thus brilliantly taking advantage of the ongoing neoliberal realignment that is putting massive amounts of (formerly) public funds into private hands. After all, 40 percent of its Performance Improvement revenues are generated from its work with the US federal government, the schoolyard bully at the Milton Friedman academy of neoliberal economics (Informa Annual Report 2008:28). With a staff of 10,000 employees in 150 offices in more than 40 countries on 6 continents, Informa is committed to building a worldwide empire.

Informa is by no means unique. The increasing privatization of public resources in the name of corporate efficiency is widespread in the US and Western Europe. More and more universities are teaming up with private industry to launch projects in the natural and social sciences (and even the humanities) as well as profit-generating initiatives, like long-distance learning. More and more are establishing satellite campuses (as New York University is in Abu Dhabi) to attract the sons and daughters of the growing comprador bourgeoisie in what used to be called the Third World. More and more university presses are being pressured to shore up their list of trade titles by persuading academics to make their books more user-friendly. So Routledge is by no means the exception. Informa, after all, aims to be at the forefront of the neoliberal revolution. “We have got to be very market-focused. If we are not we will soon fall behind. The world is changing fast and the old mentality of just produce and sell is no longer enough.”
(2008 “Informa Values”). We are all performers in the brave new world that Informa and like-minded corporations are in the process of making. Because we cannot opt out of this world, we must decide which roles we are willing to play and, more importantly, which ones we refuse.

References

Auslander, Philip

Informa plc

Taylor & Francis Group

A Theory 4 All Seasons

Shannon Jackson
Professor of Rhetoric and of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies, University of California, Berkeley

There seem to be several issues circulating at once in this distressing and potentially egregious situation. I will focus on only three of the issues that are at risk of being elided: (1) The conception of critical theory as a-disciplinary and hence transferable across all fields; (2) the idea that “Routledge” is an index of the corporatization of academic thought; (3) the charge that at least one author—senior performance studies scholar, Philip Auslander—plagiarized a book written by William Deal and Timothy Beal.

Of the three issues, the temptations and untoward effects of Number 1 seem to me most immediately legible. The Theory 4 series launched by Routledge’s former editor William Germano began with the notion that the same compendium of critical theory could be harnessed and circulated across different disciplines. This editorial principle interacted with a larger intellectual environment that rewarded and celebrated, sometimes rigorously, quite often superficially, the transformation of critical theory into “Theory,” a projection that enabled all kinds of celebratory and conspiratorial fantasies. Whether one defined theory as an experiment or as a tool, whether one conceived its rise as innovation or as fashion, or whether one decided its vocabulary was necessarily or unnecessarily “difficult,” a fraught but heady pro-Theory environment gave rise to Theory 4, assuming along the way that its spine could substitute for the discipline-specific theoretical spines of fields such as religious studies, art, education . . . and performance studies. The decision of Deal and Beal to work with Bill Germano—whose editorial vision they continue to laud—was one that endorsed this vision of a-disciplinary cross-disciplinary intellectual inquiry.

It is not legally or perhaps ethically wrong to have done so, but in my view that decision was intellectually misguided. First, the Theory 4 vision deflates discipline-specific histories of theoretical development. In so doing, it creates a pedagogical context in which there is little room to show either the resistances and inversions of particular fields and media histories to certain theoretical questions or the many unrelated but important theoretical questions posed
from within those fields themselves. Moreover the series also gives a bad name to critical theory. It contributes to a prevailing anti-theory sentiment in various wings of academia, confirming for them its faddishness and its status as a vehicle for the de-skilling and homogenization of other disciplines. For anyone who cares about critical theory as a rigorous field with a precise intellectual trajectory, the instrumentalization of critical theory by Theory 4 is very bad news.

When we begin to talk about Routledge’s relationship to the financial demands of an academic market, things become less cut and dried for me, not because there is no relationship but because the ubiquity of that relationship across all domains of academia makes definitions of appropriate engagement less clear. As numerous roundtables, special panels, publishing workshops, and editorial statements over the last decade have made clear, the landscape of academic publishing has changed and continues to change tremendously. Many university presses try to secure marketable titles ranging from Great Books to workbooks to cookbooks to keep themselves afloat, in part so that they can continue to publish the kinds of specialized scholarship that many of us feel is important but that does not earn big sales numbers. Within the academic market, editors also ask questions about whether a book will target less advanced pedagogical contexts, a question that I do not begrudge them. Whether as a direct result of its takeover by Taylor & Francis or as a change akin to the adjustments we have seen at other academic presses, Routledge’s commissioning and publishing practices have changed. Within the field of performance studies, many of our best scholars have worked with Routledge and particularly with Talia Rodgers in creating textbooks, readers, handbooks, and critical introductions that have served the pedagogical needs of many undergraduate courses in performance studies—and they have sold well. I believe that most of these Routledge books by scholars I admire have responded to the financial pressures of an academic market and have done so without “dumbing down.” I also find that I am still compelled by Routledge’s continued role (again, with the support of Talia Rodgers) in sustaining a rigorous conversation in the field of performance studies by signing groundbreaking scholarship from people like Peggy Phelan, Rebecca Schneider, Jon McKenzie, Rustum Bharucha, Petra Kuppers, Richard Gough, Dan Rebellato, Elaine Aston, Marvin Carlson, Sue-Ellen Case, Elin Diamond, André Lepecki, Richard Schechner, and many, many more who altered the discourse of our field but who were not only writing textbooks. The infelicity of Theory 4 needs to be interpreted within this longer and wider track record of publication in performance studies. That said, it seems very clear that the financial pressures of Routledge/Taylor & Francis interacted with the perception of theory’s homogenizing trendiness in a way that brought out the worst of both spheres, paradoxically producing a Routledge book on performance theory that does not do justice to Routledge’s record in performance theory.

What seems important, however, is to distinguish issues 1 and 2 clearly so that we can make an assessment of where we stand on each of them. I find myself fully able to contest Theory 4’s vision of critical theory on intellectual grounds. I find myself less able to draw clean lines between the dumbed down best-selling pedagogical book and the accessible best-selling pedagogical book. If responding to the financial pressures of an academic market becomes a newly fixed ethical barometer—one that might prompt reflection on all kinds of publishing as well as the financial, tuition, and fundraising models of the universities whose paychecks we cash—then surely no one’s nose is clean. A true conversation about the privatization and corporatization of academia would need us first to recognize how directly and indirectly implicated many of us already are in such networks and then to decide if we can propose appropriate forms of engagement and new forms of disengagement.

