UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

DISCUSSIONS in JAZZ HISTORY

Research Methods, Themes, & Locations

Student Papers

Edited by Dr. Stephanie Y. Evans

Fall 2007

http://www.professorevans.com/teaching.asp

RESEARCH METHODS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

~Jazz Historiography~

This document contains a sample of seven final papers by students in the Fall 2007 University of Florida course, "Research Methods in African American History: Jazz Historiography." In the course, students explored the following questions:

WHAT IS BLACK HISTORY & HISTORIOGRAHY?

WHAT IS JAZZ?

WHAT ARE PRESSING ISSUES IN RESEARCH ABOUT JAZZ?

WHAT ARE SOME INTERESTS AND APPLICATIONS OF JAZZ HISTORY FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES?

Course Texts:

Upon These Shores (Scott & Shade)

What is This Thing Called Jazz (Porter)

Course Syllabus http://www.professorevans.com/teaching.asp

Dr. Evans transformed her regularly taught "Research Methods in African American History" course into a community-based research course in order to highlight local efforts to rebuild the Gainesville Cotton Club. Thirteen final papers were collected and given to the East Gainesville Cotton Club Revitalization Project. However, much work remains to be done in meeting the

ultimate community-defined goal of collecting extensive primary sources specifically about jazz in Gainesville.

This document contributes to the Cotton Club project by offering state, regional, and thematic content that supports the ongoing efforts of community activists to revitalize the cultural heritage of Black roots and culture in North Central Florida. Community partners, especially Donna Isaacs, Vivian Filer, and Jennifer Lindquist, provided context to the course through guest lectures and students learned, researched, and wrote with this community in mind.

East Gainesville Cotton Club Cultural Center & Museum Project
http://www.cce.ufl.edu/cottonclub/story.htm

It must be acknowledged that, as 8-10 page, undergraduate, self-published papers, these offerings are not professional articles and certainly display some limitations of breadth or detail that expert researchers in jazz music might question. However, as a collection, these student papers are stellar in that they offer entrée into complex issues of social, political, economic, regional, and national themes in jazz history through approachable language that is useful to both scholarly and lay communities. Each author provides a truly insightful foray into jazz music, identity, politics, and culture. These papers also provide guidance to college educators about how undergraduates can creatively process lessons in race, gender, their own academic disciplines and complex issues of historiography. These papers offer fresh and original points of discussion for aficionados and newcomers, educators and practitioners alike.

Feedback is certainly welcome: contact@professorevans.com

In addition to the Cotton Club activists, these papers were written with two alternative audiences in mind: Florida public schools and the online community of jazz enthusiasts, including the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE). By students giving consent to publish these papers online, they understood that their work might be of use in Florida classrooms as well as for ongoing discussions contemporary jazz educators have about the historical development of jazz. Though the IAJE ceased daily operations in April 2008, international communities of educators still thrive and ongoing discussion of practice, theory, *and history* are essential to continued growth of jazz appreciation for future generations.

While constructing the course, Dr. Evans drew heavily upon the expertise of Mr. Orbert Davis, a scholar, musician, and teacher of jazz. Mr. Davis is a professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago and also founder and director of the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic. Mr. Davis was very gracious with theoretical as well as cultural and practical suggestions for course development. In addition, Mr. Davis's *Music Alive!* educational program in Chicago public schools exemplifies the type of community connectedness--especially with youth education--that many community service-learning and community-based research courses represent.

Orbert Davis http://www.orbertdavis.com/

Chicago Jazz Philharmonic http://www.chicagojazzphilharmonic.org/home.html

Enjoy these papers, explore jazz in your local community histories, use these ideas in K-12 or college lesson plans, discuss the implications that lie within, and allow these creative entries to help expand your appreciation for history-telling and for jazz music. The first part of the class explored issues of cultural identity, motivation, methodology, structure, and interpretation inherent in recording Black history. The second part of the course employed students in the collection, recording, and analysis of jazz history using a range of primary and secondary sources. The final products represent a joining of identity and theme for a compelling addition to the creative, innovative, improvisational, and swinging conversations about jazz culture, past, present, and future.

Dr. Stephanie Y. Evans
August 8, 2008

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FLORIDA'S JAZZ THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS STARS

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Jazz is a complex entity that requires a specific and expansive definition. It is not possible to form a single comprehensive perspective of what jazz is given that so many viable points of contention can be expressed. However, it is possible to give a general description that provides an adequate vantage point of the art. According to Ken Burns's *JAZZ*, the music began in New Orleans, reaches its epic apex as America's music during the Great Depression, and declines in the 1960s.[1] Some say that "jazz is America's classical music."[2] The purpose of this paper is not to merely define jazz, but also to explain what jazz was and is in the state of Florida. Not only did jazz exist in Florida, but it also interacted and influenced jazz beyond the border of the Sunshine State. In order to best examine this idea, one must gain an understanding of the exemplary musicians and singers that either launched their careers in Florida, or traveled through Florida and witnessed firsthand the atmosphere that jazz promulgated. Also, this essay will examine the tours or the "Chitlin' Circuit" that brought jazz musicians and singers through the state.

What is jazz? "The word has relevance with Africa, Arabia, the Creole, French, Old English, Spanish, Indians, names of mythical musicians, old Vaudeville practices, associations with sex and vulgarity, onomatopoeia, and other sources, its first origins remain a mystery."[3] Blues is a subgenre of jazz that is widely known. However, little is known of the blues legacy sown in the Deep South in the state of Florida. When discussing the blues genre, thoughts of the Mississippi delta are evoked. However, "Blues did exist in Florida; they raised mournfully from the state's citrus groves, phosphate mines, saw mills, turpentine camps, and railroads, where disillusioned Black laborers sang about paradise not found."[4] Many of these African-Americans arrived in the early twentieth century in search of new lives fresh off the heels of slavery. Many migrated north during the Great Migration period, but some headed south to the underdeveloped state of Florida in search of fresh new starts on life. The hard labor and lifestyles they found produced the soundtrack that is the blues of Florida.

Florida's blues can be characterized as an amalgamation of "Delta, Southeast, and Texas forms of blues." [4] This can be attributed to the post-slavery migration pattern that brought an influx of Blacks from other states in a southeastern direction. In the beginning of Florida's unique and latent blues tradition, artists like Hudson Woodbridge, also known as "Tampa Red", and Arthur Phelps, also known as "Blind Blake," from Jacksonville, Florida recorded popular songs. The two pursued more prosperous avenues which led to Chicago, Illinois. In addition, there was Nellie Florence, born in Jacksonville, Florida and Louis Washington, also known as "Tallahassee Tight."

Tampa Red was born in Smithville, Georgia, but was raised in Tampa, Florida. He increased his skill level on the guitar playing in Juke Joints in the Tampa and Polk County area before he headed north to Chicago, Illinois to pursue more lucrative opportunities.[4] Before the legendary B.B. King became an iconic figure, most of his hits were reinterpretations of other artists' songs including the songs of Tampa Red.[5] Tampa Red's influential reach was great enough to inspire an artist as far away as Memphis, Tennessee.

The "Juke Joint" is a critical element to the Jazz scene in the state of Florida. "It was an establishment where people sang, played music, danced, drank alcohol sometimes distilled from sterno, gambled, socialized, and fought."[4] During the era of segregation and racial injustice in the state of Florida they were incubators for Florida's jazz.

Juke or Jook originates from the writings of Florida folklorist Zora Neale Hurston. As an anthropologist interested in the folk culture in Florida, Hurston traveled during the mid 1930s throughout the state in search of the lifestyles of common folks. In the year 1935 folksong archivists Alan Lomax and Mary Elizabeth Barnicle accompanied Zora Neale Hurston on her treks through rural Black Florida communities recording their blues in Jook Joints with the intentions of presenting the songs and sounds to the world.[4] These Jook Joints were located in Polk County, Bartow, Belle Glade, Chosen, Eatonville, Lakeland, Lake Okeechobee, and Maitland.[4] These establishments provide further evidence of a popular jazz tradition in the state of Florida that has yet to be duly recognized.

Tours or circuits were the vehicles that brought jazz musicians into different venues to perform in clubs. There is much to be said about the characteristics of these circuits. Tampa Red, for instance, left the Polk county Jook establishments behind for his big break on the Theatre's Owner Booking Association (TOBA). "This particular circuit offered Black players

temporary employment during the nineteen-twenties."[4] Arthur Phelps, Blind Blake, made a living on the Medicine show circuit. He used this spotlight to establish himself a reputation on the guitar similar in stature to that of a Charlie Patton.[4] These circuits provided avenues for Florida musicians to interact with other jazz musicians and influence others from around the nation musically and culturally.

What was jazz in places like Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Orlando, Gainesville, or Miami? This question is best answered by the late, great Ray Charles. Charles along with David Ritz wrote the story of his life. Although he was born in Albany, GA in 1930, Ray Charles was able to participate in the jazz culture in Florida. According to Mr. Charles "He knew jazz. He loved jazz, and could play jazz.[6]

Ray Charles spent many of his adolescent summers in Tallahassee, Florida. He recalls the sounds he heard during these early years; musicians like Erskine Hawkins grabbed much of his attention. Around this same time, along with Julian "Cannonball" Adderly, a Florida A&M Rattler band member and others, Charles played big hits like "Tippin' In" and "After Hours," hits belonging to Erskine Hawkins. In addition to this big band style he played in a small combo style with guitarist Lawyer Smith for small gigs.[6] Charles' musical experiences in Florida speak to the diverse types of jazz that existed there. "He toyed with - swing, boogie, blues, hillbilly, jazz – something was bound to please 'em."[6] Boogie-woogie rhythm required the player to bounce rhythmically on the piano.[11]

Next, Charles made a stop in Jacksonville, Florida. Charles' address with the Thompson family was close to Musicians' Hall (also called Union Hall). He describes a competitive atmosphere that existed amongst the piano players; no one wanted others "biting" their signature styles. He knew that he had to be able to play in all the most popular styles: swing, boogie, and blues, in order to make a living amongst the fierce competition.[6] The style of music Ray Charles played in clubs depended on what the boss wanted, and he learned to play everything from boogie to big band swing.[6]

Charles' biggest break in Jacksonville was his first big band experience with Henry Washington. He describes the outfit as a "sixteen-seventeen piece group that played similarly in style to that of Kansas City's Count Basie and Billy Eckstine's big bands."[6] This group played in a club named the Two Spot. Beyond that, Charles played in a small combo with a character named Tiny York. York did not personally play an instrument but he did a Louis Jordan routine

which according to Charles was a big name at the time. These imitations of other jazz stars are indicative of a connection between Florida's jazz tradition and those in the rest of the country.

Charles felt the music at the time could be broken down into two distinct categories. The records in Florida were "Black-bottom goodies, low-moaning blues performed by colored artists only including the aforementioned Tampa Red along with Muddy Waters, Blind Boy Phillips, Washboard Sam, Elmore James, Sonny Boy Williamson and the boogie-woogie piano players – Meade Lux Lewis, Pete Johnson, and Albert Ammons." The other type of music was the radio music, mostly swing played by both Black and White players. This group included "Shaw, Goodman, Dorsey, Basie, and Ellington."[6] Charles' distinction between the two sounds speaks to the class divisions in jazz in Jacksonville, and the rest of the state. The Black group of sounds is described in a fashion that makes one imagine it is music by the Folk for the Folk.

