2007

The Racialization of Jimi Hendrix

Marcus K. Adams

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.emich.edu/honors

Part of the African American Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
http://commons.emich.edu/honors/23
The Racialization of Jimi Hendrix

Abstract
The period of history immediately following World War Two was a time of intense social change. The end of colonialism, the internal struggles of newly emerging independent nations in Africa, social and political changes across Europe, armed conflict in Southeast Asia, and the civil rights movement in America were just a few. Although many of the above conflicts have been in the making for quite some time, they seemed to unite to form a socio-political cultural revolution known as the 60s, the effects of which continues to this day.

The 1960s was a particularly intense time for race relations in the United States. Long before it officially became a republic, in matters of race, white America collectively had trouble reconciling what it practiced versus what it preached. Nowhere is this racial contradiction more apparent than in the case of Jimi Hendrix.

Jimi Hendrix is emblematic of the racial ideal and the racial contradictions of the 1960s. Generally, black artists, such as those in jazz and R&B developed styles of playing that emphasized the distinctive timbre of the guitar set against the other instruments. White artists went further by perfecting the grandiose art of guitar soloing, and rock music was seen as their domain. Hendrix represents the virtually unheard of situation where a black man is virtually worshipped by young whites in general, and white males in particular, because of his mastery of what was previously their domain—the grandiose art of rock guitar soloing. (Heller)

What may come as a surprise to many of his black detractors was that Jimi Hendrix not only knew that he was black, but what that blackness meant in the context of American history. What Jimi refused to do was allow the notion of blackness as defined by others to determine his music. Jimi was neither an activist nor a black separatist, and his central focus, as always, was music, which he saw as being without color. (Cross 98)

Responding to a question during an interview about the difference in music and race in England versus America in U Jimi Hendrix: The Uncut Story," Jimi answers by stating, "I could play louder over there [England]. could really get myself together over there. There wasn't as many hang-ups as there was in America. You know mental hang-ups."

Jimi Hendrix played the blues. From his days learning to play the guitar while growing up in Seattle, Washington, to playing a sideman on the chitlin’ circuit, before James Marshall Hendrix actually became the man known as Jimi Hendrix, he always played the blues.

By refusing to be stereotyped for playing his music, Jimi Hendrix symbolizes the contradictions on race and ethnicity that continues to remain a burden to both blacks and whites alike.

This paper examine why Jimi Hendrix became worshipped as a musical genius by the rock community, which by default was white, while balancing the social contradictions of the black community, particularly in regards to music, and which group got to claim him.

Degree Type
Open Access Senior Honors Thesis

Department
African American Studies
First Advisor
Dr. Clovis E. Semmes

Second Advisor
Dr. Victor A. Okafor

Keywords
Rock musicians United States Biography, Hendrix, Jimi

Subject Categories
African American Studies

This open access senior honors thesis is available at DigitalCommons@EMU: http://commons.emich.edu/honors/23
THE RACIALIZATION OF JIMI HENDRIX

By

Marcus K. Adams

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the

Eastern Michigan University

Honors College

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation

with Honors in Department of African American Studies

Approved at Ypsilanti, Michigan, on this date _______________________

________________________________________________________
Supervising Instructor (Dr. Clovis E. Semmes)

________________________________________________________
Honors Advisor (Dr. Victor A. Okafor)

________________________________________________________
Department Head (Prof. Ronald E. Woods)

________________________________________________________
Honors Director (Dr. James A. Knapp)
Table of Contents

I. Acknowledgements
II. Thesis Statement
III. Ownership
IV. Authenticity
V. Roots: "Jimi’s Blues"
   a. Grandparents
   b. Parents
   c. Seattle Poverty
VI. Escapes
   a. Escape from Seattle
   b. Escape from the Army
   c. Escape from Nashville
   d. Escape from New York and Chitlin’ Circuit
VII. Another New York Discovery
VIII. Stereotypes
IX. Conclusion
X. Works Cited
Well, she’s walkin’ through the clouds with a circus mind that’s running wild. Butterflies and zebras and moonbeams and fairytales. That’s all she ever thinks about. Riding with the wind. When I’m sad she comes to me, with a thousand smiles she gives to me free. It’s alright, she says, it’s alright; take anything you want from me, anything, anything. “Little Wing”

(Hendrix 88)

I would like to extend my deep appreciation to Dr. Clovis E. Semmes for not only showing me how my personal passion could be developed into academic research, but for his relentless encouragement and willingness to provide me the opportunity to do so.

I would also like to extend my most sincere gratitude to all members, past and present, of the Department of African American Studies for continuing to expand my knowledge of the history of my ancestors and the effects of the African Diaspora.

I would also like to thank Dr. James A. Knapp of the Honors College for his understanding, professionalism, and support in making this thesis possible.

Finally, I would also like to offer special thanks to Dr. Heather Neff of the Department of English Language and Literature, for her unconditional
material and spiritual support of this project, and for encouraging my pursuit of academic excellence.
Well, I'm up here in this womb, I'm lookin' all around. Well, I'm looking out my belly button window an' I see a whole lotta frowns. An' I'm wondering if they don't want me around.-“Belly Button Window” (Hendrix 25)

The period of history immediately following World War Two was a time of intense social change. The end of colonialism, the internal struggles of newly emerging independent nations in Africa, social and political changes across Europe, armed conflict in Southeast Asia, and the civil rights movement in America were just a few. Although many of the above conflicts have been in the making for quite some time, they seemed to unite to form a socio-political cultural revolution known as the 60s, the effects of which continues to this day.

The 1960s was a particularly intense time for race relations in the United States. Long before it officially became a republic, in matters of race, white America collectively had trouble reconciling what it practiced versus what it preached. Nowhere is this racial contradiction more apparent than in the case of Jimi Hendrix.

Jimi Hendrix is emblematic of the racial ideal and the racial contradictions of the 1960s. Generally, black artists, such as those in jazz and R&B developed styles of playing that emphasized the distinctive timbre of the guitar set against the other instruments. White artists went further by
perfecting the grandiose art of guitar soloing, and rock music was seen as their domain. Hendrix represents the virtually unheard of situation where a black man is virtually worshipped by young whites in general, and white males in particular, because of his mastery of what was previously their domain—the grandiose art of rock guitar soloing. (Heller)

What may come as a surprise to many of his black detractors was that Jimi Hendrix not only knew that he was black, but what that blackness meant in the context of American history. What Jimi refused to do was allow the notion of blackness as defined by others to determine his music. Jimi was neither an activist nor a black separatist, and his central focus, as always, was music, which he saw as being without color. (Cross 98)

Responding to a question during an interview about the difference in music and race in England versus America in “Jimi Hendrix-The Uncut Story,” Jimi answers by stating, “I could play louder over there [England]. I could really get myself together over there. There wasn’t as many hang-ups as there was in America. You know mental hang-ups.”

Jimi Hendrix played the blues. From his days learning to play the guitar while growing up in Seattle, Washington, to playing a sideman on the chitlin’ circuit, before James Marshall Hendrix actually became the man known as Jimi Hendrix, he always played the blues.

By refusing to be stereotyped for playing his music, Jimi Hendrix symbolizes the contradictions on race and ethnicity that continues to remain a burden to both blacks and whites alike.
This paper examine why Jimi Hendrix became worshipped as a musical genius by the rock community, which by default was white, while balancing the social contradictions of the black community, particularly in regards to music, and which group got to claim him.
Ownership

_Y'all pass me that bottle, and I'll sing y'all a real song._ Yeah! _Let me get my key, ahem!_ Well, I'm lookin' through Harlem, my stomach squealed just a little more. A stagecoach full of leathers and footprints pulls up to my soapbox door. Now, a lady with a pearl handled necktie, tied to the driver's fence breathes in my face bourbon 'n' coke possessed words; "Haven't I seen you somewhere in hell, or was it just an accident?" You know how I felt behind all of that. "My Friend" (Hendrix 119)

The racialization of Jimi Hendrix presents an interesting dilemma in determining authenticity. In _Race Consciousness_, Jeremy Wells writes that in his early years as a back-up musician, Hendrix acquired a reputation as an outrageous performer who routinely drew more attention to himself than to the lead singer. To begin with, Hendrix generally had more talent than most of those he played with. In addition, he had already begun to play the guitar with his teeth, gyrate provocatively, and wag his tongue at the audience—in other words, to execute the maneuvers that would prove shocking enough to mass audiences in 1967, much less to small-scale crowds in 1960. (Fossett and Tucker, 55)

Hendrix's reputation followed him into the mid-1960s when he began touring what was known as the "chitlin circuit," a series of clubs and theatres at which black musicians would perform for black audiences
segregated from other venues. Among the well-known acts with whom he performed and/or recorded were Little Richard, Sam Cooke, Jackie Wilson, the Supremes, and the Isley Brothers. However, with success came increasing artistic pressures. Hendrix had become one of the most adept rhythm and blues musicians in the country, yet there was little financial incentive to pursue a career playing straight-up blues, providing Hendrix with a dual dilemma. (Fossett and Tucker 55)

First, his irrepressible flamboyance annoyed and threatened those fellow band members who expected Hendrix to remain in the background and bang out a guitar rhythm according to the simple chord progressions of early rock “n” roll. Hendrix was expected to showcase his expertise during the occasional brief solo, but never detract attention away from the band as a whole or particularly, the star. Little Richard is reputed to have been especially incensed at Hendrix’s tendency to upstage him. On the other hand, the Isley Brothers were happy to have such a dynamic presence in their act. However, in all cases, the duties of a sideman severely limited Hendrix’s own musical expression. (Fossett and Tucker 55)

