

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910734340203321
Autore	Wilson James F
Titolo	Bulldaggers, pansies, and chocolate babies : performance, race, and sexuality in the Harlem Renaissance // James F. Wilson
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Ann Arbor : , : University of Michigan Press, , 2010
ISBN	9780472904044 0472904043 9780472026968 0472026968
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (ix, 260 p. :) : ill. ;
Collana	Triangulations: lesbian/gay/queer theater/drama/performance
Disciplina	812/.5209896073
Soggetti	American drama - African American authors - History and criticism American drama - 20th century - History and criticism African Americans in the performing arts - New York (State) - New York - History - 20th century Theater - New York (State) - New York - History - 20th century African Americans - New York (State) - New York - Intellectual life Harlem Renaissance African Americans in literature Race in literature Sex in the theater Harlem (New York, N.Y.) Intellectual life 20th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction: "It's getting dark on old Broadway" -- "Gimme a pigfoot and a bottle of beer": parties, performances, and privacy in the "other" Harlem Renaissance(s) -- "Harlem on my mind": New York's black belt on the Great White Way -- "That's the kind of gal I am": drag balls, "sexual perversion," and David Belasco's Lulu Belle -- "Hottentot potentates": the potent and hot performances of Florence Mills and Ethel Waters -- "In my well of loneliness": Gladys Bentley's Bulldykin' blues -- Conclusion: "you've seen Harlem at its best".
Sommario/riassunto	Bulldaggers, Pansies, and Chocolate Babies shines the spotlight on

historically neglected plays and performances that challenged early twentieth-century notions of the stratification of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. On Broadway stages, in Harlem nightclubs and dance halls, and within private homes sponsoring rent parties, African American performers of the 1920s and early 1930s teased the limits of white middle-class morality. Blues-singing lesbians, popularly known as "bulldaggers," performed bawdy songs; cross-dressing men vied for the top prizes in lavish drag balls; and black and white women flaunted their sexuality in scandalous melodramas and musical revues. Race leaders, preachers, and theater critics spoke out against these performances that threatened to undermine social and political progress, but to no avail: mainstream audiences could not get enough of the riotous entertainment.

James F. Wilson has based his rich cultural history on a wide range of documents from the period, including eyewitness accounts, newspaper reports, songs, and play scripts, combining archival research with an analysis grounded in a cultural studies framework that incorporates both queer theory and critical race theory. Throughout, he argues against the widely held belief that the stereotypical forms of black, lesbian, and gay show business of the 1920s prohibited the emergence of distinctive new voices. Figuring prominently in the book are African American performers including Gladys Bentley, Ethel Waters, and Florence Mills, among others, and prominent writers, artists, and leaders of the era, including Langston Hughes, Wallace Thurman, Zora Neale Hurston, and W. E. B. Du Bois. The study also engages with contemporary literary critics, including Henry Louis Gates and Houston Baker.
