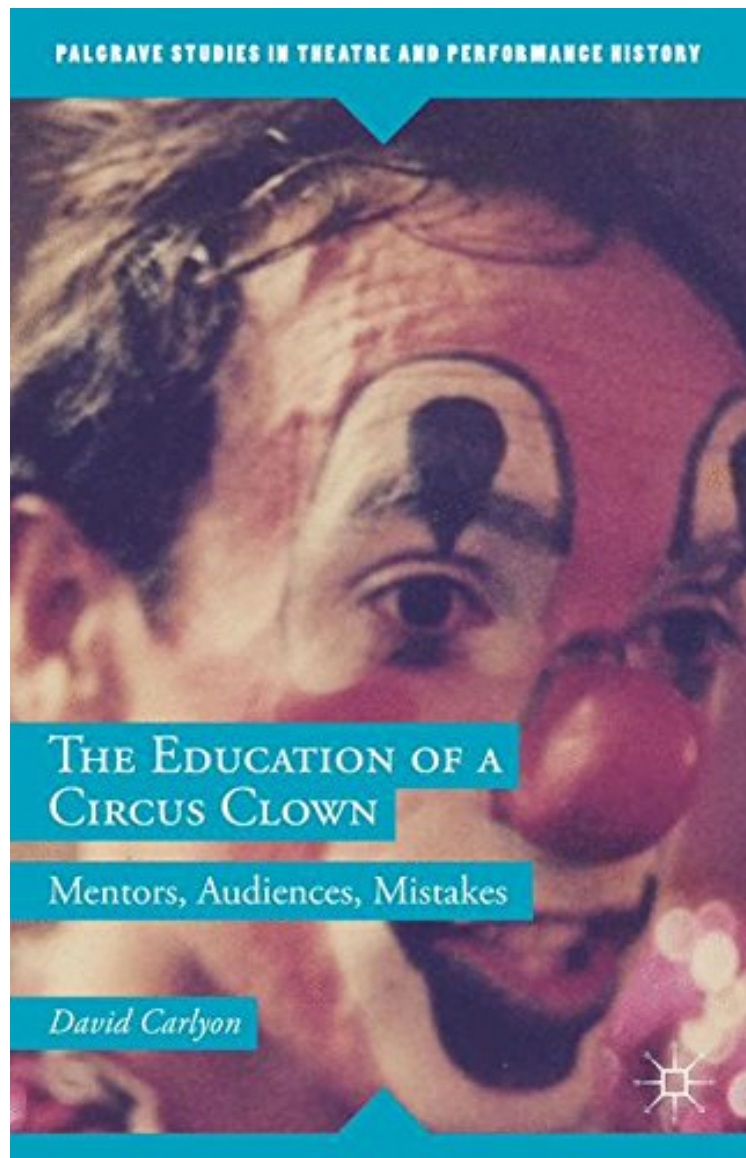


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## The Education of a Circus Clown: Mentors, Audiences, Mistakes (Palgrave Studies in Theatre and Performance History)

David Carlyon

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#1990412 in Books David Carlyon 2015-11-16 2015-11-18 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.83 x .75 x 5.721, .0 #File Name: 1137554819219 pages The Education of a Circus Clown Mentors Audiences Mistakes Palgrave Studies in Theatre and Performance History | File size: 24.Mb

David Carlyon : The Education of a Circus Clown: Mentors, Audiences, Mistakes (Palgrave Studies in Theatre and Performance History) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Education of a Circus Clown: Mentors, Audiences, Mistakes (Palgrave Studies in Theatre and

Performance History):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Learning his craft one mistake at a time By John Townsen Dave is quite the Renaissance man: writer, teacher, historian, actor, lawyer (!) and, last but not least, clown. His narrative of attending Clown College (1976) and touring with the Blue Unit (1977) stands above most circus memoirs not just because he's a better writer it's a good read but because he actually focuses on the performers' struggles to stay vibrant and funny from day to day, audience to audience. He doesn't try to pass himself off as a super clown, just as a reasonably skilled and talented individual learning his craft one mistake at a time. Read my full review on my physical comedy blog: <http://physicalcomedy.blogspot.com/2016/01/book-review-dave-carlyons-education-of.html>

The 1960s American hippie-clown boom fostered many creative impulses, including neo-vaudeville and Ringling's Clown College. However, the origin of that impulse, clowning with a circus, has largely gone unexamined. David Carlyon, through an autoethnographic examination of his own experiences in clowning, offers a close reading of the education of a professional circus clown, woven through an eye-opening, sometimes funny, occasionally poignant look at circus life. Layering critical reflections of personal experience with connections to wider scholarship, Carlyon focuses on the work of clowning while interrogating what clowns actually do, rather than using them as stand-ins for conceptual ideas or as sentimental figures.

It is published by Palgrave MacMillan, as one in the series of Palgrave Studies in Theatre and Performance History, devoted to the best of theatre/performance scholarship currently accessible, available and free of jargon. It is full of interesting anecdotes and fun in describing the education of a young clown with the Ringling show in America. It's funny, entertaining, and informative. (Don Stacey, *Circus Report*, January, 2015) "David Carlyon ran away from a lucrative legal career to join the circus. His beautifully immersive personal history captures the gritty excitement and deep camaraderie of his first circus season. *The Education of a Circus Clown* is a terrific and important book that will enrich and enliven our historical understanding of clowning, the circus, and American culture." - Janet M. Davis, *American Studies and History*, University of Texas at Austin, USA, author of *The Circus Age: American Culture and Society Under the American Big Top*, and editor of *Tiny Kline, Circus Queen and Tinker Bell: The Life of Tiny Kline* "The literature of clowning, like that of other performing arts, is full of anecdote-laden memoirs that shed little if any light on the actual craft of the performer. *The Education of A Circus Clown* is a rare exception because David Carlyon is both a professional writer and a professional performer who offers us not just a behind-the-scenes look at life in the clown alley of the world's largest circus, but also an honest and at times anguished analysis of the performer's daily struggle to be funny. Entertaining and illuminating." - John Townsen, author of *Clowns and the physical comedy blog All Fall Down* "An important history - as all-encompassing as it is personal - and a great look into the mind of a performing artist. If you want to know what real American circus life is like, then this book is for you. If you don't . . . well, then you're missing something wonderful." - Murray Horwitz, Tony Award-winning playwright (*Ain't Misbehavin'*), creator of NPR's *Wait Wait . . . Don't Tell Me*, and a former Ringling clown About the Author David Carlyon is author of the critically-acclaimed book, *Dan Rice: The Most Famous Man You've Never Heard Of*. He is Adjunct Professor at Iona College, USA, has worked as an assistant professor at the University of Michigan, Flint, USA, taught at Northwestern University, USA, and was on the Speakers Bureau of the New York Council for the Humanities, USA. He is an ex-Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus clown, produced playwright, director, and Equity actor, studying at London's National Theatre Summer Programme, UK. He graduated from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA, served in the US Army, earned his JD from Boalt Hall, University of California, Berkeley, USA, and received his PhD from Northwestern University, USA.