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*'All Rock and Rhythm and Jazz': Rock'n'Roll Origin Stories and Race in
Australia*

They had a high-fi phono
Boy, did they let it blast
700 little records
All rock and rhythm and jazz
(Chuck Berry 'C'est La Vie (You Never Can Tell)' (1964))

Rock'n'Roll Stories

Where did rock'n'roll come from? The Australian narrative was, and to some extent still is, that rock'n'roll was the debased progeny of jazz, as was rhythm and blues to the extent that Australians made a generic distinction. This answer suggests two further questions. First, how do Australians think about jazz? Second, what were the conditions that enabled jazz to occupy such a central position in Australian popular music that the next major, popular music form could be narrativised as having a heritage in jazz? These questions need to be set into a more general, overarching question: how did Australia's attitudes towards race affect people's understandings of jazz and of rock'n'roll?

The difficulty in writing about the discursive connections between what is constructed as 'jazz' in and as 'rock'n'roll' in Australia is that here, as elsewhere, and most importantly in the United States, the critical discourses relating to jazz and rock'n'roll are divergent in significant ways. As Matt Brennan writes: 'In the first half of the twentieth century, conservative critics notoriously dismissed jazz on the grounds that it was primitive, vulgar and achieved popularity by appealing to the lowest common denominator of public taste.' Behind the claims was a racial argument: white critics attacking an African-American musical form and, by implication, African-Americans. However, around the 1940s, and especially with the advent of solo improvisation and bebop, those same critics 'reconceptualised [jazz] as a serious art music.' Jazz was repositioned as modern music and was understood as a part of the modernist avant-garde.

Gary Giddins comments that today: ‘The idea of jazz as a stately, classical art—less stuffy than European classicism, more dignified than rock—remains an attractive one, and cities around the world are eager to launch jazz festivals, each with its own definition of jazz.’¹

Brennan goes on to remark that: ‘Any jazz-oriented music that fit this mould [solo improvisation especially, such as bebop] remained jazz, but anything that featured vocals and a strong dance beat, for instance, was cast away.’ Thus, the new African-American musical development that became known as rhythm and blues and, in its white American reworking, as rock’n’roll, was denounced in the same terms that early jazz had been. Thus, to quote Brennan once more: ‘The very development of jazz criticism, which claimed jazz on high art terms, perhaps made the denunciation of rhythm and blues inevitable, years before R&B ever happened.’ Rhythm and blues was denigrated and consigned to popular culture as jazz became inscribed in high culture. And, I can add, writing about rhythm and blues, and rock music in general, has remained, in the main, populist—though, by the 1970s there was developing a strand of rock criticism which, in the manner of earlier jazz criticism, was beginning to argue for rock as an avant-garde form.

Whereas in the United States, rock’n’roll was tracked back to African-American music, not least because it was impossible to ignore the African-American musical presence there, in Australia, as we shall see, there was an attempt to recuperate rock’n’roll by thinking about it as a degraded form of jazz. In Australia, where the White Australia policy was still in force in the 1950s, and would remain so until the early 1970s, jazz had been resumed as a predominantly white music, obviously in the whiteness of its Australian performers but, more importantly, in the discursive understanding of what constituted jazz. In this thinking, jazz innovations were African-American but they tended to be consolidated by whites. Thus, if rock’n’roll had a jazz history, it could be more easily appropriated and whitened in its musical practices—in rock’n’roll this would come to mean emphases on melody, harmony, the vocal standing out front rather than being used as another instrument, notes being hit perfectly, emotion remaining in the lyrics rather than in the vocal performance—if it was claimed to have a relationship with jazz. This article, then, is not about the aesthetics of either jazz or rock’n’roll, nor is it concerned with history per se. Rather, I want to think about the ways that Australian assumptions about race intersected with the discourses of jazz and rock’n’roll, discourses

which had always been inflected by American understandings of race. I want to think about why, in Australia, unlike in the United States, the story of rock'n'roll's beginnings was connected with jazz.

We must start, then, by considering the story that rock'n'roll emerged out of jazz. Luckily, Peter Doyle has done some fine detective work examining press reports about rock'n'roll in the 1950s. He writes that where 'rock'n'roll [was] defined in terms of an already established style it was 'as badly played rhythm and blues', degenerate jazz, as a kind of boogie-woogie, or as a new kind of swing.'² For both those in favour of it—very few—and those against, jazz provided the most usual origin. In an article in the *Sydney Sun-Herald*, the boogie-woogie pianist and one of Australia's few advocates at that time of African-American music, Les Welch, is quoted as saying that '[Rock and roll is] the purest form of jazz—the real jazz.'³ In the same article the trad jazz pianist Dick Hughes offers the dominant, negative view of rock'n'roll:

'Rock'n'roll is only another name for...Rhythm and Blues...both are derivatives of a fine lusty jazz style played in the Chicago Black Belt...But "pure jazz" musicians reckon that both R and R and R and B emphasise the poorer features of this...music.'⁴

It is worth thinking about this statement for a moment. Rhythm and blues, conventionally thought of as a Black genre, and rock'n'roll, conventionally identified, in the United States especially, as a white genre, are both here described as deriving from jazz—but not jazz as a general musical category. The jazz from which these genres are said to come is a 'jazz style.' The rhetoric here seems to suggest that this version of jazz is, historically, no more than on a par with other, I would suggest white, 'jazz styles.' We will have to think about what might be a white jazz style.

This Black Chicago jazz is described as 'fine' and 'lusty.' Many of the early Black New Orleans jazz pioneers from the second and third decades of the century migrated to Chicago. It is, essentially, where Black jazz, hot jazz as it is sometimes called, was most fully elaborated. 'Fine' could be read as a somewhat diminishing judgement on music which was so central to African-American culture. 'Lusty,' it would seem a substitute for 'hot,' is more problematic. While suggesting energy, the energy implied is sexual. The connection here is with modern understandings of 'primitive.' Primitive could be thought of either positively or negatively. In the early years of the

twentieth century a celebration of the primitive was associated with many of those artists thought of as avant-garde—including Gauguin and Picasso. Attempting a panoramic impression, James Clifford writes this:

‘Paris 1925: the *Revue nègre* enjoys a small season at the Theatre des Champs-Élysées, following on the heels of W. H. Wellmon’s Southern Syncopated Orchestra. Spirituals and *le jazz* sweep the avant-garde bourgeoisie, which haunts Negro bars, sways to new rhythms in search of something primitive, *sauvage* ... and completely modern.’⁵

African society offered works reclassified as art which apparently expressed a world unlimited by the conventions of modern society. For the middle class, the lack of such limits was scandalous. As Clifford makes clear, in the 1920s African-American jazz and spirituals were both included in this understanding of the primitive. The same was true of Australia. Here, as Bruce Johnson and John Whiteoak write:

‘Black American jazz held little interest or esthetic appeal for Australians until the 1930s. Yet in the 1920s even the vaguest report that jazz music and dancing were somehow ‘Negroid’ in origin imbued them with appealing exoticism and an exciting aura of social, musical and terpsichorean transgression.’⁶

This minority pleasure in the experience of transgression was, of course, overdetermined by the mainstream perception of this ‘Negroid’ music. Johnson and Whiteoak quote the *Melbourne Age*, from July 7th, 1926, to the effect that jazz was ‘an imported vogue of sheer barbarism ... a direct expression of the Negroid spirit.’⁷ Thus, both groups viewed the racial aspect of jazz the same way. However, some people celebrated jazz for its primitivism.

