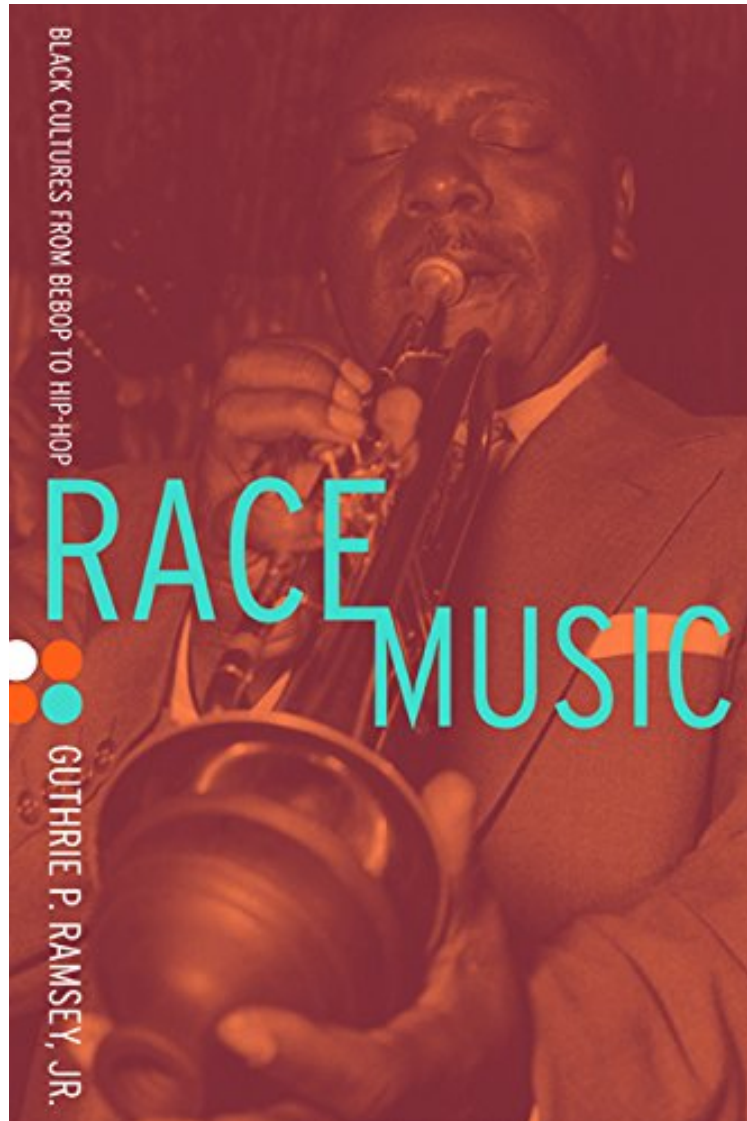


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Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip-Hop

Guthrie P. Ramsey

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Guthrie P. Ramsey : Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip-Hop before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip-Hop:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Race Music: Black CulturesBy Music LadyThis book did an excellent job addressing Race Music starting with Bebop. The information is very informative.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent purchase!By LA Momma!Race music is a wonderful addition to our library collection. I highly recommend for any study in african-american history. The book arrived in perfect condition!0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Customerall good.

