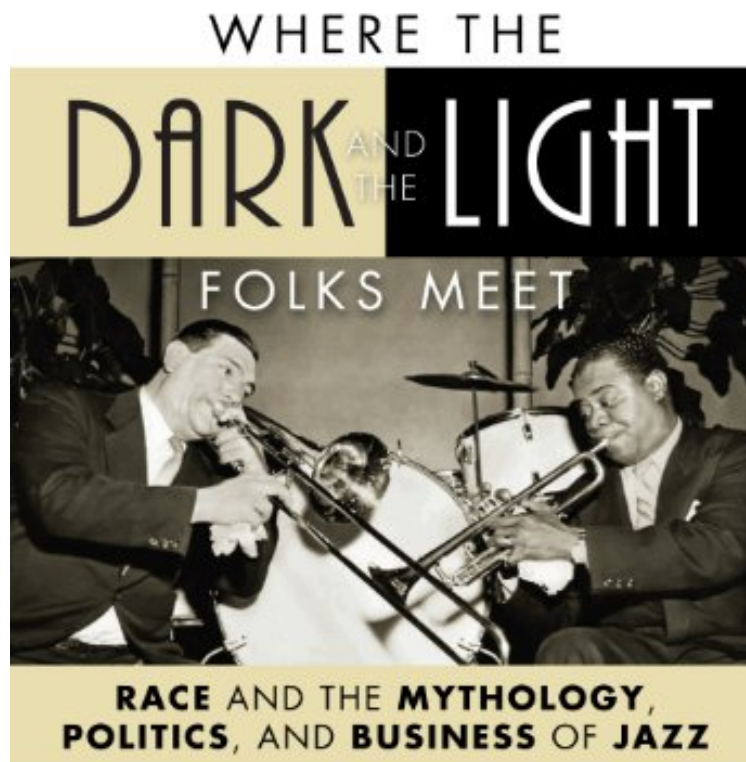


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Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet: Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz (Studies in Jazz)

Randall Sandke

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Randall Sandke : Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet: Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz (Studies in Jazz) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet: Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz (Studies in Jazz):

12 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Groundbreaking Analysis and Insightful History By ReaderinNewburyport This is an extraordinary book...accessible to the garden variety jazz fan but detailed and documented enough to please the stodgiest academic. Sandke tells the history of jazz as he argues his thesis that black

musicians drew on a variety of traditions in creating this distinctively American art form. His insider's view of the jazz world is a bracing antidote to critics and professors whose observations are informed not by the reality of the working artist, but by the necessity of proving their theories correct, regardless of the facts. "Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet" should be required reading for any student of jazz, just as Sandke's CDs should be required listening. 14 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Provocative, essential, honest reading - no academic tripe here By karen in milford Randy Sandke has accomplished something that heretofore seemed impossible: he has written a concise history of jazz and made it compelling, insightful, engaging, original, and well-sourced while skillfully weaving greater issues (social, political, financial) seamlessly into the mix. A must for anyone who is truly interested in the authentic history of jazz. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Book By bowmanh Randy Sandke's "Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet" provides a new look at jazz history by emphasizing the importance of the interaction between racial groups in the development and evolution of the music. The idea that interaction between various cultural groups and traditions can foster creative new cultural developments is a fairly common theme in history generally, but this idea has not been widely developed by jazz historians except to say that some European elements were combined with African elements in the development of jazz. Sandke notes that most jazz historians have claimed that virtually all major developments in jazz have come exclusively from the black community and that the music derived its primary support from that community. I've read a good deal of jazz history and agree that this is a common viewpoint. Sandke acknowledges that most of the greatest jazz musicians have been black but he presents convincing evidence that white Americans have also played an important role in the development of the music as both musicians and as supporters of the music. Sandke argues that the prevalence of what he calls the "exclusionary" view is due to ideological bias on the part of critics and historians who have largely come from the political left. Sandke looks in some detail at the business side of jazz history including what musicians were paid, how they were managed by agents and promoters and how copyrights were handled. He documents business dealings for both black and white musicians and concludes that in many cases, the financial aspects of the business were determined more by market forces than by race. Because Sandke is himself a jazz musician, he explores the nitty gritty of the jazz business in a way that most other historians do not. The book has been criticized by at least one jazz critic for supposedly being primarily devoted to the proposition that white jazz musicians have generally been underappreciated. Although Sandke does mention this in the case of a few specific musicians, this is a minor part of the book. The focus is clearly on racial interaction in jazz so I think this criticism is a red herring. This is a well written and well documented book which explores some new ideas in jazz history. Because it is written by an accomplished jazz musician it presents an original viewpoint and is well worth reading.

Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet tackles a controversial question: Is jazz the product of an insulated African-American environment, shut off from the rest of society by strictures of segregation and discrimination, or is it more properly understood as the juncture of a wide variety of influences under the broader umbrella of American culture? This book does not question that jazz was created and largely driven by African Americans, but rather posits that black culture has been more open to outside influences than most commentators are likely to admit. The majority of jazz writers, past and present, have embraced an exclusionary viewpoint. Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet begins by looking at many of these writers, from the birth of jazz history up to the present day, to see how and why their views have strayed from the historical record. This book challenges many widely held beliefs regarding the history and nature of jazz in an attempt to free jazz of the socio-political baggage that has so encumbered it. The result is a truer appreciation of the music and a greater understanding of the positive influence racial interaction and jazz music have had on each other.

From Booklist *Starred* The common belief that racial conflict characterizes jazz history is false, jazz trumpeter Sandke says. Instead, jazz is demonstrably a product of black-white cooperation, beginning in its prehistory in nineteenth-century blackface minstrel shows, which Sandke represents as a major venue for antislavery sentiment before the Civil War and which turned viciously racist only with the rise of Jim Crow in the 1890s. In the 1920s and '30s, when jazz became synonymous with popular music, the top black and white bands were comparably well compensated. If jazz composers were often cheated out of royalties and copyrights, the culprits were black as well as white; sometimes they were musicians preying on other musicians. Bad history is to blame for the belief that jazz is sharply racially divided. Sandke scores such 1930s leftist-activist promoters as Vanderbilt scion John Hammond and field musicologist Alan Lomax for starting the racial-strife myths, activist and poet Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka for exacerbating them, and—ruefully, for they are fellow players—jazz spokesmen such as Wynton Marsalis (whom Sandke recognizes as mellowing with age and wisdom) for perpetuating them. This amateur historian's book, more lucid and straightforward than most professional jazz critic-chroniclers could dream of producing, deserves every history-minded jazz fan's attention. --Ray Olson What Randy Sandke has to say in these pages is bound to make you think anew about jazz? agree with him or not. And he speaks from the heart. (Dan Morgenstern, director, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University; dean of jazz historians; editor, Studies in Jazz series) With a