Hughes, I have noted, played what, in Australia, is known as ‘traditional jazz’. Writing about jazz in post-Second World War Britain, George Melly drew a distinction between those who played traditional, ‘trad,’ jazz and those who played revivalist jazz.⁸ Johnson and Whiteoak write that: ‘By the beginning of the war there was a small but dedicated ‘back to the roots of jazz’ movement devoted to appreciation and revival of collectively improvised jazz, a style that had only been adopted here on a tiny scale in the 1920s and as Dixieland in dance-palais programs in the 1930s.’⁹ Johnson and Whiteoak go on to describe the two strands of jazz as they evolved in Australia: ‘On one side were the modern styles of jazz that displayed the virtuosity and creativity of improvising

soloists like [Artie] Shaw, or Australian counterparts like the Melbourne saxophonist Bob Tough. On the other side were styles that were seen to embody the grassroots expression of early black jazz.’¹⁰ What George McKay points out about the two streams of jazz in Britain noted by Melly, that these ‘clearly identifiable forms—or factions—of musical retrospection in Britain [were] both white’¹¹ is equally applicable to Australia. Melly, writing in the mid-1960s, describes the revivalist movement as ‘antiquarian.’ This white, nostalgic, picking over of a pre-war African-American musical genre has a certain implicit racial politics about it. The original, African-American artists are safely in the pre-cataclysmic past. The same politics were present in Australian traditional jazz, perhaps more so as Australia was still in the grip of the White Australia policy. In Hughes’ statement, then, we can now understand that there seems to be a complicated ambivalence about what he calls this ‘fine lusty jazz style played in the Chicago Black Belt.’

More, this music is distinguished from the music of “pure jazz” musicians’ who are, by implication, Australian and white—here we see in action the nostalgia politics of revivalist and trad jazz. A hierarchy is suggested. The judgement of these white jazz musicians is that rhythm and blues, and rock’n’roll, ‘emphasise the poorer features’ of Black Chicago jazz which, Hughes appears to be saying, are those which tend towards the primitive and, particularly, the sexual.¹² However, we should not see this mythic lineage as simply a 1950s lack of understanding.

In *Bodgie Dada and the Cult of Cool*, published in 1995, John Clare and Gail Brennan make similar claims. In a discussion of jazz as ‘the true music of the machine age’ they write that: ‘repeating riffs and the rolling, slowly metamorphosing quality of boogie...are now seen to be more characteristic of what are arguably jazz offshoots, rhythm and blues and rock and roll.’¹³ Later, Clare and Brennan are more certain. Discussing the bodgies of the 1950s they write that: ‘Like many people at the time, some of the bodgies probably did not distinguish between jazz and its offshoot, rhythm and blues.’¹⁴ Indeed, they even produce a jazz history for ‘Rock Around The Clock’ explaining that its ‘melody was an old New Orleans marching tune called ‘Bill Avery’s Blues.’’¹⁵ ‘Rock Around The Clock’ was written by Max Friedman (also written as Freedman) and James Myers. Myers was a professional song writer and country music promoter who lived in Philadelphia. He claimed ‘the melody evolved in his head over a few years before he finally wrote it down.’¹⁶ In a number of different tellings of the

song's composition, he avers that Friedman helped him complete the song in 1953. In his exhaustive discussion of the song, Jim Dawson has found evidence that suggests that Friedman actually wrote the song. Dawson mentions a number of rhythm and blues songs that are thematic precursors, especially the Sam Theard written 'Rock Around The Clock,' recorded by Theard and Hal Singer and released under Singer's name, in which: 'The overall construction of this 'Rock Around The Clock' is different from the later hit record, but the repeated line of "rock around the clock" is similar in melody to what a group called Sonny Dae & His Knights would sing three years later when they introduced the first recording of the now-famous 'Rock Around The Clock.'¹⁷ Dawson adds, though, that while recording the song Haley changed the melody of the verse from what Friedman had written, 'and dropped in, almost note for note, the verse from one of his favorite records, Hank Williams' 1949 hit, "Move It On Over," which Williams in turn had partially recycled from an old, common New Orleans Mardi Gras riff; boogie-woogie pianist Little Brother Montgomery used it on his 1930 recording of "Vicksburg Blues," and a dozen years later bandleader Charlie Barnet made it the main hook of a popular instrumental called "Victory Walk."¹⁸ While there may be a New Orleans connection, then, it is rather more remote and traditional than Clare and Brennan imply, and it had been mediated and reinterpreted by a country influence. Williams himself most probably picked up the riff from either Montgomery, who hailed from Louisiana and moved to Chicago, or the white, big band reworking of Barnet.

This is a good time to look at what is now generally thought about the origin of rock'n'roll. Paul Friedlander starts by discussing rhythm and blues:

'In the late 1940s Black music visionaries transformed elements of blues, gospel, and jump band jazz into the style known as rhythm and blues. This fusion later became the basis for rock's first era, classic rock and roll. R&B's musical synthesis consisted of the core blues band plus jazz's tenor saxophone soloist.'¹⁹

Jump band jazz was music played by a small group with a heavy emphasis on the beat. As it happens, the genre is more usually called jump blues. The style is often attributed to Louis Jordan. Bill Dahl describes Jordan this way:

'Effervescent saxophonist Louis Jordan was one of the chief architects and prime progenitors of the R&B idiom. His pioneering use of jumping

shuffle rhythms in a small combo context was copied far and wide during the 1940s²⁰

The style was carried forward by the aptly-named blues shouters like Wynonie Harris and Big Joe Turner who sang the first version of ‘Shake, Rattle and Roll.’ about which more later.

Later in his book, Friedlander describes the influences that produced rock’n’roll:

‘Rock and roll music was not musically complex—it contained elements from rhythm and blues, blues, and gospel mixed with varying amounts of country music and pop. There were emotion-laden vocals. There was an emphasis on the two and four beats of the measure (one-TWO-three-FOUR); listeners rocked on the one and three and rolled on the TWO and FOUR.’²¹

At eighteen Bill Haley had spent four years singing and playing with country and western bands. Before becoming Bill Haley and the Comets, the band were known as the Saddlemen. They recorded western swing numbers like the single ‘Deal Me A Hand’/ ‘Ten Gallon Stetson.’ Here, then, if jazz has any place at all in the development of rock’n’roll it is minor and confined to Black jump band music—which is only problematically jazz depending on one’s definitions of jazz and of rhythm and blues. Haley himself said that: ‘What I play and what I developed is a combination of Dixie, country and western, rhythm and blues, and pop.’²²

Given the jazz heritage Australians attributed to rock’n’roll, it is not surprising that it should have been jazz musicians who first tried to play the new, country-inflected white revision of rhythm and blues. Doyle tells us that the earliest usage he could find in the Australian press was in the August 1955 issue of *Music Maker*. Here, there was an announcement:

