

Ella Fitzgerald & “I Can’t Stop Loving You,” Berlin 1968: Paying Homage to & Signifying on Soul Music

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Abstract: “If you don’t learn new songs, you’re lost,” Ella Fitzgerald told *The New York Times* in 1967. This essay is a close reading of one performance of “I Can’t Stop Loving You” she gave at a concert in Berlin on February 11, 1968. The song, which had already become a global hit through a version by Ray Charles in 1962, turned into a vehicle through which Fitzgerald signified on “Soulsville,” or soul, a black popular style then sweeping the American music scene. References to Aretha Franklin’s “Respect” and Vernon Duke’s “I Can’t Get Started With You” are examples of the interpolations included here. The essay challenges the idea that the late 1960s were a fallow period in Fitzgerald’s career by highlighting the jazz techniques she used to transform one song into a self-revelatory theatrical tour de force.

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This essay depends upon a virtual community of semianonymous uploaders who have Web-posted Ella Fitzgerald’s Berlin 1968 concert in its entirety. Held on February 11, 1968, at the Deutschlandhalle, a roughly nine-thousand-seat arena in the American sector of Berlin – a divided city in a divided country – the concert was televised by and broadcast on West-German public television. As of February 2019, the YouTube clips of the concert have been viewed a combined 240,000 times.¹

Berlin 1968 challenges the idea that the late 1960s were a fallow period for Fitzgerald’s artistic achievement, a period in which her albums compromised her art to accommodate new trends in American popular music. It offers living proof, so to speak, that she had much to say about the potential interactions between pop and jazz and that old categories of “commercial” versus “authentic” cannot grapple with the individuality of her approaches. To be sure, she acknowledged her own

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receptivity to contemporary pop: "If you don't learn new songs, you're lost," she told an interviewer in 1967.

Unless you sing today's songs, all there is is the standards, the old show tunes. What new show tunes are there? "Hello, Dolly"? It has that old beat, it's an old type song. Can you think of anything else that's come off Broadway? Or out of the movies? Would the average kid want to sing "The Shadow of Your Smile"? It's an old type song. No matter where we play, we have some of the younger generation coming to the club. It's a drag if you don't have anything to offer them.²

"I Can't Stop Loving You" was not exactly a "new song" in 1968, but Fitzgerald's subversive interpretations reaffirmed the verse of a swing song she had recorded with Chick Webb in 1939: "'Tain't What You Do (It's The Way That Cha Do It)." "This is not the Ella I know," remarked one attendee at the 2014 Boston University conference on "African-American Music in World Culture," upon viewing the 1968 performance of "I Can't Stop Loving You."³ She and others in the audience expressed surprise at the sensuality on display and the singer's use of soul music as a vehicle for irony and self-exposure.

In this essay, I argue for recognizing the productive creativity that came from Fitzgerald's involvement with soul through a close reading of this one performance. While there are other examples, her ten-minute excursion at Berlin 1968 was a particular tour de force: such a work of theater that it makes the case for Fitzgerald's relationship to the pop music of her time as inspiration for self-revelation and innovation. Two precedents before Berlin 1968 shape the frame.

"We'd like to, and it's all in fun, ladies and gentlemen, we'd like to give you our interpretations of the new sounds, and

we hope you enjoy them as much as we enjoy trying to sing them. The new rock and soul." That was how Fitzgerald introduced one of her earliest forays into signifying on soul music on June 30, 1967, in Oakland, California. This important concert in her own history marked the last official appearance of Norman Granz's touring ensemble, Jazz at the Philharmonic, her home base for jazz from around 1949 through 1957, which made its farewell trek through the United States that spring along with Duke Ellington and Oscar Peterson.

Who would have expected, as one of her last numbers, that a bop version of Duke Ellington's "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" would shift gears and proclaim, "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Soul"? Was she capitulating to its market supremacy while demonstrating her mastery of a competitive singing style? Hardly. Instead, she was exposing the gulf between two kinds of vocality: the vernacular versus the cultivated voice, a dialectic running through American music history overall.⁴ As has often been (over)stated, rock and soul disdained conventional "prettiness," proclaiming authenticity through vernacular ties. In contrast, mid-century popular music, honed on theater songs from Broadway musicals and standards from Tin Pan Alley, embraced sonic ideals of beauty and tone. That said, what matters here is the way Fitzgerald, whose repertory was so identified with what we now call "The Great American Songbook," exploited this sonic opposition.