much-needed blend of careful research, common sense, passion, insight, and (at times) indignation, Randy Sandke sets the record straight about how the divisive racial mythology of jazz's origins and nature came to be. One hopes that *Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet* will do as much good as it deserves to do. (Larry Kart, author of *Jazz In Search of Itself*) In this compelling adduction of new evidence and analysis, Sandke forensically dissects jazz history and shows it, to paraphrase Ralph Ellison, to be 'ever a tall tale told by inattentive idealists' where myth and legend frequently obscure a less prosaic truth. It is a book that needed to be written and seems sure to inspire countless lines of fresh academic enquiry. (Stuart Nicholson, author of *Is Jazz Dead?: Or has It Moved to a New Address*) Randy Sandke's research and documentation are thorough. His insights and opinions are forthright. His book will infuriate its targets, those in the music world who place myth, race, nationality, sociology, politics and commerce above music itself. Everyone else will find it revealing, thought-provoking and helpful. (Doug Ramsey, author of *Jazz Matters: Reflections on the Music and Some of its Makers*) Genuine research involves the discovery of unknown or neglected materials and their analysis in ways that yield fresh insights. Randy Sandke's book meets this standard and therefore warrants careful attention. It is neither the first nor last book on the subject, but an important and serious contribution to our deeper understanding of the music we love. (S. Frederick Starr, author of *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union, 1917-91, and Louis Moreau Gottschalk*) Randy Sandke brings his wide range of experience as a jazz musician and composer to a discussion of jazz history and jazz criticism that is must reading for anyone interested in the elements and the people that have created the canons and contradictions of this endlessly fascinating art form. (George Avakian, record producer and jazz historian) The common belief that racial conflict characterizes jazz history is false, jazz trumpeter Sandke says. Instead, jazz is demonstrably a product of black-white cooperation, beginning in its prehistory in nineteenth-century blackface minstrel shows, which Sandke represents as a major venue for antislavery sentiment before the Civil War and which turned viciously racist only with the rise of Jim Crow in the 1890s. 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(Booklist, Starred) A long-time jazz player and writer, Sandke here broaches a troublesome area of jazz, not to mention American life?race.... Sandke takes a strong position on issues ranging from the political agendas of many jazz historians (from the early days to the present) to the more recent narrow redefinitions of jazz, largely by the more conservative (and influential) wing of jazz represented by Wynton Marsalis and writer Stanley Crouch. And, he asks, what myths continue to cloud understanding of jazz? Does the fact that jazz sprang from a black environment make white jazz musicians "inauthentic"? Sandke also explores who the winners and losers have been in the business of jazz, and who the audience has been. In contrast to some works about race and jazz, Sandke's is thoroughly researched and documented. He loves the music deeply and is frustrated that it may be compromised by politics, internal and external. His positions will likely draw fire and praise. This is an important addition to the literature of jazz. Summing Up: Essential. All readers (CHOICE) In *Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet*, musician and author Randall Sandke tackles the stubborn and controversial question of whether jazz is the product of an insulated African-American environment, shut off from the rest of society by strictures of segregation and discrimination; or whether it is more properly understood as the juncture of a wide variety of influences under the broader umbrella of American culture. His book takes the latter course and shows how the widely accepted exclusionary view has led to decades of misunderstanding surrounding the true history and nature of jazz. (All About Jazz) This important book is both brave and provocative, challenging the reader to rethink flimsily-based, partisan assumptions. It is not a jazz history but an essential commentary on it. Open-minded jazz fans of all ages and interests should find it instructive and stimulating and a joy to read. (Jazz Journal) Trumpeter Randy Sandke's new book, *Where the Dark and the Light Folks Meet* clearly and courageously explores race and the mythology, politics and business of jazz. (Jaz Fax) Sandke's book is quite important and should be read by anyone who does Jazz history or practices in the Jazz community today, or even just listens to Jazz. It may make you angry; it may go to great lengths to demonstrate a point...but it should be taken seriously. (Cadence Magazine) A provocative, exhaustively researched and ambitiously analytical book about a significant and endlessly complicated topic: race and jazz. (Jazz Journalist Association's; S Jja News) Jazz trumpeter Sandke is also a music history scholar, and this carefully developed volume explores the origins and realities of debates about the development jazz in the context of race and culture. (Jazz Police) Subtitled *Race and the Mythology, Politics, and Business of Jazz*, the book challenges the born-in-Africa jazz storyline.... The book is hardly one-sided. It chronicles the long history of discrimination black musicians experienced, a practice extending from infamous bookings in the Jim Crow South to recording studios in major cities. It explores the sometimes-exploitive business relationships between white managers and celebrated 20th-century musicians, notably

Irving Mills and Ellington and also Joe Glaser and Armstrong. (DownBeat Magazine) Sandke has a strong independent streak, vouchsafed by the development of his own metatonal approach to music. Ten years in the writing, Sandke brings that same individual perspective to bear in his new book, his meticulous research amassing a wealth of facts unavailable in other accounts; Fascinating. (The New York City Jazz Record) Randall Sandke's book may have a mouthful of a title, but it very succinctly describes what the book is all about. In the space of 275 pages (counting the index), Sandke essentially tells us that everything (well, very many things) we've been taught about jazz history is bunk. Of course, he states it more elegantly than that, but the overall effect is that of pure revisionism.... If jazz history means anything at all to you, you MUST read this book. (General Eclectic) Sandke tackles the stubborn and controversial question of whether jazz is the product of an insulated African-American environment, shut off from the rest of society by strictures of segregation and discrimination; or whether it is more properly understood as the juncture of a wide variety of influences under the broader umbrella of American culture. This book takes the latter course and shows how the widely accepted exclusionary view has led to decades of misunderstanding surrounding the true history and nature of jazz. About the Author Randall Sandke has been a professional jazz musician for over 30 years. He is the author of *Harmony for a New Millennium: An Introduction to Metatonal Music* (2002) and has contributed to *The Oxford Companion To Jazz* and the *Annual of Jazz Studies* (2000).