The quite serious charge of plagiarism is, once again, its own issue; however, the contingencies of the first two have certainly contributed to the perception that plagiarism took place. As
I understand the unfolding of events, Deal and Beal agreed to the principles behind issue Number 1 (i.e., A Theory 4 All Seasons) and subsequently cried foul in February of 2008 when they saw that they had not been properly credited or their royalty stream adjusted (i.e., the “profit” incurred by responding to the complexities of issue Number 2). Whether the initial crediting or royalty mistakes were corporate conspiracy or incompetence seems to hinge in many arguments on our ability to identify willful intent, a dodgy business as a contemporary theory of performativity has told us. After the subsequent addenda were added and royalties assured, the cry of foul came again in the context of the August 2008 article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. From there, the finer point of what constitutes adaptation and what plagiarism has been debated; and Deal and Beal stated more clearly what they thought it meant to offer a “template” and that they were shocked to find themselves “cut and pasted.” Indeed, the furor over Theory 4 seems to be more heated over the performance studies handbook than that of the other fields because Auslander’s book seems to follow such a cut-and-paste model more egregiously (despite his allegiance to a field that knows what an adaptation is!). Once again, the accusation of plagiarism seems in part dependent upon the location of willful intent among varieties of individuals—original and copied authors, outgoing and overworked editors—whose conscious intent seems perpetually deferred and retroactively constituted. Where in fact is the referent for Auslander’s “I,” the one that replaced Deal and Beal’s “we” as subject to every predicate? At such moments, it seems important not to confirm airless and relativist readings of performative subjectivity that would decide not to care; rather, it seems important to remember the arguments of one Theory 4 theorist who tells us that it is precisely because such “accountings” of the self are equivocal that we need to tend to their systems and effects with the utmost care.

Hence, what is striking is how Auslander and Routledge editors have responded to the charge of plagiarism by saying that their own conscience is clear, even if apologies for misexecution and incompetence have been forthcoming. In the attempt to decide on a form of engagement or disengagement from within our scholarly community, a number of proposals come to mind, including a request for the withdrawal of the book or the series. My own sense is that such a request is quite serious and should not be made lightly. It will mean Routledge canceling its contracts with various authors, however dubiously they are defined, which is not something that scholars usually endorse. It is not clear that Beal and Deal would endorse the cancellation either. Indeed, if Talia Rodgers had decided early on that Theory 4 was misguided and tried to cancel Bill Germano’s series after his forced resignation during the Taylor & Francis take-over, many might have interpreted her decision as a sign of bad editorial ethics in a newly corporatized environment. On what grounds then can we ask for a cancellation of either the book, *Theory for Performance Studies*, or the series in which it is located? Lawyers might look at the minutia of the contracts, but initial investigations thus far suggest that a legal route alone does not suffice.

What we seem to have, though, is a situation where an appeal to a legal contract is justifying a violation of a scholarly contract, the one that credits and cites, the one that refuses to claim another’s innovation as one’s own, the one that informs teenagers of the rituals of citation when we introduce them to the *M.L.A. Style Manual*—the one that does not replace another’s first person pronoun with one’s own. I would hope that neither Philip Auslander nor a Routledge editor nor a Deal nor a Beal would want to contribute to a situation that allows legality to trump scholarly integrity. And it is for that reason that I would ask all parties carefully to develop a plan for restoring the scholarly reputation of the authors, of Routledge, of critical theory, and of performance studies. That plan should probably include the withdrawal of *Theory for Performance Studies* from Routledge’s list.
What Is Theory For?
Branislav Jakovljevic
Assistant Professor of Drama, Stanford University; TDR Book Review Editor

My initial response to *Theory for Performance Studies* was that of a book review editor: Who could review this book? Is it worth reviewing?

Thomas Bartlett’s article “2 Authors Say Routledge Recycled Their Work Without Credit” appeared in the online edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* on 5 August, two weeks before the PSi 14 conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 20 to 24 August. I thought the conference an appropriate venue for addressing the questions raised by publication of *Theory for Performance Studies*, so I contacted the conference director Rune Gade and the President of PSi Edward Scheer, who supported the idea. But because there was not enough time to put together a panel of scholars who had read the book, we went with the less satisfactory format of an open forum, a Town Hall Meeting.

Our hope at *TDR* was that some of the comments could be published in place of a conventional book review. The Town Hall Meeting fell short of my expectations. The news was too fresh and there were still too many unclear details for participants to get past the scandalous aspects of *Theory for Performance Studies*, and to focus on its significance for the field. At the same time, I left the Town Hall Meeting with the sense that it was worth doing, if for no other reason than to share information about the book and to bring some transparency to the issue.

Also, I learned a few valuable lessons. First, that performance studies is no longer a family affair, so to speak, but a large international field. Many people in the room didn’t care or need to know what *The Chronicle of Higher Education* is. Many referred to Philip Auslander by his last name, and not by “Phil,” as many of us do. Second, I learned that this book primarily concerns our students. Regardless of Deal and Beal’s claims echoed in other Theory 4 books that *Theory for Religious Studies* is intended for students (undergraduate and graduate) and for scholars in the field, the book’s content and style shows that the target audience is undergraduate students.

At one point in the Town Hall Meeting, Nicholas Johnson, a student at Trinity College in Dublin, asked how were we going to present this book to our students. The silence in the room full of educators was very telling. Up to that point, the discussion shaped up in terms of loyalties: who is loyal to Routledge, to performance studies at NYU or at Northwestern, or international performance studies; and of personal alliances and friendships with Talia Rodgers, Philip Auslander, Richard Schechner … Nicholas’s question made it clear that our loyalty first and foremost should be with our students. It is precisely for this reason that the question of scholarship is just as important as the question of authorship, if not more so. Of course, the third thing that I learned is that I should write about *Theory for Performance Studies*, and that I should write about it in the context of the entire series.

There is so much confusion surrounding Routledge’s Theory 4 series that it seems apposite to begin with the simple chronology. Here, I am relying primarily on the information provided by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal in their responses to questions asked of them by Richard Schechner and published in this issue of *TDR* and on the information provided in the books themselves.

In the introduction to *Theory for Religious Studies*, Deal and Beal write that their book “had its genesis in the classroom” (2004:xxii). If the idea for the book came from their work with students, then the concept for the series was developed together with William Germano. They stress on at least two occasions in their answers for *TDR* that they developed Theory 4 collaboratively. Indeed, Germano is regularly referred to as the editor of Theory 4 from the inception of the series in 2004 until his departure from Routledge in September 2005. Four more books followed *Theory for Religious Studies*:
In their *TDR* answers, Deal and Beal note that the books that come from Routledge’s New York office “have the copyright in the publisher’s name,” whereas those that come from the UK office “have it in the author's name.” Bartlett reports in his article in *The Chronicle* that Auslander, in response to his query about plagiarism, said that he considers the question of copyright the publisher’s responsibility, and that “it was never presented to [him] as something [he] would need to think about” (in Bartlett 2008). But he should have. It is wrong to confuse copyright laws with good practices, customs, and, yes, ethics of scholarly attribution. Actually, it is this series that proves the point. There is an ironic symmetry to the whole issue of giving due credit to the authors of the “model” book. Emerling, who does not hold the copyright on his Theory 4 book, and Auslander, who does, don’t make any mention of Deal and Beal. Conversely, Dimitriadis and Kamberelis, whose book’s copyright holder is Taylor & Francis, come clean about the genesis of their book:

