



Musical Theatre Study Unit

Name:		Date:	
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Chapter 2: Minstrel Shows and Melodramas

Important Terms & Names
1) How did minstrel shows misrepresent the lives and character of African-American slaves in the early 1800s?
2) What was the first stage form to commission music specifically for its performances?
3) What were the stereotypical perceptions of “negroes” as portrayed in the minstrel characters?
4) Who developed the minstrel character of “Jim Crow”, and what laws named after it in the late 1800s?
5) Which was the most successful minstrel company of the 19th century? How was their success measured?

6) Who were some of the characters typical of a minstrel show? What roles did they fulfill?

7) What was a “cakewalk”? What was an “olio”? What was a “stump speech”?

8) What was the significance of James Bland, early composer of minstrel songs?

9) Though highly offensive today, “minstrel shows” played an important role in the development of American musical stage productions. What was it?

10) What was the basic theme of the “melodrama”?

11) What were “melos”? What role did they play in the production? What would be their contemporary counterpart?