‘For the first time in Australia, the new sensational entertainment which has swept America., will be introduced ... at Leichhardt Stadium

This new audience participation entertainment (the exact nature of which is being kept a secret) is based on the wildest elements of rhythm and blues music.’²³

The music was to be played by Monty (or Monte) Richardson's band. Richardson worked with the Bob Dyer Show Orchestra on radio. As it happens, Dyer, from Tennessee, used to sing hillbilly—that is early country—comedy songs. The announcement tells us that Richardson and the promoter, Bill McColl, 'have decided to slightly modify American versions to suit Australian audiences.'²⁴ The two songs mentioned, both, as Doyle points out mis-titled, are 'Rocking Around The Clock' ('Rock Around The Clock') and 'Dim Down The Lights' ('Dim, Dim The Lights (I Want Some Atmosphere)).' Both are on Bill Haley and the Comets' first album, released in 1955, *Shake, Rattle and Roll*. We don't know what modifications Richardson made but, given the announcement's reference to rock'n'roll as a 'new audience participation entertainment' I would agree with Doyle when he writes that this 'presumably meant making noise and drawing attention to themselves through spectacular "demonstrations" of their jiving abilities.'²⁵ Though I think the former more likely than the latter as the article also tells us that, with a complete renovation: 'The seating accommodation is comfortable with cushioned seats and a new lighting and heating system [which] makes the Leichhardt Stadium an ideal place for this family show.' This new novelty, then, rock'n'roll, appears to have been thought of as sit-down family entertainment, as a spectacle similar, as we shall see, to the way jazz was introduced to Australia within vaudeville, not a music for teenagers to dance to. Jiving, in its earlier form of jitterbugging had arrived in Australia during the Second World War with American troops. After the war there was a move back to more conservative ballroom dancing but, as I have said, dancing does not seem to have been likely on this evening.²⁶

I would hypothesise that Richardson's modification, which, in the first instance, meant transposing Haley's musical arrangement from his country/rhythm and blues band format of double bass, drums, piano, accordion, one (or two) guitar, tenor sax to Richardson's jazz band—the article tells us that: 'There will be a 15 piece band, besides other groups and the very best top line instrumentalists'—also involved slowing the songs' tempos and giving them more of a swing feel. That is, making them more respectable—which, as we shall see, we should read as even less African-American influenced than Haley's cleaned up songs—by Australian standards. This is in spite of the assertion in the announcement that the audience participation entertainment, if not the rock'n'roll itself, was to be based on the 'wildest elements of rhythm and blues music.' Given that Haley and the Comets had already modified the tempo and the beat of rhythm

and blues, as well as the lyrics in 'Shake, Rattle and Roll,' this claim can be discounted. However, it does signal the anxious status given this African-American music as extreme, uncivilised and primitive ('wildest'), and therefore in this author's case exciting, popular music.

Making Sense of 'Jazz' in Australia

I will have more to say about swing later. Here, though, it is worth mentioning one event that helps to mark the transition, both generic and generational, from swing as a, literally, popular music to rock'n'roll, and the removing of jazz in Australia, in all its forms, to a subculture. This was the July 1954 Australian tour by Artie Shaw, Ella Fitzgerald and Buddy Rich. Lee Gordon, the American entrepreneur and impresario who had moved to Sydney a year earlier, promoted the show which played stadia in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. The tour had problems from the start when, as Andrew Bisset writes: 'Fitzgerald missed the first concerts because her party had booked first class seats on the plane and had then been refused them because she was coloured.'²⁷ Race was clearly still an issue in Australia when it came to what kind of behaviour was considered appropriate for African-Americans. We shall see that Fitzgerald's treatment came out of an Australian attitude to African-American performers that went back to the nineteenth century.

However, in this feast of jazz, the first tour by American artists since the trumpeter Rex Stewart in 1949, if we want to think about the changing position of jazz in Australia it is exemplary to look at Artie Shaw. Bisset tells us that Shaw worked with a fifteen piece Australian band and that, a perfectionist, he spent three hours rehearsing just 'Begin The Beguine.'²⁸ Now, 'Begin The Beguine' had been Shaw's breakthrough number in 1938, the million seller that enabled Shaw to equal, if not overtake, Benny Goodman in popularity. Between them, Goodman and Shaw defined big band swing and provided popular music for a generation to dance to. Within a year of the release of 'Begin The Beguine' Shaw's band was making \$US60,000 a week. By 1954, though, that was sixteen years in the past and a world war away. In 1954 Shaw was on the verge of giving up music for good. He no longer had a big band. Rather, he had just reformed a new version of the Gramercy Five, the innovative combo format that he had first developed in 1940. By the second version of the group Shaw was already introducing elements of be-bop. In other words, for Shaw himself, playing music from the swing era must have only had nostalgia value. In Australia in 1954 the generation that had bought

his records was married and settled down, the next generation were not interested in pre-World War II music. To put it in Ian Whitcomb's blunt phrase, writing about the United States: 'Swing was king from 1936 till approximately 1940.'²⁹ The same seems to have been true of Australia. Gordon 'lost a lot of money on this tour.'³⁰ The Shaw tour, then, marks the end of jazz, specifically swing, as a mainstream popular music form in Australia.

We need now to think about how the dominance of swing had come about. Jazz reached Australia as a novelty. Bisset writes that: 'As described by Australian magazines and newspapers, jazz seemed to be a synonym for anything loud, discordant or noisy.'³¹ It first seems to have appeared in vaudeville:

'Nieman and Kennedy, the American Hoboes, was one act that claimed to present jazz. They arrived in Sydney in October 1917 and soon had Tivoli audiences calling for three encores of their song 'Mr Jazz.'³²

Ben Fuller, who had controlled the Fuller vaudeville network since taking over from his father in 1912,³³ asked Billy Romaine, an American who had come to Australia that same year and who had formed Billy's American Ragtime Music to play for dancers at Sydney's Salon de Luce, to put together a jazz band.³⁴ In passing we can note that ragtime has an equally racialised history in Australia. John Whiteoak remarks that:

'The Australian history of ragtime primarily concerns the importation, consumption, reproduction and synthesis of white American and British ragtime music and performance behaviour models. ... Yet there was some degree of performance-culture contact between African-Americans and Australians via popular entertainment, particularly through the black jubilee singers and ragtime artists who performed in Australia or could be heard on imported sound recordings and hand-played piano rolls.'³⁵

Here again, as in jazz, we see the Australian bias towards the 'whiter,' that is here more formal, certainly more composed and less improvised, and less syncopated, form of ragtime.

After a lengthy discussion of the Jazz Band, Whiteoak sums up:

'Overall I have argued that the Jazz Band was basically a send-up of the latest American craze, jazz, in the long popular tradition of burlesque on new vogues. ... In its relatively short existence (around four months), the Jazz Band

probably gave the impression that jazzing was playful musical interaction, vocal and instrumental ragging of popular music, the interpolation of novelty sound effects, faking, imitation ecstatic physical movements to music, improvisatory fills or breaks (particularly on percussion) and exaggerated drum rhythm and showmanship.³⁶

The band had a female singer, in Melbourne this was Belle Sylvia. Giving the impression that they were American, Fuller advertised them as ‘for the first time in Australia.’³⁷ This band first played at Fuller’s National Theatre in June 1918.

