Transculturation in Black Jazz Scenes from Ontario To Nova Scotia During the Interwar Period: And Its After-Effects

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ABSTRACT

Jazz music and culture are almost entirely forgotten on Canadian radio and television today as a popular music form, yet they are still vibrant ingredients in urban Black culture in the East and persist on the fringes of society in rural and industrial areas. This thesis examines how interwar Eastern Canadian Black jazz scenes themselves, and those Black musicians who attained popularity during that period contributed to a national Black identity, and how anthropologist, Fernando Ortiz's concept of transculturation contributed to their self-hood, today. My thesis asserts that Jazz culture helped form greater social bonds between Blacks and other ethnicities during the interwar period and was also a driving force behind the loosening of racial barriers in White society at large by connecting Black musicians and dancers from America, England, Africa, and the Caribbean to Eastern Canadian Black communities through transculturation and travel.

By incorporating old and new live interviews and archival data in print, on film and in audio recordings, this thesis draws attention to the importance transculturation as the main vehicle for the transmutation and transportation of jazz musics and cultures around the world.[3] It also documents the subtle aspects of racial discrimination in the lives of my participants, but where possible, allows the voices of those alive and those passed to speak for themselves. By using the immersive and qualitative research methods taken from anthropology, musicology, and ethnographic history, my research asserts that jazz culture was the defining factor connecting Black people together worldwide during the interwar period and was certainly instrumental in building Canadian Blacks' self- concept and a more equitable Canadian entertainment industry.

Key words: Transculturation

Diaspora

Jazz culture

Black Canadian selfhood

Cy McLean

Mynie Sutton

Bucky Adams

Fernando Ortiz

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Canada, like other nations on the Atlantic coast (the trans-Atlantic countries), has a rich history of Black jazz culture. After the first World War and throughout the interwar period (1918-1939) dramatic socio-political changes were taking place around the world. During the interwar period, culturally distinct peoples with mixed, African, East Indian, Native American or European blood, who had come from ex-slaveholding cultures in the diaspora, started to spread around North America in large numbers.[4] They were all affected and informed by the influence of *transculturation*, a form of symbolic interactionism which stresses the value and importance of cultural exchange through the use of language and symbols. Symbolic Interactionism is a theoretical approach in Sociology developed by George Herbert Mead, which places strong emphasis on the role of symbols and language as core elements of all human interaction. (oxfordreference.com). So, *why and how did the cultural influence of jazz music during the interwar years affect Eastern Canadian Blacks' sense of self and their social and legal standing?* Canadian Jazz historian Mark Miller has identified a missing period in Canadian Black music history during the interwar period and Harvey Amani Whitfield points to a gap in the record of African - Canadian political history during the same period (Miller, 1997, 19, Whitfield, 2008, 132). This likely was because there wasn't much interest in Canadian Black lives in the popular media during the interwar period in Canada. This fact makes it difficult to find information on jazz culture in the east during this time, and harder to find interview subjects who took part in that generation. None of my interview subjects could remember back earlier than the 1930's.

This thesis was originally intended to be about Black Nova Scotian jazz culture but has been re-invented over time and changed its tune several times, much like jazz music itself. In order to describe the after-effects of transculturation in Eastern Canadian Black communities during the interwar period, especially in Halifax, Montreal, and the Toronto Region, quotes from my interviews, several documentary films, and from printed media are used in this thesis to describe the jazz scene, and its impact on the participants.

I have intentionally written this thesis from a transcultural perspective, relating events in one city to another, and comparing Canadian and American jazz scenes to each other, first and foremost. This thesis will connect events from the interwar period to the social climate in Canada and the USA after World War II and during the 1960's civil rights movement in order to draw a line from one event to another in time, even up to today. A few of my own South African family's stories are included here, and so are a few stories of cross-cultural Coloureds from other cities and countries in the Atlantic diaspora. Fernando Ortiz, an important Cuban anthropologist from the interwar period, anticipated my life's experience just before my father was born. Ortiz started to write about Afro-Cuban traditions in the 1930's (Vega, 2000), but as for myself, a Canadian Black Blues musician from the hippie generation, this thesis will not be about any one city, province or person. I am deeply interested in the preservation of jazz culture and its traditions in eastern Canadian Black communities, today, and in tracing how these traditions got here. This work is about how jazz culture developed and how it influenced our present mindset and civil rights in Canada.

This thesis questions some of historian Robin Winks' views, as stated in his authoritative work, *The Blacks in Canada: A History* (1997). Many of his conclusions still ring true today; "the natural leadership – those few who went to university, the Negro preachers, the very few schoolteachers or editors, the occasional businessman – usually wanted nothing more than to be accepted as quiet Canadians, they were unlikely to organize militant, noisy, pushing protests" (pg. 466); but he tends to focus on our weaknesses and not our strengths. Winks, recently deceased, contends that (I paraphrase) historically, Canadian Blacks have no leadership, no unity, and no political will.

He states:

- of our Canadian identity: "I found that Black Canadians did not appear to have a sense of common identity, which I ascribed to the seven diverse waves of immigration to Canada" (pg. xiv).
- of Africville: "There was no sense of racial pride and Africville's children professed to dislike other Blacks" (pg. 453).
- of our leaders: "those Canadian Blacks who did wish to pursue activist policies were forced into being individual grievance collectors – never attractive people. Such activities were unable to command representative followings because many Blacks had not been touched by prejudice [], with minor exceptions, overt discrimination presented no consistent configuration." (pg. 464).
- and of our political will: "Another source of Canadian inaction lay in widespread ignorance of Canada's own Negro history." (pg. 472).
- "Canadians had little reason to think of Negroes in terms of "Black Power" for they were neither numerous nor strong" (pg. 484).

His analysis of our situation is not surprising, because he was a White American academic who had been schooled in a previous era in a different country. He was necessarily influenced by the American social dynamics of the 1960's, when he was researching and writing the book, and could not possibly know the subtleties of Canadian Black consciousness.

Still, I pay homage to his hard work, even as I criticize his conclusions. Winks has stated that Canada has never had a national Black leader, or religion, or political organization in our history (Winks, 1997, 197, 205). That is not true. Even though I was not made aware of any national organizations for Black Canadians as a child or as even as an adult until my fourth year of university, that is the fault of Canada's educational systems' priorities, and not my lack of interest. In 2016 Wilma Morrison comments, "yeah, we have been invisible for many years, and the same with the Natives" (Ayodele, 2016), in reference to how Canadian Blacks' interests and needs have not been met in the past by our institutions nor noticed by the public. But, contrary to what Mr. Winks may think, we have not failed to develop independence and strength in ourselves and in our communities, as this thesis will show.

Canada has always been a desirable location for Blacks to settle, even though for much of the last century Black migration was restricted by Canadian immigration policies.[5] Our wide-open spaces and sparsely distributed population kept Blacks from settling here in large numbers and organizing themselves. Some Black communities were close-knit, such as in Montreal, Toronto, London, Windsor and Halifax, gaining their support from church groups such as the BME (British Methodist Episcopalian) and evangelistic Baptist Churches from America (Gillard, 1999), and a few political organizations, such as the Universal Nego

Improvement Association (UNIA), The Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NSAACP), and The Brotherhood of Pullman Car Porters (Mathieu, 2010), but they were separated from each other by distance and character.

Foreigners are mistaken if they think that Canadian Blacks have no unique identity, no original music, and no great writers, businesspeople, or scientists. Wilma Morrison states in 2016, "London to me, was very progressive, having a Black newspaper and people pushing people into continuing education" (Transcript 9D). This thesis contends that there is an unspoken and unrecognized strength and unity among Canadian Blacks, regardless of their country of origin or how long they have been citizens. I have lived in Vancouver, St. Catharines, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, Sydney, and Glace Bay, and I can attest to this sense of togetherness, as does every one of my interviewees. I felt the same bond with my grandmother's neighbors in Capetown and my cousin's neighbors in Nassau, Bahamas, when I spent a month there in 2009.

Canadian Blacks experienced many kinds of racial discrimination in every province throughout the colonial period and into the war years. These included discrimination in employment, housing, schooling, athletics, the arts, in law courts, and in basic social inclusion rights. In 2019, Rod North of St. Catharines, stated,

> Rod: "I don't know if it's true or not, but when I was growing up, I heard different people talking, and there was a law on Thorold's books … whatever they're called, that a Colored person couldn't spend the night in Thorold because at this point they were building the canal, and there had been a murder or something …"
>
> Wade: Are you talking about the 1930's?

Wilma: Yeah, that's right. (Transcript 9D and Supplemental Video).

During the 1930's across North America, towns and regions could make their own rules, and business owners could refuse whomever they wished. Black Canadians' strengths were in their church traditions and the guidance they received from the Universal Negro Improvement Association and The Brotherhood of Pullman Car Porters during the interwar years. But, as Winks has noted, the unity in Black communities was local, not national. Winks probably didn't notice that Black communities in the United States are exactly the same. Louisiana and Arkansas Black culture has no relation to Black culture in urban communities in Boston, Seattle, or Detroit. Similarly, diaspora communities across Canada may have been separated by large distances, their differing traditions and languages, and may have comprised only a small percentage of the Canadian population, but they were not leaving.

This thesis proposes, and my participants and research subjects agree, that there is a common aspect of character present in Canadian Blacks which bonds us together and does not require militant action on a national scale. Black Canadians must get along with their White neighbors, while being relatively isolated from each other geographically. Canada has had an historic standpoint on being more tolerant and socialist than America. As a result, the children of many Canadian Black musicians who refused to go back to the States during the interwar period because of lynchings and police brutality, now feel more accepted as full-fledged citizens in Canada than your average American Black citizen does today, especially since the George Floyd protests began in early 2020. That event sparked a national symposium of Black Canadian academics and social leaders on June 7, 2020, which I attended online, along with George Elliot

Clarke and Dr. Afua Cooper and 300 other participants across the country and the planet. The symposium confirmed that the levels of anti-Black racism in Canada differ greatly from city to city and between provinces, but no Canadian institutions are as violent against Blacks as the judicial and police systems in the United States have been. Unlike the United States, our government has made efforts to correct any past or present misdoings due to institutional racism in Canada.

My research will show that the development of personal (not group) resilience, has been a driving factor behind Black Canadians' self-actualization, and in all cases in my study, the retention of our love for our own ethnicity and cultural values within Canadian society resonates with an ethic that started with transculturation during the Jazz Era. During the interwar period, the phenomenon of jazz culture and the creative, social, and political culture that it manifested helped to expand Blacks' rights, minds, and horizons in a Canadian climate. Canada is often praised around the world for its fairness, but not necessarily for its racial equality or inclusion (Cooper, A., 2006).

In order to determine how Black cultures throughout the diaspora are related through music traditions, foodways, their dance traditions, kinship relations, and their common social plight, I must first look at how musical scenes that no longer exist have been researched by other scholars. The main section of this thesis will describe the political and social climate that jazz was born into, taking note of the racial limitations that Blacks endured during the interwar period in Canada and the US. The final section will discuss the changes that jazz culture wrought in Eastern Canadian Black society and the conclusions I have drawn from my data. Most of the

social and political changes that jazz inspired took place after World War II, but they begin to manifest after the Great War.

A culture's identity is intrinsically tied to memories of significant events in its history and the places they took place (Cohen, 1995, 434). During the interwar period, Canadian Black identity was increasingly associated with Black jazz scenes. Through the transculturation of many ethnically unique peoples into Canada, Black jazz scenes were to have permanent, game-changing effects on Canadian society.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

I have broken down my multi-disciplinary theoretical foundations in the four sections below. Each is from a different academic discipline but contain similar approaches to ethnographic research methods and are connected in their insistence on personal involvement with participants, and non-impartiality. These methods of data collection give the reader and the research more insight and richness and are based on the work of Sol Tax, who founded the method of Action Anthropology. Tax's methods will be described in detail further on in this section.

The theoretical basis for determining new interview subjects for this thesis was based on the methods used by music researchers, folklorists, and ethnographers, and involves locating interview subjects through my academic connections, church relationships, and the various types of public engagement I have attempted during this research. By engaging with participants and their descendants in semi-structured interviews, in comfortable, natural environments, and allowing them to tell their stories and reminisce, I gain rich descriptions and personal insights that are good for the purposes of this study.

During the interwar period, Black neighborhoods from Windsor, Ontario to Glace Bay, Cape Breton had similar cultural characteristics, but they also had differences. By using interview practices that allow the subject to describe events at their own pace and allowing for the richest descriptions by using leading questions, confirmations, and rapport-building statements, I was able to get the best results from my elderly participants, who have

necessarily forgotten a few things over the decades. Jazz historian Mark Miller used these interview techniques for his many books, as did Meilan Lam, the Canadian documentary filmmaker, and my former mentor, Dr. Graham Reynolds, who has written two books with the sister of Viola Desmond, Wanda Robson.[20] Ethnographic research is the skeleton of this work, and my other theoretical foundations and proactive approach are the flesh that turns this thesis into a body of work.

2.1. FERNANDO ORTIZ: TRANSCULTURATION IN THE DIASPORA

Fernando Ortiz, the Cuban anthropologist, coined the term transculturation, which refers to the two-way flow of cultural influences between a dominant and a sub-dominant ethnic or cultural group. The term is usually used in the context of interracial relations within Western European colonial nations that were formerly slave societies (West, 2005, 967). His theory states that the cultural influences exchanged between dominant and dominated cultures are reciprocal, not one way, as in the principal of *acculturation*, an outdated term that is still in use. The over-simplified and archaic Darwinian premise that a culturally superior White European society tames or civilizes a primitive people when they invade and colonize them is a convenient and a patronizing justification for their domination and subjugation of brown-skinned peoples throughout modern history.

Transculturation is a two-way dialogue. Cultural shifts are not one-way; from savage to civilized, as in “acculturation,” the more commonly used term. Ortiz pointed this out in the 1940’s with his studies of musical traditions in Cuba and elsewhere in the diaspora (Garcia, 2018) and his contributions to anthropological theory have been acknowledged by modern

anthropologists but have not been widely publicized. Fernando Ortiz's theories of cultural migration in the Atlantic region need to be revisited, and his term, "transculturation," should replace the outdated word, "acculturation" in the lexicon of anthropological terms, because it is the more modern and appropriate term. In addition to the central focus of this thesis: Black Canadian jazz scenes from Ontario to Nova Scotia during the interwar period, this thesis also references the musical contributions made by the various displaced Black and Coloured peoples from several post-colonial countries on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, including the United States, the Caribbean, and South Africa. Otherwise, how can we discuss transculturalism?

Prior to the interwar period, the classic European colonial anthropological view on Blacks and indigenous peoples was (to paraphrase) that their traditions, languages, and religions were inferior to those of Western Europeans and needed to be eradicated (West, 2018). This nearly happened in some places in Africa, South America, North America, and the Caribbean, but fortunately, some cultural memories were retained through oral histories, language, music, cooking, and dancing traditions. By the turn of the 20th century a small contingent of skilled Black industrial workers came to Canada from the American south and the West Indies to join the few and the proud who were already here (Beaton, 1995, 65). Many of the newcomers were musicians who could read music notation due to their involvement with brass bands, as church organists, and their orchestra membership in Vaudeville and silent movie theaters during the interwar period. The number of West Indians, American and Canadian Blacks, and African musicians who could read music in Canada at the time was very significant to the music's future development (Miller, 1997, 148).

This thesis takes the macroscopic perspective that all Blacks within the Trans-Atlantic diaspora; from Cape Breton to Capetown, and from Rio to Liverpool had commonalities which can best be explained through the tenets of transculturation. Those in the British Commonwealth also shared a common experience in education, etiquette, and ethics. Certain aspects of the colonizing country's character are retained by the brown-skinned cultures in the slave areas. During the interwar period within the Atlantic region, the transculturation occurring between the British, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and French colonizers, and the many diverse minority groups in port towns, came to serve jazz musicians well. Blacks and mixed-race people were influencing each other's sense of rhythm, harmony, arrangement, and expression in the 1910s, eventually developing New Orleans Dixieland Jazz, the Blues, and Ragtime into a sophisticated artform after World War I, which we now call Swing Jazz, or a derivative thereof.

From the beginnings of the jazz idiom in the 1910's, White musicians from the US and Canada also made significant contributions to this uniquely pan-African music, further proving the transculturation inherent in jazz culture (Miller, 1997, throughout). Many more confirmations of Ortiz's transculturation are contained in these pages, my supplementary private video, in the quotes I have chosen from my interview subjects, and in the words of professional jazz writers, documentary film subjects and the musicians themselves.

2.2. PLACE AS IDENTITY: BLACK JAZZ SCENES ACROSS THE NATION

Throughout history, Black peoples' presence in Canadian society has had a transformative effect on those who settled here and their children, but Blacks from the diaspora were never totally assimilated or *acculturated* to White European culture and belief

systems in any of the colonial nations on the Atlantic coast; quite the opposite. Much of modern Western White culture has taken its cues from Black society, in language, dance, music, fashion, cuisine, and political mindset.

During the interwar period, large forced and voluntary population displacements were taking place across Europe, North America, and Africa. From the 1910's to the 1930's tens of thousands of Black people moved from the racially oppressed South to the industrial north, and what resulted came to be called the "Great Migration" by historians (Matthieu, 2010). In spite of government's attempts to restrict Black immigration to Canada, several thousand Blacks, mainly from the West Indies and the United States made it in.

The mass dispersion of brown-skinned peoples that started in the Colonial Era is referred to by historians as the African diaspora. Eastern Canada had Black slaves dating back to the early 1600's with the first French and British colonists (Cooper, 2006) and more came as escaped slaves and freemen to every province during the time leading up to the War of 1812. One such group were the Maroons of Jamaica, escaped slave rebel fighters who were captured and deported to Nova Scotia in 1796 to work as labourers. They, and others who despised the Nova Scotian climate and social conditions were voluntarily shipped to Sierra Leone to start that nation in 1800. After the War of 1812, three thousand Black Americans who had fought for the British were given a few rights as British subjects. These Americans were called the Black Refugees (Walker, 1992). The abolition of the slave trade in the British colonies in 1834 saw many more move to Canada through the Underground Railroad; an allegory for the network of

risk-taking activists, White abolitionists, and ex-slaves on both sides of the border who helped fleeing slaves (Drew, 2000).

An important activist in Canadian history was Harriet Tubman who escaped slavery in Maryland and helped establish a small Black community in St. Catharines, Ontario, and a branch of the British Methodist Episcopalian Church there in the 1860's (Larson, 2004). At the turn of the century, Blacks from the US and the West Indies were recruited for work on the railways as porters and as industrial workers, especially in Cape Breton (Beaton, 1995). Through these waves of workers and refugees, Canada established its Black communities from coast to coast. By the beginning of the interwar period, with few exceptions, Blacks in small towns and major cities on both sides of the border from east to west lived in crowded, under-serviced and segregated communities with little opportunity to gain employment except in the most menial of labour work.

The inter-weaving of cultures, music tastes, cooking and dancing traditions, symbols of ethnicity, religion, language developments, and ethics; otherwise known as "transculturation;" is, and always was, glaringly evident in Canadian, American, British, South African, Caribbean, and South American societies (Viala, 2014). During the interwar period, many gifted individuals within our Eastern Canadian Black communities took the new music form and embellished it with their own style and cultural traditions, just like the Blacks and Creoles in New Orleans and New York did. Jazz became the first popular music form to be marketed in all forms of media world-wide, and whose cultural influence swept young people away from their parents' way of thinking. The freedom of expression inherent in jazz had an impact on the development of

greater rights for Blacks, women, homosexuals, and workers who demanded self-actualization and more equality in politics, education, employment, law, sports, and business during the interwar period.

The documentaries I have listed in the bibliography discuss Black jazz scenes in Canada and the United States, and they have firsthand testimonials of people from the Jazz Era. The two main reference books listed in the bibliography, that of Gilmore and Miller, as well as other reference materials listed, attest to the musical influences that fed jazz development through interactions with other ethnicities, on the stage and in the neighborhood, whichever neighborhood is being discussed. The testimonials of my interview subjects and quotes from other researchers' interviews with musicians and participants in eastern Canadian Black jazz scenes during the interwar period also shed light on the regionality of Canadian-style racism against people of colour, and their fascination with jazz music during and after the interwar period. For the most part, everyone was welcome in non-commercial Black jazz venues during the interwar period in Eastern Canada and abroad in the trans-Atlantic region (Transcript 9I, Miller, 1997, Gilmore, 1988, Bettis, 2012).

The biggest ballrooms of the 20's and thirties, such as the Cotton Club in Harlem, or Rockhead's Paradise in Montreal, only had Black entertainers and staff, and only allowed White customers. Due to American racial exclusionism, stars like Josephine Baker, the dancer, and Sidney Bechet, the clarinetist, both coming from the inner-city slums of America, quite rationally chose to move to Europe during the interwar period. Many Canadian Black entertainers chose to stay at home and earn less money and less fame in our fledgling Canadian

music industry rather than relocate to a larger, more appreciative, and more lucrative music markets abroad. Many of our best intellectuals, athletes, and artists have done this in the past, and still do today, and will continue to do so in the future, because our country has limitations for Black people; in business, as well as in the arts.

Staying in Canada is the sentiment most echoed by the subjects of this study, regardless of the inequality in this country. Mynie Sutton of Niagara Falls stunted his professional recording career because of this ethic that I am pointing to; this "***Canadianism"*** amongst the Blacks in Canada, which Robin Winks could not see or acknowledge. Duke Ellington recognized the uniqueness of Canadian Blacks in the diaspora; "Canada has a character of its own which we should recognize and never take for granted" (Miller, 1997,10). Mark McLean, world-class drummer from Toronto, has become a smarter businessperson through his understanding of transculturation, which he inherited from his relatives as a child. His testimony, and that of his older brother Lester will attest to the Black Canadian understanding that one makes a choice to sacrifice music fame in America for friends and safety at home in Canada, in whichever province you might call home (Transcript 9C).

In this thesis, there are a few individuals that I draw attention to, but my focus is the uniqueness of the scene. It is a multiracial, sensuous scene that shattered societal boundaries for its time, and the associated culture and lifestyle that accompanied Black jazz scenes gave many Blacks and Whites their first glimpse of an integrated society. Personally, I grew up in the modern equivalent of these interwar Black jazz scenes, because I was formerly a professional club dancer (Disco, Breakdancing, Roller Dancing and Ballroom dancing) and I am also a

performing blues/jazz musician, though not of the same calibre as the icons of Canadian jazz history which are highlighted in this thesis. Picture a medium-sized room whose decor is always slightly out of date; smoky, with a well-lit dancefloor (Transcript 9D and Supplemental Video). The band is chatting quietly while setting up and tuning, and the crowd is dressed to kill. The women are hoping that one of the well-dressed male dancers will pick them. The men wear tuxedos and slick their hair back. Everyone in the room can feel the energy of anticipation. Anyone who was there could describe it, but there just aren't many first-hand participants left.

Using musicology terminology, I am essentially conducting a *scene study* of this unique music scene. A music scene can be defined as, 'a unique artistic or cultural collective which is embedded in real or imagined spaces and in behaviors which bond its members together; forever changing and adapting to internal and external forces, and constantly 'signifying'[18] on itself and seeking to expand its influence outward from its source. "[A music] scene designates particular clusters of social and cultural activity without specifying the nature of the boundaries which circumscribe them. Scenes may be distinguished according to their location (as in Montreal's St. Laurent scene)." (Straw, 2004) The Jazz music scenes in Black communities in eastern Canada played an important role in Coloured people's growing sense of national and ethnic identity, but historically, the size of the scene was always relative to the size of the community and the racial tolerance of the local people. Many small Black communities in the east had no jazz scene of their own, even within a city as large as Halifax (Transcript 9G). Many Blacks experienced jazz culture vicariously through their more visible public heroes in the movies, on the radio and on records, which were available at all stops along the railway route

across the country. Many records were pressed by small record companies and sold in small stores in small towns, but they travelled to the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, and Canada.

2.3. ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH: ORAL HISTORIES

Traditions in oral history theory span many disciplines, from health science, to anthropology, to musicology, folklore, and documentary history. Although I have training in social work and counselling, oral history gathering takes a different approach than counselling interviews. Historian Alessandro Portelli (1991, 150) describes oral history-gathering thus: “Oral history is a very unique kind of interview situation because the process of story-telling on which it is based is distinct. There are moments of realization, awareness, and, ideally, education and empowerment during the narrative process.” I have taken this approach to heart in my theoretical foundations. In addition, many of my interviews were with other Black Canadian musicians of many ages, and it seems we also have the same concerns and sense of humour.

The oral history ethnography approach finds that “significant [] are the ways in which collective memories become textured by particular venues and how memory works to forge strong collective associations between former audiences.” (Bennet and Rogers, 2016, 490). My interview technique may not be perfect for all occasions because I do get deep into the conversation, and I talk with my hands when I am excited. When I read my transcripts, I hear myself telling stories as well as requesting stories, which is not really an interview, technically. But my style has gotten excellent results for this study, and in order not to bore the reader, I have reduced my 200 pages of transcripts to a manageable number. My interview subjects were always forthcoming with descriptions of events and people. They provided me with

names, scrapbook materials, and personal impressions about style and racism. My exuberant manner seems to be infectious, regardless of the age of my participant; maybe because I spent a lot of time with my grandparents as a child, or perhaps it is due to my social work training.

2.4. SOL TAX: ACTION ANTHROPOLOGY

In this thesis, I have followed the recruiting methods of social anthropologist, Sol Tax, musician and musicologist, Matt Sakakeeny, and jazz historian, Mark Miller. Each of these researchers employs an ethic that involves engaging with the remnants of the scene, advocating on behalf of the participants according to their needs, and *not* maintaining an academic, objective detachment.[8] Sol Tax was the founder of the method of Action Anthropology in the 1950's and sixties (a branch of Participatory Action Research[9]) which stresses the sensitivity of unique populations.

Action Anthropology engages in work to improve the social plight of one's subjects in whatever way they would like assistance. "All over the world there are communities of people under pressure to change their ways. In anthropology this is often called the acculturation situation. The action anthropologist eschews 'pure science.' For one thing, his work requires that he not use people for an end not related to their own welfare: people are not rats and ought not to be treated like them. Not only should we not hurt people; we should not use them for our own ends. Community research is thus justifiable only to the degree that the results are imminently useful to the community and easily outweigh the disturbance to it (Tax, 1975, 515).

In the United States of the 1950's, Sol worked with elderly First Nations individuals who were concerned about how their testimony would be used by researchers, and what would

happen to all the published and unpublished data being collected. In his research, Sol Tax observed that the Natives' needs were not being addressed, and regardless of how hard he was working to help them in their plight for political autonomy, the Natives would not trust his motives. He decided to advocate for a new data collection method which he named Action Anthropology (Stapp, 2012, 2). Unlike the more objective anthropological methodologies, this method requires that a researcher not only pursue one's own objectives purely for academic reasons, but that they give up his or her impartiality and side with the subjects on *their* cultural terms. This method has been shown to promote trust, openness, and honest, personal insights in interviews (Polgar, 1979, 409).

Like Ortiz's concept of transculturation, Tax's theory is not well-known, but his contribution to anthropological theory should be more widely appreciated and applied today. Action Anthropology is a fitting method of data collection for this research because I am a Black Canadian musician who plays and enjoys jazz guitar and I could not be objective on this topic even if I wanted to be. As a Black Canadian researcher and musician, I have many of the same concerns as my subjects, so in order to dig out old their memories, we tell stories together and reflect on the scene and laugh at our own memories.

The three main points of this thesis have been outlined in the previous pages, but I wish to make my motives and direction clear. This thesis will use first-hand stories, archival data, and film vignettes to examine:

1. whether jazz culture changed Black Canadians' sense of self and their opportunities

2. whether transculturation was a factor in this change

3. whether racism declined or increased as a result of jazz culture.

Certain Canadian-born Black individuals are discussed in this work more than others who are equally worthy and unheralded, but the people on whom I have focused are prime examples of the above-mentioned three-fold examination of the impact of Black jazz culture in Eastern Canada. I also cite examples of Americans, Europeans, South Africans, West Indians and Latin Americans who contributed to Black Canadian jazz culture in order to illustrate transculturation during the interwar period. Black people from other music genres or different professions may also be used as examples, if they have been affected by jazz culture in one way or another. Lastly, every individual I have interviewed or quote in this thesis has their own story to tell about their experiences with racism in Canada. In my interviews, I have asked questions on this topic (Appendix 8.0) and so do other interviewers in my collected data. By allowing these participants to speak for themselves, we will see if jazz culture was a factor in their experience.

CHAPTER 3: DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collection methods employed here are based on established research techniques used by scholars of oral history, music history, and social anthropology. The reader will notice in my transcriptions that I am having an engaged conversation with like-minded people, which is my preferred method, and which has solid anthropological foundations. In the 1990's, musicologist Guthrie Ramsey Jr. interviewed his own elderly family members in order to understand the early history of the Black Blues scene in Chicago (Ramsey, 2003). As a musician, Matt Sakakeeny played with brass bands in New Orleans and interviewed players, dancers, artists, and patrons in his research on the brass band tradition, there (Sakakeeny and Birch, 2013). Ruth Finnegan studied English Folk music traditions by interviewing the oldest remaining holders of that tradition in various types of venues over several years (Finnegan, 2007). These writers' data collection techniques provided me with good examples of how to proceed.

In some cases, the researcher was related to their subjects, or was playing an instrument in the band he was researching in order to better understand and experience the remnants of the scene. Many types of venues were visited, and fans, players and organizers were interviewed, with a special focus on the oldest holders of the tradition. The testimony of elderly women was found to be full of rich details and also provided the researchers with rich personal impressions. Using these proven methods of data collection, I encouraged casual story telling in my interviews by developing a friendship with my participants and expressing a common purpose, which allowed for better recollection of details and personal perspectives.

Any real research on early Black jazz history in Canada must acknowledge the fine work of jazz writer and historian, Mark Miller, Canada's dean of jazz history. The research he did for the book, *Such Melodious Racket* (1997) not only included interviews with historically important musicians, patrons, and fans, but also included extensive archival data and scrapbook evidence collected from his participants. John Gilmore has written the definitive history of Montreal's Black jazz scene of the interwar period; *Swinging in paradise: The story of jazz in Montreal* (1988). Researched a decade earlier than Miller's book, it has been invaluable as a resource for this thesis. I have attempted to incorporate evidence from both historians and add some new documentation; a full thirty-forty years later; a much more difficult task. My search for advertisements and articles on Black jazz musicians from the 1920's and 30's at Nova Scotia's Public Archives yielded nothing at all. Black performers were not allowed to play at the larger venues in Halifax at this time, and small venues in Black neighborhoods could not afford to advertise in the daily newspaper (Transcript 9G).

Fortunately, I did collect some scrapbook material on Mynie Sutton, saxophonist and bandleader, thanks to Rod North, a former bandmate who was interviewed for this work (Appendix 8.3.1 – 8.3.5). Author Mark Miller also generously shared a few articles and advertisements on bandleader Cy McLean, after I informally interviewed him (off the record) for my undergraduate research in 2016 (Appendix 8.2.2 – 8.2.5). Two live Cy McLean interviews from the 70's have been located and transcribed for this thesis, and my live radio interview with his two grand-nephews, Mark and Lester, both accomplished musicians and recording artists, is also transcribed and included in this thesis (Transcripts 9A, B and C) .

The posters, articles and photos I have included here will help the reader to visualize the character of these scenes, and the rare recordings in my private online video of Canadian Black jazz musicians from the interwar period or just afterwards also provide an audio impression. This thesis includes an interview I conducted with Wilma Morrison and drummer Rod North in 2019 (Transcript 9D). She was one of Niagara's premier Black historians and they were both close personal friends of Mynie Sutton, a significant musician during the interwar period. In my supplemental video I also include excerpts from an independently produced 2016 documentary film about her life (Adewumi, 2016). She passed away recently ("*Black History Champion Dies*," 2020), so I ask the reader to please view the private online video I have compiled as a supplement to this thesis in order to experience her joyfulness and Canadian spirit, which is the underlying sentiment I wish to present in this thesis and the video.

I am fortunate that I located and interviewed a few elderly eastern Canadian Blacks who attended Black jazz scenes at the end of the interwar period. Fifteen extra months were added to my research schedule because of a life-threatening illness I contracted during my graduating year. I have now crossed three provinces in order to gain a better perspective from Blacks in a different eastern province, and have been very lucky in many ways, even as one of my research subjects, Wilma Morrison, Order of Ontario, was not. She died of COVID-19 in April 2020 and was well-loved by her entire community.

For this thesis I have collected unpublicized music recordings and included them in the video for the reader's benefit. The never-before published voice recordings of Cy McLean I have found and my interview with Wilma Morrison and Rod North will become my contribution to

Ontario's and Nova Scotia's archives. Where possible, I have provided actual video footage of Black Canadian dancers and the venues they performed in, but film footage from American Black venues are also included here because these scenes differed only slightly from Canadian scenes during the interwar period.[10] Again, I recommend that the reader stop reading here, and view my 20-minute private video (listed in the bibliography) as a reference to the rest of this thesis and to help clarify my upcoming observations and conclusions. In almost every case, the testimony I have collected is first-hand or from another researcher or writer in these fields.

Originally, my research design included conducting presentations at public libraries in Black neighborhoods in Halifax during Black History Month in order to locate seniors who might remember the Jazz Era. These presentations were designed to attract public interest in all age groups, to raise awareness of Canadian Black history, and to attract elderly residents in order to interview them for this work. Unfortunately, it was decided to cancel the events at three branches because advertisements and inquiries showed that there was very little interest among Black senior citizens or the younger age groups. This method had worked for me well in Sydney during my undergraduate research but bore no fruit in Halifax.

Originally, I had also intended on holding a jazz music workshop for amateur musicians at iMove Studio, a resource center in north Halifax.[9] I had hoped to meet older blues and jazz musicians and recruit them to teach young novices and to pass on their music knowledge, but once again advertisements and prescreening conversations proved that there was no interest from the youth or elderly musicians in the neighborhood, so it was cancelled as well. Oddly, when I showed my flyer for the workshop to my nephew and four nieces in Ontario (aged 14-

22; all five play instruments), they all said they would have come, but my handbill was too lengthy for a twenty-year-old today (Appendix 8.5.4). I did manage to recruit a few Black musicians my age from the integrated church which I attended in Dartmouth who were willing to teach at the workshop if it were to take place, but it did not. There is a difference in jazz music education and interest among Black youth in Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia, which is a notable distinction between the three Canadian Black cultures. Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to interview any Black youth in Montreal during this research, but I know that jazz culture is still strong there due to the International Festival de Jazz that takes place there annually, and for which I was hired as a street musician in 1992, when I lived there for a year. I was able to communicate linguistically with my French neighbors because I had learned to speak French in the Immersion program at nursery school, junior high school, and secondary school in St. Catharines, Ontario.

Over the three years' duration of this research and in my two years' undergraduate work on the same subject, I have made many contacts in Black communities across eastern Canada; from Cape Breton to Halifax and Niagara, but my most significant contacts were made by going to local Black churches wherever I lived. I was not raised in a church-going family, although I was baptized in the United Church. I started attending Black Churches in Glace Bay, Cape Breton, where one of Canada's last remaining UNIA halls still operates (Appendix 8.4.9). I saw and argued with nationally respected scholar George Elliot Clark when he spoke on Marcus Garvey, there, in 2009, and I met and chatted briefly with Marcus Garvey's son, Dr. Julius Garvey, when he spoke at Cape Breton University in September of 2016 ("*Civil Rights Pioneer*,"

2016). I first met Wanda Robson, the sister of Viola Desmond, at that event, thanks to Dr. Graham Reynolds, my former mentor in Black history.

Like a family member, when I attended these Black and integrated churches, I was often invited to play in the band, recruited to set up staging or musical equipment, or asked to control the mixing board. Now, back in my hometown of St. Catharines, Ontario, the home of Harriet Tubman, I am looking for a new church again, but once you have been a part of one of these Black and integrated churches, a traditional Western service seems so static and uninspired by comparison. To be fair, I never gave the Black churches in my hometown a chance while growing up. After living in Nova Scotia for a decade, I now have these participatory needs (or interests) which have become very important to how I want to practice my faith. I have become transculturated to eastern Canadian Black Churches and their musical traditions. I expect I have made an impression on the Blacks on the east coast as well, though not as significant as their impression on me.

Some of the churches and Christian gatherings I have attended over the past ten years include the Cornwallis St. Baptist Church in Halifax (renamed The New Horizons Baptist Church), the Nathaniel Dett BME (British Methodist Episcopalian) Chapel in Niagara Falls, the New Beginnings Church in Dartmouth, The Harriet Tubman BME Church in St, Catharines, and during my undergraduate research at Cape Breton University, I attended St. Phillips African Orthodox Church in Whitney Pier (Appendix 8.4.7) and the Christian fellowship at the Menelik Hall, the same building where Marcus Garvey made his famous speech in 1937 entitled*, The Work That Must Be Done*, which was memorialized in Bob Marley's, *Redemption Song*.[12] These are all

mixed-race congregations in eastern Black communities with the exception of St. Phillips African Orthodox, which has only Black members. I did not attend a church while visiting Capetown, South Africa in 1998 and 2001, except to go to a family funeral, which was massive. I did, however, take the opportunity to play guitars with an elderly Black fellow one day. His style sounded very Calypso to me, and he had no idea what I was doing on my semi-acoustic guitar. Jazz has progressed quite a lot in the West over the past 60-90 years, but some things don't change much in the diaspora, even over time.

Parishioners in the congregations I visited were very supportive of my research in general, and they were very forthcoming with helpful advice, as were my neighbors, professors, fellow musicians, community workers, and researchers. This is further confirmation that Canadian Blacks embrace members from their own community and accept them for all their differences. Oddly, racism is discussed far more in Nova Scotian academic circles and in news media than in any of these churches. Perhaps this is because historically, Black churches have always been very open to White attendees and have always played a pivotal role in the fight for racial equality, much like Black jazz scenes did in the secular world during the interwar period. The reason I bring up these observations in this section on data collection methods is because the difficulties and successes I encountered during my research informed me on which direction to take, and these observations influenced other conclusions I have made here.

As part of my research design I also participated in a radio show at Dalhousie University called "Youth Now," with Sobaz Benjamin, the director of iMove Studio (Appendix 8.5.5 and Transcript 9C). Sobaz is a West-Indian Canadian and an independent filmmaker and former

social anthropology master's student at Dalhousie University. He also played drums and ran the sound board at New Beginnings Church in Dartmouth, where I attended. In fact, he asked me to take his position at the church, which I did readily. On the radio show, I had hoped to conduct open discussions with Black seniors about the Jazz Era, but none that I contacted in Halifax were available during that school year. But, we did manage to interview two of Cy McLean's descendants on the show (Transcript 9C) and I interviewed jazz pianist, Order of Ontario recipient, and Jazz 91.1 radio deejay in Toronto, Joe Sealy, who was raised in Little Burgundy during the early 1940's, through a Skype connection on the internet.

Joe Sealy grew up in Montreal in the 40's, played jazz in Halifax in the sixties and lives in Toronto presently Transcript 9E). He is too young to describe the interwar period, but he describes his impressions as a child in Montreal in the 40's, and what remnants of the Jazz Era remained in Halifax 20 years after the war. Unfortunately, no significant interwar Black jazz scene from New Brunswick was discovered for this study. Had I been able to conduct research in Montreal I would probably have found relatives of significant musicians from the Jazz Era such as the Sealey brothers, George, Hugh, and Milt, or descendants of Harold "Steep" Wade. I might have met members of Oliver Jones' family, and those of Oscar Peterson. But travel is opportunity, and I have merely taken advantage of all these opportunities that have presented themselves over the course of my life to learn more about jazz culture, Canadian Black history, and transculturation, long before I embarked on the road to this thesis.

Due to a serious health problem I had last year and the trouble of relocating to Ontario, I applied for and received two extensions for this work, and a leave of absence, so I had much

more time to find research subjects and interview them than most graduate students, but I spent much of it in the hospital or at home in recovery. Ironically, one of my interview subjects was my roommate in intensive care (Transcript 9J). As I had anticipated, many of my first-hand participants were women, not only because they are longer lived, but also because they are thought to have better memory recall than men of the same age (Ramsey, 2003, 142).

In this thesis, I reference interviews from several National Film Board of Canada documentaries and one independently produced documentary film on Wilma Morrison, a Black historian from the Niagara region who was a personal friend of Mynie Sutton, an important Black band leader from the interwar period (Adewumi, 2106). I accidently met Ade Adewumi on the telephone in 2019 while conducting my research in Niagara. A fellow filmmaker, Black historian and community worker, Ade had just published his documentary on Wilma Morrison, and he shared this new ethnographic research with me, as a gift. This occurred by chance, much like something that happened to me during the year I was graduating Community Studies at Cape Breton University and moving into the Anthropology department. I happened to take a course on Black history with Dr. Reynolds, who had just published his first book with Wanda Robson. Their campaign to publicize the importance of Viola Desmond's stand against institutionalized racism resulted in a litany of honors for Viola and Wanda, culminating in Viola Desmond being represented on our current ten-dollar bill.

I credit Dr. Reynolds for bringing this information about Viola Desmond's stand against racism to the public's eye and to the government's attention. Graham Reynolds is a White academic from California who left the United States during the 1960's to study Canadian Black

history and presently holds the Viola Desmond Chair of Social Justice at Cape Breton University (more transculturation!). Many coincidental happenings have shaped this thesis and my research direction, not least my connection with Dr. Afua Cooper, my thesis supervisor, and a nationally recognized historian, author, and poet from Jamaica, who continually guides me in directions that lead to greater documentary evidence and academic relationships.

My thesis advisors, Dr. Martha Radice and Dr. Jacqueline Warwick have been invaluable in the construction and execution of this thesis, not only in the reference materials they have suggested, but in the writing and organization of this thesis. Professor Jean-Sebastien Guy, my third reader, has helped to fine tune my ideas, and he was the person who gave me the concept of transculturation three years ago while I was writing my proposal. My thanks go out to all of my advisors for making this challenge a *fait accomplit.*

For this thesis, I personally interviewed Wilma Morrison, Black historian, Order of Ontario, and a former bandmate of Mynie Sutton's, Rod North, and his wife, Ann. In addition to the above mentioned measures, I have referenced British and American-produced articles, dissertations, and documentaries about London, England, Detroit, Chicago, Toronto, Harlem, New York, Storyville, New Orleans, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Kingston, Jamaica, Little Burgundy, Montreal, Priceville, Ontario and District Six, Capetown, because they have evidence of international transculturation during this time period. Coincidentally, while writing this thesis over the past few months, I also found a dissertation from Ohio State University about my uncles in District Six. Ironically, the author remembers my family fondly as a child, when her mother, a founding cast member of the Trafalgar Players Theatre Group from Capetown, used

to visit my uncle in Toronto in the 1980's. More transculturation and more serendipitous connections appear as I continue this important work, which is my intention, as a PhD Canadian Black History and Musicology candidate at Dalhousie University, next year.

This thesis includes excerpts from my undergraduate research at Cape Breton University in 2016 with White bassist, "Red" Mike MacDonald who played on a radio show with Bucky Adams, a Black Nova Scotian saxophonist, and whose father, "Wooden" Al was a professional bass player in Montreal during the 1930's (Transcription 9E). Bucky's son Corey is also interviewed for this thesis (Transcription 9F). Margaret Gordon, who was part of a singing group in the 1940's at the Gerrish Street Hall, which was an important Halifax venue during the interwar period, is interviewed for this work with her daughter Linda Carvery, gospel singer (Supplemental Video and Transcript 9G), and so is Mark Daye, the son of Black politician Delmore "Buddy" Daye (Transcription 9H), whose name was given to the former Gerrish Street itself and also adorns a local African Nova Scotian learning center.[13]

Some typical interview questions I asked my participants are as follows:

- Where were you born? How many siblings did you have?
- Were your parents into music? What musical influences did you grow up with?
- Who were the important musicians in your community when you were young?
- How did you get interested in jazz? Do you play an instrument?
- What kinds of clubs were still operating there in the 1940's and 50's?
- Can you describe the decoration and look of some of these clubs?
- How did the people dress and dance? Were there talent contests often?
- Did the really famous Black musicians from the States ever visit or play for the Black community? How were they received by the community?
- How were Black people treated by the White club owners in your city? Describe the White clubs.
- How much racism did you experience, then?