This powerful book covers the vast and various terrain of African American music, from bebop to hip-hop. Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr., begins with an absorbing account of his own musical experiences with family and friends on the South Side of Chicago, evoking Sunday-morning worship services, family gatherings with food and dancing, and jam sessions at local nightclubs. This lays the foundation for a brilliant discussion of how musical meaning emerges in the private and communal realms of lived experience and how African American music has shaped and reflected identities in the black community. Deeply informed by Ramsey's experience as an accomplished musician, a sophisticated cultural theorist, and an enthusiast brought up in the community he discusses, *Race Music* explores the global influence and popularity of African American music, its social relevance, and key questions regarding its interpretation and criticism. Beginning with jazz, rhythm and blues, and gospel, this book demonstrates that while each genre of music is distinct, possessing its own conventions, performance practices, and formal qualities, each is also grounded in similar techniques and conceptual frameworks identified with African American musical traditions. Ramsey provides vivid glimpses of the careers of Dinah Washington, Louis Jordan, Dizzy Gillespie, Cootie Williams, and Mahalia Jackson, among others, to show how the social changes of the 1940s elicited an Afro-modernism that inspired much of the music and culture that followed. *Race Music* illustrates how, by transcending the boundaries between genres, black communities bridged generational divides and passed down knowledge of musical forms and styles. It also considers how the discourse of soul music contributed to the vibrant social climate of the Black Power Era. Multilayered and masterfully written, *Race Music* provides a dynamic framework for rethinking the many facets of African American music and the ethnocentric energy that infused its creation.

From Publishers Weekly This is a challenging and fascinating look at various ways in which popular music from the 1940s to the 1990s represented "anchor moments in the cultural, social and political realms of twentieth-century African American history." Ramsay, an assistant professor of music at the University of Pennsylvania, notes that this "is not a comprehensive, strictly chronological study"; he also uses a wide range of source material including family narratives, recordings, live concerts and films. But his sophisticated understanding of current ethnological, musicological, literary and historical theories—as well as a clear and engaging writing style remarkably free of theoretical jargon—explores a central theme: the "subjective understanding of black music as shaped continually by community sensibilities." Through nuanced looks at such musical artists as Dinah Washington and Dizzy Gillespie, Ramsay shows not only that their work displays a wide range of expressive possibilities but also that, "taken together, they provide a realistic representation of a diverse African American culture always in the process of being made." For example, Ramsay shows how James Brown's "musical language, lyrical subject matter, public presentation, and cultural politics are saturated with the new consciousness of the late 1960s... at the crossroads between the Civil Rights and Black Power movements." While Ramsay's shift toward the end of the book from the music of the '60s to an insightful analysis of music in films like Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* is jarring, this is a valuable exploration of American culture. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Through a historical yet anecdotal treatment, Ramsey explores the rich milieu of messages imbedded in black music through the 20th century. His breakthrough is his effort to find the meanings of the music through explorations of memory, history and theory. . . . Ramsey weaves his own rich musical history through the text."--Rickey Vincent, "Washington Post Book World From the Inside Flap" This work easily makes Guthrie one of the top musicologists of his generation who writes on black music. The scope, depth, and breadth are highly impressive. His criticisms of other scholars are fair. And his treatments of black musical artists in time, in space, and in place are quite illuminating. I know no one else who has his mastery of knowledge over such a broad range of black musical works of different genres and periods."Cornel West, Princeton University "Witty, powerful, smart, opinionated, beautifully written, groundbreaking, and bold. Scholars will read *Race Music* and debate it for years to come."Robin D. G. Kelley, author of *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* "Race Music is slammin'! Ramsey brilliantly interweaves oral history with his own scholarly readings of jazz, gospel, popular music, and film soundtracks with pathbreaking results. *Race Music* revolutionizes the way we receive and critique African American popular culture and provides a new context for our understanding of black music and cultural memory. A must read--intelligent, engaging and powerful."Rae Linda Brown, author of *The Heart of a Woman: The Life and Music of Florence B. Price, 1887-1953* "One of the most engaging, thought provoking and original treatments of black music that I have read. Ramsey seamlessly combines ethnographic research, musicological theory, historical investigation, and personal narrative in a work that is at once rigorous and poetic. Spanning blues, gospel, jazz, rhythm and blues, soul and hip-hop, *Race Music* offers us the scholarly monograph as jam session—a first-rate intellectual essay whose rhythms, tones, and melodious voice are as captivating as the music Ramsey brilliantly explains and masterfully performs."Michael Eric Dyson, author of *Open Mike and Holler If You Hear Me*