Second, Hendrix was only able to make a living playing within what was known as conventional or “authentic” forms of black music. In the early to mid-1960s, interracial rock groups were uncommon and interracial audiences even rarer. If asked, most people would consider rock ‘n’ roll as another form of white music, although its foundation is deeply rooted in conventional black music form. Rock ‘n’ roll was less than a decade old
when Hendrix began performing. Although rock 'n' roll freely used black music forms, it rarely allowed black performers to cross the barrier between "race records," which was another form of musical segregation, to that measurement of commercial success known as the Top 40. By necessity, Hendrix was committed to playing within this musical idiom, but found him being drawn more to jazz because it relied more on freedom of expression and less on the models of exclusion encouraged by media outlets such as commercial radio and *Billboard* magazine. (Fossett and Tucker 55)

Throughout his career, Hendrix would profess that he yearned to live in a race blind world where jazz paradigms-improvisational leeway, creative collaboration, and so forth-provided the basis of existence and interaction. In a 1969 interview, Hendrix said that his was a Universalist belief and claimed to be a prophet of a new age global harmony. Hendrix said, "It's not a black or white thing, or a green and gold thing....There are a few chosen people that are here to help get these people out of this certain sleepiness they are in." (Fossett and Tucker 56)

Like many blacks who dare to challenge what constitutes racial authenticity, Hendrix's entire career was a ceaseless struggle against racial and cultural stereotyping. And though Hendrix is quoted as saying, "Race isn't a problem in my world" amid the racial turmoil of 1968, it would be a mistake to characterize Hendrix as being racially oblivious. As with many blacks who challenged the concept of authenticity, Hendrix may have been at times a tad idealistic on the theory of what freedom and blackness meant
in America, but he was never ignorant on the reality. Hendrix personally understood and experienced the problems that could arise by thinking of race as a prohibitive category. It was this type of thinking that presented Hendrix with the boundaries that he had to cross in order to achieve commercial and artistic success. (Fossett and Tucker 56)

Hendrix left the “chitlin circuit” in 1964 and moved to New York where he eventually became a regular at Greenwich Village blues clubs. Hendrix was able to attract a mixture of audiences that fitted his own musical tastes, more importantly had his choice of songs and performance style was not dictated by a jealous band leader. Hendrix could be as unrestrained or creative as he wished because not only was he the featured attraction, Hendrix was often the only attraction. His reputation for “putting on a show” attracted audiences to Greenwich Village clubs as much as his renown for incredible musicianship. (Fossett and Tucker 56)

For Hendrix, ownership and authenticity changed in 1966 when Chas Chandler, former bass player for the Animals, a British rock band who convinced him to move to England by persuading Hendrix that the openness he discovered in Greenwich Village was characteristic of the British rock scene. Once in England, Hendrix found acceptance for what most of black America saw as outlandish clothes and music. Hendrix was paired with two white musicians: drummer Mitch Mitchell and bass player Noel Redding, forming the Experience and forever changing Anglo-American popular music. (Fossett and Tucker 57)
Hendrix gained increasing popularity in Europe, but for the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival returned to the United States. According to writer Jeremy Wells, Monterey set the standard for late 1960s music festivals and would prove to be one of the era’s defining moments. Hendrix would prove to be Monterey’s most memorable performer. (Fossett and Tucker 57)

The Monterey Pop Festival not only reintroduced Hendrix to America, it enabled him to transgress racial boundaries and galvanize those in attendance. Monterey bore the imprint of race because it tried to transcend it. Despite his personal desire to be known as a musician, Hendrix never escaped the race question his entire career, neither before Monterey, when he struggled against musical apartheid, nor after it. Wells adds that Hendrix’s dilemma was how to retain a sense of tradition while simultaneously transgressing it. Hendrix had to ensure that “blackness” remained present in his music, but he also had to combat it from becoming a totalizing presence. (Fossett and Tucker 60)
Authenticity

*Machine gun tearing my body all apart. Machine gun, yeah, tearing my body all apart. Evil man make me kill you. Evil man make you kill me. Evil man make me kill you. Even though we're only families apart. “Machine Gun”* 

(Hendrix 101)

Soul music was claimed as the aesthetic property of blacks. William L. Van Deburg, in *New Day in Babylon* writes that in both structure and conceptualization it was said to be part of an African musicological continuum. As an indigenous expression of the collective African-American experience, it served as a repository of racial consciousness. Transcending the medium of entertainment, soul music provided a ritual in song with which blacks could identify and through which they could convey important in-group symbols. (Van DeBurg 205)

In a culture where one's race often determines one's legitimacy, racial authenticity in music varies little from that of the larger society. In his book, *Instruments of Desire*, Steve Waksman observes that perhaps the fundamental recognition of the artists and intellectuals who made up the diverse constituency of the Black Aesthetic movement was that what we know as black music is no simple matter of resonance, just as black art more generally cannot be defined purely by reference to aesthetic codes any more than it can be referenced to the color of an artist’s skin. (Waksman 173)
The Black Aesthetic was the cultural movement that paralleled the drive toward political autonomy expressed by Black Power. Adhering to the black aesthetic involved accepting the maxim “black is beautiful” as the first step toward breaking away from white European aesthetic standards that had so long associated blackness with ugliness, depravity, and evil. Aesthetics were transfigured into a battleground in which black and white artists struggled over control of the images that shaped the collective racial consciousness. (Waksman 173)

Amiri Baraka’s groundbreaking 1963 study of black music, *Blues People*, argues that the black experience in the United States could be best understood through music, and more specifically through blues and jazz, the quintessential black forms. (Waksman 174)

Baraka’s argument is based on the social and historical experience of blacks in America. He understands the blues to have arisen out of the specific set of social relationships in which blacks found themselves upon their displacement to America rather than out of an essential black cultural identity. However, Baraka’s location of the origin of a specifically black consciousness in the rise of the blues placed black music at the center of the black historical experience in such a way that music became the constitutive element of black cultural identity. (Waksman 175)

Intellectually, whites could appreciate that black music’s attractive power was derived from the tension and electricity created by joining gospel’s joyful devotional fervor with the bluesman’s tale of worldly despair
and sexual anguish. On select occasions, whites might even experience the emotional catharsis provided by the music, but they seldom seemed to advance beyond superficial understandings. (Van DeBurg 205)

Hendrix’s version of the blues made him pivotal in the conflict over who not only controlled, but defined the images which shaped the collective racial consciousness of black people. Echoing Baraka, jazz critic Ron Wellburn adds that black music was at once a vanguard product and a form of expression accessible to all black people. Blackness in this context took shape as a set of natural qualities held by all black people, a “soul essence” that bridged the gap between the artist’s free jazz experiments and the experience of ordinary black Americans. Music for Wellburn provided the common language for a unified and undifferentiated black consciousness liberated from the “oppressor’s image” of negative black identity. (Waksman 176)

Wellburn’s analysis assumes an added dimension as he outlines the contrast between jazz (black music) and rock (white music). In opposition to the vitality of jazz, Wellburn describes rock as a decadent musical form reflective of the “spiritual, creative, and sociological weakness of white America.” According to Wellburn, white rock fed like a vampire upon black musical forms, using black music to satiate “white American psychosexual illusions.” In addition, Wellburn asserted that rock music reflected the subordination of spirituality to science and technology so characteristic of Euro-American culture by stating:
White rock is a technology, not real music. It is an affectation, not a felt experience. It is parasitic, not symbiotic; to black culture and lifestyles...Electronic music can make the black man blind from the sight of money and the white man rich on his deathbed, laughing absurdly at having fooled the niggers this last go-round. Black musicians should re-evaluate the technological intrusions now threatening our music; times may come when that technology will be useless. Our music is our key to survival. (Waksman 176)

Writing in the *American Ethnologist*, Maureen Mahon acknowledges that a segregated rock community was a critique of racism and stereotypes that operated in both the music industry and in the common sense assumptions of black and white Americans. Moreover, black rock, symbolized by Jimi Hendrix, stands outside conventional conceptions of black authenticity, for although it is easy to accept blacks as musicians, the image of a rock musician is, for most Americans, a white man with a guitar. (Mahon 288)

This is ironic because, as Chris Potash writes in *The Jimi Hendrix Companion*, Jimi Hendrix was a blues man, perhaps the greatest of his generation. Like his predecessors in that noble line, Robert Johnson, Sonny
Boy Williamson, Otis Redding, and all the rest, Hendrix was a man, proud and boldly sexual. (Potash 38)

Potash adds that rock 'n' roll was, as everybody knew at the time, blues with a beat. “I'm a MAN,” sang Bo Diddley, “spell it M, A, N,” announcing the end of the days of black boyhood, while Chuck Berry in his zoot suit, eyes burning with liberated anger, dared to take on Beethoven. White kids, first country boys like Carl Perkins, then high school teenagers like Bob Dylan, responded with their own blues. Then gospel singers began to sing the blues and that was called soul music. (Potash 39)

In her book, Right to Rock, Maureen Mahon writes that a black person who takes an interest in rock music is marked as someone who has either misunderstood which music is appropriate for his or her consumption, or has abandoned black culture by investing in what is perceived as a white form of music. Rock music becomes a symbol of outsider status, a tool for policing racial categories. It becomes a way of attacking the absence of authenticity, and an indicator of familiarity with contemporary black cultural norms. (Mahon 10)