> The task at hand here was to rewrite the excellent first volume in Routledge’s “Theory for” series, *Theory for Religious Studies* by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal. In some cases, we preserved most of the entry’s narrative, only adding remarks, sometimes brief and sometimes longer, about the particular importance of their work for the field of education. (2006:x)

Louise A. Hitchcock, who holds the copyright to *Theory for Classics*, goes even further. Already in the Acknowledgements section she notes that her book is a revision of the “core text in the series” (2008:ix). Then, in the introduction she respectfully credits her sources:

> [T]his book stands on the shoulders of books originally published in the Theory 4 series, revising and drawing heavily from them in all instances, and hopefully adding something to them. [T]he core text, *Theory for Religious Studies* by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal, had its origins in the classroom. My own contribution in the revision of this text also draws heavily from *Theory for Art History*, by Jae Emerling. (xiii)

Obviously, there is little agreement about what was actually the “task at hand” in the Theory 4 series. One of the possible sources of confusion, perhaps for authors as much as for the readers, is the absence of any series editor’s statement. In fact, it is hard to tell if there is a series editor in the traditional sense of the word. William Germano’s name does not appear in any of the books from the series. It is customary in academic publishing for the series editors to write a preface that lays out the vision for the series. There is no such preface in *Theory 4*. Some obvious and key questions are never addressed. Why theory for religious studies and classics, and not for literary studies and cultural studies? Why theory for performance studies and art history, and not for feminist studies and media studies? And further, why theory at all?

Deal and Beal open their introduction by asking, “What is theory and why is it important,” and go on to provide a quick answer by resorting to the etymology of “theory,” originating in the Greek word *theoria* (“a viewing” or “spectacle”), which introduces their central theoretical claim about theory: “A theory is something like a conceptual lens, a pair of spectacles, that you use to frame and focus what you are looking at” (xi). The crucial slippage happens precisely in the spectacles metaphor. The implication here is that theory is a way of looking at, a clarifying

---

1. Auslander and Hitchcock echo this question, as well as the answer.
vision from a particular point of view, an approach. By defining theory in this way, Deal and Beal reduce it to opinion, to a doxa. If theory is conceived as a “tool” (xi), then “theory for” is a tool box, a theory buffet from which one can pick and choose: “Whether one ultimately declares oneself a Kristeovan or Foucauldian or Lacanian—or, for that matter, a Marxist or Freudian or Nietzschean or Saussurean—it is important to attend to the questions these thinkers raise” (xiv). For Deal and Beal, to theorize means to follow one great theorist or another, rather than to engage the discursivity of the discipline one is pursuing.

The structure of Deal and Beal’s book comes from this approach. Their book consists simply of the list of authors/theorists who are then divided into two general sections: “Predecessors” containing only 4 names (Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, and Saussure), and “Theorists” with 25 names listed in chronological order. There is no explanation given of why these authors and not others. Further, the whole concept of the book seems to rest on the notion that theorists come before theory and not the other way around. Not only is Theory 4 based on a serious misconception about its own subject, but already in its title it misleads potential readers (and, of course, buyers). If Deal and Beal wanted to be true to the concept and content of their book, then the book (and the series) should have been titled “Theorists for.” But then they would have had to justify offering the same roster of theorists to disciplines as disparate as religious studies, performance studies, education, classics, and art history.

The choice of these core thinkers and not some others gathered in the model book seems random, just as the choice of disciplines represented in the series is random. Same goes for the choice of authors: Deal and Beal are senior scholars in their field, Auslander is one of the leading scholars in performance studies, and Hitchcock and Dimitriadis are well-established and respected scholars in their disciplines. Kamberelis already coauthored one book with Dimitriadis, and Theory for Art History is Emerling’s first book. Judging by the acknowledgements, it is safe to assume that the authors were commissioned by William Germano. It remains utterly unclear what instructions Germano gave them. Deal and Beal repeatedly state that they saw their book as a “model and template for the others in order to maintain consistency within the series,” but it remains totally uncertain if this idea was presented to the authors of the books included in the series, or how. Judging by the contents of the books, the authors seem to have been left on their own to come to terms with the botched concept of the series.

In their book, Deal and Beal are consistent: they want to provide tools for “discerning, deciphering, and making sense” (xi). Their purpose is pragmatic, and their style in tune with the reading level of undergraduates (at least as they perceive it). In Theory for Art History, Emerling seems to raise the level of complexity in the sections of the book he authored, making it more appropriate for graduate students. Hitchcock and Auslander seem to think of Theory 4 as an inventory of authors that for the most part don’t properly belong to their fields of study. Finally, Dimitriadis and Kamberelis in Theory for Education make significant changes in the structure of the “model” in order to bring it closer to their field of study. In the Predecessors section, they replaced Nietzsche with John Dewey. In the Theorists section, they excised Althusser, Bataille, Baudrillard, Benjamin, Cixous, Gadamer, Irigaray, Kristeva, Lefebvre, Levinas, Lyotard, Merleau-Ponty, White, and Žižek to make room for Basil Bernstein, Jerome Bruner, Paulo Freire, Clifford Geertz, Antonio Gramsci, Stuart Hall, bell hooks, Jean Piaget, and Lev 2.


3. They also say: “We assumed that the essential structure and concept of our book would be the model for the others, and that there would be some content overlap (e.g., in biographical information, representation of key concepts, etc.).”
Vygotsky. This makes their book almost as much a theory of as it is a theory for education. In Theory for Art History, Emerling also changed the roster of theorists (out: Bakhtin, Cixous, Gadamer, Lefebvre, White, Williams, and Žižek; in: Adorno, Agamben, Badiou, Heidegger) and added—to his credit—an original afterword, which provides a less generic argument to the whole book. In keeping with this theoretical and disciplinary specificity, Emerling almost completely rewrote some chapters (Freud and Nietzsche, for example), while in others (Marx, for example) he reproduced a significant portion of Deal and Beal’s text and then added a section that explains the significance of that theorist for art history. That was also the general approach in Theory for Classics.

In comparison with the other authors of Theory 4 books, Auslander’s “adaptation” of the core text comes across as the most mechanical and disengaged. His list of predecessors and theorists is identical to that found in Deal and Beal. Unlike Hitchcock, Auslander does not use any books from the series other than Theory for Religious Studies. He makes minimal revisions such as removing references to religious studies as well as final paragraphs of the “model,” replacing them with his own discussion of the significance of some particular theorists to performance studies and theatre studies. In the introduction, Auslander states that Theory for Performance Studies “does not survey exclusively those theorists assumed to be central for performance studies” but instead “seeks to discuss the various relationships a list of twenty-nine canonical modern and postmodern thinkers have to performance studies” (2007:1). It remains uncertain whether this disclaimer is a rationalization for what he did (or failed to do) or an echo of the charge received from Germano. In any case, the result is an exercise that does not merit being assigned in any performance studies class.

