

II

IDENTITY, PURPOSE, AND IMPACT

BEBOP INNOVATORS AS INTELLECTUALS AND MODELS FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Shuaib Meacham

Perhaps, the most prominent metaphor associated with African-American intellectual and academic practice is that of “crisis.” While the prominence of this metaphor is due in part to the shadow cast by the landmark work of Cruse (1967), *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, the theme has also been taken up by a number of other writers and scholars. Emphasis on the retention of African-American faculty in the academy suggests that the crisis is one of number. Intellectuals such as Cruse (1967), West (1991) and Sivanandan (1976), however, who have documented and described this crisis, claim that the crisis is not of number but of identity, purpose, and impact. Cruse in the late 1960s and West in the early 1990s questioned the significance of African-American intellectual production. They claimed that African-American intellectual ideas had exerted little influence on the prevailing conceptions and political forces that shape our world. Cruse went so far as to claim that the “Negro (sic) intellectual does not rate as a serious thinker in the intellectual establishment” (Cruse, 1967, p. 459).

Interpreters of the Black World for the White

In contrast to the work of African-American literate intellectuals, the musical ideas of African-American musicians have had a profound impact on U.S. society (West, 1991). One of the most intellectually influential movements in African-American music was that jazz idiom known as Bebop. Bebop musically identified vital social changes of the postwar era—changes hidden beneath layers of antiquated social norms and assumptions. Artists, scholars, and writers throughout the world were profoundly impacted by its ideas. Albeit musically articulated, Bebop's broad intellectual influence begs the questions that form the content of this chapter: (1) What were the intellectual factors that contributed to the relevance and impact of Bebop? and (2) What might we learn from those factors as we look to construct a faculty climate that not only fosters African-American faculty retention, but new levels of academic relevance and excellence?

This chapter examines the issue of academic culture conducive to African-American faculty retention through the metaphor of crisis, and the possibilities for overcoming this crisis implicit within the intellectual ethos of Bebop. The first section of this chapter examines structural factors contributing to African-American intellectual and academic crisis. The second portion of this chapter provides a detailed account of Bebop, as an intellectual practice, and the manner in which Bebop musicians cultivated the developed ideas. The final section of this chapter examines the implications of the Bebop ethos for African-American academic practice, concluding with recommendations, not only for retention, but for the cultivation of broader traditions of academic excellence.

African-American Academics and Intellectuals: The Parameters of the Crisis

As alluded to earlier, Cruse (1967) conducted the seminal work on African-American intellectual practice, identifying limitations and shortcomings in the late 1960s that continue to be prominent today. Speaking then of primarily nonacademic intellectuals, Cruse described a fundamental disconnect between intellectuals and African-American communities and a general confusion regarding their social roles and identities. Specifically, Cruse pointed to the absence of a coherent framework within which to define their necessarily dual affiliations with the mainstream establishment and the African-American community. Without a guiding framework of relationships and goals around

which to organize, Cruse described African-American intellectuals as “a rootless class of displaced persons” (1967, p. 454). Without a truly functional role, African-American intellectuals serve the community primarily as symbols of having “made it” and the mainstream establishment as spokespersons for African Americans.

Writing almost 25 years later, West (1991) discussed what he referred to as the “tragedy” of African-American intellectual practice. The tragic nature of this practice, according to West, stems from the failure of African-American intellectuals to construct a collective ethos through which to cultivate organically derived procedures and standards. These collectively developed standards, as West conceives, would enable African-American scholars to speak to complex issues in a manner that reflects the unique insights historically encountered in African-American experiences. Both Cruse and West portray African-American intellectuals as out of step with African-American communities and thereby lacking cultural grounding. This cultural disconnect has affected African-American scholars' ability to not only speak to African-American issues with accuracy and insight but precludes their drawing from the epistemological strengths within African-American communities to effectively speak to broader issues. This double failure, both local and global, comprises the parameters of the African-American intellectual crisis.

