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Colloquy: Revisiting Kenny G

Kenny G and the Ignorance of Whiteness

Kelsey Klotz

Kenny G has often refused to consider whether or not he conceives of himself as a jazz musician. In interviews, he typically turns these questions around, asking "What kind of music do *you* think I play?" But in recent years, Kenny G seems to have overtly embraced jazz. His latest album, *New Standards* (2021), is the result of his desire to "do jazz": in the 2021 documentary, *Listening to Kenny G*, he notes that he likes jazz standards, but that he wants to "do an album that sounds like I'm doing those standards, but they're my new creations."[1] In fact, two of the tracks, "Blues Skies" and "Milestones," actually use the titles, though not the tunes, of "old" jazz standards. His recent live performances also highlight jazz history in what he calls "sax education" lessons, during which he plays "old" tunes like "Girl from Ipanema" and "Naima." Kenny G's shift toward claiming jazz indicates that he newly believes it is part of his job to play "old jazz tunes" for audiences, even as he continues to claim that he created a new sound: "you can call it a new sound of jazz," he says, "a new jazz sound that appealed to a lot of people."[2]

Despite this seeming turn toward jazz, throughout *Listening to Kenny G*, the titular saxophonist offers conflicting and contradictory examples of his simultaneous knowledge and refusal of jazz. In one scene, he names jazz musicians depicted on an art piece in his recording studio. He lists Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Dexter Gordon, before stumbling on a pianist wearing a hat: "This keyboard player, gosh, I'm not 100% sure who that is." Someone in the background suggests it is Thelonious Monk (it is).[3] In another scene, archival footage shows Kenny G explaining to Charlie Rose that, while he finds the technique of Charlie Parker and John Coltrane "phenomenal," "that

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[1] Penny Lane, dir., *Listening to Kenny G* (HBO Documentary Films, 2021), 00:25:25-00:25:31.

[2] *Listening to Kenny G*, 00:56:37-00:56:47.

[3] *Listening to Kenny G*, 00:25:43-00:25:54.

music was never heartfelt for me… it wasn't anything that I wanted to emulate."[4] In his 2004 chapter on Kenny G, Christopher Washburne documents a 2002 interview with Ted Pankin, in which Kenny G asserted that "Charlie Parker would squeak a lot, and that's why they called him Bird, because his reed would chirp," a story that appears nowhere in the jazz titan's legend.[5]

As frustrating as it may be for self-identified jazz folk, it is important to relive these cringeworthy moments. Not because they demonstrate some of the ways in which Kenny G is a ridiculously easy target for jazz critics and historians (to the point that I sometimes wonder if he is actually trolling those audiences), but because they reveal a key performance of whiteness—that is, the expectation and ability to make largely unimpeded choices about one's life and livelihood. While Kenny G can shift between claiming and being ambivalent toward jazz, most Black jazz musicians across the twentieth century did not have the same musical choices available to them. Burton Peretti documents the experiences of bassist Milt Hinton, who explained that "There's no place for a Black violin player in this world," and saxophonist Benny Carter, who told jazz scholar Morroe Berger that as a Black musician, he "felt that there was no future in being a symphonic musician."[6] Miles Davis's autobiography includes the statement, "I knew that no white symphony orchestra was going to hire a little Black motherfucker like me, no matter how good I was or how much music I knew."[7] These musicians—who were well-known in the jazz field—felt unable to craft musical identities outside of white mainstream society's racist expectations of them. In what follows, I focus on one moment of simultaneous refusal and embrace of jazz featured in *Listening to Kenny G*, in which Kenny G discusses his collaboration with the deceased Stan Getz. Doing so demonstrates the musician's ability to choose, and to not choose, jazz—and to choose, and to not choose, ignorance—in a uniquely white way.

Choosing ignorance (choosing to not know) represents a performance of whiteness. Race exists as a lived reality that has been used to justify the dehumanization of racial Others through slavery, acts of violence and terror, legal discriminations, and daily microaggressions; it is also a construct, however, with spoken and unspoken rules, behaviors, and speech acts defined and re-

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[4] *Listening to Kenny G,* 00:27:33-00:27:41.