The reason for this is that, as the result of close reproduction of Deal and Beal’s text, Auslander’s book contains omissions that are impermissible in a book that purports to introduce students to the key concepts of the field. This becomes alarmingly obvious in chapters on theorists who are actually central to performance and theatre studies. For example, in discussion of Nietzsche’s The Birth of Tragedy Deal and Beal simplify his view of tragic poetry and reduce it to a cliché about the Apollonian-Dionysian duality: “The Apollonian is order; the Dionysian is the chaotic, life force” (2004:16). In Theory for Art History, Emerling adds a necessary correction: “Nietzsche explains that pre-Socratic Attic tragedy was, in fact, equally Apollonian and Dionysian” (2006:27). This important revision carries over to Hitchcock’s book on classics but is absent in Theory for Performance Studies. Ironically, students would get more accurate information on Nietzsche’s concept of tragedy from books on art history and classics than from the book intended for performance and theatre studies. There is an even more striking omission in the entry on Derrida. In their survey of his key concepts, Deal and Beal inexplicably omit that of différance. Auslander repeats their omission, and then in the conclusion of the chapter brings up this concept without ever properly introducing it. Here Auslander discusses his own article “Just Be Yourself: Logocentrism and Différance in Performance Theory” ([1986] 1997), a rigorous investigation of Derrida’s idea in relation to performance studies. So it’s not that Auslander doesn’t know, but that he doesn’t care.

In her statement read at the Town Hall meeting, Tália Rodgers acknowledged that the book Theory for Performance Studies and the series within which it was published are isolated incidents. Actually, the Theory 4 incident entails a whole series of mistakes, ranging from lack of editorial clarity and guidance, to the publisher’s appetite for profits, to the authors’ confusion and inertia, to serious omissions in paying the scholarly credit where it is due. This incredible host of blunders stems from a serious flaw in the core concept of the series evidenced in the preposition “for.” In the final analysis, we should not be asking just why theory and not theorists, but even more importantly why theory “for” and not theory “of”?

The preposition “for” saddles theory with the burden of purpose. It brings to mind the titles of textbooks in the sciences: calculus for physics and calculus for economic models, or statistics for business administration and statistics for biology. This impulse for competition with and
impersonation of sciences comes from some of the canonical disciplines in the humanities. We need only think of new “sciences” that emerged in the era of high modernism, such as psycho-analysis and linguistics; or even of artists who styled themselves as engineers. It is precisely for this reason that Foucault in “What Is an Author?” strives to make a distinction between sciences and what he calls “discursive practices” (1977:133). According to Foucault, in sciences, “the founding act,” that is to say theoretical claim, “can always be rechanneled through the machinery of transformations it has instituted” (133). Conversely, “The initiation of a discursive practice […] overshadows and is necessarily detached from its later developments and transformations” (134). Therefore, sciences (such as mathematics or physics) and discursive practices (such as psychoanalysis) differ most significantly in their modes of application. The former establishes its truth claims through correspondence, and the latter through uncovering. In the first one, the application pertains to measurement and testing, and in the second to questioning and insight (\textit{theoria}). “Theory 4” is asking young Kristevans, Foucauldians, and Lacanians—not to mention Marxists and Freudians—to engage in “application” in the first sense. Used in discursive practices, this kind of “application” loses the characteristics of its proper verb form and becomes more like a noun: an embellishment or ornament applied to the wiry structure of empirical data. This approach seeks no contradictions, but rather explanations. Instead of inquiry it promotes passivity, which is so apparent in the very concept of the Theory 4 series: a book template and its multiple variations.

There are many possible approaches to a comparative reading of the Theory 4 books. It might be amusing to find out, for example, which theorist required the most revisions (Freud), and which one the least (Marx); further, we can look at theorists that were most often omitted and the ones that were included in all five books, or investigate the ironies implied in the repetitious discussions of Benjamin’s “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproducibility.” However, none of this tells us anything about the current status in the humanities of any of the theorists discussed in Theory 4. Even if we put aside the question of plagiarism, I wonder how Routledge’s editors assumed that readers would not question the astonishing absence of disagreement among Theory 4 authors. Where does this blindness come from?

Profit is only part of the answer. The other part is the intellectual climate shaped by the new media, most significantly the internet. The very concept of “template and variations” often makes Theory 4 authors engage with each other in revisions that contribute very little to their work. For example, in their chapter on Nietzsche,Deal and Beal mistakenly speak of the appropriation the philosopher’s ideas by “influential Nazis, including Hitler and Mussolini” (2004:16). Emerling corrects the mistake of absorbing Mussolini into the Nazi party by employing a more generic word: “influential fascists, including Hitler and Mussolini” (2005:26). Hitchcock retains this wording, while Auslander resolves the issue with a single comma: “influential Nazis, including Hitler, and Mussolini” (2007:21). All of this quasi-editorial parsing resembles the perpetual editing that takes place on Wikipedia. However, there are significant differences between Theory 4 and the popular online encyclopedia: While Wikipedia treats its subjects in a more general way, Theory 4 strives—not always successfully—towards disciplinary specificity. More importantly, whereas Routledge exploits ambiguous contracts and gray zones in copyright laws, Wikipedia strictly adheres to the laws regulating intellectual property.

The problem of Theory 4 goes beyond Routledge trying to sell something that is available on the internet free of charge. The “Wikipediazation” that Schechner points to in his comments concerns not only Wikipedia itself, but also the entire culture that surrounds and nourishes it. Most important is its absence of an authorial voice. We need only compare Theory for Performance Studies with Auslander’s excellently updated (2008) second edition of Liveness. As Jaron Lanier wrote in his article “Digital Maoism: The Hazards of the New Online Collectivism,” even when it comes to the articles on scientific subjects, cloning text from its original site into Wikipedia takes away part of its value. “Accuracy in the text is not enough,” writes Lanier: “a desirable text is more than a collection of accurate references. It is also an expression of person-
ality” (2006). In Wikipedia, the authority of anonymous discourse comes as a trade off for a renunciation of personal voice. Even though the books in Theory 4 have the names of the authors impressed on the cover page, the text itself is either anonymous or a monstrous hybrid of personal and impersonal voices. Here the core concept of the series, the magical “for,” does the work that algorithm does for Google. The question remains: Why would authors who work hard to perfect their personal style of thinking and writing all of a sudden decide to renounce it? The problem is more ideological than commercial. The culture of Wikipedia is a symptom of a new kind of collectivism, or what Lanier calls a “Hive Mind.” Here, the collective is regarded as wise to the point of infallibility. Unlike totalitarian collectivities of the past, our new collective is mediated by emerging technologies. These technologies offer an illusion of equality and diversity, mistaking populism for democracy. What is truly disturbing about Theory 4 is the same averaging of opinions that we find in Wikipedia and American Idol. What could be more opposed to the spirit of rigorous theoretical inquiry than this kind of crushing mediocrity?