Structural Factors Underlying the Crisis

Far from being an unintended condition, Ahmad (1999) and Baker (1993) suggest that the cultural discontinuities described by Cruse and West reflect broad sociopolitical strategies on the part of those who resisted African-American social liberation. Both Ahmad and Baker emphasize the key role that African-American entrance into the academy played in these strategies. Prior to the unprecedented influx of people of color into major U.S. universities in the early 1970s, African-American intellectual energy had been devoted primarily to liberation from political, economic, and cultural oppression. In fact, it is difficult to identify prominent African-American thinkers and scholars of this era who were not to some extent directly involved in political action. Even a physicist such as Earl Shaw entered the academy following involvement with the Black Panthers (Russell, 1998). This ethos of political engagement reflected a dominant cultural tenor of African-American people and their collective yearning for an end to oppression (Harding, 1981).

Ahmad (1999) suggests that the unprecedented recruitment and admission of African-Americans students into the academy constituted a strategy by which to deflect energy away from resistance and toward immersion into

mainstream consumer culture. Those students who entered the academy would eventually, in the course of their professional careers, come to constitute a privileged class of African Americans. This new racialized privileged class would be in need of goods and services that would appeal to their unique mix of cultural and economic consumer tastes. This opened up a host of corporate opportunities for educated African Americans to meet the needs of this burgeoning African-American privileged class. George (1998, p. 2) refers to this racially profiled corporate consumer niche as "special markets." Special markets, while enhancing the economic and social profile of those who worked in this portion of the corporate world, retained the residue of subordination and second-class status. George captures this combination of factors for African Americans who worked in the sector in the following passage:

They walked through the doors cracked open by dog bitten marchers in the South and radical nationalists in the North . . . For the first wave of black corporate employees, special markets were often a trap that guaranteed its employees the perks of mainstream American life (suburban living, credit cards, ski weekends) yet kept them segregated from their businesses' major profit centers and from any real shot at company-wide power (George, 1998 p. 2).

These same structural factors have shaped the experiences of African-American faculty who have entered into the academy. The large increase in the numbers of African-American students created a consumer demand for more academic services tailored to the needs of this unique group. Consequently, a broad range of institutional and administrative accommodations, such as "minority" student services, "minority" student affairs, and "minority" cultural centers were established to meet the needs of the coming generations. African-American faculty within this framework functioned in a manner analogous to the corporate executives who serve "special markets." In this case, however, the "special market" consisted of a market for courses with subject matter reflective of the cultural inclinations of African-American students and a growing general interest in African-American issues.

Given this need to speak to categorically defined special-market interests, African-American faculty have been channeled into the role historically allocated to African-American intellectuals, that of "spokesman" (sic) (Baker, 1993; Ross, 1999). The role of spokesman involves interpreting the ways of black people for white people (Cruse, 1967) and helping the establishment to identify and address the question regarding "What does the [Negro] want?" (Ross, 1999, p. 25). In many institutions, the majority of not only African-American faculty, but all faculty of color in general are found in ethnic

studies-related disciplines. In other disciplines, African-American faculty research frequently looks at cultural diversity issues within those disciplines. This places African-American faculty in the precarious, "special market" position of claiming expertise confined to issues that the academy has historically conceived of as academically second class (DuBois, 1990; Stanfield, 1994).

Already marginal within prevailing academic frameworks, African-American faculty, far more than African-American students, become susceptible to the conservative foundational ideologies on which the academy is based. Whereas the prevailing cultural ethos among African Americans has historically been one of engagement, resistance, and liberation, the underlying ethos of the academy has been one of "ivory tower" distance and isolation. Thus, the natural tendency to accommodate institutional standards toward professional survival takes African-American scholars and intellectuals further from engagement with the community and deeper into the conservative norms and expectations of the academy. While African-American scholarly work may speak to or about issues of African-American community, it rarely speaks from the community, particularly in a manner that brings insight to larger sociopolitical issues. African-American academic teaching and scholarship becomes confined to the narrow parameters of the special academic market, existing exclusively in a world populated by privileged classes. Ahmad (1999, p. 11) describes this crisis of black academic practice in the following manner:

Radicalism came to be identified almost exclusively with rhetoric, in the classical sense of the art of persuasion; lectures in the classroom and books issued from university presses . . . a whole intellectual faction arose which made for itself the largest radical, even revolutionary, claims but which had no affiliation, past or present, with political parties, trade unions . . . working class neighborhoods, or insurgent struggles of the poor outside the academic arena.