- Where did average poor Black people go to dance?
- Were these integrated venues?
- Did they have Black bands when you were young?
- Were there after-hours establishments too? Describe them.
- What happened to the jazz scene there after Rock and Roll came out?

One of the central purposes of this thesis is to identify the unique people and the venues that contributed to eastern Canadian Black communities through the jazz idiom during the interwar years, and just after. For this reason, the participant's names, family histories, and personal impressions are of great significance, and each participant has agreed to be identified by name, voice, and face, in order to document their own connection to Canada's great Black music history. All my recorded interviews contain the verbal consent agreement: "have you read the information sheet, and do you agree to be filmed for this project, possibly even becoming a part of a documentary film in the future?" Their answer, "yes," is at the beginning of every video tape, and is available for further documentary evidence. A table of my interview subjects and their significance to Canadian Black jazz history, their approximate ages and the exact dates and locations of my interviews are in Appendix 8.0, page 1. All my participants were willing to share their knowledge of interwar Black jazz scenes and identify and describe their bandmates, friends, and ancestors for the benefit of this research.

My own testimony, and that of other Ontario Blacks is compared to accounts from Black Nova Scotians during and after the Jazz Era in this work, in order to distinguish between the uniqueness of Nova Scotian and Ontario Black cultures as they exist today. The Black jazz scene in New Brunswick, with its British heritage, would have been similar in size to that of the smaller cities in Nova Scotia, such as Sydney or Truro. Halifax had a much larger Black

population than anywhere in New Brunswick or rural Nova Scotia, but still had almost no jazz scene for Blacks (Transcripts 9D, E and G). The above-mentioned methods of data collection all furnished me with some sort of information for this thesis. Rather than place all of these names and events in a separate section for acknowledgements, I prefer to acknowledge all these people as sources of data for this thesis because the acknowledgements section would only have one sentence in it, ultimately: “thank God.”

CHAPTER 4: THE PLACES OF INTERWAR EASTERN CANADIAN BLACK JAZZ

The locale of a unique music scene is very integral to the character of the scene that develops in that city and the style of music that is favored. I will not argue in this thesis that Canadian Black jazz was very distinct from American Black jazz. Let us say that Black Canadians were proficient at American-style jazz during the interwar period and they still are today. What follows are biographies of the three main cities in Black jazz history in eastern Canada. Each city I focus upon in this thesis; Sydney, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, St. Catharines, and Niagara Falls; and its Black citizens, contributed to our Black Canadian identity and self-actualization.

4.1. LITTLE BURGUNDY: 'LITTLE HARLEM' OR 'PARIS OF THE NORTH'

John Gilmore states in his introduction to *Swinging in paradise: The story of jazz in Montreal,* that "Montreal's legacy of recordings tell us less about the jazz made in the city than about the values of the society in which it was being made, and about the tastes, ambitions, and prejudices of those who controlled the means of recording. Some of the city's pivotal musicians and bands were simply never recorded; others were recorded in groupings or under circumstances which did no justice to their skill or reputation" (Gilmore, 1988, 16). We see in his descriptions of Montreal during the interwar period how live audiences were willing to integrate on the dancefloor and on the bandstand in the 1920's and thirties, but the White establishment was not yet ready. Almost two decades later, this division between public opinion and the racist establishment was to rear its ugly head again, this time in Ontario between 1941 and 1944 when Cy McLean, Nova Scotian pianist, and Phyllis Marshall, a Toronto vocalist were both black-balled from the Toronto musician's union for years while they were

among the most popular and respected entertainers in the region. They were finally granted admission to Local 149 of the Toronto Musician's Protective Union in 1944 because of pressure from White club owners and the public (Miller, 1997, 174). Many Black artists played non-unionized shows around the Toronto and Montreal regions in order to make a living, and were often compelled to travel to small rural communities where Black people were an oddity; places where, even after a successful performance, they couldn't sit down at a restaurant or stay overnight.

Starting in the late 1910's, the Compo Company of Montreal used the manufacturing facility of their "Race Records Division," Apex, to record Black American blues and jazz artists. These pressings were intended for the African American market and are difficult to find today (Miller, 1997, 52-53). See Appendix 8.1.4 for an image of *Jazz and Hot Dance in Canada 1916-1949*, on the Apex/Harlequin label, to which Mark Miller contributed the liner notes. Apex recorded some jazz in the 1920's, along with Quebec folk Chansons and opera and country music, but record-making fell away almost completely during the Great Depression, even though performing and touring Black jazz orchestras continued to be active throughout the east and west (Miller, 1997, 19, 192). Once recording started picking up again after World War II, major American film and record companies were anxious to sell so called, "Black music" performed by White artists (sometimes in blackface) to White audiences in the US, Canada, and Britain. A similar phenomenon happened after the first war. The White appropriation of Black cultural and music tropes continues to this day, for better or for worse.

By the end of the 1930's, as swing music became more of an international craze, Black musicians and singers were banned from Montreal and Toronto musician's unions and the big clubs (Miller, 1997, 85, 149 and Appendix 8.3.4) and Black dancers were replaced by White ones. These were soon replaced by White exotic dancers in the 1950's (Lam, 1985). By 1941, Blacks could only rent at one hotel in Montreal (Gilmore, 1995, 273). That same year Mynie Sutton moved back to Niagara Falls after the death of his father (Miller, 1997, 87, 156, and Transcript 9D), Some Black Canadian musicians do appear on vinyl and on radio during this time, notably, Phyllis Marshall who had debuted with Sutton's Ambassadors in 1938 and turned down a job with Fats Waller's ensemble to stay in Canada (Miller, 1997, 154).

Many Black jazz musicians in Canada from the interwar period had to be rediscovered in the archives during the 1980's and 90's by jazz historians like Mark Miller and John Gilmore. The research of Black music forms began much earlier in America with the work of John and Alan Lomax for the Library of Congress in the 1940's which exposed White audiences to many blues traditions from the south for the first time.[14] John Hammond of New York was also instrumental in bringing Black musicians to the public's awareness, introducing Oscar Peterson in 1949 and Robert Johnson in 1937, the year Johnson died and missed his own debut at Carnegie Hall.[15]

From the beginning of colonialization, Montreal had housed many Black populations from different parts of the world. Caribbean Blacks who were either freemen or former slaves, American Blacks in the same condition, French-speaking African Blacks right off the boat, and English and French-speaking Canadian Black Loyalists who had settled there 100 years prior

(Winks, 1997). They all gathered around Black jazz scenes. Little Burgundy had a large American Black population during the twenties and thirties. Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Louis Armstrong; the big three, played regularly in Montreal during the Jazz Age. As a child, Sammy Davis Jr. was a regular performer at nightclubs in Montreal, as well. Mynie Sutton's Canadian Ambassadors backed him up on occasion (Gilmour, 1988, 160, and Appendix 8.3.3), and Bernice "Bunny" Jordan Whims performed dance routines with him during the Jazz Era (Lam, 1998). Unlike in other eastern Black communities, in the Little Burgundy area there were Black-owned boarding houses for railway porters and the visiting Black musicians and dancers during the 1920's and 30's. Montreal had a cosmopolitan Black community to engage with as well, and celebrities were always welcome at any Black church-related event.[16]

Louis Armstrong may have been the exception to the "really, really Black" rule in the east. This is my way of stating how, historically speaking, brown-skinned people have more strikes against them in White society if they are very dark. In my experience, if a person is very dark with fat lips, a wide nose, and kinky hair, they are treated more unfairly by Whites in Western society than those of a lighter complexion and with straighter noses and hair. Even though Louis was very dark and with all these afore-mentioned, African, genetic hallmarks, he was so loved by Whites, that he transcended the racial boundaries of his times. In addition to Ken Burn's analysis of Louis Armstrong's social impact on American White society (Ward and Burns, 2000), my interview with Paul MacDonald, Cape Breton music researcher, has revealed that Louis was invited to a party in Myra River, Cape Breton, a wealthy White community, when he played in Glace Bay in about 1946 (Transcript 9I).

Louis may have been loved by White people, but his happy-go-lucky, almost minstrel-style of performing (flashing eyeballs and big wide grins) annoyed many more modernized Black musicians and academics of his generation. Regardless of what more militant Blacks thought of him, Louis was a social and political force to be reckoned with, and his musical innovations defined the jazz genre even as he was opening new doors for other Black performers to come.

4.2. GOTTINGEN ST., AFRICVILLE AND WHITNEY PIER: HOME OF CANADIAN BLACK ACTIVISM

The Black population in Nova Scotia at the turn of the century was a combination of Loyalists who had been freed after fighting for England in the American Revolutionary War, the descendants of Jamaican Maroons who were deported there in 1796, and descendants of Black refugees after the War of 1812. When the Dominion Iron and Steel Company opened its doors in 1901 in Sydney, Cape Breton, they found that they didn't have the skilled manpower to produce steel at capacity, so Blacks were recruited from the Caribbean, the southern states, and a few northern American cities (Beaton, 1995). Many more were recruited as Canadian sleeping car porters and landed in Halifax or Montreal which had larger Black populations and more systems of support and greater cultural admixing.

At the turn of the century, on Cape Breton Island, which is a culturally distinct part of Nova Scotia, in the city of Sydney, there was a neighborhood called "Cokeville," in a district called Whitney Pier, where the Black clubs were, and the minorities lived. It was very multi-ethnic, much like Toronto's Kensington Market, and I have lived in both neighborhoods for many years. During the interwar period, each neighborhood had Turkish baths, Polish bakeries,

Jewish synagogues, and Black-owned speakeasies. Cokeville had Canada's only African Orthodox Church, a denomination from Barbados (Beaton, 1993, Appendix 8.4.4), established in 1928, where I attended a service in 2016. The Universal Negro Improvement Association also had a branch there for American and West Indian Blacks working at the steel mill and the local coal mines. The original hall's location was on Lingan Road, possibly even in the old United Mission building, which still stands, but the original building in which George McLean had been the president of the Sydney Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) headquarters had been demolished by 1937, when Marcus Garvey came to speak at their new base, The Menelik Hall on 88 Laurier St. which is a block from 47 Hankard Street, Cy McLean's father's former home and two blocks from my former home (Appendix 8.4.8 and 8.4.3).

George McLean had immigrated to Canada from Barbados with his wife and three children in 199-1912 (Canadian 1921 Census). He worked as a fireman at the Dominion Iron and Steel Company plant and was very active in the African Orthodox Church and The Loyal Order of Oddfellows from Barbados (Appendix 8.4.6). In Canada, he was a member of the Loyal Order of Forresters, another fraternal association. By the mid 1920's George McLean had become very active in the Universal Negro Improvement Association, becoming branch president in 1929 (Appendix 8.4.7). He donated a portion of his property to the African Orthodox Church in 1925, obtaining a small building from the steel company, and moving it to his property. The congregation spent three years refitting it and in 1928 the St. Phillip's African Orthodox opened its doors ("St. Philips," 2020). George McLean's house was bulldozed during the 1960's along with all of the clubs and the rest of Cokeville to make room for safer housing (See Cokeville

backyards, Appendix 8.4.5). The few Black residents that remain admit that the neighborhood was dilapidated and substandard.[17] All that was left by the 1960's was the West Indian Cricket Club, the African Orthodox Church, and the Menelik Hall, where jazz performances still continued to take place until the 1950's (Transcript 9F).

In Halifax, as mentioned previously, there was an old Black and ethnically diverse neighborhood in the north end of the city called Gottingen Street. This was where the Gerrish Street Hall, the Desmond School of Beauty Culture, and many other Black-owned businesses thrived during the interwar period. The father of saxophonist, Bucky Adams, Charlie Adams, had played saxophone with drummer Les Bryan in Halifax during the interwar period (Miller, 177). The husband of Viola Desmond was a dance champion at the Gerrish Street Hall and was known as "the mayor of Gottingen Street" during the 1940's (Reynolds and Robson, 2018, Ch. 1). Dorothy Adams, a relative, opened a dance academy during the forties, as well (Transcript 9G). During the interwar period, Gottingen Street was an entertainment district, and it has remained the center of Halifax's Black community since the turn of the century.

The other Black neighborhood in the region important to this story was Africville. This older, all-Black settlement dating back to the refugees of the War of 1812, sat on the waterfront between a city dump, an infectious disease hospital, a slaughterhouse, and a prison (Clairmont, D. et al., 2010). It had no roads, running water, electricity, or lights, and the police did not patrol there. Visiting Blacks from The States and the West Indies could not believe the living conditions and lack of sanitation in the early 1960's (Mackenzie, 1991)[18]. The Black

families there were cajoled out of their properties in 1966, and many have been awarded reparations by the Nova Scotian courts in recent times.[19]

Africville was a very musical community. “There was not a home in Africville that didn’t have a piano or organ.” (Clairmont et al, 2010, 33, 95). Some Africville families, like that of matriarch Ruth Johnson’s, sent all their Black children to the Conservatory of Music in Halifax. In 1928 Duke Ellington married Mildred Dixon, whose parents were from Africville, but she had been raised in Boston, where many Black families from Africville relocated during the interwar period. A relative of the first Black world boxing champion George Dixon, she moved to Harlem in her teens, where she got hired as a dancer at the Cotton Club during the 1920’s (*Assets of Nova Scotia,* 2020). As her husband, Duke Ellington visited the close-knit Carvery and Dixon families in Africville often (Clairmont et al, 2010), and as in my family, he would have been asked to sit at the piano whenever he visited, influencing the Black musicians that were to come out of Halifax. Music was an integral part of life in Africville, Halifax, as it was and still is in the Toronto and Montreal area Black communities.

4.3. TORONTO AREA BLACK COMMUNITIES: A SLIGHTLY MORE FAIR SOCIETY

There were many Black settlements in the Golden Horseshoe region dating back to the Revolutionary War.[20] In general, Blacks lived and worked in small, rural towns with Whites, but in larger cities like Toronto, Hamilton, and St. Catharines, neighborhoods were segregated. In Toronto this was the Spadina and College area, now known as Kensington Market or Chinatown. During the interwar period this was the garment district, as today, with clothing factories, wholesalers in fabric, machinery. It was also the heart of the Jewish community, with

theaters and bars, and fresh meat and produce vendors. The UNIA had a hall close to the corner at 355 College St., which was the main meeting place for Blacks in Toronto. Jam sessions were happening there from the 1920's which included such Canadian greats as Cy McLean, Archie Alleyne, Sam Morgan and Ollie Wagner.[21]

During the interwar period, when Blacks weren't allowed in restaurants, taverns, schools, and unions, the UNIA halls were invaluable places for Black people to develop self-sufficiency and awareness. The UNIA halls' role as education centers, meeting places and jam spaces across the nation brought authentic jazz to Canadian Blacks and Whites alike, because the jazz scenes there were among the only places for the races to mix openly.[22] Like Africville, Kensington Market had slaughterhouses and crumbling facilities, and like Cokeville, Little Burgundy, and Storyville, New Orleans, very little of the original neighborhood remains today.[23]

As Archie Alleyne has stated, "From Spadina and Dundas reaching across University to Bathurst and as far up as Harbord, we were the minorities. But it was wonderful there. I ate Jewish food and they ate Black food, and we all went to school together and just meshed well. All the businesses were basically Jewish. Blacks didn't have no businesses of our own because it was difficult for us to even walk in somewhere, far less own it." (Alleyne, 2014) He was speaking of the 1930's and forties in what is thought to be Canada's most liberal city, Toronto. And yet, despite the obstacles in Toronto, Archie still got to play with Billie Holiday, Count Basie and many others in his long career, including Cy McLean, who broke through the racial barriers in that city when he played the Colonial Tavern on Yonge St. in early 1948 (Appendix 8.2.3).

Unlike in other Canadian cities, Blacks in Toronto were not confined to one area. Within a decade after the interwar period, Blacks began moving into East Toronto. Regent Park was a city-planned housing development dating from the 1940's which was demolished recently ("Demolition Underway," 2020) Many poor Black families moved there, and to other housing projects further east, while saving money to buy property. My parents were one of these families. Scarborough, where I was born in 1966, had huge preplanned housing projects for poor immigrants. Cy McLean and his family moved to Willowdale during the 1950's, which is more of an upscale suburb in north east Toronto. My parents were also more accustomed to an upper-middle-class lifestyle in Capetown.

Transcultural Stories

My own transcultural story is no different than that of Cy Mclean's. I was the first South African from Capetown in my family to be born in Canada in 1966, just as Cy (Cyril) was the first from Barbados to be born here in 1916 to a very well-travelled and musical family from the British Empire. As a South African, I identify as "Coloured." This is an identity descriptor unique to South Africans from the Cape (Capetown region). The term "Cape Coloured" is used every day in Capetown, and it applies especially to those of mixed-race heritage from the former District Six region, which is what I am.

I hope the reader will forgive my biases and pay attention to the changes in the jazz sentiment of Canadian Blacks that are being discussed here, and which had an impact on eastern Canadian Black culture a century ago. The questions I have asked of my participants answer my own curiosity on these and many more topics, and having some artistic ability, I

hope to bring new rich descriptions of Eastern Canadian jazz culture to light and provide the reader with a new sociological perspective.

In 1965 we arrived from Capetown, South Africa, and by 1968 we moved to St. Catharines, the historic home of the 19th century Underground Railroad activist, Harriet Tubman.[24] From 1969 to 1975 my uncles and aunts moved to Mississauga, Oakville, Oshawa, and Brampton, which all had historic Black communities. Some of my uncles taught at schools on the west side of Toronto, namely in Little Jamaica, at Oakwood and Vaughn, where a large portion of the West Indian community had settled in the 1950's. All my uncles on my dad's side were schoolteachers and amateur jazz musicians except Oscar, who was a professional jazz pianist and orchestra leader in Capetown before he taught music at a Bramalea senior public school, and Johnny, who was a child prodigy, university professor, and concert pianist. Isaac was an award-winning playwright and a school principal.[25]

I grew up with my uncles and their friends from Capetown playing tennis, soccer, golf, and musical instruments; telling jokes and singing to entertain their wives, children and friends, while their parents yelled out requests from the 1920's and thirties, which were usually popular numbers and spirituals. The men would usually oblige the older folks while we danced and sang, and that is how I learned about Black music history, in much the same way as Blacks throughout the diaspora did, while holding on to my South African identity. I stayed at my grandmother's house in Capetown, South Africa on two occasions, for a total of five months, just before and after the turn of the 21st century. Hers is one of the last remaining 10 or 20 houses from the former District Six (Appendix 8.8.1 8.8.2, and 8.8.6). My grandmother, Doris,

passed away in 2009. Until September 10, 2020, the house was still being lived in by my last remaining uncle on both sides of my family, Gerry, who fought with the African National Congress in the 1960's (Appendix 9.8.6).

Every household I went to as a child in Ontario had at least one kind of musical instrument, and usually people rushed to be the first one to play it. My dad played vibraphone and ukulele and mouth organ (chromatic harmonica). When my uncle Oscar was around, everyone would step aside, especially if it was a piano or organ. At his house, he always had keyboards, percussions, wind instruments, amplifiers and stringed instruments set up and ready to play in his basement. I have carried on that tradition since I was 21 years old. Uncle Oscar used to tell a funny story of how it took him until 1978 or so to be accepted into the Canadian Musician's Union, but that he was contented, because at least his name appeared directly next to his hero, Oscar Peterson's, in the directory. His junior high school productions of Oliver, My Fair Lady, and especially Jesus Christ Superstar, for which he wrote two extra compositions for the score, were absolutely unforgettable, involving a mostly White cast and a full jazz orchestra. I have always respected his unheralded accomplishments.

4.4. THE CONNECTEDNESS OF EASTERN CANADIAN BLACK COMMUNITIES

As previously mentioned, I was not aware of any national or provincial Black leaders while growing up in St. Catharines. Black political leaders were, and still are, few and far between in Canada. In my experience, there are great differences in how Black people experience racism, victimization on the job, or in society; targeting by the police, and exclusion from province to province; depending on their pigmentation, manners, and attitude. Canadian

institutions have certain traditions and histories from province to province which can promote exclusionism in equal rights, depending on how dark a person is, and the more "Negroid" the features (an archaic anthropological term used for effect here), the greater the racism one will experience in Canada, as a general rule.

As in America, there are unique political conditions in each Canadian province which affect their way of dealing with Black cultures. Nova Scotia has historically been less inclusive than provinces further west but more recently, it has become a leader in cultural inclusion within Canada. Ontario might seem to be the least racist province in the east on the surface, but it can be surprisingly intolerant in the rural areas. The city of Toronto might be considered the most integrated and inclusive city in Canada, with Montreal a close second, but it is easy to see that institutional racism is still a reality there, as elsewhere in Canada. For proof of the ongoing and stubborn institutional discriminatory practices across the diaspora, all one must do is watch the daily news in any country you happen to be reading this from.

English-speaking Blacks are a minority in French Quebec, creating a unique linguistic, religious and cultural situation, but back in the 1920's and thirties, many of the Black musicians in Montreal were American born (Miller, 1997, 15-16) and most returned home after a few years or a few performances. Most of them went home when the clubs started using all-White bands and dancers at the beginning of the second World War. During this time, Mynie Sutton formed an integrated band, The Mynie Sutton Orchestra, and later, a quartet, The Casuals, back in his hometown, Niagara Falls, where he was well-loved (Transcript 9D, Supplemental Video, and Appendix 8.3.2 – 8.3.5). If Mynie's father hadn't passed way in 1941, he may well have left

Montreal anyway, because of the difficulty of working as a Black performer during the war (Miller, 1997, 156).

By the time Cy McLean's band was the first all-Black unionized Canadian jazz orchestra playing to an all-White audience at The Colonial in 1948 on Yonge Street in Toronto, Mynie Sutton, who had already done that in Montreal with The Canadian Ambassadors, and arguably even earlier in Niagara Falls as a high school student in the 1920's, was now going to be one of the first unionized integrated bands in Canada, officially, with White drummer, Rod North. In my personal communication with author Mark Miller in 2016 for my undergraduate thesis, *Cy McLean: Canadian Trailblazer*, he made it very clear that many all-Black bands existed in Canada going back to the 1910's, and that many integrated bands existed, even in the 1910's in New Orleans, Chicago, New York, and Montreal. Even his chapter on Ollie Wagner, alone, confirms that Edmonton had thriving Black bands in the 1920's and thirties. So, it is impossible to determine who came first. His attitude was that it doesn't matter, but for me, a Canadian Black, I want to know; but it is impossible.

When Mynie returned to Niagara Falls, Canada in the 1940's, after having been barred from the local union for years, he became the president of their new, integrated musician's union, a position he held until 1985 (Appendix 8.3.5). To my knowledge, no history course in Canadian high school or university has ever pointed this out, even though it is well publicized that the American Duke Ellington broke the color barrier in 1927 at The Cotton Club (Feather and Gitler, 2007). This bit of music trivia is also a misappropriation of facts, because James Reese Europe had full Black orchestras in the 1900's in New York, playing whatever he wanted,

including compositions with Ragtime and early jazz influences, and so did many others in Canada and the US (Badger, 1995). Concordia University in Montreal now has a display with Mynie Sutton's memorabilia, thanks to jazz historian and author, John Gilmore (Appendix 8.3.5), but one must still be in a music course that focusses on Canadian jazz history in order to encounter Mynie Sutton's or Cy McLean's name.

Jazz at the turn of the century was part Ragtime, part marching band music, part Black spirituals and part the blues, so it could be argued that Europe was playing an earlier form of jazz, before New Orleans influences came to town in the next decade. James Reese Europe was known to stick to marching band arrangements in the early part of the century, but gradually incorporated more modern influences by his death. In 1910 he started his own union, the Clef Club of New York (Appendix 8.1.3). Europe and his bands performed for the troops in World War I and when he died the year after the war, he was given a military funeral with full honors and a street parade. His organizational skills, academic approach, modification of existing music forms, and desire to pay homage to our musical history, set the bar high for other Black musicians right at the start of the interwar period.

The color barrier remained in New York after Europe's death because of the resurgence of racism during the next two decades in North America. This was undoubtedly due to anti-Black racism in the media, a developing distaste for Black empowerment in White America and Canada due to the UNIA and the proud returning Black soldiers, the audacity of the "Harlem Renaissance" intellectuals and artists that were becoming world-renowned, and peoples' general fatigue from war, disaster, economic depression, and the Spanish Flu epidemic. In

1930's Montreal, many American Blacks were somewhat accepted by White society as part of a larger Canadian Black community and were allowed to earn their livings as performers with their American union cards (Miller, 1997). There was also periodic work as a Sleeping Car Porter for Blacks of all colours, but these jobs were few and far between because Black men treasured the social clout they could receive from the community if they had union membership, and all Black people desired a steady income during the Great Depression. It also gave multi-talented men access to music in big cities on both sides of the border.

Near to Collingwood, Ontario, there used to be the Priceville Settlement, which was a major point of freedom on the Underground Railroad from the 1810's to the 1930's for Blacks from the US. Founded by a coloured man, Colonel Price, after the War of 1812, it had been home to Canadian Black families for over a hundred years (Holness and Sutherland, 2000). The original settlers, like other Black Loyalist groups across the country, were promised land by the king of Britain for fighting against the Americans in the Revolutionary War. England had merged with Wales and Scotland in 1707 to create Great Britain, or "The United Kingdom," but by the early 1930's, the original Black residents of Priceville were denied the deeds to their land. Over generations they had erected a Negro cemetery on this property and had intermixed with the local White population, much to the embarrassment of both parties.

During the interwar period, the persistence of racism in Priceville was such that all the Black families in town were ejected from their land, which was sold to White farmers while they still occupied it, and all were run out of town for fear of their lives. The cemetery was subsequently bulldozed, and the headstones repurposed by the new owner as flooring for his

stable (“African Pioneer Cemetery,” 2020). The cemetery was then lost, but it was rediscovered by local historians in the 1980’s, which was ironic, because the discoverers were actually the descendants of mixed blooded locals whose parents had never told them the truth about their own background. The site has since been reclaimed by the local historical society, but this story is representative of how regional attitudes were about race issues during the interwar period, everywhere in Canada.

The widespread existence of racism after The Great War can be evidenced in Chicago during the “Red Summer” riots of 1919[26] which killed over 100 Blacks. In 1921 “Black Wall Street” in Tulsa, Oklahoma was burned to the ground with over 36 dead and 800 hospitalized. The remaining Tulsa Blacks were run out of town, as in Priceville, Ontario (*The history of Tulsa's 'Black Wall Street' massacre,* 2016)[27]. Black-owned houses were ransacked and burned in Truro, Nova Scotia, and American lynchings were on the rise (“Halifax Race Riots”, 2014, and “The History of Lynchings, 2020). Most middle-class White families had lost a father, brother or son to the war, and when the Spanish Flu epidemic wiped out thousands more returning from the front that year, the idea of treating young, confident Black soldiers with dignity was just not on most Canadian White people’s agenda. These happenings left Blacks feeling resented, unprotected, and excluded from daily life at home after having been accustomed to the respect of Whites in Europe for years.

The connectedness and brotherhood that the soldiers of Construction Battalion No. 2 had developed through their service overseas and their common experience of racism is another example of how transculturation connects Canadian Blacks to others in the diaspora

over time and space. Regardless of how racism was practiced regionally in Canada, Australia, England, India or the British West Indies, Commonwealth Blacks around the world paid for the hubris of the returning Black soldiers and the Black jazz musicians, athletes and writers that were becoming famous during the “Harlem Renaissance “ in New York during the 1920’s.

Besides localized racial discrimination, another important common experience these returning Black soldiers shared during the interwar period was the popularization of jazz music. Jazz music was one of the only ways men and women, Black and White, listener and artist could share a common experience. Blacks in Canada were being discriminated against more than ever, but they were beginning to feel more empowered. For instance, by 1946, Viola Desmond felt no hesitation in driving alone, moving to Montreal or New York to go to school, take her parents’ lawyers to court, leave her husband, represent musicians as a copyright agent, pay for her younger sister’s education, or work in a jazz club as a cigarette girl (Backhouse, 1999, and Robson and Caplan, 2010). Great social changes were occurring during the interwar period that still affect our society today.

CHAPTER 5: KEY SOCIAL FACTORS 1918-1939

In Black communities in rural Nova Scotia and Ontario, and even in Toronto at the height of the Jazz Era, musicians had to stay and eat with local Black people in whatever community they were playing in or otherwise sleep in their vehicles. Canadian hotels did not accept Black people during the interwar period; anywhere. The Royal Ambassadors from Ohio, with whom Mynie Sutton played in the 1920's, had to stay in Buffalo, NY. when they played Port Dalhousie, a neighborhood and beach area in St. Catharines (Miller, 1997). Mynie would have stayed at his home in Niagara Falls, nearby, of course, but by contrast, Louis Armstrong's band had to stay with local Blacks while performing in Niagara Falls during the 1940's (Transcript 9D). He was the most popular and admired musician of his time, but Canada had no place that would accept him, except the stage.

With the release of the film "Birth of a Nation" in 1914, the KKKK, the Canadian branch of the American White supremacist group, the Klu Klux Klan was more active than they had ever been prior to the war (Backhouse, 1999, and "The KKK has a History in Canada, 2017). When Black soldiers from the Construction Battalion No. 2 of the Canadian Armed Forces returned from the fighting in Europe in 1918, they were not given a warm welcome by Klan members and White Canadians. The levels of racism, discrimination, and segregation at home in 1918 had increased, and Black men had an especially tough time. Xenophobia had increased as well, with Chinese businesses being sacked and burned by White servicemen in Halifax in 1919 ("Halifax Riots," 2014), First Nations or Indigenous children were being sent to residential schools during the interwar period, and Jewish and Chinese immigrants were anglicizing their

names to escape discrimination.[28] These practices continued for decades in both Canada and the US., but somehow, we still compare our society to America's, as though they are some kind of measuring stick for racial equality and civic rights.

Our current state of political affairs is beginning to look worse than during the civil rights protests of the 1960's. If the playing and performance of jazz has integrated the races in the past, we should look again at the value of music as a better example of inter-ethnic harmony, common purpose, and transculturation, rather than to discriminatory immigration policies and the over-policing of minorities. Jazz music and culture have been proven to integrate and organize diverse peoples in every country or village it has ever been played in since its inception, and it has never stopped evolving.

5.1. JASS IS BORN

It has been said that Blacks and Creoles of Colour in New Orleans, Kansas City, New York and Chicago created jazz music just before the turn of the century (Ake, et al., 2012), but the real truth must certainly be that cultural influences from throughout the British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch slave colonies were being exchanged; transculturation was taking place in New Orleans, as elsewhere, through language, music and symbols. Contributing to the intoxicating musical punch were European folk tunes (which Black slaves had to perform for their masters world-wide) mixed with African poly-rhythms, choral patterns, and harmonies (in the form of drumming, call-and-response methods, and pentatonic scales), marching band music (loved all over the world), Negro spiritual music (in the choral arrangements and the preacher's timbre and timing), and in minstrelsy; not only in the syncopated renditioning of

traditional melodies but also in the mock parading and syncopated dancing. (Miller, 1997, 15, and see Supplemental Video, narration: Jellyroll Morton and Christian Scott).

The origin of the Jazz idiom can be traced to certain New Orleans traditions from the turn of the century. “The Crescent City boasted a large red-light district, Storyville, named for the politician who spearheaded the legalization of prostitution within its boundaries in 1897. Pianists worked in the smaller Storyville brothels, and ensembles performed at the larger establishments – until civic authorities closed down ‘the District’ in 1917. Brass players, meanwhile, were heard throughout the city playing for funeral processions, parades, picnics and dances. Charles (Buddy) Bolden is one of the few bandsmen known by name from this early period; by reputation as a cornetist of great power, he is often identified as the “first” jazz musician on the basis of his activities during the years around 1900.” (Miler, 1997, 16). The smell of the jasmine perfume, worn by the ladies in the fancy salons, permeated the brothels, spawning the illegitimate name “Jass” music. So, immediately after World War 1, the earliest forms of jazz had connotations of sex, crime, alcohol, cannabis, fancy decorations and dress, parading, signifying, and individuality (Ake, et al., 2012, and Miller, 1997, 27-28 and 48).

These new creators applied the cultural fusion techniques which can be heard in the Ragtime composition style, prior to jazz proper, in which all the above ethnic and American social elements can be heard. For instance, in the compositions of Nathaniel Dett from Niagara Falls, one can also hear the multi-ethnic voices from the marketplace and the influence of his classical composition training (Supplemental Video). Intermingled with these cultural elements were musical remnants from slavery, such as field hollers, work gang chants, coon shouts

(Abbott and Seroff, 2012), and the blues technique of bending notes like the human voice which permeated early Blues, Folk, Country, Gospel and Jazz. Later, jazz voices were to imitate the various brass horns that made jazz music famous. Billie Holiday exemplified this technique during the interwar period and afterwards.

The Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries also contributed various types of calypso and Afro-Cuban rhythms, sometimes called "the Spanish Tinge" or more accurately, "the clave."[29] A quote from an online drumming resource: "The clave is a two-bar pattern that can be played in two different directions. The pattern consists of 5 notes and can be played 2-3 or 3-2. This would mean that 2 beats are played in the first bar and 3 beats played in the second bar (or vice versa for 3-2)." Fernando Ortiz developed his transculturation theory in conjunction with his study of Cuban drum playing and building traditions (Moore, 1994). During the interwar period, transculturation between former slave cultures from the diaspora was occurring on a large scale. When North American Blacks and Hispanics first encountered each other in an urban, post-industrial, emancipated environment, a new sense of freedom and individualism came to creep into their playing styles. In fact, Black Hispanics made vital contributions to the trajectory of Jazz music. Ever since Reconstruction in the US, Black popular music has maintained a floating geographic focal point and a need to keep moving, mutating and signifying, kind of like a boxer avoiding punches.

Jazz helped inspire the civil rights movement, the movement, and the women's rights movement in that it was first to give post-war and Depression citizens a liberating voice through all media forms, and jazz musicians and patrons were visible in politics, sports, and in business,

which led to the call for more freedom in other arenas. We can see evidence of this in how the sexually-liberated "Flappers" of the 20's with their fashions, smoking, and "sporting" jazz lifestyles, helped the previous generation of suffragettes to win the fight for the women's vote in Canada and the US.[30] We can trace Black membership in Canadian musician's unions to the Black orchestras appearing live on stage in the big cities and on the radio in the 1920's and 30's.[31] The influence of jazz culture in the development of worker's rights in Canada can be seen in how Black Canadian instrumentalists in the American Federation of Musicians, as many of them were, went on strike from 1942 to 1944 and again in 1948 to protest the unequal wage that instrumentalists were receiving on recordings.[32] This led to changes in copyright law so that writers and players on recordings would also receive royalties from record sales, and not just the vocalists.

Before long, Blacks were in higher positions in municipal government in northern US cities and in Toronto, as they had been prior to the Great War. But it would still take another generation before other provinces would welcome Blacks in these positions.[33] The slow progress made in the improvement of Blacks' roles in the Canadian judicial system can also be traced to the independence of certain people, like Rev. Dr. William Pearly Oliver, Viola Desmond, Carrie Best, and Rocky Jones, who had decided to make a stand against inequality because they felt that Black Nova Scotians were as good or better than the people that were discriminating against them. Despite meaningful efforts by Blacks across the nation in the sciences, in athletics and in education between the 1910's and the 1960's, their demands to be heard most definitely gained ground in Canada through the cultural impact and racial pride

embodied in jazz culture and sensibility. Average Canadian Black citizens became extraordinary during this period, such as Viola Desmond, Carrie Best, and Lincoln Alexander.[34]

Supporting this music scene of the interwar period was always the criminal underworld. Gangsters and bootleggers operated huge, elaborate speakeasies in the US and Canada and happily employed Black musicians and dancers for their floorshows when the largest and best venues typically black-balled Negro performers (Lam, 1998, and Ward and Burns, 2000). During the Depression, jobs in these clubs weren't easy to get, but club owners like Rufus Rockhead did what they could to employ as many Blacks as he could. The low-end for musical work was either panhandling, or, if they could read music, work in the orchestras in silent film and Vaudeville theaters.

During Prohibition, some of the White drinking public wanted to see how the "darkies" partied, so club owners created elaborate stage shows that portrayed Blacks in either glamorous or gaudy clothing, while dancing, singing and playing happily, like in a minstrel show. At other times they were dressed in a "put-on version of tatters and rags,"[35] grass skirts, or farm clothing, while they performed on stages decorated with watermelons and farm animals, for some reason. Really, this presentation was barely more dignified than minstrelsy. A distinct element of minstrelsy is present in the performances of Louis Armstrong, Josephine Baker and Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, in their clowning and overacting, but the music, the joy, and the dance were the guiding principles behind their methods and success. Jazz was becoming more sophisticated and many performers were also intellectuals and activists. Some, like Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong had played for the queen of England and were international

superstars. Other Black performers, like Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson and Portia White were too dignified to play in dancehalls or Vaudeville theaters, no matter how fancy they were; their venue was the concert hall.[36]

Only the special few, like the three previously mentioned, didn't need the money offered by vaudeville producers or segregated nightclubs. Robeson, Anderson and White had international professional careers like musicians do today, with an agent and manager, pre-booked accommodations and transport in luxury, but not in jazz. Finding accommodations for a Black person anywhere in Canada might be an issue for the band manager. Hotel managers, who had final say on whether a Black person could stay at his hotel or not, or even enter from the front, were often not willing to create a disturbance by letting a Black person in. If a hotel guest complained about a Black person staying in the same hotel as them, it was their job on the line. Portia White had accommodation problems in Canada. So did another world-class performer, Louis Armstrong, as did Cy McLean when he went on tour in rural southern Ontario in the mid-forties.[37]

5.2. THE CANADIAN ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

During the Depression, Black women in both countries worked primarily as domestics or cleaners for wealthy families or as schoolteachers. Often children had to leave school to work to support the family, selling coal or shining shoes.[38] Some fortunate children became involved with show business as child dancers, actors, singers or musicians either locally, or on the road. A common story one hears from the interwar period is how someone became fascinated with music or dance at an early age and left home to join the circus (or a band or dance troupe).[39]

These children weren't treated like the pampered child stars of today, they were worked hard on the vaudeville circuit and were usually exploited by their managers and often their parents as well.

During these times of hardship, many Black people turned to The Brotherhood of Pullman Porters to speak for them in cases of racial discrimination, even if they were not employed by a rail company. The Brotherhood had advocates that helped the entire community (McTair, 2000). In Nova Scotia, where there was still much segregation and racism in housing, education, employment and criminal justice, Black people turned to the Baptist Church, which is an off shoot of the Southern Baptist Church of the United States. In Ontario, Blacks were mostly from the British Methodist Episcopalian Church (BME), an off shoot of the American Methodist Episcopalian (AME) Church. But many diaspora Blacks, like my family, attended United or Catholic churches. Many West Indians maintained their connection to the Anglican Church, of which the African Orthodox Church of Cape Breton is an off shoot (Este, 2007). These various churches, as well as the many benevolent societies of all sorts in the 1920's and thirties, helped to feed, educate, clothe, and house the poor Blacks of eastern Canada during the interwar period (Braithewaite, 1993).

Many Black families that had been upper-middle class before the war lost most of their holdings due to the 1929 stock market crash and the Great Depression that followed. There was also ten years of drought in the mid-west from 1930-1940 labelled "The Dust Bowl," making even farm work impossible (Schubert, S. et al., 2004). In such an environment, being a musician or dancer seemed appealing to a poor person. People from this era talk about "music in the

streets" because of all the parades, benevolent organizations with bands, and public performances happening everywhere, not to mention that "everyone had a piano or something back in those days." (Braithewaite, 1993). Then there were the records and radio shows, the private get-togethers and speakeasies, and everyone practicing continuously.

During the 1920's Canadian broadcasting consisted mostly of retransmitted American performances and it did not play much Canadian content until later, when Oscar Peterson made his appearance at the end of the 1940's (Miller, 1997). It is true that Mynie Sutton and Millard Thomas had been broadcasting live on Montreal radio for years, but it took until 1947 for Apex Records in Montreal, Canada's only race record company since the 1920's to actually record him. Thomas, an American, had already been recorded by Apex in the 1920's (*Jazz and Hot Dance,* 1986. Appendix 8.1.4). There wasn't much money in recording anyways. The real money was in performing.

In the late thirties, Mynie was playing the Terminal Club in Montreal while Cy was playing the Sunnyside Pavilion and The Top Hat in Toronto (Appendix 8.2.2 - 8.2.3). In 1946, Cy would tour across the province promoting Lifebuoy Soap while Mynie was assembling one of Canada's first mixed-race jazz quartets in Canada, The Casuals, in Niagara Falls, with drummer Rod North, and later, with Bill Jelley.[40] During the thirties and early 40's, both Cy and Mynie were at their peak in skill and popularity, but it is unfortunate that no recording of Cy McLean's music was located for this thesis.

After the American Civil War (1860-65) and Reconstruction (1865-77), the number and quality of Black entertainers really picked up on both sides of the border. During the early

1900's Nathaniel Dett of Niagara Falls came to be the first published Black composer in Canada. His Ragtime compositions and spirituals rivaled those of any Black American composer of his time, and he was determined to rescue Negro spirituals from obscurity by writing their melodies into his chorale and symphonic pieces (Nathaniel Dett, 2020). The Maritime provinces produced some skilled Black musicians at the turn of the century too, beginning with the Bohee brothers (minstrels from New Brunswick in the late 1800's), George Hector (country banjoist from Don Messer's CBC shows in the 1930's) (Rosenberg, 1988), and Charles Adams (jazz saxophonist from Halifax in the mid- 1940's) (Miller, 1997). Author Mark Miller identifies several Black jazzmen who broke the color barrier before Oscar Peterson's landmark performance in New York at Jazz at the Philharmonic in 1949, including Charlie, the father of Bucky Adams, and Ollie Wagner.[41]

Jellyroll Morton, the famous composer, arranger and pianist from New Orleans visited Canada in 1917 on his first tour north. He played Calgary, Winnipeg, and Edmonton, possibly inspiring Ollie Wagner in his childhood. Jellyroll lived in Vancouver in 1919 and 1921, while the first jazz recordings were being made by the Compo record company in Montreal under the "race records" label, Apex. Jellyroll Morton must have met George Paris of Truro, Nova Scotia, who is said to have started the first jazz band in Vancouver at around that time and was known as the mayor of Gastown (Miller, 1997, 7, 8, 53). By then, the Little Burgundy section of Montreal had developed its own Black jazz scene under the guidance of several Black American musicians who had come north to escape the bitter racism in the US and to find work.

In America at this time, the NAACP and several Black newspapers and organizations were attacking the lynching problem in the US, and Black American bandleaders like Millard Thomas, Charles Prevoa, and pianist Lou Hooper came to Montreal and recorded very early in the century.[42] Canada seemed like a foreign country to Americans then (as compared to now) because their government had imposed the prohibition of alcohol and they had a more segregated society than ours due to the legacy of slavery and the large number of Blacks in the US. In the south at the turn of the century, Blacks outnumbered Whites three to one, but they were a minority in the northern states and had even lower numbers in Canada (a mere 2% in the 1920's) due to the lack of need for huge labour forces in the north over the previous centuries (Winks, 1997). The main industries in the east were the trade in coal, steel, lumber, produce, fish, and manufactured goods. Blacks were needed more as labourers in jobs that Whites wouldn't do. Many Black men had several jobs and multiple social obligations, such as memberships in civic organizations, church and political groups, and in athletics, as well as in music.