Next, Charles finds his way to Orlando, Florida in search of opportunity. His experience can be summed up as disastrous. Charles describes a city full of bands out of work and stranded, making landing gigs for pay all the more challenging. He spent days and nights in pursuit of "jam sessions" with other players in clubs. These sessions were challenges in which players displayed their skills. Sometimes they were chromatic challenges--meaning musicians played a tune in all the keys subsequently. Also, they played tunes with key changes that were difficult and would show what kind skill a player had.[6] His only real gig was at the Sunshine Club with Joe Anderson, a tenor saxophone player. Charles doubts they were known outside the region, but attests that they were a good band similar to Henry Washington's band in Jacksonville.[6]

Charles believed that an overflow of excellent players came from guys getting out of the military following the ending of World War II. According to Charles, "Combo bands were coming on strong in this period – '46 and '47 – and he joined up with Sammy Glover and A.C. Price respectively in Orlando."[6] Charles again describes a segregated club atmosphere which would call for being diverse in style and method.

While working in Orlando in 1946, Ray Charles met the great Lucky Millinder. He auditioned for his band while he was in Orlando on business, but was unable to make the cut because his abilities weren't yet as refined as they needed to be.[6] Charles later migrateed from Florida to achieve greatness, and thus added to the tradition of Florida musicians moving on and obtaining more national recognition.

The Chitlin' Circuit was a tour line that brought Black entertainment throughout the Southeastern United States, including the state of Florida. It dates back to the 1920s and was created by the Theatre Owners Booking Association.[7] It can be characterized as "a theater of Black folk, by Black folk, and for Black folk." This is not the "highbrow, progressive, avant-garde theatre."[7] This implies that the Chitlin' Circuit was not a high class tour line. However, the atmosphere at venues was a spectacle that included a wide range of social classes. Outside of the venues there were "grilled sausage and hot dog lines" for hungry patrons. The audience was "styling out" with "cloudlike tulle, hatbands of the finest grosgrain ribbon, wool suits, pants in neon shades, matching shoes and handbags; men sport Stetson and Dobbs hats, kente cloth cummerbunds and scarves." [7] Racial segregation, imposed in all social venues, meant that Black and White were separate, and though there were class divisions, Black people of all classes "styled out" in clubs together.

As a network, "the venues of the "Chitlin' Circuit" were theaters, speakeasies, nip joints, dance halls, hotel lobbies, ballrooms and clubs with names like Black and Tan, Waltz Dream and Happy Land." During the Jim Crow segregation era, via the infamous Circuit, clubs hosted legendary Jazz musicians like Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, and Ella Fitzgerald in places like the Jackson Ward of Richmond, Virginia. This was the seemingly paradoxical high side of the "Chitlin' Circuit." The atmosphere for the productions and musicians could be characterized as safe. The annual 2nd street festival in the Jackson ward in Virginia was an electric environment of "laughter and romance."[8]

As a veteran player of the Chitlin' Circuit, James Chapmyn spoke out critically of the criminal element on the promotions team of the Chitlin' Circuit. He eventually stopped dealing with the tour line as a result of practices he did not approve of. Chapmyn looked to uplift with his entertainment, and in his mind it wasn't possible to do so with club promoters who sometimes were selling drugs and using profits to harm the African-American community.[7]
B.B. King is a legendary blues guitar player from the muddy waters of Mississippi. His style of music was born in the days of "Swing and Big Band Jazz."[9] Long before B.B. King's star was found on the Hollywood Walk of fame, the legend played his blues on his guitar on the Chitlin' Circuit. "He became a mainstay on the Circuit once he produced some major hits; he played the small clubs and country Jook Joints that lesser known musicians worked on a day to day basis." The Chitlin' Circuit emerged from the North-South line of communication between New Orleans

and Chicago and branched deep into the old south. "This structure enabled musicians to play in Louisiana and Florida during the winters." King was fortunate because he was able to advance to the more "classy" levels of the multi-tiered Circuit, performing almost exclusively in the "best small town clubs and most important theatres in cities."[9]

Big Moose Walker describes a "violent and dangerous" atmosphere on this lower end of the Chitlin' Circuit during a 1978 interview with Sebastian Danchin in Chicago, Illinois. No stranger to some of the roughest cutthroat dives of the Circuit, Walker recalls playing in Juke houses and barns everywhere and seeing "a guy get killed for fifteen cents."[9] King, along with Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown also had some sour experiences performing on the Chitlin' Circuit--usually due to issues with promoters over not receiving payment for performances. Brown describes a concert hall event that "had thirty-five hundred guests and a promoter with a forty-five caliber pistol not intending to pay the artists." "Brown and King had to force his hand with Brown's pistol to receive what they were owed."[9]

"Jazz is a marvel of a paradox" according to Eric Porter. Elements of different musical cultures and different classes intersected during the Twentieth Century in the United States of America birthing a new form of expression. As a product of a hyper-racial society, jazz was claimed by African-Americans because it was fundamentally Black, yet this claim remains a topic of debate that is essential to fully grasping the genre.[10]

In conclusion, jazz's latent presence in Florida was rich. It influenced and interacted with jazz throughout the rest of the country via tour lines and circuits like the medicine circuit and the Chitlin' Circuit. From the small 3-4 man combos to the big bands, Florida had it all. The unheralded tradition in Florida did not closely resemble those of New Orleans, Chicago, or even Kansas City, but artists like Tampa Red and Blind Phelps brought Florida's voice to the world's attention. With the rich music of boogie-woogie race records thriving in the Jook Joints, to the swing, combo, and big band style sounds airing on radio stations, jazz connected the economically underdeveloped Florida of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s to the rest of the country.[11]

Notes

1. Ken Burns, dir. *JAZZ*, DVD. Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2000.

2. "A Talk with Dr. Larry Ross" (2003). Available from All about Jazz website

<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=562>; “An Indictment on the Jazz Establishment: The Non-Classical Nature of America’s Classical Music” (2003). Available from All about Jazz website <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=808> (accessed 4 December 2007); Mike Heffley, “Jazz History Lecture: What is Jazz History? Not All Black and White.” (2000). Available from <http://mheffley.web.wesleyan.edu/almatexts/almamusicology/Jazz%20History%20Not%20Black%20&%20White.pdf> accessed 4 December, 2007.

3. Alan Merriam and Fradley Garner, “Jazz -- The Word.” *Ethnomusicology* 12, no. 13 (1968): 1.

4. Barbar O’Reilley, “Music in the Key of Florida: A Place of Romance and Pain” *Florida Humanities Council Forum*. Winter (2004): 8-12.

5. Dori O’Neal, “B.B. King brings Blues to Tri-Cities.” *Tri-City Herald Kennewick, Washington*, (5 October 2007).

6. Ray Charles and David Ritz, *Brother Ray: Ray Charles’ Own Story*. New York: Dial Press, 1978, 44, 47, 49, 56, 70-77, 80; Michael Lyndon, *Ray Charles: Man and Music*. New York: Riverhead, 1998.

7. Harry Elam and David Krasner, *African American Performance and Theater History: A Critical Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, 138-39, 144.

8. Robin Farmer, “Jazz Echoes across 2nd Street’s Past: Festival in Jackson Ward Honors the Community’s Influence on Music, Culture” *Richmond Times--Dispatch Virginia*. 5 December 2007.

9. Sebastian Danchin, *Blues Boy: The Life and Music of B.B. King*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998, x, 41-42.

10. Eric Porter, *What is This Thing Called Jazz?: African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 52.

11. Parke Cummings, *Saturday Evening Post*. 216, no. 52 (24 June, 1944): 30.

REGIONAL INFLUENCES ON JAZZ MUSIC: 1900-1950

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The regional influences of jazz may be considered one of the most notable characteristics in terms of identifying trends in the music. While New Orleans is heralded as the birth place of jazz music, it is important to incorporate the musical traditions and new ideas of other geographical areas that might influence the art or the various interpretations of jazz music. Jazz music may be distinguishable by region, but each variation is the product of an established musical culture that had already existed throughout the country within these different areas. Chicago, New York City, and Missouri, are all considered prominent focal points for the origins of the jazz culture in their respective regions. While it is within these American cities that these influences may be traced, the elements which influenced jazz music in any given region may also have global implications. For example, the origin of jazz music in south Louisiana was engrossed in a culture which was rich in ethnic heterogeneity. There was a mix of French language and English religion which tied into the bustling social and economic nature of American society (Fiehrer, 1991). These social enclaves are what determine the prominence of certain elements of different cultures, and help to define the regional influences found in each geographic area. This paper will further explore the regional influences of jazz music as a cultural aesthetic, a mainstream phenomenon, and a local reflection of social integration.

The phenomenon that developed and became mainstream jazz was brought to the forefront of American life after the Great Depression. Mainstream jazz brought mainstream money, but did not compromise the original intent or message that creates the essence of jazz music. Below, I shed light on the people and the places that characterized jazz in its meteoric rise to the mainstream, as America endured two turbulent World Wars and a Great Depression.

New Orleans: Crescent City Creole

New Orleans was a cultural melting pot by any stretch of the imagination (Martin 265). The population consisted of French, Spanish, English, Irish, German, Italians, Cuban, and Haitians (Yanow 7). Themes of entertainment were integral to the city's cultural identity, and it

was almost impossible to avoid interaction, especially in the realm of musicianship. Out of religious songs, harmonies, brass instrumentals, and Missouri's ragtime rhythm (Fiehrer 7), jazz was a music that was quite literally *a child of the ear*. A fusion of Western Europe, Creole, and African music types interacted in the entertainment industry (Fiehrer 5). African dance and slave circles in the places like Congo Square set the precedent for a cultural tolerance that ultimately bred the innovation that was jazz (Burns *Jazz*). As most Black musicians in the late 1800s could not read music, much of jazz's improvisational nature came from early instrumentalists playing by ear. Little is known about the sound of jazz during these early days since no original artists were ever recorded, but the cultural climate has been well researched. The first recognized jazz musician was Buddy Bolden. While legendary for playing the blues, Bolden assimilated his first band in 1895 (Yanow 8).

Bunk Johnson was also a legend in the early jazz era. More widely known for his alcoholism and for being less disciplined in musicianship, Johnson was said to have played with Bolden, although this was never historically verified. Johnson's influential sound was coveted from New Orleans to New York, making several records and performances in both areas throughout his career. Among the major figures in New Orleans were cornetists Freddie Keppard, King Oliver, Kid Ory, and Sidney Bechet.

The history of New Orleans jazz is not complete without Louis Armstrong. Arguably the most influential jazz musician of all time, Armstrong grew up in the heart of the rough neighborhoods of New Orleans (Burns *Jazz*). Affectionately known as "Satchmo", Armstrong began his musical foundations singing on the streets for pennies. Some scholars have said that Louis was taught by Bunk Johnson, but Louis later denied it (Yanow 11). Over the next five decades, Armstrong would internationalize and revolutionize the interpretations of jazz. Performing an average of 300 concerts a year and appearing in over 30 films (www.satchmo.net), Armstrong was a pioneer and an international icon for a genre of music that already represented a history of globally diverse theatrical and musical elements.

Jazz in Kansas City: Ragtime in the "Wide Open" City

At the turn of the 20th century, when political bosses began buying up seats in Congress, the spread of influence in the western and southwestern regions of the United States was far reaching. Even as Prohibition swept the nation, corruption in the political system kept the

"Speakeasies" open and profitable. In this financially and political "underground" culture, Kansas City, Missouri had emerged as a major center for jazz music. Jazz music served as entertainment in the city's many bars, and a collective of talented musicians began forging their place in Kansas City's vibrant nightlife. The laissez faire attitude of the political machine allowed for a competitive and creative environment among such musicians as Lester Young, Bennie Moten, Bill "Count" Basie, and Charlie Parker (Stowe, 1992).