The straight version of the tune could not have been more sophisticated mainstream jazz, beginning with her own scating and then turning into a display piece for hard-charging solos from each member of the background trio: Jimmy Jones on piano, Bob Cranshaw on bass, and Sam Woodyard on drums. As she bent

the lyrics, she recast her vocal style, mingling enough “wha whas” to evoke Janis Joplin’s version of Big Mama Thornton’s blues song, “Ball and Chain,” and emulating the expressionistic screams and wails of James Brown. She threw in the phrase about keeping the faith then associated in particular with Adam Clayton Powell’s unsuccessful bid for retention as a congressman (after having been ejected from the House a few months earlier), as well as with the fervor of the civil rights and black power movements.

You’d better believe, you’d better wha wha wha wha wha,

It makes no difference, [under her breath] to James Brown, if it’s sweet or hot,

You’d better keep the faith, baby, keep the faith, baby, and everything will be alright,

I tell you, it don’t mean a thing if you ain’t got no soul, daddy.

I couldn’t beat ’em, baby, that’s why I join ’em.

Even the lyrics demonstrate Fitzgerald’s ease in signifying. As a theorized aesthetic, signifying now enjoys such wide currency in many kinds of cultural production (having expanded its purview from its original home in folklore and literary criticism) that for the purposes of my argument, we need only clarify its relationship to black vernacular music by quoting the music historian Samuel Floyd: signifying is a process, practiced through “the transformation of pre-existing musical material by trifling with it, teasing it, or censoring it . . . demonstrating respect for or poking fun . . . through parody, pastiche, implication, indirection, humor, tone play or word play.”⁵ These techniques were employed here by Fitzgerald in her version of Ellington’s signature tune, especially wicked since the Duke himself was on the bill that evening.

The audience in Oakland, which drew on its large African American population, and young people from nearby Berkeley, its campus of the University of California a center for student activism and pop awareness, adored the parody version and had to be stilled. Post applause, whistles, and cheers, she announced: “We’re so glad you enjoyed that. We’d like you to know we enjoy soul, too.”

A few months later Fitzgerald ventured deeper into contemporary black popular music, again referencing soul, making it explicit before a very different, mostly white audience at a concert at the New York Philharmonic Hall in November 1967.⁶ After singing the title song from the musical “On a Clear Day You Can See Forever” (praised by *New York Times* critic John Rockwell for its “lines of pure sound” and “melting beauty”), she prefaced her performance of “I Can’t Stop Loving You” with a shout-out to what she called Soulsville. Rockwell labeled it a “boisterous excursion.” Too bad no tape from this concert is known to this author to hear what “boisterous” meant that evening.

Choosing “I Can’t Stop Loving You” as a vehicle was a shrewd but unusual choice. By the time she sang it, the song technically did not qualify as a new song. On the contrary, it was a standard. Originating as a country music hit (as debuted by its composer Don Gibson in 1958), its potential was tapped in 1962 when Ray Charles brilliantly reinterpreted it through gospel idioms. Introduced on his album, *Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music*, Charles catapulted the song into one of the top 10 “Hits of the World,” popular in Britain, Belgium, Chile, Ireland, Holland, and Spain in the summer of 1962.⁷ It had even been covered in German by the Yugoslavian singer Ivo Robic, whose version, titled “Ein Ganzes Leben Lang

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(A Whole Life Long)," made the German top 20 as of September 29, 1962.⁸ By the late 1960s, the song had already been covered by about fifty pop singers and several jazz musicians, including Count Basie (for whom its arranger Quincy Jones won his first Grammy) and Duke Ellington. Now it was her turn to explore the meaning of Soulsville at a time when it was no longer contained by Ray Charles's genre of rhythm and blues and was expanding to accommodate the impact of a new superstar, Aretha Franklin, who amassed a collection of million-record sellers in 1967 and 1968. Framed as Ray Charles's legacy and female counterpart in an *Ebony* magazine article by Phyl Garland, one of the few African American female journalists of the era, Franklin represented another generation of soul, a new elaboration growing out of gospel and rhythm and blues in ways that reflected the 1960s environment of political and cultural activism.⁹