French Canadian society embraced jazz music from the beginning and welcomed travelling Black artists, but most Blacks in Canada worked in labour trades such as domestic work, shipping, or railway work. The Brotherhood of Pullman Car Porters of Canada, based in Montreal, was one of the few Black organizations that fought for Black rights in Canadian courts. The Colored Clef Club, also from Montreal (c. 1928-1943)[43] was the first musicians' union to give Canadian Blacks a voice. As was customary for the time, the best and largest venues in Montreal were reserved for White customers only, but Blacks in the St. Antoine

district of Montreal had created an enclave of Black talent that attracted entertainers from across Canada and the United States. This was due to some enterprising money-making schemes run by a few railway porters from Montreal, especially one Jamaican ex-patriot named Rufus Nathaniel Rockhead.

During the interwar period, there was a suburb of Montreal known as Little Burgundy (or St. Antoine, the terms are used interchangeably, much like Whitney Pier and Cokeville, and Storyville and the French Quarter), which was close to the head offices of both railway companies; The Canadian National and The Grand Trunk Railroad. The neighborhood housed mainly English-speaking Blacks from American backgrounds, but also included Caribbean Blacks and some immigrants, such as Jewish people and Eastern Europeans.[44] The city's international flair and love of jazz and dance propelled Little Burgundy into the spotlight for a while during the Jazz Era, which gave the isolated Blacks in Canada an opportunity to show their talents to an international audience at home for the first time. Many other performers had to relocate to find a jazz scene (Miller, 1997). Lester McLean said of his famous brother Mark, in 2019 "You know, Mark has that fire. Then you know, he picked up right after university and went down to New York because he knew that's what he wanted to do. And that … that was a tough choice for him, but he did it because he wanted to pursue music, and that's what he's done." (Transcript 9C).

Some Black musicians preferred to stay at home, though, especially if their home was Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver, where there were vibrant jazz scenes beginning in the 1920's. If your home wasn't near a big city there was only one thing to do; go visit a relative. You could

always count on the UNIA halls which were always willing to help newly arrived Blacks anywhere there was a Black community, and musicians were always welcome. (Miller, 1997, 171) The train ticket was not only affordable, you could sell your return ticket at a profit to another Black person going in the other direction (McNamara, 1950).

The inter-connectedness of Canadian Black communities can be seen in the cross-country travels of musicians such as George Paris, born in Truro, Nova Scotia in 1868, who first expanded his horizons by running away with the circus at the age of 14, then at the turn of the century, he competed as a runner in Canada. Next, he became the trainer of world heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Johnson in 1909. He travelled extensively across the northern states with Johnson before finally settling in east Vancouver, where he started Canada's first jazz band as drummer at the Patricia Hotel (Miller, 1997, 56-57). Nova Scotian Black musicians were among the first to bring jazz to Canada's Black communities. The legacy of Nova Scotian Black jazz musicians is almost forgotten today, but Jazz music's legacy is never over. Jazz is that important to social development and equal rights in the Western world.

Cy McLean of Sydney, Nova Scotia was following his older brother Reggie when he came to Toronto, eventually becoming the first Black band leader to play on Yonge Street in Toronto in 1948 (Appendix 8.2.3). Then there was his bandmate, Ollie Wagner of Edmonton. He was a saxophonist and bandleader who crossed the country in the early 30's in search of larger audiences to play to in various places, including Toronto; eventually settling in with Cy McLean's various groups until the mid-forties. He returned to Edmonton after the second war, teaching locally and performing. Ollie was known to be a hot-head (Miller, 1997, 169, and

Appendix 8.1.2) and he was also very dark-skinned, which must have contributed to his experience with Canadian racism. When he was offered a teaching position in Vancouver in the late forties, he relocated his whole family there from Edmonton, only to be denied the job, presumably because of his race. Ironically, his playing days ended in Vancouver in the 1950's as an elderly shoeshine boy; in the very place where Jellyroll Morton had lived for three years in the early days and jazz had first been played at the Patricia Hotel by George Paris in 1917, after he had crossed the country to find more jazz and more action, and ended up creating his own celebrity scene (Miller, 1997, 180).

Mynie Sutton was born in Drummondville, now Niagara Falls, Ontario, and excelled at saxophone at an early age. While still a junior, his high school principal paid him $50 to assemble a jazz band. The band became so successful that Mynie was invited to join a touring American jazz band, the Royal Ambassadors from Ohio, in his graduating year. He decided to drop out of school and take the job. He never regretted that decision.[45] He toured with The Royal Ambassadors from 1927-1931 then started his own 'Canadian Ambassadors' and ruled Montreal stages during the 1930's and 40's. He had held a musician's union card from Buffalo, New York since the 1920's (Miller, 1997, 143, 149-150), and had always been allowed to play Canadian stages with that card while the rest of the Ambassadors belonged to the Guelph local. In 1934 he joined the Canadian Coloured Clef Club in Montreal and began playing with his CCCC card, but by 1941 he had returned to Niagara Falls to care for his mother. In the late forties, after being denied a union membership for decades in his hometown, Mynie was asked to be president of the new integrated union in Niagara Falls.[46] Mynie Sutton may well have been the

first Canadian-born Black bandleader to play an all-white unionized venue with both an American and a Canadian union card. Conversely, cards from American unions which allowed Black membership were accepted in most Canadian cities during the 20's, 30's and 40's, but Canadian Blacks were mostly shut out of Canadian unions (Miller, 1997, 172).

Halifax may have been one of the most important ports on the east coast at the turn of the century and during WWI, but the local customs did not permit a large Black music scene there. The one and only dance hall in the north Halifax area was the Gerrish Street Hall, which was a private hall for rent that never had any ongoing jazz entertainment, as there was in Toronto and Montreal at the time. According to all accounts (Miller, 1997, Transcripts 9E, G, and J), the Gerrish Street Hall was where Blacks danced during the Jazz Era and into the forties until the second club, the Arrows Club, opened in the fifties. An excerpt from my interview with Margaret Gordon, a singer at the Gerrish Hall during the 1930's and 40's expresses the atmosphere and longevity of the Hall (Transcript 9G):

> Wade: What was it like at the Gerrish Street Hall? What did the inside look like?
> Margaret: The building or the people?
> Wade: The inside … well, the building first, and then the people. (All laughing).
> Margaret: Well, the building was alright as far as I was concerned, it was a nice place, you know.
> Wade: Was it very fancy?
> Margaret: No, no.
> Wade: No?
> Margaret: Not really that fancy, but …
> Wade: So …
> Margaret: It was different, and it was new, you know.
> Wade: When did they first open? I don't even know.
> Margaret: Oh dear.
> Wade: They were there early on, weren't they?
> Margaret: (Nodding) That would be very early … I don't know (Looking at Linda).

Linda: Before they sent … the troops.
Margaret: Well, I was born in 1921 and it wasn't there.
Wade: No? Ok, but my understanding is that it was here from a long time ago. Was it a Black owned business?
Margaret: Oh yes.
Wade: Yeah? And so, there would have been like, performances there every weekend, but also … like, maybe … ah, you know, wedding receptions and …
Margaret: Oh, they had different things going on there.
Wade: Things like that, yeah? And uhm … and so, I still haven't got a picture of Gerrish Street Hall in my head. I can't seem to find one, but I know … I know there was a lot of dancing going on in those days.
Margaret: Oh yeah, there was mean music … music, mostly.
Wade: What other places did people go to besides The Gerrish Hall?
Margaret: That's the only place that I know of that … you know, that … if you wanted to find out anything from where we really came from … we went there. They played different kinds of music. Jazz …
Wade: All kinds of music, right.
Margaret: Bluesy. Other places they weren't run by Black people.

Ms. Gordon goes on to explain that Black celebrities only played in the White entertainment district on Barrington St., where Blacks were not allowed, and they seldom played in the Gerrish St. Hall, although they did play in family homes in Africville.

Wade: So, when you had big names come here, where would they play? Would they play on Barrington Street?
Margaret: They would be on Barrington Street, yeah.
Wade: Yeah? And then …would they also play in the Black community too?
Margaret: Yeah, sometimes they would. Once in a while they would, but not that often. Oh. (All looking at Linda off screen).
Wade: Yeah. Well, this is where I was going to go to next. I guess there was really no … no performance venues in Africville, but people would go there, and they would play at people's houses (pointing to Linda).
Linda: That's right.
Wade: Is that right Miss Carvery?
Margaret: Yeah.

The Gerrish St. Hall was followed by The Arrows Club and The Prizefighter's Club during the sixties (Transcript 9J). Halifax saxophonist, Bucky Adams, played at all three of these and also took part in a radio show on CBC with bassist Mike MacDonald from Sydney (Transcript 9F). His father, Charles, another saxophonist, had been part of the earlier migration to Montreal during the late 1930's, but Bucky, like other Blacks in Canada, chose to stay in his hometown, hindering his career opportunities. Bucky was well loved by the people in his community and was a great resource to Mark Miller for his book, *Such Melodious Racket*.[47]

Another skilled musician from Halifax was Les Bryan, the saxophonist. He and Johnny Adams, a drummer, were able to entertain the whole block as a duo back in the fifties and sixties (Transcript 9H). Actually, the entire Adams family is known for saxophone players and skilled dancers, Dorothy having established a well-respected dance academy in Halifax by the 1940's (Transcript 9G). Going back for more than a century, the Blacks in Nova Scotia: the Carverys, the Adams'. the Paris', the Dixons, the McLeans, and others laid new tracks in the field of jazz music and dance. I have been privileged throughout my lifetime to witness Jazz's dying breath in so many places around our beloved Atlantic Ocean. But Jazz can never truly die.

The recording industry was in its infancy during the 1920's, and most race records made by the Apex record label were made by American Blacks and sold almost exclusively to a Black American audience (Miller, 1997, 53). Still, some Canadian Blacks were recorded at this time, such as Mynie Sutton and the Sealey Brothers; George, Hugh, and Milton, as were many White Canadian jazz orchestras, such as the popular Guy Lombardo Orchestra (*Jazz and Hot Dance,* 1986, Appendix 8.1.4). Mynie, Millard and other Blacks were mainly active as live performers,

sometimes appearing on radio locally, but only a few Canadian stations featured Black performers.

There were strong rivalries at the beginning of the century between Black musicians on both sides of the border. Freddie Keppart of New Orleans had the opportunity to record the first jazz record with Vocalion in 1916. He used to play with a handkerchief covering his fingers because he was paranoid that someone would learn his fingering technique (Ward and Burns, 2000). He decided against recording with Vocalion for the same reason, passing up the chance to have the first, and also the first Black jazz record. The Original Dixieland Jass Band; a White outfit from New Orleans, got that honor in 1917 (Miller, 1997, 27). The first talkie featuring jazz music in a feature-length movie, *The Jazz Singer,* starring a White, Al Jolson in Blackface, was made a decade after the first jazz record was released.[48] Great as he was, Jolson was just another guy who, at the time, was more-or-less acting out a minstrel-mockery of the new artform, while paying homage to the ancestors of our expression, which could never have come about if it were not for those pioneers everywhere around the world, Black and White and the so-called Yellow and Red. I get sick to my stomach when I have to employ these crappy terms in an academic thesis. But, back to the point …

Suffice it to say that, during the 20's and thirties many Canadian musicians had to go to America to gain notoriety, as they do today, and many Black American musicians used Canada as a home away from home. Very few Americans took Montreal or Canada seriously enough to move here permanently, though many stayed for five to ten years before going home at the end of the interwar years. Besides Oscar Peterson, who is conspicuously missing from this

thesis because his career falls outside the time period being discussed here, but he was raised in Little Burgundy during the Jazz Era, and arguably, he set the bar even higher for his contemporaries. No other Canadian Black has achieved as much worldwide success in jazz music. Many world class Black Canadian jazz musicians whose careers began after the interwar period, such as Joe Sealy, Archie Alleyne, Lester McLean, and Salome Bey (recently deceased, "Salome Bey," 2020) chose to remain in Canada and continue to help develop a more robust Canadian music industry.

Canadian Black musicians with an international fan base in other genres, such as opera singer Portia White and Banjoist George Hector, also chose to make Canada their base of operations for socio-political reasons. The way racism was expressed during the interwar period was also radically different in the United States, discouraging many Canadian Blacks from moving there. This is evident in the many testimonials from the Black musicians that Mark Miller interviewed for the book, *Such Melodious Racket,* other interviews from the time period, and from the people I have interviewed for this thesis and other projects:

- Mynie Sutton said in 1934, "I never wanted to go back to the States, really. I knew I couldn't stand that pace. I would have been dead by now if I had moved to New York." (Miller, 1997, 153);
- "People here aren't like they are in the United States. Racism is far worse down there. I've never wanted to go down there for that reason." ("Moonlight Bandleader," 1962);
- Allan Wellman of Montreal asks; "Why would I want to go to the States? Make $2 and get killed?" (Miller, 1997, 153);
- Lester McLean: "I understand how things work and everything, but even going back to Cy McLean, same thing, you know. Canada was just too small. He refused to go down to the States for the reasons that I understand, you know. Certainly … much more significant type of racism in

the US and he just wanted to stay in Canada and provide for his family and that makes sense to me, but I … I respect that very much." (Transcript 9C).

Archie Alleyne and others agree. So why didn't more American Blacks settle here? Maybe it is because there are enough remnants of White privilege here to remind them of the worst parts of American society, without the support of large numbers of like-minded Blacks and employment opportunities. It is harder to succeed in a racist society without a support network.

5.3. BLACKS IN SPORTS, THE PERFORMING ARTS AND RAILWORK

Many Blacks had to drop out of a tour or concert booking because they were called for work on the railways. One of Cy McLean's drummers, Sammy Richardson, was a track star on Canada's Olympic team and long jumped against Jesse Owens in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. He worked as a porter as well. Playing drums was his third job (Miller, 1997, 174). It must have really irked him to kow-tow to Whites on the railways. Oscar Peterson's father was a porter, so was Joe Sealy's father. Rufus Rockhead, of Rockhead's Paradise was a porter, and he became rich by bootlegging Canadian whisky to American cities during Prohibition (Jacob, 1996, and Lam, 1998). When he opened Rockhead's Paradise in Montreal in 1933, it wasn't long before other clubs, such as Connie's Inn and the after-hours Terminal Club opened nearby, creating a Black entertainment district Americans referred to as "Little Harlem" because of the number of American Blacks living there and the imported performers from Harlem itself (Sarsfield, 2004, and Lam, 1998).

The location of this Black entertainment district was no accident. Little Burgundy was placed between the head offices of the two main rail companies, where Blacks lived and worked in crowded, ramshackle tenement buildings, much like the Cokeville neighborhood of Sydney, Nova Scotia, which was near the coke ovens at the steel plant; the most industrialized, polluted area of town (Appendix 8.6.1, and 8.4.3). These two neighborhoods also housed various other minority groups that were being segregated out of mainstream society. The same was happening in Toronto, New Orleans, Chicago, New York, Boston, Capetown and many other places. These cities now all embrace their multiculturalism, but less than a century ago things were very different.

Mahatma Gandhi, Marcus Garvey, Jack Johnson, Louis Armstrong, Jessie Owens, Duke Ellington and Jackie Robinson were the first few to make a global impact on White society, then participants of the Harlem Renaissance laid new ground for Blacks everywhere. Writers like Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, and Langston Hughes told it like it was in Harlem, and other authors, such as W.E.B. DuBois, Carlotta Bass and Robert Abbott from the Black Press, and activists like Dr. William Pearly Oliver and Carrie Best from Halifax, got their message out on the streets. Actor Bert Williams and dancers like Bill Bojangles, the Nicholas brothers, and Sammy Davis Jr. conveyed the humor and humanism in Black culture during the interwar years. Musicians like Sidney Bechet, Josephine Baker, and later, Dexter Gordon and others took their acts on the road overseas (Simawe, 2000, Feather and Gitler, 2007). Whether my oldest interview subjects were aware of it or not, a Black Renaissance had begun just before their

births, and the repercussions of their parents' and their own actions have affected my life today, and that of many other Canadian Blacks.

5.4. BLACKS IN EDUCATION AND POLITICS IN EASTERN CANADA

During the interwar period, many school districts still had separate schools for Blacks and Whites. In most provinces, according to Canadian law, if there was a large enough Black community, the province or the region would either have to provide a school for the Black children, or allow Black students in public schools.[49] The Black population was only 2% of the total Canadian population in 1918 (Winks, 1997) so, many Black and mixed-blooded Canadian children went to integrated schools. Still, for much of the 20th century the authorities allowed these children to drop out at any time (Shadd, 2007). A consequence of Canada's crippled educational policies during the Great Depression was that many Black children left school to work to support their families and did not receive an adequate education. So, parents, churches, civic groups, and friends made the education of Canada's Black population their private affair. Despite these setbacks, many Blacks excelled at music, business, and education. Black women were preferred for teaching jobs in Black schools, while Black men excelled in the clergy and started to enter regional politics in the larger cities. Peyton Hubbard served as a Toronto city councilor from 1894 to 1914.[50] After the 1920's there were very few Eastern Canadian cities that could boast of a Black politician for many years.

Many of the earliest Black jazz musicians were self-taught and did not read music, but during the interwar period, Black musicians were learning to read music in order to become more professional, which was a better job than becoming a coal miner or a Sleeping Car Porter.

If you could handle the math, the music theory, the classical composition theoretics, and mind-bending exercises (which I never could master), you might be able to earn minimum wages during the Depression, if you could find a place to hire you. As a side-note: my gifted nieces and nephews will surely surpass me, my brilliant uncles, and us all (place your name here, reader, for the sake of this thesis).

During the interwar period, Vaudeville, minstrel shows, and especially silent films, required skilled musicians. Very racist societies such as in Nova Scotia and Alabama, retained gross elements of minstrelsy, which persisted until the 1960's in some regions in Canada, due to anti-Black racist imagery everywhere. Dedicated Black professional musicians either took private lessons or attended music conservatories in order to learn how to read music and avoid the stigma. Cy McLean left Sydney, Nova Scotia when he was only sixteen and went to the Hambourg Conservatory in Toronto (Appendix 8.2.3 and Transcript 9A). Mynie Sutton left high school in Niagara Falls before graduating to pursue a career in the US as a saxophonist and clarinetist. By the early 1930's his Canadian Ambassadors were said to be one of the best sight-reading orchestras to ever play Montreal, even better than Count Basie's (Miller, 1997, 148, and Appendix 9.3). Becoming musically literate was always a choice, because much of jazz music is based on "head arrangements," like Basie's band was, and does not always require reading skills. Guitarist Wes Montgomery could not read music, neither could Bucky Adams (Transcript 9H), and both Cy Mclean and Benny Goodman hired full-time arrangers.[51]

Cy McLean and The Rhythm Rompers modelled themselves after Count Basie's orchestra from Kansas City. They had a swinging style different than the intellectual, moody

New York style of Duke Ellington. Basie's style was called "Stomp," a derivative of swing jazz from Kansas City, Missouri, that had an infectious stomping beat, sometimes called "Jump."[52] Cy was labelled "Canada's Count Basie" by the media and fans around the Toronto and Niagara regions by the 1940's, but his style was described by critics as "Sweet" jazz, or as columnist Helen McNamara put it, "light, polite Jump," more in the style of his hero and close friend, Earl "Fatha" Hines (Miller, 1997, 175, 144, Transcript 9A and Supplemental Video). He was virtually unknown outside of the Toronto region, and Blacks in Whitney Pier, his hometown, never got to hear him play.[53] When Cy and his band travelled through south western Ontario in 1946 for Lever Brothers Company promoting Life Buoy Soap, the locals would have had an eyeful and an earful. At the time, they were considered Canada's best all-Black jazz orchestra (Appendix 8.2.2).

On that tour, it only cost a single box of soap to see them play in local meeting places and halls (8.2.3 and Miller, 1997, 175-176). Cy never recorded or appeared on film, and none of his written compositions have ever been found. He did however, broadcast live from the Top Hat in Toronto on CKEY from 1944 to 1947 (Miller, 1997, 174). It also might be that, like Basie, he worked with head arrangements and talented soloists, so that any original music scores would have been left with his wife, who passed away in 2003 (Appendix 8.2.1). Oddly, I have recently made contact with one of the McLean's neighbors in Willowdale, and it's possible that I may still be able to find a recording of Cy, even though their only child, Keith, passed away in 1973 and the rest of the Toronto McLean's don't know what happened to Cy's memorabilia

(Appendix 8.2.2 and author's personal communication with Mark McLean). That is why this research is vital to Black Canadians.

It might be assumed that Black jazz musicians of the Jazz Era would gravitate towards Halifax, being that it was the largest urban center in the east, but this would be to underestimate the levels of racism in Nova Scotia which discouraged Blacks from settling there during the interwar period, especially if they were seeking the kind of freedom that jazz embodied. The automobile was about to become king in the 1940's, but at this time rail travel was more common, convenient, affordable, and in many cases, one's profession. There are various reasons why no significant jazz scene developed in the Black communities of Halifax.

Halifax had just experienced a series of traumas back to back in 1918. First, the Titanic disaster of 1912 demanded the commandeering of all the city's emergency services. Then the Great War began in Europe, which was good for the local economy but killed many soldiers. Next, the Halifax Explosion of 1917 killed and wounded thousands, and destroyed much of the old Black and immigrant neighborhoods. Next, the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918 landed in Halifax ports before anywhere else in North America. In 1919 there were race riots across the US and in Halifax.[54] These crises had an impact on Blacks' civil rights in many ways in Canada and the US.

The blatant racism in Halifax, of course, discouraged visiting Blacks from the States and from Canada from staying there. Blacks from elsewhere always commented on the size of the Black community there, but stated that it was a repressed community, without a gathering place, and which was kept poor and needy by the local government. It was plain to see that in

Halifax, opportunities were few (Transcript 9G). For Black jazz musicians there, it was simpler and more lucrative to relocate to Montreal or Toronto than to try to make a living out of the few small non-union venues that Blacks were allowed to play in Halifax during the interwar years, and there was also more acceptance further west. Even years later, when the second war ended, American soldiers who were passing through Halifax who felt that they had been overcharged by lazy locals during the war destroyed many businesses on Barrington St. and much of what was left of the foreign and Chinese-owned businesses in the Gottingen Street neighborhood ("Halifax Race Riots," 2014). Consequently, African-Nova Scotians spread across the nation to seek their fortunes and they brought great music to the west during the interwar period. George Paris, Canada's first documented jazz musician was Nova Scotian, and he wasn't actually remembered as a musician, like many Black Nova Scotians, he was a world-class athlete. Music was his hobby, like myself.

Despite improvements in race relations in some provinces and states, racism remained very localized for most of the century in both countries. It would take until the early 1950's, when Viola Desmond's appeal to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia was finally turned down, that public awareness of systemic racism was raised enough to spark an eventual change in equality laws in that province many years later. She may have been unfairly imprisoned and charged because of her race, not her gender, but the same thing would have happened to her in New York City in the 1940's, if she had happened to step out of Harlem; which she would have been fully aware of. But Viola did just that, many times in her short life; but why?[55]

5.5. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

During the interwar period, the most popular form of entertainment in both countries was minstrel shows. Elements of minstrelsy persisted into the 1960's in Canada because of early American film reels, radio programs, professional and amateur theatre productions, vaudeville, and the White newspaper articles and comic strips that perpetuated racist stereotypes, especially in extra-prejudiced regions such as Mississippi and Nova Scotia. In the northern states, Blacks had organized their own musician's unions, and several American and Canadian locals did allow Blacks during the interwar period. Joining the musician's union in Toronto would present further challenges. Most Blacks worked around it somehow, by either having an American card or a card from a smaller community, like Guelph, which did allow Blacks (Miller, 1997, 143).

But even Blacks from small Ontario cities like Guelph were surprised to find the high levels of racism in the rural areas such as in Priceville (Holness and Sutherland, 2000). Cy McLean, Archie Alleyne, Mynie Sutton, and their bandmates have commented on this. "They had actually never seen Blacks before."[56] By comparison to rural Ontario, there were larger Black communities across the United States, merely miles away, where a travelling musician could find a rooming house for Blacks and be treated like an honored guest. Even in Montreal, the French-Canadian women and their families helped many Black Americans to survive during the Great Depression (Miller, 1997, 147). Black Americans seldom stayed in Canada for long while on tour during the interwar period, and Canadian Blacks usually didn't travel far from

their homes to perform because it did not pay, and it was uncomfortable. Everyone gravitated to the big cities to join the scene.

During the interwar period, there was stronger suspicion and malice towards Blacks in America, and a culture that usually just turned a blind eye when Blacks were lynched on a weekly basis, prompting Black-owned newspapers, businesses, and the NAACP to embark on campaigns to stop lynching and persecuting Blacks in both countries (Austin, 2013, Luxenberg, 2020, and Williams, 1997). But in the Commonwealth, lynching was not the problem it was in the United States; the harassment and exclusion of people of colour was more the British way.

5.6. SIMLARITIES BETWEEN BLACKS IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE DIASPORA

Transculturation is particularly evident in the Black music of the large cities of the eastern North American coast from the Caribbean to Cape Breton, and along the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Great Lakes in large cities which experienced high Black and Hispanic migration during the interwar period, but which already had had Black populations for hundreds of years previously; cities such as in New Orleans, Chicago, New York, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax. As a world traveller and brown-skinned Canadian, I am always amazed when I travel to a tropical or third world country (or even any American state), how the people always mistake me for a long-lost relative or brother of their childhood friend (if they are White). I believe this is because I have very typical European facial features mixed with a tinge of South African Aborigine and Negro.

Some South Africans have a lot of Malaysian and Indian blood, and third-generation, mixed-blood South Africans look exactly like third-generation, mixed-blood Trinidadians, Guyanese, English, Canadians or Americans. We like spicy chicken and rice, and so do they. "They use traditional cuisine to reaffirm their cultural identity and food more broadly to establish identity and belonging in a new cultural environment." (Schermuly and Forbes-Mewett, 2016). My sister, Tanya had her DNA tested for our genetic origins, and the results merely prove this connectedness (Appendix 8.8.7). Many of our fathers worked in education or in the transportation industries. Some worked in manufacturing jobs, but they all loved to sing and dance and play musical instruments, going back generations. In fact, all our musics have a calypso twist, and everywhere in the diaspora respectability was of paramount importance to our parents and grandparents.

Trans-national, cross-cultural, mixed-blooded, Atlantic immigrants grew up with large extended families which included adoptees, friends, neighbors, and rivals, but they always stuck together regardless of the bickering. Our community gets along by being jovial with each other as a practice, respecting our elders and the church, and always joking about the bad habits that God's children have. This family dynamic reflects the inherent ethic that is making and performing jazz music. It is a negotiation between unique individuals that somehow works well together despite the different temperaments and styles, and which hopefully, ends in harmony.

Since the early 1800's, obtaining an education has been an anchor of middle-class Black ethics. To many underprivileged Blacks around the world, the quest for higher education in the middle-class system may seem out of reach, like an attempt to climb the social ladder or even a

lame attempt to be White, but to the majority of middle-class Blacks, education has always been their ticket to a more dignified and gratifying life. Even in small gestures, such as maintaining the image of English manners and attending to local social calendars in a gentleman's club or Ladies' Tea Room, etiquette was an important pursuit during the 1920's and 30's for Blacks trying to improve their social standing.[57] The Harlem Renaissance in particular helped to usher in a new phase of cultural appreciation for original Black art forms during the interwar period in Canada; and new resentments.

The anti-Black backlash against proud Blacks from the military, in literature, the arts, dance, music, business, education, and legislation during the 1920's and 30's became somewhat of a global phenomenon due to Marcus Garvey and the UNIA and how organized they were becoming, with the Black Cross Nurses and the Black Star Steamship Line (Hill and Garvey, 1983). The steamship line and the Harlem Renaissance were not to last, but anti-Black racism lasts up to today.

5.7. THE ACADEMIC PRESERVATION OF 'AUTHENTIC' MUSIC FORMS

At the turn of the century, academics started taking note of cultures, languages, and traditions that were disappearing quickly with the onset of the industrial age. People worldwide were assimilating to the American industrial ideal of free consumerism and urban citizenry, and many of the last remnants of Aboriginal cultures were being lost, destroyed or forgotten. As Jazz was diversifying in the 1930's, Folk and Country songs were also being written down and discovered across America and influencing jazz. John and Alan Lomax spearheaded the search for authentic American music in the 1930's, but Helen Creighton also studied music traditions in

Cape Breton during the early forties, collecting over 4000 Nova Scotian melodies ("Helen Creighton," 2020).

There is a relationship between the Celtic music of Ireland, traditional Cape Breton fiddle music, the Bluegrass music of the mountainous regions of the eastern United States, and Cajun music from Louisiana. The use of the violin and accordion, and sometimes banjo and bass, exemplify these forms of folk music which have common elements with old folk melodies and sea shanties from trans-Atlantic Europe during the 1600's (MacEachern, 1975). Caribbean music influences can be heard in the Zydeco and Cajun music of Louisiana, in Quebec Chansons, and also in 1930's New York Swing jazz and 1950's and sixties pop. The all-permeating influence of Blues and Country music has been more of a global phenomenon. Both genres have groups and societies dedicated to the preservation of their traditions. Blues spread around the world at the same time as early jazz music, and the history of both are intertwined, but the ethos of jazz has always been to expand and experiment with the form, while by contrast, Blues music has developed an established structure and sound, as has Country music, but both strongly influenced the development of jazz music and dance during this period (Ake et al., 2012, and Ward and Burns, 2000).

Today, one must look up "Dixieland" or "Big Band' or "Gypsy jazz," to find something specific from the very same era, and the list just keeps going on into the future; Brazilian jazz, Be Bop Jazz, Fusion jazz, Free jazz, Jazz Funk, etc. (Feather and Gitler, 2007). The same has occurred with Blues (Delta blues, Chicago blues, Blues rock, etc.), Country (Bluegrass, Rockabilly, Honky-tonk, etc.) and Folk (Popular, Traditional, World, Maritime, Roots, etc.), and

there are even more sub-genres within Calypso, Reggae, and Latin music (Moore, 2002). These developments in style and genre grew out of earlier migrations involving music, food, and language traditions that Fernando Ortiz was drawing attention to in his books on Cuban music during the 1950's, which are still valuable resources in Afro-Cuban studies, today. Considered the father of Afro-Cuban studies, Ortiz co-founded the Cuban Academy of Language in 1926 and the Society of Afro-Cuban Studies in 1937 (Coronil, 1995). He also established three journals dedicated to studying Cuban culture and coined the term *transculturation*.

If one goes to the National Archives of Canada or the USA today, one can listen to any number of recordings of "authentic" music genres, for they are all preserved as pure forms on vinyl, sheet music, celluloid or disc, by music historians and folklorists (The American Folklife Center, 2020). "Authenticity is a matter of interpretation which is made and fought for from within a cultural and, thus, historicized position. It is ascribed, not inscribed. Whether a performance is authentic, then, depends on who 'we' are." (Moore, 2002). The various ethnic and cultural musics that have contributed to the creation of jazz have many elements that could be called jazzy, but true modern jazz mixes certain elements of these techniques and methods together in a unique structured way. In the hands of innovators such as Buddy Bolden from New Orleans, James P. Johnson of New York, Sidney Bechet of New Orleans, Harold Steep Wade in Montreal, and Mynie Sutton from Niagara Falls, jazz became a globally-spoken language (Feather and Gitler, 2007), and Canadian Blacks were there from the beginning, and they still are.

Jazz was the original music for rebellious teenagers that changed popular culture, but it was also the vehicle that transformed Blacks and Creoles (those of mixed races) from being merely passive recipients of a false freedom into the practitioners of a true physical, spiritual, and creative freedom through dancing, appreciating, and playing the music. Maybe that is why jazz was labelled "The Devil's music."[58] It seems as though the repressed British establishment couldn't allow too much freedom; that would be undignified. The jazz culture and liberal sentiments that were embodied in the Harlem Renaissance movement in the 1920's gave people of colour world-wide their first taste of true self-actualization and pride. Jazz can also be called the first pop music because from its earliest days jazz was formulated for specific markets, Black and White, in order to optimize sales to young people, who now had disposable cash for the first time in the "Roaring Twenties" because of the booming stock market. Later, during American Prohibition, radio shows broadcast Black bands from Black-owned nightclubs that Blacks couldn't enter, but they could at least listen, and save up money to buy their favorite record or get a cheap used instrument and learn how to play it. So, the appreciation of music could transcend class, race, and borders during the interwar period, and young people were ready for change.

5.8. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION: THE BLACK PRESS, THE UNIA, SEA AND RAIL CONNECTION

Rufus Rockhead, the Jamaican-born owner of Rockhead's Paradise in Montreal was a Pullman Sleeping Car Porter before he became a club owner. In fact, he made the money for the club through bootlegging whisky to the United States during Prohibition. Black newspapers

from the northern states were then smuggled into Canada so that Blacks from coast to coast in Canada could keep up with current news across the continent. *The Chicago Defender* was well-read in Canada, and the paper maintained a Canadian section, where author Mark Miller found much documentary evidence of Black Canadian musicians and artists. *The Defender* had news from Black communities all around the diaspora. They had their own cartoonists, and a national readership in Canada and the US exceeding ten million.[59]

At the turn of the century, and then again in the 1920's, Blacks from the southern states and the Caribbean were recruited to work in eastern Canadian coalmines and steel plants. They were, of course, interested in news from back home, and the Black Press was the only way to get news weekly from a Black perspective. Sleeping car porters were recruited for work on the railways from Canada, the Caribbean, and the American south, and new arrivals also brought news from home. Many Black churches in Canada had affiliations with Baptist churches in the southern states, the Caribbean, and England as well, so news travelled north and east by word of mouth, by ship, by automobile, rail, press, telephone, theater, movies, newsreels, radio, live performances, and recordings. Interconnected as these Black communities were, many people traveled out of necessity, because they had lost everything during the stock market crash of 1929 and the Dust Bowl phenomenon, in the midwest.[60] Under these crazy conditions, swing jazz was born, because it was the best game in town.

Many Black Canadians left Canada to pursue careers in New York City or Europe, and many Caribbeans and Americans settled in Canada to escape racism and provide their children with better opportunities. The majority of Canadians in Black communities, like other Blacks in

the diaspora, were in support of West Indian people's causes and those of other brown-skinned people worldwide. For example, the support shown for Gandhi in India; Mandela in South Africa; and Martin Luther King Jr. in the southern US was international in scope. The Jamaican-born Marcus Garvey was the first Black organizer to recognize the cultural connection between Blacks throughout the trans-Atlantic diaspora and promote it. He and his supporters created 500 chapters of the UNIA around the world in the 1920's; 34 in Canada, three on Cape Breton Island alone, and a national Canadian membership of 5000.[61] Garvey went on speaking tours across Canada during the interwar period, once in 1920 and again in 1937, stopping at Black communities in several provinces. Marcus Garvey's message of Black Nationalism was the first global movement created by Black leaders that advocated a separate Black economy, religion, and political party. It offered many Canadian Blacks their first glimpse of racial pride. "The importance of education and achieving respectability were guiding tenets among Halifax's Black elite. They were regarded as a means for social mobility and a partial bulwark against racial discrimination." (Reynolds, 2018, Ch. 1.)

5.9. 'JAZZ LIFESTYLE' AS AN EXPRESSION OF EMPOWERMENT

Discrimination against Blacks and the denial of their land rights was prevalent in the Eastern provinces of Canada throughout post-colonial history and during the interwar period (Cooper, 2006). Black people from differing parts of Canada have different perceptions of racism, and indeed, expressions of bigotry are different in every region across Canada. In Eastern Canada, personal violence against Blacks was not as extreme prior to WWI as it was afterwards, with Halifax Black city councilors dating back to the 1910's. Segregation and

discrimination were more the norm in Canada during and after the period in question. Viola Desmond's grandparents owned several properties in Halifax and Connecticut, but they lost almost everything during The Great Depression due to mismanagement and legal fraud. By the late 1940's Viola was able to file charges against her parents' lawyers in Halifax and the White-owned firm chose to settle out of court.[63] Without a law degree she was able to challenge a group of lawyers and win. This says a lot about her tenacity and ability. Cy McLean's older brother and mentor, Reggie, became a real estate lawyer in Toronto sometime in the 40's.[64] Robin Winks did not acknowledge or accept the tenacity of the Blacks in Canada in his well-researched book.

This thesis asserts that having to struggle against an unfair system in eastern Canada in music, education employment and in business, these Black Canadians became stronger. Black musicians such as Mynie Sutton, Portia White, and Cy McLean became role models and pioneers in their fields because of the freedom and respect that being a professional entertainer garnered at the time. Being a performer carried a lot of social clout because these people were the most visible, wealthiest, most dignified and respected Blacks in society. A child growing up at this time would have dreamt of being a professional performer rather than work in heavy industry or as a lackey. Other Blacks in eastern Canada did not fit in well, but they succeeded in other fields.

Jack Johnson, the heavy weight boxing champion in America at the time, made an exhibition of flaunting his wealth and his disdain for White people. These two behaviors got him two years in a state penitentiary for transporting a woman across state lines for the purpose of

prostitution. He was not really the brute they painted him as; the supposed victim was his girlfriend, and she was not Black skinned (Miller, 1997, 56-57). This was the gangster era, and the American Bureau of Investigation had a file on almost every celebrity, accusing them of everything from communist ties, to espionage and tax evasion. Jack Johnson was one of these victims, but he was also a bassist, a club owner and friend of George Paris, jazz drummer and former heavy weight boxing champion of Western Canada ("George Paris" 2020). Jellyroll Morton, who lived in Vancouver from 1919-1921 was known to be a "sport," having grown up playing piano in brothels in New Orleans.[65] There is probably no accident behind the term, "sport." Both types of celebrity enjoyed flaunting their wealth and sexual prowess. Hip Hop stars and heavy weight champions are no different today.

During the interwar period, many persons of colour, such as WEB Dubois, Duke Ellington, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Madam C. J. Walker felt that they were the equal of any person. Madam Walker used her marketing skills and business acumen to become the first self-made Black millionairess in modern history, selling beauty products and training Black beauticians to start their own businesses. Madame Walker began selling her own beauty concoctions in the 1880's. By the 1920's she had grown her business into a national school of Black Beauty Culture with twelve campuses across the United States (Reynolds and Robson, 2018). Her business model inspired other North American Black women, such as Madam Sarah Washington, who started the Apex School of Beauty in Atlantic City.

Mme. Washington and Viola Desmond based their business plans on Mme. Walker's proven model. Viola Desmond attended Madam Washington's Apex School of Beauty in

Atlantic City, New Jersey in 1939, and the self-confidence and business savvy that she developed there served her extremely well in her own beauty school and beauty products plant in north Halifax during the 1940's. Years later, after retiring from the beauty products business, she switched careers and took business courses in Montreal, starting a company in New York City during the 1950's which represented musicians in their fight to receive royalties on their written music. It is not certain, but I speculate that these were Black musicians because she was working at a legendary Black jazz club in Harlem, Small's Paradise, as a cigarette girl during the mid-fifties and stayed in New York until her death in the mid-sixties. She actually wrote and copywrote two songs under the name Viola Diamond, according to her sister, Wanda Robson, and Constance Backhouse.[66] Viola must have picked up her musical ability at church, at home, at the clubs, or by osmosis; in her travels, and at home on Gottingen St. in Halifax. Or, she may have been reinventing herself again, right before she passed away.

James Reese Europe, a bandleader from New York, started the Clef Club, a society for Black musicians in 1907. His Clef Club Orchestra played Carnegie Hall in 1912 to rave reviews and he was a respected songwriter and bandleader. In World War I, Europe led the volunteer orchestra made up from the 369th all-Black Infantry, The Harlem Hellfighters (Gilbert, 2012). Like the band from Canada's Construction Battalion No. 2, they entertained the troops and French civilians during their term (Ruck, 1986). These bands could not be said to be actually jazz bands, yet. Jazz was still frowned upon in official circles, but they played marching band arrangements, classical pieces and Ragtime. In 1921 Europe collaborated with pianist Eubie Blake to produce the musical *Shuffle Along* which does incorporate blues and jazz influences.[67]

Both Europe and Blake were staunch “race men,” proud of their race and working to preserve Negro music traditions, as were Nathaniel Dett of Niagara Falls and Oscar Peterson from Montreal, fifty years later.

Nathaniel Dett excelled as a music scholar in the 1890’s at Oberlin College in Ohio, the only well-respected university nearby that would accept a Black man, and by 1921 he was studying at Harvard, winning awards and teaching. His composing work was focused on religious music and chorale arrangements while Europe played classical and marching band music and Blake was at the vanguard of what was to become known as jazz. Blake had been trained in the “stride piano” style of early blues and jazz pianists from New York, such as James P. Johnson and Willie “the Lion” Smith.[68] All three worked to preserve Negro spirituals, as did Duke Ellington years later. Dett also started the Nathaniel Dett Chorale, a choir committed to performing religious music and chorale arrangements. Dett is remembered as president of the National Association of Negro Musicians (US) from 1924-1926.[69]

At this time, White intellectuals were starting to take note of Black writers and artists, especially in Harlem, where many Black intellectuals and artists had settled. The Harlem Renaissance takes place one decade after the founding of the NAACP and five years after the founding of the UNIA, when Black businesses and Black pride were finally starting to blossom in the United States. Mildred Dixon, a dancer whose parents were from Africville, found herself at the Cotton Club in 1924 working in a professional dance team, “Mildred and Henri,” years before Ellington was to work there (Duke Ellington fell in love with her on his opening night, December 4, 1927, and in 1928 they were married.

Ellington is remembered as the first Black band to play in an all-White unionized venue, an American landmark, but of course, the band he joined was already all-Black, and the members belonged to various American musician's locals, including James Europe's Colored Clef Club, but he gets the official credit, much like Cy McLean does on the official record in Ontario, even though Mynie Sutton did everything first. Mynie usually gets little mention in the archives because he dropped out at his peak and changed cities and provinces. Similar historic misappropriations have occurred in Canadian music history because of the lack of historical documentation, and the need for constant relocation during the interwar period. The lure of being at the heart of Black North American culture was too great for Mildred and others to resist, and then the need to tour in order to be heard kept everyone shifting around.[70] This pattern was to be repeated time and again throughout the century for jazz artists, both Black and White, especially if they came from rural areas.

Ollie Wagner was a bandleader and saxophonist from Edmonton who started the 1930's all-black jazz band, the Knights of Harlem. They toured the western provinces in 1935, but he soon moved to Toronto to find a larger audience (Miller, 1997, Ch. 12). Between the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl crisis in the mid-west, there was little money to be made in the Prairies. Ollie Wagner was born in Wichita, Kansas, in 1907 (Miller, 1997, 160). His father was an angry man who had been born into slavery and had served time for manslaughter before moving to Edmonton in 198. Ollie vehemently refused to go to the States. After playing with a few Negro bands, Cy McLean invited him to join the Rhythm Rompers in Toronto, so he settled into a position with them as a featured saxophonist. He was with them when they toured

southern Ontario in 1946 for Lifebuoy Soap and when they broke the color barrier at the Colonial Tavern on Yonge St. in January of 1948.[71] Ollie was American born and was from the Midwest during the Dust Bowl crisis. In these times of hardship, Ollie had no choice but to migrate to other places if he wanted a career in music. He ended up being one of the pivotal Black musicians in the 1930's, connecting knowledge and style from the west coast to Ontario.

