

african american entertainers black history

The Enduring Legacy: African American Entertainers and Black History

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Abstract: This analysis explores the profound and multifaceted impact of African American entertainers on Black history, examining their contributions beyond mere entertainment. From the minstrelsy era to contemporary media, African American entertainers have served as powerful agents of social change, cultural preservation, and racial representation. This essay traces this evolving relationship, considering both the challenges and triumphs faced by these individuals, and assesses their continuing influence on current trends in media and popular culture.

1. From Minstrelsy to Modern Media: A Complex Legacy of African American Entertainers and Black History

The history of African American entertainers is inextricably intertwined with Black history itself. Early forms of Black performance, often exploitative and rooted in the racist caricatures of minstrelsy, laid a foundation upon which subsequent generations of artists would build a more nuanced and empowering narrative. The legacy of minstrelsy, while undeniably problematic, provides a crucial starting point for understanding the long and complex journey of African American entertainers and their impact on Black history. This early period, though marred by racial stereotypes, also saw the emergence of Black performers who subtly resisted these stereotypes through coded language and performance choices. Their subtle acts of defiance, often overlooked in historical accounts, were crucial building blocks in the fight for racial equality.

1. The Harlem Renaissance and the Rise of Artistic Expression in African American Entertainers and Black History

The Harlem Renaissance marked a pivotal moment in the history of African American entertainers and Black history. This flourishing of Black artistic expression gave birth to a new wave of performers, writers, and musicians who challenged prevailing racial narratives through their art. Figures like Josephine Baker, Langston Hughes, and Duke Ellington transcended the limitations imposed by racial prejudice, creating art that resonated globally and helped reshape the image of Black people in the American imagination. Their work not only celebrated Black culture but also actively shaped the narrative surrounding race and identity in the United States and beyond. This period demonstrates the crucial role of African American entertainers' Black history in creating and preserving cultural heritage.

1. The Civil Rights Era and Beyond: African American Entertainers as Agents of Social Change

The Civil Rights Movement further solidified the role of African American entertainers as agents of social change. Artists like Nina Simone, Sam Cooke, and James Brown used their platforms to address issues of racial injustice and inspire social activism. Their music became anthems of the movement, galvanizing support and helping to shape public opinion. This period illustrates the powerful influence of African American entertainers' Black history in mobilizing social movements and advocating for equality. The continued struggles for racial justice found powerful expression through the music, film, and theater of these artists, further emphasizing the connection between entertainment and social progress.

1. Contemporary Trends and the Continuing Impact of African American Entertainers and Black History

Today, African American entertainers continue to shape the cultural landscape. From Beyoncé's visually stunning and politically charged performances to the groundbreaking work of Black filmmakers and television creators, the impact of African American entertainers' Black history remains profound. The rise of streaming services and social media has provided new platforms for diverse voices, enabling a wider range of perspectives and representations to emerge. While progress has been made, challenges persist, including issues of representation, stereotyping, and equitable opportunities within the entertainment industry.

1. Challenges and Triumphs: Representation, Stereotypes, and the Ongoing Fight for Equity

Despite the significant strides made, African American entertainers continue to navigate a complex

landscape characterized by both triumphs and challenges. Issues of stereotypical representation, tokenism, and limited opportunities remain persistent obstacles. The fight for equitable pay, creative control, and authentic representation is an ongoing struggle. The analysis of African American entertainers' Black history reveals a cyclical pattern of progress followed by setbacks, highlighting the enduring need for ongoing advocacy and critical engagement.

1. The Power of Storytelling and the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Through their performances, music, film, and literature, African American entertainers have played a vital role in preserving and celebrating Black cultural heritage. Their work serves as a powerful archive of experiences, traditions, and struggles, ensuring that the stories of Black communities are heard and understood. This aspect of African American entertainers' Black history is crucial for fostering cultural understanding and promoting inclusivity.

1. Looking Ahead: The Future of African American Entertainers and Black History

The future of African American entertainers and their impact on Black history is inextricably linked to the ongoing fight for social justice and equitable representation. As the industry evolves, it is crucial to ensure that diverse voices are amplified, that narratives are authentically represented, and that opportunities are available to artists from all backgrounds. The continued study of African American entertainers' Black history will be vital in shaping a more inclusive and equitable future.

Conclusion:

The history of African American entertainers is a complex and compelling narrative that reflects the broader story of Black history in America. From the struggles of early performers to the triumphs of contemporary artists, these individuals have not only entertained but also inspired, challenged, and shaped the cultural landscape. Their contributions are deeply intertwined with the ongoing fight for racial equality and social justice, making their legacy a crucial part of the ongoing narrative of Black history. Understanding this legacy is vital for comprehending the present and shaping a more equitable future.

FAQs:

1. What role did minstrelsy play in shaping the early image of African Americans in entertainment? Minstrelsy perpetuated harmful stereotypes that negatively impacted how Black people were perceived.