The year 1936 marked the point when Kansas City welcomed one of its great pioneers of all time. Jay McShann, originally from Nebraska, came to Kansas City and fell in love with the city and its sound during a two hour stop on the way from Omaha. A noted bandleader and pianist, McShann absorbed the talents of a young Charlie Parker who had found his way on stage at a local night club. Basie, McShann, and Parker helped create the "blues rooted sound with swinging horns and a powerfully driven yet relaxed rhythmic pulse" (jaymcshann.com).

'Blowin' in the Windy City

Chicago was a melting pot for jazz musicians. It was here that a fusion of ragtime and jazz took place with one of Scott Joplin's protégés: Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton. "The King Porter Stomp", a collaboration by Morton, Joplin, and Porter King, sprung to national prominence after a rendition by Chicago native Benny Goodman in 1935 (Travis 1990). The climate in Chicago was conducive to the musical integration, with establishments such as the Haitian Pavillion, where artists from around the country found each other and let the creativity flow. A cosmopolitan atmosphere provided by the industrial revolution, and a high rolling attitude furnished by the mob bosses (such as Al Capone who frequented the night clubs) created the setting in which Chicago jazz would flourish. Before the commercialization of jazz in 1926, African Americans controlled much of the business end of the promotion and production of jazz music. One of the most prominent leaders in establishing a jazz community was heavyweight boxing champion Jack Johnson (Travis 1990). Johnson opened the Cafe de Champion in 1912, and opened his doors to both Black and White patrons. Despite a backlash on the policy, the jazz café was a major addition and landmark to the South Side of Chicago. Bringing in acts of different musical and theatrical background, Johnson created a rich foundation of artistic culture in the city's night life from which all participants could benefit. In 1917 (the same year in which the Dixieland Band recorded the first ever jazz recording), Bill Bottoms, a comrade of Johnson's,

opened up the Dreamland Cafe. After opening up this cabaret, Bottoms gave his financial support to friend Virgil Williams, who then opened up the Royal Gardens cafe. Williams' club emulated a New Orleans dance hall, complete with New Orleans musicians.

From the influence of Jack Johnson and his successors, the interracial climate was, in comparison to other places, widely accepted in the jazz culture in Chicago. Playing witness to some of the most influential musicians on the stage, and creating a supportive environment for all participants from the audience to the business owners, Chicago jazz enjoyed tremendous intermingling in the musical components brought from other regions of the country to its followers.

New York, New York

The 1920s was a refreshing era of artistic and spiritual development for the city of New York. For jazz musicians, this meant being in the fray of a fertile environment of creativity (Burns *Jazz*). A geographical cornerstone for jazz music, New York continued to build upon its own legend with the Cotton Club. Situated in the Harlem and constructed in 1918, the club was built to compete with the Renaissance Casino on West 133rd Street. (Haskins 3). The club switched hands a second time, and was owned by Chicagoan Jack Johnson (Britannica), it was Irish gangster Owney Madden who took over the establishment in 1923 and renamed it the Cotton Club. The club was tribute to the pre Civil War past, and was known for its larger than life grandeur and decorative southern accents. With a Whites only patronage, and Black stage participants, the policy kept the money coming and conflicts to a minimum (Haskins 21). Highly touted for its exclusively rich menu and distinguished ambience, the Cotton Club was a space for White patrons to observe African and African American musical culture without mixing with it. The club's exclusive atmosphere can also be attributed to the free-flowing supply of liquor and alcohol in blatant rejection of the Prohibition Era.

The club became the epicenter for New York jazz fans and was stage for major figures of the jazz community at large, such as Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway. While Calloway's stint at the Cotton Club was short lived, Ellington was responsible for elevating the Cotton Club to national prominence (Haskins 57). A deal between stage manager Herman Stark and Columbia Broadcasting System representative Ted Husing eventually sprung Duke Ellington and the Cotton Club into the households of America (Haskins 57). This was what became the Cotton

Club sound. Ellington eventually had so much stake in the prominence of the club that the "Whites only" policy was relaxed in order to allow his friends and families of the band to enjoy the performances (Haskins 57).

As jazz evolved in New York from the Great Depression to the World War II era, the pioneers of the music began a changing of the guard. Bebop became the new sound coming out of New York (Yanow 108). While Ellington, the Cotton Club, and other establishments like it had been living as the face of jazz, there were fertile spaces for creativity emerging in clubs such as Connie's Inn on 131st, or the Lenox Club on 144th Street. Places such as these brought together big names, and lesser known creative genius. The transaction of artistic musicianship translated into the environment that birthed Bebop. The creation of Bebop is typically attributed to Charlie Parker and Dizzie Gillespie, who spent their nights on stage in light night jam session as Minton's Playhouse and Monroe's Uptown playhouse (Yanow 121). Between 1939 and 1941, the evolution of this new style was evident with collaborations between Cab Calloway and Dizzie Gillespie, and Charlie Parker with Jay McShann (Yanow 110).

The Harlem Renaissance laid the foundation for innovation in New York. The venues, constant flow of ideas, and intermingling of artistic styles both on the stage and through the media are main reasons why New York was such an empowering environment for jazz as a cultural aesthetic and universally prominent form of music.

Jazz in the West

> "Our regular guys were me on banjo, Alexander on saxophone, Marcellus on drums, and Gene Richard on piano. Sometimes we also had Elmer Claiborne on saxophone, Sonny Craven on trombone, and Clem Raymond on his clarinet when he first came here. The Peacock Melody Strutters -sometimes we used Peacock Melody Syncopators instead- was a Dixieland-type band."
>
> (Alfred Levy, excerpt from *Jazz on the Barbary Coast*)

Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker were heavy influences in the West Coast. In 1945, jazz staked its claim when Gillespie showed up for a stint at Billy Berg's Hollywood Nightclub. However, even before his arrival, there had been strong ties forged from New Orleans artists. Musicians such as Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver took hold of Los Angeles audiences from 1917 to 1922 (Yanow 151). Lester Young was the founder of "Cool" jazz (Yanow 150). Nat King Cole's career took off in L.A. in the 1937 when he formed the King Cole Trio. It was in the

midst of this integration of Creole and Swing that Gillespie and Parker began taking over in the 1940s, and set the stage for one Shorty Rogers. Rogers was arguably one of the biggest legends in West Coast jazz (Gordon 51-68). As big bands broke up, former members would find their way out west. The influences of Miles Davis and pianist Lennie Tristano, with their disciplined theoretical approach to music were major factors in fostering the environment in which Shorty flourished. Originally born in Massachusetts, he was raised in New York and attended the High School Music of the Arts (Gordon 51-68). Shorty was drafted in 1943, and stationed in Virginia where he met bassist Arnold Fishkin. Shorty made it out to Hollywood in 1946, and decided to stay. Rogers played in everything from small, intimate quartets to orchestras. By early in the 1950s Shorty had begun making his claim as the prodigy of West Coast jazz. With an assembly of different musicians, Rogers became the defining icon of Cool. (Gordon 51-68). In December of 1951, Shorty ascended to the status of a legendary West Coast jazz artist as he almost single handedly reinvented the Lighthouse Café with a series of Sunday jam sessions, and turned it into a world renowned establishment (Gordon 60). Rogers played a key role in getting jazz on soundtracks (Yanow 158), and had his hand in just about any project or outlet in Los Angeles.

As an urban environment placed within the context of a little more relaxed lifestyle than the bustle of New York, the West Coast and Cool jazz were signs of tolerance. While segregation was still prevalent across the country, mixed bands were more accepted in the 1950s west coast (Yanow 151). UCLA had a jazz event promoting tolerance; featuring Lester Young, the King Cole Trio, and Charlie Parker (Defender, April 27, 1946). Although the birth of the Cool was a milestone in West Coast jazz history, it was Shorty Rogers' constant involvement and interaction with the different artists and avenues that promoted jazz which make him the symbol of the West Coast.

Conclusion

Jazz, as a musical art form, has evolved with the same instinctive innovation in which it was born. While there are identifiable origins of different types of jazz, the question about the origin of jazz itself has about as diverse an answer as the population that created it. The widespread adoration for the genre and its many different styles make it a truly a source or national pride and an international phenomenon. The acceptance of jazz is similar to Hip Hop music's rise to the world stage. As Basu notes on some of the individuals that characterize the

current climate of Hip Hop, "Their new global mixtures of local linguistic, musical, and political contexts are firmly located in the dynamics of power and political economies of globalization." (Basu 9). Jazz was a force in many different forms depending on geographical context. It soothed the souls of African Americans in the face of oppression, in provided optimism for the United States as a whole in the midst of Depression, and brought peace in the conscience during both World Wars. Jazz had a spirit that was impossible to kill, and the icons, both personal and monumental, still exude that spirit today through their timeless presence and influence in contemporary music.

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THE IN-FUSION OF EARLY BLUES AND JAZZ

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The sounds associated with both jazz and blues are very different at first listen. The high-pitched voice and solo acts of Robert Johnson hardly resembles the upbeat and full sound echoed from Cab Calloway and his plethora of accompaniment. Calloway's 1940 hit "Geechy Joe" features a full orchestra and while the beat is slower than usual jazz tunes, the sound is still very rich and the volume is very heavy ("Geechy Joe," 1940). Listening to Johnson as he strums his banjo in his 1936 tune "Phonograph Blues" one gets a sense of the very distinct differences between the traditional blues and jazz sounds. Johnson's recording is nowhere near as full and vibrant as the big band sound from Calloway's song ("Phonograph Blues," 1936). When one first listens to these two it would be easy to dismiss either one having much to do with the other. This is where the true meaning of listening to not only the words, but the tones and rhythm of the music is apparent. As Donald D. Megill and Richard S. Demory state, "the blues is the root and foundation upon which all jazz has developed. Indeed, without the blues there would be no jazz as we know it today" (Oliver, 1991). While it is nearly impossible to prove which genre of music had more of an impact on the other, it is no secret that jazz and blues helped each other become two very important types of music in American culture.

The divide between blues and jazz is so thin in some areas that the definition of the word "blues" appears in *Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary* of 1988 as "a style of jazz evolved from southern American Negro secular songs and usually distinguished by flatted thirds and sevenths and a slow tempo" (Lacava, 1992). It is believed that blues became an American musical experiment during the Civil War, but its roots, like jazz, lie in the work songs of African slaves in America and Africa. The grunts, groans, cries, bends and dips used in earlier forms of blues and jazz evolved from those same pan-African rhythms and sounds. Other elements created during this period that were essential to the evolution of blues and jazz were the emphasis on the call-and-response method during performances and the back-and-fourth exchange between the artist and the audience (Martin, 2000). Artists like Calloway and bluesman Son House wowed crowds by literally bringing them into each one's shows. House's

blues was a more upbeat type of blues rhythmically, but certainly did not have the verbosity of a Calloway or Dizzy Gillespie hit. Mostly it was jazz musicians who excelled at these methods. Calloway's famous "The Hi De Ho Man" is one of the most popular call-and-response songs of all time. Calloway not only incorporates his band into reciting the verses of his song, but more importantly it is the audience's role in the song by responding "Hi De Hi De Hi De Ho" after Calloway does that really brings the song to life ("The Hi De Ho Man," 1936).

The evolution of blues and jazz together resembles the famous "chicken or the egg" theory because no one is quite sure which genre looked to the other first for inspiration. Jazz pianist, Jonny King, agrees that jazz did not create blues and blues did not create jazz, but he does argue that in order to be a powerful jazz player, one must be able to play the blues well. King believes that blues are a "benchmark for all jazz musicians." There is no doubt that many sounds that come from within the soul of jazz have a "bluesy" tone or drawl to them. King says the reason for this is that many jazz musicians try to stay rooted in early blues sounds in order to make a more pure sound. Some artists have even dedicated their jazz albums to the beginnings of blues. Oliver Nelson's *Blues and the Abstract Truth* and John Coltrane's *Coltrane Plays the Blues* are two albums simply devoted to "exploring different approaches to the blues" by way of jazz music (King, 1997).