When we speak of the Cajuns in Louisiana, we must realize that they were originally French-speaking Acadians transplanted there by the British government from parts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick between 1765 and 1775 (Mitchell, 2014). The French Canadians (Acadians) shared musical traditions with the local slave and Creole populations, creating the "Cajun" culture, which involved distinct cooking methods, a French language-based patois, and new genre of dancing music played on accordions, fiddles, and washboards. These mixed blood Blacks were mostly country-dwellers, and were distinct from the Creoles in the city, who had always been considered a class of free, educated Coloureds, and part of the elite New Orleans citizenry.[72] "The Great Expulsion" of the Acadians, as it is called, took place in the 1750's, but it had an influence on the later development of jazz and folk music from that region (Faragher, 2005). The use of the fiddle, harmonica, accordion, drums and banjo date from this period in Louisiana, and a century later horns and piano were added in Congo Square, the historic birthplace of the jazz idiom and jazz dancing.[73]

Close by, in the 1940's in Memphis, Tennessee, Elvis Presley was working as a labourer and he was entranced with Black spiritual music. He walked into a record-pressing studio in the late 40's and after his recording of "That's Alright Mama" a great wave of Black cultural

appreciation soon began. In 1949 he became a recording star and box office idol by emulating Black performers and preachers that he had grown up with. In actuality, Sam Philips. The record producer, was looking and waiting for a White front man who could introduce great Black music to White audiences, and Elvis had come along first.[74] Many more were to come, but Elvis' story is a great example of Ortiz's transculturation, even though it falls outside the timeframe of this study. The same can be said for Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones, and thousands of other great White musicians.

Benny Goodman didn't feel good about his place in the White-owned and run record and broadcasting industries during the 1940's and 50's, neither did Dave Brubeck or Artie Shaw (Ward and Burns, 2000), but they felt compelled to participate in it and at least bring the music to more people and introduce them to Black artists. Other White musicians like Keith Richards, John Mayall, Jimmy Page, and Eric Clapton gave credit to their Black predecessors during the fourth wave of Black popular music during the 1960's; the first three big movements in the early part of jazz history being Ragtime, Dixieland, and Swing jazz. The White artists mentioned above, all emulated and promoted Black music styles and all of them shared the stage with the original artists after the marketplace had become more liberal-minded.[75]

Going back to the interwar period, it is easy to blame White jazz musicians for being complicit in maintaining and contributing to an unjust system, but many of these musicians were directly responsible for the development of a more equal social system in both countries and possibly even in France, Holland, England and Germany. Historically, music has been as good a way to achieve permanent social change as any ever conceived (Simons,209).

During the 1920's and thirties Montreal welcomed Black artists and dancers, but even before World War II the popularity of jazz had grown so much, that club owners only wanted White performers, and the only jobs left for Black people were as Pullman Porter or labourer, regardless of their education level (Gilmore, 1988, and Appendix 8.3.4). Before the war, only the top Black musicians from the jazz world appeared in film or on the radio, such as the Nicholas Brothers (dancers), Duke Ellington (jazz orchestra) and Louis Armstrong (big band Dixieland). In Canada, local radio broadcasts in major cities did feature some all-Black jazz bands, such as Mynie Sutton's Canadian Ambassadors and Millard Thomas' band before him (Appendix 8.1.4).

The jazz scene west of Ontario, in Calgary, Winnipeg, and Vancouver, were really swinging during the interwar period, with many Black bands from Canada and the US playing regularly, but this thesis does not focus on happenings west of Windsor, Ontario. After the war, there was a musician's strike in the recording industry because of differences in wage scale between musicians and vocalists.[76] By the mid-forties, White big band jazz orchestras such as those of Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, and Tommy Dorsey, promoted cults of personality with formulated images of handsome, clean-cut singers and dancers like Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Tony Bennet, and others. In the forties and fifties, often White orchestra's arrangements were done by people like Fletcher Henderson and Billy Strayhorn, Black arrangers from the New York scene (Ward and Burns, 2000). This was also the inception of the pop music industry which we would recognize today.

There was a flood of White players of traditional blues and jazz in the record and film industries of the 1930's and 40's, designed for the segregated, White record-buying public. This did not discourage North American Blacks from continuing the development of jazz and some of this creative activity was caught on film.[77] By the end of the 1930's, artists like Django Rheinhart, Charlie Christian, and Duke Ellington had raised the bar for all jazz musicians, foreshadowing the creation of bebop jazz in the next decade.

The swinging styles of Louis Jordan and Cab Calloway led the way for other Black artists in the lucrative White market, eventually leading to the Rock and Roll sound of Bill Haley's Comets, Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis. One thing that all the jazz musicians and dancers in the interwar period had in common was that they were always dressed impeccably, they carried themselves with dignity, and many were well-educated. Some musicians as important as Sidney Bechet, Wes Montgomery, and Bucky Adams were completely uneducated or didn't bother learning to read music.[78] Many were very religious, but in the early days, the "sports" or "sporting types" made it very plain that they preferred the nightlife and the underworld people and places.

5.8. POLITICAL CHANGES AND OTHER SOCIAL FACTORS IN THE JAZZ ERA

In 1896, a group of Southern civil rights activists chose Homer Plessy to challenge the segregated seating statutes on public transportation in New Orleans. He was a mixed-blood Negro who was so light-colored it was said that he would have to inform you that he was Black.[79] This group sent Plessy to sit on a segregated bus. This landmark case was intended to challenge the law and force the Supreme Court to defend equal rights for Blacks. Instead, the

exact opposite happened. In 1909, a full seventeen years later, the Louisiana Supreme Court ruled that segregated facilities that were separate but equal and did not violate the American Constitution, codifying Jim Crow Laws in the United States and influencing Canadian attitudes for decades. Soon, American and Canadian restrooms, schools, and theaters were segregated.

This ruling actually legalized racist practices for the next 50+ years in Canada and even longer in the United States. Civil rights activism in Canada after World War II can be linked to this progressive action taken by American Blacks before and during the interwar period in several forums: in the courts, in employment, in housing, education, criminal justice, and in entertainment. A case in point; in 1944 in Nova Scotia, "the Mississippi of the north,"[80] Carrie Best was roughed up and jailed after she took her son to a movie theatre in New Glasgow and sat in the Whites only section. This was the same theater that Viola Desmond was to make a stand in four years later (Backhouse, 1999). Ms. Best went on to publish a newspaper, *The Clarion*, and publicized the Desmond case as much as she could in order to raise awareness on issues of racism and equality.

Like Carrie Best, Viola was thrown in jail and manhandled by the police and the theatre manager. She then took the Nova Scotian government to court to challenge the statutes on segregation. She lost her case, but it is possible that Viola was sent to the Roseland Theatre in 1946 by her friends in order to force exactly such a decision in Nova Scotia. Viola Desmond was Canada's preeminent Black beautician at the time, with three successful businesses and some very influential Black friends in political circles. Portia White, the opera singer, was one of her customers and an old school chum. Portia's father was the pastor at the Cornwallis St. Baptist

Church in the 1920's, where she had started her singing career. Viola was also close friends with Dr. William Pearly Oliver, the pastor there during the 1940's, and his wife, Pearleen. In 1945, the Olivers started the Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NSAACP.[81] That organization payed for the legal fees incurred in her case. Viola's social standing, wealth, and self-assuredness, combined with the fact that she was also very light-skinned, petit, and lady-like, were exactly the qualifications an equal rights group would choose to point out the inequalities in the law. The Southern activists had done the same thing with Homer Plessy in New Orleans and obtained the same result. But Viola was not your average hairdresser; she knew the law well.

During the second war, Black entertainers on both sides of the border were everywhere, performing for the troops, the public, and the camera in every field of public and published media. Athletes, poets and writers, playwrights, dancers, choreographers, and costume designers benefitted from all the travelling soldiers and nightlife, even beauticians. Times were still hard for Canadian Blacks, but for the time being, Viola was content as her businesses grew in the 1940's. During World War Two, everyone dressed snappily, and some had disposable income. The women made sure to look their best when they went dancing every weekend; in this context, Viola's confidence grew.

This sense of competence, entitlement, and a lack of fear are sentiments that grew out of Black peoples' place in the entertainment industries and women's new role in the war machine as needed competent workers. After World War II, an air of non-compliance and public resistance to anti-Black discriminatory practices permeated North American Black

culture. Canadian Black peoples' legacy in the sports hall of fame, and their presence as jazz performers and innovators made an international impact, even before Oscar Peterson was born. Viola and her husband would have been the cream of the crop in the jazz world in Halifax, not as musicians, but as local celebrities.

Jack Desmond was a dance champion during the 1940's, so it's only reasonable to assume that Viola was his partner, although they seemed to have a distant relationship, so that cannot be confirmed yet. His family, the Desmond's, had owned barbershops in Halifax for generations (Reynolds and Robson, 2018). Jack was from New Glasgow, and he knew of the racism in that town, but he disapproved of Viola's independence and bravado. Her actions in 1946 may have caused the break-up of their marriage in 1953, as there was no reconciling the differences between their two positions on racism. Soon after, the childless Viola left her husband in Halifax and moved to New York City and took up work as a cigarette girl at a club in Harlem (Backhouse, 1999). Her drive to diversify, stand up for Black rights, self-educate, challenge the establishment, and travel for work, all sound eerily reminiscent of the life of an itinerant musician or performer during the interwar years. Cy McLean was driven to challenge the musician's union in Toronto in 1944 and won, with the support of the White audience in Toronto (Appendix 9.2.3).

I believe it was the more visible challenges to White privilege that gave Blacks the confidence and strength to challenge the status quo. Images of successful, defiant Black professionals started to become more numerous by the 1930's in the media, on film, records, and stage, on the radio, in business and in public office (Supplemental Video). Civil rights

challenges levelled at Canadian courts started to take place in the mid-forties with Viola Desmond's case and others across the east. It would be almost a decade before similar work was done in the American south by Rosa Parks (Boyd, 2006). It is significant that Blacks in the US were permitted into musician's unions decades before this was allowed in Canada. This is a result of their greater numbers and greater lobbying power, as Robin Winks has pointed out in *The Blacks in Canada* (1997). In Canada, as White musicians took on the new music form, Blacks were no longer needed to entertain White audiences (Miller, 1997, and Appendix 8.3.4).

The 1920's brought equal rights struggles, labour movements and political unrest to every continent. Colonized peoples were resisting subjugation and inciting global riots, demonstrations, and guerrilla warfare across the globe. The struggles led by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa and India is a case in point. Gandhi attended university in South Africa and became a practicing lawyer there by 1917. He was in support of equal pay and treatment for his Indian brethren in South African society. He organized several protest marches and strikes which landed him in prison for two years (Gandhi, et al. 1960). Upon his release in 1922 he returned to India. Back home, he began organizing the poor and by using the principles of non-violent civil disobedience, he and the Indian people pressured the British government into allowing India to be a self-ruling nation. His example of self-sacrifice and determination was a message to all brown-skinned peoples of the world to fight the racist establishment and organize for self-rule and international recognition. Gandhi's humanitarian principles would eventually lead to the creation of the United Nations in 1945.[82]

As mentioned previously, the KKKK was more active in Canada during the 1920's but did not lynch or kill Canadian Blacks outright, although there were cross burnings, riots, kidnappings, and the destruction of Black properties in the east.[83] The small Black populations in Canada were almost helpless to stop angry Whites from lashing out at them at the time because of the systemic racism in eastern Canadian courts and police policies (Walker, 1997) The importance of UNIA halls as a meeting place, community center, learning establishment and arts collective for Blacks in Canadian society cannot be understated. In his book, *The Blacks in Canada*, Robin Winks has pointed out a lack of organization in Black Canadian society but has not compared our practical freedoms and milestones to those of other countries in the diaspora with similar sized Black populations and standards of living, such as Germany, Holland, or France (Edugyan, 209, for stories from mixed blood Europeans). A steadfast researcher would find that Black Canadians have a rich history of struggle, resistance, and resilience.

In the past, Black Canadians' resentment over their historical role in our society has varied from city to city and has mutated with the times and from place to place. For example, people in Southern Ontario from the city will tell you that racism is practically irrelevant in today's urban climate, but those from the country would disagree (Holness and Sutherland, 2000). Cy McLean comments on a few aspects of Canadian racism versus American-style racism in this interview:

> "People here aren't like they are in the United States. I've never wanted to go down there for that reason." ("Moonlight Bandleader," 1962, Appendix 9.2.4).

Ann North remembers one incident involving Mynie Sutton in Niagara after the second war:

> Ann: … and uhm, we were going out and they had a band and we were going out to hear the band and have dinner… and remember, well I made the reservations, and we walked in and I think when they saw Mynie was colored, I told them what table we wanted, and they said, well that's not available, and I said oh yes it is.
>
> Wade: Uhm hm.
>
> Ann: … and I said that's where we're going to sit.
>
> Wilma: I used to have friends like that. (Transcript 9D).

Cy McLean's bandmember, guitarist Willy Wright, remembers a rural town in Ontario they played in during the Lever Bros. tour in 1946:

> "People would line up to peer through the restaurant window to watch us eat. They had actually never seen Blacks before," referring to the curiosity, not hostility of the locals.

On the same tour, Syd Blackwood, Cy's saxophonist noted:

> "We never encountered any discrimination that was harmful." (Miller, 1997, 176).

But in nearby Priceville, a Black man reported:

> "There was what you call 'an imaginary boundary line' that was handed down. If you go by so-and-so, you're going to feel sorry that you did. You had to be careful when you went out that way because they just didn't want us out there."

Another Black resident of Priceville during the interwar period said:

> "They'd just be chased out or told … they were just told face to face, 'you can't come here.'" (Holness and Sutherland, 2000).

In interwar Toronto, when it came to the big-name acts, Blacks weren't allowed to enter the main clubs. Here's the testimony of one Duke Ellington fan in Toronto during the 40's:

> "What really hurt is that while I was arguing with the man that we had every right to go in and that my money was as good as everyone else's, a drunk stinking of vomit was let through the door after making a mess of himself in the parking lot." (Miller, M. 1997, 150).

And then Archie Alleyne says in *Tuning Up*, a Toronto TV show (2014) that:

> "Blacks didn't come downtown because they didn't feel welcome." (Supplemental Video).

Maybe that's because they weren't.

At the end of the interwar period, activists in Nova Scotia, such as Dr. William Pearly Oliver and his wife, Pearleen and their friend, activist and publisher, Carrie Best, were some of the most vocal Black activists in Canada, but international political and social movements of the period added strain to the government's already overtaxed resources and the public's attention. It took years until legislation was to change in fair education laws, safe employment practices, better housing for the poor, and environmental accountability.[84] What occurred in Africville, Priceville, Storyville, Tulsa, and District Six, are good examples of how poor Blacks were neglected and ostracized in North America, and often the wealthiest Blacks were targeted for violence and vandalism in both countries. In 1929, the stock market had crashed. This had a devastating effect on the economy and society. Alcohol and many recreational and pharmaceutical drugs were prohibited; there was mass unemployment, poverty, homelessness and new infectious diseases were spreading around the globe.

There was a great military buildup happening in Western Europe and Asia and several ethnic genocides were taking place.[85] After the war, every country was rebuilding their transportation, communications and electrical infrastructure. Drought attacked the mid-west of North America, and southern sharecroppers were on the move north in great numbers. With these migrants came hope, new traditions, and a willingness to try anything. This was not like the Underground Railroad a hundred years earlier. During the interwar period, it was the

transcontinental cultural express train, built on exploration, exploitation, and mass production. Historians have dubbed this period as “The Great Migration.” (Trotter, 1991).

The most popular entertainer in the world during the interwar period was Charlie Chaplin, the little hobo, or perhaps it was Harry Houdini, the eastern European illusionist who died as a result of a blow to the stomach he had gotten at a performance in Montreal in 1932.[86] Both Chaplin and Houdini exhibit characteristics of the underdog in American society which people loved to watch during the Depression. Film and live performance were just starting to develop mass media and marketing techniques, so that people in Nova Scotia began to see the same acts as those in California and Michigan. This was also the heyday of Pantages Vaudeville theatres and Barnum and Bailey’s Travelling Circus, which provided many Black performers with jobs during the Depression, even as jazz was becoming more mainstream in society and the second war drew nearer. Just before World War II started, White club owners in Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia began to shun Black talent. This was most noticeable in Montreal, where all the best and busiest clubs in St. Antoine had always employed Black performers before (Gilmore, 1988, 165).

Powerless to stop it, many Black families lost their properties and savings during The Great Depression, sometimes through dishonest dealings with legal firms (as in the case of Viola Desmond’s parents), sometimes because of bank collapses, but most often because there was no more work. Knowing the law was often one’s only way to fight the systemic racism in Canadian and American institutions.

5.9. THE HIGH COST OF TOURING: THE DESTABILIZATION OF FAMILIES

As the second war drew near, in Capetown's District Six, Halifax's Africville, Montreal's Little Burgundy, New York City's Harlem, Sydney's Cokeville, etc … alcoholism, delinquency, poverty, prostitution, crime, drug addiction and insufficient services prevailed, but these did not stop the communities from functioning. Through the assistance of many benevolent societies and churches, the poor were somehow clothed, fed, educated, and housed. The Black Cross nurses from the UNIA was one organization among many in Whitney Pier that were helpful to young West Indian mothers who were ailing during the Depression. A Black West Indian immigrant from this time remembers: "People mingled together in Canada, not like in Barbados, where the class lines were very well-defined." (Braithewaite, 1993). Since 1985 there has been a Toronto-Sydney reunion and a Caribbean festival in the St. Philips African Orthodox churchyard; the same yard Cy and Reggie McLean had played in as children (Appendix 8.4.4).

During the Great Depression, when men had to travel great distances in order to find work, many would have picked up musical knowledge from the northern states and other Canadian cities and brought it home. If they were musicians, they could either emulate the new sound, or if they were not, they could at least play the record they had just bought for their friends and family, spreading new jazz trends across the nation quickly and easily. Some of these Black travelling workers never returned to their homes and families though, and their children grew up without fathers, an education, or government support. They might even have a family on both ends of the route, connecting Black culture and forging identity from coast to coast. In the end, many Black children could only count on their mothers, benevolent societies,

and extended family and friends to make ends meet. In general, fathers were absent. Wilma Morrison expressed it eloquently; “we couldn’t afford daddy.” (Adewumi, 2016). This social factor of departing daddies in Black kinship relations was evident on both sides of the Atlantic and in both hemispheres for many generations before and after the interwar period.[87]

When travelling, if Black musicians couldn’t find a local Black family to house them, they had to sleep in their own vehicles while they were in a new town. Many Black performers would spend ten months a year or more on tour, and they started at an early age, sometimes a mere six or seven years old. Michael Jackson started at that age, so did Sammy Davis Jr. (Feather and Gitler, 2007) and vaudeville pianist Bobby Short (*Vaudeville* [Film], 1997). While touring, being able to signify on all the tropes of the region you’re performing in is essential to success, so the need for migration brings transculturation, and the Black Press, the touring musicians and all the travelling workers bring information from afar that encourages migration. It helps if you can play an Italian song at an Italian wedding. Here is a quote from my Supplemental Video and Transcript 9D:

> Rod: And ah, we had the badminton club the golf club …
> Wilma: They were fancy.
> Rod: Yeah.
> Wilma: They were really fixed up.
> Rod: And we played … like, weddings and you'd have to play polkas, waltzes …
> Wade: Yeah.
> Rod: You played everything.
> Wade: Yeah, you were playing to a crowd. You never knew what they would want to hear.

Rod: We'd play an Italian wedding, and Mynie would try and make sure we had a couple of Italian … what are they called? There's a special name for them, I can't remember what it was.
Ann: Ellises?
Rod: It's like a Polka but that's not what it's called.
Wilma: That was half of Niagara Falls
Everyone: Hahaha.

Black communities within the diaspora had much more in common with each other than poor building conditions. Just like in Black ghettos in the US today, if you couldn't afford to go to college, one of the only ways out of the housing projects for people without financial means was through sports, music, crime, or marriage. The very last option was as railway porter. Actually, the job of shoeshine boy was one's last resort, but most people just worked at the steel plant, coal mine or wherever they would hire a Black person. Many of the musicians and dancers mentioned in this thesis chose to stay in their Canadian hometowns but began their careers as touring musicians during the interwar period. The conditions and pay probably did not make it worthwhile during the Great Depression, but many toured anyways, because it was less demeaning and physically demanding than general labour, and being a performer was more creative and offered more opportunity. A byproduct of all this travel was that people in the outer reaches also got to hear early Black jazz music by live musicians. White and Black kids alike were drawn to the jazz life in the big city during this period. Somehow, an all-Black band that Reggie McLean knew from Toronto was playing in Sydney, and that's where Cy got his start at sixteen years old. Who that band was and why they were there is unknown to history. (Thomas, 1962, and Appendix 8.2.3)

5.12. JAZZ AS FREEDOM FROM OPPRESSION AND SEGREGATION

Jazz and Blues music performance can be considered transculturation *in action,* in the way it combines a variety of musical influences: quoting songs and styles from other countries; signifying on other musicians and genres, stretching notes to emulate the human voice; borrowing songwriting methods from church spirituals and slave songs; adding syncopation and humor to performances, and breaking the rules of polite society and traditional Western music composition. Then as now, every time jazz music is performed, the musicians are negotiating a unique discourse; learning from and adapting to each individuals' tastes and tempo; finding their own place in a complicated musical construction and attempting to express a universal truth, or at least a personal one.

A good example of the transculturation in Black music and how it can spark invention is the career of iconic Blues guitarist, Robert Johnson. During the 1930's he would usually be found at a party, playing on a borrowed guitar, with a borrowed girlfriend and drink, invited by a friend, and then be gone in the morning (Levey, 2003). This sounds familiar because it is the essence of the iconic, self-sacrificial blues or jazzman, as it is marketed to the public (Supplemental Video). A similar life was lived by the so-called inventor of jazz, Buddy Bolden, who ended his days in an insane asylum in 1907, Fats Waller, who drank, ate, and smoked his way to an early grave, and Charlie Parker, the heroin addict and originator of Bebop jazz, and many others. Live fast and die young.[88] Jazz, Rock, and Blues music may sometimes seem to sound chaotic, but they do follow certain rules of engagement that employ intuition and skill to create something beautiful and unique, using a blues, jazz or European folk music

compositional structure. To the astute listener, each performance reveals traces of the musicians' influences and where they came from, much like the relationship between Black American Soul food, South African cuisine, Caribbean cooking, and Cajun food.[89] Another example is Black women's hair fashions, which seem to spread like wildfire throughout the trans-Atlantic Black diaspora by word of mouth alone and can sometimes reveal where a woman gets her influences and taste from.

Blacks in Canada were and are physically connected to each other and their home countries through shipping industries, railway lines, telephones, highways, and in modern times, airports, and the internet. Socially, they were also connected through the film, radio and record industries, as well as the many travelling minstrel troops and circuses, and the vaudeville theatre circuit, all of which employed Blacks as performers (Abbott, and Seroff, 2012). In addition, the Black-owned newspapers in Canada and the US contributed greatly to the broad-ranging communication between Blacks, as did the travelling Black hockey and baseball teams during the interwar period.[90]

Jazz was the gateway to integration for Blacks and Whites around the world. North American Black soldiers were very popular in France as dance partners, and Black musicians were equally desired in Montreal as sexual partners (Miller, 1997, 147) Although the power of the Black Church held a lot of influence over young Black girls, the lure to dance was even stronger during the Jazz Age. Popular dance champions like Jack Desmond in Halifax would have been the local heart throbs, and long-forgotten musicians like Les and Johnny Adams, who were in their sixties during the 1960's, were considered local celebrities in Halifax.[91] Black

people would typically go dancing at least once a week somewhere, maybe even attending an after-hours or Sunday morning jam session with visiting musicians at the local UNIA hall. White jazz men developed the same lifestyle during this period.

The Nova Scotia Gleaner (of which only one issue remains) was a Sydney Black newspaper from 1929 which announces the election of Cy Mclean's father as new president of the Sydney chapter of the UNIA. The exact location of the original hall has been forgotten by locals, but it was on Lingan Rd., near to the Mission Dover. See Appendix 8.4.3 for a map of Cokeville, in Whitney Pier, from Beaton, E. "*An African-American Community in Cape Breton, 1901-1904*" (1995). Mission Dover is also described as an educational facility for minorities during the 1910's. Contained in the full edition are reports of many jazz performances. There are reports of Black barristers in Sydney, Black businesses, and horn players with family names that still come up in discussions about Black musicians today in Glace Bay, New Waterford, and the area surrounding Sydney; names like Paris, Harris, Allen, Rouett, Nickols, Adams, and Pyle. This edition even reports on the Ancient Order of Forresters, to which George Mclean also belonged, and Portia White, when she was attending business college in Halifax (*The Nova Scotia Gleaner*, 1929, 6). Also see Appendix 8.4.7 for page three of the paper, which discusses George McLean's election victory and lists a few of the musicians named above. My Supplemental Video and Transcript 9F contain excerpts of my interview with "Red" Mike MacDonald about the jam sessions and dances at the Menelik Hall in the 40's and fifties.

Jazz and Fashion

By the 1940's formal dress was the trend. Male dancers were cleanly shaven with their hair greased and heavily stylized into a 'ducktail' haircut.[92] They wore well-pressed, custom-tailored suits which started out close-fitting in the 20's, and gradually became baggy in the forties; the infamous "zoot suit," and then returned to slim cuts again in the early sixties.[93] From the late thirties to the 1940's some zoot suits were custom made, with hidden pockets for liquor and reefer (cannabis, which was always popular with the jazz and blues crowd[94]), and they were worn with long, sporting pocket watch chains and shiny two-tone pointed shoes. The fabrics used in the men's ties were exquisite; silk embroidered, Art Deco masterpieces with geometrical patterns, brilliant dyes and metallic threading. Handkerchiefs were monogramed, hair was short, oiled and straight, except for the bad boys, like Cab Calloway, who insisted on one long, flowing lock across his forehead to swing around for effect.[95]

The women had to have their hair and nails done to go out dancing. The short skirts and dresses of the liberated Flapper era changed into the longer, more conservative hemline of the thirties, with long, flaring skirts that showed their fancy underwear when they were tossed into the air while dancing (Supplemental Video). In my training as a fashion designer, I have learned that the length of women's hemlines usually drops with the economy and rises with prosperity, it is called the Hemline Index (Gilbert, 2017). So, the longer skirts of the Great Depression correlate with the sagging economy of the day, and the shorter, flaring skirts of the post WWII era reflect the prosperity America was experiencing after the war, which only increased. This fact seems to correlate with the great epochs of popular jazz, as well. As Western society

arrived at the post-nuclear age in the 1960's, with mini-skirts and bikinis, (named after Bikini Atoll, an American nuclear test site), there was no shorter skirt to make, so complete nudity has become more of a thing today on the internet, movies, and in subliminal television images and advertising.[96]

The use of technology is commonplace in jazz music today. Racially integrated bands are the norm, now. Pick a style, they all have followings. American guitarist Brian Setzer tries to maintain the style and tempo of the interwar Big band Era, leading with a 1940's-style semi-acoustic electric guitar and playing 1950's-style Rock-a-Billy swing (or Boogie-woogie) with a 25-piece orchestra, complete with the syncopated dance moves in the horn section, and the Lindy Hoppers ("Jitterbuggers" in later days) dancing in front of the stage (Brian Setzer Orchestra, 2020). There are ten dozen blues and jazz artists that I could have mentioned here, but The Brian Setzer Orchestra has the right ethos. His presentation has a style that originates in the 1930's, was revived in the 1950's, and then again in the 1980's, in my generation, under a new name. Rock-a-Billy is cross-referenced into Blues and Country through Boogie-woogie, which is yet another category of Jazz, and a Rock category, as well.

During the interwar period, the members of big bands would perform simple dance routines that added a spark to the floorshow. Soloists would walk across the dancefloor, interacting with the dancers while they played. Today, they have started doing the same, using advanced technology. Horn players in the 30's and 40's used to syncopate their arm flares and movements, in the fashion of King Oliver (Feather and Gitler, 2007) earlier in the century. During the 1970's, in the song "Midnight Train to Georgia, (1973. Video link in bibliography), the

Pips are imitating in 1973 what Black jazz horn sections had been doing since 1917 with the original Black groups coming out of New Orleans. One can hear the orchestration that Ellington and Blake had developed in the 1930's mixed with Southern Gospel elements, vocal harmonies from the Ink Spots in the late thirties, simple Rhumba rhythm, coming out of the West Indies, violins from the symphony, and 1940's Chicago electric guitars (Feather and Gitler, 2007).

White dancers enjoyed going to the Black clubs, such as Harlem's Savoy Ballroom and Montreal's Rockhead's Paradise, to see the newest dance moves created by the Black community. This is where the trends always came from. Often a new song would inspire someone to create a new dance. These trends happened so fast you couldn't wait for a movie to come out featuring the new dance, you had to go to a Black club, no matter which North American city you lived in, because you could count on the local Blacks to know what was "hip."

May use myself as an example of how quickly and easily new dance trends can cross borders through the grapevine and through transculturation? As a pre-teen in St, Catharines, I had heard of Breakdancing and Electric Boogie in southern Ontario long before I saw it in a movie. In fact, I had already taught my gym class the Hustle (another club dance associated with Disco music five years earlier) and various other Club Dances by 1978, and had played every festival, parade, under-age club and contest in Niagara, Toronto, and Buffalo regions by 1983. I was a paid professional Breakdancer and instructor by the time the film "Beat Street'" came out in 1984. That year I was teaching young White kids and old ladies how to Moonwalk at a fitness and dance studio in St, Catharines, and it was the very year of Michael Jackson's landmark "Billy Jean" performance on the Grammy Awards. I learned the new dance three

years before Jackson publicized and immortalized the Moonwalk on television, and by that time I knew three different ways of Moonwalking. This was in no small part due to my sister's boyfriend and my dance teammate, Danny Bogle, a Jamaican-American from New York City.

During the interwar period, the language of hipsters started to change with the idiosyncrasies of Black jazz musicians. People loved the way Louis Armstrong spoke. He used to call ladies *birds* and men *cats,* and addressed them as "man," which everyone, Black and White used to emulate (Ward and Burns, 2000). He was an avid Marijuana smoker as well, and terms like reefer, weed and getting high, also come from this period.[97] Black men used to straighten their hair with hair pomade, like Duke Ellington and James Brown did. Blacks who were very dark, with thick lips and very kinky hair, like Louis Armstrong, could not get away with this look, so he is considered one of the first advocates for Black pride, because, although he started off waxing his hair, in later years, he left his hair as it was; kinky. Even after he became famous, he still spoke and sang with a Louisiana street drawl, and even dressed in Blackface (the traditional costume) for the 1949 Mardi Gras Parade of the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club in New Orleans, where he was named king of the parade, his lifelong dream, much to the disdain of liberal Black Americans (Smith, 2013, and Ward and Burns, 2000). After the much-publicized event, he was heavily criticized by more modern Blacks for playing the "Uncle Tom" role to White audiences and the media, but actually, Louis was embracing the cultural norms of his hometown and generation. It was the northern Blacks that didn't understand his gesture to the legacy of Jazz heroes and to New Orleans culture itself.

Those cultural norms were to change rapidly in Armstrong's lifetime. Swing jazz replaced the Dixieland of his generation, which by the 1930's sounded to the modern ear more like Ragtime, an embarrassing relic of a past life of even more inequality. Orchestral, arranged jazz came next, with Fletcher Henderson and Duke Ellington in New York City. Count Basie, Chick Webb, Louis Jordan and Cab Calloway made the next young generation do the Lindy Hop, then White bands like Benny Goodman's and Tommy Dorsey's cleaned up the improvisational style of Webb and Jordan, calling their style Big Band jazz. This, in turn, was resisted by the next generation of Black innovators. The smooth, stomping style of Kansas City that Count Basie had started back in the mid-thirties was replaced by the frenetic, over-educated *Bebop* sound created by saxophonist Charlie Parker during the forties (Feather and Gitler, 2007). Both came out of Kansas City, but a decade apart.

Rapid changes in culture and in people's methodology were occurring during the Jazz Era. By the end of the second war, Black influence had increased in the media and in legislation; Jazz music's popularity, influence, and profitability had gained ground; the public's, the union's, and the record industry's support had also improved; gender roles in media and legislation had changed because women now had self-supporting incomes; political rebels and advocates for equality in Canada and abroad came to the forefront; media exposure and propaganda for and against Black culture increased with the equal rights struggles in the south and the Nation of Islam and Malcolm X; and timely improvements in technology and free access to culture and information through radio, newsprint, and film, were all part of the new normal by 1945. Black Canadians had those features of daily life in common with Black Americans, West Indians,

British, African, and who knows who else? There is a film clip of a child from India dancing Electric Boogie like a pro just a few years after *Beat Street* came out (Supplemental video).

The individualistic jazz styles that followed after *Bebop* are too numerous to name in this thesis, but some notable mentions during the interwar period are Gypsy Jazz from Django Rheinhart in Belgium; Sweet Jazz, exemplified by Earl Hines in New York, and *Bebop* jazz, developed in New York by Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, who figured out the math behind Parker's rantings and wrote it down, taking care to teach it to the next three generations of jazzmen. An influence of Gillespie's, Arturo Sandoval, brought Cuban jazz to America in the 1930's, while Charlie Christian, who was self-taught and didn't read music, was charged with backing up these giants in a time when jazz and the electric guitar were brand-new (chalk up another point for us self-taught, by-ear players).[98] Billie Holiday, who also exemplified the era, created her own unschooled way of singing that captivated generations of listeners, incorporating and encapsulating all the memories of American Black music history and signifying on its historical traditions up to that point. Sometimes she is painful to listen to, as in "Strange Fruit," other performances, like her "Now Baby or Never" with Count Basie, in my video, are joyous (Supplemental Video).

From the 1930's to the 1960's Black and White dancers were often separated at dances by the authorities or by management, but the dancers themselves were not usually so repressed. Unofficial or underground performances, such as those at UNIA halls, were important places for young mixed couples to meet and dance in Canada. They were also the sites of integrated jam sessions for decades, long before and after jazz was adopted by the

mainstream public. In general, until the 1950's, Blacks weren't allowed in White clubs as customers, but Whites were usually allowed in Black establishments, if they were lucky enough to find one in an eastern Canadian city. Many people got fed up with the rural lifestyle that they had been living prior to the war; they wanted to be modern, city people. Adventurous Blacks gravitated to the cities of the north to escape Jim Crowism and sharecropping in the south. They moved to Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit, Edmonton, St. Louis, Windsor, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax; places where there were industry, nightlife and more Black people, and perhaps a job they could stomach (Trotter, 1991).

The Lindy Hop became the dance of the nation during the 1930's and only increased in popularity until the mid-1950's. Like the music, the Lindy Hop mutated into the Jitterbug and then simply "Swing Dancing," as it is still called today. Originally, it was the "street" or "club" version of more studied professional dance techniques taken from Tap and Ballroom dancing moves (see Supplemental Video). I remember from my Ballroom dance training, that the Lindy Hop, or Swing Dancing, grew out of the Foxtrot, developed in the 1910's; they employ similar timing and weight transference techniques, but the Hop is danced to a faster rhythm. Many early jazz songs were Foxtrots (Spring, 1997, and Hancock, 2008). Professionals, such as the Harlem Lindy Hoppers, the New York City Breakers, the California Lockers, the Nicholas Brothers and the Berry Brothers took moves from Native African and American dancing; from Chinese and Brazilian martial arts; and from minstrel and circus clowning. All these influences made an impact on transculturated Black dancers from Rio to Missouri and from Windsor, Ontario to Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Street dancing is always more athletic and innovative than

stage performing. Just as “Electric Boogie” came out of “Locking” and “The Robot”, eventually the street version became named “Breakdancing,” today’s catch-all term.[99] I was a part of that generation, and we owe a lot to Black jazz scenes from coast to coast, as the supplemental video will show.

5.13. SHOULD I STAY OR GO: SURVIVING THE DEPRESSION

Jazz music and culture had an influence on average citizens after World War I, not least because of the cultural experience that the soldiers had and brought home with them, but also because of the outspokenness of the sexually liberated women of the Western nations during the 1920’s called, “Flappers,” They were fearless, educated, sophisticated, and the equal of any man. Some women, like Josephine Baker, used their sexuality to become very wealthy. Just as socialism and communism was starting to gain a foothold in Europe, jazz musicians, especially Black ones, were starting to be welcomed overseas. Josephine Baker became the darling of Paris in the 1920’s by doing a slapstick dance and comedy routine reminiscent of minstrelsy and the glittering Cotton Club floorshows in Harlem. Eventually, this act turned into a song and dance revue reminiscent of the Zeigfield Follies in New York (Rosenberg, 1999). Baker adopted many trans-Atlantic brown children which she raised as a single mother. In current times, actress Angelina Jolie has emulated Josephine Baker in this regard.[100] During the 20’s and thirties Montreal was booming with Black talent and Canadians contributed on both sides of the border, although you would never know this by just following jazz history in the documentation and in the media.

As I conclude this thesis, I want to revisit the conditions that created jazz in the Eastern parts of Canada during the interwar period. Beginning in the 1900's and continuing on into the sixties; for whatever reason and under various immigration conditions; thousands of Blacks from the West Indies, the American south, South America, and Africa moved to Canada and the United States to try to find work in the heavy industries and in education. They found work in the slaughterhouses of Chicago, the steel mills of Hamilton, Pittsburgh and Sydney, the rail companies in both countries, and the auto plants and dry docks of Detroit and St. Catharines (Beaton, 1995). Jazz clubs in Montreal flourished during the Prohibition era. Many American Blacks sought refuge in Canada because of the widespread lynchings that were still going on in the US, but very few Blacks actually immigrated to Canada permanently, given that Canada had immigration restrictions against Black people during the interwar period.

Before 1918, Canada welcomed travelling Black jazz artists, but by 1939 Canadian Blacks were shut out everywhere, even in Montreal. When Jazz music became so popular that there was a fortune to be made in Black music, record companies and radio stations rejuvenated their previous racist attitudes and maintained a segregated stage and dancefloor. Within a few short years, White artists started insisting that Black musicians be heard. We are now more aware of our missing history because of these, and my own actions to preserve the memory of eastern Canadian Black jazz scenes of the interwar period.

CHAPTER 6: RESULTS OF THE DATA

Many migrating Blacks chose to become Canadians rather than Americans when they came to the continent. Now that they are Canadians, many prefer to stay in Canada rather than succumb to the lure of big American paychecks. Our racism problems are manageable compared to theirs, and many Canadian Blacks today do not feel comfortable in the United States anymore, especially with their loose gun laws, institutionalized racism, and outrageously-priced healthcare system, not mention their ongoing conflict with Muslim freedom fighters in the Middle East. Suffice it to say that Canada is still troubled by these issues of anti-Black racism, as is the rest of the world, but none as badly as the United States.

For this thesis, I conducted screening interviews with no less than four older gentlemen in Halifax and Niagara who either admitted that they remembered nothing, weren't living near an urban center during the 1930's, or just weren't interested in participating for personal reasons. One elderly Black man in St. Catharines was raised in Alabama during the Great Depression. He declined because his memory of that time and place is unpleasant, presumably because of racism. Others just failed to schedule an appointment in time for this work or made appointments and just cancelled them for no particular reason. It is possible that these older Black men were reluctant to remember a painful time in their lives and that discussing jazz will not erase the trauma of the past or bring back loved ones. The obstacles I encountered with the men were: their refusal to participate because of emotional discomfort; their failure to make an appointment during the research period after agreeing to be interviewed; their inability to

remember anything of importance; a lack of interest in the subject matter; and the complete lack of exposure to Black urban jazz scenes because of their strict religious and rural upbringing.

Many Black communities in the east were in small farming towns, and Blacks there did not take to jazz music until it was fully accepted by mainstream White audiences in the 1940's, especially in the Maritime provinces where Black country musicians had gained some notoriety at this time. The women I interviewed remembered the Jazz Era with more positive feelings and some had even been jazz performers. We can compare these men's conservatism and their reticence to participate in this study to the women's optimistic participation in the new music scene. The women generally had fond memories of the period and the men were ambivalent. Anthropologist Arthur Huff Fauset researched Nova Scotian Black folk cultures in 1923 and found no remnant of African folk ways or music to speak of, although there was a strong country music influence (Rosenberg, 1988, 141).

To extrapolate further on some of the deeper truths about life during the interwar period for Black Canadians in the east, Black men in rural areas could not afford to be too flashy or sporting in front of their White neighbors out of fear of violent reprisals. These hard-working religious men would have seen the sporting jazz lifestyle as corrupting, decadent, and more than a little undignified. Their hard-won community respect and cautious manners tell a different story of self-actualization, that of Black Canadian men's ongoing struggle for dignity and social acceptance in an unequal society. The elderly Black women I interviewed found the jazz scene very exciting and slightly taboo during the interwar period, much like the teenage girls during the rock and roll and hip-hop eras did, and still do.

Another conclusion we can draw from the various responses I received from the Black seniors I approached in Halifax Black neighborhoods is that they are not responsive to local advertisements for presentations on Canadian Black jazz history at the library. Black seniors go to these libraries, I saw them there. I can only speculate that their interest in Black jazz history is less important than current events, or that they are very busy with life responsibilities and health concerns. This was not the case in Cape Breton. I cannot help but notice that most Black youth in Nova Scotia today are uninterested in jazz education. By contrast, in southern Ontario, I have an 18-year-old niece who plays saxophone and trombone in several community and school jazz orchestras and has a full scholarship at Western University in southern Ontario for music education on the piano (Appendix 9.8.4). Her father is a Black factory worker from Tonawanda, New York and neither he nor my sister plays an instrument. I point this out to illustrate the value of migration, education, and transculturation. The possible reasons why these ethics are important to Black people in Canada are discussed throughout this thesis.

There were many Black jazz bands in Toronto and Montreal during the interwar period which are not mentioned in this thesis. For a more complete accounting of the all-Black jazz bands during this era see my two main reference books, *Such Melodious Racket* and *Swinging in Paradise,* which can be found in the bibliography. Other eastern Canadian cities with Black populations, such as in Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and elsewhere in Quebec and Ontario have not been represented in this work for reasons of limited time and resources.

Although every Black community east of Kenora, Ontario cannot be explored here, a fair cross-section of Black musicians, dancers, workers, young and old people, activists, athletes,

and businesspeople from the interwar period have been represented fairly here, in this study. The people who have been interviewed for this thesis are intended to be a representative group of participants from the interwar period who experienced jazz culture, racism, and transculturation in eastern Canadian Black society during this time period, and not the opinion of an entire group, anywhere. There are certain musical elements found everywhere throughout the trans-Atlantic diaspora countries which demonstrate that jazz culture was a gateway phenomenon that led to greater freedoms for all its participants. Cuban jazz, for instance, which helped Arturo Sandoval defect from Cuba, with the help of Dizzy Gillespie, and New Orleans Dixieland, which is still popular more than one hundred years later.

The significance of this research is that students, scholars and civilians alike can now be made more aware of the efforts and contributions made by great Black Canadians in jazz history during the interwar period and afterwards, a time when Black lives did not matter in Canada. There is barely a record left of the jazz artists in the interwar eastern Canadian Black communities, and our knowledge of that period is now a little more colourful and nuanced. The story of jazz culture in eastern Canada is just one of many throughout our history that details the strength and character of Black Canadians. Moreover, the impact of jazz and jazz culture can still be felt one hundred years later, and its influence can be heard in every type of modern music. Every informed person on this continent today will know who Pop vocalist, Drake, is.[101] We live in a mass communication world that makes that possible, but 100 years ago Drake would not have been given the chance to be heard internationally if he had only stayed in

Canada, because he is Black. Like Oscar Peterson and many others, he made his fortune and his name in the US. Our two nations' histories and societies are intrinsically intertwined.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

The importance of jazz music in Black Canadian society is fading quickly as new music forms are created and regurgitated for the pop music industry. Jazz is no longer pop music, but it was the first music form that benefitted from global multimedia marketing. Music writers and historians have noted that today, jazz music and culture is maintained primarily by White listeners and musicians.[102] The same can be said for other Black music inventions after the interwar period, such as traditional blues, rock and roll, disco, and especially hip-hop music, which is dominated today by sales world-wide to White teenagers.[103] Hip-hop has become the music of the oppressed city dweller, but as mentioned, White kids in the suburbs, towns and the countryside are some of the principal consumers of hip-hop culture (music, dance, fashion, and iconography). They buy the same fashions, they cut their hair similarly, dance like the celebrities, talk like them, and drive what they drive and drink what they drink. Swing jazz was the first Black music form that was adopted by White teenagers, globally, and whose hip language and style of dress became an irresistible movement. Many more fashion and music trends from the Black music scene in North America were to come by the century's end. That is the impact that music can have on society. One does not have to be a musician or dancer to be affected by jazz music or jazz culture.

