

The Laramie Project



The Laramie Project: A Deep Dive into Hate, Hope, and the Power of Storytelling

The murder of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998 shocked the nation and ignited a national conversation about hate crimes, homophobia, and the urgent need for tolerance. But the story didn't end there. Instead, Moisés Kaufman and the Tectonic Theater Project created The Laramie Project, a powerful and moving piece of documentary theater that explores the aftermath of this tragedy and its profound impact on a small town. This post will delve into the play's creation, its impact, its enduring relevance, and its lasting legacy in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. We'll examine its theatrical techniques, its critical reception, and its continued use as a tool for education and social change.

H2: The Genesis of The Laramie Project: From Tragedy to Theater

The Laramie Project isn't a traditional play with a singular author and a fixed narrative. Instead, it's a mosaic of verbatim testimony gathered from interviews conducted in Laramie, Wyoming, in the months following Shepard's murder. The Tectonic Theater Project spent significant time in Laramie, speaking with residents from diverse backgrounds – law enforcement, clergy, students, business owners, and individuals directly affected by the crime. These interviews were then transcribed and woven together to create a play that captures the multifaceted perspectives of a community grappling with a profound tragedy. This unique approach allows the audience to hear directly from the people of Laramie, experiencing their reactions, their prejudices, and their evolving understanding of the events.

H2: The Structure and Style of a Unique Play

The play's unconventional structure is a key element of its power. Rather than a traditional narrative arc, The Laramie Project unfolds in a series of vignettes, each focusing on a particular individual or event. This fragmented structure mirrors the fragmented nature of the community's response to the crime and the complexity of the issues at stake. The use of verbatim testimony – direct quotes from the interviews – ensures authenticity and allows the audience to form their own conclusions about the characters and the events. The play is not judgmental; it presents the diverse voices and allows the audience to engage in their own moral and ethical considerations.

H3: Exploring Themes of Hate and Prejudice

The Laramie Project doesn't shy away from confronting the ugly realities of homophobia and hate. The play exposes the pervasive nature of prejudice in Laramie and reveals the devastating consequences of unchecked intolerance. Through the testimonies of various individuals, the audience witnesses the insidious effects of hate speech, the normalization of homophobic attitudes, and the devastating impact of violence fueled by prejudice. However, the play also showcases acts of kindness, empathy, and resilience.

H3: Hope, Healing, and the Search for Understanding

While the play confronts the dark aspects of human nature, it also offers glimmers of hope and the potential for healing and reconciliation. The play showcases the individuals who actively sought to understand and combat hate, those who organized vigils and rallies, and those who worked to create a more inclusive community. These moments of compassion and activism provide a powerful counterpoint to the acts of violence and hatred. The exploration of these conflicting narratives is what makes The Laramie Project so compelling.

H2: The Enduring Legacy of The Laramie Project

Since its premiere in 2000, The Laramie Project has been performed worldwide, becoming a touchstone for discussions about hate crimes, LGBTQ+ rights, and the importance of empathy and understanding. The play's enduring relevance speaks to the ongoing struggle against prejudice and discrimination. It serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of actively combating hate speech and working towards a more inclusive and just society. Its use in educational settings, particularly in schools and universities, continues to foster crucial dialogues about tolerance and acceptance.

H2: Critical Reception and Impact

The play received significant critical acclaim upon its release, praised for its innovative structure, its powerful message, and its unflinching portrayal of a community grappling with a profound tragedy. It sparked numerous conversations and debates, prompting introspection about the role of prejudice in society and the importance of challenging hate. Its impact extends beyond theatrical circles, influencing public discourse and inspiring activism.

Conclusion

The Laramie Project is more than just a play; it's a powerful testament to the human capacity for both cruelty and compassion. It is a living document that continues to resonate deeply with audiences years after its creation. By presenting the diverse perspectives of a community grappling with a hate crime, the play challenges us to confront our own prejudices and to work towards a more just and equitable world. It stands as a powerful reminder of the importance of remembrance, empathy, and the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ rights and equality.