In the United States, understanding black authenticity is supported by what anthropologist Renato Rosaldo characterizes as a tendency to “conflate the notion of culture with the idea of difference.” Noting the difference from the white mainstream is a common way of defining black cultural identity. Many blacks and non-black assume that sustaining authentic black culture requires maintaining separation from other contaminating cultures. This view
of authenticity holds that "real" black culture and "real" black people must be really different, elaborating and guarding practices recognized as authentic through processes of cultural protectionism. (Mahon 10)

Some notions of black authenticity are uncritically connected to long standing stereotypes that position blacks as being spiritual, sensual, and artistic, but also predisposed to criminality, poverty, and other pathologies. Assumptions about class status are embedded in images that frame a poor or working-class position as part of authentic blackness and suggest that there is a correct formula for black identity that should in some way address working-class politics. (Mahon 10)

In *Just My Soul Responding*, Brian Ward writes that authentic blackness was also manufactured and promoted by some of era’s leading cultural nationalist. For example, Maulana Ron Karenga’s Kawaida was conceived as an attempt to slip the shackles of white cultural and psychological domination by reverting to a putatively African system of values. Kawaida’s precise relationship to any known form of African philosophy or system of cultural practice was a matter of some debate. It was more a synthesis of certain cultural and philosophical essences which Karenga and others believed defined African, and therefore all truly black, consciousness throughout the Diaspora and across the ages. Ward adds that like most Afrocentrists, Karenga’s identification was less with any real historical Africa than with a mythic, homogenized Africa of the mind. This view was conveniently empty of any of the national, tribal, linguistic,
religious, gender, cultural and class divisions which have characterized the
history of the continent. (Ward 348)

Karenga’s many critics, led by the Black Panther Party, noted that he
and his acolytes appeared to be making an ego-gratifying fetish and healthy
profit out of these pseudo-African trinkets while doing little to convert the
racial consciousness and solidarity Karenga promoted into meaningful
challenges to white power. Blacks were still being oppressed; it was just
now some endured that oppression while proudly wearing natural hair,
dashikis, bubas, kente cloth, and tikis. However, most civil rights veterans
were seasoned in the painstaking work of grassroots political organizing.
Many, like the Black Panther Party, were deeply skeptical of claims that the
route to black liberation in America lay in romanticizations of Africa and
cosmetic affections. (Ward 349)
Roots: “Jimi’s Blues”

The Grandparents

You got my pride hangin’ outta my bed. You messing with my life, so I bought my lead. Even messing with my children, and you screamin’ at my wife, baby. Get off my back, if you wanna get outta here alive.—“Freedom”

(Hendrix 62)

James Marshall Hendrix was born in Seattle, Washington at 10:15 AM on November 27, 1942. (Cross 22) Despite his inability to read or write music, Hendrix nonetheless became a musical genius by conquering what was previously the sole domain of white males, the rock guitar solo. (Heller 4)

This is ironic because Hendrix in his heart and soul was a blues man. Hendrix not only played the blues, he also lived it. The blues was part of his family’s genealogy, beginning with his grandparents, Bertran and Nora Hendrix.

Bertran Philander Ross Hendrix was born in Urbana City, Ohio, in 1866. He was born out of wedlock from the union between his mother, a former slave, and a white merchant who once owned her. Bertran’s mother named him after the slave master who had once owned her, hoping that the father would support his son, which never occurred. Reaching adulthood, Bertran took a job as a stagehand with a Chicago vaudeville troupe. It was there that he met Nora Moore and the two married. Nora’s great-
grandmother was a full-blooded Cherokee. This bloodline, along with that of the Jeter's, Jimi's mother, made Jimi Hendrix at least one-eighth Native American. (Cross 17)

It was 1909 when Nora and Bertran Hendrix arrived in Seattle with their all-black vaudeville troupe, the Great Dixieland Spectacle, and performed at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition being held at the University of Washington. The Hendrix's stayed for the summer before moving to Vancouver, British Columbia. Vancouver had even fewer blacks than Seattle. In fact, Vancouver had so few blacks that they were oddities. The Hendrix's settled in Strathcona, the immigrant district in Vancouver, known as the "square mile of sin" by the locals for its bootlegging and prostitution. (Cross 17)

Vancouver was no different than the United States in that the best-paying jobs were reserved for whites. With little demand for black vaudeville, Bertran found work as a servant and laborer. The Hendrix's had four children—Leon, Patricia, Frank, and James Allen Hendrix. James, born in 1919, was always called Al, and later became the father of Jimi. A local murder in 1922 stirred up anti-black sentiment causing Bertran to lose his job as a bathroom attendant—considered one of the few jobs open to all races. Bertram eventually was hired as a steward at a golf course, a position he held until his death in 1934. (Cross 17)
Roots: The Parents

Down the street you can hear her scream, “You’re a disgrace,” as she slams the door in his drunken face. And now he stands outside and all the neighbors start to gossip and drool. He cries, “Oh girl, you must be mad. What happened to the sweet love you and me had?” Against the door he leans and starts a scene, and his tears fall and burn the garden green.

“Castles Made of Sand” (Hendrix 39)

With the death of Bertran and the early death of Leon, the oldest son, the family was forced to survive on welfare payments from Canadian relief, and eventually lost their home. The Hendrix’s then moved into a house with Nora’s new boyfriend. Al shared a room with his brother Frank and a boarder. (Cross 17)

Growing up, Al Hendrix regularly entered dance contests. He would brag about how he could flip his partner in the air and, in a snazzy move, slide her between his legs. However, there were very few black women in Canada and dating a white woman in Vancouver, just as in America, was dangerous. Al took a job at the Chicken Inn, a restaurant which was at that time in Vancouver a center of black culture. (Cross 18)

Though only five-foot-six, Al was stocky and muscular. After a brief, but unsuccessful career as a boxer, Al was unable to find employment or a girlfriend so he left Vancouver. Al moved to Seattle in 1940 with forty
dollars. His first steady job was bussing tables and shining shoes at the Ben Paris nightclub before eventually landing a job at an iron foundry. Al's only real joy at the time came on the dance floor. It was there he met Lucille Jeter. (Cross 19)

Lucille Jeter was sixteen years old and in the ninth grade when she met Al Hendrix. Though remarkably pretty, Lucille was naïve when it came to boys and Al was her first boyfriend. Lucille was intrigued by Al's Canadian upbringing, but that also alienated him from some in Seattle's black community. Al began to formally court Lucille, visiting her parents. Although Lucille's parents liked Al, they didn't take him seriously because they felt that their daughter, at sixteen, was too young to be seriously involved with a man. (Cross 19)

Al lost his job at the foundry and was employed racking balls at a pool hall when he heard that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. Al was twenty-two years old and with war having been declared, was certain to be drafted. His relationship with Lucille accelerated and by late February 1942, she discovered she was pregnant. Al's declaration that he would marry Lucille did not appease her parents who tried, without success, to talk Lucille out of marriage. Al and Lucille were married at the King County Courthouse, and three days later Al went to the army. (Cross 20)

Being pregnant, unemployed, and living at home with her parents was difficult for Lucille. In addition, the Jeter's were struggling financially and living on welfare. By lying about her age, Lucille eventually found work as a
waitress in the unruly Jackson Street club scene. Jackson Street was where
the pimps, whores, gamblers, drug dealers, drug addicts, and successful
black businesspeople went to have a drink and be entertained. Like Al,
Lucille also became part of the entertainment, singing for tips in between
waitressing. For sixteen year old Lucille, working on Jackson Street was a
life-changing event. Lucille quickly became savvy to the ways of Jackson
Street. The district became hers. Lucille knew people, they knew her, and
she was never again completely comfortable up on the hill in the more staid
Central district world of her parents or the traditional world Al Hendrix
represented. (Cross 20)

Very pregnant and no longer able to work, Lucille moved in with
Dorothy Harding, a homeowner and family friend. It was Harding who gave
Jimi the nickname “Buster,” inspired by the comic strip character Buster
Brown and the brand name of a children’s shoe. Later, Jimi said it was after
Larry “Buster” Crabbe, the actor who played Flash Gordon in the movie
serials that Jimi adored. Most of Jimi’s relatives and neighbors in Seattle
called him Buster. Jimi was also called Buster to avoid Lucille’s choice of his
legal name: Johnny Allen Hendrix. Johnny wasn’t a common name in either
Al’s family or Lucille’s, and these forever planted questions of paternity in
Al’s mind. In any case, no one called the baby Johnny, not even Lucille, and
it would be the first of three legal name changes for Jimi. (Cross 22)

Harding sent Al a telegram informing him of the birth. Eventually,
Lucille finally sent Al a photo with the child sitting on her lap with the
caption, “This is the baby and I,” not using the child’s name. Al later received another photo that had the caption, “To my daddy with all my love, Baby Hendrix.” (Cross 23)

To be fair, life in 1943 was very difficult for Lucille. Buster would be a year old before any of Al’s army pay finally reached Lucille. Desperately poor, Lucille found other men to support her. (Cross 25)

The care of Buster increasingly fell on family friends, Delores and Dorothy Harding, Lucille’s mother Clarice, and Mrs. Champ, another family friend. Mrs. Champ’s care of Buster was meant to be temporary, but it stretched on, and an informal adoption appeared in the works. Al Hendrix arrived in Seattle on a troop transport ship in September 1945 after serving in the Pacific, unsure of where he was going to live, or if he even had a wife, while he was overseas, Al had initiated divorce proceedings. Once in Seattle, Al moved in with his sister-in-law, Delores, and then spent several weeks in Vancouver visiting his family. In the meantime, Buster was still in California with the Champ’s, and it would be two months after his discharge before Al went to see Buster. (Cross 26)