1. How did the Harlem Renaissance change the landscape of African American entertainment? It fostered a new wave of artistic expression that challenged racist narratives and celebrated Black culture.
1. How did African American entertainers contribute to the Civil Rights Movement? They used their platforms to address racial injustice, inspire activism, and create anthems for the movement.
1. What are some contemporary examples of African American entertainers who are pushing boundaries and challenging norms? Beyoncé, Ava DuVernay, and Kendrick Lamar are examples of artists challenging existing power structures.
1. What challenges still face African American entertainers in the industry today? Challenges include stereotypical representation, limited opportunities, and the fight for equitable pay and creative control.
1. How can we ensure a more equitable future for African American entertainers? By promoting diversity, inclusion, and authentic representation, and addressing systemic inequalities.
1. What is the importance of studying African American entertainment history? It's crucial for understanding the broader story of Black history, cultural preservation, and ongoing struggles for racial justice.
1. How has technology impacted the representation and reach of African American entertainers? Social media and streaming have created new platforms for diverse voices and widened the reach of their work.
1. What are some key figures in the history of African American entertainment that deserve further study? Numerous figures, like Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong, Sidney Poitier, and countless others warrant deeper investigation.

Related Articles:

1. "The Evolution of Black Representation in Hollywood": Traces the changing portrayal of Black characters in film, from early stereotypes to more complex and nuanced depictions.
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1. "Contemporary Black Filmmaking and its Representation of Black Lives": Analyses the current state of Black film and its increasingly diverse narratives and representations.

african american entertainers black history: African American Entertainers in Australia and New Zealand Bill Egan, 2019-12-20 Eleven African Americans, including a musician, were among the First Fleet of colonial settlers to Australia. In the 150-plus following years, African Americans visiting the region included jubilee singers, vaudevillians, sports stars and general entertainers. This book provides the only comprehensive history of more than 350 African American entertainers in Australia and New Zealand between European settlement in Australia in 1788 and the entry of the United States into World War II in 1941. Famous names covered include boxer Jack Johnson, film star Nina Mae McKinney and jazz singer Eva Taylor. Background stories provide a multidimensional view of the entertainers' time in a place very far from home.

african american entertainers black history: Just as I Am Cicely Tyson, 2021-01-26 "In her long and extraordinary career, Cicely Tyson has not only succeeded as an actor, she has shaped the course of history." -President Barack Obama, 2016 Presidential Medal of Freedom ceremony "Just as I Am is my truth. It is me, plain and unvarnished, with the glitter and garland set aside. In these pages, I am indeed Cicely, the actress who has been blessed to grace the stage and screen for six decades. Yet I am also the church girl who once rarely spoke a word. I am the teenager who sought solace in the verses of the old hymn for which this book is named. I am a daughter and a mother, a sister and a friend. I am an observer of human nature and the dreamer of audacious dreams. I am a woman who has hurt as immeasurably as I have loved, a child of God divinely guided by his hand. And here in my ninth decade, I am a woman who, at long last, has something meaningful to say." -Cicely Tyson

african american entertainers black history: White Richard Dyer, 2013-10-18 White people are not literally or symbolically white, yet they are called white. What does this mean? In Western media, whites take up the position of ordinariness, not a particular race, just the human race. How is this achieved? White takes these questions as starting points for an examination of the representation of whiteness by whites in Western visual culture. Dyer places this representation within the contexts of Christianity, 'race' and colonialism. In a series of absorbing case studies, he shows the construction of whiteness in the technology of photography and film as part of a wider 'culture of light', discusses heroic white masculinity in muscle-man action cinema, from Tarzan and Hercules to Conan and Rambo; analyses the stifling role of white women in end-of-empire fictions like *The Jewel in the Crown* and traces the associations of whiteness with death in *Falling Down*, horror movies and cult dystopian films such as *Blade Runner* and the *Aliens* trilogy.

african american entertainers black history: *African-American Entertainment in Baltimore* Rosa Pryor-Trusty, Tonya Taliaferro, 2003 African-American Entertainment in Baltimore captures the brilliance of the city's musical heritage from 1930 to 1980. This educational and entertaining volume invites readers to take a visual trip down memory lane to the days when Pennsylvania Avenue, the heart of the city's African-American community, vibrated with life. Celebrated within these pages are entertainers such as The Ink Spots, Sonny Til & the Orioles, Illinois Jacquet, Cab Calloway, Lionel Hampton, Sammy Davis Jr., Slappy White, Pearl Bailey, Billie Holiday, and Ella Fitzgerald; The Avenue's hottest nightspots and theaters including the legendary Royal Theater, The Regent Theater, the Sphinx, and Club Casino; and the DJs and promoters who helped cultivate the city's musical talents.

african american entertainers black history: The Music of Black Americans Eileen Southern, 1997 Beginning with the arrival of the first Africans in the English colonies, Eileen Southern weaves a fascinating narrative of intense musical activity. As singers, players, and composers, black American musicians are fully chronicled in this landmark book. Now in the third edition, the author has brought the entire text up to date and has added a wealth of new material covering the latest developments in gospel, blues, jazz, classical, crossover, Broadway, and rap as they relate to African American music.