FAQs

1. Is The Laramie Project suitable for all ages? While the play deals with mature themes, it's often used in educational settings with careful guidance and discussion. Parental discretion is advised.
2. Where can I see The Laramie Project performed? Check local theater listings and university schedules, as the play is frequently performed.
3. How does the play differ from other documentary theater pieces? Its unique use of verbatim testimony, creating a mosaic of voices rather than a singular narrative, sets it apart.
4. What is the play's lasting impact on the fight for LGBTQ+ rights? It significantly raised awareness, prompting discussions and fostering activism around hate crimes and LGBTQ+ inclusion.
5. Are there any resources available to learn more about Matthew Shepard and the events surrounding his murder? Numerous books, documentaries, and websites provide extensive information about Matthew Shepard and his legacy. The Matthew Shepard Foundation is a valuable resource.

the laramie project: The Laramie Project , 2012 THE STORY: On November 6, 1998, gay University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard left the Fireside Bar with Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson. The following day he was discovered on a prairie at the edge of town, tied to a fence, brutally beaten, and close to death. Six days later Matthew Shepard died at Poudre Valley Hospital in Ft. Collins, Colorado. On November 14th, 1998, ten members of Tectonic Theatre Project

traveled to Laramie, Wyoming and conducted interviews with the people of the town. Over the next year, the company returned to Laramie six times and conducted over 200 interviews. These texts became the basis for the play *The Laramie Project*. Ten years later on September 12th, 2008, five members of Tectonic returned to Laramie to try to understand the long-term effect of the murder. They found a town wrestling with its legacy and its place in history. In addition to revisiting the folks whose words riveted us in the original play, this time around, the company also spoke with the two murderers, McKinney and Henderson, as well as Matthew's mother, Judy Shepard. *THE LARAMIE PROJECT: TEN YEARS LATER* is a bold new work, which asks the question, How does society write its own history?

the laramie project: The Laramie Project and The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later

Moises Kaufman, Tectonic Theater Project, Leigh Fondakowski, Greg Pierotti, Andy Paris, 2014-06-03 Two classic plays in a single volume: One of the most-performed theater pieces in America about the brutal murder of Matthew Shepard and the town in which it happened, joined by an essential and moving sequel to the original play. A terrific piece of theater, history, and life.... Nothing short of stunning.... A theatrical and human event." —New York magazine On October 7, 1998, a young gay man was discovered bound to a fence outside Laramie, Wyoming, savagely beaten and left to die in an act of brutality and hate that shocked the nation. Matthew Shepard's death became a national symbol of intolerance, but for the people of the town, the event was deeply personal. In the aftermath, Moisés Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theater Project went to Laramie and conducted more than 200 interviews with its citizens. From the transcripts, the playwrights constructed an extraordinary chronicle of life in the town after the murder. In *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*, the troupe revisits the town a decade after the tragedy, finding a community grappling with its legacy and its place in history. The two plays together comprise an epic and deeply moving theatrical cycle that explores the life of an American town over the course a decade.

the laramie project: Gross Indecency Moisés Kaufman, 1999 *THE STORY*: In early 1895, the Marquess of Queensberry, the father of Wilde's young lover, Lord Alfred Douglas, left a card at Wilde's club bearing the phrase posing somdomite. Wilde sued the Marquess for criminal libel. The defense denounced Wild

the laramie project: The Meaning of Matthew Judy Shepard, 2009-09-03 "The Meaning of Matthew is Judy Shepard's passionate and courageous attempt to understand what no mother should have to understand, which is why her son was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in the fall of 1998. It is a vivid testimony to a life cut short, and testimony too, to the bravery and compassion of Judy and Dennis—Matthew's parents—as they struggle to survive a grief that won't go away." —Larry McMurty, author of *Terms of Endearment* and *Lonesome Dove* Today the name Matthew Shepard is synonymous with gay rights, but until 1998, he was just Judy Shepard's son. In this remarkably candid memoir, Judy Shepard shares the story behind the headlines. Interweaving memories of Matthew and her family with the challenges of confronting her son's death, Judy describes how she handled the crippling loss of her child in the public eye, the vigils and protests held by strangers in her son's name, and ultimately how she and her husband gained the courage to help prosecutors convict her son's murderers. *The Meaning of Matthew* is more than a retelling of horrific injustice that brought the reality of inequality and homophobia into the American consciousness. It is an unforgettable and inspiring account of how one ordinary woman turned an unthinkable tragedy into a vital message for the world.

