

Title: Playing 'The Kreutzer Sonata': Marriage and Wifehood in Theatrical Adaptation  
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Abstract:

This presentation examines English-language theatrical adaptations of Tolstoy's Kreutzer Sonata. Particular attention is paid to three productions which reached American theatre audiences. The first is an early "adaptation" (in the loosest sense of the word) by Jacob Gordin, which was originally written in Yiddish. This script was later translated into English by American playwright Langdon Mitchell and staged on Broadway in 1906. The second is an adaptation by Nancy Harris, originally staged at the Gate Theatre in London which subsequently transferred to LaMaMa in New York City for a short run in 2012. The third is a home-grown adaptation by Utah playwright, Eric Samuelsen, which premiered at Plan-B Theatre Company in Salt Lake City in 2015. The focus of this project was to examine how playwrights and theatre-makers from different historical eras have chosen to deal with Tolstoy's material and to endeavor to interpret how the persona of the wife has been treated in various staged adaptations through an analysis of scripts, original production archival materials and published reviews.