The Champs adored Buster and tried to talk Al into giving him up for adoption. Al, conflicted over the situation, wrote in a letter to his mother, Nora Hendrix, that Mrs. Champ was brokenhearted at the idea of losing the boy: “They are so attached to him, and love him so, and he’s used to them too. But after all, he’s my son, and I want him to know who his daddy is, though he calls me daddy all the time now.” Al ended the letter by saying
that he'd never forgive himself if he left California without his son, who at that point, had been raised exclusively by women and had lacked any father figure. (Cross 26)

Yesler Terrace in Seattle was the first racially integrated public housing project in the United States. There were few blacks, and despite the poverty of the residents, it was a close knit community where diverse cultures met on common ground. Buster fit right in with the many other children, and it was the beginning of his multicultural upbringing. Lucille soon showed up and said “Here I am.” For the first time, the three Hendrix's were in the same room, but it was a strange situation. Lucille had seen neither her son in months, nor her husband for over three years. Al wasn’t sure whether to voice his anger at Lucille or take her in his arms. In the years since Al had last seen her, Lucille had transformed from a girl into a beautiful woman. Al dropped divorce proceedings, and by all accounts, the next several months would be the smoothest ones the family would ever know. Expenses being low since they were living with Delores and with Al still receiving small payments from the Army, Al and Lucille were able to go out almost every night. (Cross 28)

Alcohol began to take on a greater role with Al and Lucille. Lucille would become overly affectionate and emotional when drunk, whereas Al became evil. Al found work in a slaughterhouse, which allowed the family to move into a hotel in the Jackson Street area that catered to transients. Their room had only a single bed, which they all shared, and a one burner hot plate
on which to prepare meals. The only other furniture was a desk chair, and they lived in this room for months. It was during this time and a full year after his return that Al decided to legally have his son's name changed. James was chosen as a first name because that was Al's legal name, and Marshall was the middle name of Al's deceased brother, Leon. (Cross 29)

In the spring of 1947, the family moved to Rainier Vista projects. Occupied primarily by retired white families, after the war, it increasingly became home for a number of blacks. The family's one bedroom apartment was so small that Buster slept in the closet. As Buster's parents began to fight more frequently, this closet became his sanctuary. Most of Al's and Lucille's fights were about money. Al had a series of short-term manual labor jobs, while studying to be an electrician under the G. I. Bill. In addition, whenever Lucille threatened to find a job as a waitress, Al saw that as an affront to his manhood. The family was living on less than ninety dollars a month, and paying forty dollars in rent. (Cross 30)

Increasingly, alcohol became the fuel for Lucille and Al's conflicts and even at his very young age, this was not lost on Jimi. In addition, their house frequently became the hangout. Even Al, in his book, My Son Jimi, wrote "When Lucille and I had alcohol at the house, we drank together and there'd be other people there too, so it was a party." Those parties became so raucous that Jimi either had to leave or sit in his closet and listen to the racket. Jimi had become more withdrawn. When asked why, Jimi frequently said, "Mama and Daddy are always fighting. Always fighting. I
don't like it. I wish they'd stop." When his parents nightly bickering began, Jimi would often retreat to Dorothy's house. Jimi also had developed a slight stutter, which lasted until adolescence and occasionally reappeared in adulthood when he became nervous. (Cross 32)

The birth of Jimi's brother, Leon, in 1948, and named after Al's deceased brother, marked the height of the family's good times. Al had a better job and the fighting between him and Lucille seemed to slow down. After Leon's birth, the family moved into a two bedroom apartment in the same Rainier Vista project. The apartment was still small, but Jimi at least could share a room with his brother and, more importantly, no longer had to sleep in the closet. (Cross 34)

In less than a year after the birth of Leon, Lucille gave birth to another son, whom Al named Joseph. Although listed as the father on Joseph's birth certificate, Al, in his autobiography, *My Son Jimi*, denies paternity. If the birth of Leon marks the high point of the Hendrix's, Joseph's birth represents its decline. Joseph had several serious birth defects, including a club foot, cleft palate, one leg significantly shorter than the other, and the unusual phenomenon of having two rows of teeth. The family now had three young children to feed when they could barely afford one. For the remainder of their marriage, Al and Lucille would fight about the cause of Joe's medical problems, with Lucille blaming Al for pushing her while she was pregnant, and Al blaming her for drinking. (Cross 34)
By June 1949, the children had health issues due to malnutrition. Jimi and Leon survived only by eating with neighbors, a habit that would soon become a daily occurrence. In the fall of 1950 when Jimi was eight years old, the Hendrix's had another child Kathy Ira, who was born sixteen weeks premature and weighed just one pound ten ounces at birth. Worse, the family soon discovered that Kathy was blind. She lived with the family, but after eleven months she was made a ward of the state and placed into foster care. Like Joseph before her, Al once again denied paternity. (Cross 35)

Jimi was almost nine when in October 1951 Lucille gave birth to another daughter, Pamela. Though not as severe as Kathy's, she also had health problems. Once again, even though listed on the birth certificate, Al denied paternity. Pamela was given to foster care, but stayed in the neighborhood and would occasionally see the family. Although Lucille had left Al, and the couple officially divorced on December 17, 1951, it wasn't long before they were back together again. (Cross 36)

Al's refusal to help pay for Joseph's medical expenses ensured that the only way for him to get the care he needed was to make him a ward of the state, and for that to happen Al and Lucille had to relinquish parental rights. Lucille begged Al to reconsider, and both Delores and Dorothy offered to adopt Joseph, but perhaps fearing that he'd still have a financial obligation, Al vetoed those suggestions. In the summer of 1952, Joseph became a ward of the state. (Cross 37)
Although officially divorced, and both failing to control their alcohol abuse, Al and Lucille still lived together. Lucille once again became pregnant with a child that Al once again would deny was his. Alfred Hendrix was born on February 14, 1953, and was their fourth child born developmentally disabled. Alfred was immediately placed for adoption. Jimi was ten years old. (Cross 39)

Raising his son’s alone and working the afternoon shift pumping gas at Seattle City Light left Jimi and Leon with no one to watch them after school. Although the neighbors watched over Jimi and Leon, the boy’s got into minor mischief and drew the attention of the welfare department. The welfare workers drove green cars and Jimi and Leon learned to watch for them. (Cross 40)

In the spring of 1953, Al got a job as a laborer with the City of Seattle. The more consistent income allowed Al to purchase a very small two-bedroom house, back in the Central District near Jackson Street, with a down payment of ten dollars. To Jimi and Leon, the house was like a palace. It was their first house and it gave them a yard of their own. (Cross 41)

Though he hadn’t previously shown any particular interest in music, in 1953 Jimi began to follow the popular charts and played along to the radio, using a broom as if it was a guitar. Almost everyday after school, Jimi would listen to Al’s radio and pretend to play along using the broom. (Cross 42)
By 1954, acting on repeated complaints, a social worker from the welfare department began stopping by the house every week. The social worker from the welfare department finally gave Al two choices: sons could be put up for adoption or be sent to a foster home. Although Leon was clearly his favorite, Al argued that Jimi, almost a teenager, needed less care and should stay with him. The social worker agreed and Leon was placed in foster care. (Cross 44)

Although no one did more for Jimi over the years than Dorothy Harding, there were many families from the Central District who asserted that Jimi was a regular presence in their home for dinner and bedtime. Jimi spent very little time at his father’s house and, for all practical purposes, lived off the kindness of others in the black community. The contributions of these people cannot be underestimated, for these families, quite literally, kept Jimi alive. (Cross 46)

One day Jimi was in the woods with a group of children. One of their friends, a developmentally disabled boy kept lagging behind. Jimi and the others would yell at him to keep up, but after he fell out of sight, they went back to locate him. They found the boy about to be sexually assaulted by an older man, whom they scared off. A decade later, Jimi told a girlfriend that he’d been sexually assaulted as a youth. Jimi left out specific details, other than to say that the abuser was a man in uniform, but it was an incident that marked him. (Cross 50)
The instability in Jimi’s life continued. Al’s drinking remained out of control and that summer of 1955, the welfare department threatened court action to place Jimi into foster care. As a compromise, Jimi was allowed to live with Frank, Al’s brother, who resided nearby. Boeing Aircraft provided Frank a good, stable income and his wife, Pearl, provided Jimi another strong matriarchal figure in his life. Jimi, however, had to attend a different school from that of his friends. In the meantime, Al found work in landscape, something he would do for the rest of his life. However, in order to stave off foreclosure, Al took in borders, Cornell and Ernestine Benson, who slept in what was once Jimi’s bedroom. The presence of Ernestine Benson proved to be transformational for Jimi. Ernestine was a blues music fan and brought her large collection of records to the house. It was during one of his visits that Jimi for the first time was exposed to Muddy Waters, Lightnin’ Hopkins, Robert Johnson, Bessie Smith, and Howlin’ Wolf. And Jimi loved it. (Cross 51)

In 1956 the difficulties in Jimi’s life continued. In February, Frank and Pearl broke up. Jimi was sent back to Al, and the Benson’s moved out. Jimi returned to his previous school and was reunited with his friends, but was a poor student. In September, the bank repossessed the house. Jimi and Al moved to a boardinghouse run by a Mrs. McKay, and once again Jimi had to change schools. The McKay’s had a paraplegic son who played a one string, beat up guitar. When the guitar was discarded, Jimi asked Mrs. McKay if he
could buy it and she said five dollars. Al refused to pay, but eventually it was Ernestine Benson who bought Jimi his first guitar. (Cross 52)