the laramie project: Moment Work Moises Kaufman, Barbara Pitts McAdams, 2018-04-17 A detailed guide to the collaborative method developed by the acclaimed creators of *The Laramie Project* and *Gross Indecency*--destined to become a classic. A Vintage Original. By Moisés Kaufman and Barbara Pitts McAdams with Leigh Fondakowski, Andy Paris, Greg Pierotti, Kelli Simpkins, Jimmy Maize, and Scott Barrow. For more than two decades, the members of Tectonic Theater Project have been rigorously experimenting with the process of theatrical creation. Here they set forth a detailed manual of their devising method and a thorough chronicle of how they wrote some of

their best-known works. This book is for all theater artists—actors, writers, designers, and directors—who wish to create work that embraces the unbridled potential of the stage.

the laramie project: Fires in the Mirror Anna Deavere Smith, 2015-01-21 Derived from interviews with a wide range of people who experienced or observed New York's 1991 Crown Heights racial riots, *Fires In The Mirror* is as distinguished a work of commentary on black-white tensions as it is a work of drama. In August 1991 simmering tensions in the racially polarized Brooklyn, New York, neighborhood of Crown Heights exploded into riots after a black boy was killed by a car in a rabbi's motorcade and a Jewish student was slain by blacks in retaliation. *Fires in the Mirror* is dramatist Anna Deavere Smith's stunning exploration of the events and emotions leading up to and following the Crown Heights conflict. Through her portrayals of more than two dozen Crown Heights adversaries, victims, and eyewitnesses, using verbatim excerpts from their observations derived from interviews she conducted, Smith provides a brilliant, Rashoman-like documentary portrait of contemporary ethnic turmoil.

the laramie project: The Book of Matt Stephen Jimenez, 2013-09-24 "Methamphetamine was a huge part of this case . . . It was a horrible murder driven by drugs." — Prosecutor Cal Rerucha, who convicted Matthew Shepard's killers On the night of October 6, 1998, twenty-one-year-old Matthew Shepard left a bar with two alleged "strangers," Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson. Eighteen hours later, Matthew was found tied to a log fence on the outskirts of town, unconscious and barely alive. Overnight, a politically expedient myth took the place of important facts. By the time Matthew died a few days later, his name was synonymous with anti-gay hate. *The Book of Matt*, first published in 2013, demonstrated that the truth was in fact far more complicated – and daunting. Stephen Jimenez's account revealed primary documents that had been under seal, and gave voice to many with firsthand knowledge of the case who had not been heard from, including members of law enforcement. In his Introduction to this updated edition, journalist Andrew Sullivan writes: "No one wanted Steve Jimenez to report this story, let alone go back and back to Laramie, Wyoming, asking awkward questions, puzzling over strange discrepancies, re-interviewing sources, seeking a deeper, more complex truth about the ghastly killing than America, it turned out, was prepared to hear. It was worse than that, actually. Not only did no one want to hear more about it, but many were incensed that the case was being re-examined at all." As a gay man Jimenez felt an added moral imperative to tell the story of Matthew's murder honestly, and his reporting has been thoroughly corroborated. "I urge you to read [*The Book of Matt*] carefully and skeptically," Sullivan writes, "and to see better how life rarely fits into the neat boxes we want it to inhabit. That Matthew Shepard was a meth dealer and meth user says nothing that bad about him, and in no way mitigates the hideous brutality of the crime that killed him; instead it shows how vulnerable so many are to the drug's escapist lure and its astonishing capacity to heighten sexual pleasure so that it's the only thing you want to live for. Shepard was a victim twice over: of meth and of a fellow meth user."

the laramie project: The Laramie Project Moisés Kaufman, 2001 On October 7, 1998, a young gay man was discovered bound to a fence in the hills outside Laramie, Wyoming, savagely beaten and left to die in an act of brutality and hate that shocked the nation. Matthew Shepard's death became a national symbol of intolerance, but for the people of Laramie the event was deeply personal, and it is their voices we hear in this stunningly effective theater piece. Moises Kaufman and fellow members of the Tectonic Theater Project made six trips to Laramie over the course of a year and a half in the aftermath of the beating and conducted more than 200 interviews with people of the town. From these interviews as well as their own experiences, Kaufman and the Tectonic Theater members have constructed a deeply moving theatrical experience. *The Laramie Project* chronicles the life of the town of Laramie in the year after the murder, using eight actors to embody more than sixty different people in their own words--from rural ranchers to university professors. The result is a complex portrayal that dispels the simplistic media stereotypes and explores the depths to which humanity can sink and the heights of compassion of which we are capable--Jacket.

the laramie project: October Mourning Leslea Newman, 2020-09-01 A masterful poetic exploration of the impact of Matthew Shepard's murder on the world. On the night of October 6,