african american entertainers black history: *Stars for Freedom* Emilie Raymond, 2015-05-01

From Oprah Winfrey to Angelina Jolie, George Clooney to Leonardo DiCaprio, Americans have come to expect that Hollywood celebrities will be outspoken advocates for social and political causes. However, that wasn't always the case. As Emilie Raymond shows, during the civil rights movement the Stars for Freedom - a handful of celebrities both black and white - risked their careers by crusading for racial equality, and forged the role of celebrity in American political culture. Focusing on the "Leading Six" trailblazers - Harry Belafonte, Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Sammy Davis, Jr., Dick Gregory, and Sidney Poitier - Raymond reveals how they not only advanced the civil rights movement in front of the cameras, but also worked tirelessly behind the scenes, raising money for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legal defense, leading membership drives for the NAACP, and personally engaging with workaday activists to boost morale. Through meticulous research, engaging writing, and new interviews with key players, Raymond traces the careers of the Leading Six against the backdrop of the movement. Perhaps most revealing is the new light she sheds on Sammy Davis, Jr., exploring how his controversial public image allowed him to raise more money for the movement than any other celebrity. The result is an entertaining and informative book that will appeal to film buffs and civil rights historians alike, as well as to anyone interested in the rise of celebrity power in American society. A Capell Family Book A V Ethel Willis White Book

african american entertainers black history: *The Negro Motorist Green Book* Victor H.

Green, *The Negro Motorist Green Book* was a groundbreaking guide that provided African American travelers with crucial information on safe places to stay, eat, and visit during the era of segregation in the United States. This essential resource, originally published from 1936 to 1966, offered a lifeline to black motorists navigating a deeply divided nation, helping them avoid the dangers and indignities of racism on the road. More than just a travel guide, *The Negro Motorist Green Book* stands as a powerful symbol of resilience and resistance in the face of oppression, offering a poignant glimpse into the challenges and triumphs of the African American experience in the 20th century.

african american entertainers black history: *Black Broadway* Stewart F. Lane, 2015

The African-American actors and actresses whose names have shone brightly on Broadway marquees earned their place in history not only through hard work, perseverance, and talent, but also because of the legacy left by those who came before them. Like the doors of many professions, those of the theater world were shut to minorities for decades. While the Civil War may have freed the slaves, it was not until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s that the playing field began to level. In this remarkable book, theater producer and historian Stewart F. Lane uses words and pictures to capture this tumultuous century and to highlight the rocky road that black actors have travelled to reach recognition on the Great White Way. After the Civil War, the popularity of the minstrel shows grew by leaps and bounds throughout the country. African Americans were portrayed by whites, who would entertain audiences in black face. While the depiction of blacks was highly demeaning, it opened the door to African-American performers, and by the late 1800s, a number of them were playing to full houses. By the 1920s, the Jazz Age was in full swing, allowing black musicians and composers to reach wider audiences. And in the thirties, musicals such as George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and Eubie Blake's *Swing It* opened the door a little wider. As the years passed, black performers continued to gain ground. In the 1940s, Broadway productions of *Cabin in the Sky*, *Carmen Jones*, and *St. Louis Woman* enabled African Americans to demonstrate a fuller range of talents, and Paul Robeson reached national prominence in his award-winning portrayal of Othello. By the 1950s and '60s, more black actors--including Ruby Dee, Ossie Davis, and Sidney Poitier--had found their voices on stage, and black playwrights and directors had begun to make their marks. *Black Broadway* provides an entertaining, poignant history of a Broadway of which few are aware. By focusing a spotlight on both performers long forgotten and on those whom we still hold dear, this unique book offers a story well worth telling.

african american entertainers black history: *Paris Blues* Andy Fry, 2014-07-04

The Jazz Age. The phrase conjures images of Louis Armstrong holding court at the Sunset Cafe in Chicago,

Duke Ellington dazzling crowds at the Cotton Club in Harlem, and star singers like Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey. But the Jazz Age was every bit as much of a Paris phenomenon as it was a Chicago and New York scene. In *Paris Blues*, Andy Fry provides an alternative history of African American music and musicians in France, one that looks beyond familiar personalities and well-rehearsed stories. He pinpoints key issues of race and nation in France's complicated jazz history from the 1920s through the 1950s. While he deals with many of the traditional icons—such as Josephine Baker, Django Reinhardt, and Sidney Bechet, among others—what he asks is how they came to be so iconic, and what their stories hide as well as what they preserve. Fry focuses throughout on early jazz and swing but includes its re-creation—reinvention—in the 1950s. Along the way, he pays tribute to forgotten traditions such as black musical theater, white show bands, and French wartime swing. *Paris Blues* provides a nuanced account of the French reception of African Americans and their music and contributes greatly to a growing literature on jazz, race, and nation in France.