Instead of strategies for "retention" narrowly defined by which to retain African-American faculty within this prevailing ethos, the above-described conditions call for a reenvisioning of African-American academic possibility. Toward that end, the following section examines the intellectual ethos of Bebop intellectuals for potential insight into the challenges faced by African-American academics.

Bebop: Turning Rhythm into New Language

Prior to examining the intellectual ethos of Bebop, it is important to identify just what kind of intellectual impact Bebop exerted on the larger nonmusical

society and among literacy-based intellectuals in particular. Bebop musical innovations existed primarily in the areas of rhythm and harmony. Prior to Bebop, popular music in general and jazz in particular, consisted of danceable rhythms and major key harmonies that served as a pleasant soundtrack to enjoyment and entertainment. Bebop, however, disrupted these musical expectations by accelerating the speed and length of musical improvisation and confounding listener expectations with dissonance. The intellectual power of this music stems from the fact that these rhythms and sounds musically articulated social currents, fears, and processes buried deep beneath the surface of the national consciousness. The intellectual quality of Bebop's diversion from musical norms emerged not only in the changes from the expected sounds of African-American music, but in the manner in which the musicians related to audiences and regarded their role as musicians:

Bebop was as much a listener's music as anything heard at Carnegie Hall. Bebop differed from swing and rhythm and blues not just musically, but in the players' attitude toward their audience. Cool, self-assured, and . . . often dignified in appearance . . . Gillespie, Parker, Monk and others took this music seriously and considered it art as high minded and elitist as . . . Western classical music (George, 1988, pp. 24, 42).

This change in sound and professional comportment comprised a symbolic political and intellectual statement, altering the manner in which to consider African-American music. It was not only to be regarded as a soundtrack for entertainment, but as a vehicle for ideas.

The accuracy and insight of Bebop's musical ideas may be evidenced in the extremes of response that Bebop generated among both musicians and intellectuals. As one might expect, such a sharp disruption of musical and performance norms elicited harsh, even violent reactions on the part of some listeners. Musicians and critics committed to "Swing" regularly equated Bebop with noise, even "violence." White as well as African-American critics and musicians castigated Bebop musicians for what they perceived to be the destruction of the jazz tradition (Blesh, 1946).

While Bebop elicited extreme negative reactions, it also generated profound levels of allegiance, particularly in the literary and artistic communities of the time. Allegiance within these communities extended to the point where one's identity within these communities depended on one's stance with respect to Bebop. In the following passage, novelist John Clellon Holmes describes the impact of Charlie Parker on his artistic identity as well as the identities of his peers:

One of the key conversion experiences of that time involved Bop, which was not merely expressive of the discords and complexities we were feeling, but specifically separated us from the times just passed. . . . When you "went over" to Bird, when you "heard" him all of a sudden, you were acknowledging that you had become a different sort of person. . . . If a person dug Bop, we know something about his sex life, his kick in literature and the arts . . . and the very process of awareness (Holmes, 1988, pp. 52-53).

It must be emphasized that Bebop's intellectual influence extended far beyond the temporal domain of postwar America. As Bebop's intellectual credibility increased over the years, academics began to employ Bebop figures and personalities within scholarly work as a means of symbolizing, not just Bebop itself, but artistic and intellectual excellence. In his historical account of postwar U.S. culture and the deeper social processes rarely acknowledged by postwar historians, Jezer (1982) spoke of the intellectual insight of Charlie Parker. Describing the V-Day victory celebration at the end of the war, Jezer wonders how Parker and the Bebop idiom captured the qualities of confusion and despair that were to follow the U.S. victory:

Who, on that most wonderful of summer nights would have imagined that this black bopster genius (and not the celebrants dancing, cheering, singing, kissing, hugging, and winding their way through tons of confetti . . . was attuned to the future? (Jezer, 1982, p. x).

