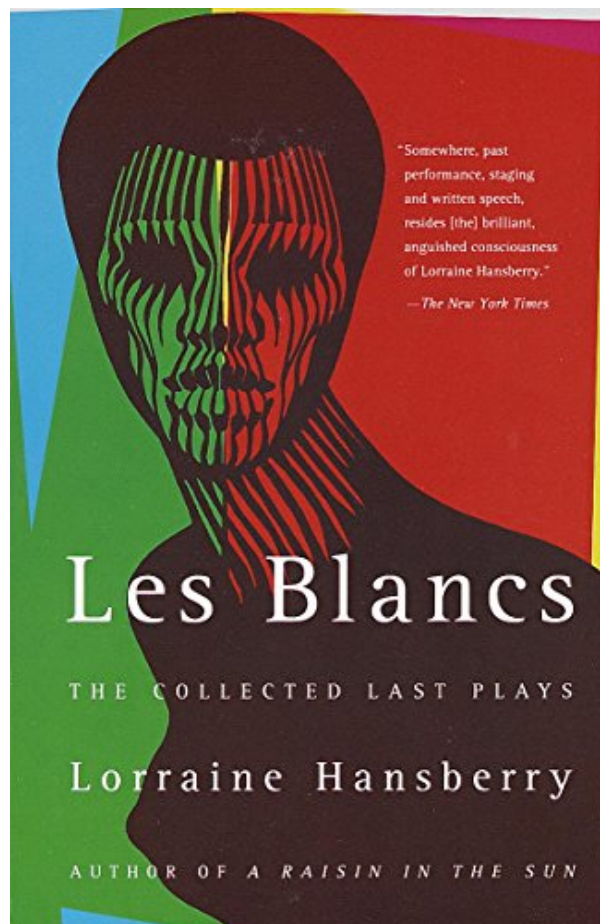
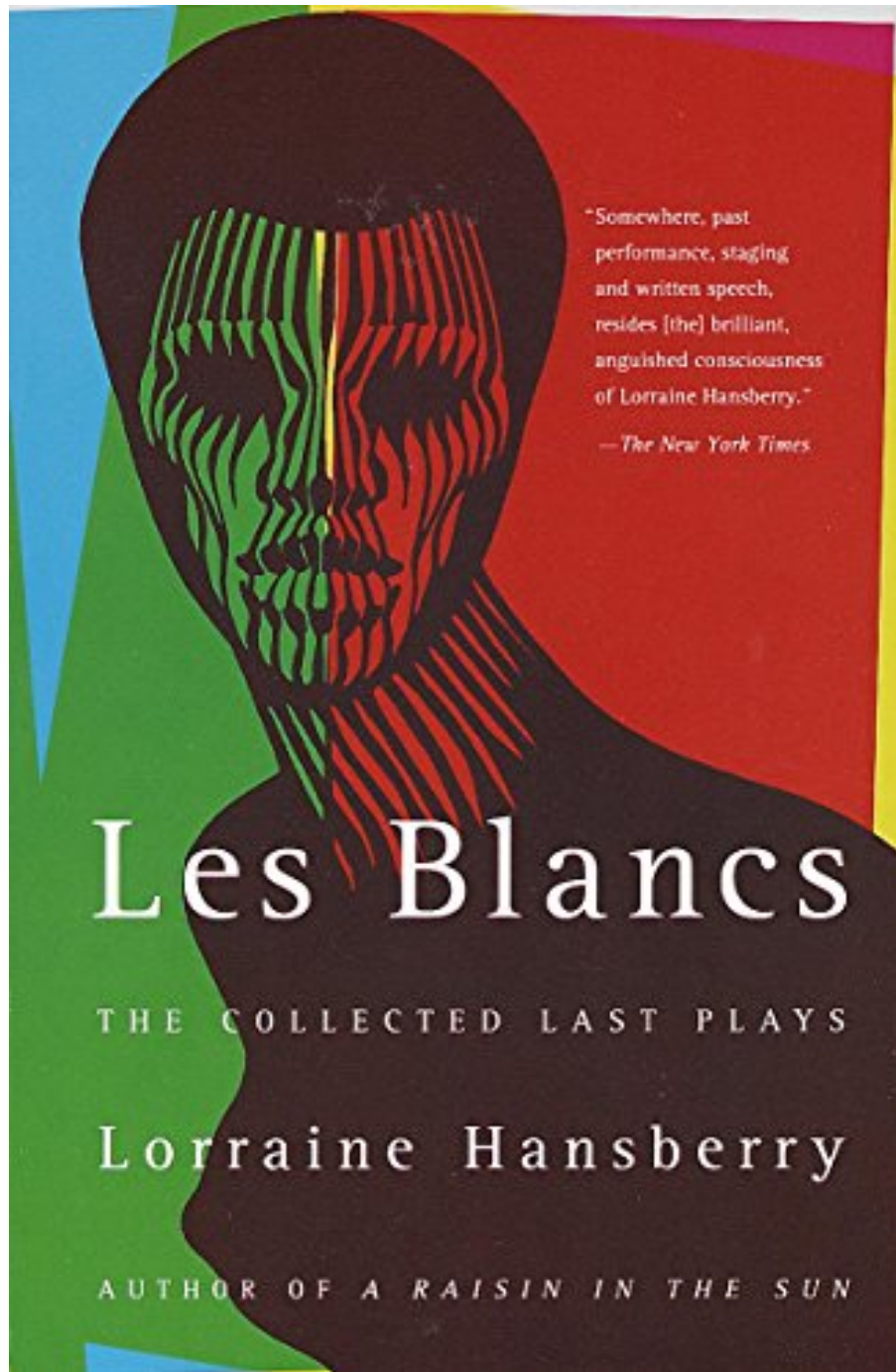