[5] Quoted in Christopher J. Washburne, "Does Kenny G Play Bad Jazz?," in *Bad Music: The Music We Love to Hate*, edited by Christopher J. Washburne and Maiken Derno (New York: Routledge, 2004), 126.

[6] Burton Peretti, *The Creation of Jazz: Music, Race, and Culture in Urban America* (Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 74.

[7] Miles Davis, *Miles: The Autobiography*, with Quincy Troupe (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 59.

defined over the course of centuries. As I argue in *Dave Brubeck and the Performance of Whiteness*, these habits are rehearsed in every interaction we have with ourselves, people we consider to be like ourselves, and people we consider to be Other.[8] The performance of whiteness is thus not a singular act, but rather is part of the repeated norms that guide everyday life, highlighting broad social conventions. Although whiteness is not a monolith, and its performance includes subtleties and variations, ultimately, across the documentary, as in his career, whiteness defines Kenny G's persona.[9]

PLAYING "WITH" STAN GETZ

Although Kenny G has collaborated with musicians across a wide spectrum of popular music, his primary collaborations with jazz musicians have been with *dead* jazz musicians: Louis Armstrong and Stan Getz.[10] The Stan Getz performance appears on the song "Legacy" on *New Standards*, and in the documentary, Kenny G insists that, "The jazz community's gonna hate it. I know they're gonna hate it."[11] Kenny G's presumption is no doubt based on the absolute firestorm of criticism that erupted after he "played with" (overdubbed) Louis Armstrong on "What a Wonderful World" in 1999. In that episode, as Brian F. Wright notes in the introduction to this colloquy, jazz critics and

[8] Kelsey Klotz, *Dave Brubeck and the Performance of Whiteness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023).

[9] It is worth noting that Kenny G is also Jewish, although that part of his identity does not seem to occupy a prominent part of his performing persona (he mentions it once in the documentary while relaying an anecdote from the 1980s). The relationship between Jewishness and whiteness in the United States across the twentieth century is fraught, and it is important to highlight the anti-Semitic violence and discrimination carried out in the name of white supremacy. However, the documentary strongly suggests that Kenny G conceives of himself as a white man. For more on Kenny G's Jewishness, see: Sasha Rogelberg, "Without his Saxophone, Who is Kenny G?" *Jewish Exponent*, January 20, 2022, 18. For more on race, Jewishness, and whiteness, see Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks: and What That Says About Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994); Marc Dollinger, *Black Power, Jewish Politics: Reinventing the Alliance in the 1960s* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2018); Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Kelsey Klotz, "Negotiating Jewish Identity in *The Gates of Justice*," in *Dave Brubeck and the Performance of Whiteness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023); Deborah Lipstadt, "Anti-Semitism Is Thriving in America," *The Atlantic*, May 3, 2019, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/05/poway-shooting-shows-anti-semitism-flourishing/588649/.

[10] Kenny G has name-checked Armstrong and Getz for decades as being musicians he admires, and musicians who he thinks his audience doesn't know, but should know. See George Varga, "Kenny G: Changing His Tune," *Jazz Times* 29, no. 1 (May 1999): 53-54.

[11] *Listening to Kenny G*, 01:19:10-01:19:14.

musicians were overwhelmingly appalled that Kenny G would co-opt Armstrong, using his jazz credibility and popularity to imply that the two were musical equals. A fiery, Kenny G-excoriating letter in response by white guitarist Pat Metheny was shared and re-shared across jazz communities.

Indeed, some critics did not like the Getz track—but not in the way Kenny G imagined. As critic Will Layman writes,

> In some manner, digital samples of notes recorded by Getz were cobbled together to create this track. Getz not only didn't consent to duet with the G Force, but he never phrased this melody, he never connected these notes, he never put his *musicianship* into this work. There's more to playing the saxophone than the digital recreation of tone.[12]

However, the vitriol directed toward Kenny G's prior Armstrong performance is not evident in reviews of the Getz performance: the *Down Beat* review by John McDonough didn't even mention this track.[13]