Eventually, Jimi was able to acquire strings for his warped neck guitar that wouldn’t stay in tune. He played it constantly, or at least until Al caught him. Jimi was born left-handed, but Al insisted that he write with his right hand and applied the same principle to the guitar. Al thought that everything left-handed was from the devil. Jimi restrung the guitar so he could play it leftie. When Al came home Jimi immediately flipped his guitar, keeping his song going all the while. Thus, what would later be one of Jimi’s trademark performance techniques was actually born out of necessity to prevent his dad from yelling at him. (Cross 55)

Jimi’s brother Leon temporarily left foster care, and the three of them shared a tiny room in the boardinghouse. With his brother around, Jimi’s spirits and schoolwork, while poor, showed some improvement. Even that was remarkable considering that Jimi now skipped school at least once a week, often walking around the neighborhood with his guitar strapped across his back. Through Delores, Jimi learned that his mother, who he hadn’t seen in months, had remarried on January 3, 1958, to a William Mitchell, a retired longshoreman who was thirty years her senior. (Cross 56)

Lucille had serious health issues because of her alcohol abuse. She was admitted to Harborview Hospital twice in the fall of 1957, suffering from cirrhosis of the liver. By the middle of January 1958, Lucille was hospitalized with hepatitis. Delores took Leon and Jimi to visit their mother,
and they were shocked to see her pallid appearance, her use of a wheelchair and her deteriorated condition since they last saw her. Two weeks later on February 1, 1958, Lucille Jeter Hendrix Mitchell was found unconscious in an alley next to a bar and died in the hospital. (Cross 57)

Written years later, "Castles Made of Sand" would be Jimi Hendrix's most autobiographical song. It refers to a woman in a wheelchair whose "heart was a frown." The song begins with a domestic argument where the wife slams the door on her drunken husband. Another verse tells the tale of a young boy who plays in the woods, pretending he is an Indian chief. The crippled woman eventually decides to take her own life by jumping into the sea, pleading, "You won't hurt me no more," as she leaps. The woman lands on a "golden winged" ship. Jimi ends the song with a couplet about timelessness, using the image of "castles made of sand" washing into the sea. (Cross 57)

Al borrowed a truck and took Jimi and Leon to a funeral to see Lucille's body. However, outside of the funeral home Al changed his mind and made the boys stay in the truck while he paid his last visit to Lucille. Jimi, who was fifteen years old, cried as they waited, while Leon, age ten, remained stoic, thinking that if he showed no emotion, the pain would go away. When Al returned, he offered each boy a shot of Seagram's 7 from a flask of whiskey in his pocket. All three took good, long swigs and Al drove them home. Lucille's funeral was held four days later and was scheduled to begin at 2:00 pm on a Sunday. Nora, Al's mother, came from Vancouver,
and about two dozen of Lucille’s friends attended. At 2:00, everyone was there except Al, Jimi, and Leon. Hoping they were late, the preacher held the funeral for another two hours, but they never came. (Cross 58)

In his autobiography, *My Son Jimi*, Al explained that Jimi wanted to attend the funeral, but he didn’t have a car. Al gave Jimi bus fare instead. Rather than take the bus to his mother’s funeral by himself, Jimi stayed in his room and cried. However, Leon later recalls, “We both wanted to go, but my dad wouldn’t let us.” (Cross 59)

Already shy, after his mother’s death, Jimi became even more distant and withdrawn. For the remainder of his adolescence, it would be rare for Jimi to initiate a conversation with anyone but his closest friends. Jimi also developed a sense of detachment, that after the loss of his mother, nothing else mattered. It would also become a trait that Jimi took into adulthood. Instead of long-term planning, Jimi lived every day as if it were his last. Jimi continued to be a dreamer, but he responded with resignation when things in life went wrong. Jimi’s relationship with his father permanently changed with Lucille’s death. Al’s decision not to let him attend the funeral stayed with Jimi as a bitter memory for which Al was never forgiven. (Cross 59)
Angel came down from heaven yesterday, she stayed with me just long enough to rescue me. And she told me a story yesterday about the sweet love between the moon and the deep blue sea. And then she spread her wings high over me. She said she’s going to come back tomorrow.

“Angel” (Hendrix 16)

In the spring of 1958, Jimi and Al left the boardinghouse and moved into a two bedroom home with Cornell and Ernestine Benson. Leon had once again been sent back to foster care. Although it was cramped conditions with four people living in a home with less than five hundred square feet, for Jimi it felt like a respite. (Cross 61)

Although Ernestine fed Jimi and mothered him, it was her collection of blues records which aided his musical development. She would occasionally take Jimi down to Bob Summerrise’s World of Music and let him pick out a record. In addition to the wide selection of blues and R&B, the store also carried records of popular white artists, although those were kept under the counter. Summerrise also hosted a radio show that played cutting-edge black music and Jimi was an avid listener. Although Jimi’s academics continued to decline, his musicianship continued to improve. Jimi never took formal music lessons, but learned his guitar licks from the neighborhood kids, most notably Randy “Butch” Snipes. Imitating T-Bone Walker, Snipes could
play the guitar behind his back and do the Chuck Berry duck walk. On many
afternoons, Jimi sat watching Snipes and learning showmanship. (Cross 62)

It was April 1959 when Al and Jimi moved again, this time to an
apartment in a building so rodent infested that Al never used the kitchen.
Prostitutes worked the streets below, and the apartment directly faced a
juvenile detention center which gave Jimi a daily reminder of where things
could lead. At the constant nagging of Ernestine Benson, Al finally bought
Jimi an electric guitar on installment from Meyer's Music. It was a white,
right-handed Supro Ozark which Jimi immediately restrung it left-handed.
(Cross 65)

Another exciting transition for Jimi began in the fall of 1959 when he
entered the tenth grade at Garfield High School. With a population 1,688
students, of which 50 percent were white, 20 percent Asian, and 30 percent
black, Garfield was the most integrated high school in Seattle. Garfield also
reconnected Jimi to his old friends from the neighborhood and never ending
discussions of music. (Cross 67)

The Velvetones, formed that fall by piano player Robert Green and
tenor sax Luther Rabb would be Jimi's first significant band. Unpolished, the
Velvetones played a mixture of jazz, blues, and R&B. The Velvetones earned
a steady weeknight gig at Birdland, Seattle's legendary club. (Cross 68)

Later that fall, Jimi began to play in a band called the Rocking Kings.
Like the Velvetones, the Rocking Kings was made up of high school kids.
However, the Rocking Kings had a manager who got the group several professional-level paying gigs. (Cross 72)

Most of Jimi’s friends had graduated from high school by the spring of 1961. Employment opportunities for young black men were few and usually limited to service positions, if available. For example, a clerk’s position in a department store during this period was off-limits to blacks. (Cross 78)

With such limited employment prospects, several of Jimi’s friends joined the armed forces, the most common choice for young black males from the neighborhood. Jimi’s career options were even more limited. He was a high school dropout, and while occasionally helping his father with landscaping and playing in bands, Jimi virtually had no work experience. (Cross 79)

In an underprivileged area, even the poverty of Jimi’s home stood out. There was a burger joint directly across from Jimi’s old high school. Having learned that the restaurant threw away unsold food at closing time, Jimi frequently visited it and asked if there was any extra food. Initially, having known him from high school, some of the staff was taken aback. But soon they understood Jimi’s situation and each day began to collect unsold burgers and fries. Occasionally, Jimi would be lucky and get half a dozen burgers, which he would take home. However on many occasions, like a starving wild animal, Jimi quickly gobbled down whatever food he was given right there in the parking lot. (Cross 80)
He left home when he was seventeen. The rest of the world, he had longed to see. And everybody who knows, boss. A rolling stone gathers no moss! “Highway Chile” (Hendrix 72)

On May 2, 1961, Jimi was arrested by the Seattle Police Department for riding in a stolen car. Although he said that he didn’t know the car was stolen and that it was parked, Jimi spent a day in juvenile detention before being released. However, four days later, Jimi was arrested again for riding in another stolen car for which he spent eight days in juvenile detention. Facing five years on each charge and knowing that prosecutors often accepted a stint in the military as part of a plea bargain, Jimi made an attempt to join the Air Force but was rejected. (Cross 81)

Jimi’s next choice was the Army. Having read about the 101st Airborne Division and having drawn their famous “Screaming Eagle,” the patch became a fixation as it conferred an identity to the wearer. Because Jimi drifted through childhood without a stable home life, the “Screaming Eagle” insignia, and the manhood it represented, in addition to his legal problems, the Army became a powerful lure. (Cross 82)

At a juvenile court hearing on May 16, 1961, Jimi was represented by a public defender. The prosecutor agreed to a two-year sentence that would be suspended if Jimi joined the Army. However, the conviction would
become part of Jimi's permanent record. On May 17, Jimi signed up for a three year enlistment in the Army and was scheduled to take a train on May 29 to Ft. Ord, California to begin basic training. Jimi had never been on an airplane, and other than a few trips as an infant he had never been more than two hundred miles outside of Seattle. (Cross 82)
Escape from the Army