african american entertainers black history: Great Black Entertainers Paper Dolls in Full Color Tom Tierney, 1984-01-01 Detailed authentic depictions of 10 great stars, Bert Williams to Louis Armstrong, in celebrated roles, concert performances. Hattie McDaniel, Paul Robeson, Billie Holiday, Bill Robinson, more. Biographies.

african american entertainers black history: Stealing the Show Miriam J. Petty, 2016-03-08 *Stealing the Show* is a study of African American actors in Hollywood during the 1930s, a decade that saw the consolidation of stardom as a potent cultural and industrial force. Petty focuses on five performers whose Hollywood film careers flourished during this period—Louise Beavers, Fredi Washington, Lincoln “Stepin Fetchit” Perry, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, and Hattie McDaniel—to reveal the “problematic stardom” and the enduring, interdependent patterns of performance and spectatorship for performers and audiences of color. She maps how these actors—though regularly cast in stereotyped and marginalized roles—employed various strategies of cinematic and extracinematic performance to negotiate their complex positions in Hollywood and to ultimately “steal the show.” Drawing on a variety of source materials, Petty explores these stars’ reception among Black audiences and theorizes African American viewership in the early twentieth century. Her book is an important and welcome contribution to the literature on the movies.

african american entertainers black history: Spirituals and the Birth of a Black Entertainment Industry Sandra Jean Graham, 2018-02-26 Spirituals performed by jubilee troupes became a sensation in post-Civil War America. First brought to the stage by choral ensembles like the Fisk Jubilee Singers, spirituals anchored a wide range of late nineteenth-century entertainments, including minstrelsy, variety, and plays by both black and white companies. In the first book-length treatment of postbellum spirituals in theatrical entertainments, Sandra Jean Graham mines a trove of resources to chart the spiritual's journey from the private lives of slaves to the concert stage. Graham navigates the conflicting agendas of those who, in adapting spirituals for their own ends, sold conceptions of racial identity to their patrons. In so doing they lay the foundation for a black entertainment industry whose artistic, financial, and cultural practices extended into the twentieth century. A companion website contains jubilee troupe personnel, recordings, and profiles of 85 jubilee groups. Please go to: <http://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/graham/spirituals/>

african american entertainers black history: Technicolored Ann DuCille, 2018 Black feminist critic Ann duCille combines cultural critique with personal reflections on growing up with TV as a child in the Boston suburbs to examine how televisual representations of African Americans--ranging from *I Love Lucy* to *How to Get Away with Murder*--have changed over the last sixty years.

african american entertainers black history: Colorization Wil Haygood, 2021-10-19 A NEW YORK TIMES CRITICS' TOP BOOK OF THE YEAR • BOOKLISTS' EDITOR'S CHOICE • ONE OF NPR'S BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR “At once a film book, a history book, and a civil rights book.... Without a doubt, not only the very best film book [but] also one of the best books of the year in any genre. An absolutely essential read.” —Shondaland This unprecedented history of Black cinema examines 100 years of Black movies—from *Gone with the Wind* to Blaxploitation films to *Black Panther*—using the struggles and triumphs of the artists, and the films themselves, as a prism to

explore Black culture, civil rights, and racism in America. From the acclaimed author of *The Butler* and *Showdown*. Beginning in 1915 with D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*—which glorified the Ku Klux Klan and became Hollywood's first blockbuster—Wil Haygood gives us an incisive, fascinating, little-known history, spanning more than a century, of Black artists in the film business, on-screen and behind the scenes. He makes clear the effects of changing social realities and events on the business of making movies and on what was represented on the screen: from Jim Crow and segregation to white flight and interracial relationships, from the assassination of Malcolm X, to the O. J. Simpson trial, to the Black Lives Matter movement. He considers the films themselves—including *Imitation of Life*, *Gone with the Wind*, *Porgy and Bess*, the Blaxploitation films of the seventies, *Do The Right Thing*, *12 Years a Slave*, and *Black Panther*. And he brings to new light the careers and significance of a wide range of historic and contemporary figures: Hattie McDaniel, Sidney Poitier, Berry Gordy, Alex Haley, Spike Lee, Billy Dee Williams, Richard Pryor, Halle Berry, Ava DuVernay, and Jordan Peele, among many others. An important, timely book, *Colorization* gives us both an unprecedented history of Black cinema and a groundbreaking perspective on racism in modern America.