In reality, there was never any risk that critics would unleash the same torrent of fury on Kenny G for his track "with" Getz for a number of reasons. While respected, Getz is not as beloved as Armstrong. Though Getz helped popularize bossa nova in the United States, he is not credited with innovating a new approach to jazz improvisation (as Armstrong is). And Getz is white. To be clear: I don't make this final point out of some feeling of white grievance that white people can't get a fair shake in jazz. Rather, as musician/scholar Jason King explains in the documentary, "[Kenny G] really extends this long and troubling history of appropriation in popular music, where Black artists innovate, and then white artists come along and stylize and then receive greater financial renumeration, greater critical acclaim."[14] However, many jazz critics and historians who objected strongly to Kenny G's appropriation of Armstrong operate within a frame that has, since the mid-1950s, largely tried to subvert that white-dominated music industry by recognizing Black jazz musicians' musical value and efforts, if not their commercial value.[15]

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[12] Will Layman, "Kenny G and the Problem with Art that Asks Very Little of Us," *PopMatters*, January 12, 2022, https://www.popmatters.com/kenny-g-art-asks-little.

[13] John McDonough, Review of *New Standards*, by Kenny G, *Down Beat*, April 2022, 46.

[14] *Listening to Kenny G*, 01:02:54-01:03:09.

[15] As Ingrid Monson writes, by the mid-1950s, white critics began a turn toward Blacker aesthetics, awarding more Black jazz musicians recognition in critics' awards, and placing more Black jazz musicians on the cover of *Down Beat*. There are, of course, important exceptions to this overriding narrative, particularly in the white backlash of the 1990s. See Ingrid Monson, *Freedom Sounds: Civil Rights Call Out to Jazz and Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 67-69. I explore the concept of meritocracy within jazz communities in Kelsey Klotz, "Moving House and Herding Cattle: Dave Brubeck and the Possessive Investment of Whiteness," in *The*

But again, Kenny G demonstrates little awareness of the difference between Stan Getz and Louis Armstrong within "the jazz community." Indeed, a lack of self-awareness pervades the documentary—most notably when he is asked if he thinks being white benefited his career.

Kenny G offers a long monologue in response, explaining, "I've honestly never put a lot of thought into the color of my skin and my career and my success. Honestly haven't." He muses about whether record producer Clive Davis would have signed him if he was Black, before concluding, "So I'm gonna say I probably benefited from that. I'm kinda thinking that I got that door opened for me. Yeah, I think that's a good question. I've never really thought about it like that and I think, I think I benefited."[16] Throughout this monologue, Kenny G speaks with a slight smile (Figure 1), suggesting openness and honesty, at times shaking or nodding his head to emphasize a point. It is, in some ways, a vulnerable moment; but one that after a nearly 40-year career—pursued against the backdrop of multiple scandals revealing the entertainment industry's continued privileging of white and male members (a few notable examples include MTV's seeming refusal to play music videos by Black artists, Justin Timberlake's 2004 Super Bowl halftime controversy, and Eminem's massive popularity), not to mention multiple uprisings in response to racism in Los Angeles (1992), Ferguson, Missouri (2014), Minneapolis (2020), and so many other cities in the United States and worldwide—is unbelievably and blindingly short-sighted.

Oxford Handbook of Political Economy, 2nd edition, ed. Dale Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

[16] *Listening to Kenny G,* 01:03:10-01:03:59.

Figure 1. Kenny G reflecting on his white privilege, *Listening to Kenny G* (2021)

A lack of self-awareness or recognition, while problematic from a jazz historical perspective, represents a crucial, overdone performance of whiteness in which an individual is unable to perceive distinctions in oppressions or to comprehend how an individual can impact other individuals. Many white people have not had to consider themselves as racialized subjects whose lives and livelihoods have been shaped by whiteness. As James Baldwin wrote decades ago, "They [white people] are in effect still trapped in a history which they do not understand and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it."[17]

Writer Ralph Ellison calls white people like this "sleepwalkers" because they are unaware of their place among others in the world.[18] Choosing to be unaware and to lack knowledge, and to not be held responsible for that lack, is a fundamental privilege of whiteness, (re)performed over the course of centuries. Philosopher Charles W. Mills calls such lack of racial knowledge on the part of whites (as well as some people of color) "white ignorance."[19] White ignorance can stem from "straightforward racist motivation," but it does not have to; Mills writes that colorblindness is a form of white ignorance often not based in bad faith, but nevertheless refuses to recognize historic legacies of structural discrimination. And, as Sherrie Tucker writes, white people do not "have to

