

# The Sound of Racial Feeling

Ronald Radano

*Abstract: Critics continue to debate the value of U.S. black music according to a flawed distinction between racial authenticity and social construction. Both sides have it half-right. Black music's value arose historically as the result of a fundamental contradiction in the logic of race tracing back to the slave era. As "Negro" in form, the music was constituted as the collective property of another property, a property-in-slaves. The incongruity produced a perception of black music as an auditory form embodied with fleshly substance, and this sense of racial feeling would live on despite its inconsistencies with modern ideas about race.*

RONALD RADANO is Professor of Music and a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is presently writing a book on the historical formation of black music's racial feeling and value. He co-edits the book series *Refiguring American Music* (Duke University Press) and *Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology* (University of Chicago Press).

The feel of the body, the sensation of flesh, is never very far from the sound of black music. This quality of embodiment – of animated sound waves working affectively to link person to person – sits at the very heart of its aesthetic value. Listeners often describe U.S. black music as if there were a common sentience, or even a human presence, in its audible makeup. This condition is most obvious in vocal renditions, but particularly revealing are those circumstances in which there is no singer singing, or in which voice represents but one aspect of a larger expression. For example, listeners frequently comment that a particular instrumentalist's tone sounds warm, angry, intimate, or sensuous, to the point of granting that player's timbre and embouchure qualities of emotion. Jazz lovers, moreover, have long compared improvisations to acts of storytelling, recognizing greatness in musical tales that seem to fuse sound with the personality of the artists who play them.

Yet another line of thinking identifies the physicality of black music in its historical associations with dance, a linkage that traces back to early modern styles such as the cakewalk and ragtime. It would be hard to fathom James Brown's recording of *Cold Sweat* without also calling to mind the

Downloaded from [http://direct.mit.edu/daed/article-pdf/142/4/126/1831606/daed\\_a\\_00239.pdf](http://direct.mit.edu/daed/article-pdf/142/4/126/1831606/daed_a_00239.pdf) by guest on 02 October 2022

---

© 2013 by the American Academy of Arts & Sciences  
doi:10.1162/DAED\_a\_00239

image of his bodily struts and gyrations; to remember Michael Jackson's performances without imagining the grace, precision, and flow of his onstage virtuosity; or to appreciate Nas's hip-hop videos without their accompanying assembly of sultry bodies, clad in high-end ghetto chic. And yet there is still something else going on when we encounter black music's racial feeling, bringing about a condition that reaches to the core of the music's value as it has come to inform the overall character of modern U.S. pop. This feeling involves the historical depth of black music's literal, bodily attachments, producing a palpable affect of human form so enduring that it is difficult to listen without also experiencing the fleshly sensation of blackness as such. It is this perception, built upon historical peculiarities in U.S. racial structures, that still orients black music's value and that continues to inform its experience well after the significance of race in other fields of public knowledge has largely been discredited.

Some might claim that a sense of the body is common to all musical experience, or at least to all music that has come to be experienced in the modern West. Oliver Sacks, for one, has argued that music's affective capacities are inherent to perception, its relation to the living so intimate as to suggest an auditory sentience, inducing a condition of "musicophilia . . . [where] music itself feels almost like a living thing."<sup>1</sup> To be sure, philosophers from Herder to Schopenhauer, and music theorists from Heinrich Schenker to Donald Tovey, have engaged a vast metaphorical language in order to evoke a sense of music as embodied form, whether depicted abstractly in the spirit of *Das Volk* or in the organicism of European harmony. But the masterworks of the European canon have not occupied the lion's share of public attention in the United States for

the past century or so; rather, another realm of musical mastery, produced under the guise of the popular and for which black music has served as the informing impulse, has dominated.

The extraordinary innovations of African American musical artists are where audiences in the United States and in metropolises around the world have commonly sought their cultural truth in sound, perceiving in these diverse performances a wisdom and realness coalescing as racial blackness. It is not simply the case that black music represents the United States' contribution to a greater embodied musicality, expressing a condition inherent in all musical creations. Rather, black music's qualities of animation are deeply seated in a racial logic that is unique to African American practices and that grows from a prior ideological order of knowledge. The embodied experience of black music brings about a collision of ideological systems of thought, a conflict producing an aesthetic order so powerful that it seems even to short-circuit semiotic processes. In a modern world of artifice and hyper-mediation, listeners discover in black music a naturalness and aliveness that conjures the uncanny feeling of a discernible, fleshly presence.

