

# Jazz Whiteness and Racialized Listening: Living Existentialism



## The Sonic Gaze: Jazz, Whiteness, and Racialized Listening (Living Existentialism) by T. Storm Heter

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2167 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
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Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 305 pages



Jazz is a uniquely American art form that has its roots in the African American community. However, the history of jazz is also marked by a complex and often fraught relationship with whiteness.

In her book, *Jazz Whiteness and Racialized Listening: Living Existentialism*, Susan McClary argues that jazz has been shaped by a "racialized listening" that privileges whiteness and marginalizes blackness. This racialized listening is evident in the ways that jazz has been commodified, appropriated by white musicians, and stereotyped as "primitive" or "savage."

McClary draws on the work of existential philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus to develop a theory of "living existentialism" that she argues is central to jazz. Living existentialism is a way of being in the

world that is characterized by a deep sense of freedom and responsibility. It is a way of living that is not afraid to confront the challenges and contradictions of life, and that is always striving to create something new and meaningful.

McClary argues that jazz musicians have always embodied the spirit of living existentialism. They have faced racism and discrimination, but they have never stopped creating music that is both beautiful and challenging. They have found freedom and expression in a world that often tries to silence them.

*Jazz Whiteness and Racialized Listening* is a groundbreaking work that challenges our understanding of jazz and its relationship to race. It is a must-read for anyone who is interested in the history of jazz, the philosophy of existentialism, or the complex relationship between race and culture.

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## **Chapter 1: The Problem of Whiteness**

In the first chapter of her book, McClary argues that whiteness is a problem for jazz. She traces the history of jazz from its origins in the African American community to its appropriation by white musicians in the early 20th century. She shows how whiteness has been used to marginalize and

exclude black musicians, and how it has shaped the way that jazz is listened to and understood.

McClary also argues that whiteness is a problem for existentialism. She argues that existentialism has been used to justify white supremacy and to deny the experiences of black people. She shows how existentialist philosophers have often ignored or dismissed the role of race in human existence.

## **Chapter 2: Racialized Listening**

In the second chapter of her book, McClary develops a theory of racialized listening. She argues that racialized listening is a way of listening that privileges whiteness and marginalizes blackness. This racialized listening is evident in the ways that jazz has been commodified, appropriated by white musicians, and stereotyped as "primitive" or "savage."

McClary argues that racialized listening is a product of white supremacy. She shows how white supremacy has created a system of racial hierarchy that privileges whiteness and devalues blackness. This system of racial hierarchy is reflected in the ways that jazz is listened to and understood.

## **Chapter 3: Living Existentialism**

In the third chapter of her book, McClary argues that living existentialism is a way of being in the world that is characterized by a deep sense of freedom and responsibility. It is a way of living that is not afraid to confront the challenges and contradictions of life, and that is always striving to create something new and meaningful.

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## **Chapter 4: Jazz and the Future**

In the fourth and final chapter of her book, McClary explores the future of jazz. She argues that jazz is a vital art form that has the power to challenge racism and white supremacy. She calls for a new generation of jazz musicians to embrace the spirit of living existentialism and to create music that is both beautiful and challenging.

McClary's book is a timely and important contribution to the literature on jazz, race, and existentialism. It is a must-read for anyone who is interested in the future of jazz and the fight against racism.

## **About the Author**

Susan McClary is a musicologist and cultural critic. She is the author of several books, including *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* and *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form*.

## **Praise for *Jazz Whiteness and Racialized Listening***

"A groundbreaking work that challenges our understanding of jazz and its relationship to race. It is a must-read for anyone who is interested in the history of jazz, the philosophy of existentialism, or the complex relationship

between race and culture." -**Robin D.G. Kelley**, author of *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*

"A powerful and provocative book that will force us to rethink the history of jazz and its relationship to whiteness. McClary's insights are essential for understanding the complex and often fraught relationship between race and culture in America." -**Angela Y. Davis**, author of *Are Prisons Obsolete?*



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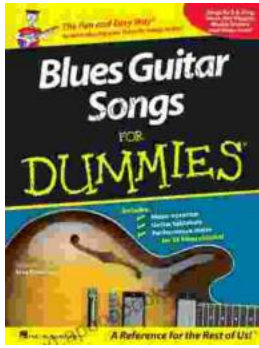
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