At this point there was no sense of jazz as being a part of the African-American music tradition. Fuller advertised his jazz band as a vaudeville novelty act:

‘Ben J. Fuller first again...in introducing the most curious of musical ideas—the height of eccentricity, the acme of skilled and musical nonsense. In his wildest moments Sousa never dreamed of anything like this.’³⁸

John Philip Sousa, who had toured Australia in 1910, was famous for his march compositions. He had been made head of the United States Marine Band in 1880 and in 1892 organised his own band. Fuller’s understanding of jazz is couched in the discourse of carnival and transgression. Sousa represents order, the strict time of the march. Jazz, Fuller is suggesting, is the carnivalesque opposite; it is eccentric and musical nonsense. One reviewer at least made the connection with minstrelsy:

‘The band reminded one of the old-time nigger minstrel bands. For the most part the members made more noise than music—simply ‘jazzed’ away for all they were worth, but it was patent to see that they were all experts in their various departments.’³⁹

Historically, though, Sousa’s band is one of the antecedents for the dance band. The African-American, James Reese Europe, who pioneered the dance band, studied violin and piano in the 1890s with Sousa’s assistant director, worked with the celebrated white dance team, Vernon and Irene Castle, and in 1913 recorded with his band for the Victor label.⁴⁰

Bruce Johnson argues that:

‘Until the arrival of the first visiting American jazz bands in 1923 the musical conventions of Australian jazz were likely to have been a combination of local dance and vaudeville traditions, with ragging and related effects based on earlier touring minstrel groups and later associated with vaudeville, cinema and dance music. All this was now augmented with a sometimes Dada-esque, anachronistic sense of the new “jazz” components. Contemporary reviews describe animal impressions, the banging of kitchenware, revolver shots, drums thrown around the stage.’⁴¹

Much of this sounds like a throwback to the medieval and early-modern world of rough music (‘music’ made by a group of people banging things like saucepans in a carnivalesque context for the purpose of highlighting somebody’s social transgression) rather than any kind of recognition of the form of New Orleans jazz. It would not have been that much of a throwback, though. In Henry Lawson’s reminiscence about the songs sung on the gold rush diggings around the 1880s he describes how a digger got married secretly and brought his wife back to the camp after dark ‘but the diggers got wind of it and rolled up with gold-dishes, shovels etc etc, and gave them a real good tinkettling in the old-fashioned style.’⁴²

It may also have been that Fuller or Romaine had acquired a copy of the first recording by a jazz band, The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, released in 1917.⁴³ The ODJB, as they became known, were a group of white New Orleans musicians who travelled to Chicago in 1916 and then moved to New York where, on 26th February 1917, four years after Europe’s first dance band recordings, the band recorded ‘Livery Stable Blues’ and ‘Dixie Jazz Band One-Step.’ ‘Livery Stables Blues’ includes a comic interlude where instruments imitate the sounds of animals. Australian musicians may have taken this as a licence to go the whole vaudevillian hog.

Interestingly this attempt to play jazz from within the cultural terms of vaudeville and with, possibly, some understanding of ragtime, is similar to the attempt, already discussed, to play rock’n’roll from within the terms of Australian jazz. If there was a difference in knowledge, it would have been an effect of technology. Monte Richardson might have had a copy of Bill Haley and the Comets’ first album and so might some of his audience though this is unlikely as the album was released in August in the United States and the performances were spread over the last evening of August and the first two of September.. Moreover, the *Music Maker* article explains that Richardson had new

arrangements ('special arrangements brought straight from New York will be a feature of the production') so, as was still common, Richardson was working from written charts of the music.⁴⁴ Fuller and Romaine, at a time when gramophone technology was still in its infancy, could have had only the one released single which would have had to have been played on a gramophone without electric amplification. They would definitely have been using sheet music.

The Australian, vaudevillian form of jazz became well-established. American bands did not tour until 1923. Bisset notes that, 'by the end of the five years Australia had its own flourishing young entertainment industry.'⁴⁵ One reason for this was the new craze for public dancing. This, too, was imported from the United States:

'The dance craze had begun before the Great War, from the time the American Fleet visited in 1908. Thereafter the cities of Australia were only a season behind America. Descriptions of dances arrived with each ship bring to Australia a steady stream of dance-crazed visitors and immigrants....'⁴⁶

Johnson and Whiteoak date the dance boom to after World War 1 and describe how it 'coincided with the introduction of jazz-age ballroom dances such as the jazz foxtrot, the jazz waltz and, later, the shimmy, the Blues, the Charleston, the black bottom and others.'⁴⁷ They go on to describe how: 'Dance bands accordingly began to be called jazz bands' and how they 'adopted at least some of the instrumentation and performance characteristics that the public and entertainment entrepreneurs had begun to associate with jazz.'⁴⁸ In this way what was constructed as 'jazz' in Australia—Johnson and Whiteoak note that: 'Any Australian band that played marginally syncopated song hits ... was believed to play 'jazz''⁴⁹—merged and renovated more established dance music. As Johnson notes: 'The urban "mass" consumption of music was expanded with the growth of public dance halls from the teens of the century.'⁵⁰ Bisset compliments this:

'The vogue for dancing went from strength to strength 1922-1928. Dancing had long been enjoyed by all classes but never had it been embraced by so many.'⁵¹

In Australia jazz meant dance music.

That Dance Music, That's Jazz

The first American jazz band to visit Australia was Frank Ellis and his Californians. The Californians stayed for four years.⁵² They played dance music. Johnson notes that: 'The extravagances of local jazz performances diminished with the arrival of the first American jazz bands from 1923.'⁵³ Ellis had previously played with Art Hickman's band in San Francisco, as had Bert Ralton who was the next to tour Australia as Bert Ralton's Original Havana Band arriving in November 1923.⁵⁴ Hickman, who claimed to have been influenced by the African-American musicians playing the dance halls of San Francisco's Barbary Coast, seems to have put his first band together in 1913. The music he played was 'a balance of disciplined playing and discrete improvisation' with 'Paul Whiteman-esque arrangements.'⁵⁵ James Collier puts the arrangements down to Ferde Grofé, a classically trained musician 'who began to realize that dance music could be made a lot more interesting if it were to make use of the simpler devices on which symphonic music was built—contrapuntal lines, harmonies using standard voice-teaching procedures and the like.'⁵⁶ Grofé started to arrange for Hickman, '[a]t some point in the years after 1915.' He subsequently went on to work for Paul Whiteman. In short, Hickman's strict tempo dance music places him in the lineage of white dance bands that includes Paul Whiteman, Benny Goodman and ends, as we have already seen, with Artie Shaw.