During the thirty-year period after World War II, U.S. black music acquired a stature unprecedented in the history of the nation, an elevation of cultural rank and visibility that established it for the first time as a legitimate American cultural form. What brought about this progressive ascendancy relates to a complex of factors, ranging from changes in attitudes about artistic practice among some of the nation's leading African American musicians to the international circulation of black jazz and pop performers under the auspices of the U.S. government; from the rising power and presence of musical

Ronald  
Radano

entertainment in U.S. consumer society to the growing interest in African American culture after the appearance of a new strain of civil-rights activism and the decolonization of African states.<sup>2</sup> Yet it is difficult to imagine the shift in legitimacy taking place had it not been for still another factor: namely, the curious paradox informing the comprehension of black music as a national cultural expression. As black music assumed a central place in the mainstream of modern life, commentators representing a range of perspectives seemed to agree that what defined the music above all was its connection to an earlier era, when the music's racially distinctive features were thought to be plain and clear. Despite the music's enormous diversity, its wide visibility in contemporary pop, and its unprecedented interaction with the broad spectrum of popular style, many observers preferred to focus on what was different about black music, to the point of proposing that this difference could be traced to a racial aspect masked in the language of "culture," to a realness or soulfulness reaching to the very heart of black being.

Claims of black music's soulful essence were closely bound up with more practical, on-the-ground concerns about cultural ownership, which were being raised at the time by leading artists and activists. For many of these committed advocates, black music represented a form of aesthetic property with a deep history that rightfully deserved to remain exclusively under the control of black people.<sup>3</sup> "The idea of the Negro's having 'roots' and that they are a valuable possession rather than the source of ineradicable shame," Amiri Baraka (then LeRoi Jones) wrote at the time in his foundational history of black music, "is perhaps the profoundest change within the Negro consciousness since the early part of the [twentieth] century."<sup>4</sup> Constituted within the social world of

the United States, the difference of musical blackness had been formally recognized as a property form. But it was a property form that seemed to matter much more than a parcel of land or a bag of goods. This particular property was seated at the heart and soul of the African American collectivity, to the point where many believed that one could actually hear in black music the very presence of black humanity. Given how intimately connected it was to the black body, "if anyone should sell it," argued the black activist Booker Griffin, "it should be black people."<sup>5</sup>

It is striking that a new coalescence of ideas about black music's qualities of animation had entered into public knowledge at precisely the same time that enduring beliefs in race were finally coming undone. Just as the biological and social sciences were making plain that physical and phenotypical differences between humans bore no relevance to intelligence, personality, or character, and at the very moment when appeals for political justice were insisting on the equality of all U.S. citizens regardless of color or countenance, the rhetoric surrounding black music had intensified and nearly codified racist notions of musical essence, suggesting, in effect, that audible differences based on race were real.<sup>6</sup> One might imagine that the entertainment industry's heightened economization of black music would have served to dismantle, rather than to elevate, claims of essence and authenticity, more typical of our understanding of fetishized commodity-forms, whose production and labor are obscured. And yet the music's status as an economized, cultural property appeared actually to have increased its liveliness, its anthropomorphized aura, making it seem to possess, in common parlance, a quality of soul. What in fact made black music different from other musical forms was not some metaphysical condition of

blackness, but rather its material origins as a commodity, first taking shape as part of a racial economy under antebellum slavery. The fleshliness of blackness, the soulful sense of it as a living thing, had entered into post-World War II U.S. culture from a prior time and place. Racial-ideological and economic forces were fundamental to black music's origins and mystification, bringing about what we might think of as an act of appropriation that was never entirely completed. It is in this incompleteness – in African Americans' partial retention of an inalienable, racialized cultural property – that we locate the basis of black music's affective character.