Some jazz historians say that while blues is considered one of the "tributaries" that fed the mainstream of jazz's foundation, it was a secondary style of music compared to the popularity and support of jazz. It can even be said that blues is merely a "primitive" precursor of jazz and not jazz's contemporary. It is more like a survivor of such an old tradition and it was jazz that would help fuel the reemergence of blues (Bolcom, Harrison & Oliver, 1986).

It was the creation of ragtime that helped shape blues evolution and was very influential in the creation of later forms of jazz in general. However, it is important to note that while ragtime and jazz resemble each other, ragtime is not an early form of jazz. It is merely a similar genre that takes characteristics from both blues and jazz. Rag tunes were indeed used in jazz compositions, but because ragtime is primarily a written form of music and jazz is primarily improvised, it is incorrect to state that ragtime was an early form of jazz (Bolcom, Harrison, & Oliver, 1986). By the late 1890s and early 1900s the sounds of both blues and ragtime were possibly the loudest of sounds to come out of St. Louis. Early performers such as blues pianist Lee Green would sometimes sneak into ragtime performances to see if there was anything he

could find in either the sound of the performance or the movements from the artists that he could encompass in his shows. These acts went back and forth between artists and were not really looked down upon by either side. Son Long, the man whom many say was the creator of a more "funky" form of blues – boogie woogie – made this new form to bring in a little more lively aspect to blues. It was ragtime that he looked to for answers. Long's new form of blues was seen as more of an up-tempo piano style that featured a "shuffle rhythm" (Ottenheimer, 1989).

But the evolution from ragtime into different forms of jazz really relied upon ragtime copying some of the traditional blues sound. Ragtime genius of Scott Joplin, of St. Louis, was known to frequently venture into towns of the rural southern part of Missouri to collect Midwestern folk material from young African-Americans. He would use these blues-like elements as a means of producing new sounds and rhythms in his music. He would take pentatonic scales, blue notes and triplet figures to create a resemblance to the slurry sounds associated with common blues. Even ragtime pianists would use the slower blues-like rhythm to produce a new mellower sound for their shows. At the turn of the century, the blues became a major part of most published pieces of ragtime compositions. Blues and jazz intersected so frequently in the Midwest that according to jazz historian Gunther Schuller, the popularity of blues was stretching far west of St. Louis and had a "profound" influence on the development of swing (Ottenheimer, 1989).

As ragtime moved west and began its transformation into swing, blues traveled with it. And with swing came a lot more dancing. While dancing has always played a major role in jazz, it was mostly limited in blues because of the slower more laidback rhythms. However, many jazz artists used the bluesy sound to help dancing come alive in night clubs. When fox trot music and dancing became popular during the early part of the 1900s, artists blended jazz, blues, ragtime, spirituals and barbershop quartets to get not only a more colorful sound but a rhythm that allowed anyone with a hint of rhythm to be able to move their feet to. Some historians even dubbed this new style of both movement and music as "America's native music." While the blues sound helped define the fox trot sound, it was jazz that took the credit and jazz that made it flourish because the two were so closely linked in style and sound (Norris, 1938).

With the institutionalization of Jim Crow and the migration of blacks throughout the United States, black culture began to be a major way of opposing the harsh racial tension that blacks dealt with. African-American music began to flourish and looked to give meaning to life

under freedom. The catalyst for this cultural movement was the impact that both blues and jazz had on the nation. Like the spirituals, these hybrid styles of music looked to bring about a sense of hope and affirmation building upon African-dominated roots. Both were derived from sounds of the minstrel, vaudeville, gospel and ragtime (Martin, 2000).

The blues carried many messages, but mainly the central theme behind most songs was an "emotional life of a race [African America]." Both also looked to celebrate pleasures and desires "of the flesh." There is no doubt that the popularity of both genres grew because of the "sensual and sexual fixation" expressed in some pieces. But it was the stance against black injustice that fueled the music (Martin, 2000). During the 1920s it was jazz and blues that spoke to the middle-class African-American society. The blues' very political stance on life was indeed a factor in many jazz artists' priority to portray early 20th century life in the black culture into their lyrics and stage movements. One jazz musician in particular echoed the struggled atmosphere of the blues into his work: jazz pianist and composer, Duke Ellington. The blues was possibly the "most important color on Ellington's musical palette," as he "embodied the struggles of a country trying to come to terms with its multiracial legacy," through his music. Alongside him, Albert Murray, a jazz critic and novelist, called the blues "a metaphor for the heroism of African-American people" (Porter, 2002).

According to Murray, not understanding the blues was like not understanding the humanity of African Americans coexisting in the US culture. Murray even went as far to point out that Ellington's classic hit "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" directly correlates to being a part of the blues idiom by the phrasing of the music and the rhythms he uses within the music. It is as if to play blues, whether through jazz or alone, is to transform oneself into a heroic figure, like Ellington. Not only politically, but musically. Ellington's harsh tones and vibrant style not only fulfilled the need for jazz connoisseurs to hear that up-tempo jive but blues admirers as well who were seeking a new synthesis from the traditional down-home style to a more refined element of blues musicianship (Porter, 2002).

One of the first jazz composers, Jelly "Roll" Morton not only used blues style and tone in his work but also many of his songs used traditional blues lyrics and subjects in front of a more upbeat jazz sound. Morton sang of his life that revolved around crime during his youth and looked to send a message of change for not only himself but his listeners. Like many jazz artists, Morton would even add the word "blues" to many of his song titles in honor of the music that

helped to mold him into an artist (Gaines & Reich, 2003). The virtuoso pianist's song "New Orleans Blues" was recorded as a jazz piece, but its sound is eerie similar the slow downtrodden sound of early blues pieces. Even with the uplifting sounds Morton's piano in the background, his song still revolves around a certain struggle and ending up poor and alone in life.

Jazz continued to garner most of the attention in the music world as it spread throughout the country. At the same time, bluesmen began to move to big cities and saw most of their time playing on street corners of major cities like Memphis and Chicago. But in order to succeed in the business, blues artists had to turn to a more lively way of reaching their audience. Performances now had to be more sophisticated in order to excite crowds (Lacava, 1992). Early blues performers were struggling to reach jazz's status because of not only the robotic movements during performances but the "primitive" instruments used by most bluesmen. Harmonicas, unamplified guitars and even old jugs and the tub bass were commonly used in a typical blues performance (Booth, 1969). Jazz artists, on the other hand, such as Nat King Cole and Louis Armstrong were dazzling crowds with their overwhelming sounds – from not only their instruments but their entire orchestras – and intense facial expressions, which were essential for providing an even warmer atmosphere to an already amazing sound (*Jazz Giants of the 20th Century*, 2007). This is where jazz really helped expand the blues audience.

Artists began to use more improvisation in their acts, just as jazz singers had been doing for years. The traditional one-man-band approach began to turn into artists allowing more face time for members of his band. The new ways of communicating with the audience transformed the once idle bluesman into a "spontaneous" story teller. It was as if the singer was performing a new ritual or drama for the audience and helped the performer communicate many different messages at once. Whether it was to deliver the pulsation of the beat with his feet or the sorrow or happiness with the expression on his face, artists were telling the stories from their heart (Porter, 2002). From its creation, jazz was mostly a work of improvisation, but blues artists did not truly experiment with improvisation until later in the music's development. Buddy Guy was one of the first blues musicians to refuse to sit in his chair while performing. During the early 1950s, Guy decided to take a different approach to his act by getting up and becoming very theatrical while on stage. He not only jumped up and down on stage, but he began to run up and down bars that would sometimes be near the stage. This not only built a reputation for himself

but helped provide blues musicians with a sense of excitement in their performances and helped steer some away from the doldrums of always being seated in a chair (Lacava, 1992).

Blues and jazz also share the relationship of similar song formation and sets of chord changes. Revolutionary music composer George Gershwin's hit jazz tune "I Got Rhythm" is not even close to comparison of a traditional blues composition because of its lively melody and fast beat. But to find the blues characteristics from within the tune, one must look at the blueprint that makes up the song. The basic makeup of any traditional pieces of blues is merely a chord progression that is easily susceptible to improvisation. This is the exact makeup of Gershwin's tune. King believes that the reason for such similarity underneath the actual sound is that most jazz musicians turn to playing blues when practicing and rehearsals come about. Blues form is the ultimate standard for some jazz musicians and "the most frequent set of chord changes to which jazz musicians turn again and again, as both performance and practice vehicle" (King, 1997).

An excerpt from King's book *What Jazz Is* describes how he uses blues melodies to help with his technique during his practice secessions and to come up with new ways of developing his own jazz piano songs.

> When I'm feeling very industrious, I might practice for hours playing over a single blues in the key of F. Louis Armstrong, the Count Basie Orchestra, Duke Ellington and virtually every name band leading up to the swing era recorded tunes based on blues changes. The blues structure is also integral to bop and underlies numerous bebop melodies, such as Bird's (Charlie Parker) "Relaxin' at Camarillo" and (Thelonious) Monk's "Straight No Chaser" (King, 1997).

It wasn't just male artists that epitomized the characteristics of both jazz arts and blues. Women like Ma Rainey (known as the Mother of the Blues) and Bessie Smith were not only powerful blues artists, but they were also influenced by the jazz sound. It was their incredibly powerful and commanding voices that made them so popular in not only the blues and jazz world but he world of music in general (Oliver, 1991). The importance of these women is that with their almost masculine demeanor in their voices they were able to show a power and soul of women that was rarely seen. Other artists started to see the command and dignity in these women's work and began to copy the style. Billie Holiday's resonating voice can be heard in the soul of Bessie Smith's tune "Need a Little Sugar in my Bowl" (Martin, 2000).

But it wasn't just the sounds that made female vocalists so powerful in both blues and jazz. Both genres had a major impact on the feminist movement in music during the early 1900s.

While female jazz artists expressed these feminist views in songs (mainly the incorporation of sexual themes) it was blues artists that began the trend. Many lyrics of women's blues have been wrapped up in controversy because of the exploration they take in frustrations associated with love and sexuality. More than just sexual connotation, many artists began to speak out about problems within society. Bessie Smith is famous for bellowing words toward issues such as racism and economic injustice (crime, imprisonment, alcoholism, homelessness and the impoverishment of the black community as whole). Smith's 1928 recording of "Poor Man's Blues" was a new form of social protest in the United States. Her song espoused the tremendous gap between the upper class wealthy and the impoverished lower class mainly made up of African-Americans (Davis, 1998).

Smith's denunciation of injustice sparked a trend of a politicized voice for not just female artists but male artists in many different genres of music. Female jazz pioneer Billie Holiday was influenced by Smith's song when she created the controversial record "Strange Fruit" 10 years later. Her record company, Columbia, refused to record her song because of the fear of backlash the company anticipated it would receive – especially from white southerners – for the song's response to the injustice blacks in America's society and her adamant outcry to eliminate lynching. Eventually, Holiday's song was picked up by Commodore Records, a new independent label whose management was very interested in having Holiday's antiracist anthem speak through it (Davis, 1998).