The concepts of Fernando Ortiz might hold a new appeal to Canadian Blacks today for various reasons. Toronto is proud of its multi-ethnicity and variety of music, art, fashion and food. Montrealers would say the same about their fair city, but they would say theirs is better (a little healthy sibling rivalry). Halifax has now recently embraced the flow of foreign students

coming to their city, and many of them stay and open businesses and build new houses. This is exactly what the slumping Nova Scotian economy needs: money and ideas. It might be that people from the rural areas in southern Ontario still feel the sting of "Jim Crow"-style racism, but not as much as the Blacks in Nova Scotian farming communities or even those on the outskirts of Nova Scotian cities. My experience as a Black Ontarian in Cape Breton showed me on several occasions that Blacks, there, distrust outsiders,[104] especially other Blacks in their own neighborhood, as though I should live in some other neighborhood rather than that one. That is a peculiarity of Cape Breton. I did not get that kind of response in Dartmouth or Halifax Black communities.

I employed the methods of Action Anthropology to overcome these obstacles in trust and communication with my research subjects, who are now my friends. Tax describes the duties of an action anthropologist in this passage from a speech in 1975; "The towns- people may resent his having used them (fieldnotes and recordings) for some purpose not their own. Sometimes they suppose he has made millions off them. The action anthropologist[s] [-] report is likely to be part of the program itself, participated in by the community. In any case, he has moral justification for expecting the community which gains from his scholarship to help the development of new knowledge that may be used to help others. One may characterize action anthropology by saying that the community in which it works is not only its subject of study but also its object." (Tax, 1975, 515). By engaging with the community at youth clubs, community centers, libraries, and churches, in their neighborhoods, I was able to overcome my foreign-

sounding last name and Ontario accent, and interact with and interview Blacks of every ethnic background in Nova Scotia and Ontario for this thesis.

Throughout my graduate and undergraduate research, I have built relationships with curators of historical knowledge; at The Whitney Pier Historical Society, The Beaton Institute, and The Harriet Tubman Museum (the Salem Chapel BME Church), the Nathaniel Dett Memorial Chapel, and the Menelik Hall. Through sheer diligence and persistence, I acquired some inside information from author Mark Miller; historian Graham Reynolds and researcher Paul MacDonald, in addition to the many great leads given to me by my advisory panel who are well-qualified in their own fields, respectively. I have been interviewed by CBC News and Radio, and the Cape Breton Post, on Cy McLean and Cape Breton Black music history, and recently I participated in a national symposium on Canada's response to the George Floyd protests in June 2020, and the Lord Dalhousie Panel on Racism and Discrimination in 2019 with my supervisor and other significant Canadian Black academics.[105] These action anthropology methods are useful for data collection and the preservation of cultural memories, but more importantly, they help increase my subjects' visibility and furthers the progress of our common goals of publicizing Canadian Black history and striving for a more equitable Canadian society.

The Nova Scotian Provincial Government has recently embarked on an official program to apologize to the descendants of the Africville settlers. A few former residents have also received some compensation for the theft of their land.[106] Further, a statue of Lord Cornwallis, the founder of Halifax; a colonizer and persecutor of the Mi'kmaq people, has recently been taken down because it was seen as an affront to the Indigenous and Black Nova Scotian

communities, and a symbol of colonialism. Similar events have taken place across the US and Canada in the past few years as a response to ongoing systemic racism.[107]

These events demonstrate how Western Whites are starting to accept transculturation in their society as an undeniable fact. Just as the British were uncomfortable with Caribbean Blacks and East Indians on their streets two generations ago, Natives in the US, Canada, Africa and Australia today are not entirely comfortable with Whites in their home countries. Regardless of peoples' discomfort, in urban environments, all ethnicities must live in close proximity to each other and get along, or risk labelling "the other" as foul and alien, creating the conditions for conquest, war and genocide, again.

Post-colonial and interwar Canadian immigration policies were intent on excluding Blacks (Shepard, 1997) but there have been many changes in these restrictions since then. "Today, most will agree that the scholarly optimism of 1980s and 1990s was misplaced. Without denying the import of the policy developments that inspired these arguments, the feminist, critical race, and critical legal scholarship that has emerged since the 2000's has made it clear that we have good reason to doubt that we live in an era of non-discriminatory immigration, integration, and citizenship policy." (Ellermann, 2020). Historically, Canada has had an institutional focus on admitting more White-skinned immigrants than darker-skinned peoples, but rather than having the effect of inhibiting minority populations in Canada, our policies have actually increased the numbers of immigrants here due to foreign investment, students, refugees, and labourers. One fifth of the current Canadian population is now brown-skinned, and the percentage grows every year,[108] and so does their visibility and affluence.

We have now had over a century of jazz. The evolution of jazz music went hand-in-hand with trajectories of race, anti-Black racism, civil rights and greater freedom. Jazz traveled with the migrants during The Great Migration in the United States. Jazz crossed the 49th parallel with Jellyroll Morton, Duke Ellington, and others, and jazz arrived in Canada with musicians like Mynie Sutton and Cy McLean who embellished it with northern nuances, making it Canadian. When McLean and Sutton integrated nightclubs, ballrooms and bars in Canada, they became agents for civil rights and social change. Fernando Ortiz must be smiling wherever he is.

Each reported incidence and personal experience of racism presented here differs from person to person and from town to town, but light-skinned Christian Blacks like me have an easier time with Canada's brand of racism than those who are very dark and from other religions. For the present, most Canadian Blacks are Christian, no matter where they come from, but those who practice other religions, such as Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, or Rastafarianism have an even harder time being accepted in eastern Canadian society.

But it was not easy for Blacks during the interwar period, and it is still difficult today, especially for those of a darker hue. Louis Armstrong once said that "lots of guys could play piano better than Jellyroll Morton, but they couldn't get the gig," speaking of the difference in how Blacks of varying shades are treated by White society (Ward and Burns, 2000). So, there was a sort of color-based hierarchy in jazz culture during the interwar period that was shattered by Louis Armstrong and his skill and charm. His musicality and innovation outshone his dark skin and minstrel-like performances, making it possible for others to be themselves.

Leading up to the interwar period, Blacks had no choice but to accept a subordinate role in Canadian society in order to work and survive, but after World War I many Canadian and US Blacks resisted this third-class citizenry by using their voices in concert halls, vaudeville theatres, judicial courts, and in business. They arrived in Eastern Canada with differing religions, customs, music traditions and speaking varying languages, but by being in close contact with each other and with other ethnic minorities in segregated neighborhoods across North America, their cultural and music traditions were exposed to each other, prompting the invention of new music forms. The term, "Rhythm and Blues," is the catch-all name given to the music family group that grew out of jazz culture, but it is much too general. In my video, I present a few more accurate names of jazz genres and with their accompanying audio recordings, dance forms, and appropriate narration, which is usually describing something more than just the visual imagery on the screen, such as Eastern Blacks' political mindset or the conditions in Black society, or rich descriptions of the jazz scene, or interactions with celebrities. Where possible, I provide the dates and locations of the music recordings, narration, and video.

Changes in word meanings and new patois dialects arose in diaspora nations as a result of the slave trade, jazz culture, transculturation, and migration. For instance, until the 1950's in America, the term for mixed-blood children of Blacks who had been displaced due to the trans-Atlantic slave trade over previous centuries was, "Coloured." This term became much despised and associated with Jim Crow racism practices in the US, but it is still the preferred epithet in South Africa today, where the cultural and ethnic mix of minority peoples is so diverse that no

racist, over-simplified term such as “Black” will do. In Canada, we just say, ’mixed, but in Louisiana, the word ‘Creole’ is used as an ethnic, linguistic, and cooking descriptor if one is a mixed-blooded French-speaking person, and ‘Mulatto’ is used across the United States if one is not French-speaking. The patois in Capetown is called “kombuis Engels” (“kitchen English,” Appendix 8.8.5). There are many more regional terms in different languages around the world. America and Brazil in particular, employ numerous terms for mixed-blooded, depending on the amount of Negro blood one has. Many are very unflattering.

It took until the late-forties for very dark, unambiguous Black artists like Oscar Peterson, Charles Mingus, Miles Davis and Art Blakey to make names for themselves in mainstream jazz, while their dark counterparts in the blues industry in Chicago, like Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf, and John Lee Hooker were also breaking into the mainstream record industry. My qualitative analysis shows that Blacks from both Ontario Nova Scotia cities experienced racism, regardless of their skin tone, but those in Nova Scotia in the countryside expressed the more experiences involving racism. Blacks from Quebec were not interviewed for this thesis, but there is a curious dichotomy behind how accepting Montrealers were to American, English-speaking Black musicians at the beginning of the 20th century, compared with how confrontational they were with Caribbean-Canadian Blacks in the 1969 Sir George Williams (Concordia) University sit-ins which resulted in many arrests and deportations.[109] Joe Sealy, who was interviewed for this thesis is from Montreal, but he was serving his time with the military in Halifax at about this time. At this time, Rocky Jones, an equal rights activist and eventually a lawyer from Truro, was being surveilled by the RCMP for subversive activity in Halifax because of his sympathies with

the Black Panther Party of America (Rocky Jones, 2000). He had invited the Black Panther party leader, Stokely Carmichael to Halifax, and when Carmichael accepted, all hell broke loose in Canadian law enforcement agencies (Jones, 2016), but that is another story for another time.

The fictitious movie character King Kong was also invented at the beginning of the interwar period. Like the fictitious carnal Black man of D.W. Griffith's imagination, he was always trying to abduct White women. He wanted to climb the highest tower in America, defy White military supremacy and escape persecution. Unlike the movie, my story doesn't end with the White man saving the day. In many places in eastern Canada, racism still prevails over logic, law, and common people's sentiments. Over the past century, many Canadian Blacks have become better equipped to deal with this threat, to some degree. By using the law, the media, our transcultural allies and civic disobedience, Blacks are making great strides in public forums today.

Eastern Canada's Viola Desmond is the first Black woman to be depicted on Western currency because of her role in reforming equality laws in Canada. Her legacy is a direct result of the hard work that she put forth and the changes that jazz culture wrought in her lifetime. She was a teacher, businessperson, activist, scholar, self-made woman, and philanthropist. She was certainly not the only one in Canada. The UNIA's Black Nationalist sentiment of building up one's race was in the air during the interwar period, and Ollie, Cy, Mynie, Carrie, Portia, Archie, Steep, and many other eastern Black Canadians caught the bug.

This thesis only discusses a small portion of what was the eastern Canadian Black jazz scene during the interwar period; nothing more than the main features, really. The complex

social changes that ensued after the Jazz Age are the main topic being discussed here. I have shown how transculturation was a primary factor in the creation, development, dissemination, and execution of jazz music. Transculturation was an important factor in influencing jazz dancing, style of dress, popular culture, language idiosyncrasies, sexual mores, and illicit drug use, to name a few social changes wrought by Black jazz scenes. Jazz culture's forte and legacy is that it has used its visibility to free people from institutional oppression, segregation, labour inequality, sexual repression and mental anguish by allowing them to express themselves individualistically. Western society's rules of fashion, food, and behavior were transformed during this period, and jazz culture allowed mass media to be freer in expression and caused images of dark-skinned people in the media to be more flattering and factual. But White appropriation and mass-marketing of Black cultural elements has been around for a long time, and that fact has been bothering some people for more than a century.[90]

Jazz culture during the interwar period created integrated spaces for the races in Western society, and a new venue for the sexes to mingle away from prying eyes. Blacks and Whites learned from each other in these Black jazz scenes, and familiarized themselves with each other's customs through the various expressions of jazz culture, which was at its apex during the interwar period, slightly before it was fully commercialized in the 1940's. The difference in Jazz education for young people differs greatly between Eastern provinces, today, but was not so different during the Jazz Age. Jazz was the Pop of its day. Many Eastern Black Canadians have made an impact on world music history, such as with the music of Mynie Sutton, Cy McLean, Oscar Peterson, Joe Sealy, Oliver Jones, Mark McLean and Drake, to name a

few. Jazz history is not yet finished, and the offspring off interwar Eastern Canadian Black jazz scenes will probably continue to produce valuable musical ideas in the future.

This thesis is not a plea for Black Canadian jazz musicians to be heard or respected in America, rather, I give the credit to jazz music, musicians, and jazz culture itself for expanding our opportunities, imaginations, and horizons. I do not know that there is anything unique about Canadian jazz from the interwar period. Louis Armstrong was very fond of the Guy Lombardo Orchestra and admired their even-tempered and well-mannered sound. That is what Canada is usually remembered for, their well-mannered, even-tempered White people.

Some Americans don't even realize that there is a Black population in Canada other than escaped American slaves, and many Canadians are unaware of our own slave-holding history. In the preface to Robin Winks' second edition, he admits that his book, *The Blacks in Canada,* fails to present Black Canadians in a proper light. He even relates James St. G. Walker's comment to himself that; "I was 'dangerously' suggesting that Blacks themselves, not White racism, were responsible for their unequal position in society," and concedes that certain parts of the book are; "marked by a critical approach insufficiently understanding of Black culture or of economic or class realities" and he "believes these criticisms to be just," (pg. xvii) yet, he did not edit out the unflattering statements.

Many Blacks in Mississippi, Louisiana, Virginia and Alabama have relatives in Nova Scotia, and they call it the "Mississippi of the North." Maybe it is, but changes are occurring today, maybe not directly due to the impact of jazz, but I can't help thinking that jazz was the first thing that Blacks created that commanded Whites' respect. In fact, being a part of jazz

culture was so liberating, that it got the different races and ethnicities together first on the dancefloor, then on the stage, then on the airwaves and records, and then in legislation. It was a catalyst for change during the interwar period.

For a White jazz fan during the interwar period, going to the Black side of town to dance and drink was just part of a good night out with your friends.[91] The races intermingled and intermixed because of these Black jazz scenes in the thirties and forties, which led to the fight for Blacks' equal rights in North America and abroad. Jazz culture was a key contributing factor in trans-Atlantic Black peoples' emancipation from social ostracization. Jazz culture also gave us new ways of thinking, dancing, talking, and feeling about ourselves. It was something Blacks could be proud of, and it was something that people of different ethnicities could contribute to and learn from. Jazz scenes gave people of different races a new sense of freedom which came with the music and the dance, garnering changes in that generation which saw them and their children challenge racism across the continent. Black jazz scenes of the interwar period also gave us a new musical language with which to express ourselves that never stops evolving, signifying, and swinging with every new generation.

END NOTES

1. *Transculturation*: Coined by Fernando Ortiz, the Cuban ethnographer, transculturation is the interchange of cultural influences between a dominant and subdominant group or groups. See Arnedo-Gómez, 2008, and Vega, 2000, for details.

   Diaspora: the historic dispersal of a group of people who are related through ethnicity, racial similarity or religion. "Communities of peoples of African descent across the globe who experienced and continue to experience broadly similar problems and who share broadly similar cultural characteristics." (Palmer, 2000).

2. The terms, the *Jazz Era* (Age), the *Golden Age of Jazz* and *the interwar period* (years) are used interchangeably in this paper, referring to the period from 1918 to 1939.

3. See Moore, 1994, Vega, 2000, and Viala, 2014.

4. *The Great Migration* refers to the mass migration of Blacks from the rural Southern United States to the more industrial urban centers of the North that began in 1916. See Mathieu, 2010, and Shepard, 1997.

5. From the Chinese "head tax" to the Domestic Workers Program in 1955, Blacks, Asians and Jews were routinely denied citizenship or deported from Canada during the interwar period. See *A History of Racism in Canada's Immigration Policy*. peoplescommission.org.

6. *The Slavery Abolition Act* passed British parliament in 1833 and was enacted in 1834. Anti-Black discrimination and abuse did not stop in Canada or any other British colony due to this parliamentary act.

7. Henry Louis Gates legitimized this Black American term in his 1988 literary critique "*The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism,"* referring to how an artist quotes, takes on the style of, or directly imitates another piece of work during a performance or in their own finished product (as in literature, music, dance, fashion, cooking and speech patterns) in order to boast or show one's skill.

8. See Polgar, 1979, 409, Sakakeeny et al. 2013, 4, and Miller, 1997, 9, for examples of non-impartiality and active engagement for the purposes of obtaining better oral histories from interview subjects.

9. Focusing on collaboration and individual agency, "participatory action research strives to take seriously the ethics and politics of the processes and outcomes of doing research." oxfordbibliographies.com.

8. For more Black Jazz dance and music footage see Youtube/wa8ey8/Prewar Black Jazz.

9. At the time this paper is being written, *iMove Studio* is an arts and culture resource center in Halifax's north end directed by Sobaz Benjamin, filmmaker and radio host which promotes Black education and community awareness. See Appendix 8.5.4.

12. See Menelik Hall, Sydney, NS. Appendix 8.4.8 and "The *African Nova Scotian Roots of Bob Marley's 'Redemption Song*.'" thecanadianencyclopedia.ca

13. See Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute, Halifax. dbdli.ca

14. See The American Folklife Center www.loc.gov/folklife/lomax/ for a listing of John and Alan Lomax's extensive work on folk music traditions in the US which began with John's landmark collection, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* in 1910 and continued into the 1990's with Alan's work. Also see the Supplemental Video for an example of Alan Lomax's Cajun recordings in Louisiana in the 1980's.

15. See the interview with John Hammond at the end of this film: Meyer, 1997. He was so saddened by the news of Johnson's passing, that he opened the concert with a record player, playing two R. Johnson recordings.

16. Lam, 1988, Interview with Bernice "Bunny" Jordan Whims. Also, Sarsfield, 2004, for a description of the entertainers' visits to church affairs in Montreal.

17. Author's personal communication with numerous elderly residents over five years of living in the community.

18. For live video footage of Africville in the 1950's see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28cvg6iD7lA

19. In 2010, the City of Halifax offered the former residents a three-million-dollar settlement, but the battle for compensation is not over yet. See Transcript 9H and http://spacing.ca/atlantic/2010/02/23/africville-reparations-40-years-later/

20. The highest concentration of Canadian Black settlements were in Southern Ontario in the 19th and 20th centuries: "Brantford, and the Black settlement of Wilberforce (now Lucan); along the Niagara Peninsula at St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Newark (Niagara on the Lake) and Fort Erie; in the larger urban centers on Lake Ontario, that is Hamilton and Toronto" (https://www.pbs.org/black-culture/shows/list/underground-railroad/stories-freedom/settlements-canada/)

21. See https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/6wq5ex/the-life-and-times-of-archie-alleyne-torontos-greatest-jazz-drummer and Miller, 1997, 171.

22. See Hill and Garvey, 1983, and Marano, 2014.

23. See this 1957 article which describes the Kensington Market neighborhood during the interwar period. https://archive.macleans.ca/article/1957/7/6/the-streets-of-canada-spadina . The segregated neighborhoods in cities and towns throughout the trans-Atlantic diaspora are too numerous to list here, but outlined briefly in this paper are Little Burgundy, Montreal, District Six in Capetown, Harlem, New York, Whitney Pier, Sydney, Gottingen St. Halifax, and of course the documented birthplace of jazz, Storyville, in New Orleans. All these neighborhoods and historic places have been destroyed under the auspices of "urban renewal" over the past century. Rockhead's Paradise and the Cafe St. Michel in Little Burgundy are now parking lots (Miller, 1997, 7).

24. See https://www.salemchapelbmechurch.ca/index.html and https://harriettubman.dsbn.org/

25. See Appendix 9.8.4 for pictures of my six uncles on my dad's side. Also: House, 2010 on the Trafalgar Players. Excerpt in Appendix 9.8.3.

26. Starting with the drowning of a Black youth after a group of White kids had stoned him for violating beach privacy rules and escalating into full out race war, Chicago erupted when police refused to arrest anyone for the crime. https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/chicago-race-riot-of-1919

27. When a Black man is accused of raping a White woman, the local White men ransack and burn all the Black owned properties in Greenwood, Oklahoma. https://daily.jstor.org/the-devastation-of-black-wall-street/

28. Between 1880 and 1996 residential schools were in operation across Canada. In 1931 there were 80 in Canada (the highest number ever to operate at once). The last one closed in Saskatchewan in 1996. thecanadianencyclopedia.ca. The spellings of names were usually Anglicized, such as from Goldstein to Gold, or from Zijun to Cathy, as in this article from Seattle https://www.seattleglobalist.com/2018/9/20/changing-names-is-just-one-part-of-immigrant-life-in-u-s/76787

29. Duke Ellington used this term. Ward and Burns, 2000. Also, for a full description of the clave drumming technique, see http://www.rockdrummingsystem.com/underground/drum-lessons/what-is-the-clave.php

30. In 1920, the 19th Amendment was passed in the US, granting women the right to vote. History.com. Manitoba got the women's vote first in 1916, followed by the other western and central provinces in the two following years. The provinces further east gave women the vote in the 1920's, and Quebec only allowed women to vote beginning in 1940. thecanadianencyclopedia.ca.

31. Some union locals allowed Blacks in Canada, such as the Guelph Musician's union local, and The Canadian Colored Clef Club of Montreal which started in 1928, but the CCCC really gathered steam in 1935 when the American Federation of Musicians granted the CCCC membership as Local 9, while the White players belonged to Local 10 (Miller, 1997, 143, 150-151). Many performing Black musicians just belonged to an American Local which also allowed them to play in unionized venues at home.

32. See https://libcom.org/history/1942-1944-musicians-recording-ban for information on the musician's strikes of the 1940's.

33. George Diggs was the first city councilor in Halifax in 1908-1917 and then again from 1920 -1930. https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/municipal-archives/exhibits/featured-archival-photographs. William Peyton Hubbard served as Toronto Alderman from 1894-1914. https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/elizabeth-abbott/william-peyton-hubbard_b_12614494.html, also http://www.thepearsoncentre.ca/progressive-memos/50-black-public-figures-working-for-canada/ for lists of provincial and federal Black leaders in more modern times.

34. "Noteworthy Black Canadians," https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/black-history-month/black-canadians.html

35. See Lam, 1998, and *Vaudeville,* 1997, for interviews with Black musicians and actors who performed on the Vaudeville stage during the interwar period. Supplemental Video.

36. See https://www.insider.com/musicians-who-performed-for-royalty-2018-3#louis-armstrong-performed-at-buckingham-palace-for-king-george-v-and-princess-margaret-and-broke-royal-protocol-1. See Feather and Gitler, 2007, and *Famous Black Canadians*: 2/10, 2020.

37. See Miller, 1997, 175-176 and the few articles in Appendix 8.2.3 for Cy Mclean's description of touring in southern Ontario, and Transcript 9D on Louis Armstrong in Niagara Falls.

38. Finkel, 2006, and Cooper, 2016. Also: *Vaudeville*, 1997.

39. See Appendix 8.2.2, Abbott and Seroff, 2012, Miller, 1997, and Bettis, 2012.

40. See Appendix 8.3.1 – 8.3.5, and Transcript 9D for Rod North and a quick reference to Bill Jelley, whose son Jason is a good friend of mine. Bill, his wife, and my parents were some of the original organizers of the St. Catharines' Folk Arts Festival in the 1970's and we used to see each other often at the "Jump-Up's" they used to hold when St. Catharines was twin cities with Trinidad and Tobago.

41. M. Miller has drawn a timeline for jazz development in Canada on page 22 and 23 of *Such Melodious Racket* (1997). In Appendix 8.1.1, I have drawn my own timelines which incorporates most of the information from his timeline on Black musicians during the interwar period and also include sociopolitical milestones.

42. See Miller, 1997, 22-23, and Appendix 8.1.1.

43. Colored Clef Club, McTair, 2000, Miller, 1997, 150-151, Appendix 8.1.3.

44. See https://montrealgazette.com/arts/festival%20central/the-story-of-jazz-in-little-burgundy for more detail, and https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/little-burgundy-and-montreal-s-black-english-speaking-community for the history of Little Burgundy, which is a national historic site now, as is Whitney Pier.

45. Appendix 8.3.2 – 8.3.5 has various articles and quotes from Mynie himself over the years, but there is more in Gilmore, 1988, and Miller, 1997.

46. Appendix 8.3.5 and Transcript 9D have testimony from Rod North and Mynie himself.

47. Miller 1997, 236, and Transcript 9J. Before Bucky Adams died in 2012, he was playing weekly at the New Horizons (formerly the Cornwallis St. Baptist Church in Halifax). Personal communication with Linda Carvery.

48. See https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-jazz-singer-1980 on this historic film.

49. From "A Historical Overview of Education in Canada": "The School Act of 1850, however, permitted segregated schools for Blacks.' The School Act was amended in 1884 to permit Black students to attend public school in their local area. The result was that in areas of Black concentration Black students would continue to attend the segregated schools, but in integrated areas they would not be barred from the local (White) school (Walker, 1999). The last segregated school, in Guysborough, Nova Scotia, was closed in 1983." Also see Winks, 1969, 164-191.

50. Plummer, 2019, and "Halifax Elects First Black City Councilor in 20 years," 2016.

51. See "Head Arrangements" at https://www.ejazzlines.com/big-band-arrangements/by-performer/count-basie-jazz-big-band-arrangements-/ and Ward and Burns, 2000, and Feather and Gitler, 2007.

52. Feather and Gitler, 2007. Examples of Stomp progressions are "King Porter Stomp" by Jellyroll Morton, 1923, and "Let the Good Times Roll" by Louis Jordan, 1946. See Supplemental Video for examples: Billie Holiday with Count Basie Orch. and Sister Rosetta Tharpe.

53. Author's personal communication with local residents Olga Skeete, Glenfield Moe, "Red" Mike MacDonald, and Wayne Nichol in Sydney between 2015 and 2017. All, except Mike MacDonald were in their 80's then.

54. See https://novascotia.ca/archives/halifax/Introduction.asp for Halifax history and https://oldnorthend.wordpress.com/category/history/ on race riots in Halifax in 1945.

55. Viola Desmond went to school in New York twice, and Atlantic City once. She also went to school in Montreal and ended her days as an entertainment and copyright agent. See Reynolds and Robson, 2018, and Backhouse, 1999.

56. Miller, 1997, and Weekes, 2015.

57. To Canadian Blacks, social and fraternal organizations were very important for community cohesion and social validation during the interwar period. Before Blacks were allowed to join or form unions, fraternal organizations were the only path to respectability for generations of Canadian Blacks. Winks, 1997, and Beaton, 1997.

58. Playing the Blues and Jazz music has always been associated with the Devil in folklore. Robert Johnson's song, "Crossroads Blues" speaks of making a Faustian pact with the Devil at the crossroads. He allows Legba (the local name for the evil spirit in Mississippi) to tune his guitar, which gives him incredible musical ability. Blues performers used this association to get more publicity and create mystique. See https://www.thevintagenews.com/2017/09/13/what-happened-at-the-crossroads-blues-legend-robert-johnson-and-his-deal-with-the-devil/ and Levey, 2003.

59. Nelson, 1999 [Film], discusses the resistance to Black newspapers during the mid-thirties, and how Black rail workers could always be counted upon to smuggle the newest editions across national, state, and regional lines where the paper was banned out of fear that it would incite the local Blacks to stand up for themselves and change the status quo.

60. The causes of the Great Depression were multifold, and The Depression affected disenfranchised people the hardest; Blacks, Natives, Jews, women, Chinese, and even the Irish were considered sub-par in America and Canada. Black steel workers were unemployed for the most part, until they were needed as strike-breakers to keep the Irish, Slavs, Germans and Jews in line. Beaton, 1995.

61. Marano, 2014, 143-175 for the history of the UNIA in Canada. Beginning in Montreal in 1919, UNIA Halls opened across Canada with 1000 branches world-wide in 40 countries. Also: Reynolds, 2016. Garvey used the Toronto chapter (Appendix 8.7.3 -8.7.5) as his home base during 1936-1938 and toured to Sydney to speak at the Menelik Hall. A few miles away, the Glace Bay hall was one of the first UNIA chapters in Canada in 1919 and remains the last today. (Appendix 8.4.9), and Winks, 1997.

63. Viola Desmond's case against her parents' lawyers is described in Robson and Caplan, 2010, and Backhouse, 1999.

64. Reggie Mclean, lawyer, in George McLean Obituary, Appendix 8.4.6 and McLean Family Tree, Appendix 8.2.1.

65. Miller, 1997, 7. Morton used to like the money and the atmosphere in the brothels. When Storyville was torn down 1917, he went to other big cities trying to find a new home and sell jazz to the people.

66. Backhouse, 1999, and CBU online lecture Nov.21, 2017 With Graham Reynolds and Wanda Robson. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pcTHA57cNQ&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3B6bnUBEJNcyLWX5sr634WASRh_wydFeak8Yfd-8RM1wi-3el4vnyVSQ8

67. Feather and Gitler, 2007. and J.R. Europe in Appendix 8.1.3.

68. Stride piano style is described in detail in this NPR article, https://www.npr.org/2010/04/12/125689840/stride-piano-bottom-end-jazz. From Fats Waller, to Willie "the Lion" Smith, James P. Johnson, and Art Tatum. Also: Feather and Gitler, 2007.

69. Gilbert, 2012. The US Library of Congress has a complete biography on Dett. https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200038840/. His *Morning: La Barcarolle* is included in the Supplemental Video.

70. Mildred Dixon in "Noteworthy Black Canadians," 2020, and http://www.dukeellington.com/home.html. Also: see Bettis, 2012 for a description of touring in the 1920's and thirties on the T.O.B.A. circuit for Blacks in America. It would have been no different in Canada at this time, when both jazz and Black people were associated with minstrelsy and the lecherous villain from Griffith's "Birth of a Nation."

71. See Miller, 1997, 171-175 on his involvement with Cy Mclean. See Appendix 8.2.3 on Cy Mclean and the Colonial Tavern.

72. See https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-deportation-of-the-acadians-feature and http://www.experienceneworleans.com/cajun.html on Cajuns and Creoles, and the Supplemental Video for an example of Cajun music; Canray Fontenot: *Bonsoir Moreau*, 1983. Alan Lomax Archive, Library of Congress, USA.

73. See Bettis, 2012, Ward and Burns, 2000, and Supplemental Video.

74. See *Record Row: Cradle of Rhythm & Blues,* 1997, PBS and The Library of Congress, USA. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_M1AY8Pu7M. and Ward and Burns, 2000.

75. See https://www.rockhall.com/inductees/categories/early-influences for Hall of Fame inductees. It is sometimes surprising who nominated the inductee, and how cross-genre musicians can be.

76. See https://libcom.org/history/1942-1944-musicians-recording-ban for information on the musician's strikes of the 1940's.

77. “Notable Canadian Blacks,” 2020, and in addition to the Supplementary Video, see Youtube/wa8ey8/Prewar Black Jazz.

78. See Sidney Bechet, Django Rheinhart, Charlie Christian, Bill Haley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley, Cab Calloway, and Louis Jordan in Feather and Gitler, 2007. See Supplemental Video and Transcript 9H for Corey Adams on his father.

79. Luxenberg, 2020. Also: https://www.naacp.org/naacp-legal-team/naacp-legal-history/ for information on Homer Plessy and his legal case.

80. Author’s personal experience as a teaching assistant at Dalhousie University, where I met at least one American Black student from Alabama who used this term, but it is well known in the Gottingen St. neighborhood and in Dartmouth, where I lived.

81. See Reynolds, 2016, and White, 2015.

82. See United Nations at britannica.com. South African representatives were present at the founding of the UN. Oddly, Apartheid was established in 1947, two years later.

83. See this Globe and Mail article on recent cross-burnings in Halifax. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/editorials/punishing-cross-burning-stops-the-fire-next-time/article1241361/ and *Klu Klux Klan*, Backhouse, 1999, 173-225.

84. See https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/ns-environmental-racism-map-1.3494081 for a current map of environmental hazards overlapped with Black settlements in Nova Scotia. Also: Henry, 2004, and The Lord Dalhousie Report on Racism and Discrimination: https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/ldp/Lord%20Dal%20Panel%20Final%20Report_web.pdf This, in addition to the daily news on protests, demonstrations and rioting happening world-wide as a reaction to the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis this year, the ongoing *Black Lives Matter* movement, and the *Take a Knee* movement two years ago. It is significant that all these started after President Barack Obama left office.

85. See Armenian Genocide 1914-1923, Second Sino-Japanese War 1937-1945, The Holocaust 1941-1945, at britannica.com.

86. Both Chaplin and Houdini were masters of self-promotion in the early days of mass-media. Choi, J. (2010). HARRY HOUDINI. Iowa Review, 40(3), 76-76, and Chaplin, 1964.

87. “There is a ‘fatherhood movement’ playing out in cities from Kingston, Jamaica, to New York, to Toronto. 41% of children and youth in Toronto Children’s Aid Society’s care are Black, while just 8.2% of Toronto’s population under the age of 18 is Black.” https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/fathering-change-strengthening-the-role-of-black-fathrs-1.2948066.

88. Feather and Gitler, 2007. Buddy Bolden was institutionalized with alcohol-induced schizophrenia at age 30 and died in 1907. Charlie Parker died of a heart attack and cirrhosis of the liver at age 34, complicated by alcoholism and pneumonia in 1955. Fats Waller died of pneumonia as well at age 39 in 1943. Robert Johnson died at 27 years of age in 1938 from drinking poisoned whisky.

89. Schermuly and Forbes- Mewett, 2016, and Foret, 1989.

90. See http://lemac2.tripod.com/index-203.html for a history of the Cape Breton Colliery Baseball League from before 1900 to 1939, and https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/coloured-hockey-league for the history of the Coloured Hockey League from 1895 to the 1930’s. Although Toronto, London, Halifax, and Sydney had their own Black newspapers at one time or another, they were primarily local newspapers. The most widely-read Black

paper during the interwar period and right up to the 1960's in both Canada and the US, was the Chicago Defender. (Stanley, 1999).

91. See Transcript 9J for Mark Daye on Les Bryan and Johnny Adams in the 1960's, and Miller, 1997.

92. See Ducktail haircut at https://www.vintagehairstyling.com/bobbypinblog/2019/07/mens-vintage-1950s-haircuts-ducktail-tutorial-and-more.html

93. See https://sites.google.com/site/americainthe20thcentury/home/fashion-in-the-1920-s/men-s-fashion for a rough history of men's fashions in the 20th century. Also see zoot suit and zoot suit riots, 1943, at history.com.

94. See https://prohbtd.com/read/a-brief-history-of-cannabis-and-jazz/ and Transcript 9H on Bucky Adams.

95. See Supplemental Video and https://menhairstylesworld.com/mens-hairstyles-through-the-ages/.

96. See "bikini" at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2018/07/05/a-scandalous-two-piece-history-of-the-bikini/ . Also see https://www.eviemagazine.com/post/the-harmful-effects-of-nudity-in-media/. See my playlist of 1930's and 40's Black jazz performances which includes dancers, musicians, vaudeville routines, cartoons and propaganda from the 1940's and fifties. facebook.com/wa8ey8/Prewar Black Jazz.

97. See https://www.etymonline.com/word/reefer for the 1920's origin of the word "reefer" and https://www.rawmusictv.com/article/amp/2019/Louis-Armstrong-wanted-a-marijuana-permit-to-smoke-weed-anywhere-in-the-United-states-Grass-Is-Greener on Louis Armstrong, and Transcript 9H and Supplement Video on Bucky Adams' predilection for pot.

98. See https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-06-01/how-dizzy-gillespie-and-dan-quayle-helped-cuban-musician-defect on Sandoval, and Charlie Christian, Feather, L. & Gitler, I., 2007.

99. Apparently, according to Britannica.com. the term Breakdancing originated in the late 1960's, but I was there; it began in 1978-1980. My video has examples of all of these old and modern dances, except for the California Lockers. There was no room on the tape. See the legendary Shabba-Doo and Re-Run from "*What's Happenin?*" (TV show from the early 1970's) in this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRS83-ZhZSE.

100. See https://www.vanityfair.com/style/photos/2017/07/angelina-jolie-children-slideshow

101. See: *The Guardian,* 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/music/2018/apr/06/drakes-progress-the-making-of-a-modern-superstar

102. See this very humorous article about modern jazz fans https://www.allaboutjazz.com/who-listens-to-jazz-by-jeff-fitzgerald-genius.php.

103. See https://genius.com/discussions/281920-The-majority-of-hip-hop-listeners-are-white, for unconfirmed statistics on Hip-hop record sales today.

104. A few incidents over seven years in Cape Breton showed me that it takes the Blacks there a long time to trust Blacks from elsewhere. They can be down-right racist at times, but others were very warm.

105. *Information Morning*, CBC Radio, Sydney, July 4, 2016 https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2692326151 and https://issuu.com/dalhousieuniversity/docs/lord_dal_panel_final_report_web and CKDU Radio, *Youth Now*, Halifax, November 27, 2018.

106. See this CBC article from last year. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/nova-scotia-home-for-colored-children-inquiry-final-phase-1.5087352 and Corey Adams in Transcript 12H. The reparations court cases of Native Residential School victims, Coloured Boys' School victims, and the Africville homeowners are still in litigation today.

107. See Scientific American's analysis of why monuments are being torn down across the continent. https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-people-are-toppling-monuments-to-racism/

108. See: People of Colour in Canada: Quick Take. https://www.catalyst.org/research/people-of-colour-in-canada/ and https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/209/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x209001-eng.cfm#a4

109. See Sir George Williams University sit in 1969 at https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/a-look-back-at-montreal-s-race-related-1969-computer-riot-1.2538765. And David Austin, (2013) *Fear of a Black Nation*: Race, Sex and Security in Sixties Montreal. Between the Lines Press. Toronto.

18. Langston Hughes wrote in a 1952 letter: "Even the 'Negro' shows like 'Amos and Andy' and 'Beulah' are written largely by white writers - the better to preserve the stereotypes, I imagine." https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/blacklisted-birth-letter-langston-hughes.

91. Other scholars before myself have confirmed the integrated nature of the jam sessions and dances at UNIA halls in Toronto and Montreal, The Gerrish St. Hall in Halifax, the Menelik Hall in Sydney, the bars and speakeasies of turn-of-the-century Cokeville, and in *Ken Burns: Jazz*, PBS., historians of New Orleans jazz culture describe Storyville as an open red light district. Harlem was where Blacks lived, and Whites partied. District Six has a multicultural background, and there are very few Cape Coloureds that don't have some European blood. See Appendix 9.8.4 for images of my father and uncles, and my genius niece, Jordyn. Also see my sister's Ancestry.com DNA analysis, Appendix 9.8.7.

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https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-the-city/archives/971.6225%20S%201989.pdf

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APPENDICES

CHART 1: INTERVIEW SUBJECTS DATA

Person	Significance to Jazz	Interviewer	Place and date	Age	Gender
Cy (Cyril) McLean	Pianist and Bandleader	Nancy Wood for Imperial Oil Co.	Toronto 1972	56	male
Cy (Cyril) McLean	Pianist and Bandleader	B. Broadfoot for Imperial Oil Co.	Toronto 1979	65	male
Lester McLean	Guitarist and Saxophonist/Composer. Relative of Cy McLean	Wade Pfaff, Sobaz Benjamin, CKDU Radio, Halifax	Toronto 2018	56	male
Mark McLean	Session drummer and Composer. Relative of Cy McLean	W. Pfaff and Sobaz Benjamin, CKDU Radio, Halifax	New York City 2018	50	male
Wilma Morrison	Personal friend of Mynie Sutton	Wade Pfaff	St. Catharines 2019	85-90	female
Rod North	Drummer/friend of Mynie Sutton	Wade Pfaff	St. Catharines 2019	85-90	male
Ann North	Personal friend of Mynie Sutton	Wade Pfaff	St. Catharines 2019	85-90	female
9gvcJoe Sealy	Pianist, Composer, and radio Dee Jay	W. Pfaff on Skype from Halifax	Toronto 2018	65-70	male
“Red” Mike MacDonald	Son of “Wooden” Al MacDonald, both are Bassists and interwar recording artists	Wade Pfaff	Sydney 2017	70	male
Margaret Gordon	Interwar Halifax Singer	Wade Pfaff	Halifax 2019	85-90	female
Linda Carvery	Halifax Gospel Singer	Wade Pfaff	Halifax 2019	60-65	female
Corey Adams	Son of Bucky Adams, grandson of Charles Adams, all Saxophonists	Wade Pfaff	Africville, Halifax 2019	55	male
Paul MacDonald	Cape Breton folk music historian and jazz Guitarist	Wade Pfaff	Sydney 2017	60	male
Mark Daye	Gottingen St. resident and son of Halifax Politician Delmore “Buddy” Daye	Wade Pfaff	Halifax 2019	60	male

8.1 CANADIAN JAZZ MISCELLANEOUS

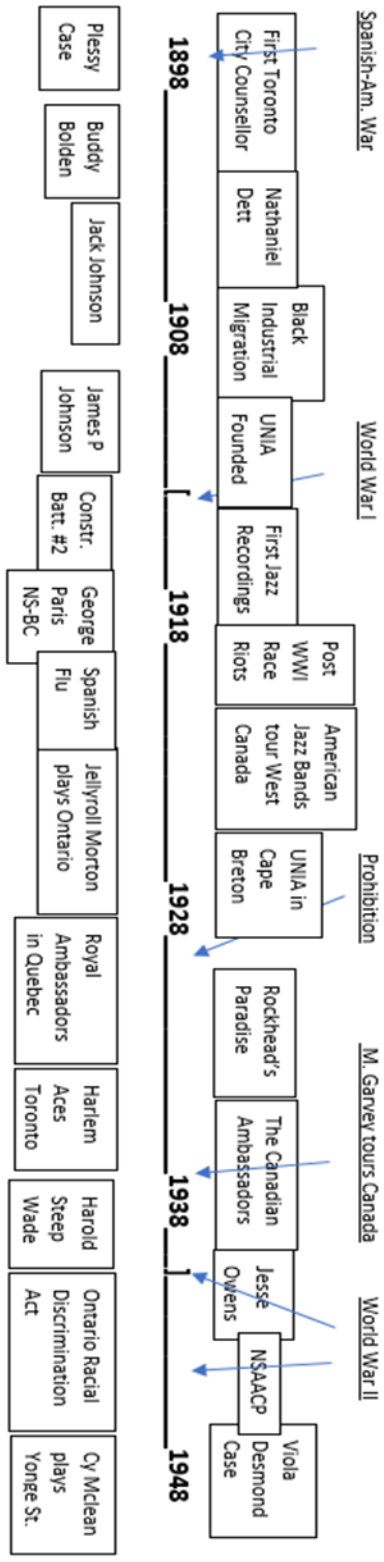


Fig.8.1.1

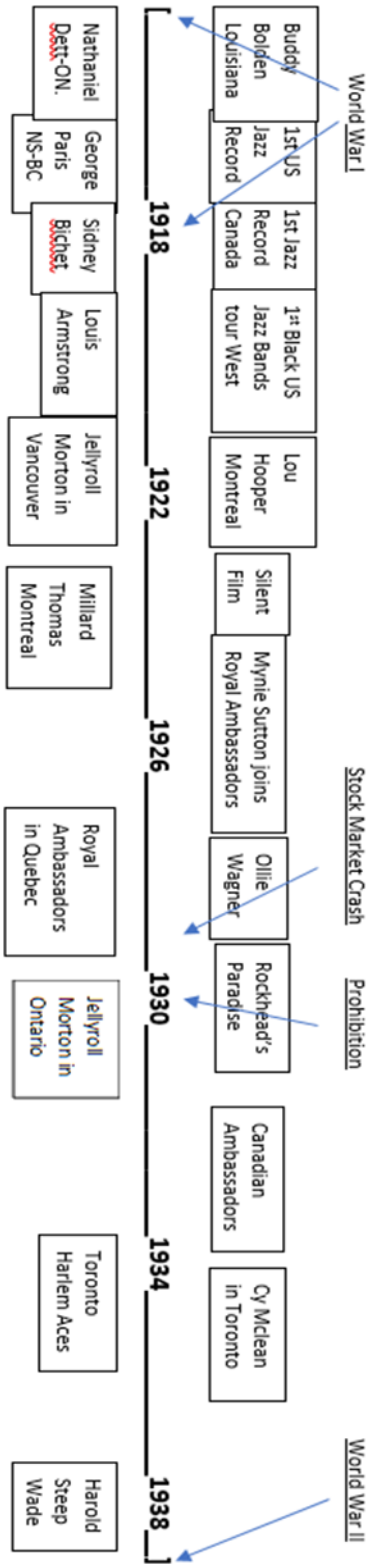


Fig. 8.1.2

Fig. 8.1.3

Edmonton musicians 1930's. Ollie Wagner top right. Miller, (1997),162. J. R. Europe's Colored Clef Club poster (Google image)

Side One – Delirious Rag; Music (Makes The World Go Round); Cotton Pickers Ball; Lazy Drag; How's Your Folks And My Folks; Up And At' Em; I Just Want To Be Known As "Susie's Feller"; Darktown Strutters' Ball; Bugle Call Rag.