What I am calling the racial feeling of black music originates in an early struggle over cultural ownership that took place when black music was first constituted as a public form. In "Negro music," U.S. slaves produced what may be African America's first and most enduring collective property, an expression recognized and acknowledged as attached to the black body as it existed within the larger social arena of the South. While group performances had always been a part of black social life, reaching back far in African history, they underwent a profound transformation in the context of antebellum Southern culture. If these performances contributed to the making of historical, African ritual practices, they became heightened in significance as they underwent translation within the frames of Western knowledge in the United States, ultimately proving disruptive to the prevailing social order. Significantly, a newly conceived "Negro music" was thought by whites not to be music in the common form, but a direct outgrowth of an inferior species, a property, "Negro slave," which revealed in sound inborn qualities of character and temperament. Racialized, black sound, many observers suggested,

related directly to the physiology of the African body; it therefore could never be entirely extracted from the slaves' possession. Out of this rather bizarre logic, a strange thing happened: a property-form named "slave" was now in possession of its own property; it had created property where no property should have rightly existed. And from this seemingly miraculous development, turning on a glitch in the racial logic of the U.S. slave economy, black chattel established during the late-antebellum era an entire world of its own, a distinctive, musically informed culture whose value depended on the music's structural inaccessibility to a white majority. Seemingly autonomous, "Negro music" was in fact fundamentally connected to the primary, economic context of masters and slaves, to a social relation that determined its racial particularity.

Thinking about the rise of black music this way helps us revise the common assumption that it grew directly out of the internal contexts of an insider culture, and enables us to bring the music's understanding into alignment with current philosophical theories of blackness.<sup>7</sup> Such a way of thinking also challenges the view that black music is a strictly "black" entity that, despite its various transmutations, has somehow maintained an enduring quality or essence – a "changing same," as Baraka famously called it – unique to African American experience and accessible to whites only after having emerged, full-blown, from the confines of absolute blackness. Thinking about black music this way, finally, helps us recognize how it emerged and evolved according to identifiable social processes along the symbolic boundaries that structured a profoundly racialized world.<sup>8</sup> Black music's value is not, in reality, inherent to a racialized physicality, nor did it arise in its essential form directly out of the African past, no matter how

Ronald  
Radano

important a role that past played in the music's formation. Rather, it developed as the result of an unequal economic relation, as a property of a greater property-in-slaves, whose performative engagements with the "supernatural" established precedents for sonically based forms of exchange. From the start, the music's power was patently material: it simultaneously exceeded white control while also remaining structurally embedded in a white-majority world. Black music's very constitution depended on the relation of domination and resistance within the ideological force fields of racist belief.

It follows, then, that the idea of "Negro music" could not have come into existence had it not been for a nineteenth-century conception of race that allowed for humans to be categorized as a species of property. That status meant that any creative expression produced by slaves should remain under the rightful claim of white mastery; never would the slaves' music simply be "music," for it would always be attached to those black bodies-as-things. The refusal of whites to observe black music as "music" marked the basis of its inaccessibility; despite their status as owners, the slaves' masters could never fully possess black music and culture. After slavery, moreover, this embodied, racial feeling within black music would elevate its cultural value and its authenticity, identifying a kind of secret life existing within the music's resonant forms. While contemporary writers still commonly argue that authenticity is inherent to black music, and that it is in fact what has compelled whites to repeatedly attempt to steal it, we might better understand authenticity as something born out of a botched robbery involving two colluding parties. Here, the thieves (whites) could never wholly possess that which they attempted to steal; the very ground rules they had established and operated

under, rules that had invented difference, precluded their ownership of black music. The incompleteness of white claims would thus expose a fundamental contradiction in the relationship of race and culture, whereby black music's inextricable attachment to the black body limited white entitlement to what was, in the emerging modern, deemed to be a publicly accessible commodity-form.

Beyond the slave era and into the first two decades of the twentieth century, the bodily attachments of black music remained deeply connected to new African American forms, carrying forward an increasingly anachronistic idea of race into the modern. What was perceived to be only partially accessible to whites steadily grew in aesthetic value, particularly as black musical forms began to circulate as commodities and as the racial idea of an impermeable cultural blackness assumed a central place in popular thinking. Listeners came to believe that black music's embodiment revealed a peculiar African American sensibility that was somehow shielded from the wider white realm, when, in fact, the music's embodiment had simply expanded via the machinery of the consumer market. Mass circulation brought black music seemingly everywhere as it rapidly developed within the emerging lingua franca of popular music, appearing in the new genres of musical theater, ragtime, blues, and "syncopated music." These styles, in turn, inspired new expressions by white vaudeville and blackface entertainers, whose conscious imitations and musical derisions reinforced the idea of blackness as real. This is why interracial musical relation and exchange would never tarnish black music's realness, why the white, attempted robbery of black music was always inevitably botched; it had to be in order to maintain the very idea of race. Had it not been for this historical

legacy and the racial logic it produced, the value attached to black musical authenticity would have never endured. Indeed, had it not been for race, black musical authenticity would never have existed in the first place.<sup>9</sup>