When looking for that old southern feeling for any style of music, artists would turn to the overpowering voice of Ma Rainey. While many artists were mimicking songs back and forth, no one was able to duplicate the sound of Rainey. It is said that her unearthly voice was so strong in her hit song "Bo Weevil Blues" that boll weevils in the area were blown out of town by the sound and force of her voice. While many artists from both genders and all genres of music tried to duplicate her voice, most failed. Holiday was the only artist of the time to even remotely come close to resembling Rainey's incredible sound and even then it is a stretch to say that she truly compared to her (Tracy, 1987).

Holiday was by no means a failure in the music world and while blues played a minimal role in Holiday's performances, her music was deeply rooted in blues tradition. She used blues to mold some of her songs and helped other artists – male and female – transform the popular culture. Her influence is even alive and well today as American singer/songwriter Madeline

Peyroux looks to put the old blues and jazz sound into her 21st century music. While Peyroux admits that the music she performs is certainly outdated, she can't help but be thrilled that she is attempting to carry on the sound and feeling of female jazz and blues musicians of the past. It was even her singing voice's haunting resemblance to Holiday that attracted the attention of many record companies (Band, 1997).

Jazz and blues have always been a part of the American culture. The important thing to understand is that while different at first, both are full of the same qualities when it comes to tone, rhythms and organization. Despite jazz's overwhelming popularity, it would not have come as far as it did with inspiration from the blues sound. Blues would not have been able to travel out of the Deep South without piggy-backing onto the fast pace of jazz. Neither created each other, but neither would have survived without the other. It is hard to keep this in perspective by merely hearing a jazz or blues piece. One must listen to the words and rhythms and know the history behind both styles to find the similarities.

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RACE AND JAZZ: HOW THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IS EXPRESSED THROUGH JAZZ

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Jazz is an instrument created and utilized by African Americans as a means of Black expression. The eloquent lyrics of the art form are an articulation of the Black experience, and the fundamental form and essence of the genre are the traditional elements of African Diaspora music. Although jazz became an international sensation, its creation was "an urban response to the challenges of freedom [for Blacks] in cosmopolitan cities" (Martin, 265). According to Duke Ellington, jazz was 'authentic Negro music' that was 'a genuine contribution from our race.' The many forms of jazz, specifically bebop, are prime examples of African American expression and culture.

The Black experience is incidents, altercations, and interactions that Blacks in America undergo due to their race, which affects their existence in society. For example, the external macro-level forces such as, socioeconomic hardship, inequality, and oppression. And the internal forces such as physical, emotional, and psychological adaptation against the struggles, which influence the complete essence of the experience (Hall, 716). The Black experience is often conveyed through music because it "has played a key role in…the creation and elaboration of a sense of identity" among the Diaspora of Africans in America (Martin, 251). Jazz materialized as a means of encouragement, unification, and expression by connecting Black people from various regional and socioeconomic backgrounds into one collective community. The Black experience is a perspective that most African Americans understand and share. Hence it promotes the creation of a shared interest among the many groups of one race.

Black originators of jazz did not create the music for mass production and international popularity, but to speak "the Black urban experience" (Martin, 263). Although jazz was appreciated and praised by Whites around the globe, it was created by African Americans for African Americans. The expression of this ethnic awareness was the key aspect of jazz. The idea that the music attributed to "the growth of a pan-African sense of identity" is confirmed in many jazz creations (Martin, 254). "African Americans preserve their experiences…in mostly forms of

cultural expression" and "music has provided the definitive voice" for Blacks to proclaim their shared ideology (Hall, 726). Black music bonded the oppressed because it spoke directly to their souls. Additionally, the distinct stylistic elements of jazz revived this powerful deep-rooted musical culture that clearly represented the sentiments of the African American community.

Jazz reflects Black culture in America through its African roots, cultural expressions, and rejection of White culture. Jazz "epitomizes the performance basis of African American music" and the elements of traditional Black music such as, call-and-response, improvisation, and repetition, are the "characteristics that make African American music distinctive and must be understood to originate...from [cultures] which the bulk of the slaves came" (Martin, 253). Understanding the history of Black music and how closely it relates to the distinct form and essence of jazz illustrates why jazz can be an ample portrayal of Black musical traditions. Additionally, the appeal of jazz to the idea of authentic blackness and its resistance to conform to classical European stylistics further demonstrates its purpose to express the Black experience.

In essence, "authenticity, paradoxically, is both a matter of finitude and the conscious refusal of the internal obedience that defines the being of the slave" (JanMohamed, 327). Therefore, the idea of authentic blackness refers to the utmost resistance of European influence and the ultimate assimilation of African American culture. Although jazz has undoubtedly been under the White persuasion, musically and administratively, when considering the idea of authentic jazz "the definitions must be Black" (Baraka, 70).

According to Henry Martin, "jazz is a twentieth century music originated in America by Black Americans and characterized by improvisation and a strong projection of rhythm" (Gridley, 515). "The interchangeability of the terms 'improvisation' and 'jazz' is common in the music business" which shows how much of an impact this distinct African American stylistic musical element have on the foundation of jazz (Gridley, 517). Traditional African melodic characteristics are clearly paralleled in jazz. Without the slave songs and Negro spirituals that attributed to the "distinctive African derived style" jazz would lack the authenticity that makes up the genre (Martin, 255).

In a jazz lyrics, issues of financial struggle, oppression, Black culture are addressed which mirror similar issues faced by many African Americans. Additionally, the use of African American vernacular by artists solidifies Black culture by preserving the dialect of their peers. Critically acclaimed jazz musician, Dizzy Gillespie, stated that "The music proclaimed our

identity" stressing the importance of jazz illustrating blackness and African American culture. Jazz music also rejected White culture by straying away from the traditional European classical forms. Jazz artists strayed away from formal composure and instead fell back on improvisation.

Moreover, the artists themselves resisted being a part of this mainstream culture by embracing their Afrocentricity. When Ellington's authenticity was questioned following his commercial success, he exclaimed that, "We are not interested primarily in the playing of jazz or swing music…Our music is always intended to be definitely and purely racial" (Porter, 1). By claiming this racial identity and directly associating it with their music, artists further utilized jazz as a form of expressing the Black experience. Jazz was not just music to many artists but a means of enriching their community. Ellington questioned, "Why don't we call what we do 'Negro music'" (Hentoff). He created songs like "Black, Brown, Beige" and "Black Beauty" to appeal to his people and uplift his race.

It is important to realize the effect Black music had on the culture, society, and spirit of the African American community. Although Black music had crossed over into mainstream culture, jazz is highlighted for its resounding influence on the idea of blackness and the maintenance of a collective culture. "American culture possesses an intrinsic Africanness within its creole complexity" (Martin, 252). Despite the European and Native American influences on music but nevertheless strongly reaffirms the "unusual resiliency" of its authenticity is frequently noted. The passionate vocals, the intense percussion, and the raw emotion revealed through improvisation are the elements of African American music that illustrate the struggles, pains, and sorrows of these once enslaved peoples.

Consequently, Black music created this culture that not only provided this Diasporic people an outlet for their anguish but a common ground they could all stand firmly on. "African American music since the 1940s has been deeply influenced by the growing political assertiveness of the Black liberation insurgency…Black self-definition and Black consciousness found resonance among exemplars of bebop and free jazz" (Martin, 266). Many subgenres of jazz were created from the political and social state of American society and its affect on the Black community. Art truly imitates life in relation to jazz and more specifically in bebop. "Bebop mirrored transformations in Black life, attitudes, and politics in the crucible of urban America during World War II" (Porter, 55). Through the origin and purpose of bebop, jazz can again be established as an adequate illustration of Black cultural expression.

Bebop can be an example of “authentic Negro music” because it reveals the struggles of the Black experience due to its “aesthetic of speed and displacement [which] reflected, albeit indirectly, the militant aspirations of its youthful, working-class audience and the political demands of the “Double-V” campaign (victory in the war overseas and victory in the fight against racial prejudice at home” (Porter, 56). African Americans that risked their lives for a country that did not even respect their rights, felt as if the racial tensions would lessen due to their military involvement. The perpetual discrimination they continued to face when they arrived back in the United States from fighting America’s wars showed these Black soldiers that despite their dedication to their country, they were still inferior. This outraged the Black community and “amid rising African American political demands and increasingly visible American youth cultures, bebop garnered new capital for jazz as a music that spoke to observers of social and cultural resistance” (Porter, 54).

Despite the strong racial representation in jazz, many critics such as Damion Phillips argue that the issue of jazz is more of a class struggle than a race struggle. Following its mainstream success, jazz’s intended audience expanded beyond its original community and its form and essence were open to heavy criticism and disapproval. According to Phillips, “jazz music emerged from New Orleans and came to the Midwest with musicians—both African-Americans and lower class Whites—who migrated from Louisiana and the rest of the South.” The genre’s Storyville origin attributes to its negative view of African Americans, as well as its rejection by middle and upper class America as a dominant art form. This created a constant assessment of the Black community, by Whites and Blacks alike but also created color blind class distinctions. It was not until jazz became a more accepted musical genre that the class and race struggles began to merge. For instance, music companies often employed “musicians of European operatic and classical music who could demonstrate the companies’ commitment with ‘‘high-class music’’ that ‘‘appeals to the best class of people.” White jazz artist Paul Whiteman’s bands were often praised because they “featured classically-trained musicians who were largely ‘ignorant of Black musical styles’” (Philips).

On the other hand, Perry Hall stated that “racism creates a shared experience around which Blacks universally identify” thus revealing the importance of color over class and culture (Hall 724). Jazz musicians confronted the issues of racism in American society and its affect on Blacks. These external forces that attribute to the essence of jazz are exactly what White patrons

are unable to genuinely relate to. While jazz was a collective American interest and brought Blacks and Whites together on a few dance floors and stages, it failed to evoke any significant social change due to the lack of cultural understanding of the genre by Whites. African Americans originated the art form but it was subsequently employed, exploited, and expanded by Whites through record companies, White artists, and mainstream America.

Despite the unquestionable African persuasion on jazz music, the issue of using jazz as an adequate representation of the African American community is the ownership and distribution of the music by Whites. White control of the packaging of jazz watered down its authenticity and diluted its genuine culture. Therefore, this influence tainted the true image of Black music and culture. "When Du Bois distinguished the authentic from the inauthentic in Black musical culture, the distinction was based less on African American uses of European forms than on White appropriation and marketing of Black forms" (Porter, 4). Since White record executives and managers had a say in the overall construction of the music, their manipulation of the art could be a significant factor of why jazz can be opposed as a realistic view of the Black community. Furthermore, the issue of White artists performing jazz music can evoke issues as well. According to Amiri Baraka, "jazz and blues *are* Western musics; products of all Afro-American culture…and in this sense European anything is irrelevant" (Martin, 267). The external forces and internal forces that create the essence of jazz cannot be expressed by White artists; no matter how talented they are, because they are not familiar with the Black experience.

By the same token, Billie Holiday was highly praised for her social conciseness when she recorded the song, "Strange Fruit" which addressed the horrors of lynching. Although many assumed Holiday penned the song herself, it was actually written by "a left-wing political activist, composer, and school teacher, Abel Meeropol (using the nom de plume Lewis Allan), saw a photo of a lynching, an image which 'haunted him for days'" (Daniels). The fact that this heart wrenching expression about Black struggles with violence in the Deep South was composed by a White man questions that notion that only African American artists can articulate the Black experience. The vision of "the bulging eyes and the twisted mouth" of the "Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze" are vivid details of the Black southern experience. These lyrics exposed the idea that Whites can contribute authenticity to the jazz world and rightfully portray the Black experience.