It is worth emphasising that this is a different stream of jazz, and as we shall see it may be that we should not use this word to describe dance music though most commentators do, to that brought to New York by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. As Bruce Vermazen writes:

'In the winter of 1916-17, jazz became a craze in New York. But it wasn't the jazz that Art Hickman and the lads were playing for the fox-trotters in the Rose Room.'⁵⁷

When Hickman travelled to New York in 1919 he took with him both Ellis on piano and Ralton on saxophone. In 1920 Hickman very clearly distinguished his music from what was becoming commonly accepted as jazz. *Talking Machine World*, 15/7/20, reports that:

'Art Hickman...insists that his orchestra, now playing on the Ziegfeld roof, is not a jazz band. 'Jazz,' says Mr Hickman, 'is merely noise, a product of the honky-tonks, and has no place in a refined atmosphere. I

have tried to develop an orchestra that charges every pulse with energy without stooping to the skillet beating, sleigh bell ringing contraptions of a padded cell.’⁵⁸

In another interview with the San Francisco *Examiner* three months later, Hickman repeated his position even more clearly:

‘People [of New York] thought who had not heard my band...that I was a jazz band leader. They expected me to stand before them with a shrieking clarinet and perhaps a plug hat askew on my head shaking like a negro with the ague. New York has been surfeited with jazz. Jazz died on the Pacific Coast six months ago. People began to realise that they were not dancing, that the true grace of Terpsichore was buried in the muck of sensuality.’⁵⁹

While he acknowledged an original inspiration in African-American dance music, Hickman here is very clear that he does not play music which is in any way African-American. That music, jazz, is a music of disorder, lack of control and, where dancing is concerned, sensuality—we are, here, back with ideas of the primitive. Hickman’s orchestra plays dance music acceptable to white society.⁶⁰

It was this white dance music, proto-swing as I have already mentioned, which Ellis’ and Ralton’s bands brought to Australia. Even with this degree of white, bourgeois respectability, though, Ellis’ band was still a revelation to Australians. According to Frank Coughlan in *Music Maker*, December 1936, among other things Ellis’ band introduced vibrato for saxophone and trombone and ‘drumming for rhythm instead of noise.’⁶¹ In addition:

‘Ellis discovered that the tempos were much slower in Australia than in America and, unknown to the dancers, he slowly speeded up from 36 to 56 bars per minute over a period of weeks. Every dance hall followed.’⁶²

For all its vaudevillian chaos, it would seem that the music Australians had been playing for dancing, and calling jazz, had an even slower tempo than the respectable, white proto-swing of the Hickman alumni—which Hickman had denied was jazz, to distinguish it from what he considered the ‘noise’ of African-American music. More, it lacked the use of drums to supply a regular beat.

The first African-American band playing New-Orleans-style jazz arrived in Australia in 1928. For comparison, Sydney Bechet had gone to London with the African-American Southern Syncopated Orchestra (the band mentioned earlier in the quotation from Clifford) in 1919. Sonny Clay's Plantation Orchestra toured as part of an African-American package called Sonny Clay and the Colored Idea. It included a singer, Ivy Anderson, who sang with the Colored Idea and would go on, later, to work with Duke Ellington, the Harmony Emperors (a.k.a. The Colored Emperors of Harmony) and a group of dancers called The Four Covans.⁶³

Sonny Clay had started playing jazz when he lived in Phoenix, Arizona. Subsequently he moved to Tijuana where he played drums with Jelly Roll Morton and then to Los Angeles where he played with Reb Spikes and in Kid Ory's Original Creole Jazz Band. He had put together a number of different bands in the 1920s before signing on for the Australian tour.

In Australia, the Minister for Home and Territories, the Labor Senator George Pearce, 'had refused two applications to import Negro bands in 1924 and had publicly asserted that 'coloured men will never be allowed to come in''.⁶⁴ Pearce had been a member of the first Commonwealth Parliament that had passed the Immigration Restriction Act, the Act that founded the White Australia policy, in 1901. It may well be that the reason Clay's band, and the rest of the tour group, were allowed in was because the combination of acts made the package look somewhat like a minstrel troupe. In the United States minstrelsy went into a long decline after the end of the Civil War in 1865⁶⁵ and: 'By the 1890s, minstrelsy formed only a small part of American entertainment, and by 1919 a mere three troupes dominated the scene.'⁶⁶ According to Richard Waterhouse: 'When Orpheus McAdoo imported his Alabama Cakewalkers in 1899, the press noted the novelty of the event for tours by American minstrel parties were no longer commonplace.'⁶⁷ (Nevertheless, we should remember that blackface continued in the United States. Al Jolson appeared in blackface in the first talking film, *The Jazz Singer*, in 1927⁶⁸). In Australia the American minstrel shows were gradually replaced by the English version of the Christy minstrels in the vaudeville theatres in the early twentieth century. The English Christy companies, Waterhouse writes, concentrated more on songs and less on the 'Negro business' than the American minstrel troupes. However, as we shall see, the place of the minstrel troupes was taken by African-American jubilee singers.

Clay's tour was originally booked into the vaudeville theatres before being rebooked into dance halls.⁶⁹ At the Tivoli theatre, the management advertised the show as an 'old plantation nigger show.'⁷⁰ In this context the shift from theatre to dance hall is important. It suggests a shift in attitude by audiences who, rather than objectifying Clay's band as 'colourful darkies,' wanted to appreciate them as musical performers and to involve themselves in the music by dancing. To cut a semiotically fascinating story short, the police raided apartments in Melbourne where Clay's band were staying. They found six of Clay's band drinking with six white women, some of whom were in states of undress. A journalist for the *Truth* described the scene: 'Empty glasses, half drunk girls, an atmosphere poisonous with cigarette smoke and fumes from the liquor, and lounging about the flat six niggers.' Newspaper headlines included 'Nude Girls in Melbourne flat orgy; Negro comedians as partners; Raid by police'⁷¹ and, in the *Truth* 25 March 1928 'White Girls With Negro Lovers—Flappers, Wine, Cocaine and Revels.' Clay's band was thrown out of the country and African-American musicians were barred until Ella Fitzgerald came on the Artie Shaw tour in 1954 and Louis Armstrong's group was brought over as the headline band by Lee Gordon for one of his Big Shows a few months later..

It is likely that the deeper reason the members of Clay's band were deported was that they were not behaving the way Australians expected African-Americans to behave from what Australians had learnt from the discourse of minstrelsy—including the African-Americans who had come to Australia as members of minstrel troupes in the latter part of the nineteenth century—and perhaps, more importantly, from the increasing number of African-American jubilee singing groups who were replacing the minstrel shows. One such group were the Fiske Jubilee Singers who toured from 1886. Waterhouse tells us that they 'reinforced the Afro-American impact on colonial society.' It seems that 'McAdoo and his choir proved so popular with colonial audiences that the tour which began in 1886 was still in progress almost twenty years later.'⁷² Bisset makes the point that:

'In August 1929, the Kentucky Jubilee Singers, eight coloured singers of spirituals and plantation songs, were warmly received by vaudeville patrons when they performed at His Majesty's Theatre. Obviously white society could accept the humble Christian aspirations of the spirituals which showed Negroes in a yielding, resigned light, but could not tolerate

Negroes in the exuberant, confident and assured role which jazz gave them.⁷³

To this we could add that Sonny Clay's visit was the first time Australians had heard Black jazz rather than diluted white versions, played mostly as respectable dance music. The music would have seemed very 'primitive' and threatening to mainstream Australia.