References

Auslander, Philip


Bartlett, Thomas

Deal, William E., and Timothy K. Beal

Dimitriadis, Greg, and George Kamberelis

Emerling, Jae

Foucault, Michel

Hitchcock, Louise A.

Lanier, Jared

Mentoring Junior Colleagues through the Publishing Thicket

Jill Dolan

Professor of English and of Theatre and Dance, Princeton University

I appreciate the invitation to respond to Richard’s essay on the Routledge Theory for Performance Studies controversy. Reading the original article from The Chronicle of Higher Education, which circulated online through various academic email networks last summer (2008), I felt a foreboding frisson of the future, a harbinger of how publishing is changing in ways that will make it more and more difficult for especially new, junior scholars without proven track records to bring out the original scholarship necessary for tenure.
Routledge’s effort to make a quick buck with the Theory 4 series isn’t that surprising, coming from a for-profit press that is responsible to a complex corporate culture that requires ever-increasing receipts at any cost. But it’s disappointing that a scholar as smart and perceptive as Phil Auslander and an editor as savvy and innovative as Talia Rodgers would let themselves be tainted by such shoddy business practices. I regret that Auslander won’t engage directly with the debates around this affair. Insisting that putting his own name on someone else’s work wasn’t plagiarism is an inadequate, defensive response that doesn’t illuminate what might have been his more thoughtful process of signing on to the project. If Phil won’t talk about it, we can’t know what he was thinking by participating in such a scam.

I was glad to receive notice last summer that a town hall discussion of the controversy would be staged at the PSI conference in Copenhagen. I looked forward to hearing smart readings of the debacle from intellectually acute colleagues. But at the surprisingly listless event, many of those present shut down discussion by insisting it wasn’t ethical to talk about the book or the series without Phil or Talia present (even though a Routledge staff person sat in the front row listening throughout).

This issue isn’t personal to Phil or Talia. The incident matters for performance studies because it exemplifies the long reach of corporate business practices into a field that’s historically prided itself on its radicality and politically progressive bent. I’m sobered by what this means for scholars who aren’t as noted and powerful as Auslander. If a press like Routledge can plump up its bottom line by recycling scholarship, why should they be interested in investing the time and resources required to bring out a book by an unknown scholar? I know that publishers protest that one enables the other, that making money on resource-light books underwrites new scholarship that takes more time to evaluate, hone, and produce. But as the balance swings farther toward projects like Theory 4, which are so blatantly established to rake in bucks, I’m not persuaded that a large number of junior scholars will be able to publish the original work required for tenure. More and more, scholars will be required to frame our ideas from within the imperatives of a market that first and foremost requires ideas to “sell.”

We all should be keenly aware of how a press’s business decisions affect their editorial policies and, as a result, intimately affect what we’re able to publish, the books from which we teach, and thus the configuration of our field. I’m not being Pollyanna-ish about business imperatives; all evaluations about prospective manuscripts for any press include questions about a book’s potential market and readership. University presses couldn’t survive without such considerations. The age of writing esoteric monographs for a handful of colleagues passed long ago. I don’t regret the passing of such rarefied, insular scholarship; in fact, I’m interested in solid academic projects that speak to large audiences, which makes a trade press like Routledge vital to increasing attention to performance studies.

In the graduate program in Performance as Public Practice I headed until recently at the University of Texas at Austin, my colleagues and I regularly admonished our students to be aware of publishing trends that bear on their ability to circulate their work to larger audiences. We also encouraged them to aspire to publish books that will bolster their tenure cases as assistant professors, should they choose to take the academic route through their careers. We steered them away from selecting trendy dissertation topics based on their potential to sell. But at the same time, we told them stories of how theatre and performance studies series editors themselves decry how their own choices are manacled to their marketing directors’ opinions about which titles have the best potential for reader appeal. How can we help our students and our junior colleagues in performance studies navigate their research topics without encouraging them to compromise their interests, their ideas, or their commitments?

One way, it seems to me, is by being responsible, as a field, for charting trends in publishing and analyzing the ideological implications of debacles like this one. To help junior scholars understand the context in which they work, and for all of us to be able to consider our scholarship within the growing complexities of increasingly corporate publishing, I wish that Phil and
Talia would speak openly about what happened in this Theory 4 fiasco. I wish that Routledge would regularly participate in conference panels on the state of publishing in the field. For only one example, LeAnn Fields, the theatre and performance studies editor at University of Michigan Press, regularly sits on panels at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education and the Association for Theatre Research’s annual conferences. She offers helpful, demystifying insights into publishing for junior faculty and grad students just learning their way through the professional thicket of circulating their work to a wider audience.

Such a crucial gesture would be ameliorative for both Talia and Phil to extend. Making their decisions—their mistakes and their achievements—transparent and engaging our community in an honest public dialogue would help restore our faith and our respect, and would further our understanding of how publishing works.

“Facts,” Responsibilities, and Action(s)

*Phillip Zarrilli*

*Professor of Performance Practice,*
*Exeter University*

From my dual perspectives on both sides of the Atlantic, in this brief commentary I want to address a few of the issues raised by the publication *Theory for Performance Studies* by Philip Auslander. My comments are a response to “the facts,” to Richard Schechner’s commentary, and to Talia Rodgers’s call in this issue of *TDR* for a “full and honest debate about the relationship between scholarship, academic publishing, higher education and intellectual integrity.”

Having briefly examined both Auslander’s book and the Deal/Beal book on which it is based, I agree with Schechner’s detailed argument that *Theory for Performance Studies* has been “ethically” (if not legally) plagiarized. The fact is that the structure of the book and the vast majority (80–90 percent?) of its words are the same as Deal/Beal.

Where does responsibility lie for what has happened, i.e., the publication of *Theory for Performance Studies* as a sole-authored book “by Philip Auslander”? From my perspective, first responsibility lies with the author. Auslander decided how to interpret the task contractually agreed with Routledge. I assume he read the other books in the Theory 4 series published prior to his. Auslander submitted a manuscript in which a high percentage of the manuscript is exactly the same as Deal and Beal, changed their “we” to “I,” and did not credit Deal and Beal. Auslander must have sent Routledge a manuscript that read “*Theory for Performance Studies* by Philip Auslander.” What if Auslander had chosen to represent authorship of the volume in a way that more clearly reflected the relationship between his book and *Theory for Religious Studies*?

*Theory for Performance Studies*

Original text and format by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal
Edited and with additional commentary by Philip Auslander

Given the editorial history of the Theory 4 series and Auslander’s book within it, I accept at face value that Talia Rodgers must have been unaware that the manuscript Auslander delivered was in large part a repetition of the Deal/Beal book. If I were in Rodgers’s position—having inherited a title from a New York editor, not having commissioned either the series or this specific title, and having previously published Auslander’s sole-authored books—I would have assumed the manuscript delivered, following the standard series format and under his own authorship, was written by Auslander, or that it would include appropriate acknowledgement of the source.