1998, a gay twenty-one-year-old college student named Matthew Shepard was kidnapped from a Wyoming bar by two young men, savagely beaten, tied to a remote fence, and left to die. Gay Awareness Week was beginning at the University of Wyoming, and the keynote speaker was Lesléa Newman, discussing her book *Heather Has Two Mommies*. Shaken, the author addressed the large audience that gathered, but she remained haunted by Matthew's murder. *October Mourning*, a novel in verse, is her deeply felt response to the events of that tragic day. Using her poetic imagination, the author creates fictitious monologues from various points of view, including the fence Matthew was tied to, the stars that watched over him, the deer that kept him company, and Matthew himself. More than a decade later, this stunning cycle of sixty-eight poems serves as an illumination for readers too young to remember, and as a powerful, enduring tribute to Matthew Shepard's life. Back matter includes an epilogue, an afterword, explanations of poetic forms, and resources.

the laramie project: Losing Matt Shepard Beth Loffreda, 2000-09-26 The infamous murder in October 1998 of a twenty-one-year-old gay University of Wyoming student ignited a media frenzy. The crime resonated deeply with America's bitter history of violence against minorities, and something about Matt Shepard himself struck a chord with people across the nation. Although the details of the tragedy are familiar to most people, the complex and ever-shifting context of the killing is not. *Losing Matt Shepard* explores why the murder still haunts us—and why it should. Beth Loffreda is uniquely qualified to write this account. As a professor new to the state and a straight faculty advisor to the campus Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Association, she is both an insider and outsider to the events. She draws upon her own penetrating observations as well as dozens of interviews with students, townspeople, police officers, journalists, state politicians, activists, and gay and lesbian residents to make visible the knot of forces tied together by the fate of this young man. This book shows how the politics of sexuality—perhaps now the most divisive issue in America's culture wars—unfolds in a remote and sparsely populated area of the country. Loffreda brilliantly captures daily life since October 1998 in Laramie, Wyoming—a community in a rural, poor, conservative, and breathtakingly beautiful state without a single gay bar or bookstore. Rather than focus only on Matt Shepard, she presents a full range of characters, including a panoply of locals (both gay and straight), the national gay activists who quickly descended on Laramie, the indefatigable homicide investigators, the often unreflective journalists of the national media, and even a cameo appearance by Peter, Paul, and Mary. Loffreda courses through a wide ambit of events: from the attempts by students and townspeople to rise above the anti-gay theatrics of defrocked minister Fred Phelps to the spontaneous, grassroots support for Matt at the university's homecoming parade, from the emotionally charged town council discussions about bias crimes legislation to the tireless efforts of the investigators to trace that grim night's trail of evidence. Charting these and many other events, *Losing Matt Shepard* not only recounts the typical responses to Matt's death but also the surprising stories of those whose lives were transformed but ignored in the media frenzy.

the laramie project: The Laramie Project Moisés Kaufman, Members of the Tectonic Theater Project, 2015

the laramie project: *Murder, the Media, and the Politics of Public Feelings* Jennifer Petersen, 2011-08-12 In 1998, the horrific murders of Matthew Shepard -- a gay man living in Laramie, Wyoming -- and James Byrd Jr. -- an African American man dragged to his death in Jasper, Texas -- provoked a passionate public outrage. The intense media coverage of the murders made moments of violence based in racism and homophobia highly visible and which eventually led to the passage of The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act in 2009. The role the media played in cultivating, shaping, and directing the collective emotional response toward these crimes is the subject of this gripping new book by Jennifer Petersen. Tracing the emotional exchange from news stories to the creation of law, Petersen calls for an approach to media and democratic politics that takes into account the role of affect in the political and legal life of the nation.

the laramie project: The Whole World was Watching Romaine Patterson, Patrick Hinds, 2005 On the evening of Thursday, October 8, 1998, 20-year-old Romaine Patterson received a phone