Despite White influence on the managerial and financial aspect, jazz was an art form for the creative expression of the Black experience for African Americans. From ragtime to fusion, jazz displayed pure innovation through its rapid and continuous alteration of musical style. But the purpose of the genre was as timeless as its African roots. The authentic struggles of a once enslaved people conveyed over a "rhythmic complexity" and melodic distinctiveness is the essence of Black music and a major factor in jazz. The "oral transmission of culture" was first employed by the African slaves in the New World through slave songs and subsequently Negro spirituals, and this articulation of expression is later mirrored in jazz (Martin, 254).

Nevertheless, it is imperative to note that jazz is "not all Black and White." There are many other factors that play into the definition of jazz. "Gender identity issues too, like racial ones, have always been and remain at the forefront of this music's history, in the confrontation between a Puritanic and larger Protestant cultural ethic and a more traditionally pagan, for want of a better word, when it comes to matters of sex, and the body, in society…likewise political dynamics have often been associated with the music, which can't be ignored…when tracking down this question of what jazz is" (Heffley).

All things considered, when evaluating the multifaceted themes, arguments, and beliefs of jazz, it is crucial to understand the significance jazz played in the history of African American culture. Jazz is not solely a Black expression when reviewing the various factors that attribute to its origin and purpose. However, jazz comprises specific stylistic elements distinct to African Diaspora music which make it a prime example of an expression of the Black experience.

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PERFORMING GENDER: THE DARLINGS OF RHYTHM, ORNETTE COLEMAN AND THE INTERNATIONAL SWEETHEARTS OF RHYTHM

CHALLENGING NORMATIVE CONCEPTIONS OF RACE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

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Despite normative constructions of race, gender, and sexuality, during the post-World War II era, the Darlings of Rhythm, Ornette Coleman, and the International Sweethearts of Rhythm complicated notions of racial, gendered and sexual identities.

The Darlings of Rhythm were organized in Harlem in the early 1940s by Lorraine Brown—an African American female saxophonists—in an effort to improve the working conditions of Black women musicians. According to Sherrie Tucker's analysis in "Nobody's Sweethearts: Gender, Jazz and the Darlings of Rhythm," meager wages and the poor health of Black women performers led Brown to organize the Darlings of Rhythm in 1943. Brown successfully enlisted qualified musicians from various parts of the United States and through skills and ingenuity, secured housing and shelter for the group members. Despite a tumultuous beginning characterized by uncertainty, the group ultimately emerged as a comparatively successful group.

According to the *Chicago Defender*, "the Darlings of Rhythm, America's all-girl bands is on the horizon of fame with Gene Ray Lee, hot trumpeter and Clarence Love, musical director. This all-girl orchestra compares with any in the business…." *The Pittsburgh Courier* extolled their managers for "unearthing the Darlings" and in its editorial piece described the group as "one of the nation's fastest bands" (qt. in Tucker, 264). In addition to receiving complimentary remarks, the Darlings were compared to the International Sweethearts of Rhythm (founded in 1937) to determine which ensemble possessed the most superb skills. Though comparisons surrounding musical ability occasionally surfaced, assessments examining the two distinct displays of sexuality and gender dominated discussions of difference. For example, the Darlings'

style of music was frequently characterized as “masculine.” Additionally, Tucker states that though the Sweethearts were capable of producing quality performances, their physical appearance led some to conclude that their ability to perform authentic jazz was hindered (Tucker, 256). Conversely, the Darlings were often described as “raggedy” and unkempt. Such distinct comparisons suggest that gender performance and/or sexuality was indicative of musical sustenance. In addition, though the Sweethearts enjoyed success, the Darlings’ ability to be recognized for performing “authentic” jazz was bolstered by accepted and static gender constructs. For instance, because male performers enjoyed greater success relative to female artists, musical prowess was in large part determined by one’s ability to imitate the characteristics of male jazz musician. Tucker comments on this occurrence by contending:

> Such descriptions evoke a jazz sphere where women didn’t necessarily present a glamorous image; where women’s nonglamarous or “raggedy” appearance might in fact be positively equated with a “swinging” sound; where women commanded audiences to listen to their music rather than ogle their bodies; and where women produced the a kind of “powerhouse” aesthetic that was variously described as “rougher” “more masculine” and “better” than what audiences expected from an “all-girl” band. (Tucker, 257)

Though some argued that the stage presence of the Darlings’ was an attempt produce “authentic” jazz, others suggested that the ensemble’s decision to create music did not directly challenge notions of womanhood or accepted gender differences (Tucker, 270). In sum, despite disagreement, the Darlings of Rhythm distinct style transgressed traditional notions of femininity and womanhood.

The Darlings unorthodox style caused contestation among established musicians. For example, after securing social and professional permanence as capable jazz musicians, the Darlings were scheduled to perform alongside Billie Holiday and other notable artists at Chicago’s Grand Terrace. Prior to the scheduled performance, the Darlings of Rhythm received praise and laudation for its musical prowess. In April 1944, the *Chicago Defender* labeled the Darlings “America’s No.1 all-girl orchestra”. The article continued by stating that the Darlings’ leading vocalists, Helen Taborn was as equally talented as both Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald (Tucker, 272). However, various sources suggest that Holiday did not display feelings of euphoria at the comparison or excitement about sharing the stage. In light of such wide recognition, many of the Darlings’ group members did not anticipate Holiday’s harsh criticism

and unfavorable reaction to their unconventional style. According to Frann Graddison (lead vocalists of the Darlings'), Holiday frequently employed insensitive language to refer to both their personal appearance and musical ability. Additionally, she questioned the Darlings' unconventional style of play. For instance, Holiday attempted to modify their style of play by attempting to "soften" the music. The Darlings' however resisted such changes and insisted that their music remain unchanged. Holiday's insistence that the Darlings' change their musical style seemed to stems from her efforts to secure her position as a talented female vocalist. Tucker states:

> Holiday's own approach to crafting an identity as a female jazz artist did not consist of "busting notes", nor did it entail straining to be heard over instrumentalists who "busted notes". Holiday's intervention into the usual gender division of jazz labor included her insistence that instrumentalists, who were usually male, listen to her as she listen to them, and to interact with her with the same spirit of collaboration and respect they would accord any other soloists in the band. (273)

In sum, though Holiday's critique of the Darlings of Rhythm was harsh, her stance stemmed from her desire to achieve respectability according to established standards of female performance.

In addition to the Darlings of Rhythm, the International Sweethearts of Rhythm also complicated social and gender constructs. The Sweethearts began as a fundraising effort in Mississippi for poor and orphaned African American children. The group consisted of mixed-raced members, including Chinese, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Native American and White. Such diversity challenged the racial distinctions that characterized the South during this period and also satisfied African American audiences eager to support both the internationalism and multiculturalism that the group represented. Additionally, the group's support of local educational initiatives served to bolster their respectability and popularity. The Sweethearts' efforts mirrored a history of Blacks providing basic reading and writing tutoring to African American youth. Since the ensemble founding in the late 1930s, the Sweethearts of Rhythm complicated racial distinctions. According to Tucker's "Internationalism and the Sweethearts of Rhythm", local authorities in the Southern United States remained "baffled" by the groups diverse membership. Tucker states:

> Since the founding of the band in 1937, the Sweethearts had included light-skinned, mixed-raced women: women who were part African American (and part White, Asian, Latina or Native American), and therefore legally Black by the one-drop rule.

Essentially, though many members were considered African American due to larger social and political constructs, the Sweethearts, nonetheless complicated racial norms. Further, the ensembles' racial diversity also represented attempts to forge alliances with oppressed people of color. For African American audiences of the 1940s, internationalism was engraved in the bands diverse range of skin color, facial features and birth origins. The African Americans press commended the Sweethearts for such diversity by stating that the group offered "an empowering social alternative to looking at blackness as a monolithic category of second-class status" (Tucker, 174). Some scholars contend that the ensemble's diversity mirrored the increasing nationalism of the period. For example, Eric Porter addresses the impact nationalism had on jazz by stating:

Black nationalism, torn from its circus aspects and made more palatable to a wider section of the Negro population, permeated every phase of Negro life. This orientation was also a product of pan-Africanist sentiment and the developing feelings of kinship with other people of color both within the United States and throughout the globe (qt in Porter, 60). Clearly, the band's ethnic diversity symbolized the groups' dedication to other people of color both within and outside the United States.

Further, the group challenged traditional gender norms in complex ways. Not only were the group members racially diverse, but lesbian and straight women were also represented among its ranks. According to Tucker, two of the groups' members—Tiny Davis and Ruby Lucas—enjoyed a lasting relationship. In conclusion, the International Sweethearts gained popularity among African American and Whites despite the fact that they effectively transgressing racial and gender norms. Though they were perceived as more feminine than the Daughters, they still transgressed gender roles in significant ways.

Despite claims that the International Sweethearts of Rhythms complicated notions of race and gender, others nonetheless suggested that the Sweethearts' aesthetic appearances undermined their ability to play authentic jazz music. For instance, according to Frann Gaddison—former member of both the Sweethearts and the Darlings'—the "Sweethearts played

buy they were pretty girls" (Tucker, 256). She continues her appraisal by stating that the "Sweethearts were very lavish, you know beautiful. They had hair-dos and make up…But they didn't swing. Gaddison's observation implied that the groups' overall physical attraction usurped its ability to perform authentic (masculine) jazz.

Additionally, Gaddison's comments reflect the debates that emerged during this period surrounding the importance of jazz. According to Porters analysis, during the first quarter of the twentieth century, debates emerged between W.E.B DuBois and New Negro intellectuals surrounding Black musical expression. DuBois argued that spirituals represented authentic African American musical expression. Conversely, he decried minstrel songs and other forms of imitation. The New Negro intellectuals of the Jazz Age also addressed similar concerns about minstrelsy; however, they arrived at different conclusions. These individuals sought to unearth an African American past, yet they remained deeply influenced by the Black nationalists sentiments surfacing throughout the globe (Porter 4-5). Accordingly, many of the critiques surrounding the Sweethearts during this period mirrored the larger intellectual debates.

Similar to both the Darlings' and the Sweethearts complication of gender, Ornette Coleman—renowned jazz artists of the 1940s—also challenged traditional gender constructs. According to Ake, Coleman's musical and personal preferences served to challenge traditional notions of masculinity within the jazz idiom. Ornette Coleman emerged during the 1940s as a leading jazz musician. Porter comments on bebop's emergence:

> Coming to prominence at the end of World War II, amid rising African American political demands and increasingly visible American youth cultures, bebop garnered new capital for jazz as a music that spoke to observers of social and cultural resistance. (54)

Clearly, bebop emerged during this period directly following overseas conflict and represented an alternative for jazz musicians. Porter states:

> Not only did the development of the music itself reflect the forward-looking, worldly perspectives of many of its practitioners, but their public responses to the idea of bebop (whether they embraced or rejected the term) also spoke of a rejection of artistic and social boundaries, which inspired their music. (55)

Though the emergence of bebop represented a challenge to artistic boundaries, notions of manhood and masculinity remained unchanged from earlier established notions of masculinist jazz standards. According to Ake, ability to display physical vigor and musical prowess were

symbolic of masculinity. Such characteristics were often displayed by attempting to play faster and louder than fellow musicians. In addition, drug use was also a signifier of masculinity. According to Ake, heavy drug use caused a "drag" in the individuals voice and also served to convey an "implacable demeanor." Despite such displays of masculinity, Coleman represented an alternative model. For example, "cutting contests"—challenges between musicians to determine who possessed superb skills—were seen as one of the most ultimate displays of masculinity, yet Coleman and his accompanying musicians refused to participate in such challenges. Coleman's decisions to undermine this obvious display of manhood "opened the door for a whole generation of players to find new criteria by which to understand themselves as jazz musicians" (Ake, 33).