Although the assumptions outlined in the above paragraph are reasonable, Rodgers and the editorial staff at Routledge nevertheless share responsibility for not ensuring that Auslander’s book, like the others in the series, appropriately credited Deal and Beal. Routledge also bears responsibility for any/all marketing of *Theory for Performance Studies*—the marketing issued
before the problem of authorship/appropriate crediting of Deal/Beal was recognized, as well as any marketing issued after the problem was identified.

What responses and actions have thus far been made? Are the actions taken appropriate or not?

From my perspective, first responsibility for addressing what has transpired lies with Philip Auslander as the author. Schechner states that Auslander emailed him that “he did not feel the book was plagiarized.” Were there extenuating circumstances for Auslander, or was there a major error of personal judgment? Perhaps Auslander could respond to the situation by stating clearly what transpired from his perspective, and/or by taking action. Auslander could request that the relationship between his book and Deal/Beal be more clearly represented, as noted above, by placing an insert on the cover page, or even request that Routledge withdraw the book.

Once Rodgers discovered there was a major problem with Theory for Performance Studies, she publicly acknowledged her error and those of her staff. Humanities Editorial Director Claire L’Enfant acknowledges in her statement printed in this issue the fact that “human error” meant the book’s contents were not appropriately credited to Deal/Beal. Routledge has “apologised unreservedly,” and ensured that Deal and Beal are being “paid in full” for both their own book and “series royalties.”

Are these actions sufficient? From my dual perspectives, in some ways “yes,” and in other ways “no.” Within the UK, the actions taken by Routledge would generally be considered an appropriate attempt to correct the situation by (1) admitting to and amending the human errors made, (2) ensuring that both acknowledgement and payment are given to Deal/Beal as per their contractual obligations, and (3) issuing a public apology. I would point out that within the UK, issuing a public apology is considered a major and not a minor act. This formal apology should not be taken lightly. It is highly significant.

While all of the above were important and appropriate responses to the situation, there are two ways in which Routledge’s response, especially when considered from a US perspective in which “action” is more important than apologies, has been inadequate. The first inadequacy is L’Enfant’s rejection of the “claim of plagiarism on the basis of what we consider to be the unequivocal wording in the contract they signed with us.” This is a technicality. If 80 to 90 percent of Auslander’s book are Deal/Beal’s exact words and format, then Schechner is correct that the book is “ethically” plagiarized. Whatever the legal situation, for the publisher not to acknowledge that Auslander’s book repeats verbatim 80 to 90 percent of Deal/Beal is unacceptable. Short of withdrawing the book, an appropriate action would be to provide a much clearer statement of authorship—such as that suggested above—on the cover page of every copy.

A related point is how Routledge is marketing the book, especially in this period after discovery of the problem. On its website and in its current catalogue Routledge represents Theory for Performance Studies as “Adapted from Theory for Religious Studies by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal.” As Schechner argues, this is not an adaptation. Despite the “adapted from” addition, Routledge continues to ascribe sole authorship to Auslander in statements like the following on its website:

Theory for Performance Studies [...] is a clear and concise handbook to the key connections between performance studies and critical theory since the 1960s [...] Beginning with four foundational figures—Freud, Marx, Nietzsche and Saussure—Auslander goes on to provide guided introductions to the major theoretical thinkers of the past century, from Althusser to Žižek.
Substituting “the authors” for “Auslander” would more fairly represent who wrote these introductions.

I also want to briefly speak to the larger context within which a series like Theory 4 was commissioned. The commercial publishing industry in both the UK and US are intimately tied up with the structure and demands of the educational industries whose needs it serves. Commercial UK publishers such as Routledge and Palgrave/Macmillan publish specialist journals; scholarly monographs; series of titles within areas of study such as Routledge’s Critical Concepts series, Routledge’s Worlds of Performance Series (edited by Schechner), Routledge’s recent Performance Practitioners Series (edited by Franc Chamberlain); and student readers.

The publication of student readers and some series such as Performance Practitioners are a response to the demand for certain types of books by teachers at A-Level in the UK and/or in the Higher Education drama/theatre sector wherever English-language texts are used. Teachers within both sectors are often responding to institutional changes brought about within a single state system where those teaching must respond to structural changes and/or mandates often handed down from above without any real consultation.

A-Level examinations follow a relatively set curriculum; in drama, for example, this means covering Stanislavsky and Brecht at a level that A-Level students (advanced high school students) can understand. Some student readers and book series are being written specifically for A-Level students, and/or for first year university drama students. This often leads to essays by key figures that are so drastically edited that they are little more than dictionary-type sound bites.

The production of these types of books is also being driven by the huge increase in numbers of students in higher education. In the UK, as recently as 15 years ago, subject areas like drama had an intake of between 12 and 20 students a year. Education was intimate—taking place in small groups and/or one to one tutorials. When I arrived in Exeter in 2000, our annual intake was 60, still manageable. In the past few years the management of the university mandated that we double our BA intake from 60 to 120. We now have 360 BA students. We had no choice. Staff/student ratios have exploded. Large lecture survey courses were necessarily introduced to accommodate the numbers and have placed new demands on the kinds of texts lecturers can effectively use.

Unlike the US market where most undergraduates are taught from one or a few textbooks, most BA drama modules in the UK use multiple shorter texts and/or supplemental photocopied readings. This kind of teaching invites a proliferation of texts such as the Theory 4 series.

We all need to pay attention to the larger issues at work between the publishing and education industries, and to understand what impact this is having on the types and quality of books being published, and on the future of scholarship. This is especially important within the UK where it is increasingly difficult for young scholars—who are being pressured to conduct large-scale research projects and to publish sooner rather than later—to find the time to spend writing serious, in-depth scholarly monographs.

Having worked with Talia Rodgers and Routledge on four major books—an edited collection of essays in Schechner’s World Performance series; a coauthored textbook; and two sole-authored books—I would say with great confidence that what transpired with Theory for Performance Studies is an unfortunate and isolated incident.

Finally, there is one very positive and simple action open to all of us in the fields of theatre and performance studies (and the humanities in general): we can use the publication and distribution of Theory for Performance Studies as a case study for further discussion of plagiarism.
As author-publisher relations are explored in detail, the effect of packaging on writers since the nineteenth century will be better understood. (Stoddard 1987:9–10)

Over the summer, a controversy arose regarding Philip Auslander's textbook *Theory for Performance Studies*, published by Routledge, a division of Taylor & Francis, which replicates much of the text in *Theory for Religious Studies*, by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal, published in 2004. Although the books are different objects—different author, trim size, cover, and type design—the brief essays in *Performance Studies* on Marx, Butler, Spivak, and so on, usually have several paragraphs largely identical with paragraphs in the same essay in the earlier book (both books treat the same theorists), a paragraph or two that blends in new phrases with standing material, and—especially toward the end where a theorist’s impact on performance studies is assessed—two or three entirely new paragraphs.