call that her best friend, Matthew Shepard, had been beaten and left hanging on a split-rail fence outside Laramie, Wyoming. Romaine was then thrust to the center of the worldwide media frenzy that descended on Laramie, and she came face-to-face with twisted homophobia when Baptist minister Fred Phelps and his followers picketed Matthew's funeral with signs reading, "Matt burns in hell." Upon learning of Phelps' plan to bring his ministry of hate to support Matt's killers at their trial, Romaine went into action. Who can forget the image of Romaine and her friends donning seven-foot angel wings so they could encircle Phelps and his gang, leaving the picketers silent and invisible? From that moment forward, Romaine has become a spokesperson for tolerance, acceptance, and nonviolence around the globe, whether as a founder of Angel Action, as a consultant for The Laramie Project (the award-winning play that has been produced hundreds of times and became an acclaimed HBO film starring Christina Ricci as Romaine). In one of their last conversations, Matt told Romaine that he wanted to spend his life helping people realize that they as individuals could make a difference in the world. This is Romaine Patterson's journey to realizing the truth of that statement. Wyoming native Romaine Patterson got started in activism when her close friend Matthew Shepard was killed. In April of 1999, she founded Angel Action, an organization for peaceful demonstration. Angel Action is now used all over the world as a means of combating hate. She has also served as a regional media manager for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). She continues her work educating youth about hate crimes and has lectured at the University of Wyoming, Georgetown University, Penn State, and others. She currently lives in Brooklyn.

the laramie project: *Essentials of Stage Management* Peter Maccoy, 2014-02-13 Good stage management is key to the smooth running of any theatrical production and, as technology continues to develop and regulations tighten, the responsibilities of the stage manager have never been greater. In this essential guide, Peter Maccoy examines the qualities and skills necessary for effective management, stressing the importance of understanding both the creative and the technical processes involved in theatre. From negotiating contracts through to rehearsals, performance and post-production, *Essentials of Stage Management* is packed with invaluable advice on every aspect of the job and every type of theatre.

the laramie project: *Gruesome Playground Injuries; Animals Out of Paper; Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* Rajiv Joseph, 2010-10-04 Rajiv Joseph is one of today's most acclaimed young playwrights. The winner of numerous awards, including an NEA Award for Best Play and a Whiting Writers Award, he is an artist to watch. This volume gathers together for the first time his three major works to date. Included herein are his latest play, *Gruesome Playground Injuries*, which charts the intersection of two lives using scars, wounds, and calamity as the mile markers to explore why people hurt themselves to gain another's love and the cumulative effect of such damage; *Animals Out of Paper*, a subtle, elegant, yet bracing examination of the artistic impulse and those in its thrall, which follows a world-famous origamist as she becomes the unwitting mentor to a troubled young prodigy, even as she must deal with her own loss of inspiration; and *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, a darkly comedic drama that looks on as the lives of two American soldiers, an Iraqi translator, and a tiger intersect on the streets of Baghdad.

the laramie project: *The Designated Mourner* Wallace Shawn, 2010-12-21 "The play nicely combines Pinterian menace with caustic political commentary." -Time "Acerbic, elusive, poetic and chilling, the writing is demanding in a rarefied manner. Its implications are both affecting and disturbing." -Los Angeles Times "In his exquisitely written dramatic lament for the decline of high culture. . . . [Shawn] offers a definition of the self that should rattle the defenses of intellectual snobs everywhere." -The New York Times Writer and performer Wallace Shawn's landmark 1996 play features three characters—a respected poet, his daughter, and her English-professor husband—suspected of subversion in a world where culture has come under the control of the ruling oligarchy. Told through three interwoven monologues, the Orwellian political story is recounted alongside the visceral dissolution of a marriage. The play debuted at the Royal National Theatre in London, in a production directed by David Hare, who also directed the film version, starring Mike

Nichols and Miranda Richardson. The play's subsequent New York premiere was staged in a long-abandoned men's club in lower Manhattan, directed by Shawn's longtime collaborator André Gregory. Wallace Shawn is the author of *Our Late Night* (OBIE Award for Best Play), *Marie and Bruce*, *Aunt Dan and Lemon*, *The Fever*, and the screenplay for *My Dinner with André*. His most recent play, *Grasses of a Thousand Colors*, premiered last year in London.

the laramie project: 26 Pebbles Eric Ulloa, 2017 On December 14, 2012, Adam Lanza walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School and killed twenty-six innocent souls before taking his own life. These twenty-six innocent deaths, like pebbles thrown into a pond, created ripples and vibrations that were felt far beyond the initial rings. This is the story of those vibrations. Similar in style to *The Laramie Project*, playwright Eric Ulloa conducted interviews with members of the community in Newtown and crafted them into an exploration of gun violence and a small town shaken by a horrific event.