african american entertainers black history: 100 Greatest African Americans Molefi Kete Asante, 2010-06-28 Since 1619, when Africans first came ashore in the swampy Chesapeake region of Virginia, there have been many individuals whose achievements or strength of character in the face of monumental hardships have called attention to the genius of the African American people. This book attempts to distill from many wonderful possibilities the 100 most outstanding examples of greatness. Pioneering scholar of African American Studies Molefi Kete Asante has used four criteria in his selection: the individual's significance in the general progress of African Americans toward full equality in the American social and political system; self-sacrifice and the demonstration of risk for the collective good; unusual will and determination in the face of the greatest danger or against the most stubborn odds; and personal achievement that reveals the best qualities of the African American people. In adopting these criteria Professor Asante has sought to steer away from the usual standards of popular culture, which often elevates the most popular, the wealthiest, or the most photogenic to the cult of celebrity. The individuals in this book - examples of lasting greatness as opposed to the ephemeral glare of celebrity fame - come from four centuries of African American history. Each entry includes brief biographical information, relevant dates, an assessment of the individual's place in African American history with particular reference to a historical timeline, and a discussion of his or her unique impact on American society. Numerous pictures and illustrations will accompany the articles. This superb reference work will complement any library and be of special interest to students and scholars of American and African American history.

african american entertainers black history: Black Diamond Queens Maureen Mahon, 2020-10-09 African American women have played a pivotal part in rock and roll—from laying its foundations and singing chart-topping hits to influencing some of the genre's most iconic acts. Despite this, black women's importance to the music's history has been diminished by narratives of rock as a mostly white male enterprise. In *Black Diamond Queens*, Maureen Mahon draws on recordings, press coverage, archival materials, and interviews to document the history of African American women in rock and roll between the 1950s and the 1980s. Mahon details the musical contributions and cultural impact of Big Mama Thornton, LaVern Baker, Betty Davis, Tina Turner, Merry Clayton, Labelle, the Shirelles, and others, demonstrating how dominant views of gender, race, sexuality, and genre affected their careers. By uncovering this hidden history of black women in rock and roll, Mahon reveals a powerful sonic legacy that continues to reverberate into the twenty-first century.

african american entertainers black history: Black Comedians on Black Comedy Darryl Littleton, 2006 (Applause Books). *Black Comedians on Black Comedy* is the only up-to-date book to examine African-American humor. Comedian Darryl Littleton traces the history and evolution of black comedy in his narrative and through the 125 interviews he conducted with some of the top African-American comedians in the world. Those interviewed include Dick Gregory, Sinbad, Eddie

Murphy, Mike Epps, Cedric the Entertainer, Nick Cannon, Bernie Mac, Eddie Griffin, Damon Wayans, Arsenio Hall, Chris Rock, Marla Gibbs, Robert Townsend, and John Witherspoon.

african american entertainers black history: How It Feels to Be Free Ruth Feldstein, 2013-11-26 Winner of the Benjamin L. Hooks National Book Award Winner of the Michael Nelson Prize of the International Association for Media and History In 1964, Nina Simone sat at a piano in New York's Carnegie Hall to play what she called a show tune. Then she began to sing: Alabama's got me so upset/Tennessee made me lose my rest/And everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam! Simone, and her song, became icons of the civil rights movement. But her confrontational style was not the only path taken by black women entertainers. In *How It Feels to Be Free*, Ruth Feldstein examines celebrated black women performers, illuminating the risks they took, their roles at home and abroad, and the ways that they raised the issue of gender amid their demands for black liberation. Feldstein focuses on six women who made names for themselves in the music, film, and television industries: Simone, Lena Horne, Miriam Makeba, Abbey Lincoln, Diahann Carroll, and Cicely Tyson. These women did not simply mirror black activism; their performances helped constitute the era's political history. Makeba connected America's struggle for civil rights to the fight against apartheid in South Africa, while Simone sparked high-profile controversy with her incendiary lyrics. Yet Feldstein finds nuance in their careers. In 1968, Hollywood cast the outspoken Lincoln as a maid to a white family in *For Love of Ivy*, adding a layer of complication to the film. That same year, Diahann Carroll took on the starring role in the television series *Julia*. Was *Julia* a landmark for casting a black woman or for treating her race as unimportant? The answer is not clear-cut. Yet audiences gave broader meaning to what sometimes seemed to be apolitical performances. *How It Feels to Be Free* demonstrates that entertainment was not always just entertainment and that *We Shall Overcome* was not the only soundtrack to the civil rights movement. By putting black women performances at center stage, Feldstein sheds light on the meanings of black womanhood in a revolutionary time.

african american entertainers black history: African Americans in Radio, Film, and TV Entertainers Linda J. Armstrong, 2014-09-02 This book is filled with fascinating stories, from the night a shy young woman's play changed Broadway to the day the most successful talk show host in history got her start. Find out about the stage actor who once earned letters in four college sports—and who won academic honors, too. Follow the triumphs and disappointments of some of the most famous black entertainers in our nation's history. Rediscover great personalities who have been forgotten. And learn about how the roles of black performers both changed with and helped changed American society.