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PLAYS: THE DRINKING GOURD/WHAT USE  
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Much more powerful than Raisin in the Sun

By Leland Traiman

Lorraine Hansberry is best remembered for "Raisin in the Sun" which, even today, many feel is a strong statement against racism. However, "Raisin" pales in comparison to "Les Blancs", a much more militant and radical statement which, I have not doubt, must have genuinely frightened the liberal establishment in the 1960's. This play was decades ahead of it's time and it is no wonder that the more comfortable "Raisin" is what Ms Hansberry is mostly remembered for. Anyone who knows both of these works will realize that the world lost a great treasure when cancer stole this brilliant African-American lesbian's life from us when she was just 34. (Although Ms. Hansberry, married a white Jewish man, Robert Nemiroff in 1953, the couple separated in 1957 and divorced in 1964. She wrote some articles for "The Ladder", the first lesbian periodical in the United States, in the late 1950's.)

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Beautiful work by a great artist

By alma

Beautiful work by a great artist. Died way too young. She was ahead of her time. Her plays are relevant today. From the introduction: " Hansberry once said in an interview that her goal as a dramatist was to "reach a little closer to people, to see if we can share some illumination about each other."

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Buy if interested in racial justice and/or Hansberry's development as a writer

By Okemos56

Hansberry was a great writer who wrote extensively about racial injustice in the United States. These plays continue her condemnation of racism past and present. In *Les Blancs* Hansberry writes primarily about the freedom struggle in Africa. The "problem" with this is that it is a play, and it requires a good imagination or having seen the play to fully visualize some the role of the unnamed and only woman character, who is so vital to the play that she might be considered the most important character.

More problematical for me is her satire of the liberal American journalist who plays a recurring if minor role. It is sometimes an all-too-true indictment and it reflects her justified anger and despair at the state of race relations in America at the end of the sixties, but it is a cardboard figure and therefore potentially polarizing. I have read that it did so at the first performance in 1970. I did not find it polarizing, more sad that Hansberry seemed to have lost hope, but as satires go, it was more heavy handed than most.

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