the laramie project: The Book of Will Lauren Gunderson, 2018-06-18 Without William Shakespeare, we wouldn't have literary masterpieces like *Romeo and Juliet*. But without Henry Condell and John Heminges, we would have lost half of Shakespeare's plays forever! After the death of their friend and mentor, the two actors are determined to compile the First Folio and preserve the words that shaped their lives. They'll just have to borrow, beg, and band together to get it done. Amidst the noise and color of Elizabethan London, *THE BOOK OF WILL* finds an unforgettable true story of love, loss, and laughter, and sheds new light on a man you may think you know.

the laramie project: 33 Variations Moisés Kaufman, 2011 *THE STORY*: A mother coming to terms with her daughter. A composer coming to terms with his genius. And, even though they're separated by 200 years, these two people share an obsession that might, even just for a moment, make time stand still. Drama

the laramie project: One Arm Moisés Kaufman, 2013 *THE STORY*: Based on Tennessee Williams' unproduced screenplay of his own classic short story, this new adaptation from pioneering theatrical auteur Moisés Kaufman follows Ollie, a young farm boy who joins the Navy and becomes the lightweight boxing

the laramie project: These Shining Lives Melanie Marnich, 2010 *THE STORY*: *THESE SHINING LIVES* chronicles the strength and determination of women considered expendable in their day, exploring their true story and its continued resonance. Catherine and her friends are dying, it's true; but theirs is a story of survival

the laramie project: Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home, 1995

the laramie project: A Body in the O Tim Miller, 2019 Tim Miller's autobiographical explorations into queer identity and social justice through the lens of his own experiences lead to visceral, humorous, and poignant performances. This collection is the culmination of the many struggles for rights and equality that Miller has documented, and performed, over the course of his career.

the laramie project: Never Leaving Laramie John W. Haines, 2020-09 *Never Leaving Laramie* takes readers from a small university town in Wyoming into the human and natural landscapes of remote and dangerous areas in the world. John Haines bicycles across Tibet and kayaks the length of West Africa's Niger River. He rides the Trans-Siberian train across the former Soviet Union and survives a traumatic train accident in the Czech Republic. For two decades, the author lived a restless life exploring pockets of the world in transition, always finding a route back to Laramie, the home that shaped him--a place he loved but needed to leave, and in the end never left.

the laramie project: The Laramie Project Moisés Kaufman, 2001 Typescript, dated July 17, 2000. Lacks title page. Heavily marked with colored ink and highlighter. Used by The New York Public Library's Theatre on Film and Tape Archive on July 17, 2000, when videotaping the stage production at Union Square Theatre, New York, N.Y. The production opened on May 18, 2000, and was directed by Moisés Kaufman.

the laramie project: Stories from Jonestown Leigh Fondakowski, 2014-05-14 The saga of Jonestown didn't end on the day in November 1978 when more than nine hundred Americans

died in a mass murder-suicide in the Guyanese jungle. While only a handful of people present at the agricultural project survived that day in Jonestown, more than eighty members of Peoples Temple, led by Jim Jones, were elsewhere in Guyana on that day, and thousands more members of the movement still lived in California. Emmy-nominated writer Leigh Fondakowski, who is best known for her work on the play and HBO film *The Laramie Project*, spent three years traveling the United States to interview these survivors, many of whom have never talked publicly about the tragedy. Using more than two hundred hours of interview material, Fondakowski creates intimate portraits of these survivors as they tell their unforgettable stories. Collectively this is a record of ordinary people, stigmatized as cultists, who after the Jonestown massacre were left to deal with their grief, reassemble their lives, and try to make sense of how a movement born in a gospel of racial and social justice could have gone so horrifically wrong. Taking with it the lives of their sons and daughters, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters. As these survivors look back, we learn what led them to join the Peoples Temple movement, what life in the church was like, and how the trauma of Jonestown's end still affects their lives decades later. What emerges are portrayals both haunting and hopeful. Of unimaginable sadness, guilt, and shame but also resilience and redemption. Weaving her own artistic journey of discovery throughout the book in a compelling historical context, Fondakowski delivers, with both empathy and clarity, one of the most gripping, moving, and humanizing accounts of Jonestown ever written.