Hooray, I awake from yesterday, alive but the war is here to stay. So my love, Catherina, and me, decide to take our last walk through the noise to the sea. Not to die, but to be reborn, away from lands so battered and torn. Forever, forever. “1983...(A Merman I Should Turn To Be)” (Hendrix 11)

Initially, Jimi reveled in the structure and formality of military service that dictated when you ate, what you wore, and what you did every minute of the day. In addition, the three square meals a day provided the most consistent nutrition in his life. (Cross 85)

Having completed basic training on August 4, Jimi’s dreams were finally beginning to come true. His long delayed orders had arrived and he was assigned as a supply clerk for the 101st Airborne Division located in Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. (Cross 88)

It was a rainy day in November 1961, and Jimi was at Service Club No. 1 practicing on the guitar that his father had sent him near the end of basic training. The club had instruments and amplifiers for rent, and Jimi practiced there when he wasn’t on duty or writing letters. (Cross 90)

In his seminal book Jimi Hendrix, David Henderson wrote that Billy Cox, another soldier from the 101st, was musically the opposite of Jimi. A serious student of European classical music, as well as R&B and blues, Billy
recognized that Jimi was a genius with skills that ranged between Beethoven and John Lee Hooker. Although what Billy heard indicated that Jimi was limited to only about five keys, he also recognized that Jimi had largely mastered and extended his sound into virtuoso statements. (Henderson 45)

Billy had grown up in Pittsburgh and played bass in a number of bands. He introduced himself to Jimi, checked out a bass, and the two began jamming. A personal and musical bond was immediately formed that would last until Jimi's death. (Cross 90)

Jimi's interest began to shift. Although Jimi was still fixated on the Screaming Eagle patch, he and Billy, along with other soldiers, immediately formed a five-piece band. Although the band had no name and a constantly changing lineup, Jimi and Billy was the core, and they played at base clubs on weekends. For awhile, they were a three-piece band with the two of them and a drummer. In this arrangement, Jimi and Billy shared vocal duties. However, Billy wasn't a strong singer, and although Jimi didn't like his own voice, out of necessity it became his first venture in fronting a band. (Cross 90)

Ft. Campbell was located on the border between Tennessee and Kentucky, sixty miles from Nashville. In nearby Clarksville, Tennessee, there were a number of clubs that catered to soldiers, including the Pink Poodle, which became Jimi's favorite. The club served an almost exclusively black clientele. Although the Army was officially integrated, soldiers socialized by race and off base, had large portions of society were off-limits to blacks.
Even music was defined by race, as southern blacks were mostly interested in blues and R&B. Jimi discovered true racial segregation. Billy remembered Jimi becoming deeply interested in the music of Albert King, Slim Harpo, Muddy Waters, and Jimmy Reed all blues legends that had gotten their start in the region. (Cross 91)

Jimi was also aware of geopolitics. In January 1962 Jimi graduated from jump school and earned the right to wear the Screaming Eagle patch. Due to increased tensions along the Korean border, in Eastern Europe, with Cuba, and the increasingly intense conflict in Southeast Asia, Jimi began to dread the possibility of being called into actual combat. (Cross 91)

Jimi and Billy's group now had a name, The Kasuals, which was building a reputation in the area. On weekends, The Kasuals performed in Nashville and at military bases as far as North Carolina. Although Jimi accomplished his goal of being in the 101st Airborne, his interest in the military declined as opportunities for The Kasuals increased. (Cross 92)

Billy was near the end of his military commitment, but Jimi had a problem. By April 1962, Jimi had served only ten months of his three year enlistment. On April 2, Jimi went to the base hospital and saw the psychiatrist. Jimi told the psychiatrist about how he had developed homosexual tendencies and began fantasizing about members of his unit. The psychiatrist told him to get some rest. (Cross 93)

Jimi's visits to the psychiatrist increased during the months of April and by May, his statements became more bizarre. On one occasion, Jimi
said that he had become addicted to masturbation and to bolster his claim, allowed himself to be caught masturbating in the barracks. Jimi claimed that he was in love with a member of his squad, couldn't sleep, repeatedly wet himself, and had lost fifteen pounds because of his fixation on a member of his squad. Jimi even sold his guitar. (Cross 93)

Finally, on May 14, 1962, Jimi received a complete medical examination from Captain John Halbert. When Jimi first entered the military, the only notation on his medical form was that he stuttered in the past and that his occupation was student. This time when completing the same form, Jimi listed a range of ailments from chest pains to homosexuality. However, this time his new occupation was musician. In Jimi's medical records, Captain Halbert typed homosexual, masturbating, dizziness, pain and pressure in the left chest, loss of weight, frequent trouble sleeping, and personal problems and recommended Jimi for discharge due to his homosexual tendencies. Jimi never confessed the ruse, even to his closest friends, and although there's no mention of it in his medical records, Jimi explained that his early discharge was due to a broken ankle caused by a parachute accident. (Cross 94)
Escape from Nashville

I used to live in a room full of mirrors, all I could see was me. Well, I take my spirit and I crash my mirrors. Now the whole world is here for me to see. I said, the whole world is here for me to see. Now I'm searching for my love to be. “Room Full of Mirrors” (Hendrix 140)

Jimi was living in Clarksville and Billy was discharged that September. The band changed some personnel and was renamed the King Kasuals. The Chitlin’ Circuit became Jimi’s milieu. Either playing with the King Kasuals or as a hired backup musician, Jimi soon felt as if he seen the inside of every juke joint and tavern from Virginia to Florida to Texas. Yet even with a gig every night, it was difficult to make a living. However, gigs did provide Jimi invaluable lessons on showmanship, audience interaction, and survival as a touring musician. It also forever engrained in him the notion that the job of a touring musician included being an entertainer, because if the audience didn’t stay entranced, it didn’t matter how authentic the music was. With every gig, Jimi learned more of the Delta tradition, and his own playing matured. (Cross 103)

The King Kasuals played all over Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Indiana, but even as they expanded their fan base, it was clear that their success would be limited. The Kasuals were a dance band playing the latest
R&B hits to exclusively black audiences and as such, there was a built-in ceiling to their fame. (Cross 104)

By the fall of 1963, Jimi had toured with some of the nation’s best bands and could respectfully play with the groups he’d grown up admiring. It was this awareness which helped cement his growing sense that playing in a Nashville cover band was not his fate. When a New York promoter came through Nashville and offered work in New York, Jimi jumped at the chance. Jimi tried to convince other members of the Kasuals to join him, but after none would consider the move, Jimi took a Greyhound bus to New York City. (Cross 106)
Jimi arrived in Harlem in early 1964 and moved into a hotel on 125th Street where a room could be had for twenty dollars a week. He soon learned that the job offer which had brought him to New York had disappeared, so Jimi began looking for work as a sideman in Harlem’s many clubs but was frequently spurned. R&B, jazz, and blues were the only acceptable genres in Harlem, and then were best played in strict accordance with how the masters had played them. There was a code, if you didn’t look, or sound a certain way, you were shunned. Harlem didn’t want to hear any rock ‘n’ roll. (Cross 109)

Jimi’s luck began to change in February 1964 when he heard from a friend that the Isley Brothers were looking for a guitar player and by March he was a member of the Isley band. (Cross 111) After playing for a short stint in the Gorgeous George Odell tour, Jimi joined up with Little Richard’s band the Upsetters. Richard’s Upsetters were the highest profile backup band Jimi had ever played with, and though the job failed to satisfy him creatively, the Upsetters were exceptionally tight. (Cross 114) Jimi played
for nearly a year for Little Richard and was paid $200 a month. However, with all his fines for being tardy, performing banned stage antics, and dressing like Little Richard, Jimi was rarely paid his actual salary and was eventually fired. (Cross 117)

In the summer of 1965, Jimi had returned to Harlem and had offered himself to a number of record companies as a session player and in October, Jimi met Curtis Knight, who led a group called Curtis Knight and the Squires. Although vastly inferior to the other bands he had played with, Knight centered the band on Jimi and promised to make him a star. The first recording session Knight did with Jimi was a cover of Bob Dylan’s “Like a Rolling Stone,” retitled “How Would You Feel.” “How Would You Feel” was a cover song for producer Ed Chalpin, who owned PPX Productions. Chalpin had become successful by marketing quick cover versions of U.S. hits in overseas markets. Initially, because he couldn’t read music, Chalpin was unimpressed with Jimi. However, after hearing him play, Chalpin realized that he had talent and on October 15, 1965 signed Jimi to a recording and producing contract. (Cross 120)

The contract, which Jimi did not read before signing, stated that he would “produce and play and/or sing exclusively for PPX Enterprises Inc., for three years.” The contract also specified that Jimi would “produce...a minimum of three sessions per year.” As compensation, Jimi would receive one percent of the retail price of all records he produced. Included in the contract, PPX would have “exclusive rights to assign all masters produced.”
In addition as to actual cash, the contract stated that Jimi would receive “one dollar,” which was a standard clause in many music industry contracts at the time when no up front money was being exchanged. Essentially, Jimi received no cash advance against future payments, though the offer of one percent retail was a higher royalty rate than most contracts of the day. While Jimi made very little money, he learned the basics of how to record and overdub in Chalpin’s studio. (Cross 121)

To supplement his income, Jimi went on the road with Joey Dee and the Starlighters, playing fifty-eight shows in sixty days. The job was a coup for Jimi, as the Starlighters was a successful rocks ‘n’ roll band. Their “Peppermint Twist” had been a number one hit. The Starlighters mainly played in the Northeast, but made some appearances in the South. They were the first racially integrated band Jimi had joined since Seattle. Jimi found that being in an integrated band was even more difficult than playing in an all-black group. The Starlighters played to crowds as large as ten thousand, the biggest Jimi had ever seen. However, because of the racial tension caused by the mixed band, in many venues the musicians were not allowed to leave the backstage area during set breaks. (Cross 122)

