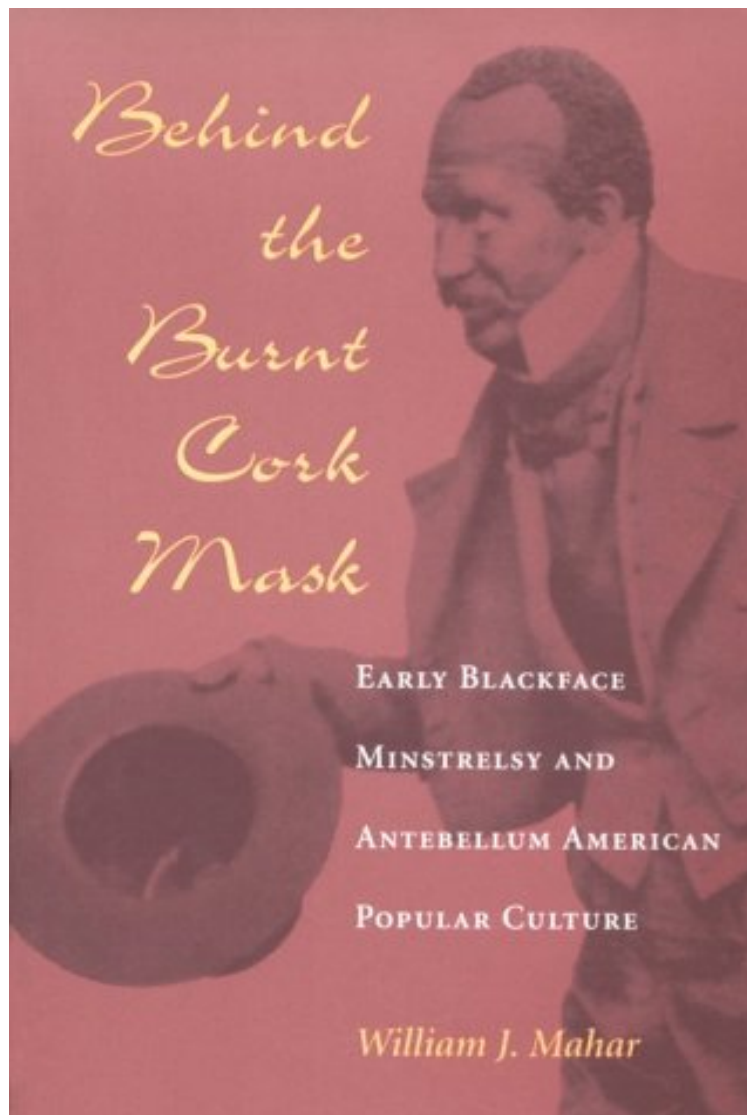


(Pdf free) Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture (Music in American Life)

Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture (Music in American Life)

William J. Mahar

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William J. Mahar : Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture (Music in American Life) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Behind the Burnt Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture (Music in American Life):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A nice book -- I would have liked more of it! By Nancy Mitchell This study of blackface minstrelsy is very well researched. It's a detailed historical work with some sociology added. It covers the first half of the nineteenth century (before the Civil War). It would have been nice if this book had gone on to discuss the minstrel shows and the performers of the remainder of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s. The time period the book covers is the distant past to me and not easy to relate to -- no film recordings, and very few photographs and illustrations to look at. As its title says, the book is about the early years.

Promises to redefine the study of blackface minstrelsy, charting new directions for future inquiries by scholars in American studies, popular culture, and musicology

From Library Journal This monograph, part of the distinguished "Music in American Life" series, is an interdisciplinary study drawing on music, performance, and theater history to examine the beginnings of an influential entertainment medium. Mahar (humanities/ music, Pennsylvania State Univ.) uses the study of blackface minstrelsy from 1843 to 1860 as a way to examine the formation and effect of much late 19th-century American popular culture. He provides generous samples of playbills, sheet music, lyrics, selections from comic sketches, and photographs as evidence for his argument. Mahar shows that the minstrel show made fun of formal speech and rhetoric, satirized opera for popular consumption, and provided a mirror for the polarities of contemporary American life, social rituals, and sexual roles. It prepared the way for melodrama, burlesque, vaudeville, and the musical comedy, all of which extended those functions. Recommended for scholars. ?Thomas E. Luddy, Salem State Coll., MA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Make[s] available much valuable and fascinating material found nowhere else in the literature on blackface minstrelsy, so much so that *Behind the Burnt Cork Mask* can itself serve as a primary source for further research." -- Charles Hamm, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* From the Back Cover Blackface conventions both criticized the changes occurring in antebellum American life and helped shape images of race, gender, and class. Through the songs, dances, jokes, parodies, spoofs, and skits of blackface, white performers could satirize majority values without directly attacking them. Burnt cork served as a masking device for these entertainers, shielding them from any direct personal identification with the material they were performing. *Behind the Burnt Cork Mask* reassesses relationships between blackface comedy and other genres and traditions of Western theater; between the music of minstrel shows and its European sources; between blackface performance and socially constructed identities; and between "popular" and "elite" culture.