Although soul was still a relatively new trade-music category in the mid-1960s, it had a long reach, understood as both racialized vocality and a code word for a new movement within black culture with political implications. Summing up a style that has generated a huge scholarly literature at this point, far beyond the needs of this essay, we need only recall how soul is typically defined as a fusion of rhythm and blues with gospel idioms as well as a state of political and social consciousness drawing its strength from civil rights activism of the era.¹⁰ When Aretha Franklin entered the arena of soul, an audience from two intertwined movements – the sexual revolution of the 1960s and the "women's liberation," or women's rights, movement (which later became known as second-wave feminism) – came in her wake. As it crossed over from the black world into the white charts, by 1970, Franklin's version of

"Respect" became an anthem of intersectionality, in which both gender and race shaped its reception, reaching black and white women, both within and separate from the women's liberation movement coalescing at that time. Well aware of Aretha Franklin, whom she had met as a young girl at her home in Chicago, Fitzgerald used "I Can't Stop Loving You" as a way to express competition, admiration, and ambivalence about the success of an artist used by a white reporter to redefine "authenticity" and parcel out vocal "blackness" in a cover story for *Time* magazine.¹¹ Fitzgerald was mainly concerned about the vocality of soul more than politics. Her signifying in Berlin 1968 expanded beyond the casual references in the Oakland concert to a display of competition between two ways of singing, the whole lit up with the electricity of a duel, a struggle taking place internally and externally all at once. Otherwise, there is no accounting for what happens in it: transgressive stage behavior that flouts protocol about the claims of the audience on a performer's priority, excursions into text quotations that reference other singers, a breathtaking "confession" about her own artistic priorities, abandoning the trio midstream, and ending with an obscure personal reference. These elements defy terms like scat or improvisation, and I am making the claim here that "theater piece" is a reasonable substitute for the final product.

O:00 – 0:53: *Introduction*.¹² "I Can't Stop Loving You" appeared at the end of the long concert in Berlin on February 11, 1968, near the start of her month-long European tour. Fitzgerald had brought with her the chart made by Marty Paich, one of her favorite Hollywood arrangers, and its mood set the tone from the beginning. With the Tee Carson Trio (Donald Carson on piano, Keter Betts on bass, and Joe

Harris on drums) playing Paich's spoof of burlesque music, Fitzgerald sashays on the stage, twirling her signature handkerchief like a prop. She begins unaccompanied, unfurling a long melisma on "I." Then an uncharacteristic bit of comic byplay flouts the contract between performer and audience when she stops dead and looks around as if she has told a private joke rather than gifted us with a mesmerizing musical moment. Back on focus, she shouts out the destination of our journey: "Soulsville!" decorated with a nervous giggle. Delivering an inaudible aside to the pianist, who then doubles over with laughter, she shares an inside joke with the musicians in full view of the audience. Thus, ambivalence is launched with inside/outside, person/persona in the mix.

Hearing Fitzgerald luxuriate in the song itself with her voice at its prime in a straightforward delivery for five minutes – longer than any commercial release of a pop song – it is clear that if she is going to live in Soulsville, it will be in a mansion. As the drummer enthusiastically beats out solid rhythm and blues, "officially" getting things going, Fitzgerald exercises her full powers at a very slow tempo, savoring the passionate "earthiness" that Aretha Franklin once associated with soul. Bending pitches, elongating particular words, shifting dynamics, moving ahead or behind the beat, and belting out the lyrics, she is hardly "covering" Ray Charles. He employed strings, which highlighted his own gravelly rhythm and blues voice, as well as a backup vocal group to evoke the call and response of gospel; his premeditated pitch alterations, calibrated to sound natural, display the control he exercised in the recording studio.¹³

4:19 – 5:03. Fitzgerald alters the narrative from a male to a female point of view through various techniques to turn it into a torch song. Although the mood of the original song celebrates nostalgia,

Fitzgerald takes on self-justifying resentment: "I know someone someone someone someone told you a lie, what a lie" she sings, as if an outsider has betrayed her. The hapless lover in Ray Charles's treatment affirming loyal nostalgia yields to a far more assertive woman living not just with loss but with recriminations in the classic manner of an old genre.