[17] James Baldwin, "A Letter to My Nephew," *The Fire Next Time* (1962; repr. New York: Vintage, 1992), 8.
[18] Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (1952; New York: Vintage International, 1995), 8.
[19] Charles W. Mills, "White Ignorance," in *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007), 11-38.

choose or know about [their] privilege to benefit from it."[20] White ignorance insists that ignorant white people are still morally good and creates distinctions between one "innocent" white person and racist, violently anti-Black white individuals. As journalist Reni Eddo-Lodge explains, "We tell ourselves that good people can't be racist… We tell ourselves that racism is about moral values, when instead it is about the survival strategy of systemic power."[21]

But whiteness has never been invisible; people of color have survived by knowing how it operates, whether or not white people choose to know. As Sara Ahmed writes, "the power of whiteness is maintained *by being seen*; we see it everywhere, in the casualness of white bodies in spaces, crowded in parks, meetings, in white bodies that are displayed in films and advertisements, in white laws that talk about white experiences, in ideas of the family made up of clean white bodies."[22] White ignorance is not an accident; it is at once a privilege and a performance re-played throughout history—and that performance is on full display in *Listening to Kenny G* and throughout Kenny G's career.

KNEE-JERK REACTIONS AND THE PERFORMANCE OF RACE

When I critically analyze performances of whiteness, there is often an implicit assumption that I simply don't like whatever musician/organization I examine; this is rarely ever true, but not irrelevant. I never felt terribly strongly either way about Kenny G. While my brothers and I kind-heartedly mocked my mother's interest in Kenny G as children, I also had teachers in jazz camps shut down any Kenny G bashing, saying that many people obviously found Kenny G's music meaningful, and that they hoped they could create music as meaningful. I have taught Kenny G in jazz history classes, opening up conversations about the extent to which virtuosity, or commercialism, or production, might define the jazz genre.

But the HBO documentary changed things for me. I was baking cookies as I watched, and at several points felt the need to jam my flour-covered fingers aggressively at my iPad to pause the documentary and let out a rant, venting my frustration with my rolling pin or in long text messages to my (rather amused) spouse. I was surprised by the rage I felt toward a musician about whom I'd previously given relatively little thought and had in fact defended. Given the extent to which Kenny G flies in the face of much of the jazz tradition, it is

[20] Sherrie Tucker, *Dance Floor Democracy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 314.
[21] Reni Eddo-Lodge, *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 63-64.
[22] Sara Ahmed, "Declarations of Whiteness: The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism," *Borderlands E-Journal* 3, no. 2 (2004): para. 14.

understandable that many of us embedded in some way in the jazz field would cling to knee-jerk dismissals of his music. Tuning into and analyzing these knee-jerk dismissals, however, can often tell us much more about the field and our place within it. As ethnomusicologist Eugenia Siegel Conte argues, "Our emotional life, health, and connections to ethics and community engagement always drive our observational efforts; and rather than ignore or obscure them, perhaps we should find ways to acknowledge them more fully in our own work."[23] Conte calls this work *diagnostic embodiment*, or a scholarly way of interpreting what we as academics "observe, question, privilege, and feel in [our] fieldwork with professional groups." As Wright explains in the introduction to this colloquy, my knee-jerk reaction was performative (even if only performed to myself and my spouse), but more than that, it was part of an individual and collective performance of race consciousness.

The critical discourse around Kenny G has always been about race, whether implicitly or explicitly. And as much as Kenny G performs whiteness, so, too, do some of us in our hate of Kenny G. Critics and historians see too many aspects that reflect Kenny G's individual white privilege *and* the ways the music industry is set up to systemically privilege white musicians. Many of us have been steeped in a particular race consciousness about the history of jazz in terms of the dichotomy between who has contributed and who has benefited; as one of the genre's most famous exponents, Kenny G is anathema to the racial paradigm constructed and defended by many jazz critics and historians. Many reactions to, and against, Kenny G can be described using Sara Ahmed's conception of love and the nation. For many in-group jazz musicians, scholars, and listeners, hating Kenny G is performed as an act of love for jazz, a music we also often worriedly frame around narratives of preservation and death; as Ahmed explains, "Because we love, we hate and this hate is what makes us together."[24] For us, and particularly for those of us who are white, hating Kenny G is a low-risk, emphatic re-assertion of our reverence for jazz as Black music in some minimal way. We receive the added benefit of getting to be "good white people" for recognizing Kenny G's performance of whiteness and acting to save jazz from his clutches without necessarily having to do anti-racist work in the jazz field.[25] This (much harder) work should include, in part, decision-making about who,