Echoing the question posed by Jezer, the remainder of this section looks at the processes that enabled Bebop musicians and innovators to so accurately assess the times in which they were imbedded. In analyzing the intellectual ethos that informed Bebop practice, three factors shape this practice most significantly: the orientation of speaking from African-American communities; the primacy of motion and incorporation; and the quality of collective language cultivation. The following sections examine these qualities in further detail.

From the Community

One of the aforementioned characteristics of African-American intellectual practice was the fundamental disconnect from African-American community traditions, perspectives, and epistemologies. This disconnect has led to an intellectual orientation where African-American academics primarily speak from the academy about African-American communities, rarely drawing from their community connections. Thus, the impact of academic research rarely travels to the communities on which it concentrates its focus. By contrast, Bebop musicians

cultivated an ethos wherein they spoke from African-American communities about a broad range of phenomena. While the specifics of Bebop's musical commentary are explored in the following section, this section looks at the cultural basis from which this commentary emerged.

Bebop and the Tradition of the "Crossroads" In saying that Bebop musicians spoke from the African-American community, I am speaking of a pattern wherein Bebop intellectual dispositions are best explained by processes found in African-American culture. Discussing the impact of rhythm on the life and work of writer James Baldwin, Kun (1999) emphasized the primacy of "the beat" in particular and rhythm in general on African-American cultural identity. Specifically, Kun describes the beat as integral to the African-American imperative of "confront[ing] and transform[ing] realities imposed from above" (Kun, 1999, p.313). An ethos of rhythm and sound versus one informed primarily by the written word fosters a more fluid conception of text. In contrast to singular and formalistic conceptions of text that dominated both musical and literary critical work, rhythmic and sonic texts are more variable, able to more easily adapt to contextual factors. Gates (1988 p. 25) refers to this quality of text as "texts in motion":

The text, in other words, is not fixed in any determinate sense; in one sense it consists of the dynamic and indeterminate relationship. . . . Interpretation . . . even—or especially of the same text . . . is a continuous project . . . life is a form of reading texts in motion, constantly variable.

Writing on possible cultural precedents for African-American language practice within an African-American theory of text, Gates (1988) looked to the Yoruba West African Cosmological tradition. Gates found therein an ethos of textual interpretation informed by the contingencies of "the crossroads" (p. 25). Also a foundational metaphor in the blues tradition, the crossroads symbolizes the basic life experience of crisis in the disruption of one's singular path with intervening roads of uncertainty. Thompson (1984, p. 88) describes the crossroads according to the following spatial parameters:

A fork in the road (or even a forked branch) . . . [a] crucially important symbol of passage and communication between worlds . . . the point of intersection between the ancestors and the living.

The crossroads, as Thompson suggests, is that space where worlds come together, that point where differences intersect, and often it is this intersection

of different worlds, territories, and boundaries that precipitates crisis. Within the context of crisis, the Yoruba turn to a clergy called Babalaawo, who interpret the crisis and offer recommendations. These interpretations and recommendations, however, are not direct statements of advice, but codes rendered in an abstract language that require a change in the thinking of the petitioner in order to understand. In many ways, the change of thinking not only leads to the answer but is itself the answer. The following passage delineates the specifics of this connection between language and illumination:

[The crossroads process] destroys normal communication to bring men (sic) to speak a new word and to disclose a deeper grammar to them and then to restore them to a conversation that speaks more accurately to Yoruba life. At this moment, the language of the Yoruba is enlarged to name and to humanize an otherwise unintelligible and therefore unassimilable event (Gates, 1988, p. 41).

As the passage suggests, insight within the Yoruba tradition involves the destruction of the conceptual blinders found in "normal" communication, so that "new" more insightful and intellectually accurate words might be spoken. These new words enable the Yoruba to incorporate that which was formally perceived to be fundamentally outside of their personal and cultural landscapes.