Side Two – Christopher Columbus; One O'Clock Jump; Moanin' At The Montmartre; Flying Home; If I Could Be With You; Honeysuckle Rose; The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise; Pallet On The Floor.

azz and Hot J

2/03 **George Sealey and his Orchestra**
Benny Montgomery (trumpet); Hugh Sealey (alto sax); George Sealey (tenor sax); Harold "Steep" Wade (piano); Freddy Blackburn (drums) The Rendez-Vous, Montreal, Quebec, 11 May 1941
-- Moanin' At The Montmartre (Mynie Sutton) acetate record

2/04 **Oscar Peterson**
Oscar Peterson (piano); unidentified (bass); unidentified (drums)
Montreal, Quebec, circa December 1944
(CT8747, 5050, WPD662) Flying Home (Benny Goodman, Lionel Hampton)
Bovril Show (CDN) No. 23

2/05 **Oscar Peterson**
Same as 2/04 Montreal, Quebec, circa December 1944
(CT8756, 505Y, WPD645) If I Could Be With You (James P. Johnson) Bovril Show (CDN) No. 25

2/06 **Mynie Sutton**
Howard Bradley (trumpet); Harry Brunt (trombone); Mynie Sutton (alto sax); Johnny May or Jack McAllister (piano); Ralph Grant (bass); Doug Arsenault or Frank Pelose (drums)
St. Catherines, Ontario, circa 1947
-- Honeysuckle Rose (Fats Waller) acetate record

Fig, 8.1.4

Front and back cover (continued next page), *Jazz and Hot Dance in Canada 1916-1949, Vol. 14*. Harlequin – HQ 2023, UK. 1986.

There were black musicians in Canada as early as 1775. Several thousand blacks escaped from slavery in the neighbouring United States of America via the "underground railway" before the American Civil War and availed themselves of the opportunity to live in freedom in Canada. During the 19th century, music in the black communities was of church and folk origin. With the birth of ragtime in 1897, Canadian musicians, among them the black composer Nathaniel Dett, began writing ragtime melodies.

Several white Canadian pianists recorded in a jazz or ragtime style including Willie Eckstein, Vera Goffaroff, Harry Thomas, and Louis Weitzman. The greatest of these was *Willie Eckstein*, born (1888) in Montreal in the province of Quebec. He began playing in vaudeville at age 12, then worked in silent movie theatres, nightclubs, and radio, and recorded prolifically. In 1919 he gave the first live musical performance ever broadcast on radio in Canada. One of his protégés was *Harry Thomas* (born in England as Reginald Thomas Broughton), a self-taught pianist who could scarcely read a note of music. Thomas, however, had an enormous talent for improvisation, polished during the 1910s and 1920s by accompanying silent movies. Between 1916 and 1929 he recorded 38 titles issued on 78 rpm records, and 18 piano rolls. "Delirious Rag," an early composition by Harry Thomas and Willie Eckstein, was recorded in 1915 and issued on METRO ART, UNIVERSAL, and VOLTEM piano rolls. The UNIVERSAL roll was transferred to tape using a 1929 Willis Ampico Grand piano.

Several Canadian dance bands and small groups recorded during the 1910s and early 1920s. The Brown Brothers, a saxophone group from Lindsay in the province of Ontario, toured in vaudeville and recorded in the USA (1911-1920). The orchestras of O. F. Beck, Simone Mantucci, Henri Miro, Billy Munro, Luigi Romanelli, and Andy Tipaldi were all recorded in Montreal, the location of the only recording studios in Canada prior to the Second World War. Emile Berliner, the inventor of the flat record, had established a factory in Montreal in 1899 to manufacture gramophones and records. Production of BERLINER records began in 1900 using imported masters. In the same year Berliner began using the "His Master's Voice" trademark, several years before it was used in the USA and the UK. In 1916 the Berliner Gramophone Company began recording in Montreal, issuing the records on the Canadian "HIS MASTER'S VOICE" label in the 216000 series of catalogue numbers. In 1918 Berliner's son, Herbert Samuel Berliner, founded The Compo Company in the Montreal suburb of Lachine, and in 1921 began recording for his APEX and STARR GENNETT labels, in the 500 series of catalogue numbers. Both companies recorded American dance orchestras that were visiting Montreal, but not the American jazz bands that played in Canada in the early days: the Bubbly Brown Quartet with Bingie Madison (1920), Jelly Roll Morton (1922), and Hollis Peavey's Jazz Bandits (1923), for example.

During the First World War, Andy Tipaldi formed a band named *The Melody Kings* that played in the prestigious dance halls in Montreal until 1928. It also recorded for APEX and "HIS MASTER'S VOICE". This was a society dance band that played tight arrangements. But "*Music (Makes The World Go Round)*" was recorded early one morning after a long party, and the musicians were allowed to improvise. The Compo Company did not intend to issue the side originally, for no matrix number was assigned to it. Fortunately, however, the side was issued on both APEX 586 and STARR GENNETT 587.

Guy Lombardo formed his first orchestra in London, Ontario, in 1921. It eventually became the most famous dance orchestra in North America, Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians. Before their style settled down as *the sweetest music this side of heaven*, the band played hot when a tune required it. "*Cotton Pickers Ball*" was issued in the USA on GENNETT 5417 and in Canada on STARR 9536.

The Chicago Novelty Orchestra was an all-black American band led by *Millard Thomas* in Montreal from at least 1920 to 1927. The band played at dances, theatres, and amusement parks in Montreal, and broadcast over the radio as early as 1924. In that year the band recorded eight sides in Montreal for the AJAX label of The Compo Company, one of which was "*Lazy Dog*."

New Princes' Toronto Band was assembled in 1924 by Hal Swain and Les Allen, comprised of musicians who had been playing in dance bands around Toronto. The band played at the New Princes' Restaurant in London, England, from 1924 to 1926. It recorded 54 titles issued on English COLUMBIA, and was filmed while playing on stage. "*How's Your Folks And My Folks*" was also issued on Australian COLUMBIA 3884.

During the summer of 1926 Dave Caplan, the banjo player with the *New Princes' Toronto Band*, obtained a booking for the band in Berlin on the strength of its COLUMBIA records. Some members declined to go, so Caplan used musicians from other Canadian and English bands. *Dave Caplan's Toronto Band from Canada* starred at the Scala Theatre in Berlin, then toured Europe. While in Germany, the band recorded 56 issued titles. "*Up And At 'Em*" was also issued on German GRAMMOPHON 20782.

The first Canadian jazz band is said to have been led by James Reilly in Guelph, Ontario, circa 1920-1925. In 1925, "Trump" Davidson formed The Melody Five in Sudbury, Ontario. But the honour of making the earliest jazz record by a Canadian band goes to *Gilbert Watson*. Watson formed a dance orchestra in 1925 and played around Toronto until the late 1930s. In 1925 and 1926 the band recorded ten titles for The Compo Company that were issued on a variety of labels. All the Gilbert Watson records are quite rare today. "*I Just Want To Be Known As 'Sosie's Feller*" was also issued on MICROPHONE 22543 and LUCKY STRIKE 24531.

During the years between 1926 and 1945 only a handful of jazz-oriented records were issued by The Compo Company and by The Victor Talking Machine Company of Canada (which had acquired the Berliner Gramophone Company in 1924). But there were Canadian dance bands playing jazz: black bands led by Mynie Sutton (The Canadian Ambassadors), Harry Lucas (The Harlem Aces, The Rhythm Aces, The Rhythm Knights), and Cy McLean Orchestra; and white bands led by Rex Battle, Bert Niosi, and Don Romanelli. No records are known to exist by these bands, but other bands were recorded non-commercially (acetate records of radio broadcasts, radio transcriptions, privately recorded records).

Having formed a jazz band in 1925 styled after Red Nichols and his Five Pennies, *Jimmy "Trump" Davidson* moved to Toronto where he played from 1929 to 1936 with Luigi Romanelli's Orchestra. In 1936 he organized his own orchestra for the Club Esquire in Toronto. Ray Noble heard the band and arranged for the National Broadcasting Company in the USA to broadcast the band regularly from the club. Trump arranged for some of the broadcasts to be recorded off the air on acetate records. One of these is "*Darktown Strutters' Ball*," composed by the black Canadian-born Shelton Brooks, who also wrote "Some Of These Days."

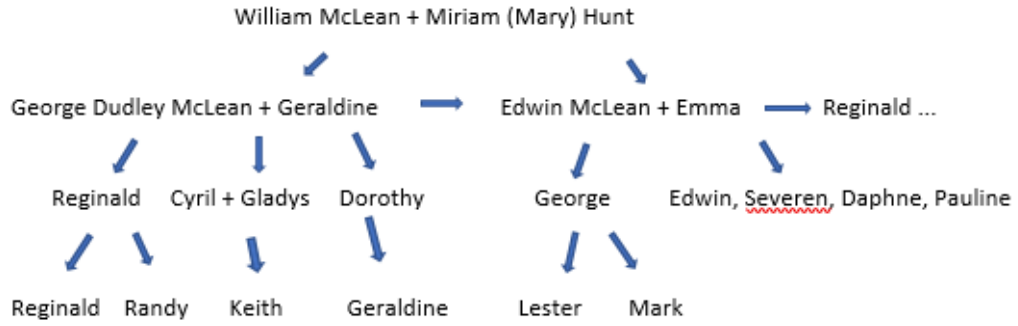
Morgan Thomas led a dance band that played in the Ontario cities of Hamilton, Toronto, and Crystal Beach from the early 1930s until the mid 1940s. In 1938 the band recorded a series of radio programs, possibly as many as 26, sponsored by the makers of Bridal Wreath diamond rings. Each program was pressed by The Compo Company on a single-sided, 13 inch record playing at 33⅓ rpm, and the records were shipped to subscribing radio stations in the province of Ontario. "*Bugle Call Rag*" is from one of these records.

Sandy DeSantis formed a small group to play at the Venice Café in Vancouver in the province of British Columbia, then led a dance band at the Palomar Ballroom in the same city from 1937 until the 1950s. Within the eleven-piece orchestra was a six-piece jazz band, heard here during a radio broadcast playing "Christopher Columbus."

Allan McIver began his career in 1926 playing piano for silent films in Montreal theatres, and then was active in radio during the 1930s. His dance band was frequently heard on radio during the 1940s. In 1940 the band recorded four titles for private use. "*One O'Clock Jump*" is on a double-sided, 12-inch 78 rpm record that plays from the inside to the outside.

8.2 CY MCLEAN

Below is a family tree drawn by Edwin McLean, nephew of Cy McLean and father of Lester and Mark McLean. Other names were taken from George McLean's death certificate, Dominion Iron and Steel Company Employee Records (1923), and the author's personal communication with Mark McLean, May 2, 2017.



"George McLean. Youngest of 5 children
(b. 1890 Barbados). Father of Cyril, Reg and Dorothy.
George McLean (younger) came to Canada in 1965
Cyril 'Cy' McLean, 1916 – 1986
Rests at York Cemetery, 416-221-3404
Reg McLean was a lawyer in Real Estate
Cy McLean was married to Gladys Moe McLean,
1917 – 2003 – Edwin McLean. Fig. 8.2.1

Below: *Helen McNamara Fonds* - National Library of Canada, courtesy Mark Miller.

A10/ THE TORONTO STAR, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1986

Jazz pianist Cy McLean, 70 led Toronto's first black band

By Jim Foster Toronto Star

A funeral will be held Monday for Cy McLean, a hunchbacked jazz pianist who was Toronto's first — and for many years only — black bandleader.

In spite of his handicap and the racial prejudice of the period, he became a hit in the white entertainment industry of the 1940s.

Then dance bands died. While former sidemen became famous, his star waned and he died in relative obscurity Wednesday at the age of 70 after a heart attack in his cottage at Port McNicholl.

Born in N.S.

Cyrus G. McLean was born in Sydney, N.S., the son of an immigrant West Indian steelworker. He took violin lessons, but his brother taught him enough piano chords to land a brief job with a visiting dance band.

That encouraged the teenager to head for Toronto and the old Hambourg Conservatory. As he explained later, "I figured since somebody hired me when I couldn't play nothing but a few chords, then maybe I could play piano."

Soon he could — so well that the legendary Art Tatum always looked him up when he hit town.

Mr. McLean started playing jobs while he studied. One was with Roy

Cy McLean: Jazz pianist became a hit in Toronto entertainment industry in the 1940s.

Worell's band. When Worell dropped out in 1937, the band voted 20-year-old Cy in as leader.

Before long he formed Ontario's first black jazz band, 10 men who tried to copy Count Basie's swing in Pallingbrook and other dance halls. It took months of pressure before the white Musicians Union would let them join.

During World War II Mr. McLean took seven men on a tour across southern Ontario promoting Lifebuoy soap. In one small

Obituaries

town no one would serve them food.

"In other places people would line up to peer through the restaurant window to watch us eat," guitarist Henry Wright recalled. "They had actually never seen blacks before."

Top dance spots

After the war, Mr. McLean's black and white musicians held their own in the top dance spots. In 1947 and 1948, for example, they ruled the old Top Hat while Jack Evans played Sunnyside's outdoor floor across the road, with Trump Davidson at the Palace Pier and Bert Niosi at the Palais Royale.

When economics demanded smaller combos, Mr. McLean's quartet opened the new Colonial Tavern and played upstairs there for a couple of years. Later he moved to the Corsair opposite Billy O'Connor, then to the El Mocambo.

Mr. McLean leaves his wife Gladys, brother, Reginald, niece, Geraldine, and nephews Randy and Reggie.

The funeral will take place at 1 p.m. Monday in the R.S. Kane funeral home, 6150 Yonge St. south of Steeles Ave.

Fig. 8.2.2

Cy McLean obituary, Toronto Star Nov. 1, 1986, A10

For Him Day Starts At Night

Toronto Star 20 Oct 1962

By RALPH THOMAS

Around 8 every weekday morning, Cy McLean gets up and goes to work like everyone else. He puts in his eight hours as an order clerk at a large oil company and then heads home for supper. But his day has only started, for he starts to work again at 9, six nights a week pounding a decrepit piano in the basement of the Warwick hotel. It is 1 a.m. before he collects his soiled sheets of music and goes home for the day.

And he's been turning in this kind of day for 14 years.

This is the lot of the only Negro bandleader in town. At 45, he has been going for 25 years, and there are many prominent names in Canadian jazz who owe their beginnings to this quizzical, hunchbacked little man.

He gave them their start, taught many of them and fit them into his many groups. But he himself is today almost unnoticed.

Years Have Been Hard

His years as a jazzman have been hard and far from profitable. He has had to cope with discrimination; he's had to hold down "draggy" jobs such as the one he's got now; and he's had to live with a permanent phyisical handicap.

But McLean, a plucky man, doesn't remember the bad times much. He prefers to remember things like the friendship he had with the late and great Art Tatum, who always made a point of calling him as soon as he came to town.

"I go along day to day without thinking much about things," he mused during a break at the Warwick. "That's the way I've always been."

He was born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, the son of an immigrant West Indian steelworker. His first contact with music came in the form of a violin his father gave him for his birthday (he doesn't remember which) and insisted he learn to play it. He worked away at it for six years, but "I never did care for that violin."

Got Temporary Job

His brother, also once a band leader, taught him a few chords on the piano, enough to get him a temporary job with a visiting dance band. "I figured since somebody hired me, when I couldn't play nothing but a few chords, that maybe I could play piano."

He headed for Toronto and enrolled in the old Hambourg Conservatory (run by Clem of the House of Hambourg and his brothers almost 30 years ago). He soon started to get a few jobs, one of which made him a bandleader at the age of 20.

Since that day, 25 years ago, when he was voted leader by his fellow sidemen of the Roy Worell band, when Roy left to get married, McLean has always led his own band. And in that time, the longest he's ever been out of work was two months, when as he put it, "I thought of giving the whole thing up."

He has taken his bands all over Southern Ontario. He went on a long tour of Canada for Lever Brothers —a tour which ended when rationing of fats and oils cut down production of soap.

The admission ticket to hear McLean was a box of the soap. He formed the first all-Negro jazz band seen in Ontario. And he was the first to play at the Colonial tavern when it opened.

Couldn't Get Served

From those various bands came such prominent Canadian jazzmen and musicians as the late Jack Kane, Moe Koffman, Al Mayers, Bill Goddard and Bernie Black.

One of the things he remembers from those days was the time he and his band couldn't get anything to eat, because no one would serve Negroes, when he was doing a charity concert in a little Ontario town during the war.

Then there was the trouble he had before the war trying to get into the Musicians' Union. It took the threatening of a Toronto tabloid jazz critic and a few months of waiting around before he was admitted.

As far as he's concerned, these incidents don't stand for much. Things have changed and "people here aren't like they are in the United States. I've never wanted to go down there, for that reason."

As he walked back to the little platform he plays on, many customers called out, "Hy, Cy, how are you doing?"

He waved and grinned back.

CY McLEAN

He doesn't want to remember the bad times

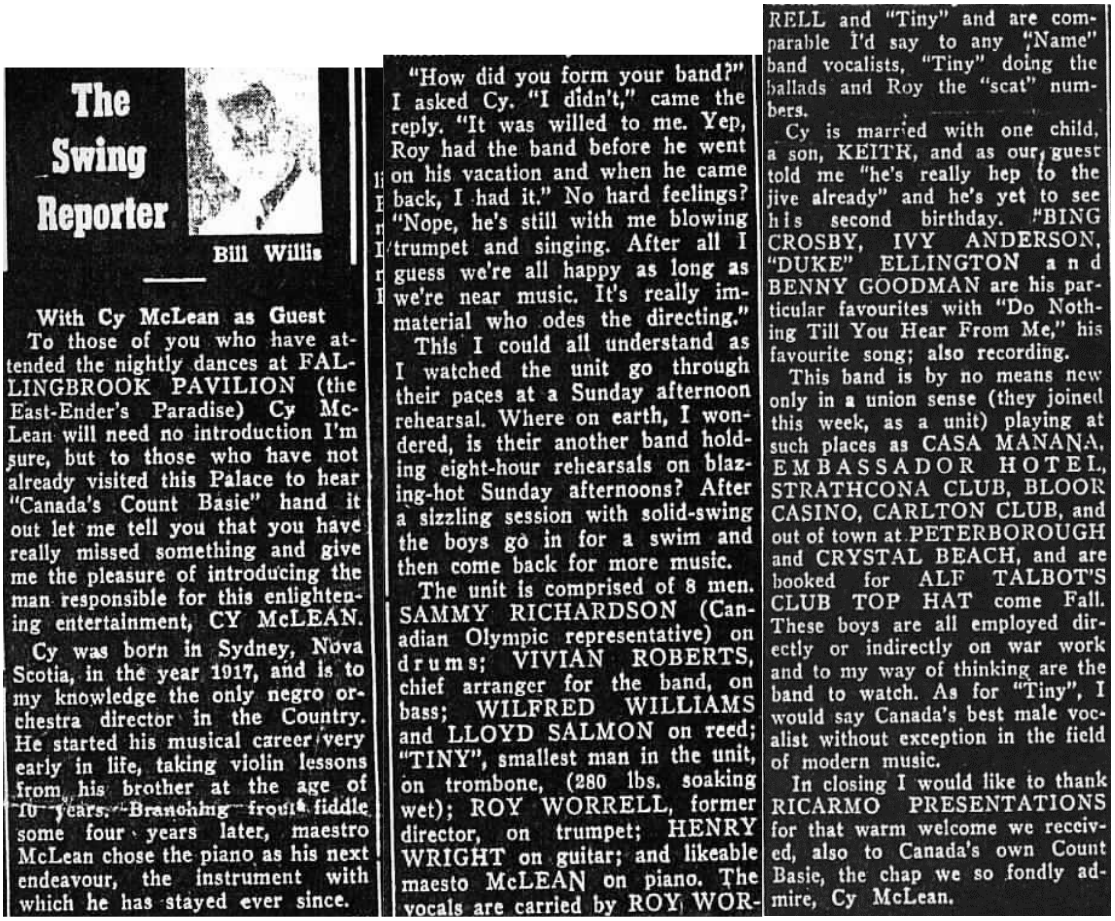
Thomas, R. Toronto Star, Oct. 20, 1962. Fig. 8.2.3

'Moonlight' Bandleader Prefers Canada To U. S.

Pianist McLean at work

Although he works eight hours a day as an order clerk and five nights as a bandleader at the Warwick Hotel in Toronto, jazz pianist Cy McLean says he prefers living in Canada because "people here aren't like they are in the United States. I've never wanted to go down there for that reason." Credited with training many Canadian jazzmen, McLean admits he was once barred from getting food in some towns in Ontario and formerly couldn't join the Musicians' Union, but conditions have changed now.

Jet Magazine, December 27, 1962, 62. Fig. 8.2.4



The Swing Reporter

Bill Willis

With Cy McLean as Guest

To those of you who have attended the nightly dances at FALLINGBROOK PAVILION (the East-Ender's Paradise) Cy McLean will need no introduction I'm sure, but to those who have not already visited this Palace to hear "Canada's Count Basie" hand it out let me tell you that you have really missed something and give me the pleasure of introducing the man responsible for this enlightening entertainment, CY McLEAN.

Cy was born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, in the year 1917, and is to my knowledge the only negro orchestra director in the Country. He started his musical career very early in life, taking violin lessons from his brother at the age of 10 years. Branching from fiddle some four years later, maestro McLean chose the piano as his next endeavour, the instrument with which he has stayed ever since.

"How did you form your band?" I asked Cy. "I didn't," came the reply. "It was willed to me. Yep, Roy had the band before he went on his vacation and when he came back, I had it." No hard feelings? "Nope, he's still with me blowing trumpet and singing. After all I guess we're all happy as long as we're near music. It's really immaterial who odes the directing."

This I could all understand as I watched the unit go through their paces at a Sunday afternoon rehearsal. Where on earth, I wondered, is their another band holding eight-hour rehearsals on blazing-hot Sunday afternoons? After a sizzling session with solid-swing the boys go in for a swim and then come back for more music.

The unit is comprised of 8 men. SAMMY RICHARDSON (Canadian Olympic representative) on drums; VIVIAN ROBERTS, chief arranger for the band, on bass; WILFRED WILLIAMS and LLOYD SALMON on reed; "TINY", smallest man in the unit, on trombone, (280 lbs. soaking wet); ROY WORRELL, former director, on trumpet; HENRY WRIGHT on guitar; and likeable maesto McLEAN on piano. The vocals are carried by ROY WORRELL and "Tiny" and are comparable I'd say to any "Name" band vocalists, "Tiny" doing the ballads and Roy the "scat" numbers.

Cy is married with one child, a son, KEITH, and as our guest told me "he's really hep to the jive already" and he's yet to see his second birthday. "BING CROSBY, IVY ANDERSON, "DUKE" ELLINGTON and BENNY GOODMAN are his particular favourites with "Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me," his favourite song; also recording.

This band is by no means new only in a union sense (they joined this week, as a unit) playing at such places as CASA MANANA, EMBASSADOR HOTEL, STRATHCONA CLUB, BLOOR CASINO, CARLTON CLUB, and out of town at PETERBOROUGH and CRYSTAL BEACH, and are booked for ALF TALBOT'S CLUB TOP HAT come Fall. These boys are all employed directly or indirectly on war work and to my way of thinking are the band to watch. As for "Tiny", I would say Canada's best male vocalist without exception in the field of modern music.

In closing I would like to thank RICARMO PRESENTATIONS for that warm welcome we received, also to Canada's own Count Basie, the chap we so fondly admire, Cy McLean.

Fig.8.2.5. Willis, B. The Swing Reporter (Toronto Star?) *Helen McNamara Fonds*. 1944 (the week they joined the union).

8.3. MYNIE SUTTON: (Collection: courtesy of Rod North, St. Catharines, ON.)

Fig. 8.3.1

Niagara Falls Review Articles over time:

Big Bands
1930. Mynie Sutton
& his
Canadian Ambassadors

Born in Niagara Falls on October 9, 1903, Mynie began playing piano at a young age. By the time he was 21, he was quite adapt on piano, saxophone and clarinet.

Passing up the opportunity to study at the Boston Conservatory of Music, Mynie went down to Buffalo joining Eugene Primus' band, an opportunity to play with many prominent musicians such as J.C. Higginbotham and Budd Johnson.

He returned to Canada permanently in the 1920's, forming an all black band out of the Montreal area and appeared initially in 1931 at the Gatineau Club.

Mynie was quite unique in putting together the best black talent the Montreal and Toronto areas had at that time. Some of these musicians were Lloyd Duncan, saxophone, who recently had returned from the U.S.A., playing with Jimmy Lunceford and Chick Webb. Buster Harding also joined Mynie's band, another musician of talent who went on to later arrange for Count Basie and Artie Shaw. Willie Girard a well-known fiddler; Steep Wade, piano; the Sealey brothers, Hugh and George; Lou Hooper joining him as pianist in the 30's.

Fig. 8.3.2

Mynie has paid his dues music man for 55 years

Fig. 8.3.3

By JOE HVILIVITZKY
Review staff writer

It's there in Mynie Sutton's scrap book — the highlights of a musical career that has spanned 55 years.

In that time, he's played his alto saxaphone in posh Montreal night clubs, desolate northern towns, area dance halls, and at funerals.

As a student at Stamford CVI, he played piano for the dances that followed basketball games.

In his early teens he decided to try the clarinet; chucked that after a short time, tried alto sax and he has been with it ever since.

In 1922 he organized the first school band at Stamford with $50 he received from principal A.N. Myer.

A disastrous flu epidemic in the early 1920s took many lives. In those days it was still the custom of many Italians to hire musicians to play at funerals.

As a member of the St. Ann's Band, Mynie often took the afternoon off from classes to play in a funeral procession.

The epidemic hit in winter, Mynie remembers. "It was so cold you couldn't even finger the sax."

A clipping from The Evening Review in 1922 notes the fact that The Harmonizers, with M. Sutton, played a successful engagement at Ye Poodle Dog, an ice cream parlor near Main and Ferry streets.

In 1924 he quit Grade 12 and joined the Joe Stewart band in Buffalo.

That was the beginning of 17 years he spent as a road musician.

For the next six years the Stewart band played jobs throughout Western New York and eventually lined up an appearance on WGR Radio.

"On the first broadcast I got up to play, I took one look at the microphone, and I froze," Mynie recalled.

spots in Montreal, and Ottawa, and even ventured into Toronto.

The first engagement for The Canadian Ambassadors was at the Gatineau Club in Ottawa where the band stayed for a year-and-a-half.

Then it was on to Montreal and jobs at such places at Connie's Inn which advertised itself as "bringing Harlem to Montreal," the Hollywood Club, The Terminal and the Montmartre Cabaret.

In that era, a night club featured a complete floor show with a band, chorus line, comedian, singer and featured performer.

In the early 1930s, Mynie's band backed Sammy Davis Jr. when he performed as a child with his father and uncle.

And there was Billie Holiday; Oscar Peterson who sometimes sat in with the Ambassadors; and Phyllis Marshall who made her major debut with Mynie's band at a dance in Toronto.

Most of the Depression years Mynie spent in Montreal and he looks on this period with great fondness.

"In those days, no one has anything more than anyone else and everyone was friends. We had a ball."

Although most of that 10-year period was spent in and around Montreal, there were occasional expeditions into the boondocks for one-nighters or longer engagements.

On one occasion, the band got trapped in Kirkland Lake for a month after the employer refused to pay.

It was in December, and Mynie remembers trying to go to court to get the money owing the band. It was a small claims court and he was told that because the $500 claim was outside the court's jurisdiction, he would have to wait until spring assizes.

and later formed his own band that played Port Dalhousie, Crystal Beach, and the old Victoria Ave. armories among other places.

He's still playing, although it's with a four-piece group now.

It is not uncommon for him to play at a wedding reception where the bride or groom's parents had Mynie play for their wedding as well.

He and his wife, Mae, live on Peer St., three doors up from the house in which Mynie was born.

He retired Sept. 14 from his welding job at Abex Industries after 29 years. He'll be 70 on Oct. 9.

He says he hopes to pick up a part-time job in a few weeks — something to keep him busy. After all, as he says, "I don't feel like 70 — I feel more like 50."

(continued next page)

"I couldn't play a note. Another musician had to take over."

He remembers playing at a club near Buffalo which never had any patrons. It served only as a front for gangsters, and every night the band would arrive and play to an empty room.

There were occasions during this period that rival criminals arrived with guns drawn, ready for a shoot-out.

Mynie left the Stewart band in 1931 and joined the Royal Ambassadors, a group of Black musicians from the U.S. which played throughout Ontario.

With its home base in Iriquois, near Cornwall, the band played one-nighters.

The band later moved into the U.S. the following few months produced the only period that Mynie remembers with bitterness.

It was during this time that he encountered racism such as the sort in Wheeling, West Virginia where clubs would hire a Black band but refused admittance to Negro customers.

He returned to Canada and organized his own group of Black musicians called the Canadian Ambassadors.

Mynie's scrap book starts here, with a picture of the Ambassadors — eight men nattily dressed in white short-cut jackets, and pants with black trim.

For the next 10 years, this group played in some of the poshest night

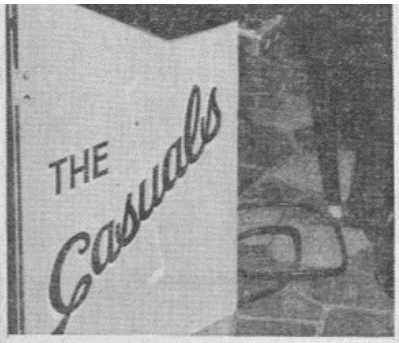
In Sudbury, burly miners often brawled as part of the evening's entertainment. Mynie recalls that when a fight broke out, the bandleader could release a rope which lowered a wire screen in front of the band.

Probably the scariest experience was in Iriquois where a photographer showed up one night to take a picture of the band.

The photographer miscalculated on the amount of flash powder and the resulting "proof" ignited some crepe hanging from the ceiling. The band had to drop their instruments and help douse the blaze.

Mynie's life on the road ended in 1941 when he returned to Niagara Falls to stay with his ailing mother. His father died in 1927.

He continued playing in this area



MYNIE SUTTON

His career as a musician has spanned 55 years. Although he retired Sept. 14 and will be 70 next week, he plans to keep busy and keep playing.

Hit house says culprit was her power steering

Damage totalled $2,000 when a car slammed into a house at 4827 Sixth Ave. shortly after 9:30 p.m. Saturday.

Sharon Chevers, of 4083 Front St., operator of the car, received minor bruises.

She told police she was not familiar with the power steering and the car went out of control.

Mark Thistlewaite, 13, of 7047 Dell Ave., received cuts and bruises when his bicycle hit a parked car owned by Addolorato Pizzi, of 6317 Margaret St., Sunday. The accident occurred on Margaret St. at Joyce Cres. at 6:20 p.m.

Fig. 8.3.4

Author and music professor work to assu

City-born great lives

By BEVERLEY THOMPSON
Review staff writer

Mynie Sutton of Niagara Falls is still making history two years after his death at the age of 78.

His papers and music are the first in the just-established jazz collection at Montreal's Concordia University.

And he's also the subject of a whole chapter in a book about the Montreal jazz scene, due at the publisher next year.

"He was a very important figure on the Montreal jazz scene during the Depression," said John Gilmore free-lance journalist and jazz history lecturer at Concordia.

When he was buried in Niagara Falls in June, 1982, Mynie Sutton was an all-but-forgotten jazz musician.

He still played local club dates, to be sure. In fact, his last gig was at the A. C. MacCallum Legion, just three weeks before he died. But his importance to Canadian jazz was almost lost to new generations of jazz musicians.

Gilmore and Andrew Homzi, head of the music department at Concordia University, are determined Sutton and the other jazz musicians like him begin getting full credit for the work they have done.

TOURED IN SUMMER

By the time Mynie Sutton and his band the Canadian Ambassadors left Montreal they had played for the Governor-General, backed singers Billie Holliday and Sammy Davis Jr. and taken jazz around Quebec and northern Ontario on summer tours, notes Gilmore.

And Downbeat Magazine had proclaimed the Canadian Ambassadors the hottest jazz band in Montreal.

It was a long way from Niagara Falls for the son of a factory worker sent to the local church organist for piano lessons at the age of nine. By the time he was 21, Myron Pierman Sutton had mastered the clarinet and alto saxophone.

He passed up a chance to study the classics at the Boston Conservatory and joined a black dance band in Buffalo, N.Y. After a two-year apprenticeship, he joined Eugene Primus' Band in Buffalo but homesickness quashed offers of fame and fortune in New York City.

Instead, Mynie Sutton joined the Royal Ambassadors, a Cleveland-based band which played southern Ontario in the summer and the U.S. in the winter.

It was gruelling life but Sutton stuck with it for two years until he formed his own all-Canadian band. At the time, black and white musicians could not play together on the same stage, even in Canada, notes Gilmore, and many of the best black Canadians had fled south to make a living.

Sutton lured them back and the Canadian Ambassadors made their debut at the Gatineau Country Club near Ottawa in 1932.

JAZZ HISTORY

The rest is jazz history.

The Sutton band took Montreal by storm although they were never invited to play in the major ballrooms because they were black. Until 1939, black musicians were barred from the American Federation of Musicians and forced to play in the clubs and halls of downtown and east end Montreal.

Home base for the Canadian Ambassadors was the Terminal Club near Windsor Station, with illegal gambling on the third floor, chorus girls on the second and the best fried chicken in town on the first.

"I used to carry a piece of iron under my seat to challenge the drunks,' " Gilmore quotes Sutton as saying in a 1981 interview at his Niagara Falls home.

Sutton also recalled the corruption rampant then in Montreal night clubs, said Gilmore.

" 'I've seen them deliver booze to a club in the morning, then the vice squad would come by in the afternoon and take it away, he said. In order to open the club that night the owner would have to buy back his booze from the cops at 20 to 30 per cent above what he paid for it that morning.' "

Mynie Sutton kept his nose clean however, said Gilmore, and just kept working.

In 1938 however, the Montreal club where Sutton was playing decided to switch to a white stage show. Black musicians did not back white shows, and the Ambassadors were out of a job.

RETURNED HOME

Three years later, Mynie Sutton left Montreal, returning home to Niagara Falls where his

(continued next page)

Fig. 8.3.4 continued

e Mynie Sutton his rightful place in music history

n in jazz history collection

ner had fallen ill.
the 1950s, he married
, the woman he left a
ow in 1982.
his later years,
ie Sutton led occa-
ial bands around
gara, especailly at the
Henley in St. Cath-
es, at weddings and
the St. Ann's Band.
also taught saxophone
ately in the basement
is city home.
onically, he also was
wn for the work he did
h the local chapter of
musicians union which had barred him because of his color in earlier years.

To his wife, he left precious memories obvious in speaking with Mae Sutton. To his step-daughter Diana Beldham, he is her beloved Dad.

To two music professors from Montreal, Mynie Sutton is a symbol of a bygone age and a musical heritage too important to ignore.

Both Gilmore and Homzi were enthusiastic about travelling to Niagara Falls from Montreal to pick up the tapes, records, scrapbook and other memorabilia Mynie Sutton left behind in his basement den.

"The real story will develop when scholars and others go through the papers," said Homzi.

Sutton's records are meticulous and tell many sad stories of how he tried to return to the U.S. but was barred from doing so.

The collection was passed on to the university after the family was approached by Gilmore and Homzi.

GOOD IDEA

"We thought it was a good idea for others to share," said his step-daughter.

And the family also knew the now-fragile materials would be in the hands of experienced librarians and conservators.

Tragically, the Myron Pierman Sutton collection includes only one 78 rpm recording of the city musician.

Like too many other jazz musicians, Sutton probably threw out a lot of material over the years, thinking it was unimportant.

Now, thanks to his family's generosity, the determination of John Gilmore, who took a year to track Sutton to Niagara Falls, and the backing of Andrew Homzi, Mynie Sutton is assured his rightful place in Canadian music history.

Mynie Sutton of Niagara Falls is pictured third from the right in the above photo of the Canadian Ambassadors. When Review photographer Ron Roels removed the photo from its frame to make a copy, he discovered another photo behind it, of Sutton and the other members of the Buffalo band called Eugene Primus and His Birds of Paradise. The city-born jazz musician was then nicknamed Canada because of his origins. Both photos are now in the jazz history collection at Concordia University in Montreal. In photo left, Andrew Homzi, head of the music department at Concordia, holds a 78 rpm record and step-daughter Diana Beldham a photo, while Mae Sutton and John Gilmore, music lecturer and jazz historian, examine a scrapbook from the Myron Pierman Sutton Collection at the Montreal University. The two men were in Niagara Falls to accept the Sutton memorabilia and papers, which form the collection of the new jazz history collection at Concordia.

MONTREAL, TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 1982

Montreal jazz great Sutton dies

M. Sutton Obituary. Fig. 8.3.5

By JOHN N. GILMORE
Special to The Gazette

Mynie Sutton would have been the last person to boast about it, but he was a Canadian pioneer.

A pioneer of jazz.

He wasn't the first musician to play jazz in Montreal, but when his tuxedoed Canadian Ambassadors hit the stage at Connie's Inn on The Main in June, 1933, they did more than any other band in town to take jazz out of the back rooms and onto centre stage.

Mynie Sutton was buried yesterday, all but forgotten by subsequent generations of jazzmen. But the story of Sutton and his band, the first organized black jazz band this city had seen, offers a glimpse into Montreal's music scene when the city was one of the nightlife capitals of North America.

By the time Sutton left Montreal in 1941, his Canadian Ambassadors — billed "The Colored Kings of Jazz" by the management at Connie's — had played before the Governor-General of Canada, backed shows that included Billy Holliday and Sammy Davis Jr., played moonlight dances on cruise ships out of Montreal, and taken jazz to the church halls and dance rooms of north-eastern Ontario on a series of summer tours. And *Downbeat* magazine had acclaimed the Canadian Ambassadors the "hottest jazz band in Montreal."

Passed up chance

Myron Pierman Sutton was born in Niagara Falls, Ont., on Oct. 9, 1903, the son of a factory worker who sent him to the local church organist for piano lessons at the age of nine. By the time he was 21, Sutton had mastered the clarinet and alto saxophone and passed up a chance to study classical music at the Boston Conservatory in favor of a job in a black dance band across the Niagara River in Buffalo, N.Y.

After a two-year apprenticeship under pianist Joe Stewart, Sutton joined Eugene Primus' band in Buffalo in 1924, alongside trombonist J.C. Higginbotham and saxophonist Budd Johnson. Higginbotham tried to lure Sutton to New York City with visions of fame and fortune, but the young saxophonist was homesick for Canada. So he signed on with a Cleveland-based band called the Royal Ambassadors who had booked a summer tour of one-nighters through rural southern Ontario.

Crowded into a windowless wooden bus with nine other musicians and their instruments, Sutton's return to Canada was anything but triumphant. But he stuck with the Royal Ambassadors for two years of gruelling summers in Ontario and winters in the States before deciding to form his own, all-Canadian band.

Lured the best back

With black and white musicians barred from working together on the same bandstand, even in Canada, Sutton faced no small task assembling a band of Canadian blacks. Many had already gone to the States in search of work. But Sutton lured the best of them back: tenor saxophonist Lloyd Duncan, who had been playing with the big bands of Jimmy Lunceford and Chick Webb; drummer Terry Hooper, whose legendary brother Lou later played piano with the band; and eventually Buster Harding, who graduated from Sutton's band into the top league in New York as an arranger for Count Basie and Artie Shaw. Augmented by other Ontarians, Sutton's Canadian Ambassadors made their debut at the Gatineau Country Club near Ottawa in December, 1932. Six months later they took Montreal by storm.

But despite their considerable success, life for the Canadian Ambassadors, as for most musicians in Montreal during the Depression, was a constant struggle. "A breakfast of beans, toast, and coffee often had to last you all day," Sutton told me last winter when I met him at his home in Niagara Falls, Ont. "I often helped out the unemployed musicians who didn't have enough to eat."

In clubs and halls

Though Sutton's band played dance music — jazz in those days was first and foremost a dance music — the Canadian Ambassadors were never invited to play in the ballrooms of the city's big hotels. No black musicians ever did in those days. Barred from the American Federation of Musicians until 1939, black musicians were relegated to playing their music in clubs and halls "downtown" on St. Antoine St. and in the "east end," as the area around The Main was then called.

Home base for the Canadian Ambassadors between more prestigious cabaret jobs was the Terminal club, opposite Windsor Station on St. Antoine. With illegal gambling on the third floor, chorus girls on the second, and a reputation for the best fried chicken in town, the Terminal Club witnessed some of the most spirited jazz — and bar-room brawls — of the thirties.

"I used to carry a piece of iron under my seat to challenge the drunks," said Sutton, his voice crackling with laughter.

Corruption, too, was rampant in the city nightclubs.

"I've seen them deliver booze to a club in the morning, then the vice squad would come by in the afternoon and take it away. In order to open the club that night the owner would have to buy his booze back from the cops at 20 to 30 per cent above what he paid for it that morning," recalled Sutton.

A decent wage

Like most musicians of his day, Sutton considered himself a working man. He closed his eyes to corruption and kept his nose clean. And he held out for what he considered a decent wage for his band — $25 a week per man for a band that varied in size from four to ten musicians, depending on the job.

"Rufus Rockhead once told me 'There isn't a musician in the world worth more than $20 a week,' and I said, 'Well, you're taking to one who thinks he is.' So I never did work at Rockhead's."

Nor did Sutton ever get back into the States. Despite job offers from a resort in upstate New York, the U.S. Immigration Department refused to grant the band visas.

Mynie Sutton (fourth from left) pictured with his Canadian

Unwelcome by the musicians' union in Toronto, recorded but never waxed by a record company Sutton had no interest in remembering, the Canadian Ambassadors eventually fell victims to the kind of racial circumstances that have so often shaped the course of jazz history.

While they were working at the Montmartre in the late thirties, the club's owners decided to switch to a white stage show. Traditionally, white musicians had always backed white entertainers — so the Canadian Ambassadors were out of a job.