On a night late in May 1966, Jimi was playing a gig with Curtis Knight and the Squires at the Cheetah Club. The Cheetah Club once housed one of New York’s grand turn-of-the-century ballrooms and could hold two thousand people. That night, it barely held forty. It was also the night that
Linda Keith came to check out the Cheetah, and music has never been the same. (Cross 131)
Another New York Discovery

Purple haze all in my brain. Lately things they don’t seem the same. Actin’ funny, but I don’t know why. ‘Scuse me while I kiss the sky. Purple haze all around. Don’t know if I’m coming up or down. Am I happy or in misery? What ever it is, that girl put a spell on me. “Purple Haze” (Hendrix 130)

The twenty-year old Linda Keith was everything that Jimi was not: British, Jewish, financially secure, highly educated, and an integral part of London’s in crowd. More important to Jimi, Linda’s boyfriend was Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones. Linda had begun dating Richards in 1963 and had witnessed the genesis of the Stones, which by proxy made her something akin to British music royalty. The Rolling Stones were due to arrive in the U.S. in a month for their highly anticipated 1966 tour and Linda, who loved the blues and traveled with a case of her favorite 45s, had arrived early to get a taste of New York’s club scene. (Cross 131)

The Café Wha? was located in the heart of New York’s Greenwich Village. The countercultural movement had just begun to blossom in 1966. Long hair was in vogue and beads on men became popular. Drug experimentation increased, and societal norms on sex and marriage were challenged. Whereas Jimi’s individualized form of blackness didn’t fit in with
the institutional blackness of Harlem, Greenwich Village embraced and
encouraged it. (Cross 138)

For example, in a June 1969 recorded interview with Nancy Carter,
Jimi stated,

“Even some colored people look at my music and
ask if that music’s white or black? Why do you
want to dissect that for, try to go by the feeling of
the music, just because it’s loud...all those things
we have to try to wipe away from the face of the
earth before we can live in harmony.” (Carter)

After impressing the few who heard him play at the open-mic audition
at Café Wha? on a borrowed guitar, Jimi was invited to return. While at a
music store shopping for guitars, Jimi bragged to two strangers about his
solo gig at the Wha? and invited them to play in a band. The strangers
accepted and with that, the Blue Flames was formed. It was also when Jimi
actually changed his name to Jimi (from the actual James) because he
thought it looked more exotic. (Cross 139)

The Blue Flames was mostly a cover band with frequently changing
membership. Jimi would stretch the original two or three minute song into
twelve and play it differently every time. Free from the confining sets of the
Chitlin’ Circuit, Jimi wasn’t against applying blues harmony to rock
progressions or inserting wild rock solos into the middle of blues classics.
Many blues guitar players could bend the strings for an added tone, whereas
Jimi applied the same principle to an entire song, making whatever he played his own. (Cross 140)

By June 1966, Jimi was also experimenting with a crude version of a fuzz box. This effects box sat between the guitar and amplifier and would distort the note and thicken the sound by making a light string sound heavy and a heavy string sound like a sledgehammer. This psychedelic sound, when combined with bending the strings and with feedback created by overdriving the amplifier, sounded a lot like the music Jimi had heard back in Seattle at the Spanish Castle. Jimi’s technical ability was so advanced that he was able to quickly master new effects and make them musical. Jimi’s command of these crude electronic devices was so great that he would attract a crowd of guitar players who were in awe at his use of the new technology. (Cross 140)

The dilemma for Jimi was similar for any black whose definition of blackness didn’t fit with the institutional definition of what constituted blackness. For some months, Jimi was a man torn between two musical cultures: the strict, regimented tradition of uptown Harlem R&B and the “chitlin circuit,” or the loose amalgam of folk and rock that was developing in Greenwich Village. Jimi’s exceptional musicianship made him comfortable in both worlds; however Jimi played what many considered rock, which was considered white music. Artistically, this was an epiphany for Jimi as he did not set out to mix blues, rock ‘n’ roll, and R&B. Jimi’s musical imagination was so wide that combining genres was inevitable. A chance meeting was
about to take place which not only was about to change Jimi's world, but 
the musical world as well. (Cross 146)

Still in New York, on August 2, Linda Keith ran into Bryan “Chas” 
Chandler outside a club and told him he should check out this guitar player 
down in the Village and they made arrangements to meet at the Café Wha? 
the next day. Chas Chandler was the bass player in the Animals. The 
Animals were a successful British band with eight Top 40 hits. Their 1964 
hit “House of the Rising Sun” had topped the charts on both sides of the 
Atlantic. Chandler had planned to leave the Animals when their 1966 U.S. 
tour ended and was looking for producing opportunities. Chandler had heard 
a version of the Tim Rose song “Hey Joe” and was convinced that he'd have 
a smash hit in England if he found the right artist to cover this song. (Cross 
146)

Coincidentally, as fate would have it, Jimi also had recently discovered 
Tim Rose's “Hey Joe” and played this song. After the set, Jimi, Chandler, 
and Linda, talked about their mutual affection for “Hey Joe,” his musical 
technique, and his days on the Chitlin’ Circuit. Chandler couldn’t believe 
that somebody hadn’t signed him to a contract and asked Jimi about it. Jimi 
told him about Juggy Murray and the Sue Records contract and Chandler 
said that he’d try to straighten that out. When asked if there were any 
others, Jimi either forgot, or intentionally failed to mention his contract with 
Ed Chalpin and PPX Records. (Cross 147)
Although initially Chandler was described as Jimi's manager, from the beginning he worked in partnership with Michael Jeffrey, who actually managed the Animals and was soon Jimi's co-manager. (Cross 151)

British immigration laws are strict and required paperwork that vouched for his past, which Jimi had none. Jeffrey had forged correspondence which made it appear that Jimi was being asked to come to the U.K. by a promoter. Jeffrey paid the several hundred dollars it cost to buy out Jimi's contract from Sun Records, and he handled the various other requirements, all with a phone call. With a promise that he'd get to meet Eric Clapton, on September 23, 1966, Jimi put any misgivings aside and left for England. (Cross 152)
Stereotypes

*Have you ever been, have you ever been to Electric Ladyland? The magic carpet waits for you, so don’t be late. Oh, I wanna show you the different emotions. I wanna ride you with sounds and motions. Electric woman waits for you and me. So it’s time we take a ride, we can cast all of your hang-ups over the seaside, while we fly right over the love filled sea. Look up ahead, I see the love land, soon you’ll understand. “Have You Ever Been (To Electric Ladyland)”* (Hendrix 67)

In his book, *Just My Soul Responding*, Brian Ward writes that black R&B performers proved unwilling to become mere victims of white racial stereotypes. Many found ways to manipulate and profit from white expectations, just as the black “coon-song” composers, and black vaudevillians had done with the sambo stereotype. (Ward 243)

Steve Waksman in *Instruments of Desire* describes a typical performance by Jimi. He is in the most obviously phallic of poses: his body arched slightly backwards as he plays the guitar behind his back, the neck of his instrument protruding through his legs like a surrogate penis, surrounded by his large black fist. Jimi specifically and intentionally manipulated his guitar so that it took shape as a technological extension of his body, a “technophallus.” The electric guitar as a technophallus represents a fusion
of man and machine, an electronic appendage that allowed Jimi to display his instrumental and, more symbolically, his sexual prowess. (Waksman 188)

While Jimi may have used the technique better, it should be noted that Jimi simply modified what was a long tradition of black R&B style of performers like T-Bone Walker and Guitar Slim who had introduced a significant element of demonstrative physical display into their performances. For example, Chuck Berry often used his guitar to convey the spirit of a song through his gestures. At a point in a song when Berry told his lover to cuddle up close, he drew his guitar toward his face, affecting a look of devotion as Berry plants a kiss firmly on the neck of the guitar. The end of the song finds Berry going into his “duck-walk,” bending his knees to bring his body towards the ground and pacing back and forth across the stage, his head butting forwards and back while his guitar pointed out from his body in a position that was phallic but arguably more playful than aggressive. (Waksman 152)

Jimi’s overtly phallic style of performance was just as crucial to his rock persona as his sound. His appeal was sexual as well as musical and is only the beginning of understanding the meaning of Jimi’s sexuality to his audience. The bodily gestures that constituted Jimi’s performance style, and the ways in which those gestures were perceived, can only be understood when judged within the broad set of cultural meanings and discourses surrounding black male sexuality and a largely white audience. (Waksman 188)
Jimi’s music cannot be considered as separate from his physicality; his style of virtuosity was itself highly phallocentric, and his combination of musical and bodily flamboyance was perceived by many of his white guitar-playing peers to offer a unique challenge to their own talent and, by implication, their masculinity. A fair question would be did Jimi’s performance style pose a similar challenge to stereotypes of black male potency and hypersexuality, or did it merely represent, as in the days of coon-music, Jimi’s success in tailoring an image to fit the racial stereotype held by his audience? (Waksman 190)

In answering whether Jimi’s performance style issued a similar challenge to black male potency, the answer is no, simply because the issue of black sexual potency was a creation by whites as part of their history of cultural hegemony. Highly stylized individual performances were a part of the Chitlin’ Circuit and expected by black audiences. However, because of the history of racial prejudice in both the U.S. and Great Britain, whites continued to demand a certain level of minstrelsy from black performers.