5:06 – 6:30: A "Text Jam." Enter Aretha Franklin and "Respect." Before finishing a third go-round of the tune, Fitzgerald stops the drummer, disrupts the lyrics, and launches an extended pastiche of phrases linked by the subject of romantic loss and pain. She refers implicitly to Aretha Franklin to launch the text jam. In 1967, Franklin had recorded the two songs referred to here: "Do You Love a Man" and "Respect." "Respect," Fitzgerald says. "Sock it to me. Give it to me all night long," Fitzgerald says, with a half-smile in her voice, hollering, swooping through chanting, moaning and shaking in gospel testifying. She trifles with sexual innuendo and then retrieves the word "respect" as a serious demand for dignity.

Have you ever loved a man like I've loved my man? You know how I feel this morning.

All I want is respect. In the morning, in the evening, give it to me all night long, give me respect.

I'm gonna tell it like it is this morning. I'm gonna tell everything, everything I know, yeah yeah yeah yeah.

You got a man, I got a man, she's got a man that's true.

We're gonna talk about our man, we talk about him, yes we do.

Do we love him? Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. (3x)

Early in the morning, all we gotta do is reach on the pillow, tears on my pillow, all night long. I'll be crying, yeah.

Alright OK, you win.

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Other allusions follow as well, coming at us in fleeting moments. Among them are the Beatles' "Do You Love Me," Joe Williams and Count Basie's "Alright OK, You Win," and "Tears on My Pillow," a rhythm and blues song popularized by Little Anthony and the Imperials. "Tell It Like It Is" became an iconic cultural signifier in the mid-1960s as well. It meant black pride, authenticity, and candor about social justice and discrimination as well as personal truth-telling.

This textual mash-up of grammatically unrelated phrases is what I call a *text jam*. Precedence for this terminology comes from its musical counterpart: the term *vocal jam*, which appeared in a jazz magazine in 1946, when Fitzgerald's famous improvisations on "Oh! Lady Be Good" debuted in live performance.¹⁴ Second, the improvisation reflects Fitzgerald's practice of interpolating quotations and borrowing riffs from contemporary improvisations by instrumentalists and she transfers it here to words alone, drawing the listener in through vibrant and compelling free association.

What a jumble! The text jam works because Fitzgerald adopts the persona of an African American preacher. Music historian Tammy Kernodle has noted that,

She's engaging in something we call in Black Church culture "testifying." What she is doing is rooted in the Pentecostal church. The improvisatory nature of her talking about her experiences in this way, would have been read by audiences as "the Holy Spirit" taking over. She stops the drummer because he's hampering her "flow." In the church a good musician would know how to vamp with the singer to provide the right rhythmic and harmonic space for her vocal and harmonic improvisations to flow. It's obvious that he's simply trying to "recreate" what he thinks is the Pentecostal "shout" beat. It is but that

doesn't work unless the performance flows in that manner – when it does then the person transitions to a different rhythmic vocal style.¹⁵

Fitzgerald adopts rhetorical strategies of preaching, such as inserting dialogue through questions – "Do we love him?" – asking congregants to answer and affirm their willing participation. To bind the many sources into a unified experience, she signifies on that dialogic approach. Alternative vocal styles compete in this play-off performance. Shifting from one to the other, she acts out her own internal debates, showing that she too can sing with soul attitude, if she wished, and make it her own. At least for a while.

6:30 – 7:10: "This Ain't My Bag." The most startling moment in "I Can't Stop Loving You" breaks the mood of testifying at the moment of return to the original. Fitzgerald drops the preacher's robes from her shoulder. As if waking from a self-induced trance, Fitzgerald confesses in a normal street voice – startling to hear from the stage through a microphone – "this ain't my bag." She has broken the fourth wall, a theatrical term for the imaginary barrier between audience and actor, becoming the truth-teller with the audience bearing witness. Her revelation of an internal debate stops the action, as she displays her "bag" as the canon of American popular song, what we now call the "Great American Songbook." Instead of "I Can't Stop Loving You," she sings "I Can't Get Started With You," written by Vernon Duke with lyrics by Ira Gershwin. Shifting vocal personas, she croons the opening of this classic 1936 pop song. After we have heard Fitzgerald's offstage speaking voice, we hear her singing voice projecting the kind of material most closely identified with her success. Has all of the preceding amounted to little more than a comic simulacrum,

a persona, a mask adopted in pursuit of a musical adventure? Is she now “telling it like it is?”