african american entertainers black history: Unfree Masters Matt Stahl, 2013 DIVIn *Unfree Masters*, Matt Stahl examines recording artists' labor in the music industry as a form of creative work. He argues that the widespread perception of singers and musicians as free individuals doing enjoyable and fulfilling work obscures the realities of their occupation./div

african american entertainers black history: Just Around Midnight Jack Hamilton, 2016-09-26 By the time Jimi Hendrix died in 1970, the idea of a black man playing lead guitar in a rock band seemed exotic. Yet a mere ten years earlier, Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley had stood among the most influential rock and roll performers. Why did rock and roll become “white”? *Just around Midnight* reveals the interplay of popular music and racial thought that was responsible for this shift within the music industry and in the minds of fans. Rooted in rhythm-and-blues pioneered by black musicians, 1950s rock and roll was racially inclusive and attracted listeners and performers across the color line. In the 1960s, however, rock and roll gave way to rock: a new musical ideal regarded as more serious, more artistic—and the province of white musicians. Decoding the racial discourses that have distorted standard histories of rock music, Jack Hamilton underscores how ideas of “authenticity” have blinded us to rock’s inextricably interracial artistic enterprise. According to the standard storyline, the authentic white musician was guided by an individual creative vision, whereas black musicians were deemed authentic only when they stayed true to black tradition. Serious rock became white because only white musicians could be original without being

accused of betraying their race. Juxtaposing Sam Cooke and Bob Dylan, Aretha Franklin and Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and the Rolling Stones, and many others, Hamilton challenges the racial categories that oversimplified the sixties revolution and provides a deeper appreciation of the twists and turns that kept the music alive.

african american entertainers black history: Josephine Baker Alan Schroeder, Heather Lehr Wagner, 2009 * Critically acclaimed biographies of history's most notable African-Americans * Straightforward and objective writing * Lavishly illustrated with photographs and memorabilia * Essential for multicultural studies

african american entertainers black history: Black Acting Methods Sharrell Luckett, Tia M. Shaffer, 2016-10-04 Black Acting Methods seeks to offer alternatives to the Euro-American performance styles that many actors find themselves working with. A wealth of contributions from directors, scholars and actor trainers address afrocentric processes and aesthetics, and interviews with key figures in Black American theatre illuminate their methods. This ground-breaking collection is an essential resource for teachers, students, actors and directors seeking to reclaim, reaffirm or even redefine the role and contributions of Black culture in theatre arts. Chapter 7 of this book is freely available as a downloadable Open Access PDF at <http://www.taylorfrancis.com> under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives (CC-BY-NC-ND) 4.0 license.

african american entertainers black history: Singing Like Germans Kira Thurman, 2021-10-15 In Singing Like Germans, Kira Thurman tells the sweeping story of Black musicians in German-speaking Europe over more than a century. Thurman brings to life the incredible musical interactions and transnational collaborations among people of African descent and white Germans and Austrians. Through this compelling history, she explores how people reinforced or challenged racial identities in the concert hall. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, audiences assumed the categories of Blackness and Germanness were mutually exclusive. Yet on attending a performance of German music by a Black musician, many listeners were surprised to discover that German identity is not a biological marker but something that could be learned, performed, and mastered. While Germans and Austrians located their national identity in music, championing composers such as Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms as national heroes, the performance of their works by Black musicians complicated the public's understanding of who had the right to play them. Audiences wavered between seeing these musicians as the rightful heirs of Austro-German musical culture and dangerous outsiders to it. Thurman explores the tension between the supposedly transcendental powers of classical music and the global conversations that developed about who could perform it. An interdisciplinary and transatlantic history, Singing Like Germans suggests that listening to music is not a passive experience, but an active process where racial and gendered categories are constantly made and unmade.

african american entertainers black history: Making Movies Black Thomas Cripps, 1993-05-20 This is the second volume of Thomas Cripps's definitive history of African-Americans in Hollywood. It covers the period from World War II through the civil rights movement of the 1960s, examining this period through the prism of popular culture. Making Movies Black shows how movies anticipated and helped form America's changing ideas about race. Cripps contends that from the liberal rhetoric of the war years--marked as it was by the propaganda catchwords brotherhood and tolerance--came movies that defined a new African-American presence both in film and in American society at large. He argues that the war years, more than any previous era, gave African-American activists access to centers of cultural influence and power in both Washington and Hollywood. Among the results were an expanded black imagery on the screen during the war--in combat movies such as *Bataan*, *Crash Dive*, and *Sahara*; musicals such as *Stormy Weather* and *Cabin in the Sky*; and government propaganda films such as *The Negro Soldier* and *Wings for this Man* (narrated by Ronald Reagan!). After the war, the ideologies of both black activism and integrationism persisted, resulting in the 'message movie' era of *Pinky*, *Home of the Brave*, and *No Way Out*, a form of racial politics that anticipated the goals of the Civil Rights Movement. Delving into previously inaccessible records of major Hollywood studios, among them Warner Bros., RKO, and 20th Century-Fox, as well

as records of the Office of War Information in the National Archives, and records of the NAACP, and interviews with survivors of the era, Cripps reveals the struggle of both lesser known black filmmakers like Carlton Moss and major figures such as Sidney Poitier. More than a narrative history, *Making Movies Black* reaches beyond the screen itself with sixty photographs, many never before published, which illustrate the mood of the time. Revealing the social impact of the classical Hollywood film, *Making Movies Black* is the perfect book for those interested in the changing racial climate in post-World War II American life.