'They let us go'

"When they changed the policy in one place it started changing all over town," said Sutton. "That put you out of work and you started struggling . . . When the struggle got too hard you cut your band down in size 'till everybody was out on their own working with somebody else."

The Canadian Ambassadors played their last major engagement as an organized band at Connie's Inn in 1938. "They tried to keep our band with the white show and we played their music fine. But then the white entertainers got bitchy, saying we weren't playing their type of music, so they let us go."

Sutton hung on in Montreal for three more years, but when his mother fell ill in Niagara in 1941 he decided to head home for good. Disenchanted, he gave away his clarinet and most of the 300 arrangements in his band's library — many of them originals by Buster Harding, Bill Shorter, and Sutton himself.

Until his death from cancer last Thursday at the age of 78, Sutton led occasional bands around the Niagara area, worked for the Niagara musicians' union, and taught saxophone privately in the basement of his home.

There aren't many people left in Montreal who still remember Mynie Sutton, and almost all of the Canadian Ambassadors died before him. But when Sutton was laid to rest yesterday in Niagara Falls, an important chapter in Montreal's jazz history was silently and unceremoniously closed.

•John Gilmore is writing a book on the history of jazz in Montreal.

15th anniversary concert held for Man & His World

Man & His World celebrates its 15th anniversary tomorrow night with a gala opening concert featuring actress-singer Monique Leyrac, pianist Andre Gagnon and rocker Plume Latraverse.

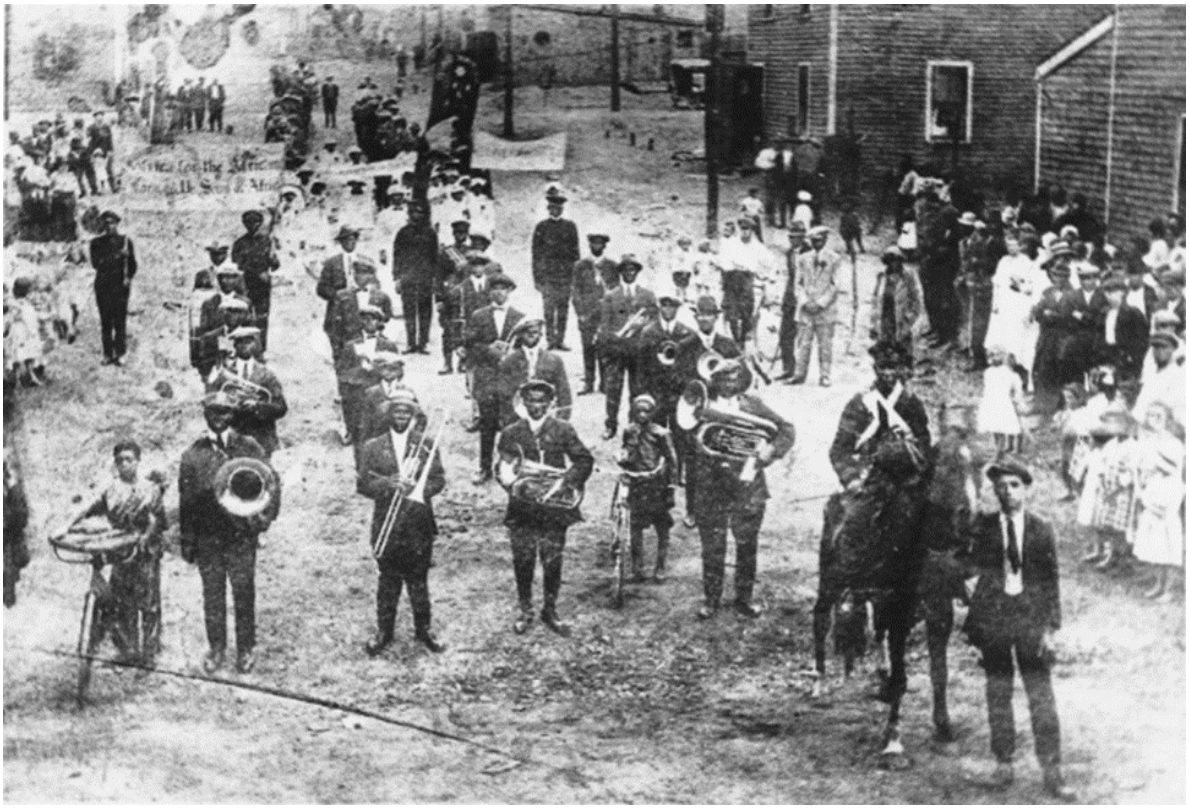
The concert is to be held at the open-air Theatre des Lilas-Brador, on Ile Notre-Dame at 9 p.m. and will be telecast on Radio-Canada, Channel 2, starting at 10 p.m.

In the event of rain, the concert will be presented Thursday at the same time.

8.4. WHITNEY PIER

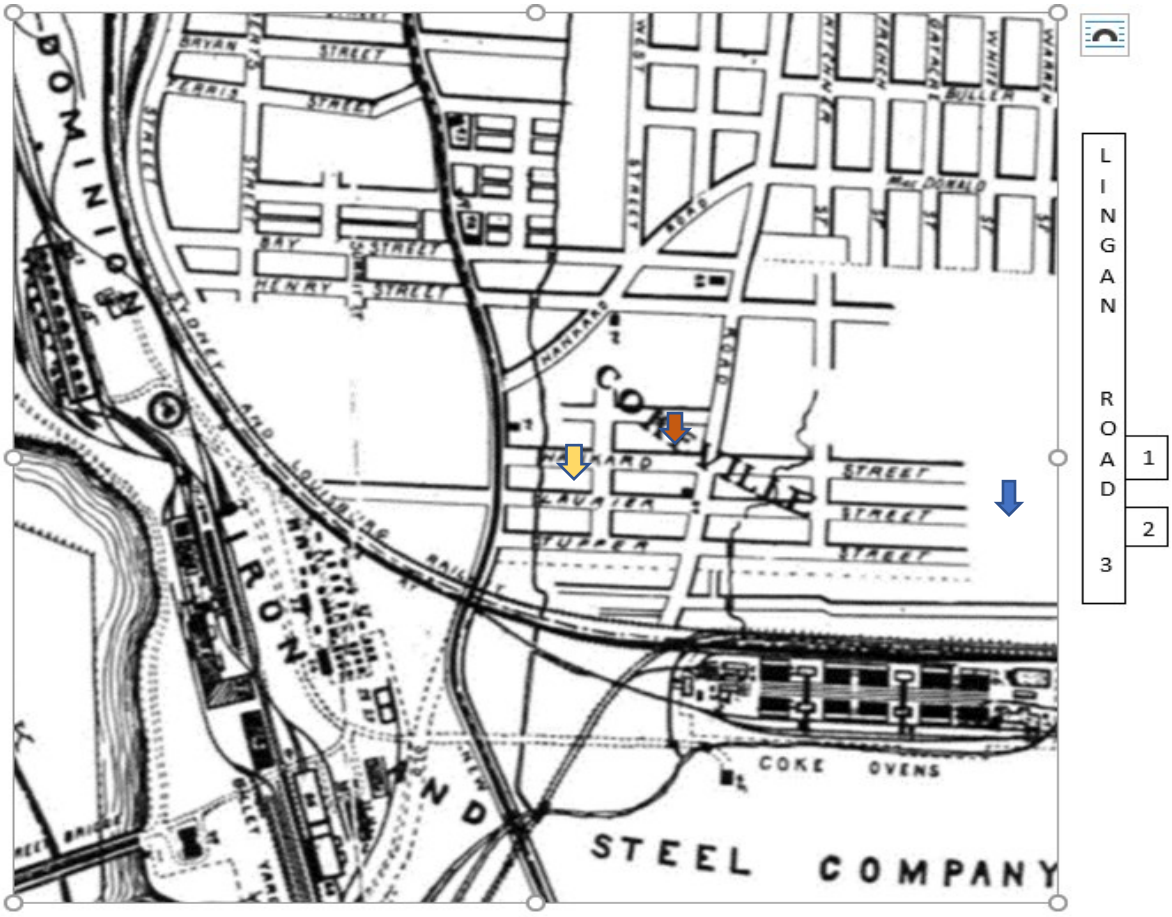
Fig. 8.4.1

Whitney Pier school children c.1920's Beaton Institute Archives, MG 12.198).



"Africa for the Africans" Parade in 1921 on Laurier St. in Whitney Pier (prior to the establishment of a UNIA hall or the St. Philips African Orthodox Church in Sydney). Beaton Institute Archives, Cape Breton. 78-92-1862. Fig. 8.4.2

Beaton, E. "An African-American Community in Cape Breton, 1901-1904," *Acadiensis,* XXIV, 2 (1995), 93. Fig. 8.4.3



1: Present location of the United Mission (now closed), possibly the same building known as 'Mission Dover' in Elizabeth Beaton's paper, cited above. Both served the Black and immigrant community.

2: Proported location of the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) hall, between approximately 1928 and 1937. See *The Gleaner*, 1929, and Reynolds, 2015, 136-140.

3: Author's completion of the map

Menelik Hall My former residence St. Philips African Orthodox Church.

St. Philip's African Orthodox Church, host to the Sydney-Toronto Family Reunion (Google images). Fig. 8.4.4.

Back yards on Tupper Street in Cokeville c. 1950. Beaton Institute photos, MG 12. 198E). Fig. 8.4.5

GEORGE D. MacLEAN

A resident of Whitney Pier for the past 38 years, George Dudley MacLean, 66, of 34 Hankard Street, died yesterday in the City Hospital. He had been ill for the past month.

A native of Barbadoes, he came to Sydney in 1912 and was employed at the steel plant. The news of his passing will be learned with deep regret by a host of friends and acquaintances in this city.

His wife predeceased him a number of years ago and he is survived by two sons, Reg, barrister in Toronto; Cyril, an orchestra leader in Toronto. His son Reg also is a talented pianist and was with a number of orchestras in C. B., Halifax and in Central Canada.

Both sons are in the city from Toronto, also a granddaughter of the deceased, Geraldine.

The late Mr. MacLean was a Past Chief Ranger of Ancient Order of Forresters, Court Washington Lodge here, and was also a member of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows Barbadoes.

The remains are resting at his late residence on Hankard Street and the funeral will be held on Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

George McLean obituary. Fig. 8.4.6. Cape Breton Post, October 27, 1950

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

The NOVA SCOTIA GLEANER

"For the Cause that lacks Assistance,
The Wrong that needs Assistance,
The Future in the Distance,
And the good that I can do."

In the Interest of the Colored People of Nova Scotia

VOL. I, NO. 3 SYDNEY, N. S., OCTOBER 5, 1929 Price 10c

encouragement and to wish them success. He said that there was a new spirit taking hold of the colored people in Cape Breton and he hoped it would extend to the people in other places. That the building was a mark of unity, corporation and vision. He said that every structure raised by us made us stronger and improved our position in the eyes of the world. He pointed out that we not only should raise material buildings but should try also to build on a strong foundation of Christianity and build a strong social and moral structure. He hoped the men would stick together and the work well together and that when we pass on our young ones will take it up. He said we are laying a corner stone to a great structure and we should strengthen the stakes and lengthen the cord and the community would appreciate it. He hoped that this would infuse us with higher things and our people would be always trying for something greater. He told them to aim at the very highest and it will have its effect on our relation in the community. He also quoted the words of Dunbar "Go on and Up".

The next item was a cornet solo by Mr. Rouett, this was followed by a duet by Paris and Allen. A vote of thanks was then moved by Mr. A. Francis. This speaker outlined the early struggles of the men in New Waterford to get a meeting place and have recreation. He said that he must first thank God for the inspiration of the Honorable M. Garvey as it is through his inspiration that we are able to have a hall. He said that there are only about 36 men and women in New Waterford but they put their shoulders to the wheel and by that we have the present structure. He thanked the speakers and the visitors that took part in making it a success. The meeting then came to a close by the singing of the Ethopian National Anthem followed by the National Anthem. After which Rev. England pronounced the benediction.

U. N. I. A. Reorganized

On Sunday, September 15th the Sydney Division of The U. N. I. A. held a reorganization meeting. Rev. C. S. England acted as Chairman for the meeting. He outlined the object of the meeting and told the gathering that the purpose of the meeting was to elect a new slate of officers to carry on the work for the coming year. He pointed out to them that the organization had not been keeping up to the position that it formerly held in the community. The secretary then read the list of financial members. This list showed a membership of 23. The chairman then gave those present an opportunity of becoming financial members. The result was that eight were added to the list. Then followed the choosing of officers. Messrs. George McLean and Alonzo Lucus were nominated for the office of President, the former was elected. The office of first Vice President went to Mr. Lucus in a vote between himself and W. E. Smith. Nominations were asked for the office of second Vice President. The only name mentioned was W. E. Smith. He was elected by acclamation. Conrod Haynes was elected Secretary and Julien Brewster Assistant Secretary. Richard Lovell was elected Treasurer, Rev. England Chaplain. All these were elected by acclamation.

The election of Trustees and the Advisery Board was deferred until the next meeting. The President elected gave a short address thanking the members for electing him and asking the co-operation of all the colored people in the community. After the singing of the Ethopian Anthem the meeting adjourned.

WEYMOUTH FALLS, NOVA SCOTIA

Scattered abroad throughout the Province of Nova Scotia are people of the Colored Race.

Weymouth Falls is a small country settlement of colored people owning their homes and property. Farming and lumbering are their chief industries.

The Pioneer and Progressive Club organizations are carried on by leading Colored men of this place.

There are other societies organized by women for interest of church work and foreign Missions.

Two halls are being erected for public and social affairs. The Mount Beulah Baptist Church and the St. Matthew Church of England are both of colored denominations. This community is growing gradually toward success.

Mrs. Parker, Lynn, Mass., arrived home recently to visit her mother, Mrs. Davison Smith.

The supper given by the members of the African Baptist Church was a success.

Mrs. Jorden and other friends motored from Digby to Weymouth last evening.

CHARACTER

Many men build as cathedrals were built, the part nearest the ground finished; but that part which soars toward heaven, the turrets and the spires, forever incomplete.

—Henry Ward Beecher.

The Nova Scotia Gleaner Vol. 1, No. 3. October 5, 1929. Beaton Institute Archives. PAM – 1605. Fig. 8.4.7

Menelik Hall, Sydney. Fig. 8.4.8.

UNIA Hall, Glace Bay. Fig. 8.4.9. (Google images).

8.5. NORTH HALIFAX

Africville 1960's. From: *Africville, After the Apology*, Oct. 2018, Canadian Museum of Human Rights. Fig. 8.5.1.

Left: Halifax, 1930's, probably Brunswick St. and Springarden Rd., Nova Scotia Archives Film. Fig. 8.5.2.

Right: The corner of Gerrish and Gottingen St., north Halifax. The Davis (Viola Desmond's) family residence is on the top 2 floors (c. 1940). Her historic beauty salon is half a block down (far left at the barber's pole sign). The Halifax Public Library stands there now. One block farther to the left (out of the shot) is the historic Gerrish St. Hall. Photo with permission from Graham Reynolds. Fig. 8.5.3.

HalifaxNorth Music Workshop June-July2018

Fill in the blank:
I am a youth (18-30), and I guess I would say that I am a minority.

I've always wanted to learn how to play the _____, but I never thought I had the _____ or _____.

If I had an instrument and a place to play, I would give it a try, but I have no one to teach me and no one to play with, and no money anyways.

I don't want to be told what to play, just how to play.

I wish I had access to cool electronic gear, I could try stuff, and I would learn to write my own music, in my own voice.

It would be great to meet others like me who want to play funk blues jazz R&B and soul music, and jam once in a while.

If I had a band I would call it _____.

If there was a good place to jam where it cost me nothing, I would go.

iMOVestudios 2439 Gottingen St.@ iMOVeHFX

To join this jazz and blues musicians' workshop Sundays at 2 pm this summer, fill in this questionnaire and return to iMOVe Studios or submit online at: wadepfaff@yahoo.ca or www.facebook.com/search/str/imove+studios+halifax

Name _____. I want to learn to play the _____. I am a beginner __ , novice __ , or amateur __ musician. I have ___ (do not have ___) an instrument to play. Phone/email _____.

Come to our Open House on Sunday June 24th!

iMOVe In My Own Voice

CKDU 88.1FM

Top: Jazz and Blues Workshop handbill. Fig. 8.5.4. Above: Sobaz Benjamin, director of iMove Studios and host of "Youth Now" CKDU Radio show, Halifax. Fig. 8.5.5. Logos from Google images.

Email from Graham Reynolds September 21, 2018. Fig. 8.5.6.

Hi Wade,

I don't think it is possible to fill in the gaps in Viola Desmond's life in New York. She lived there during the last 10 years of her life until she died in 1965 in her Harlem apartment of an intestinal bleed. For a while, she worked at Small's Paradise Club as a cigarette girl and Wanda thinks she was also taking a business course at that time. She eventually became an entertainment agent and probably worked with local musical groups. It would be interesting to explore the Small's Paradise Club connection because this was a well-known entertainment center in Harlem during the 1950s and 1960s. Viola may have made business connections while she worked there. Checkout the history of Small's Paradise Club on Google.

Constance Backhouse has the most to say about this period of Viola's life (mostly in her notes). I talked to her recently about this part of Viola's life and she was not able to add any more information. Wanda recalls that when Viola died, her sister Emily went to New York to clean out her apartment and bring her body home to Halifax. Viola's apartment and clothes would indicate that she was doing quite well financially. It is possible she was doing well as an entertainment agent or she was living off her savings from her previous business enterprises. Wanda confirms that she was a smart businesswoman and she knew how to earn and save money.

My biography does not explore the last years of Viola's life. I simply didn't have the time or resources to do this and with so little information to work with, I didn't want to speculate.

I have attached a draft of chapter 1 from our book *Viola Desmond: Her Life and Times.* This is due to be released in November by Fernwood Publishing. You have my permission to use this material but please cite me in your notes. I should let you know that there is new material in my book that relates to Viola's beauty culture enterprise. I was able to fill in some information regarding her time in Atlantic City where she studied under Madam Sara Spencer Washington at the Apex College of Hairdressing and Beauty Culture.

8.6. LITTLE BURGUNDY

Overhead view of Little Burgundy c.1940s. High, S. *Little Burgundy: The Interwoven Histories of Race, Residence, and Work in Twentieth century Montreal*, Urban History Review, Vol. 46, No. 1, Fall 2017, 23-44. Fig. 8.6.1.

Little Burgundy backyard c. 1950. Fig. 8.6.2. (High, S. *Little Burgundy,* 2017). Montreal trainyard c. 1930. Fig. 8.6.3. https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/little-burgundy-and-montreal-s-black-english-speaking-community

Full cast at a Little Burgundy nightclub in the late 1940's. *Toot Sweet: When Jazz Ruled Montreal* - Canada's History. https://www.canadashistory.ca/explore/arts-culture-society/toot-sweet-when-jazz-ruled-montreal. Fig 8.6.4.

8.7. TORONTO

Yonge and Bloor 1920's and Toronto Midway (pinterest.com). Fig. 8.7.1. and 8.7.2.

CNE midway 1913?

#279F

City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, f1244_it0279f

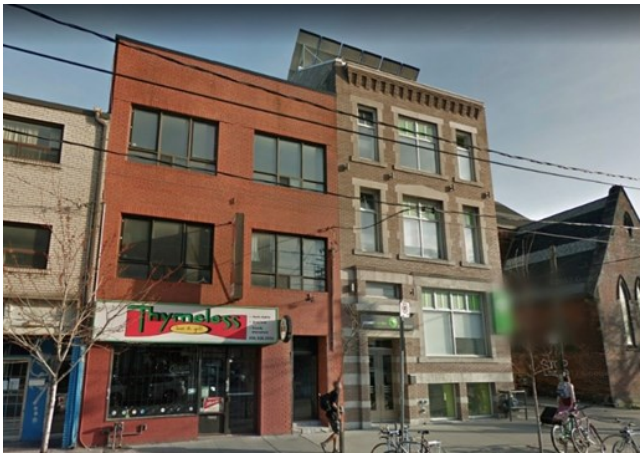
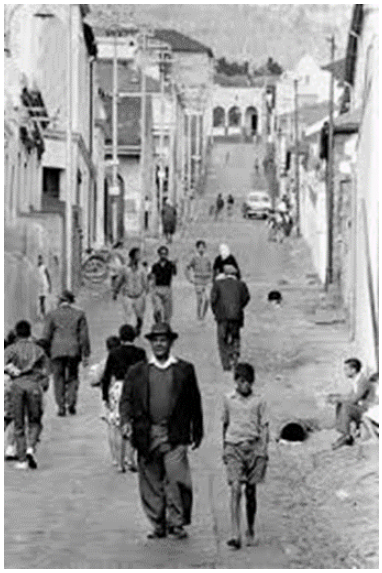


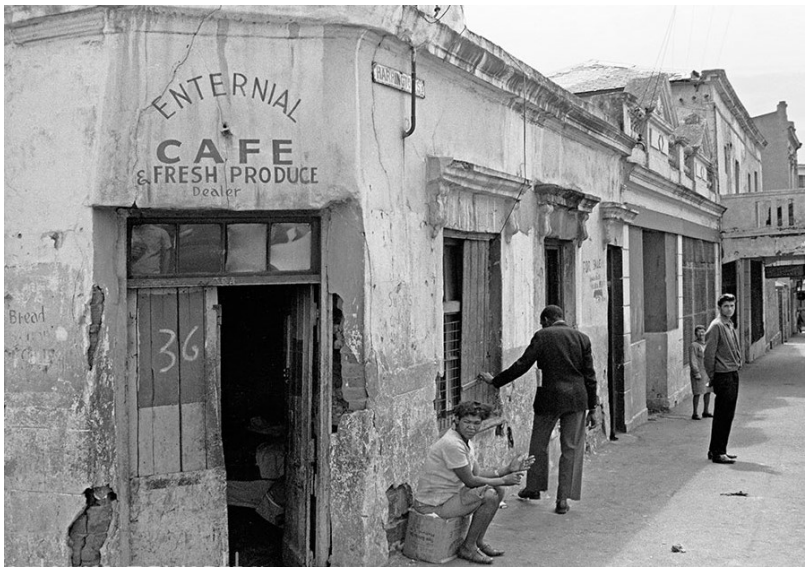
Fig. 8.7.3.
http://spacing.ca/toronto/2018/08/17/marcus-garveys-place-in-torontos-history/

Fig. 8.7.4
https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/access-city-information-or-records/city-of-toronto-archives/whats-online/web-exhibits/caribbean-connection-one-mans-crusade/

Fig. 8.7.5
City of Toronto Archives. #355, 357, and 370 College St. (across the street from the UNIA hall). Google image.

8.8 DISTRICT SIX





District Six 1930's. pinterest.com. and https://grahams-word.blogspot.com/2012/05/district-six-forgotten- injustice.html Fig. 8.8.1. and Fig. 8.8.2.

Segment from: Melanie House, PhD dissertation, 2010. Ohio State University, USA, 45-46. Fig. 8.8.3.

"Eventually, because of the multi-ethnic make-up of District Six, the area was bulldozed out of existence leaving behind only select buildings, memories, and rubble of a once thriving neighborhood. Trafalgar High School, home of the Trafalgar Players, was among the structures in the bulldozed area of District Six. When Isaac Pfaff, a teacher at Trafalgar High School, and his brother Oscar Pfaff founded their theatre company, they based it on the precepts of universal brotherhood and the equality of all persons. For the Pfaffs, the "question of how to theorize a general human identity ... [or a] ... common South African identity" was fundamentally important. This is evident in many of their works. Consider, for example, Isaac Pfaff's "A Time for Compassion: Biko's World in Six Plays." Written under his pseudonym "Paul Roubaix", the publication begins with a Forward penned by Frank Birbal Singh who wrote, "Roubaix's drama deals with wider themes of the freedom and dignity of each individual and his need for practical brotherhood within the context of a universal moral law whose purpose is to ensure the protection of human community and the survival of the species." Known as "Sakkie", Isaac and his brother expressed their passion for universal brotherhood — not only through their original plays but through classic works that addressed their favorite themes. Consequently, they developed a following that included not only the Coloured intelligentsia in Cape Town but other cultural segments as well. In addition to Trafalgar's students, the community's middle class, who had learned about the players through newspaper articles or word of mouth, began to take notice."

Fig. 8.8.4.

The Pfaff brothers: Johnny, Isaac (Sakkie), Oscar, Neville (my dad), Cyril, and Dennis. My niece, Jordyn Goins, 2019.

Segment from: McCormick, Kay, *Language in Capetown's District Six*, Oxford University Press, 2002. Fig. 8.8.5

I have noticed that they speak a lot of Afrikaans '*buite*'.

(*Buite* ['outside'], I was told, refers to all of Greater Cape Town except the areas from which there is a close-up view of the face of Table Mountain.)

We speak mixed up/confusedly.

When they speak Afrikaans then the English just comes in. Then everything gets mixed.

I can't explain it to you but I know they used to have a slang of their own which was different from the people in Bonteheuwel perhaps. But here in District Six there was a lot—I think the *kombuistaal* comes from here, District Six.

them focused not on accent but on the degree of mixing of English and Afrikaans—it was felt to be greater in District Six than elsewhere in the Cape Peninsula and Cape Flats. Ms M's comment implies that there is a difference from prevailing norms elsewhere:

My Grandmother's house in Capetown. My uncle Gerry (a Hendricks, not a Pfaff) lived in the lower apartment at the back until his death on September 9, 2020. This side of Marsden Rd.is the only remaining block left from District Six. When I was there in 1998 and 2001 there was a massive empty lot behind the house where it used to be, but now it is full of upscale houses. That is Table Mountain at top left. Google maps. Fig 8.8.6. Below: courtesy of Tanya Pfaff. Fig. 8.8.7

DNA Story for Tanya

England, Wales & Northwestern Europe	22%
Southern Asia	21%
Africa South-Central Hunter-Gatherers	21%
European Jewish	13%
Central & Eastern Europe	
Western and Central India	7%
Cameroon, Congo, and Southern Bantu Peoples	7%
Eastern Africa	2%
Philippines	2%
Southeast Asia—Vietnam	2%
Ireland and Scotland	1%
Sweden	1%
Turkey and the Caucasus	1%

TRANSCRIPT EXCERPTS

TRANSCRIPT 9A – Nancy Wood with Cyril (Cy) McLean Toronto 1972, Imperial Oil Collection, IR -3b-9

Nancy: What do you do for exercise?

Cy: Well, I go to Vic Tanny, three times a week… often. I spend three days a week at Vic Tanny's most of the time. A little light exercise, nothing heavy you know. Freshen up…

Nancy: You have another job, haven't you? Doing what?

Cy: Well I play piano in the clubs downtown. I've been doing this for years. Playing piano… I have a group. Something I enjoy… I really enjoy this.

Nancy: What kind of music do you play?

Cy: We [can] play everything from [straight] to … [much?]. Jazz, preferably jazz. But the club we're at right now is catering mostly to the elder, older folks, like you know, middle aged, I should say. Not older folks, middle aged. We play all the tunes. Standard tunes like a few of the Pops of the day. A little rock. A little rock here, a little rock there, like you know. Mostly good, clean jazz, you know. Soft… soft, sound.

Nancy: When did you… when did you start all of this?

Cy: Oh, I have been in the band business, I would say about … thirty years? And playing practically any place that's worthwhile playing, I played.

Nancy: Well, you're … well thirty years … you were pretty young when you started, eh?

Cy: Uh, huh. Yes. Well, I started with my brother's band. I started on the violin first. It took, it took about six years span on the violin and then my brother was quite an accomplished pianist, and he took me under his wing for a while and I finally came to Toronto, and I went to Hambourg Conservatory there for a while, and got into the music business with … through my brother and played with the band he was looking after. A big band he had, and I got playing with them.

Nancy: You know all the jazz greats, don't you? Down … they came down to the Colonial and …

Cy: Oh yeah.

Nancy: … played at jam sessions?

Cy: Yeah, I know, Art Tatum. He's a very personal friend of mine. Uhh, and I don't know, Bud Clayton. We all associate together.

Nancy: What do you do when they come into town?

Cy: Oh, usually wind up in a session with them. Bend the elbow a bit. The usual thing (laughs) you know. Party for a while. And uhh … you know swap ideas, talk music back and forth. Like, Earl Hines is another very, very good friend of mine. Whenever he's in town we have a real ball. The

two weeks he spends here at the Colonial, I always have him up for dinner. He like his greens, you know. The wife and I always … have him up to dinner. Have him up. And if there's a football game on that afternoon, or a rugby game we get wrapped right up in it. Or a baseball game. It depends on what time of year he gets up here. You know, baseball season and football season. He's right on the TV, forget about music when it comes to baseball or football.

Nancy: How come you didn't go into music full-time?

Cy: Well, it's just one of those things. It's hard to explain, and myself, I sometimes even ask the question why I still don't. And ahh, I got married. I was under … I did a circuit for a big company around here. I was touring all over for them. And I was away from home a lot, and I was married. And we came back and, I would say my son didn't even know who I was. So, I figured I would try to get something around the city and see if I can't stay stationary. So, one thing I could do back then was to try to get a day job and do the odd job playing. So that's what I did. But the odd jobs became pretty much stable jobs (chuckles).

Nancy: How long have you been with Imperial?

Cy: I've been here 25 years next year. In a few months it will be twenty-five years.

Nancy: Have you noticed any changes over 25 years?

Cy: Oh heavens, yeah! When I first went with the company it was like one big happy family. It seemed like everybody knew everybody. But now you go down and for days you don't see your closest friend, even though you're in the same company.

Nancy: And that's a bad thing

Cy: Well, after you've been here all the years, I wouldn't say it's a bad thing. It's the way the world is changing, I guess. So, you have to go along with it.

Nancy: How on earth do you put up with a schedule like that? What, what's you're working time? You start when in the morning and what time do you finish at night? How do you do it?

Cy: I even do the same thing on the weekends when I'm home. Like, I mean the same hours, I mean I don't sleep any longer. I get up around seven o'clock, quarter to seven sometimes if I'm in a real good mood. And then I start from there. And then three days a week I go down to the gym and I kind of freshen myself, and it carries me through.

Nancy: Give me a run-down then of a typical day.

Cy: A typical day for me? Well, I would say it's about quarter to seven. Wide awake. I listen to seven o'clock news. Get up a shower. Have my breakfast and basically not very much. Then I come down here. I come to Imperial, and I spend from … I get here, I usually get here around five after eight. About five or ten after eight at the latest. Because I like to get a good parking spot. And uhh … I'm here until five o'clock. I go home, I get home about ohh … twenty to six, something like that, with traffic. Pour myself a shot (laughs) and uhh, have a rye, rye and water. Have my supper. Sometimes there's some records I want to listen to, so I put it on. Listen to them and

relax. It's a nice way to relax. Just sitting down and trying to listen to these records. If there's something I want to try on the piano I try it out before I go downtown. I get downtown about oh … twenty-five, that's when I start at nine o'clock. I get there about twenty-five after eight. And then I go sit up to the bar until it's time to play. then away we go relaxing at the beginning

Nancy: What time do you finish?

Cy: Well usually I finish at this particular spot I finish at 12 but there was spots I used to finish at around 2 but it just depends on who's in town. I finish at 12 but whoever is in town if there's something happening in town that I have to go over there after I get through and it just depends on what's happening and what time I get home

Nancy: Do you have many employees as customers of yours downtown?

Cy: Well quite a few of them come downtown you they come down to have dinner and dancing you know or they come down to seaside well I imagine they come there because they know me but they a couple of spots I play it there are real live wires actually quite a few honestly not much to sell but the truth is that's where they used to have the dancing girls let's put it that way quite a few guests friends are doing the rounds at the time you know celebrating having a get-together they don't want to see me at this particular spot.

Nancy: Where were you born Cy?

Cy: What? Sydney Nova Scotia, out east. You know, we hate each other haha.

Nancy: Did you grow up there?

Cy: Yeah, I came up here when I was about oh-oh 16 I guess when I came to Toronto and when did you start working when you came is round here I went to school for about a year here. A couple of years here in school I then I got into the music racket I've been in that since right up to when I came to imperial.

Nancy: You were in it full-time before you came to Imperial.

Cy: Oh yeah. Thought that's all I did, going across the country, travelling … had a real good deal going for myself. We were being sponsored by a big company, so it was a real growing concern. But that couldn't last forever. And then I came back, and that's when I said … got married went and settled down in the same spot and bought a home.

Nancy: What's your favorite form of relaxation when you want to get away from it all? Both from the music side and the Imperial Oil side. What do you do?

Cy: Well, I usually take about three or four days all to myself and go up to the cottage just me and a little record player.

Nancy: And what records do you take? What else do you do?

Cy: I take a collection. I take quite a bit of records you know I take a lot of Ramsey Lewis I like Ramsey Lewis I take Hines. I dig Hines. To just sit down and listen to what those guys are doing

you know. And there's no phone to ring nobody to rap on the door … nothing. I wish I had some other company with me but haha … me and my friend Mr. O'Keefe and Mr. Labatt's hahaha.

Nancy: What is it about music that turns you on?

Cy: Well, to me there's nothing like it really nothing like it really relaxing you sit down I mean you take a real smooth well even a nice good classic you know classics are like you're going off into adult playing there's nothing like being up at the cottage and the rain is pouring outside … couldn't care less like that sometimes it's tapping on the roof and sometimes it's the drumming of the rhythm it's like music you know I really love it beats anything in the world to me you know.

Nancy: Does your family feel the same way? Your wife?

Cy: Yeah, she likes music, but she plays when I'm away. She would have ... she'll buy her own records. She'll have them going all night, so really, she must be playing them a lot cuz the records are well worn when she buys a new one.

Nancy: How does she feel about these wild jam sessions you have?

Cy: Oh she goes along with it she doesn't mind them once in a while we don't have them too often once I used to have them practically every week there wasn't one at my house I was going to one but right now we haven't had one for a little while she's been asking when are you going to have one. So, I said it goes to show she approves of it.

Nancy: What do you do at a jam session?

Cy: Well the last good one was a few years ago when we had this fella a friend of mine he is a very good writer and he wrote some arrangements that he wanted to see what they sound like it was one of the better ones that we had you know and putting his stuff together and a bunch of key men top men and we played the stuff and I still have the tape of it it's very good and you play that and then you put a solo in it and he knows he's conducting the whole thing and everything's polished all your solos are ad libbed but when you get through you play it back you listen to what you did and what it sound like then he adds comments about your individual playing and the group on a whole and while you're doing this you have a little refreshment haha and by the time you have five or six playbacks well then you're in a jam session hahah you forget about the rules haha you're just calling out different tunes your favorite tune like when everybody's … and away you go.

Nancy: Does it get pretty wild?

Cy: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Sometimes you get to playing it's really but it's good it's good it's always taking just swapping things more or less somebody hears plays a different lick and the guy says man that sounds good and he tries it on his horn how do you do that you know later on the two of them are in the corner saying show me what to did there and the rest of the night they are just blasting it out chorus after chorus trying to make each one better than the first that's

fabulous it is it is and the thing about it is all my neighbors as soon as they hear it they're all over at the house so I'm not disturbing anybody cuz they're all sitting there listening. Yep.

Nancy: Where do you live do you live in a house in the city in the suburbs?

Cy: We live out in Willowdale we live out there it's nice up there it is real nice what I see of it anyhow haha that's why I appreciate when I get up there I sit back.

Nancy: Let's get back to imperial for a second besides just the largeness of it the way it's grown over the last 25 years any other changes you've noticed?

Cy: Well ahh, well the change of personnel you know like I mean is everything is moving so fast you never know where one person especially people that you know you know here today and gone tomorrow and then all of a sudden turn if you're here nor there or back again you know they just left the company you know so it's … personnel changes so fast so it's like you know actually you don't get acquainted with somebody like you used to you know before you know a person in such and such a department later you come back and you might have moved his desk but he's still in that department.

Nancy: Still though a lot of people have been around for about 20 years 30 years even 40 years.

Cy: Yes.

Nancy: You must have known people right from the beginning.

Cy: Yeah oh yeah oh yeah quite a few people were kicking around that I've known when they first came to the company but yet once upon a time you go through the hall or up and down an elevator I could know everybody on that elevator you could know by their first name but you but you know who they are you know are you can give nothing uptown you know that they've worked for imperial regardless of where you meet them you know if you went away on a trip even, you know practically everybody at work for the company but now haha you know you meet a person like that you meet him and then when I am out playing somebody would come up and kind of say hey they saw me around here but usually I mean I would know them too like you know, I've never seen them around the building but now it's no way people come and sit up right? and then like the next day they will have dinner they sit up and chit chat the next day they take a look at me and say I think I saw that guy play piano last night hahaha.

TRANSCRIPT 9B – Barry Broadfoot and Mark Nichols with Cyril (Cy) McLean, Toronto 1979, Imperial Oil Collection, IR -6-40

Host: Well just tell me some stories about the club you know. What club is it now?

Cy: Oh, there's several clubs that I play at oh several.

Host: Are they coloured clubs or they mixed or …

Cy: Just cocktail bars downtown.

Host: Oh, just cocktail bars?

Cy: Yeah two of them two main ones I used to play at used to have the strippers then they have lots of strippers and everything you know the company would get a lot of seminars coming to town you know.

Host: Yeah?

Cy: Yeah. A lot of seminars and then they'd come after the game from the company here. Yeah, if they have an evening free right? They'll come down to see me. Oh yeah, we used to have a whole lot of laughs yeah hahaha.

Host: The boys out on the town eh?

Cy: Yeah. Haha … and we'd always get a whole lot of laughs and then there was another incident when I was home. I get a phone call. A gentleman called me up want to know what time I started at. I told him that… what time I get to the club. I told him I get there around 8:30 quarter to. Right, he was down there stranded. Him and his girlfriend ordered everything you wanted, but nobody would pay for it.

Host: Was he a member of this company?

Cy: Yep.

Host: Was he an executive?

Cy: No, no, no … just an ordinary guy and he's out doing the town with his lady, so I just got in touch with the maitre'd, and told him not to worry about a thing. I'll be responsible for him.

Host: You'd go for the tab?

Cy: Yeah.

Host: Did he did he ever pay it back?

Cy: Oh yeah oh yeah. Cy: Hahaha. Double all the sales. All the sales representatives or practically anybody that was on the road for a period knew me from coast to coast. Yeah, practically every one of them would come and spend the night with me. They knew of me anyhow. I'd come, and then they'd introduce themselves to me you know saying so and so said he told me that we'd have a swinging time. I'll go hum …

Host: Did you play with the band?

Cy: Oh yes, I had my own band.

Host Oh you did?

Cy: 15 pieces. Fifteen we played the Sunnyside on the boardwalk. Sunnyside, oh yeah. The Club Top Hat, numbers on the on the road for Lever Brothers…

Host: How do you mean that?

Cy: I did a road tour. I did a road trip for Lever Brothers.

Host: Oh, you did a promotional tour?

Cy: Yeah.

Host: Have you ever done any of that for Imperial?

Cy: No. I played for several of their parties anyhow.

Host: So, it's a nice little sideline?

Cy: Oh yeah put me in good standing you know. Right now, I've got a little holding in Bermuda I mean Grenada.

Host: Grenada eh?

Cy: Beautiful place down there. That's when I'm ready to pack it in you know.

Host: Yeah, so your life at Imperial Oil has been good then eh?

Cy: Uh-huh, no squalks.

Host: Yeah, any discrimination or anything like that?

Cy: Well, I mean, it's like the way … I was operating … I mean it was to my advantage to do what I'm doing, cuz I have my evenings all free you know what I mean? All my concentration was on my music at that time. Yeah, I had a lot of different groups going on, so you just deliver things around and that.

Host: I suppose you seen a lot of them come and go?

Cy: Yep.

TRANSCRIPT 9C – Wade Pfaff and Sobaz Benjamin with Lester and Mark McLean, CKDU Radio, Halifax, November 27, 2018.

Wade: But seriously funky and really, really clean recordings too. I was going to ask you guys. Like, uh, uhm … when did you first get your first recording? Uhm, Lester, let's start with you. When did you get your first record deal?

Mark and Lester: (Laughing hysterically).

Lester: Oh, sorry. Sorry … he's still laughing … haha … because my record deals? I, I, I still don't have a record deal.

Wade: Oh. (Chuckling).

Sobaz: Interesting.

Wade: Every record I've done, gentlemen is … it's been an absolutely … it's been an independent record.

Wade and Sobaz: Uhm, hmm? Ok.

Lester: The first … I'll tell you. Let me just back up a little bit. I mean, there's some things that I find very interesting about … about our great uncle Cy. His history and my history and uhm, one of the things you've noted here, Wade, is that he worked for Bell. Ahh, and in fact, right now … I mean he sort of … I guess he was … obviously, he would have preferred to be a full-time musician, but for circumstances …

Wade: Uhm, hmm.

Lester: …whether that be racism, whether that be just the climate in Canada in terms of trying a life, trying to be a full-time musician or whatnot, or session … he didn't do it. So, what he did instead was he continued to play, but he supplemented his income from playing by doing other jobs, and quite frankly, that's exactly what I have done.

Wade: 355. That's right. That's the famous, you know, United Negro Improvement Association Hall.

Mark: Oh yeah. That's where all the jam sessions used to take place.

Wade: Yeah:

Mark: And we first learned about that through Archie Alleyne.

Wade: Yeah, so you guys were familiar with him?

Mark: Oh yeah, Archie. Archie's … yeah. He's been a great supporter, or was a great supporter of both of us and …

Wade: Oh, that's fantastic.

Mark: That was there in Toronto, yeah. Great drummer. Great person. One of the few …

Lester: You know, Mark has that fire. Then you know, he picked up right after university and went down to New York because he knew that's what he wanted to do. And that … that was a tough choice for him, but he did it because he wanted to pursue music, and that's what he's done.

Wade: Weren't we … we were discouraged you know, as Black people, from entering those fields because you know, it was risky, you know? Shouldn't you … get a government job, or something more secure?

Mark: Yeah, exactly, and you know, our cousin Kojo, you know, he basically stuck his neck out for us (chuckling), because he was like the first one who really went down that road. And I remember everyone trying to talk him out of that.

Sobaz: What do you … what do you think it took for him to do that? I mean, everybody's discouraging you, and you still go for it. Why do you … what is it? What is that?

Mark: Passion.

Sobaz: Uhm, hm.

Mark: Passion and dedication, you know. He knew that's what he wanted to do and … he had other jobs, but ahh … you know, it's tough when the music … when the music's calling. When the art is calling you.

Sobaz: Uhm, hm.

Mark: … and you've just got to do that and he … he was very happy. Very happy.

Wade: So, you guys … you guys came upon this of your own accord. Like, your parents discouraged you from entering that field and you knew nothing about your great uncle until later in life, is that right?

Mark: That … that … that is correct, actually. Uhm, you know, I think they were always … they loved music, our parents, and they are always super supportive, you know. Like, you know … it's not … it's expensive taking piano lessons (laughing).

Wade and Lester: (Chuckling).

Sobaz: You know?

Mark: … and buying instruments. You know, I lived through all that.

Lester: (Laughing).

Mark: You know, there was a time when it didn't sound good.

Lester: That's for sure. Listen a minute … I would … I don't want to … I, I think discouraged is a little bit of a strong word. I think that's … you know, you know maybe, you know … I don't want it to make … as Mark said … they were very supportive of us.

Sobaz: Uhm, hm.

Lester: I don't want it to make it sound like they didn't support and inspire us. Our parents were always there. To this day our parents come to see us play, especially when we play when Mark's back in town and we happen to have … guys back together. Yeah, they're there.

Mark: It's a little … it's rare because you can go to school for percussion and you learn … like, the hand percussions, but when I first moved to New York I was really inspired by a drummer named Harlan Riley who played for The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra led by Wynton Marsalis.