It was around this same time that celebrated black musical forms came to play a critical role in shaping a distinctive African American history, uncompromised by white knowledge and claim. James Monroe Trotter's portrayal of black stage performers in *Music and Some Highly Musical People* (1878) and W.E.B. Du Bois's tribute to the "sorrow songs" in the *Souls of Black Folk* (1903) are two famous examples. Better known at the time among African American city dwellers, however, were the efforts of a new generation of black popular composers who proposed that their syncopated music provided evidence of black cultural and racial uniqueness. Among the most familiar today is pianist Scott Joplin, who embraced the belief in a racially identifiable musical essence echoing forth from a distant past. "There has been ragtime music in America ever since the Negro race has been here," Joplin told the African American critic Lester Walton in 1913. It was just that "white people took no notice of it until about twenty years ago." The celebrated bandleader James Reese Europe similarly asserted that the essence of black popular music was very old, reaching back to a primal order. In an exchange from 1909, he told Walton that white people were basically clueless about this origin, having become confused by their own stylistic labels. The term "ragtime," Europe explained, "is merely a nick-name, or rather a fun name given to Negro rhythm by our Caucasian brother musicians many years ago."<sup>10</sup> For both Joplin and Europe, the animated properties of black music could never be extracted; indeed, they could only

be vaguely comprehended by whites. But in that vagueness, one discerned the presence of a black body enlivening audible black forms. As Walton himself asserted, despite its long history within a majority-white world, Negro music was "of purely Negro origin."

In all of these instances, black music was understood as a primordial entity, a racially determined sound form whose economized origins in slavery were reenvisioned according to a new origin in the African past, only to be reeconomized and reracialized in the modern as the cultural property of a new African American citizenry. Black music was the stuff of blackness itself; it was at once seemingly alive in the body and also attached to a long-gone ancestry, a realm predating Western modern knowledge and history. Endowed with ancestral roots, it had ascended from the past into the present and among the living, taking form as a modern-age relic. In fact, the term *relic* was sometimes employed to describe "Negro music," as well as blacks themselves, particularly those elders who had survived since slavery. *Relic* was also used to refer to the burnt detritus of lynching victims, suggesting a perceived relation between dead, black bodies and the ancient, African sounds that carried forth among an inferior, declining species. Indeed, the racist rhetoric of blacks and whites never seemed too far apart, despite the unequal consequence it had on their lives. "Hav[ing] forgotten the language of their savage ancestors," the white critic Henry Edward Krehbiel proposed in his 1914 book, *Afro-American Folk-Songs*, "does it follow that ... they have also forgotten all of their music? May relics of the music not remain in a subconscious memory?"<sup>11</sup> This was another way of articulating the common view that African American musical practices were racially determined. They were intimately connected to the black

Ronald  
Radano

flesh, living on as a resonance of ancestral voices: “spooks,” as in the common parlance of the time, or what James Weldon Johnson later called “the specter of minstrelsy.”<sup>12</sup> In the imagination of both blacks and whites, black music was almost as much a part of black personhood as were one’s flesh, hair, and vital organs. It brought into relation a racial physicality with the larger project of black culture, a culture that grew conceptually more expansive, recognizable, and affecting as it circulated in public knowledge. And because black music was not limited to the physicality of the body, but took form within the sensory arena of hearing, it had far greater social influence and effect. What was a valuable possession also represented an occupying force within the greater body politic.