the laramie project: Mainstream AIDS Theatre, the Media, and Gay Civil Rights Jacob Juntunen, 2016-01-29 This book demonstrates the political potential of mainstream theatre in the US at the end of the twentieth century, tracing ideological change over time in the reception of US mainstream plays taking HIV/AIDS as their topic from 1985 to 2000. This is the first study to combine the topics of the politics of performance, LGBT theatre, and mainstream theatre's political potential, a juxtaposition that shows how radical ideas become mainstream, that is, how the dominant ideology changes. Using materialist semiotics and extensive archival research, Juntunen delineates the cultural history of four pivotal productions from that period—Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* (1985), Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* (1992), Jonathan Larson's *Rent* (1996), and Moises Kaufman's *The Laramie Project* (2000). Examining the connection between AIDS, mainstream theatre, and the media reveals key systems at work in ideological change over time during a deadly epidemic whose effects changed the nation forever. Employing media theory alongside nationalism studies and utilizing dozens of reviews for each case study, the volume demonstrates that reviews are valuable evidence of how a production was hailed by society's ideological gatekeepers. Mixing this new use of reviews alongside textual analysis and material study—such as the theaters' locations, architectures, merchandise, program notes, and advertising—creates an uncommonly rich description of these productions and their ideological effects. This book will be of interest to scholars and students of theatre, politics, media studies, queer theory, and US history, and to those with an interest in gay civil rights, one of the most successful social movements of the late twentieth century.

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

the laramie project: *Applied Theatre* Philip Taylor, 2003 Philip Taylor offers strategies for using theatre to raise awareness, propose alternatives, provide healing, and implement community change.

the laramie project: *Utopia in Performance* Jill Dolan, 2010-02-05 Jill Dolan is the theatre's most astute critic, and this new book is perhaps her most important. *Utopia in Performance* argues with eloquence and insight how theatre makes a difference, and in the process demonstrates that scholarship matters, too. It is a book that readers will cherish and hold close as a personal favorite, and that scholars will cite for years to come. ---David Román, University of Southern California What

is it about performance that draws people to sit and listen attentively in a theater, hoping to be moved and provoked, challenged and comforted? In *Utopia in Performance*, Jill Dolan traces the sense of visceral, emotional, and social connection that we experience at such times, connections that allow us to feel for a moment not what a better world might look like, but what it might feel like, and how that hopeful utopic sentiment might become motivation for social change. She traces these utopian performatives in a range of performances, including the solo performances of feminist artists Holly Hughes, Deb Margolin, and Peggy Shaw; multicharacter solo performances by Lily Tomlin, Danny Hoch, and Anna Deavere Smith; the slam poetry event Def Poetry Jam; *The Laramie Project*; *Blanket*, a performance by postmodern choreographer Ann Carlson; *Metamorphoses* by Mary Zimmerman; and Deborah Warner's production of *Medea* starring Fiona Shaw. While the book richly captures moments of feeling utopia found within specific performances, it also celebrates the broad potential that performance has to provide a forum for being human together; for feeling love, hope, and commonality in particular and historical (rather than universal and transcendent) ways.

the laramie project: *Polaroid Stories* Naomi Iizuka, 1999

the laramie project: *Abide in the Heart of Christ* Fr. Joe Laramie SJ, 2019-09-13 In *Abide in the Heart of Christ*, Rev. Joe Laramie, S.J., offers accessible wisdom from the foundations of Jesuit spirituality—St. Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual Exercises—in a ten-day personal retreat that will help you encounter Christ, grow your relationship with him, and shape your heart. Laramie is your guide through this accessible retreat into the heart of Jesus. Based on a structure and approach he developed as a retreat leader at White House Jesuit Retreat in St. Louis, Laramie introduces you to classic themes of the Christian life, including sin, forgiveness, and creation. This book also helps you learn how to use key scripture passages to reflect on your own experiences. Each reflection includes teachings from the Spiritual Exercises and offers examples from Laramie's own life. Reflection questions and activities guide you in further contemplation to help you see what's in your heart, encounter Christ in your daily life, and live more fully in his love each day.

the laramie project: *The Laramie Project* Kaufman Moises, 2014-07-01 You'll be up all night with *Divergent*, a brainy thrill-ride of a novel.

the laramie project: *Simple Dreams* Linda Ronstadt, 2014-09-02 Includes discography (page 203-225) and index.

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which consists of a note from playwright Anna Deavere Smith entitled Gathering, and a list of scenes in the play. Used by The New York Public Library's Theatre on Film and Tape Archive on November 16, 2021, when videotaping the stage production at the Pershing Square Signature Center, New York, N.Y. The production opened on October 12, 2021, and was directed by Taibi Magar.

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