From Rhythm and Blues to Minstrelsy and Jubilee Singing

In 1955 an all-African-American tour group came to Australia. They must have been booked into what remained of the vaudeville theatre circuit because they were not booked by Lee Gordon and did not play the stadia that the Big Shows played. The tour group went under the name, The Harlem Blackbirds. This name was only used for the Australian tour. In the United States the revue was called Larry Steele's Smart Affairs road show. Somebody must have thought that this sounded too uppity for Australia and suggested a name that fitted the show into the minstrelsy tradition. In 1877, the Hicks-Sawyer Minstrels, an African-American troupe, was advertised as the 'Blackbirds of Melody.'⁷⁴ Minstrelsy, it seems, was still the only discourse available to most Australians for understanding African-American performance. The tour group included the comedy team Freddie and Flo, and Pigmeat Markham, born in 1904, who had made his name in burlesque as a comedian. Later, in 1968, he would have a novelty hit with a funk-ed-up version of part of his routine, 'Here Come The Judge.' There were also the Leonard and Leonard dancers,⁷⁵ and a tap dancer called Peter Ray. The revue was backed by a twenty-six piece band.

Mabel Scott was the vocalist. Born in 1915, Scott was at the end of her career. She had started out as a gospel singer and then, in 1932, started working with Cab Calloway's Orchestra at the celebrated Cotton Club in Harlem. In the 1940s she worked with the jump blues artist Wynonie Harris and had hits on the new Billboard Rhythm and Blues chart in 1948 with 'Boogie Woogie Santa Claus' and 'Elevator Boogie.' While in Australia, Scott made her last recordings with Les Welch's group. After returning to the United States, Scott retired from the music business and went back to singing gospel in her Los Angeles church. Scott's career epitomises some of the important influences on rhythm and blues—gospel, Black jazz, blues, boogie woogie. However, it does the complex development the diverse and interweaving strands of African-American music no justice to distinguish them generically like this.

Also on the tour were the Moroccos. The Moroccos were an early doowop harmony band from Englewood on the South Side of Chicago. They had formed around 1952. They sang a variety of material from reworkings of Negro spiritual and similar music like ‘The Last Month Of The Year,’ through ballads such as ‘Pardon My Tears’ to jump blues such as ‘Chicken,’ which introduced a new dance, and ‘Red Hots and Chili Mac.’ The latter was paired as a single with a blues-style vocal reworking of Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg’s torch ballad sung by Judy Garland in *The Wizard of Oz*, (1939), ‘Somewhere Over The Rainbow.’ This got national airplay in the United States but, by then, the Moroccos were in Australia. A generation younger than Scott, the Moroccos’ music shows similar influences but includes the harmony work and the white popular music which were also a part of rhythm and blues.

George Kemp (a.k.a. Prayer), the baritone with the Moroccos, tells us that the tour was contracted to last eight weeks but ‘I think we stayed almost nine months.’⁷⁶ This suggests how well the revue was received. One context for the revue’s reception was the popularity of the African-American close harmony group, the Mills Brothers, who had toured briefly on the Tivoli circuit in 1939 when they came to Australia from England after the outbreak of World War 2. As in the United States, they were billed as ‘4 Boys and a Guitar’ and as ‘New Stars of Variety from England and America’⁷⁷ though, in the United States, they had become a sensation in the early 1930s. The Mills Brothers, along with the Ink Spots, were very popular in Australia in the 1940s. The close harmony work of both groups forms a link between the jubilee singers and the doowop groups of the 1950s. For all their sophisticated urbanity, the connection of these groups with the minstrelsy tradition is evident in this very negative review of an Ink Spots concert from 1944 in Los Angeles: ‘Billy Kenny’s phony falsetto and grotesque use of hands, the Jim Crow “roll yo eyes, bo” of two of the Spots, and the smug, overconfident sureness of all four totaled up to a nauseating sum.’⁷⁸ Given their lack of familiarity with African-American culture, Australian audiences seem to have primarily understood the Moroccos in the terms of minstrelsy and the jubilee singers.

To put it differently, the revue’s music was only understood from the vantage point of the white mainstream popular music tradition. Sollie McElroy, the Moroccos’ lead singer, says about the Australian tour that:

‘ “We did a variety of songs...I remember doing ‘Money Honey,’ also ‘Unchained Melody,’ which was done in such a way that we got a standing

ovation. We did it practically a capella.... We did another song, a spiritual called 'Go Down Moses.'

"The reasons we didn't do too many R & B numbers was because Australia was way behind the United States. If we did numbers that were current or popular in the United States, they would have no idea what we were singing. So we would do mainly things like what Nat King Cole would do."⁷⁹

McElroy is very clear that Australian audiences didn't understand rhythm and blues. Luckily, the group had in their repertoire some spirituals such as would have been sung by the jubilee singers as recently as, as we have seen, twenty years earlier. Also, they were familiar with the Tin Pan Alley-style white ballads. I have already mentioned 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow,' Elroy tells us that 'Unchained Melody' was a massive success for them. 'Unchained Melody' written by Hy Zaret and Alex North, was originally performed in the prison genre film *Unchained*, released in 1955. It was subsequently a hit in the United States for the blind, African-American singer Al Hibbler who had worked with Duke Ellington's band from 1943 to 1951. It has been covered many times since. It is a torch ballad in the same musical mould as 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow.'

Coming out of the African-American musical tradition, Elroy's nearest point of contact with white American crooners of the 1940s and early 1950s is Nat King Cole. Cole, an African-American, basically sang in the white musical style of crooners such as Bing Crosby with a few blue notes, and gained a large white audience for his slightly soul-inflected ballads. As it happens, Nat King Cole was brought out to Australia by Lee Gordon in 1956 and 1957 and it is possible that he also performed here in 1952. Clearly McElroy's sense of what music Australians understood, and liked, was spot on.

In McElroy's list of songs, 'Money Honey' is the odd one out. This was written by Jesse Stone, an African-American professional songwriter who in the early 1950s was working for Atlantic Records. Stone helped to create the smoother Atlantic soul sound that was more accessible to a white audience used to an emphasis on melody. In 1953 'Money Honey' was a hit for Clyde McPhatter and the Drifters. It is sometimes described as an early rock'n'roll track and certainly, in the Drifters' version, has a country feel to it which, coupled with a strong regular beat, marks it off from rhythm and blues songs

influenced more by the blues tradition. Indeed, 'Money Honey' fits well with the sweetened, melodic material, often written by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, which characterised the Drifters' career. It is not a surprise that Elvis Presley released a version of 'Money Honey' in 1956.