Wade: Ooh.

Mark: He, ahh … he would just pick up the tambourine and start playing, and not only would he play the tambourine with his hands, but he'd play the bottom half of the drum set with the pedals, ahh … and get a really good thing going. So, I took some lessons from him and I sort of studied him.

Wade: Uhm, hm.

Mark: And that's exactly where that influence comes from. From Harlan Riley.

Lester: Exactly. Those three there.

Mark: And they all three are the biggest touring acts in the world.

Lester: Right, right.

Mark: And all three of those, what do they have in common? They had to leave Canada to make it in the US, to come back to Canada. Correct?

Lester: That … that is correct. So, I mean, that's what we're talking about here. So, you know, I understand … I understand how things work and everything, but even going back to Cy Mclean, same thing, you know. Canada was just too small. He refused to go down to the States …for the reasons that I understand you know. Certainly … much more significant type of racism in the US and he just wanted to stay in Canada and provide for his family and that makes sense to me, but I … I respect that very much.

Wade: And so, I wonder … if you would like to see the story of your great uncle included in Black history courses in school?

Lester: Absolutely!

Mark: That … that would be great. You know, a segment … yeah. I think that's something that people need to know and … you know, I think the people just need to learn about the Arts in general. Pushing that, and then the history of the musicians in Canada. It lets you know what … what's happening and what happened. Yeah.

Wade: Yeah. Today everything's getting really political again, now-a-days in the news, eh? But, like, do still that music can bring about social change, today, like it did in those days with the civil rights movement and everything?

Mark: Yeah … I think it can. Music is really powerful for bringing people together. And I like the fact that artists have that power to bring people together with music. And, I remember a quote from Oscar Peterson's … ahh, I think it was … it may be his movie, "In the Key of Oscar," or his autobiography, and he said, if people … "if everybody in the world was a musician, they would really understand what love is all about." So, I think that music can really make … can bring the world together.

Wade: Street Life … huge, huge tune over there.

Lester: Ok, so, in 2004 she had a couple of shows in Zimbabwe and we went to Zimbabwe to play and that was quite an amazing experience.

Wade: Uhm, hm.

Lester: It was inspiring in the sense that, you know … I, I … I've only been actually back to Guyana once, but I was only two years old, and to go to Africa … at the time I was 34, and that was a real eye-opening experience. It just sort of … I got a very strange sense of homecoming, you know … of course.

Sobaz: Did you really? 'Cause a lot of Black people … you say you got that feeling of homecoming?

Wade: I certainly did. I certainly did too.

Sobaz: Interesting.

Lester: Yeah.

Wade: But also, you know, that particular song is almost like an anthem in South Africa. I mean, they must have just given you the greatest time there.

Lester: You know what? I'll tell you what. It was very nice. We played at a place called the Celebration Center. It was in Harare, Zimbabwe, the capital.

Wade: Hmm, hm.

Lester: And the day we got there ... the first time we went there just to set up rehearsal, there was a whole greeting … people greeting us and just … it was unbelievable. It's the one and only time I've felt like a real star in my life. For just internationally, anyways. So, it was really nice.

TRANSCRIPT 9D – Wade Pfaff with Wilma Morrison, Rod and Ann North, St. Catharines, July 18, 2019

Wilma: Well, I, I started out in London and then ended up in Hamilton

Wade: Uhm.

Wilma: … for twenty years, until a cute guy suggested I move down here.

Ann; Ha, ha, yeah.

Wade: Uhm, the primary thing that I'm researching is jazz in the Black communities of Canada. Now, I know that Windsor had a Black community, Niagara Falls had a Black community and Black Church, Hamilton, St. Catharines; all had a Black community … and my understanding is that when Mynie Sutton moved back to Niagara in '41 … you were saying that the article said it was 1941 …

Rod: Uh hmm (nodding).

Wade: … and then he started playing … he started The Casuals, or did he join the Casuals? How did that work out?

Rod: What was that again? I'm sorry.

Wade: Did Mynie join The Casuals, or did he start The Casuals?

Rod: Oh no, there was no … he started it.

Wade: He started The Casuals.

Rod: There wasn't really, like a jazz scene down here.

Wade: No?

Rod: It was all big bands,

Wade: I see.

Rod: …there were instrumentalists that played jazz

Wade: Yes.

Rod: … that were in the big bands, but there was no … not that I ever saw. Where it was strictly a jazz club.

Wade: So, they were playing big band arrangements?

Rod: Yeah, and that sort of died out. And uh, Mynie started a little four-piece. We had an awful lot of three-piece jobs. There was a shortage of bass players (ha, ha, ha).

Wade: Yeah, yeah. It's always hard… I'm a musician myself. It's always hard to find a good bass player. So, you guys would play throughout the Niagara Region?

Rod: Oh yeah.

Wade: …and umm, can you describe to me the atmosphere in these clubs?

Rod: We played mostly for dances.

We even had to play for an amateur night. Where people came up. And that was funny.

Wade: And you just had to back them up as they got…

Rod: Yeah.

Wade: … as they got up and sang?

Rod: yeah. One night a little old lady, she was literally a hundred… came up, said she wanted to play the trumpet.

Wade: She what? Ha, ha, ha.

Rod: She looked like this (grimaces and pulls his lips back). And so, she got her case out, she opened it up, pulled out a pair of false teeth, put them in her mouth…

Wade and all: Ha, ha, ha.

Rod: … picked up the trumpet and called a tune to play.

Wade: And she played, and she knew what she was doing?

Rod: Yeah, she knew what she was doing.

Wade; Wow. Ha, ha, ha.

Rod: Yeah, we had some really good ones. One guy wanted to play beer bottle.

Wade: What's beer bottle?

Rod: He just had a beer bottle, and

Wade: Oh, he had a beer bottle and wanted to (makes a deep vibrating whistle sound)?

Rod: He wanted to (gestures with hands as if blowing in a bottle neck). Whew, whew. And he conducted us behind his back at the same time, so…

Wade: (Chuckles). Now, uhm … I wanted to ask you, just … not much, but just a little about segregation in the 1940's and before the 1940's. And I was going to say, I'm from this region. I was born in Toronto I was raised here. I didn't really experience a whole lot of that myself in the 60's or in the 70's. Now of course we're talking twenty, 25 years before that. And so, I wondered, what was it really like for somebody like Mynie when here moved back here? What was it like? Did he have a hard time getting gigs?

Rod: Everybody I knew that knew Mynie loved the man.

Wade: Yeah?

Rod: Yeah.

Wade: So, there was no real issue if a …

Wilma: …and it was his home.

Wade: Right …

Wilma: So, he was comfortable here… he worked here…

Wade: …his family and his friends…

Wilma: Yeah.

Rod: I remember only once. We went for a beer, and it was a hotel in Niagara Falls, I can't remember which one it was, and they wouldn't serve us. Just this one waiter.

Wade: Right here in Niagara Falls?

Rod: Yeah. Just that once.

Wade: Well I mean, you know, having grown up here, you do run into the odd little bit of racism from time to time,

Wilma: Uhm hmm.

Wade: But it's kind of rare. Sort of rare.

Wilma: Yeah, rare but hurtful.

Ann: … and uhm, we were going out and they had a band and we were going out to hear the band and have dinner… and remember, well I made the reservations, and we walked in and I think when they saw Mynie was colored, I told them what table we wanted, and they said, well that's not available, and I said oh yes it is.

Wade: Uhm hm.

Ann: … and I said that's where we're going to sit.

Wilma: I used to have friends like that.

Wade; Yeah.

Ann: Remember?

Rod: Yeah, I remember.

Wade: Yeah, yeah. You do run into the odd bit of racism from time-to-time. You know, in my family … my family is mixed. Not everybody in my family is brown skinned, not everybody you know.

Wilma: Just about all of our family is dark.

Wade: Yeah, but in one sense, you know, I found it very normal, you know, to be living in a multi-ethnic community. I found it very normal.

Wilma: Yeah, yeah. Well we've never ….

Rod: Well, like Mynie, he was one of my best friends.

Wilma: But you have to take into consideration the fact that we were, at that time about, we were less than one percent of the population.

Wade: Yes.

Wilma: And so, you know, we didn't pose a threat, per se.

Wade: Right. There was not a lot of us.

Rod: I have a friend named Gene Lees. I don't know if you've ever heard of him. He's written all kinds of books on jazz. And he was … he turned out to be the editor of Downbeat Magazine. And he came … we corresponded quite a bit. I'm just telling you about the group and everything else. But ah … he went to Concordia wherever the university is,

Wade: Yes.

Rod: … and saw this display of Mynie, so he wrote me back and he said, "you never told me that Mynie was colored."

Wade: Oh, that's why. Yeah, yeah.

Rod: And I said, "why should I? I don't think that way."

Wade: Right, that's right.

Rod: So, I don't know.

Wilma: So, it was in the mid-forties that in Hamilton they started bringing in Duke Ellington and …

Wade: Oh yeah.

Rod: Duke Ellington.

Wilma: Yeah, Louis Armstrong, yeah, Louis Armstrong used to stay at the house down the street from us.

Wade: Oh.

Wilma: And then we lived in a very small place. The … his clarinet, I think clarinet player stayed at our place. So, we got to know and talk to all of the

Wade: Members of the band.

Wilma: … musicians, yeah. It was really something.

Wade: Yeah, I suppose they …

Wilma: But they played there but they couldn't stay back then in any of the clubs.

Wade: I know, I know.

Wilma: The one particular one was the one in Burlington (looking at Don). I remember reading articles about how it was that he brought all these musicians … all these big-time musicians, and we didn't get a chance to say, "Yeah? What?" (raising brows at Wade).

Wilma: You know, so, the attitudes were different and, it's like, London, to me was very progressive; with having a Black newspapers and people pushing people into Continuing Education.

Wade: Oh yeah?

Wilma: Ahh, when we moved to Hamilton the minister at the church was very progressive. We did a lot of stuff there through the years. The early years. The early forties.

Wade: Community work, education …

Wilma: Community, yeah.

Wade: Uhm hmm?

Wilma: It was really something. And actually, the minister there ended up being … because he was so involved with the community, he ended up being given the honor of Citizen of the Year. That was 1953. Pretty early. You know, things like this we've been pushing for, and it's, it's change. And change continues to change.

Wade: Yeah.

Wilma: But it was a very slow start.

Rod: I don't know if it's true or not, but when I was growing up, I heard different people talking, and there was a law on Thorold's books … whatever they're called, that a Colored person couldn't spend the night in Thorold because at this point they were building the canal …

Wade: Right.

Rod: … and there had been a murder or something …

Wade: Are you talking about the 1930's?

Rod: God I'm not …

Wilma: Yeah that's right.

Rod: (Looking at Wilma) Did you hear that?

Wilma: Yeah, I did.

Rod: And ah, we had the badminton club the golf club …

Wilma: They were fancy.

Rod: Yeah.

Wilma: They were really fixed up.

Rod: And we played like weddings and you'd have to play polkas, waltzes …

Wade: Yeah.

Rod: You played everything.

Wade: Yeah, you were playing to a crowd you never knew what they would want to hear.

Rod: We played Italian wedding and Mynie would try and make sure we had a couple of Italian … what are they called? There's a special name for them, I can't remember what it was.

Ann: Ellises?

Rod: It's like a polka but that's not what it's called.

Wilma: That was half of Niagara Falls

Everyone: Hahaha.

Ann: The place was …

Rod: I mean it was just … Mynie was playing jazz but it wasn't …

Wade: It wasn't pure jazz all the time.

Rod: No.

Wade: It depends on what's the audience wants.

Rod: Yeah. It was … just playing for people to dance to.

Wade: Yeah.

Rod: Yeah.

Wade: Dancing was very important.

Rod: Oh God, yes.

Wade: And people in this region just like everywhere, I'm sure they loved to dance.

Rod: Pardon?

Wilma: Yeah.

Ann: They came from where they don't dance.

Wade: And they would get dressed up to go out dancing.

Wilma: Yes.

Rod: … and they'd have dances every weekend … someplace.

Wade: And the men were very on their best behavior when it was at a dance, right?

Ann: Yes.

Wade: They were well-dressed they were polite to the girls.

Ann: Oh yeah.

Rod: He never mentioned the fact that he had quit smoking. But he had quit just like that (snapping fingers). Bang. He must have been smoking for years.

Ann: Yeah.

Rod: But what got me was, he never said, "no I've quit," he just said no thanks. Hahaha.

Wade: Yeah, and I'm sure everybody around him smoked.

Rod: Yeah.

Wade: That was very common.

Ann: Oh, everybody.

Don: You could see in some of these Halls, the smoke …

Wade: Yeah.

Rod: … hanging off the ceiling and I'd come home, and I'd have to put my band jacket out outside to get the smell out of it.

Ann: Oh God yea. It was terrible you couldn't hang it in the closet.

Wade: Yeah, I can imagine smoking was very common. And I saw in the newspaper clippings this morning … I think that she passed away … about, oh-three or something. May? His, his widow?

Ann: Yes.

Wade: She passed away something like '03, Yes. Ok, and uhm, so … So, it sounds to me like he had a very colorful life, a very full life.

Rod: He was a great guy.

Wade: Yeah.

Rod: I never heard anyone say a bad word about Mynie.

TRANSCRIPT 9E – Wade Pfaff with Joe Sealy on Skype, Halifax and Toronto, November 22, 2018

Wade: So, you've had a very interesting career I mean you started on you started in Montreal and…

Joe: Yeah, I was about 17 when I started working professionally in Montreal with a lot of the musicians were x New Yorkers who had migrated to Quebec and particularly in Montreal. I worked a lot with them all through the province basically from late 1956 right until 1959 when I joined the armed services. And at the same time while I was doing this, I was going to Sir George Williams University in Montreal which is now Concordia, so it was a busy time for me, you know.

Wade: How did you get this strong interest in jazz by the way?

Joe: Well that's a good question I guess probably my dad had an influence on me he had records that he really enjoyed he really enjoyed the saxophone the jazz saxophone he had records by Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young yeah. Yeah, Flip Phillips and he also liked a guy by the name of what was his name alto player Earl Bostic and he also had some count Basie a couple of count Basie albums and since I was sort of interested in the music he started taking me to see Jazz at the philharmonic in Montreal when I was about 12 or 13 years of age which would have been …

Wade: About what year it would have been?

Joe: I was 12 it would have been 1952 so 52 - 53 in that area.

Wade: Can I quickly divert you for a moment? what kind of clubs were still existing in 1952-53 in Montreal

Joe: Good question. I was too young to go to them in Montreal, but I would expect that Rockheads that might have still been going. I think the Saint Michelle had closed down but it reopened years later as the Harlem Paradise. I actually played there with a couple of bands on occasion. I'm trying

to think of what else that might have been there as far as clubs. I would say probably Rockheads was the main one. I think he was still operating although I was too young too young to go.

Wade: Was that all in one strip, so you could easily access them?

Joe: Yeah, at Mountain and St Antoine it was on the corner of de la Montagne and St Antoine and right across the street until around that time was the Harlem Paradise. That's what's originally what was the Saint Michelle.

Wade: So, they had Jazz quartets at that point orchestras floor shows?

Joe: Yeah, they I mean it was entertainment and they would have an MC and

Wade: Dance acts?

Joe: Dancers. You know jazz music would be predominant, however.

Wade: Were these Black bands in those clubs?

Joe: Yeah there were black bands playing still.

Wade: Do you have family in Africville?

Joe: Yeah. Well, my dad had sort of great aunts and second cousins, etc. Some of them would come up to visit us in Montreal as well. Some of my second and third cousins would come up from Africville and stay with us for a week or two. So, it was that little bit of cultural exchange that was going on.

Wade: But I guess Montreal was really happening in those days it must have seemed like a really small quiet environment

Joe: What Montreal?

Wade: No, Halifax by comparison to Montreal.

Joe: Oh yeah it was pretty quiet really it really was even though it was an international city because it was a seaport town and ships used to come in from all parts of the world but it was still relatively small and relatively quiet there was no Jazz but the only Jazz that was happening in Halifax at the time was the jazz club 777 Barrington Street which was quite well known at the time right across Canada and when I went to the West coast it had closed down and when I got back in the fall of 1960 they moved to 599 Barrington Street.

Wade: Do you remember any names that were important in the black clubs around then in the community for black artists

Joe: Well, there was a while the other one that was open that I don't think was open at that particular time probably active at the time was the Arrows Club which was on it was on Argyle or one of those streets

Joe: Yes, mostly from Trinidad and in Jamaica and also Barbados because my dad we are Barbadian of Baijian descent yeah so there was a strong very strong community of West Indian based community. Yeah, I think that was the big difference.

Wade: So, you mentioned that a couple of days ago when we spoke that you're the first musician in your family, so you didn't inherit this. you mentioned that your father was an influence how was he an influence?

Joe: Well he… he, you know as part of his relaxation he played on the c Melody saxophone and he was a very amateur player and it a c melody he was very of good, 'cause we could do duets together off the piano sheet so a lot of my early playing was playing some of these semi religious songs that he could he could play in the c Melody saxophone with me

Wade: So that was your father's interest was religious music?

Joe: Ah, it was written music that he was familiar a lot of it was religious because that's the music that he was familiar with he was not overly religious but in retrospect trying to think of some of the songs we played like Star of the East and I'm trying to think of some other tunes or pieces that we would play you know some of them were just but it was simple music that he could not only read but he was familiar with the melodies so he knew what he was playing wrong he was familiar with the melodies

Joe: What can I say Oscar is Oscar man. And I hear a nostalgia when I hear him play, don't you?

Joe: Yeah. I hear a lot of nostalgia. Yeah he's such a pristine player he can play with fire and he can play with passion and he can play with tenderness and you know he's the full gambit and I knew Oscar I'm not mean I would wouldn't say we are friends I mean Oscar we were where we our paths crossed on many occasions and we always had a good relationship with each other but you know you don't make friends with Oscar … Oscar decides if he wants to be friends with you like it or not and that was fine with me 'cause I never ever considered myself to be in his league, but at the same time I did well in his profession he paid me a compliment I would say I think you did very well he said I would say the only compliment I mean he never really criticize me but the only compliment I ever gave me he ever gave me, he said I like your compositions and I thought fine I'm happy with that he made my year (laugh).

Wade: You know, that … that's a great compliment from Oscar Peterson.

Joe: Yeah, yeah. He goes I like your writing yeah that was wonderful he doesn't spread compliments his sister Daisy I love this story. Daisy, Oscar tells us about Daisy when he first started making it in the business you know he was so doing well and he's playing the Blue Note New York and somebody invited Daisy to come down and catch the show so Daisy's in the audience and … and he and Ray Brown and Ed Thigpen open the stage and then they play this blistering set and Oscar comes out and sits at the table with Daisy and he goes well so what you think of that laughs, you know laugh Daisy said do you really always have to play in e flat and b flat don't you ever play in b & g flat or anything like that. and you know playing those keys and Oscar... what the hell what do I gotta do to get a compliment? then he'll laugh

Wade: My God, what a Nazi.

Joe: I know, (laughs) and that's when I was taking lessons from her and I hadn't had lessons in like 6 years or something and I'd be playing and she be in the kitchen cooking while I was playing and listening and I would hit something and she would say from the kitchen Joey that's b flat haha so her ears were like...she heard everything really well I mean, I think the ear is really important when it comes to playing jazz, isn't it?

TRANSCRIPT 9F – Wade Pfaff with "Red" Mike MacDonald, Sydney, February 3, 2017

Wade: So, I understand your father was part of Gib Whitney's Orchestra

Mike: He was a small part of Gib Whitney's Orchestra. He was also a part of Emilio Pace's Orchestra.

Wade: Hmm

Mike: He also played with Charlie Hillcoat's Orchestra

Mike: And Charley Hillcoat was still operating. Not too much, but by then… the uh, big band thing began to fizz out, you know.

Wade: Yes.

Mike: Instead of the big bands there were smaller units.

Wade: Quartets…

Mike: Instead of the 15, 14-piece bands, they were down to maybe 9 or 10, you know.

Wade: Even that would have been large.

Mike: That would have been a large band.

Wade: It was very expensive to keep these guys employed and fed.

Mike: Exactly, yeah.

Wade: Now, uhm… are you aware of like, the different races coming together coming together and playing at any point in time?

Mike: Well um Alf Coward, who was a Black pianist…

Wade: I just heard of him today.

Mike: Yeah, well Alf and I did some work together at CBC.

Wade: Wow!

Mike: And um, Alf played with uh, the Emilio Pace band.

Wade: Uhh, hmm?

Mike: And that was mostly, well that was an all -white band, with the exception of Alf.

Mike: Oh.

Mike: He was a piano player. A very, very good piano player.

Wade: Hmm.

Mike: …and his brother Don, who was also a piano player, and … I did work with Don, but um, Alf went to Toronto. He attended med school for a couple of years, got out and taught jazz piano in Toronto, and I guess, did very well, from what I gather.

Mike: Yeah. The Menelik Hall would have been one of them.

Wade: The Menelik Hall is one…

Mike: Yeah.

Wade: …and they would perform there on weekends all the time?

Mike: Well, you're talking about Black musicians… there was uh there was a…a group… now I remember my first exposure to Jazz was with uh, Don Coward on piano, Sinclair Grantham on tenor saxophone. That was Don's stepbrother, um, Evellyn Braithwaite on bass, and um….

Wade: 'Cause one of the things … you talk about the Menelik Hall, there … from the 1930's, and the …

Mike: Yeah.

Wade: … there were jam sessions that were going on there …

Mike: Oh, they went on right into the Fifties. The Menelik Hall, yeah.

Wade: Right into the Fifties? Yeah., and it was just an informal thing? They didn't advertise, or was it just, you go there …?

Mike: Oh, I remember one particular night, ahhh … a guy on bass … a guy from … Bucky Adams, he was the … I don't know what he was playing, alto or tenor that night, but it was Bucky, ahh … a guy, Rory Eastman, bass player. Good bass player from Halifax. Of course, Bucky was from Halifax. And, uhh … I don't know who the others were, but anyway, it was just a … they decided to play at the Menelik Hall.

Wade: And just showed up?

Mike: The place was jammed.

Wade: Huh.

Mike: And they were dancing there, they uhh … had a great night.

Wade: So, musicians could just do that? They could just …

Mike: Playin'.

Wade: … say I'd like to play?

Mike: Yep, … it … that happened a few times. I can remember that happening a few times.

Wade: Hmm.

Mike: Uhm, like I said … not all went out. Uhm … I can remember one guy came down here, ahh, he ahh … I got a call … what he did was he called as many musicians as he possibly could …

Wade: … before he got here.

Mike: Yeah.

Wade: Uhm, hmm.

Mike: And then, the musicians, of course would call their friends and they would turn out at the hall, right, however many that might be.

Wade: So …

Mike: It didn't happen all that often.

Mike: Yeah. Well, in my opinion, we had one of the best female vocalists…uhm, I'm sure… east of Montreal. Ethel Miller.

Wade: Yes?

Mike: She was a Black lady, and she…man, could she sing. Uhm …

Wade: Did she go on to work in Toronto and Montreal too, yeah?

Mike: She was asked to, but she refused. She decided to hang in here. Her favorite saying used to be … Ahh …" better to be a big fish in a small pond, (haha) than a small fish in a big pond" (ha, ha, ha).

Wade: Mister MacDonald, I have said those very words myself, so many times… (laughs).

Mike: Ha. It's probably very true. You know, there's probably more truth in that…

Wade: Uhm, hm.

Mike: And a great lady too.

Wade: Hm.

Mike: Ethel. A beautiful woman. I was a pall bearer at her funeral.

Wade: Oh, wow.

Mike: Yeah, that was just a great lady. But you know, with the advent of Charlie Parker, when he came in with the modern jazz thing…that sort of… uhm…took another direction.

Wade: Yeah?

Mike: So, you didn't have musicians, here that had the background (28:35), including myself. Like, to keep up with that sort of thing…didn't have the training.

Wade: I understand. As a musician, myself, I completely understand.

Mike: Yeah, Right on. So, that took a while, you know to get on to his tunes …and you know, learn them, and ahh, play them. But ahh, yeah, it took another direction altogether uhm …

Wade: And it must have scared off the public.

Mike: Yeah. That's, see, that's the problem. See, guys, they'd want to go out there and play, but you can't go out there and play Charlie Parker stuff and expect to educate…

Wade: Uhm, hmm.

Mike: …the public. You know, they're, they're not ready for that. I mean, there's few musicians who…

Wade: Few musicians are accomplished enough to play it…

Mike: Exactly.

TRANSCRIPT 9G - Wade Pfaff with Margaret Gordon and Linda Carvery, Halifax, April 26, 2019.

Margaret: I wasn't born in this neighborhood. I was born in the country in a place called Hammonds Plains.

Wade: Hammonds Plains?

Margaret: That ... that's in Halifax here.

Wade: Oh, oh, oh. Ok. That's right here in Halifax.

Margaret: It's one of those country places.

Wade: I haven't been to that area but … did you grow up in this area here … in addition, like when you got older?

Margaret: Oh yeah. We knew what was going on … what was concerning here.

Wade: Yes … what was concerning here? You always knew what was going on?

Margaret: Yeah.

Margaret: All the time. To me, I … you know, when I went, I enjoyed it. I was satisfied with myself you know.

Wade: Yes, but I mean, if you were to go to the theatre you would have to come to this neighborhood, right?

Margaret: Yeah.

Wade: If you came to see a movie or came to …

Margaret: Oh yeah, we did that.

Wade: … go to a dance?

Margaret: The dances were on the weekend at Gerrish Street Hall.

Wade: Yes. What was it …

Margaret: And it was all …

Wade: Oh yes?

Margaret: … all about music.

Wade: It was? A lot of musicians around?

Margaret: Yeah, but different ones used to come and visit and play … like, you know …

Wade: That's what I heard yeah. What was it like at the Gerrish Street Hall? What did the inside look like?

Margaret: The building or the people?

Wade: The inside … well, the building first, and then the people. (All laughing).

Margaret: Well, the building was alright as far as I was concerned, it was a nice place, you know.

Wade: Was it very fancy?

Margaret: No, no.

Wade: No?

Margaret: Not really that fancy, but …

Wade: So …

Margaret: It was different, and it was new, you know.

Wade: When did they first go … when did they first open? I don't even know.

Margaret: Oh dear.

Wade: They were there early on, weren't they?

Margaret: (Nodding) That would be very early … I don't know (Looking at Linda).

Linda: Before they sent … the troops.

Margaret: Well, I was born in 1921 and it wasn't there.

Wade: No? Ok, but my understanding is that it was here from a long time ago. Was it a Black owned business?

Margaret: Oh yes.

Wade: Yeah? And so, there would have been like, performances there every weekend, but also … like, maybe … ah, you know, wedding receptions and …

Margaret: Oh, they had different things going on there.

Wade: Things like that, yeah? And uhm … and so, I still haven't got a picture of Gerrish Street Hall in my head. I can't seem to find one, but I know … I know there was a lot of dancing going on in those days.

Margaret: Oh yeah, there was mean music … music, mostly.

Wade: What other places did people go to besides The Gerrish Hall?

Margaret: that's the only place that I know of that … you know, that … if you wanted to find out anything from where we really came from … we went there. They played different kinds of music. Jazz …

Wade: All kinds of music, right.

Margaret: Bluesy.

Margaret: Well, no. Other places they weren't run by Black people.

Wade: … they weren't run by Blacks all the time … What …

Margaret: No, they were run by White people.

Wade: Were they segregated places, most of the time?

Margaret: Yeah.

Wade: Yeah? So, down on Barrington it was all segregated.

Margaret: Yeah.

Wade: But there was Black musicians … but you couldn't … if you were a customer …

Margaret: Oh, yeah.

Wade: … you couldn't go there to dance.

Margaret: If you used to go there … you got into something you know?

Wade: Yeah, yeah? So, when you had big names come here, where would they play? Would they play on Barrington Street?

Margaret: They would be on Barrington Street, yeah.

Wade: Yeah? And then …would they also play in the Black community too?

Margaret: Yeah, sometimes they would. Once in a while they would, but not that often. Oh. (All looking at Linda off screen).

Wade: Yeah. Well, this is where I was going to go to next. I guess there was really no … no performance venues in Africville, but people would go there, and they would play at people's houses (pointing to Linda).

Linda: That's right.

Wade: Is that right Miss Carvery?

Margaret: Yeah.

Margaret: And the reason I went in there … I like music.

Wade: You like music?

Margaret: I love music.

Wade: Aw, really? So, can you think of any of the musicians that played there regularly? Or bands … the names of the bands?

Margaret: Oh yeah, but I can't think about the names.

Wade: No. It's probably hard to remember …

Margaret: Oh, yeah. Oh yeah.

Wade: Anybody anywhere …

Linda: Wouldn't Archie Dixon? He's a horn player, Archie Dixon … used to play …

Margaret: Oh yeah, Archie.

Wade: Oh yeah?

Linda: He's … he's dead now. He would have been in his nineties.

Margaret: Well, there wasn't that many.

Linda: But Archie Dixon was a … was a saxophone player, right? And didn't Bucky Adams' father play, or something?

Wade: So, would be the place where they could get started? It was the Gerrish Street Hall.

Linda: That's the only place.

Margaret: Yeah, oh yeah.

Wade: It was the only place down here.

Margaret: That was the only place they had down here.

Wade: I see. So, maybe Africville … everything would have been in homes … would have been private parties.

Linda: Yeah.

Wade: But here in town it would have been in the Gerrish Hall. I see.

Margaret: (Nodding) The Gerrish Hall.

Wade: So, you must have seen some great music there over the years.

Margaret: Yup.

Wade: Uhm, I mean … I don't know when they closed. Do you recall when they closed?

Margaret: I don't remember when they closed. I'm not sure …

Wade I could look it up, but ahh … there was a lot of rebuilding going on in the fifties and the sixties.

Linda: Exactly.

Margaret: I think it was there for years and years. It was there for years and years.

Wade: Yeah. It seems that they were. It seems that they were. Well, that's fantastic.

Linda: And … and you … you even sang there, mom. She sang with a group called The Three M's.

Wade: Three M's?

Linda: it was Margaret, her sister May Sheppard that you talked about …

Wade: Yes?

Linda: … and another woman named Margaret.

Wade: Oh.

Linda: Two of them are still living.

Wade: No kidding. So (looking at Margaret), you were really into music then.

Linda: She was.

Margaret: I loved it. (Laughing) I loved it just like a child, really. I don't know what they were playing, but he could go, you know? He had to make something go.

Wade: So, I … I suppose, like a lot of other small towns, they probably had talent shows all the time.

Margaret: Not as often as they should have.

Wade: More so, eh? There was a lot of good talent?

Margaret: Yes.

Wade: Yup. And then dance contests

Margaret: Oh yeah.

Wade: I'm sure.

Linda: And the great dancers came from the Adams family.

Wade: Did they? Oh wow.

Linda: Superb dancers, yeah. The top ones came from the Adams family.

Wade: And so, I always had been told that they couldn't get a hotel room in Canada. So, they had to count on the Black community …

Linda: … to house them.

Wade: … for a place to eat and a place to stay when they were performing. No matter how much money they were being paid at The Forum, they still had to come and count on their own people for a meal. And throughout … and so, my understanding was that they played in the Black community.

Margaret: Yeah, but I mean …

Wade: Not much eh?

Margaret: Very seldom. Not a lot.

Wade: Very seldom. They maybe stayed at friends' houses … rich peoples' friends' houses.

Margaret: Yeah anyways, those ones you were talking about … in town … you were just saying …

Wade: Duke Ellington and …

Margaret: Yeah … the main ones.

Wade: Count Basie …

Margaret: They would play for the other people.

TRANSCRIPT 9H – Wade Pfaff with Corey Adams in Africville, Halifax, January 5, 2019

Corey: I have to go back to the beginning. My dad … every time he went to the store, he used to go from here, probably to the top of the hill.

Wade: Uhm, hm?

Corey: I would go and, and … I would ahh … sneak out, even though … so I could watch him go out … so I could go take his horn out of the case and go … (miming playing saxophone).

Wade: Oh, Ok. So, you play saxophone as well.

Corey: Well, yeah.

Wade: Yeah? Ok.

Corey: Well anyhow, so he'd come home and then he'd open up his case afterwards and say, "Hey, are you playing my horn?" No, I didn't play with your horn man.

Wade: (Laughing).

Corey: (Laughing) So anyways, he did an interview and I heard the recording. He said that when his father used to leave the house, he used to do that to his father (laughing). For real (laughing).

Wade: His father was a saxophonist too?

Corey: Yeah. His dad was a saxophonist too. (Referring to Charles Adams, who played with Lou Hooper and Harold "Steep" Wade in the 1920's and thirties in Montreal). You know.

Wade: No kidding. So, that really goes back.

Corey: So, it's … it's in the family, you know. The horns alone were … a family thing. Passed down and passed down from generation to generation.

Wade: So, getting back to what you were saying in the car … that there weren't a lot of clubs around, but there were certainly a lot of private events, you know …

Corey: Yeah, yeah.

Wade: You know, lining rooms and basement parties …

Corey: Yeah, yeah.

Wade: 'Cause when I spoke to Miss Gordon … and she was saying that there were no other venues in Halifax. Nothing.

Corey: Uhm, hm.

Wade: But you mentioned The Arrows Club … I think that was a little bit later on though, in the sixties.

Corey: The Arrows Club came after … after the …

Wade: Yeah.

Corey: The Gerrish Street Hall. And there's The Unusual Club.

Wade: Club Unusual.

Corey: Club Unusual.

Wade: Well, you know … it would be very … I'd be very fortunate if I could meet your father. You know, he could …

Corey: He, ahh … the video would give you a sense of who he was, though.

Wade: Yeah.

Corey: Because he's … (laughing) he smoked a lot of weed.

Wade: Did he? Yeah? (Laughing).

Corey: You know what I mean? And if he knew that they were legal now, he would probably get back on his motorcycle and …

Wade: Ha, ha, ha … That's crazy.

Corey: But he was the coolest cat. I don't … I mean, we became friends.

Corey: So, Joe told you about The Gerrish Street Hall then? You know, he's played in it.

Wade: A little bit. I didn't … I asked him to describe the interior and he said it was just an empty room.

Corey: Yeah.

Wade: And that's not very good (laughs).

Corey: But … he wasn't lying.

Wade: Yeah.

Corey: It was an empty room, but it was … it was … to the people that were going it was *the* room.

Wade: Anybody who … they rented it. They could do whatever they wanted.

Corey: So, actually the band was called The Unusuals. That was the band with my dad and Joe Sealy.

Wade: Ahh.

Corey: And Joe Sealy, Chuck Connish … Chuck Connish and a white guy too. I can't remember his name. Kenny … Kenny something. Kenny Odvak? Kenny … the guy used to clean the place. I was only like, eleven years old.

Corey: Like … he wrote the … well, the Africville …

Wade: Africville Suite.

Corey: … Suite, or whatever, but now, everybody's trying to write about Africville something now.

Wade: Yah.

Corey: … because we're in the midst of settling sometime soon (referring to reparations for the forced relocation of Blacks in the late 1960's).

Wade: That's great.

Corey: The money and stuff … they had a surveyor in and surveyed the whole area … surveyed with the cane up here where we were, the bridge would be burnt today, and down to the south. For face value, right?

Wade: Uhm, hm. That would work. Whatever money they were given, that doesn't even count anymore.

Corey: That has nothing … nothing.

Wade: Oh, good.

Corey: … because they've foreseen that the people who … who …

Wade: They got conned.

Corey: Yeah, they got conned because …

Wade: They got totally conned.

Corey: … somebody saw … somebody saw the bigger picture.

Wade: Yeah.

Corey: They didn't want … they basically said it was nonsense, but meanwhile, we were self-sufficient.

Wade: Yeah.

Corey: You know, we weren't … no one was on Welfare there.

Wade: So, they're going to tear it all out again? (Speaking of Gottingen St. neighborhood).

Corey: It won't be tomorrow, but that's the word around.

Wade: Naw … they can't do that. That's an historic neighborhood.

Corey: They're doing it now as you can see. 'cause that used to be an entertainment district.

Wade: Yeah. Yeah.

Corey: The Steam Room, The Cap, The Birdie. These are places that all the Black people used to go.

Wade: On the opposite side of the street there, across from the library.

Corey: Across from the library? Yes.

Wade: Ok. Because that's a whole new developed area. Even on the same side of the library there's no old buildings left until you go up a few blocks … past Cunard, right?

Corey: Uhm, hm, uhm, hmm. (Chewing).

Wade: So, everything that used to be there was …

Corey: At least the after hours. I played at one and we'd start at one in the morning.

Wade: Yeah?

Corey: … finish at six.

Wade: Uhm. So, what can you tell me about those places?

Corey: What I liked about it is, as soon as we began playing, we got paid. Even if there was one person in there.

Wade: Oh yeah?

Corey: They paid us right from the beginning.

Wade: So, these are after hours that made money.

Corey: They made lots of money. Lots of money. And they were classy too.

Wade: They were classy?

Corey: Real classy

Wade: Oh yeah?

Corey: They had trap doors to get in.

Wade: Yeah?

Corey: Oh yeah (motioning with one arm) … you had to lift it. It was steel.

All: (Laughing).

Wade: Then you exit out the back alley (laughing).

Corey: Yeah.

Wade: And with a guitar you've got six notes you can play at one time, but with a saxophone you better know what you're doing, you've got one note.

Corey: My dad didn't know how to read … and he could grab something right away … boom, boom, boom, he got it. Just one shot (snaps fingers) …

Patti: Hmm.

Corey: And he got it. And then … he developed his own time.

Wade: Yeah.

Corey: If there was three hundred sax players behind a curtain, I would know which one was my dad. And that's what made him … you know.

Wade: I gotta find a recording of him. I gotta find a recording of him.

Corey: And there's a picture of him playing … BB King came down to sing at this place here (pointing down the road) …

Wade: Yeah?

Corey: … where I just showed you. There's a picture around somewhere.

Wade: Yeah. That place on the waterfront.

Corey: And he played with Louis Armstrong. And he's played with Oscar Peterson. Duke Ellington wrote a song for my mother when she was a little girl when she was at the … ahh, what's the big, gig in New York?

Wade: Oh. Carnegie Hall?

Corey: Yeah, one of the halls anyways.

Wade: Oh, ok.

Corey: And the Duke said to my mom … she was with my … my mother was with her aunt. He said he's going to write a song for her. And it went (sings a few notes).

Wade: Was she living in New York at the time?

Corey: She's over there periodically, you know.

Wade: Oh, Ok.

Corey: Every other month. I'm trying to figure that out too.

Wade: Was your mom a performer?

Corey: No, she wasn't. But there's something.

TRANSCRIPT 9I - Wade Pfaff with Paul MacDonald in Sydney November 2, 2017

Paul MacDonald is a researcher of Cape Breton music and jazz musician working with The Beaton Institute, Cape Breton.

Paul: Well, yeah. Now, the marching band tradition in Cape Breton is a lot older than you think so that can be found as early as the 1870's. Each town, North Sydney, Sydney Mines, Glace Bay, Dominion Louisburg, Port Morion, all these towns had bands.

Wade: Hmm

Paul: Yeah, they all had them. So, when jazz did come to Cape Breton there was no shortage of people who knew how to read music and there was no shortage of brass instruments. They were here.

Wade: Ok so, so between those years about 1900 and 1930 there would have been a lot more jazz here than you could actually tell.

Paul: Yeah.

Paul: That's a great story I was told by Donnie Palmer. He said you know Louis Armstrong came here to play and he went to a big house party in the Mira afterwards

Wade: Oh yeah

Paul: Partied all night you know

Wade: No shit

Paul: Left the next day

Paul: No, jazz was no stranger in Cape Breton

Paul: They never really combined, but they did combine over here. Here was the point that I was trying to get to… Ok, so you have a lot of musically literate people in industrial Cape Breton because of the marching bands. You've got people that know how to read music. Jazz is catching on in North America

Wade: Yup

Paul: You got the string band tradition happening in The Pier you know, in the early part of the century there, so the idea of a Black influence was already here and you got the people who are able to read music, and all of a sudden, the idea of having dance halls starts opening up.

Paul: Rudy first told me about Cy, 'cause it was often said that uh a musician going to Toronto could depend on him for a gig or something like that you know. He's, he's well known he…

Wade: He's a session player

Paul: Yeah, yea, he was known

Wade: Hmm

Paul: He was known he was a contact if you were going to the big city Cy was one of your contacts

Wade: And there wouldn't have been any problems with them [whites] coming into the Black community to listen to the music, would there?

Paul: Especially if they were musicians

Wade: They would have been welcome

Paul: Of course

Wade: But if it was the other way around, Black musicians… but you said that there weren't any venues in those days in Sydney

Paul: Not really

Wade: They were all in Whitney Pier

Paul: No, and you wouldn't have found Blacks in those venues

Wade: No, you couldn't have

Paul: No

Wade: So, it was really a one-way street if you wanted to come and listen to popular music. I mean, not the symphony orchestra. Popular music you would have had to have went to the Pier

Paul: If you were interested in jazz or new music you went down to the Pier for sure.

TRANSCIPT 9J – Wade Pfaff with Mark Daye in Halifax, April 22, 2019

Note from the author: I met Mark in the hospital in Halifax after recovering from my life-threatening infection in January of 2019. Mark was my next-door neighbor in intensive care, and his family was extremely warm to me every day when they visited him. We developed a friendship after a while, and he wanted to contribute to the project. Neither one of us could talk in the hospital because we both had tracheotomies in our throats, but I had a pad and paper, and he had this Mac book thing, and after we were released from the hospital I interviewed him. He has throat cancer, though, and his recovery will take much longer than mine. At the time of this interview he was not able to speak, so we used the tablet thingy and I repeated whatever he wrote into the camera. I have transcribed the better parts of the interview here.

Wade: You know, I hear that a lot from the men of my generation. They have no relationships with their fathers (referring to our ongoing conversation about Corey Adams, his father Bucky, and their relationship).

Mark (dictated by me): Bucky was full of ego, not love … uhm, himself. God rest his soul.

Wade: Do you think that's because he spent so much time travelling and living the life of a musician? … No?

Mark (dictated by me): Bucky sucked?

Wade: (Laughing) He wasn't a good player?

Mark: (Nodding enthusiastically).

Wade: So, when I hear him, I'll … I'll see for myself (laughing)?

Mark: (Nodding).

Wade: Because I met people out in Cape Breton that played with Bucky too … And so, he's well known. I know he's self-taught.

Mark (dictated): He administered to White people …?

Wade: So, he was well-respected with White audiences, right? Yeah.

Mark (dictated): (Nodding). Johnny Adams.

Wade: He's the one to know? He's still living?

Mark: (Shaking head to indicate "no").

Wade: Is he the Father? No? Another Adams … Same family, but he's the one who could play?

Mark: (Raises eyebrows and nods).

Wade: Yeah? Also saxophone? Drums ...

Mark (dictated): (imitates a drummer) Music, when we were kids, Mr. Adams was the man who put the music to our childhood.

Wade: So, he was really good, you're saying? He was like, a leader of the community.

Mark: (Nodding).

Wade: Johnny Adams?

Mark (dictated): Mr. Adams and Les t.

Wade: Yeah, that is a name that is on my list. I'm going to have to look him up. So, Les t and Johnny Adams … they were way up there?

Mark: (passes the I Pad, nodding).

Wade: No, Corey can't read music, no. And he even said that his dad didn't read music.

Mark: (passes the I Pad).

Wade: Dot? Dorothy? Yeah, apparently, she had a dance school. Les? I guess he's a Black guy? Corey also mentioned that even into the sixties, there was a lot of afterhours places around here.

Mark (dictated): Creighton Street had two clubs, Prizefighter's Club and Gerrish St. Hall.