Now, in the era of digital reproducibility, in which file-sharing and viral video seem to mark the incipient extinction of those leather-backed dinosaurs, books, the Routledge controversy—and a rather different tempest involving the termination of Patricia Parker’s edition of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* for the Arden Shakespeare series, a division of Cengage—appears to signal the ongoing volatility of “author” and “work,” and so to dramatize the asymmetry between technological and cultural change. Indeed, the events confirm Roger Stoddard’s familiar dictum: “Whatever they may do, authors do not write books. Books are not written at all. They are manufactured by scribes and other artisans, by mechanics and other engineers, and by printing presses and other machines” (1987:4). Texts become books through the collaborative intervention of the many agents and agencies of the publishing process. *Caveat auctor.*

The Arden series is an important contribution to contemporary Shakespeare scholarship, providing up-to-date meticulously edited texts of each play, along with an extensive apparatus and commentary; presumably this scholarship is enabled by the durable sales of the Ardens as textbooks. The Routledge Theory 4 is narrowly gauged as a textbook series and enacts more clearly the distinct notions of “author,” “work,” and—to use the idiom—“content” animating textbook as opposed to scholarly publishing. It’s commonplace in textbook publishing to assign ownership of the “work” to the publisher, with the explicit understanding that an author/editor unwilling or unable to produce a new or revised edition when required may be replaced; since the author’s name is part of the “brand,” s/he may even receive reduced royalties for an edition or two. I’ve published a drama anthology, and have a contract along these lines (full disclosure: my original publisher, the college division of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, has been sold at least twice, and the current publisher Wadsworth is, like Arden, a division of Cengage). So, if “my” book persists on the market long enough, “my” words—those that remain—could eventually appear under a joint byline, or under someone else’s name altogether. Just to be clear, this is not plagiarism, precisely because the use of “my” language to replace me as “author” is, well, authorized, if not quite publicized. As Foucault might have put it, in many precincts of contemporary publishing—textbooks, travel guides, dictionaries, and apparently Theory 4—the author function contractually and conceptually supersedes the author.

It’s tempting to see this paradigm of the “work” to exemplify the commercially driven migration of a digital model of “information” from the culture of the screen to the culture of the

---

1. See Reinstate Pat Parker (2008), and Howard (2008); it might be noted that a more fine-grained discussion of this troubling case has, apparently, since taken place between Parker, Cengage, and the Arden editors.
book. In digital communications, “information” has been theorized statistically, as a principle of potentially significant variation in a signal or pattern: if stasis (no variation) and chaos (all variation) are the extremes, then change-within-pattern would provide the means for a signal to convey “information.” As N. Katherine Hayles (1999) argues, this notion severs “information” both from its material conveyance and from more familiar notions of meaning. The stream of digital impulses realized as a pixelated visual image on your computer screen (a text, a photograph) can be directed to different platforms, and so can be realized in a wide range of materializations: encoded on a disc, printed in a book, broadcast on YouTube. In the information-theory sense, each platform stages the same “information,” but from both a materialist and a more broadly cultural perspective, each site of performance seems to shape it in distinctive ways, performing different “information” (see Worthen 200).

The Ardens are typically authorized not by Shakespeare but by the editor—the Jenkins *Hamlet* (1982), the Ridley *Antony* (1954)—or the publishing house, *The Arden Shakespeare*. There’s well-earned marketing magic in the web of it: the *Cengage Shakespeare* just won’t do. As Stoddard notes, some “books are social institutions” (1987:12), and as an institution the Arden platform is so distinctive, so unlike the conception and format of other series, that Parker’s “information” is not readily downloadable to another paper-and-binding Shakespeare edition, repackaged as an Oxford, Cambridge, Pelican, what you will, even if it were legal or desirable to do so. If the Parker *Dream* perhaps images the tragedy of work lost for lack of its proper stage (as of January, the question may be moot, as Cengage has sold Arden to a new publisher), the Routledge volumes enact something approaching comedy of the absurd, perfecting the “work” as commodity fetish, something, nothing, slave to thousands. Yet, the mobility (and mutability) of “information” between platforms is hardly new. For centuries, material from manuscript and printed books was casually reused without attribution. Yeats’s poems, James’s novels, Beckett’s plays all exist in different, variously “authorized” print forms. Copyright legislation hardly protected Dickens from seeing his work picked up by a rival medium like the theatre, Tate’s *King Lear* held the stage as Shakespeare’s play for a century or more, Olivier’s film *Hamlet* eliminated half the play and several characters, and Almereyda’s begins with lines that Shakespeare’s prince speaks halfway through the script. The notion that print guarantees the rights of authorship (and assigns them to the author!) or stabilizes the identity of the work is a consensual, highly regulated fiction, one unevenly conceptualized even across the field of print culture.

In a sense, the transformative possibilities of digital data have not so much compromised intellectual property as dramatized its contingency, its dependence on the cultural structures for identifying property, and identifying it with specific properties of value. The Routledge controversy evokes the distance between scholarly and corporate notions of inquiry, writing, and publishing, and suggests how the temporalities of technological change cannot be conceived adequately along bilateral lines, even across a single institution like book publishing. It particularly witnesses the power of the platform to define the “information” it embodies, even when that definition abrades widely held notions of “author,” “work,” and the propriety of written discourse. The *Theory* 4 series instantiates a kind of type-O, universal-donor model of “content” for teaching purposes; more cynically, *Theory* 4 exploits the rhetoric of the book to legitimate and differentiate the same “information” when it appears on different platforms for different markets (whoops, *disciplines*). Different platforms render similar information in different forms (T-shirt/book; religious studies/performance studies); materialized as a book, though, the “information” is marked and revalued by the agency of its performance: new title, new cover, new author, new work. In both cases, what we’re seeing is less the fracture between old-school and new-wave, print and digital cultures, than the surfacing of tensions that have informed print culture for centuries. Animating our commitments to scholarship and pedagogy,

2. “Who steals my purse steals trash; ’tis something, nothing: / ’Twas mine, ’tis his, and has been slave to thousands” (*Othello* 3.3.162–63).
these controversies also witness a broader cultural friction arising from the ways new technologies not only repurpose older ones, but also complicate the commonsense understandings—ideology doing its deepest and most consequential work—of what technology is, and is for, across the horizon of contemporary culture.

In memory of Stephen Jordan, friend and editor.

References
Auslander, Philip
Deal, William E., and Timothy K. Beal
Hayles, N. Katherine
Howard, Jennifer
Jenkins, Harold, ed.
Reinstate Pat Parker
Ridley, M.R., ed.
Shakespeare, William
Stoddard, Roger
Worthen, W.B.