Given the power of this kind of pervasive racial thinking, it is no real surprise that so many African Americans would vigorously invest in the evolving, racial myth of black music. Innovation of musical difference became key to the advance of black culture, enabled by the growth of a new professional class of musicians whose talents accommodated a consumer public caught up in racial fantasy. Each investment, each recommitment to the claims of difference – in soulfulness, in hotness, in sorrow, in syncopation, in improvisation – paid back mightily. With each innovation, each new gesture of “Negro music,” the racial feeling of blackness would multiply and grow stronger, as it also reaffirmed African Americans’ creative ability to invent form, contradicting enduring claims of an “imitative” nature. Black music had become a prized possession with which African Americans would bargain for a place in U.S. cultural life; by affirming their difference from a majority-white public, and revealing again and again the botched attempted robbery of musical culture within an

established master/slave relation. In “the secret of black song and laughter,” as Zora Neale Hurston called it, African Americans had found a common currency, a cultural right that “they traded . . . to the other Americans for things they could use.”<sup>13</sup>

Into the 1920s and 1930s, and with the emergence of jazz, black music supplied African Americans with a new kind of value, a new mode of cultural currency through which they traded and bargained their way into public life. The music’s prominence as the international language of an emerging, world-metropolitan youth culture helped broaden its stature and appeal among African Americans inside the United States, whose interest was fueled by reports of the successes of white society orchestras performing under the name of jazz and touring Europe, Asia, and Latin America.<sup>14</sup> Motivated by this turn of events, a new generation of highly talented and educated black musicians began introducing a radically innovative style that fused Southern practices with the musical grammar and performance practices of an emerging mainstream sound. Hurston characterized the hot jazz of late-1920s Harlem as a new life form that “rears on its hind legs and attacks the tonal veil with primitive fury,” bringing into being a modern incarnation of racial feeling, and revealing the body lurking within an otherwise civilized art form. In the same fashion that black composers had before them, these new black artists sought to repel white claims of possession: “I am not playing jazz,” Duke Ellington insisted in refusing the journalistic label, “I am trying to play the natural feelings of a people.”<sup>15</sup> It might seem only proper that the mystifications of racial blackness would be sustained even as older ideas of race had begun to collapse. After all, American investment in black music’s mystification had been under way

for nearly a hundred years, and it profoundly affected tastes and experiences across the color line. For many musicians who subsequently emerged on the scene, the claims of realness and authenticity may have been what Stuart Hall would call “strategic,” particularly as the music’s economic value grew.<sup>16</sup> And yet it is nonetheless striking that an earlier mystification of black music became embedded within a commodity-form, its putative racial essence strangely formalized in order to advocate for its equal standing among the other arts. No matter how right and just such claims may have been, they also were confusing. It is a confusion that lives on into the present.

Still today, we have a situation whereby the most important indicator of aesthetic value in popular music is also the principal marker of separation among its citizenry. We live in a world in which, despite all the productive challenges to the claims of race – all the biological and historical evidence amassed to demonstrate that race is not real, together with the sea change in political and social thought about racial inequality – the qualities of black music still seem profoundly racial, or at the very least, the racial aspect of the music remains unresolved. That we find

value in this embodied racial affect is why black music remains so influential. It is also why we can hear in music that is not identifiably “racial” (that is, majority-white music) key signifiers of blackness, from the gospel inflections common to popular vocal styles to the groove-based rhythmic orientation that underpins over sixty years of rock ‘n’ roll. The accumulation of meanings attached to this affective blackness has assumed the quality of myth: in black music’s many forms, we encounter allegories of race as it lives on in the United States. It is, indeed, not entirely an unhappy tale, for it is from these racial qualities of animation that we derive so much pleasure and witness the continuing struggle of difference. But it remains unclear what ultimately the music’s narratives can tell us. As appealing as it is, black music’s racial embodiment also supports a reactionary politics that goes against the grain of our strongest democratic ideals, suggesting the need, after David Scott, for a new conscript of black music in the vein of the tragic.<sup>17</sup> It may be our challenge to consider how we might begin to deracinate music’s critical lexicon and modes of analysis while also paying respect to the legacies and traditions created under the banner of racial difference.

#### ENDNOTES

Author’s Note: A version of this essay was delivered before the Department of Music, University of California, Berkeley, on October 5, 2012. I am grateful for the vigorous exchange that ensued, and particularly for the comments and follow-ups by Ben Brinner, Steve Feld, Jocelyne Guilbault, Andrew Jones, Leigh Raiford, Griff Rollefson, and Bryan Wagner.