Moreover, Coleman personal appearance and demeanor also served to re-masculinate the jazz space. For example, contrary to the preferred fashion of the period (dark suits), Coleman instead preferred casual attire. In addition, he preferred long hair, as opposed to short and ate vegetarian dishes. Coleman reflects on this image by stating:

> I was born in Texas and I was put in jail for having long hair, and I was called a homosexual, and I was going through so many things, and the only thing I was trying to do was find a way to have my own individual beliefs, freedom…I was a vegetarian and everything, and I hair down to my shoulders and a beard, and the cops took me to jail and cut my hair off (qt in Ake, 35).

Clearly, Coleman's "unusual" appearance served to challenge traditional forms of masculinity and attracted the attention of local authorities. Further, he also openly decried, in contemptuous terms, the sexuality surrounding jazz. He states:

> You don't know how many times I've come off the bandstand and had girls come up to me and hand me a note with their address on it…Sometimes I say to myself "Well, shit, if this is what it's all about, we should all be standing up there with hard-ons, and everybody should come to the club naked, and the musicians should be standing up there naked. Then there wouldn't be any confusion about what's supposed to happen and people wouldn't say that came here to hear music" (qt in Ake, 36).

Coleman's distaste of the sexual overtones within the jazz environment reached a new level of extreme after he inquired about possible castration. Clearly Coleman offered a variance to the most popularly known picture of jazz men. Despite the overt displays of masculinity and manhood, Coleman represented an alternative form of sexuality.

To conclude, though static racial and gender norms characterized the jazz idiom during the mid twentieth century and many aspects of the Jazz Age culture, both the Darlings and the International Sweethearts of Rhythm negotiated boundaries of race, class and sexuality in order to perform (Smith, 2000). Women jazz musicians, including Mary Lou Williams and Marian McPartland, like Darlings' or the Sweethearts, struggled to be recognized as "real" jazz artitst. Further, Ornette Coleman's challenge to traditional norms of masculinity by displaying an alternative form dress, appearance and sexuality, reveals a side of jazz history not often recognized in mainstream scholarship. Though sexual identity has been widely explored in historical areas like the Harlem Renaissance, rich work remains to be done in considering race, gender, sexuality, and jazz music.

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A VIEW OF "LOW LIFE," "HIGH LIFE," AND CLASS STRUCTURE IN THE JAZZ AGE

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American class structure is an idea of separation between groups of people based on their economic and social status. When American society and culture has attempted to become more morally distinguished, with heavy support of the progressive movement and social reformation, a counter movement of corruption and moral decay has created a new, more ambiguous class system. "Low class" is no longer confined to minorities, as the northern states have seen more inflow of migrant workers and slight economic booms across cultural lines have begun to blur historical social categories. Karl Marx's social, political and economic ideology discusses the plight of the working class in an industrial society. His discourse, coupled with the turmoil and economic discontent of America in the post World War I era lead to the social reforms of the post World War II era. He is important in understanding the constructions of class and the affects of class in the United States.

This paper will use political and economic evidence and jazz historiography to show the variables that contribute to class analyses of jazz. The varying opinions on jazz stem from many sources; this paper will address the role class has in framing different interpretations of jazz as well as its production and development. The idea of "authentic" jazz, as well as the feelings people had towards the music or the way the music should be, is instrumental in addressing the attitudes that shaped the basics of jazz. It is the intention of this paper to examine the role class movement, distinction, and structure has played in the advancement and perceptions of jazz in America.

The two World Wars caused young Americans to rethink the moral and social mores of their mothers and fathers. "Jazz developed during a period when Americans were redefining their ideas about culture."[1] Jazz music, with its rhythms and sensual sounds, created an backlash in American culture because for some the music was too sexual. The drawback to openly sexual music is that it distanced distinguished citizens from the music; some critics argued that it was far too socially deviant to be treated as a respected art.

The rhythmic qualities of jazz, the participatory elements of its performance, and the physical aspects of the dancing associated with it spoke of unrestrained sexual energies, which had long been projected onto Black bodies by Europeans and White Americans. At a moment when many young people (and young women in particular) were throwing off the constraints of Victorian sexual mores, anxieties over White juvenile sexuality dove-tailed with fears of Black sexuality and, especially, of the impact Black culture might have on the sexual behavior of young Whites. [1]

The "low class" status attributed to jazz music became a part of the split culture within Black and White communities. In the twenties, when jazz began its prominence, moving beyond the clubs in New Orleans, an economic boom related to World War I gave people a reason to dance and a chance to truly enjoy a truth-telling music. The music represented an age of prosperity and good feelings that permeated American culture. However, the Great Depression generated a very different cultural feeling especially in lower class society where the Depression was felt the worst.

Louis Armstrong was an important component in the evolution and prosperity of jazz music. He is credited with much of the success of jazz music. "Jazz experts, even the purists who criticized Mr. Armstrong for his mugging and showmanship, more often than not agreed that it was he [who]… took the raw, gutsy Negro folk music of the New Orleans funeral parades and honky-tonks and built it into a unique art form."[2] Some African Americans embraced jazz and blues and their various forms. Prominent Black artists with voices that can reach the public have supported the music as a voice of the people. For example, "Richard Wright saw the difference between North and South embodied in their music… the new forms of blues, jazz, swing, and boogie-woogie were 'spirituals' of the city pavements, representing our longing for freedom and opportunity…". It was music in which people could gather together and share a single voice. The suffering and pains of an entire class of people were identified in a single rhythm, or beat, or melody.

Armstrong demonstrated the mingling of class relations through jazz music. He was a low life, a criminal, and he found a way to greatness. He wrote, "I was foolin' around with some tough ones… Get paid a little money, and a beeline for one of them gambling houses. Two hours, man, and I was a broke cat… Needed money so bad I even tried pimping, but my first client got jealous of me and we got to fussing about it and she stabbed me in the shoulder. Them

was wild times."[2] How could a man like that become so famous that the president speaks out after his death? President Richard Nixon said, "Mrs. Nixon and I share the sorrow of millions of Americans at the death of Louis Armstrong. One of the architects of an American art form, a free and individual spirit, and an artist of worldwide fame, his great talents and magnificent spirit added richness and pleasure to all our lives."[2] Armstrong had come from the pitfalls of the ghettos of New Orleans to become revered as an artist-- and a as national figure. Yet the low class aspect still kept some from embracing the music.

W.E.B. Dubois is one of many Black artists who were hesitant to accept jazz as a cultural voice for Black people. Dubois was raised in a situation in Massachusetts where he was given more opportunities as a middle class African American than he would have received in more southern states. "Because of this economic leveling, Dr. DuBois was not faced with racial discrimination until he had left New England to attend college in the South." [23] Dubois grows up in a community in which social status is more economically focused than it is racial. "Dubois Hated jazz."[22] Jazz brought a very negative connotation with it that made intellectual Blacks attempt to distance themselves from the lower class idealism associated with the music and the culture. This repulsion from "low brow" jazz music was not isolated to intellectual Blacks. Paul Whiteman, a White orchestra leader, "…attempted to make jazz more respectable by constraining its syncopated rhythms and tonal embellishments and fusing it with popular song and classical music."[1] Despite Black musicians' arguable influence in the initial conception of jazz music, Eric Porter cites, "many White fans probably knew jazz only through the work of White musicians."[1] Some could argue that while jazz brought elements of American culture together, it was because of White artists that the music itself was heard in the mainstream at all. Jazz acquired an unofficial stigma as the music of Black people. "Musical 'authenticity' also symbolized the restrictions that segregation and racism had imposed on African American life." [1]

Porter argues that jazz music came about as a result of Black communities becoming more incorporated in American social and economic life. "Jazz emerged when Black musicians and other African Americans became immersed in modern life at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth." [1] During this period of time, a large amount of migration was taking place with southerners moving to northern regions in hopes of employment. "What happened during the high-pressure years of 1916-19 was not simply a change in racial employment policies but a redirection of the geographic scope of unskilled labor

markets.” [3] The industrial shift of the global economy increased the availability of employment in northern industrial factories. Although a great migration of Black southerners occurred, and a shift in the make up of social class structures changed, the shift was national because White immigrants also were affected by the adjustment in production. “White southerners migrated north in far greater numbers than Blacks, but their migration did not attract the same attention or violence.”[3] Inner city housing conflicts which restrained Blacks to low cost housing in the parts of town with the brothels and the gambling rings led to increased stereotypes of Blacks and violence. “…as Blacks lost in the competitive bid for better jobs, they were forced deeper and deeper into the most dilapidated sections of the city.” [3] Finding work and maintaining a job were very tough during the Great Depression, and before civil rights legislation, Blacks were usually the last candidates considered for a position in an industry controlled by Whites.

Prominent Black American artists have presented various views on the class structure of jazz music itself, and they each come from different social backgrounds. Duke Ellington to put into perspective the idea of popular music”

> I am not playing jazz. I am trying to play the natural feelings of a people. I believe that music, popular music of the day, is the real reflector of the nation’s feelings. Some of the music which has been written will always be beautiful and immortal. Beethoven, Wagner and Bach are geniuses; no one can rob their work of the merit that is due it, but theses men have not portrayed the people who are about us today, and the interpretation of these people is our future music… The Negro is the blues. Blues is the rage in popular music. And popular music is the good music of tomorrow![1]

He argued that popular music represented his culture. Interestingly, he defines the blues as the Negro’s but he does not take ownership of jazz. This is evidence of the variant ownership and attribution of jazz by different components of American culture. “Jazz received a fair amount of negative press in the late 1910s and then became the object of a moral panic during the 1920s.”[1] Jazz carried a negative stigma among “respected” artists, in the music industry and highbrow American culture, so to claim it was often detrimental to the movement that artists like Ellington were attempting to be a part of. They wanted a product defined simply by the music and not the atmosphere in which it was produced. This example shows that information about jazz must be attributed to the artists who directly impacted the interpretation and creation of jazz.

When the government deinstitutionalized segregation in the World War II military, the soldiers returned with hopes of equality, and when those hopes are dashed, a new wave of more

militant discontent arose in oppressed areas. History shows that when people were expected to risk their lives for a country, they expected a certain amount of collateral liberty. These elements involved in the production of jazz music created a class structure within the art that was influenced by labor, war, cultural production, and migration. Jazz musicians came together and separated themselves from one another, based on complex ideologies and performance. The American class system shaped the ideas of jazz musicians and affected the perspective certain Americans had about jazz culture and music.

Because of influential musicians and shifts in economic class, the era of jazz music complicates cultural construction. This history also challenges views of morality and perceptions of normative behaviors around social class. The many varying factors in the construction of social class contributed a great deal to the views and opinions on the significance and respectability of jazz music. The negative stigmas of sexual and moral depravity generally associated with the jazz culture (i.e. Louis Armstrong when he was younger) bring into question the historical value of jazz music and the jazz lifestyle. Regardless of these value judgments, it must be acknowledged that the jazz generation provided an artistic outlet for the lower class, where the thoughts, emotions, and concerns of a struggling people could have a voice and be heard.

Notes

1. Eric Porter, *What is this Thing Called Jazz? African American Musicians as Artist, Critics and Activists* (U of California Press, 2002).

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THE ECONOMY OF JAZZ PRODUCTION

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Like a new invention, jazz was a product in which record companies acted as businessmen and musicians as employers who altered their product to fit the appeal of all. Without the business aspect of jazz, it would be difficult for it to have been infused in American culture and have appealed to audiences across the world. However, there was a downside to jazz industry's profitability: the musicians had little control over their work and received only a small portion of profit. As a result, popular musicians produced a watered down version of jazz and to some, money became as much an enemy as a friend. An enemy in the sense that it changed and corrupted the art, but a friend in the sense that without it, jazz could not have grown to the magnitude it did allowing it to be studied today.