The question is left hanging. By this time, her backup trio has given up trying to follow the singer-turned-runaway-vehicle and they sit back and wait.

Can't help lovin that man.

Do you love your man (2x) [Preaching to audience with rhetorical question]

[Speaking] There was a silence.

[Audience laughs at itself and applauds.]

Well, well, we can't do without 'em. We can't do without 'em, we can't do without 'em, yeah, let's tell it [synchronizing a pitch with the piano, laughing] I don't think I'd better preach no more.

Oh no, no, no.

“Can't Help Lovin' That Man” – another song title with “can't” in it – by Jerome Kern from the musical *Show Boat* (1927) signals a new happening. Persisting in her bemused quest to turn a Berlin audience into an African American congregation, Fitzgerald behaves again like a preacher, calling out her audience to respond. She thrusts the microphone into the faces of front-row folks, asking one woman after another: “Do you love your man?” It is a mock question, a virtual paraphrase of “Do you love Jesus?” Who in this respectable white, middle-class Berlin audience would reply? Reaching out to her audience as an evangelical, she talks to Germans sitting in the first row as if they were needing to confess, waiting to be saved. It is a bit of stage humor signifying on both the fourth wall and on the rhetorical strategies of evangelical preachers.

But not for long. Again, a dramatic subversive moment disrupts this flow. Positioning herself in the fluid relationship of a stand-up entertainer more than preacher, Fitzgerald laughs and delivers another

street-voice riposte: “There is silence.” Just as she is signifying, so now the audience signify on themselves by clapping their complicity. Years of experience in African American vaudeville in the 1930s and 1940s as well as years of touring stand behind this bravado. How challenging to talk your way in and out of this performative conundrum. Thus improvising her interactions, Fitzgerald mocks the trope of the loyal female encapsulated in the rhetorical question, “Do you love your man?” expressing her own brand of idiosyncratic feminism. She follows this with a few seconds of vocal parody of classical opera.

For a moment, it appears as if the text jam might be a turn-around moment on the way to an ending. Enough, perhaps. Instead, the singer has one more equally radical surprise.

Oh, I feel this morning

Yes

I can't stop

I can't stop, stop

I wanna talk about my man, yeah

I wanna preach about my man, yeah

Oh [holler style]

Oh [moaning style]

Cuz I'm the woman with the little skinny legs

Yeah yeah, cuz I'm the woman with the little skinny legs

Yeah yeah, yeah yeah, oh no, alright.

I can't stop loving you.

You. You.

She moves from preaching to testifying, delivering her own interrogation of her own identity. Interpolating a long moan on the word “Oh,” coming straight out of nineteenth-century African American vocality, she transforms herself into

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a paradoxical smiling testifier, speaking private code with the phrase, "I'm the woman with the little skinny legs." We are in the muddle of another paradox, listening to a peculiar, potentially autobiographical text as delivered with insider irony and sharing backward glances at the band. "They know what I am talking about," she projects. Maybe so. And it doesn't matter if the audience is in on it. She has taken flight from convention.

The back story to this particular line retrieves a memory from her troubled past as a young girl. One clarifying bit of testimony can be found in an interview conducted by *Essence* magazine. There she said in response to a question about her early years, "I used to go to a theater on 148th Street [in Harlem] all the time. I'll never forget. My legs were so skinny, I used to wear boots so nobody could see the bottom of my legs. They would see me coming, and they'd say, 'Oh, here's that little chick with them boots on.'"¹⁶ With the confidence to display her own lack of it decades earlier, Fitzgerald proudly asserts her stature in the present. As she bears witness to her own past, she translates memory into improvisation on the spot. This is soul singing by signifying on her own life. She winds up this performance with the refrain from the original song, but at this point it is almost beside the point. The process has triumphed over the material, making the experience more important than the song.