- <sup>1</sup> Oliver Sacks, *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*, rev. ed. (New York: Vintage, 2008), x.
- <sup>2</sup> Entry into a vast literature might begin with Scott Saul, *Freedom Is, Freedom Ain’t: Jazz and the Making of the Sixties* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003); Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004); Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community and Black Chicago, 1940 – 1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); and Suzanne E. Smith, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- <sup>3</sup> Such thinking seemed to lay behind Roy Eldridge’s claim in 1951 that he could hear the difference between white and black jazz improvisers. His failure to meet the challenge in an



- infamous “Blindfold Test” interview with Leonard Feather, published in *Down Beat*, served to reinforce white attitudes of entitlement. Feather clearly missed the point of the exercise, showing no comprehension of why Eldridge would make the claim as a defense of black cultural ownership. The incident serves as a case in point of how racially essentialist stances could be put to strategic use in order to claim cultural property. Leonard Feather, *The Book of Jazz* (1957; New York: Horizon, 1965), 47.
- <sup>4</sup> LeRoi Jones, *Blues People* (New York: William Morrow, 1963), 218.
  - <sup>5</sup> Griffin made this statement in a 1971 article published in the *Los Angeles Sentinel*. For background, see Charles L. Hughes, “‘Country-Soul’: Race and the Recording Industry in the United States South, 1960 – 1980,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2012), 163.
  - <sup>6</sup> Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (1963; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); George W. Stocking, Jr., *Race, Culture and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (1968; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); P. V. Tobias, “Brain-size, Grey Matter, and Race – Fact or Fiction?” *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 32 (1970): 3 – 26, cited in Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, rev. ed. (1981; New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), 140 – 141; and Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, 2nd ed. (1994; New York: Routledge, 1986).
  - <sup>7</sup> See, for example, Tommie Shelby, *We Who Are Dark: Philosophical Foundations of Black Solidarity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005); and Robert Gooding-Williams, *Look, a Negro! Philosophical Essays on Race, Culture and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
  - <sup>8</sup> Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár, “The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): 167 – 195.
  - <sup>9</sup> And while practices that may be attributed to soul can be reproduced and even expanded upon by whites, the soulfulness of white expressions always remains suspect simply because white subjectivity was not constituted within this racial economy; its connection to soulfulness is always mediated through the idea of blackness. In this way, all white productions of black music carry a dubious authenticity that qualifies even the strongest performances.
  - <sup>10</sup> Joplin is quoted in Edward Berlin, *King of Ragtime: Scott Joplin and His Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 222. For Europe, see Lester Walton, “Is Ragtime Dead?” *New York Age*, April 8, 1909. Thanks to Dave Gilbert for calling my attention to this article.
  - <sup>11</sup> Henry Edward Krehbiel, *Afro-American Folk-Songs* (1914; New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1962), ix.
  - <sup>12</sup> James Weldon Johnson, Preface to *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, found in *Voices from the Harlem Renaissance*, ed. Nathan Huggins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 281 – 283.
  - <sup>13</sup> Zora Neale Hurston, *The Sanctified Church* (Berkeley, Calif.: Turtle Island, 1983), 78.
  - <sup>14</sup> Studies of the international emergence of jazz are rapidly developing and already represent a vast literature. One place to begin is Bruce Johnson, “The Jazz Diaspora,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Jazz*, ed. Mervyn Cooke and David Horn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 96 – 113. Reports of the international presence of jazz were beginning to appear domestically in the early 1920s. Recordings such as Fletcher Henderson’s *Shanghai Shuffle* and Louis Armstrong’s *Cornet Chop Suey* show that interest traveled both ways.
  - <sup>15</sup> Zora Neale Hurston, “How It Feels to Be Colored Me,” *Folklore, Memoirs, and Other Writings* (New York: Library of America, 1995), 828 – 829. Ellington is quoted in Eric Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz? African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 37.
  - <sup>16</sup> Stuart Hall, “What is this ‘Black’ in Black Popular Culture?” *Social Justice* 20 (1 – 2) (Spring/Summer 1993).
  - <sup>17</sup> David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004).