african american entertainers black history: Hollywood Black Donald Bogle, Turner Classic Movies, 2019-05-07 The films, the stars, the filmmakers—all get their due in *Hollywood Black*, a sweeping overview of blacks in film from the silent era through *Black Panther*, with striking photos and an engrossing history by award-winning author Donald Bogle. The story opens in the silent film era, when white actors in blackface often played black characters, but also saw the rise of independent African American filmmakers, including the remarkable Oscar Micheaux. It follows the changes in the film industry with the arrival of sound motion pictures and the Great Depression, when black performers such as Stepin Fetchit and Bill Bojangles Robinson began finding a place in Hollywood. More often than not, they were saddled with rigidly stereotyped roles, but some gifted performers, most notably Hattie McDaniel in *Gone With the Wind* (1939), were able to turn in significant performances. In the coming decades, more black talents would light up the screen. Dorothy Dandridge became the first African American to earn a Best Actress Oscar nomination for *Carmen Jones* (1954), and Sidney Poitier broke ground in films like *The Defiant Ones* and 1963's *Lilies of the Field*. *Hollywood Black* reveals the changes in images that came about with the evolving social and political atmosphere of the US, from the Civil Rights era to the Black Power movement. The story takes readers through Blaxploitation, with movies like *Shaft* and *Super Fly*, to the emergence of such stars as Cicely Tyson, Richard Pryor, Eddie Murphy, and Whoopi Goldberg, and of directors Spike Lee and John Singleton. The history comes into the new millennium with filmmakers Barry Jenkins (*Moonlight*), Ava Du Vernay (*Selma*), and Ryan Coogler (*Black Panther*); megastars such as Denzel Washington, Will Smith, and Morgan Freeman; as well as Halle Berry, Angela Bassett, Viola Davis, and a glorious gallery of others. Filled with evocative photographs and stories of stars and filmmakers on set and off, *Hollywood Black* tells an underappreciated history as it's never before been told.

african american entertainers black history: *Purlie*, 1971 An African American preacher returns to his hometown to open a church, outwitting a segregationist plantation owner to make it happen.

african american entertainers black history: *Bette Davis Black and White* Julia A. Stern, 2022-01-19 Introduction: Black and white -- Little Foxes and little brown wrens -- The poetics of color in *Jezebel* -- Melodramas of blood in *In This Our Life* -- The whiteness of *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* -- Bette Davis black and white.

african american entertainers black history: *The Cruelty Is the Point* Adam Serwer, 2021-06-29 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • From an award-winning journalist at *The Atlantic*, these searing essays make a powerful case that “real hope lies not in a sunny nostalgia for American greatness but in seeing this history plain—in all of its brutality, unadorned by euphemism” (*The New York Times*). NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY NPR • “No writer better demonstrates how American dreams are so often sabotaged by American history. Adam Serwer is essential.”—Ta-Nehisi Coates To many, our most shocking political crises appear unprecedented—un-American, even. But they are not, writes *The Atlantic*’s Adam Serwer in this prescient essay collection, which dissects the most devastating moments in recent memory to reveal deeply entrenched dynamics, patterns as old as the country itself. The January 6 insurrection, anti-immigrant sentiment, and American authoritarianism all have historic roots that explain their continued power with or without President Donald Trump—a fact borne out by what has happened since his departure from the White House. Serwer argues that Trump is not the cause, he is a symptom. Serwer’s phrase “the cruelty is the point” became among the most-used descriptions of

Trump's era, but as this book demonstrates, it resonates across centuries. The essays here combine revelatory reporting, searing analysis, and a clarity that's bracing. In this new, expanded version of his bestselling debut, Serwer elegantly dissects white supremacy's profound influence on our political system, looking at the persistence of the Lost Cause, the past and present of police unions, the mythology of migration, and the many faces of anti-Semitism. In so doing, he offers abundant proof that our past is present and demonstrates the devastating costs of continuing to pretend it's not. *The Cruelty Is the Point* dares us, the reader, to not look away.

african american entertainers black history: *African American Entertainers in Australia and New Zealand* Bill Egan, 2019-12-06 Eleven African Americans, including a musician, were among the First Fleet of colonial settlers to Australia. In the 150-plus following years, African Americans visiting the region included jubilee singers, vaudevillians, sports stars and general entertainers. This book provides the only comprehensive history of more than 350 African American entertainers in Australia and New Zealand between European settlement in Australia in 1788 and the entry of the United States into World War II in 1941. Famous names covered include boxer Jack Johnson, film star Nina Mae McKinney and jazz singer Eva Taylor. Background stories provide a multidimensional view of the entertainers' time in a place very far from home.