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[23] Eugenia Siegel Conte, "'Sounding Good'? Choral Activism and Advocacy," "'Here in this Generous Room': Space, Voice, and the Curation of Affect in Euro-American Choralism," PhD diss., (University of California, Santa Barbara, forthcoming, 2023).

[24] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (London: Routledge Press, 2004), 43.

[25] Robin DiAngelo, *Nice Racism: How Progressive White People Perpetuate Racial Harm* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2021); Shannon Sullivan, *Good White People: The Problem with Middle-Class White Anti-Racism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009).

what, and how we teach, promote, research, and hire, and recognizing systems of white supremacy and their impact on us as individuals—acts with subversive potential within the systems of white supremacy that have long defined our field.

POSTSCRIPT: KENNY G, WOMEN, AND JAZZ

One last thought: This essay has focused on Kenny G's performance of whiteness. However, a full analysis would necessarily be more intersectional. In particular, I am interested in the role gender plays in jazz critics' ranging disinterest or dislike of Kenny G. I can't ignore the sense that hating Kenny G is also part of a long tradition of demeaning women's choices in the spheres of popular music and, especially, jazz. I am reminded of my mother, and all of the other women for whom Kenny G's music was significant. While gender identity or expression cannot unilaterally define what people are or are not fans of Kenny G, I am left wondering what the at times gender-based derision of Kenny G did for women who were or might have been interested in jazz. Despite anecdotal grumblings about how few women attend live jazz performances, NEA Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts have, since 2002, affirmed and re-affirmed that, in a binary understanding of gender, men and women attend jazz events at roughly equal rates (Table 1). This suggests that those anecdotal grumblers likely have a more limited understanding of what counts as jazz performance, defined by historically gendered conceptions of what does and does not "count" as "jazz."

	Women	**Men**
2002	10.8%	10.7%
2008	7.9%	7.7%
2012	8.3%	7.9%
2017	8.5%	8.7%

Table 1. Self-reported jazz attendance rates divided by gender, NEA Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts[26]

[26] Tom Bradshaw and Bonnie Nichols, "2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts," National Endowment for the Arts, March 2004, https://www.arts.gov/impact/research/publications/2002-survey-public-participation-arts; Kevin Williams and David Keen, "2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts," National Endowment for the Arts, November 2009, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2008-SPPA.pdf; Bohne Silber and Tim Triplett, "A Decade of Arts Engagement: Findings from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, 2002-2012," National Endowment for the Arts, January 2015, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2012-sppa-feb2015.pdf; Mary Anne Carter, "U.S. Patterns of Arts Participation: A Full Report from the 2017 Survey of Public

To be clear, I am not arguing that there are jazz sounds or subgenres that are somehow inherently more male or female, but rather that there are sounds and subgenres that have historically been associated with masculinity or femininity, and further, that in addition to women historically being excluded from jazz, jazz that has been associated with women has also been excluded from pervasive patriarchal definitions of jazz. As Wright notes in the introduction to this colloquy, "attempts to exclude Kenny G's music from jazz on musical grounds highlight the impossibility of defining jazz through any single set of musical criteria and demonstrate that musical judgements about jazz are ultimately subjective." I would add that those subjective musical judgements about jazz are rooted in raced, gendered, and sexed (among other identifiers) understandings about the music, the places it does or does not inhabit, the people who perform it, and the people who write about it. Consider, as an example, Wright's initial description of critics' objections to Kenny G's music, and to smooth jazz more generally: "With its soft timbres, its consonance, its dynamic swells, its effortlessly resolving harmonies, its sonic emphasis on pop production techniques (most notably, reverb and echo), and its catchy melodies, smooth jazz deliberately invokes notions of romance, sentimentality, and femininity." From its "softness" to its "swells" to its simplicity to its association with popular music, smooth jazz is already always abundantly gendered—even before associations with "notions of romance, sentimentality, and femininity." Even pianist Fred Hersch's reaction to Kenny G immediately feminizes his sound while simultaneously distancing it from "real" jazz: "My gut reaction is that it's like Paul Whiteman trying to make a lady out of jazz… he [Kenny G] is not a jazz musician." Hersch continues with a sentiment familiar to any woman who has been told to smile more: "He's the only person I've ever seen who is able to smirk while playing the saxophone."[27]