Other performances of "I Can't Stop Loving You" in the late 1960s and early 1970s demonstrated her changing relationship with the material at the same time she privileged it in her repertoire. In three other publicly available versions, we watch a theater piece shrink and return to the genre of soul jazz, keeping some improvisational text in play and adapting to the venue and purpose of the

performance along the way. On May 19, 1968, she brought it to the Cave, a supper club in Vancouver, where she is backed by the club orchestra using Marty Paich's arrangement. "Here we are at the Cave and I'm preachin' and moanin'. Treat me like a woman, not a lady. Tell it to the Judge. Sock it to me." Then come two verses from "I Can't Stop Loving You." Without any reference to her "bag," the audience gets the message. Aretha Franklin's "Respect" is sublimated through allusions to a comedy show called "Laugh-In" and a shout-out to a vaudeville stereotype of the "Judge" being revived: Pigmeat Markham, a legendary sketch comic in black vaudeville from the 1920s through the 1940s, who, in 1928, invented the sketch that included the line "Heah comes de judge."¹⁷

Two other high-profile performances of "I Can't Stop Loving You" occurred around this time as well. A dull version on her television special "An Evening with Ella Fitzgerald" was followed by a treatment running about six minutes on June 1972, as she brought the song to Norman Granz's concert in Santa Monica, which was intended to launch his jazz label, Pablo Records. Welcoming her old friend back into the flow and backed by the Count Basie Orchestra in the Paich arrangement, she displayed total comfort with her inventive soul singing, punching out her text repetitions and delivering a healthy shout or two. Just at the moment when her testifying was supposed to start, she interjected an ironic comment and then resurrected a blues lyric: "Whee, Can you hear me screaming this evening? I can't stop, I can't stop. I got a guy, he lives on a hill. If he don't, somebody else will. He's my main squeeze, Right on!" Thunderous applause. Beautiful. "I Can't Stop Loving You" had served its purpose.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Thejazzsingers Jazz in Holland, “Ella Fitzgerald in Concert in Berlin 1968 Parts 1–5,” YouTube, uploaded February 4, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejbtLXoWaZU>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLQJ_xEpW0o; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zw3QfSXYoME>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_U6rkq8gQg; and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1NLBpZkGLY>.
- ² John S. Wilson, “Ella Changes Her Tunes for a Swinging Generation,” *The New York Times*, November 12, 1967.
- ³ This conference was sponsored by the Department of African American Studies at Boston University and organized by Professor Allison Blakely. “African American Music in World Culture: Art as a Refuge & Strength in the Struggle for Freedom,” Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, March 17–22, 2014.
- ⁴ For the classic statement of these terms, see H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction*, 1st ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969).
- ⁵ Samuel A. Floyd Jr., *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 8.
- ⁶ She included not only “I Can’t Stop Loving You,” but also other black pop classics, including “Sunny,” a mellow ballad, and “Goin’ Out of My Head.” John S. Wilson, “Philharmonic Hall Sold Out, Naturally, For Ella Fitzgerald,” *The New York Times*, November 23, 1967.
- ⁷ “Hits of the World,” *Billboard Music Weekly*, August 25, 1962.
- ⁸ Jan Torfs, “Jazzfest in Mud Still Draws 35,000,” *Billboard Music Weekly*, August 25, 1962; and “Hits of the World,” *Billboard Music Weekly*, September 1962.
- ⁹ Phyl Garland, “Aretha Franklin – ‘Sister Soul,’” *Ebony* magazine, October 1967.
- ¹⁰ Mellonee V. Burnim and Portia K. Maulsby, *African American Music: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 278.
- ¹¹ “Aretha Franklin: The Sound of Soul,” *Time* magazine, June 28, 1968.
- ¹² Thejazzsingers Jazz in Holland, “Ella Fitzgerald in Concert Berlin 1968 Part 5,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1NLBpZkGLY>.
- ¹³ Ray Charles Robinson Jr., *You Don’t Know Me: Reflections of My Father, Ray Charles* (New York: Crown, 2010), 168.
- ¹⁴ Unsigned review, September–October 1946, reprinted in Ron Fritts and Ken Vail, *Ella Fitzgerald, 1935–1948: The Chick Webb Years & Beyond* (Lanham, Md.: The Scarecrow Press, 2003), 78.
- ¹⁵ Tammy Kernodle, email to the author, March 12, 2014.
- ¹⁶ Ella Fitzgerald, interview with *Essence* magazine, as quoted in Jim Haskins, *Ella Fitzgerald: A Life through Jazz* (London: Holder and Stoughton, 1991), 26.
- ¹⁷ On Markham, see Frank Cullen, Florence Hackman, and Donald McNeilly, *Vaudeville, Old & New: An Encyclopedia of Variety Performers in America* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 724.