Bebop musicians, particularly primary innovators such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk, carried out a similar interpretive or intellectual function. Within this framework, Bebop innovators constructed a "rhetoric," a language that spoke new words of intellectual insight in response to the crisis encountered in their engagement of postwar U.S. society. As Jezer (1982) emphasizes in his postwar account, the United States and in fact the whole world was in the midst of unprecedented social and geopolitical tumult. The Cold War, challenges to prevailing race relations, the global uprising of Third World states, and the beginnings of the corporate global economy all lay before Charlie Parker as he blew his disturbing, dissonant, high-speed interpretations through his horn while others celebrated. His insight and power resided, not in mimicry of literate intellectuals, but through immersion in the perfection of craft and a collective ethos that emphasized integration of multiple influences. In other words, African-American cultural practices such collective orientation of musicians served as an intellectual resource. The primary context for this immersion was found in the context of the Big Bands. The following section looks at the Big Bands and their role in augmenting the Bebop primacy of motion and the integration of multiple influences.

The Primacy of Motion and Integration

As stated earlier, Bebop's sound within the context of the 1940s was that of chaos and dissonance. Tonal harmony requires structural organization around a central key around which all elements of a composition are related. By contrast, dissonance or atonality involves the abandonment of any central point of reference. In atonal structures, "Wherever you are at the moment is the key you're in. . . . Such space is not uniform, but rather multidimensional" (MacLuhan & MacLuhan, 1988, p. 52). The MacLuhans also refer to this atonal construct as "multilocationalism" (p. 238). Bebop innovators' primary experience of multilocationalism occurred within the context of their participation in Big Bands. Big Bands and the Big Band jazz of "Swing" were the prevailing jazz contexts and the prevailing jazz idioms prior to Bebop. While commercially and conceptually designed to conform to the tastes of the popular entertainment audiences, Big Bands supported a collective ethos within which musicians could cultivate ideas. The economic contingencies of Big Bands also required musicians to travel extensively throughout the country, performing in venues ranging from small rural towns to major urban centers. Thus, Bebop musicians were not only conceptually inclined through crossroads processes, but physically positioned to observe and musically comment on the emerging postwar society. This section examines the constant crossroads motion experienced by Bebop musicians and its impact on the development of the Bebop sound.

Texts in Motion The metaphor of the crossroads implies that life itself is a process of constant motion, perpetual change, and transition. Due to the travel required of the Big Bands, Bebop musicians, with few exceptions, both literally and figuratively lived lives of constant crossroads motion. In Baker's (1987) discussion of the crossroads, he describes musicians as not only travelers engaged in passive, distant contemplation, but active interpreters, literally embodying the energy of the forces they encounter:

At the junctures, the intersections of experience where roads cross and diverge, the blues singer and his performance serve as codifiers, absorbing and transforming discontinuous experience into formal expressive instances, refusing to be pinned down to any final dualistic significance (Baker, 1987, p. 8).

This quality of embodiment is critical because this form of data collection, if you will, distinguishes the Bebop intellectual engagement from that of the academic. A revealing example of this occurs in Clifford's (1988) discussion of

Stanislav Malinowski's anthropological diary collected during fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands. In contrast to the orderly, academic, and "objective" quality of Malinowski's inquiry methods, his diary reveals that in the context of his fieldwork, he experienced a "crisis of an identity" (Clifford, 1988, p. 98). This identity crisis was brought on by his excursion into a "cacophonous [jungle] filled with too many voices" (p. 102). Specifically, Malinowski's grasp of the singular norms of Western structural thought weakened as, literally in the jungle, he confronted a multitude of forces pushing at him from without. Malinowski's response to this struggle with multiple sounds and voices was to maintain a tonal center and impose a "personal coherence . . . [a] unified personality" (Clifford, 1988, p. 103) over this threat of chaos and multidimensionality.

Bebop innovators, as Baker's conceptions suggest, welcomed the sounds, the voices of multiple places and experiences, and literally absorbed them into their musical expressions. Musicians spoke in terms of hearing new sounds and incorporating them into their performances. Not exclusive to Bebop, what Murray refers to as the entire "blues idiom" (1970) emphasizes the integration of sound and experience.

Speaking of the ideas that contributed to his composition "Chinoiserie," Duke Ellington captured the manner in which Jazz innovators integrated new sounds and experiences into their musical ideas:

The title was inspired by a statement made by Marshall McLuhan [which said] that the whole world is going oriental and that no one will be able to retain his or her identity. . . . And of course we travel around the world a lot and in the last five or six years, we too, have noticed this thing to be true. So as a result, we have done a sort of thing.

