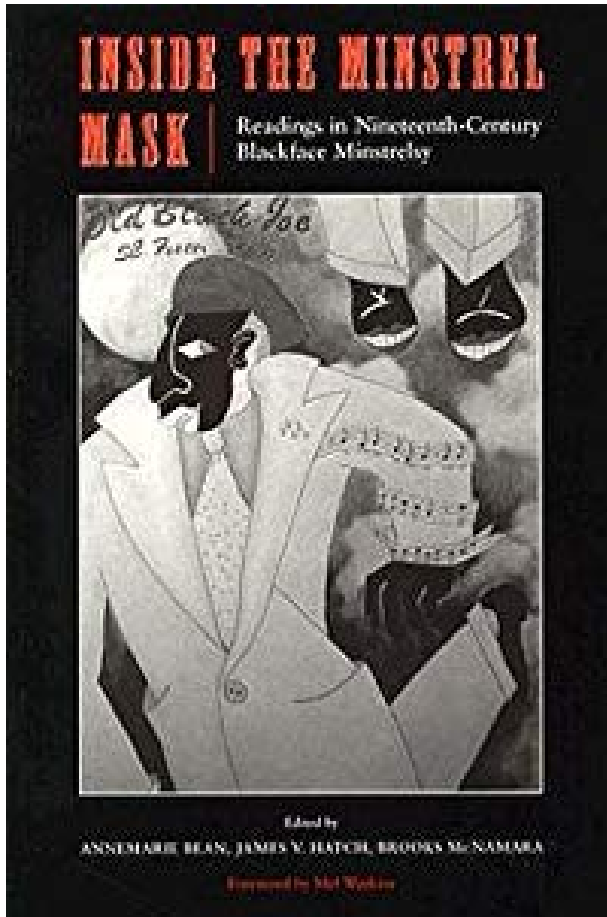


Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy



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As the blackface minstrel show evolved from its beginnings in the American Revolution to its peak during the late 1800s, its frenetic dances, low-brow humor, and lively music provided more than mere entertainment. Indeed, these imitations and parodies shaped society's perceptions of African Americans-and of women-as well as made their mark on national identity, policymaking decisions, and other entertainment forms such as vaudeville, burlesque, the revue, and, eventually, film, radio, and television.

Gathered here are rare primary materials-including firsthand accounts of minstrel shows, minstrelsy guides, jokes, sketches, and sheet music-and the best of contemporary scholarship on minstrelsy.