In jazz's beginnings, it was a humble art created with European, Caribbean and African sounds that could only be heard by touring bands from New Orleans. The first jazz players were innovators such as Jelly Roll Morton and Buddy Bolden, but although excelling in the art, they gained minimal mainstream popularity. Part of the reason for this is the reluctance of early jazz artists to record their songs for fear of being copied. However, an all White band called the Original Dixieland Jazz Band would break this tradition and record the first ever jazz record in 1917. This would mark the beginning of commercialized jazz. The recording featured a mock or imitative version of jazz which did not compare with the quality or originality offered by prominent jazz musicians of the time. Despite its low quality, the Dixieland Band brought jazz into the homes of Americans who did not make a habit of visiting jazz clubs (Burns, 2001).

In jazz's peak during the jazz age of the 20s and 30s, it was a booming industry with money to be made in jazz clubs, records and concert hall performances. Much like minstrel shows before, jazz performances provided salaries for an array of entertainers from musicians like Duke Ellington to singers like Billie Holliday and dancers like Katherine Dunham. These were the artists, but the real money makers were those managing the musicians. These were the promoters, night club owners and record company executives. They earned the most profit off of

the musicians' talent by more often than not exploiting them and giving them a low percentage of the money they earned. Unfortunately, this often was on racial lines with the businessmen being White and the musicians African Americans (Peretti, 1992).

A musician needed a promoter to become popular. He was the necessary evil in jazz business in that he popularized the musician as much as possible in order to make a maximum profit. They would do this by organizing club performances, selling records, marketing band leaders, creating competition among bands, etc. The problem with the promoters was that they were businessmen not artists. Therefore, they did not appreciate the musician's artistry nor did they appreciate the musicians' hard work. They exploited them by taking most of the profit and hiding musicians' lawful royalty rights (Peretti, 1992). An example of this would be Earl Hines, a jazz pianist and band leader in Chicago during the 1920s. His promoter, Ed Fox, paid Hines $150 a week and the rest if his band $75 to $90. Fox kept $3500 to himself. Hines even admitted that "Whites [in the 1920s] began to realize the talent Negroes had, and they began scheming how to commercialize it" (Peretti, 1992).

Another problem musicians faced was the jazz clubs, which were sometimes operated by gangsters especially in big cities such as Chicago and New York. These gangsters left the musician with virtually no rights to negotiate and used intimidation so the musician would comply. Duke Ellington was at one time threatened to be burned for refusing to work with a gang. Because of his connections, he was able to be protected. Not everyone was so fortunate though. "Gangsters sometimes harassed, maimed and even kidnapped musicians who disobeyed them or who were simply symbolic targets in the employ of rivals." The latter would happen to Joe Darensbourg, a New Orleans musicians playing in Harrisburg, Illinois in the 1920s. He was shot three times and pistol whipped as a message to his employers from a rival gang. Louis Armstrong's own promoter, Joe Glaser, was a former overseer for Al Capone and runner of a prostitution ring. He would work with Armstrong from 1935 until the Armstrong's death in 1971. Even in the mainstream jazz world, crime and music seemed to overlap (Peretti, 1992).

Record sales were perhaps the most efficient way for jazz musicians, especially African Americans, to reach a mainstream audience. Blacks were continually discriminated against in hotels and on the radio so they had to rely heavily on recordings (Porter, 2002). During the early 1900s, phonograph sales were increasing with each year. Of the Black homes in the rural South in 1939, 2 percent had telephones, 13 percent had electricity, 17 percent had radios but 28

percent had a phonograph (Peretti, 1992). In a 1952 *New York Times* article, the author predicts "that it will not be long before records as a business outstrip books in dollar turnover. Therefore, records were an essential part of a jazz musicians' success since the phonograph would be more popular than the radio (Taubman, 1952).

Record producers, much like promoters, would use this opportunity to make a maximum amount of money off of musicians. They would pay the artists was little as possible, pay the instrumentalists a flat fee without royalties, and hide royalties from musicians. Also, because of some producers' lack of knowledge on jazz, they would often water down the recordings. Jack Kapp, a record producer, diluted jazz music through his recordings by simplifying the melody and limiting improvisation because of the simple fact that he did not understand jazz. If artists were lucky and knowledgeable enough, they would retain their royalty rights and would be substantially profitable off of record sales. An example of this would be Paul Whiteman, who receiving royalties, would make thousands off of record sales (Peretti, 1992).

World War II proved to be a desperate time for jazz musicians because of entertainment taxes, blackouts and curfews. Traveling, a large factor in the jazz musicians' life having to go from city to city became an expensive endeavor with the rise of gasoline prices. Then, in 1942, James Petrillo, president of AFM, announced a recording ban as a strike so jukebox companies will pay royalties to musicians. On top of that, the material used to make records, shellac, was rationed because of the war (Porter, 2002). With all these forces pulling at the jazz musicians, and exploitation at every turn, it should be no wonder why most musicians would never find wealth in jazz and even end up in debt because of it. In Malcolm X's *Autobiography*, he recalls the hardships of his good friend, Shorty, who was an aspiring musician. After being in a band for years, Shorty ended up in debt. Malcolm X says, "How could Shorty have anything? I'd spent years in Harlem on the road around the most popular musicians, the "names" even, who really were making big money for musicians—and they had nothing" (Haley, 1964).

Some have argued this systematic exploitation was a part of a racial mistreatment on Black culture by Whites. Kelley Norman charged that jazz was only a part of a broad pattern of Whites in America who stole Black art to gain wealth and commercialized success at the expense Black artists. "Black music has become a part of a structure of stealing that ranges from the minstrel shows of pre-Civil War America, to White composers copying Black jazz styles, to White rockers covering original Black R&B songs, to segregating music by Black performers as

"race music" and thus limiting their audience appeal…" The author further argues that all White ethnic groups have done their part in capitalizing off of Blacks from "Anglo-Saxons (slavery), Irish (minstrelsy), Jews (Hollywood, the record industry), Italians (mob influence) — have participated with regard to Black music forms" (Norman, 1999).

Those who did mange to achieve some wealth and popularity had problems far beyond financial woes. These artists who played commercial music had their artistry question by other jazz musicians and critics who believed these artists were playing a watered down commercialized version of jazz. As Rudi Blesh stated in 1946, "Commercialism [is] a cheapening and deteriorative force, a species of murder perpetuated… by Whites. Commercialism is a thing not only hostile, but fatal to [jazz]." This can be seen in jazz musicians who only opted to play jazz in order to sustain themselves. When jazz's popularity reached its peak, it had a downside to some Black musicians, who because of segregation and racism, were forced into playing jazz music to earn money, even if this was not their real music interest. (Porter 33).

Jazz musicians have forever battled the line between commercial success and pure art. Some would argue that there is a distinct difference between jazz and commercialized jazz so much so that the commercial version can not even be called jazz. "Commercial musicians… become different from jazz musicians" (Stebbins, 1966). Others argue the commercialized jazz has deteriorated the core of jazz music, which involves the Black experience that becomes lost with popularity. This can especially be seen with White musicians who often gain more popularity and respect than Black ones. An example of this would be Paul Whiteman whose band became the first to sell a million records in 1917. Whiteman, a White band leader, tried to disguise the roots of jazz as being an African American. He is quoted for saying at a concert hall that jazz music is a music "which sprang into existence about ten years ago from nowhere in particular." Not only did White musicians gain more respect, it was through White criticism that jazz was validated in the first place (Porter, 2002).

As much as jazz musicians wanted to keep their music authentic, it was necessary for some sort of commercialization in order to resonate with audiences. Therefore, the promoters' input, while coming solely from a business sense, was important. Jazz which was not created for commercial appeal had a smaller chance of finding an audience. These musicians who would work purely for the creativity of jazz would end up with "composition and playing [that] are too

radical to be acceptable to the general public and …consequently, not likely to make much money" (Stebbins, 1966). An example of this would be pianist Herbie Nichols who considered himself of jazz purist who would create music without the demands of the jazz industry during the 1940s and 1950s. Because of his decision, though, he never gained much success forcing him to give piano lessons and perform in Dixieland bands for income (Porter, 2002).

Unfortunately for Nichols, the jazz industry during the jazz age was not controlled by the musicians, but rather the businessmen we have explored before. This left jazz musicians in a difficult position with in the jazz world. They were the ones producing the product, but they had little input in how that product would be sold or received (Porter, 2002). The ideal would be for the musician to lead a double life, one that enabled them to be successful financially as well as continue their creative and innovative jazz playing. A musician who could master both would find true success in the jazz business being able to enjoy the riches of commercial success while still being respected as an artist. In this instance, it is the only way money moves from its corrupting position, but rather allows for creativity and art to flourish (Stebbins, 1966).

This culture of successful jazz remains in its own class because of the negative connotation of both jazz and commercial art. As Scott De Veaux argues, "The music of an oppressed minority culture, [it is] tainted by its association with commercial entertainment in a society that reserves its greatest respect for art that is carefully removed from daily life" He further argues that commercialization only corrupts jazz entertainment (De Veaux, 1991).
By the end of the jazz age, jazz would steadily decline in popularity, being overshadowed by new genres such as rock n roll and R&B during the 1960s. With the passing of Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong in the 1970s, jazz seems to lose a relevancy that would only continue to decline. With this decline, musicians who could find little income during jazz's popularity would only face the same fate during jazz's decline. During the 1950s, jazz offered few opportunities for wealth. Swing music was still on the boom, however. "Like salsa today, jazz in the 1950s was a good way to make a living and a lousy way to get rich." Musicians had to focus on cities like New York because other cities like Detroit and Philadelphia had no recording industries.

In our modern day, jazz has become much like classical music, a genre of music that is studied rather than used for popular entertainment. Classical and jazz music have been neck in neck in record sales throughout the 1990s. According to the Recording Industry Association of

America, these two genres have some of the lowest recording sales just ahead of oldies and New Age. Jazz is able to achieve about three percent of the business in music sales. As a result, big record companies such as Columbia are reluctant to sign new, young jazz artists. In order to break a new artist in general it requires an almost $100,000 investment on the part of the record company. What young jazz artists that do exist, they are lucky to sell 15,000 records in an 18-month period, which is not enough incentive for record companies. Even, Wynton Marsalis, a well-known modern jazz artist, pulls in numbers like these. Therefore, jazz is thriving off of small, independent labels who are dedicated to the art.

Another factor that makes it hard for young artists is the competition with old jazz legends like Dizzy Gillespie, Armstrong and Billie Holiday. Record companies constantly re-release these artists whose names resonate with audiences of all ages. Competition with these legends is almost unfair for new artists who produce a different type of jazz. Couple that with new genres of music such as hip-hop and jazz has become an ancient genre. Matt Pierson, head of the jazz department at Warner Brothers, said although exaggerating that "the audience for straight jazz is made up of aging White males. In ten years, after they've all had heart attacks, it'll be left with no audience."

The monetary realm of jazz has proven to be both a negative and positive influence within the construct of jazz culture. Jazz could not have thrived had it not been received so well by the mainstream. Much like jazz today, Jazz Age culture may have resonated with a small audience whose lack of resources would have been the end of jazz. However, despite the wealth of club owners and industry moguls behind jazz, musicians could make a living and often had the freedom to write what they wanted and played how they felt without the influence of the businessmen surrounding them. It seems money was both the box that constrained jazz creativity and the wings that helped it flourish. It is this paradox that makes the economy of jazz a complex and intriguing subject.

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