In an article in the June 1968 issue of *Life* magazine titled “The Jimi Hendrix Phenomenon,” Frank Zappa explains how racialized desire affected the career of Jimi. Zappa describes Jimi’s sound as “very symbolic,” with its “orgasmic grunts, tortured squeals, lascivious moans...and innumerable audio curiosities...delivered to the sense mechanisms of the audience at an extremely high decibel level.” Ultimately, Zappa suggested that the source of Jimi’s appeal lay elsewhere.
“The female audience thinks of Hendrix as being beautiful (maybe just a little scary), but mainly very sexy. The male audience thinks of him as a phenomenal guitarist and singer. The boys seem to enjoy the fact that their girlfriends are turned on to Hendrix sexually; very few resent this appeal and show envy. They seem to give up and say: "He’s got it, I ain’t got it, I don’t know if I’ll ever get it, but if I do, I wanna be just like him, because he’s really got it." They settle for vicarious participation and/or buy a Fender Stratocaster, an Arbiter Fuzz Face, a Vox Wha-Wha pedal, and four Marshall Amplifiers.” (Waksman 193)

Or as Eric Clapton so eloquently stated, "Everybody and his brother in England still sort of think that spades have big dicks. And Jimi came over and exploited that to the limit, the fucking tee. Everybody fell for it. Shit. I fell for it. After a while I began to suspect it.” (Waksman 197)

The British press wasn’t much different than Clapton in their assessment of Jimi. The national daily tabloids treated Jimi like a freak show, dubbed him the “Wild Man of Pop,” and generally trotted out the stereotypical would-you-let-your-sister-marry-this-man ritual. The mainstream American had a similar reaction to Jimi. In addition to the aforementioned Life magazine article, Newsweek described the Hendrix
Experience as a “nasty looking trio with its triptych of smirking simian faces.” Another Life article made reference to “the Hellenic sculpture of Hendrix’s trousers,” while Time magazine recounted how Hendrix “slung the guitar low over swiveling hips, or raised it to pick the strings with his teeth; he thrust it between his legs and did a bump and grind, crooning: ‘Oh, baby, come on now, sock it to me!’ Lest anyone miss his message, he looked at a girl in the front row, cried, ‘I want you, you, you!’ and stuck his tongue out at her.” Considering that during that time period Jimi did not yet have a black audience, the racially suggestive message from Time was stereotypically clear. (Waksman 199)

In a Room Full of Mirrors, Charles Cross writes that Rolling Stone, as well as a number of magazines called Jimi a “psychedelic superspade.” A review in the East Village Other headlined HENDRIX: THE CASSIUS CLAY OF POP? while critic Richard Goldstein called Jimi an Uncle Tom because he attracted a largely white audience. Copying the British press, even Ebony magazine in an article describing Jimi wrote, “In repose, he looks like a cross between Bob Dylan and the Wild Man of Borneo.” (Cross 239)

Perhaps the clearest example of the dilemma faced by white males was articulated by Peter Townsend, guitarist for yet another British blues/R&B influenced band, The Who.

I suppose like a lot of people, like Eric [Clapton], for a while there I think we gave up [after having first seen Hendrix play], and then we started again
and realized...it was very strange for Eric and me. We went and watched Jimi at about 10 London shows together, and he [Clapton] wasn’t with a girl at the time, so it was just me, my wife-to-be Karen, and Eric, going to see this monstrous man. It got to the point where Eric would go up to pay his respects every night, and one day I got up to pay my respects, and he [Hendrix] was hugging Eric, but not me, he was kind of giving me a limp handshake, just because Eric was capable of making the right kind of approach to him. It was a difficult time. You have to remember the other thing about him, that he was astonishingly sexual, and I was there with my wife, you know, the girl I loved. And you could just sense this whole thing in the room where every woman would just [claps] at a snap of a finger. (Waksman 202)

Not only was the white man forced to concede that Jimi, a black man, was the greatest guitarist they’ve ever heard, they also lived in a sort of powerless fear that they might have to concede their women as well.
Conclusion

After all the jacks are in their boxes, and the clowns have all gone to bed, you can hear happiness staggering on down the street, footprints dressed in red. And the wind whispers Mary. A broom is drearily sweeping up the broken pieces of yesterday's life. Somewhere a Queen is weeping; somewhere a King has no wife. And the wind cries Mary. "The Wind Cries Mary" (Hendrix 161)

In his book Midnight Lightning, Greg Tate cites the writer Peter Schjeldahl definition of an American as someone obsessed with race. The African American negotiation of that obsession to positive benefit is a game that has been played since before the Mayflower. (Tate 50)

Maureen Mahon in Right to Rock writes on how the dynamics of race and Jimi's blackness influenced the treatment he received from the music industry, critics, and fans. In spite of his international success, Jimi never achieved what the music industry viewed as substantial popularity among black audiences, which is perfectly understandable. Jimi's music was not and is not played on black radio. Although conventional wisdom views Jimi as a for whites-only performer, the racialized and unscientific system of recording record sales contributed significantly to the perception that Jimi had no black fans. (Mahon 242)
Although blacks did buy Jimi’s records, his sales were reported on the pop charts and did not register on R&B lists. As a result, all of his sales were interpreted as pop, which was a euphemism for white. The R&B charts tracked black sales, which were based on black radio station airplay and black record store sales. With virtually no black radio airplay and no appearances on the R&B charts, Jimi was essentially forced into aligning himself with the white audience as his management was convinced he should target. (Mahon 242)

Jimi was not unaware of this and attempted to reach out to black audiences by incorporating more ostensibly black roots in his music and speaking on black issues. For example, in remarks to the press supporting the Black Panthers, Jimi was quoted as saying:

> Almost anyone who has the power to keep their minds open listens to your music. Black kids think the music is white now, which it isn’t. The argument is not between black and white now. That’s just another game the establishment set up to turn us against one another. But the black kids don’t have a chance too much to listen; they’re too busy trying to get their own selves together. We want them to realize that our music is just as spiritual as going to church. (Mahon 243)
Jimi’s Band of Gypsys project was an effort to make a public and personal connection to his blackness. The Band of Gypsys breakthrough album was a recording of a 1969 New Years Eve performance at the Fillmore East. The album featured an anthem called “Machine Gun” that Jimi introduces by saying, “I’d like to dedicate this to all the soldiers fighting in Chicago and Milwaukee and New York. Oh yes, and all the soldiers fighting in Vietnam.” Here, Jimi pointedly connects the urban racial rebellions and the daily struggles of black people to the war in Vietnam where a disproportionate number of black Americans were fighting. Although this was a more politically and racially conscious move than typically associated with Jimi and could cynically be construed as him reclaiming his blackness, one should not forget that given his upbringing, Jimi’s authenticity to blackness is as legitimate as any of his black music and cultural critics. In addition, Jimi’s declaration was made even more meaningful because the Ban of Gypsys was an all-black band featuring Buddy Miles on drums and his old friend from the 101st Airborne Division-Billy Cox on bass. (Mahon 243)

Ironically, the Band of Gypsys was a one time collaboration to fulfill an outstanding contractual obligation that James signed before he became Jimi Hendrix. Although white critics and fans dismissed the Band of Gypsys, they were immediately embraced by blacks because what Greg Tate calls the “booty-bouncing power of ‘Who Knows’ and the twelve-minute anti-war requiem ‘Machine Gun.’” Tate adds that Jimi’s supernatural flow of ideas compares him favorably to the legendary jazz great John Coltrane. (Tate 48)
This comparison to John Coltrane is timely because by all accounts Jimi had gotten bored with the rock ‘n’ roll madman image that he had helped to create and was tired of playing songs from his first album to audiences of screaming whites. Jimi had begun experimenting with new forms of music, listening to jazz, and playing with black musicians schooled in jazz and West African forms. In addition, Jimi was planning a recording session with the jazz great Miles Davis. (Mahon 243)

Racial identity and the white dilemma of Jimi’s career and musical legacy can be summed up in this way. The mainstream view of white rock holds that Jimi was not really black is ironic not simply because of the significance of his race to black fans, but also because the white perception of Jimi as something other than black was accompanied by a clear understanding that Jimi was unquestionably something other than white. It was this otherness that was part of what made Jimi so appealing to white audiences and had much to do with him being black. (Mahon 244)

In the late 1960s, blackness was a confrontational identification that stood in clear opposition to whiteness and was most visibly represented by the advocates of Black Power, the Black Panthers, and the Black Arts Movement. It rejected engagements with white forms as signs of diminished black consciousness and black identity. Some in the black community might argue that it was having a predominantly white fan base that, according to some, cost Jimi the cultural right to be referred to as black. Whites on the other hand, whose interactions with blacks are often negative, frequently
interpret positive experiences with blacks in ways that render that black person as “not really black.” This reasoning is what made it possible for whites to confer the title of “honorary whiteness” to Jimi and claim him as one of their own. (Mahon 249)

As Sammy Drain, a childhood friend of Jimi’s succinctly sums up the question of ownership on the DVD Jimi Hendrix: The Uncut Story with the following:

He had to go to London to be acknowledged because he was so bad, and you know, we didn’t really love him the way they did over there. That’s why they say Jimi is ours.


http://find.galegroup.com/itx/printdoc.do?&prodId=ITOF&userGro...


Potash, Chris, ed. *The Jimi Hendrix Companion: Three Decades of*