The 2016 film *La La Land* offers one high profile and fictionalized example of what I mean by jazz's exclusion of women and genres that jazz critics and musicians have associated with femininity.[28] Jazz pianist Sebastian (Ryan Gosling), horrified upon hearing that potential love interest and aspiring actress

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Participation in the Arts," National Endowment for the Arts, December 2019, https://www.arts.gov/impact/research/arts-data-profile-series/adp-18.

[27] Quoted in Varga. Recalling such additional expectations that women musicians should also look good, saxophonist and bandleader Peggy Gilbert once remarked, "The girl bands were hired as attractions for the men, and club managers were always reminding us not to take the music so seriously, to smile more. How can you smile with a horn in your mouth?" Quoted in Jo Ann Baldinger, "The Dixie Belles—Peggy Gilbert's Not-Ready-For-Retirement Band," *Los Angeles Times*, November 8, 1981: Calendar Section, 4.

[28] Damien Chazelle, dir., *La La Land*, (Summit Entertainment, 2016), DVD.

Mia (Emma Stone) hates jazz, immediately takes her to a jazz club to explain why she is wrong (Figure 2).[29] Sebastian starts by telling a story about how jazz was born in New Orleans flop houses by people who spoke five different languages and couldn't communicate with one another except through jazz, and Mia responds, "Yeah, but what about Kenny G?" The audience sees Sebastian immediately tense up, flabbergasted that Kenny G would even be part of a conversation about jazz. Mia presses on: "What about Kenny G, I mean what about elevator music? You know? *Jazz* music, that *I* know. From *my* life." Jazz audiences might see Sebastian clutching his fist to his mouth, as if holding in bile (either metaphorical or literal), as a sign of masculine restraint, as he forces out through clenched teeth, "What about it?" Mia adds that she finds jazz relaxing, and Sebastian, identifying something tangible that he can argue against, insists that jazz is *not* relaxing, offering as evidence that Sidney Bechet had once supposedly shot somebody for saying he had played a wrong note (he does not mention that the person he shot was a bystander). Mia continues, still relaxed and apparently not picking up on the existential tension she has created in Sebastian, explaining that where she grew up there was a radio station that people put on when they had a cocktail party and everyone would talk over it. Sebastian looks defeated, his head in his hand, rubbing his brow in frustration. He changes his tack, explaining that the problem now is Mia has never seen jazz live: "You have to see it! You have to see what's at stake… It's new every night. It's very, very exciting," he says earnestly. Sebastian, the prototypically hyperbolic mansplainer characteristic of director Damien Chazelle's jazz-oriented work, is clearly positioned to the audience as being in the right; he is, after all, the character who knows the most about jazz and its history. However, Mia has a definition of and history with jazz, as well (jazz music from *her* life)—one that is entirely discounted by Sebastian's canonical knowledge musically and experientially in a scene that clocks in at less than two minutes. In those two minutes, Sebastian speaks for a total of about 71.5 seconds, Mia speaks for just 25 seconds, and music plays by itself for 6 seconds.

[29] *La La Land*, 00:43:40-00:45:30.

Figure 2. Sebastian (right) explains jazz to Mia (left) in *La La Land* (2016)

But what would happen if we understood Mia's experiences of jazz to have legitimacy? What impact would that have on histories of jazz? If we as jazz scholars are to truly understand the apparent disjunct between self-reported jazz audiences and jazz audiences we witness at "typical" jazz venues, then we must shift our definitions of jazz to include the perspective of audience members. In other words, further study is needed of Kenny G and smooth jazz from the perspective of gender justice, as well as the critical privileging of masculinity in the creation of genre definitions; this work might redress some of jazz's longstanding issues with regard to gender inclusivity in particular.

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