In the context of the postwar United States, where multivocal, multidimensional changes were taking place, Bebop musicians were able to draw on their crossroads' ethos to accept the harsh atonal sounds of impending change. Instead of responding to crisis with an imposition of a singular norm, as was the dominant practice of the time, they accepted the sounds and rhythms and incorporated them into their intellectual conceptions and musical performances. During the constant travel required by the musical marketplace, musicians cultivated these sounds in furtive spaces and isolated domains away from the marketplace. In short, they cultivated a language within which to collectively reinforce and express the ideas and sounds they encountered. The following section describes this cultivation of language and the practices of community that reinforced its development.

Bebop and the Collective Cultivation of Language

As alluded to earlier, the constant motion of the Big Bands was complemented by a collective ethos in which musicians regularly exchanged ideas and musical insights. This collective functioned as a form of "alternative culture" from which African Americans have historically resisted externally imposed structures and norms (Sidran, 1971, p. 73). Reflecting West's (1991) recommendations for literacy-based intellectuals, these alternative cultural spaces comprised the sites wherein Bebop innovators collectively derived standards and procedures for the new idiom.

In truth, the Big Band experience comprised only one site of these collective activities; the other sites consisted of the homes of native New York musicians, and most famously, the after hours establishment known for late night jam sessions named Minton's Playhouse. The following paragraphs delineate this collective process, paying special attention to both the implicit and the explicit intellectual practices.

Furtive Spaces and Bebop Apprenticeship in the Big Bands

Berliner (1994), in his study of the pedagogy that contributed to the development of jazz improvisational expertise, emphasized the primacy of informal spaces for the learning of key improvisational. The Big Bands adhered to an ethos of interpersonal exchange through which important information was shared and disseminated. Thus, in contrast to many academic settings, jazz musicians passed down information through social mechanisms. In fact, several jazz figures specifically contrasted the Bebop ethos with academic modes of learning as a means of illustrating the importance of the interpersonal. Writer Ralph Ellison (1964, p. 208) makes this contrast when he said, "it is more meaningful to speak, not of courses of study, of grades and degrees, but of apprenticeships, ordeals, initiation ceremonies, of rebirth."

Although the Big Bands played a key role in Bebop's development, the commercial pressures on Big Band music and musicians to entertain meant that much of the talk of music innovation had to be confined to the private realm. Some bandleaders such as Cab Calloway were openly hostile to new music, particularly when musicians performed Bebop ideas in conjunction with the Big Band performance. Thus many of the musicians emphasized the secret, nearly hidden spaces in which their learning and development took place. On rooftops, in the back of theaters, at the foot of drum-kits represent just a few of the places in which musicians learned or shared seminal ideas. In the following passage, bassist Milt Hinton shares the manner in which he exchanged Bebop insights with Dizzy Gillespie in secret spaces (Deveaux, 1997, p. 183):

While Dizzy was with the band and when we were playing at the College Club . . . Dizzy and I would go up on the roof between shows, I'd get my bass and climb those spiral steps, going round and round, and we would blow right over Broadway. Dizzy would show me the new tunes and his substitution changes, so I could play with him the next time he took a solo.

Minton's and the 24-Hour Intellectual Process Bebop's initial sounds occurred within the Big Bands wherein its key innovators shared time as they met their economic obligations through the playing of "swing." The real core of the music, however, developed in New York where many of the musicians either lived or gathered between tours with the Big Bands. In New York City, Bebop musicians engaged in a nearly 24-hour process of study, performance, and information exchange. It was through this process, supplemented by the stability and social discourse found at Minton's Playhouse, that Bebop developed into the idiomatic musical tongue that achieved such insight into the postwar times.

In contrast to the Big Band ethos of surreptitious communication and compromise with commercial constraints, the New York musical nightclub economy, also problematic in many respects, supported the small group ethos of Bebop and allowed Bebop musicians to cultivate and develop their ideas.