Stone also wrote 'Shake, Rattle and Roll' which was recorded for Atlantic by Big Joe Turner in 1954. On his tracks for Atlantic, Turner's sound was already 'whitened' when compared to his work for other labels in the late 1930s and 1940s. 'Shake, Rattle and Roll' was covered by Bill Haley and the Comets and, as I have already noted, became the title of their 1955 album. Haley cleaned up the lyrics to make them acceptable for white, American teenagers and gave the song a less bluesy, brighter and more beat-oriented arrangement. In 1956, Presley also covered 'Shake, Rattle and Roll' combining Haley's arrangement with Stone's original lyrics.⁸⁰

One suspects that many in the Australian audiences would have found the up-tempo nature of 'Money Honey' alienating. Certainly it would have been on the edge of the Moroccos' revised repertoire. Luckily, Doyle has found a review of The Harlem Blackbirds in *Music Maker*, October 1955 by T. Rigney. Rigney tells us that: 'The "r'n'r" in this show is not to be confused with the description noticed in one of our dailies where it was suggested that everyone should be given a drum to beat time...but of the type being currently promoted by leading disc jockeys.'⁸¹ The suggestion about drums offers an eerie echo of the attitude to drums already mentioned when 'jazz' was first played in Australia. In the mocking tone is both a cultural memory of the role of drums in rough music and carnival, and an anxiety over the role of the beat in up-tempo music. Either the Moroccos didn't sing 'Money Honey' in the show Rigney attended or s/he was prepared to grant it as an aberration.

Rigney, though, had a good idea of what rock'n'roll is, or ought to be. Whatever that was, it obviously did not include music with an upfront regular drum beat. Earlier in his review, Rigney writes that the show is unique:

'...insofar that not once does the show rely on "blue" gags but each night the audience was hit with a fast moving routine of slick comedy plus excellent dancing and vocalising with the accent on the current "rock'n'roll" trend.'⁸²

The stance here is the wowsler response to minstrel shows—the anxiety over lewd and bawdy humour, for example. More generally, this suggests a concern that the (Negro) ‘primitive’ should not threaten (white European-originated) ‘civilisation.’ Rigney tells us, though, that the music highlighted ‘the current “rock’n’roll” trend.’ Given what we know of the Moroccos’ repertoire and Scott’s background, this would seem to mean, for Rigney, big ballads given a swing feel.

In the earlier quotation Rigney mentions disc jockeys. In 1956, the first year for which we have charts in Australia, we have, alongside Dean Martin and Doris Day, Louis Armstrong (‘Mack The Knife’) and the Platters (‘The Great Pretender’). Both African-American artists, they highlight respectively swing and harmony. In Australia, without a general sense of an African-American musical tradition, swing, thought of as both jazz and as white dance music, had been understood as a dominant, if not the only, popular music form. We are, then, returned to the Australian idea that rock’n’roll evolves, or rather devolves, out of jazz. Armstrong whitened his swing even more by playing, in this case, a European melody written by Kurt Weil and Bertolt Brecht for *Three Threepenny Opera* (which had premiered in Berlin in 1928), and the Platters were a classic African-American crossover group with many of their doo-wop style harmonizing songs, including ‘The Great Pretender,’ written by their white manager, Buck Ram.

No wonder Monte Richardson wanted to modify Bill Haley and the Comets’ material for an Australian audience. Where Haley and the Comets substituted a country reference for rhythm and blues, Richardson, we can surmise, added a swing reference. Through this process, ‘rock’n’roll’ became music without an African-American musical component, in spite of what that announcement claimed, and certainly without a hard, up-front rhythmic beat. Basically, as we can see from Rigney’s comments, mainstream acceptance of rock’n’roll was premised on transforming it into melodic music without a strong backbeat and sung without emotional emphasis, music derived from the European musical tradition; respectable music, that is, without an African-American ‘primitive’ rhythm and blues influence. Establishing rock’n’roll as having a ‘jazz’ lineage meant, in white Australia, giving it as far as possible a white, dance music heritage. This would justify ‘toning down’ rock’n’roll for local consumption. Luckily, none of this worried the American larrikin Lee Gordon. In January 1957, when Bill Haley and the Comets toured in one of Gordon’s Big Shows, Big Joe Turner was on the same bill.⁸³

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- ¹ Gary Giddins 'How Come Jazz Isn't Dead?' in Eric Weisbard ed. *This is Pop: In Search of the Elusive at Experience Music Project*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004, p. 53.
- ² Peter Doyle 'Flying Saucer Rock and Roll,' in *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*. 4:3 (1999): 26. I would like to thank Peter for his comments on an earlier version of this article, some of which I have incorporated, others of which I would have included had I had space.
- ³ Quoted in Doyle 'Flying Saucer Rock and Roll', p. 33.
- ⁴ Quoted in Doyle 'Flying Saucer Rock and Roll,' p. 33.
- ⁵ James Clifford *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988, p. 122. On the idea of the primitive see also Marianna Torgovnick *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.
- ⁶ Bruce Johnson and John Whiteoak 'Jazz' in John Whiteoak and Aline Scott-Maxwell *The Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia*, Sydney: Currency Press, 2000, p. 374.
- ⁷ Johnson and Whiteoak 'Jazz,' p. 374.
- ⁸ George Melly *Revolt into Style: The Pop Arts in Britain*. London, Allan Lane: 1970, pp. 25-27.
- ⁹ Johnson and Whiteoak 'Jazz,' p. 378.
- ¹⁰ Johnson and Whiteoak 'Jazz,' p. 378.
- ¹¹ George McKay *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005, p. 48.
- ¹² In a personal communication Peter Doyle has suggested to me a further reading of this dislike. Peter thinks that what may also be being expressed is a dislike of conformism and an assertion of the individualism that could be read into bebop and other forms of jazz that emphasised the improvisatory over the group. Peter adds: '[I]t is worth considering too how people like Hughes and [Merv] Acheson (both working writers at the time) saw themselves in the context of the wider Australian parochialism, wowserism and racisms of the day -- their espousing of all things black was I think to a large extent a way of declaring and celebrating

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- their own bohemianism against post-war Australian conservatism and wowseryism.’
- 13 John Clare and Gail Brennan *Bodgie Dada and the Cult of Cool*. Kensington, NSW: University of New South Wales Press, 1995, p. 19. Gail Brennan is a pseudonym used by Clare for his journalism.
- 14 Clare and Brennan *Bodgie Dada*, p. 23.
- 15 Clare and Brennan *Bodgie Dada*, p. 75.
- 16 From the website ‘James E. Myers’ at: <http://www.rockabillyhall.com/JamesMyers.html> .
- 17 Jim Dawson *Rock Around The Clock: The Record That Started the Rock Revolution*. San Francisco; Backbeat Books, 2005, p. 24.
- 18 Dawson *Rock Around The Clock*, p. 82.
- 19 Paul Friedlander *Rock and Roll: A Social History*. Boulder, Col.: 1996, p. 18.
- 20 Bill Dahl ‘Louis Jordan’ on the All Music Group website at: <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:rxkbikb6bb39~T1> .
- 21 Friedlander *Rock and Roll*, p. 27.
- 22 Bill Haley quoted in Dawson *Rock Around The Clock*, p. 155. It so happens, as Matthew Brennan tells us, that Duke Ellington wrote an essay in the 1955 Newport Jazz Festival program ‘demonstrating how jazz and rock’n’roll shared the same historical roots. Ellington argued that rock’n’roll was simply “the most raucous form of jazz.” Brennan also discusses the racialised nature of music criticism about jazz and rhythm and blues in the United States. This is in Matthew Brennan’s presentation ‘Comparing the Shaming of Jazz and Rhythm and Blues in Music Criticism’ at the Experience Music Project Pop Conference, Seattle, 27-30 April, 2006. I am grateful to Matthew for emailing me his paper and allowing me to quote from it.
- 23 ‘Leichhart Stadium Gets a Face Lift; Musical Entrepreneur Bill McColl Introduces Rock’n’Roll,’ *Music Maker*, August, 1955.
- 24 ‘Leichhart Stadium Gets a Face Lift; Musical Entrepreneur Bill McColl Introduces Rock’n’Roll,’ *Music Maker*, August, 1955.
- 25 Doyle ‘Flying Saucer Rock and Roll,’ p. 29.
- 26 On this history see Jon Stratton *The Young Ones: Working Class Culture, Consumption and the Category of Youth*. Perth, WA: Black Swan Press, 1992, Chapter Five.
- 27 Andrew Bisset *Black Roots, White Flowers: A History of Jazz in Australia*, Rev. ed. Sydney: ABC Enterprises, 1987, p. 163.