african american entertainers black history: *Jazz and Justice* Gerald Horne, 2019-06-18 A galvanizing history of how jazz and jazz musicians flourished despite rampant cultural exploitation. The music we call "jazz" arose in late nineteenth century North America—most likely in New Orleans—based on the musical traditions of Africans, newly freed from slavery. Grounded in the music known as the "blues," which expressed the pain, sufferings, and hopes of Black folk then pulverized by Jim Crow, this new music entered the world via the instruments that had been abandoned by departing military bands after the Civil War. *Jazz and Justice* examines the economic, social, and political forces that shaped this music into a phenomenal US—and Black American—contribution to global arts and culture. Horne assembles a galvanic story depicting what may have been the era's most virulent economic—and racist—exploitation, as jazz musicians battled organized crime, the Ku Klux Klan, and other variously malignant forces dominating the nightclub scene where jazz became known. Horne pays particular attention to women artists, such as pianist Mary Lou Williams and trombonist Melba Liston, and limns the contributions of musicians with Native American roots. This is the story of a beautiful lotus, growing from the filth of the crassest form of human immiseration.

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african american entertainers black history: *Black Magic* Langston Hughes, Milton Meltzer, 1990-08-21 *Black Magic* Langston Hughes's last book, presents the vast, sweeping story of African-American entertainers--the artists and the musicians, the singers and the dancers, the obscure and the illustrious--from the tragic beginnings in slavery to the triumphant artistic achievements of the late 1960s. Long considered the most comprehensive history of African-Americans in the performing arts, this milestone in black history features hundreds of rare and beautiful illustrations. Covering both the obstacles to achievement that these artists faced, and their eventual triumph, *Black Magic*—long out-of-print—is an essential book of American history.

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african american entertainers black history: *White Screens/Black Images* James Snead,

2016-07-22 Hollywood's representation of blacks has been consistently misleading, promoting an artificially constructed mythology in place of historical fact. But how, James Snead asks, did black skin on screen develop into a complex code for various types of white supremacist discourse? In these essays, completed shortly before his death in 1989, James Snead offers a thoughtful inquiry into the intricate modes of racial coding in Hollywood cinema from 1915 to 1985. Snead presents three major methods through which the racist ideology within film functions: mythification, in which black images are correlated in a larger scheme of semiotic valuation where the dominant I needs the marginal other in order to function effectively; marking, in which the color black is repeatedly over-determined and redundantly marked, as if to force the viewer to register the image's difference from white; and omission--the repetition of black absence from positions of autonomy and importance. *White Screens/Black Images* offers an array of film texts, drawn from both classical Hollywood cinema and black independent film culture. Individual chapters analyze *Birth of a Nation*, *King Kong*, Shirley Temple in *The Littlest Rebel* and *The Little Colonel*, Mae West in *I'm No Angel*, Marlene Dietrich in *Blonde Venus*, Bette Davis in *Jezebel*, the racism of Disney's *Song of the South*, and *Taxi Driver*. Making skillful use of developments in both structuralist and post-structuralist film theory, Snead's work speaks not only to the centrality of race in Hollywood films, but to its centrality in the formation of modern American culture.

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african american entertainers black history: *The Story of the Blues* Paul Oliver, 1998 Featuring over 200 vintage photographs and a new introduction by the author, the engaging, informative volume brings to life the African American singers and players who created this rich genre of music as well as the settings and experiences that inspired them. The author deftly traces the evolution of the blues from the work songs of slaves, to acoustic country ballads, to urban sounds, to electric rhythm and blues bands. Oliver vividly re-creates the economic, social, and regional forces that shaped the unique blues tradition, and superbly details every facet of the music, including themes and subjects, techniques, and recording history.

african american entertainers black history: *The Coupling Convention* Ann DuCille, 1993 Much more than a period study, *The Coupling Convention* spans the years from 1853 to 1948 and addresses the vital questions of gender, sexuality, race, and the marriage tradition in black women's fiction.

african american entertainers black history: *Lost Sounds* Tim Brooks, 2010-10-01 A groundbreaking history of African Americans in the early recording industry, *Lost Sounds* examines the first three decades of sound recording in the United States, charting the surprising roles black artists played in the period leading up to the Jazz Age and the remarkably wide range of black music and culture they preserved. Drawing on more than thirty years of scholarship, Tim Brooks identifies key black recording artists and profiles forty audio pioneers. Brooks assesses the careers and recordings of George W. Johnson, Bert Williams, George Walker, Noble Sissle, Eubie Blake, the Fisk Jubilee Singers, W. C. Handy, James Reese Europe, Wilbur Sweatman, Harry T. Burleigh, Roland Hayes, Booker T. Washington, and boxing champion Jack Johnson, plus a host of lesser-known voices. Many of these pioneers struggled to be heard in an era of rampant discrimination. Their stories detail the forces--black and white--that gradually allowed African Americans to enter the mainstream entertainment industry. *Lost Sounds* includes Brooks's selected discography of CD reissues and an appendix by Dick Spottswood describing early recordings by black artists in the Caribbean and South America.

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