Brain Cramps

Joseph Roach
Sterling Professor of Theater and English, Yale University

I want to keep in mind how much Bill Germano and Talia Rodgers have contributed to academic publishing by standing up for books in edgy fields like performance studies. They committed Routledge to a number of worthy projects that other presses wouldn’t touch (authors and readers, mostly tenured now—you know who you are). I want to keep in mind the exceptional originality of Phil Auslander’s thinking and the value of his previous work to the field. But I also want to acknowledge that even the most talented and well-intentioned colleagues may experience an apparently inexplicable brain cramp once in a while, sometimes without warning symptoms beforehand. The corporate context of this Grand Mal episode does shed some light on its causes: reducing per-unit costs by creating economies of scale is generally considered a good thing to do; but doing it by putting a different title page on the same book and re-selling it as another book, which seems to have been the Theory 4 series business plan, is clearly not.
What were they thinking? Citing a contract with the original authors doesn’t help me to understand this debacle either, though maybe a lawyer could set me right, because I always thought that no parties can make a valid contract that’s against the law. Mightn’t the reasonable person construe the marketing of identical or nearly identical books under original copyrights as consumer fraud? Not that it’s impossible to imagine how smart editors, neck-deep in manuscripts stacked on and around their desks, might be tempted by the thought that academic specialists in a given field are all just trying to write the same damn book anyway; but resisting such temptations is what makes them smart editors, or former editors. Nor is it impossible to imagine how (as an author whose core idea concerns the priority of the copy over the original in postmodern culture) you might convince yourself one day that the same-old same-old might just as well—oh, to hell with it—be more of the same; but having the judgment not to act on such spasmodic convictions is why the colleagues who wrote for your tenure and promotion could say proudly that your work added up to a lot more than the same-old same-old.

What to do? When you have injured someone, the remedy is to acknowledge it by making an apology and as much restitution as you can. This misbegotten book, *Theory for Performance Studies*, and probably the others in the Theory 4 series, except the first one by William E. Deal and Timothy K. Beal, ought to be recalled (and the costs refunded), with any residual royalties turned over to the authors of the ur-text. The injury to the field—including the unquantifiable damage to the junior colleagues trying to make their way in a relatively new discipline and to those at all levels who are struggling to win a foothold for this discipline against the grain of resistant institutional cultures—can best be acknowledged and remedied by resignation.

**An Open Letter to Phil Auslander**

**Peggy Phelan**

*Ann O’Day Maples Chair in the Arts, Professor of Drama and English, Stanford University*

Dear Phil,

This is an ugly story, disquieting and depressing on both personal and professional levels. “What was he thinking?” has been running around in my head for weeks. It is tempting to denounce you and Routledge, but perhaps that is also too easy. I cannot pretend to know everything that transpired. Therefore, I am asking you to explain what you meant to do and what your thoughts are now that the story has broken in the messy way it has. The only thing I am sure of at this point is that there is plenty of blame to go around.

My overwhelming feeling about the whole thing is bafflement. Without a fuller explanation from you about what you were thinking when you decided to do as you did, I find it impossible to lay the issue to rest in my own mind. I do know that many of my students, and friends and colleagues outside the field, who read the article in *The Chronicle*, are, like me, deeply dismayed about what appears to be serious professional misconduct, if not fraud.

All who are accused of professional misdeeds of this sort have a right, and I would say an obligation, to explain their side of the story. Routledge, no matter how unsatisfying some may find it, has offered a public admission of error and an apology. Apparently, they have also belatedly paid Deal and Beal royalties they had neglected to pay. This is another serious issue, but here I just want to talk with you about your role in this mess.

I am asking you to offer a fuller comment than you managed in your defensive remark to Thomas Bartlett when he asked you about it for his article in *The Chronicle*: “I don’t consider this to be my fault,” you maintained, “It was never presented to me as something I would need to think about” [*The Chronicle of Higher Education* 54, 49 (15 August):A6].
I have played the gotcha-game with journalists myself so I imagine something threw you off course when you said this. I am sure you did not mean that you thought writing the book was something that required no thought. But did you mean it did not occur to you that there was something wrong with the idea of taking so much of another book and calling it your own? That strains my belief.

You are a thoughtful scholar; indeed, your work is marked by its probing, restless dissatisfaction with surface meanings. So even if there is a legal justification for your actions, as your comment to Bartlett implies, that does not take us very far. What were you thinking when you omitted any acknowledgment of Deal and Beal’s book? Did you assume that was Routledge’s duty?

In your introduction, you reprinted Deal and Beal’s comment saying the book was for students. Please let me know what you were thinking about your students when you reprinted so much material from Deal and Beal’s book and copyrighted it as your own work. How do you discuss this approach to publication in your seminars? Do you use it to illustrate the perilous economy of academic publishing in an effort to warn your students about a future in the profession? Do you offer your largely borrowed volume as a way of talking about “pedagogical needs” in today’s classroom? How do you reconcile your book with your professed concern to assist your students in their own scholarly development?

I wonder what you were thinking when you came to believe that a book conceived explicitly for religious studies could also serve as a book on theory for performance studies. It is hard for me to believe that you think these fields share the same intellectual foundations or seek to answer the same questions. I am dumbfounded to see that you did not think it necessary to alter a single name on Deal and Beal’s list of relevant theorists. In your introduction you state that the book is not about performance studies, so why did you choose to publish it under a title that suggests it is indeed a book “for” performance studies?

You are widely regarded as a senior theorist in performance studies and you have published well-respected, influential books in the field. It seems unlikely that you needed to add a quick book to your c.v. Are you under some pressure from Georgia Tech or the University of Georgia to produce books rapidly? If so, please explain what those pressures are and if and how they influenced your actions here. If senior scholars like yourself are driven to choose quantity over quality of publication, then we have a bigger problem than your particular case suggests. Did you undertake the book only for money? I hope your salary is sufficient to make publishing a choice rather than a necessity.

Finally, I hope you will explain why you are not leading the charge to get the book pulled from Routledge’s list. Only the author can make this kind of demand stick. Each copy purchased by a library or a scholar spreads the scandal. Pulling the book from Routledge/Informa’s catalog, returning any funds owed, and stopping its further translation and circulation, would all be reasonable, concrete ways you might begin to rectify the injury to your reputation your choices have caused.

I don’t believe Routledge’s almost surreal series of blunders here erases their long history of support for the field. But it does give one serious pause about their relationship to ethics and to the basic duties of editing. Obviously, full acknowledgements and royalties ought to be rendered without prodding. I don’t harbor any illusions that Informa will care about any of this mess without your strong insistence that they pull the book.

If you let your unfortunate remark in The Chronicle stand as your only public defense and justification, I believe you are making a mistake. I genuinely want to know what you were thinking and I respectfully ask you to explain your side of the story as forthrightly and as rapidly as possible.

Sincerely,

Peggy Phelan