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- 28 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 163.
- 29 Ian Whitcomb *After the Ball: Pop Music From Rag To Rock*. Baltimore: Penguin, 1974, p. 143.
- 30 Damian Johnstone *The Wild One: The Life and Times of Johnny O'Keefe*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2001, p. 18.
- 31 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 9.
- 32 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 9.
- 33 Richard Waterhouse *From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville: The Australian Popular Stage 1788-1914*. Kensington, NSW: University of New South Wales Press, 1990, p. 120.
- 34 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 8-10.
- 35 John Whiteoak *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music in Australia 1836-1970*, Sydney: Currency Press, 1999, p. 112.
- 36 Whiteoak *Playing Ad Lib*, p. 180.
- 37 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 9.
- 38 Bisset reproduces the advertisement in *Black Roots*, p.8.
- 39 Quoted in Whiteoak *Playing Ad Lib*, p. 172.
- 40 See the material on James Reece Europe in David Wondrich *Stomp and Swerve: American Music Gets Hot 1843-1924*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2003, pp. 164-188.
- 41 Bruce Johnson *The Inaudible Music: Jazz, Gender and Australian Modernity*. Sydney: Currency Press, 2000, p. 11.
- 42 Henry Lawson 'The Songs They Used to Sing' in *On the Track*, first published 1900.
- 43 The 'Jazz' in the band's name was originally spelt 'Jass' which was the first spelling of 'jazz' before 'jazz' became more common.
- 44 The vaudeville comparison actually goes deeper. The *Music Maker* article also tells us that: 'Joe Martin as comedy compere [is] equally as good his American counterpart, says [promoter] McColl.'

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- 45 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 9.
- 46 Jill Julius Matthews *Dance Hall and Picture Palace: Sydney's Romance with Modernity*. Sydney: Currency Press, 2004, p. 85.
- 47 Johnson and Whiteoak 'Jazz,' p.374.
- 48 Johnson and Whiteoak 'Jazz,' p. 374.
- 49 Johnson and Whiteoak 'Jazz,' p. 375.
- 50 Johnson *The Inaudible Music*, p. 8.
- 51 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 21
- 52 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 21.
- 53 Johnson *The Inaudible Music*, p. 11.
- 54 James Collier *Benny Goodman and the Swing Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 33.
- 55 Lee Hartsfeld on the Art Hickman page at Amazon.com.at:
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/customer-reviews/B00032N1UQ/103-8315864-8732662>
- 56 Ralton was killed in a big game hunting accident in South Africa in 1927 according to Collier *Benny Goodman*, p. 35.
- 57 Bruce Vermazen 'Art Hickman and His Orchestra' at:
<http://www.garlic.com/~tgracyk/hickman.htm>
- 58 Quoted in Vermazen 'Art Hickman and His Orchestra.'
- 59 Quoted in Vermazen 'Art Hickman and His Orchestra.'
- 60 Whiteman had the same attitude to Black jazz as Hickman. Josh Kun writes that: 'The premise behind [Whiteman's] "symphonic jazz" was ... an attempt to refine the disruptive, primitive elements of jazz (read: black music). Or, as Whiteman himself once put it in *Jazz*, his 1926 collaboration with Mary Margaret McBride, "I never stopped wanting to go into the concert halls and in some measure remove the stigma of barbaric strains and jungle cacophony"' (Josh Kun *Audiotopia: Music, Race and America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, p. 45).
- 61 Quoted from Bisset *Black Roots*.
- 62 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 21.

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- 63 The most detailed outline of the tour membership is in Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 42-44.
- 64 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 44.
- 65 See Robert Toll *Blacking Up: The Minstrel Show in Nineteenth Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974, also Robert Allen *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991, pp. 163-178.
- 66 Wikipedia ‘The Minstrel Show’ at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minstrel_show .
- 67 Waterhouse *From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville*, p. 95.
- 68 In *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998, Matthew Frye Jacobson remarks that: ‘Although this first talking picture [*The Jazz Singer*] was in some sense the very high point of the form, it also marks the end of an era in which blackface would be among the most popular forms in urban culture.’ (p. 121).
- 69 Eugene Chadbourne ‘Sonny Clay’ at *All Music Guide* at: <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:5e841vg3zzma~T1v> .
- 70 See ‘Minstrelsy in Australia: A Brief Overview’ at: <http://www.nugrape.net/minstrel.htm> .
- 71 Bisset *Black Roots*, p. 45.
- 72 Waterhouse *From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville*, p. 87.
- 73 Bisset *Black Roots, White Flowers*, pp. 45-46.
- 74 Waterhouse *From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville*, p. 88.
- 75 Later, in 1958, Leonard and Leonard appeared on television in episode 126 of *Toast of the Town*, (aka *The Ed Sullivan Show*).
- 76 The Moroccos at: <http://members.aol.com/jennysko/midwest2.htm> . All the information about the tour itself comes from this web page.
- 77 A program front cover is available on the web at: <http://www.nugrape.net/mills.jpg> .
- 78 This review can be found at: <http://inkspots.ca/ACTIVITIES-44-47.htm> . There is a story that, when a group using the Ink Spots name finally toured Australia in 1963, they were refused service in an Inverell, New South Wales, pub because of their colour. This can be found at: <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/ncas/teach/unit/his/His21ola/Assets/docs/bandler.html> .

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- 79 The Moroccos at: <http://members.aol.com/jennysko/midwest2.htm> .
- 80 Wikipedia has an informative entry for ‘Shake, Rattle and Roll’ at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shake, Rattle and Roll](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shake,_Rattle_and_Roll) .
- 81 Quoted in Doyle ‘Flying Saucer Rock,’ p. 29.
- 82 Quoted in Doyle ‘Flying Saucer Rock,’ p. 29.
- 83 The great African-American female rhythm and blues singer LaVern Baker was on the same Big Show.