According to Miles Davis, Bebop musicians were able to spend time with one another all through the day and night when on the scene in New York. "Dizzy Gillespie's apartment at 2040 Seventh Avenue in Harlem was the gathering place for many musicians in the daytime" (Davis & Troupe, 1989, p. 64). The daytime exchange of ideas fed into the extensive series of jam sessions and performances that took place in the night. In the following passage, Miles Davis provides a description of this process of constant information exchange and practice:

We'd play downtown on 52nd Street until about twelve or one in the morning. Then, after we finished playing there, we'd go uptown to Minton's, Small's Paradise, or the Heatwave and play until they closed around four, five, or even six in the morning. After we'd be up all night at jam sessions . . . [we] would sit up even longer talking about music and music theory about approaches to the trumpet. . . . Then after classes, me and Freddie would sit around and talk more music. I hardly slept (Davis & Troupe, 1989, p. 63).

The key in the circuit of Bebop experiences described by Davis was Minton's Playhouse, where a sense of community reinforced the language and

intellectual insight. For many, Minton's was considered the "home" of Bebop. Minton's was the sight of the literal crossroads of comings and goings of the musicians as they passed through New York, that worldwide crossroads of transition and immigration. Whenever musicians came to Minton's, there were the jam sessions, and the constant presence of Thelonious Monk, submitting ideas for musical consideration, but there were also sounds and social validation of home. Musical innovation was supplemented by food and a sense of temporary stability through which to renew their spiritual resources and continue the struggle to express their idiom. Speaking of the importance of Minton's, Ralph Ellison emphasized this idea of home when he referred to Minton's as "the rediscovered community of the feasts, evocative of home" (Ellison, 1964, p. 200). While not immediately obvious, this sense of home was integrally related to the maintenance of intellectual growth. The ability to speak new words, to survive the consequences of disrupting norms, requires a stabilizing force to sustain one as the world turns away and conflicts ensue. West (1991, p. 77) captures this requirement when he describes the perennial question of the insurgent intellectual as:

Where can I find a sense of home? That sense of home can only be found in our construction of communities of resistance. . . . Renewal comes through our participation in community. . . . In community we can feel that we are moving forward, that struggle can be maintained.

The Lessons of Bebop for African-American Academics and the Academy

Based on the Bebop intellectual processes described above, Bebop's intellectual impact can be attributed to the following characteristics: (1) a sense of belonging at the vanguard of the ideas and cultural influence and the intellectual power of the African-American legacy; (2) the ability to roam the world of ideas and incorporate multiple voices into their intellectual expressions; and (3) the ability to gather collectively to share insights and support one another at the level of human, interpersonal need. The final section of this chapter discusses each of the above-mentioned factors and the implications that each holds for the academic climate and the retention of African-American faculty.

The Cultural Vanguard and the African-American Legacy

In discussions of faculty retention, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on accommodations required of the academy to create a climate appropriately

hospitable to culturally diverse faculty. It is my contention, however, that there is little that the academy can do if African-American faculty do not have a sense of purpose and mission regarding their role and intellectual legacy.

The intellectual example of Bebop musicians, while undeniably informed by the genius of its innovators, reflects the power of a sense of belonging at the cultural vanguard and a confidence in their musical heritage and legacy. While much has been made of the jazz musicians jealousy regarding the cultural status of the classical musician (George, 1988), there had been few attempts to imitate classical musicians as a way of raising the stature of jazz. Bebop innovators in particular realized that their own traditions were as relevant as any and deserved the respect and consideration due to a sophisticated art form. Toward that end, Bebop musicians drew from the best of whatever they encountered, including the classical music tradition, but integrated the classical into their musical priorities. This enabled Bebop musicians to grow and expand intellectually, while retaining their identity and style.

African-American academics have to begin to cultivate a sense of tradition and epistemology. Many African-American academic organizations celebrate African-American accomplishment without reinforcing the particular insights and which African-American ways of knowing have contributed. Particularly in a profession of knowledge, it is vitally important to know the multiple factors underlying knowledge representation so that one may make effective strategic decisions regarding how to situate oneself at the forefront of relevant thought. African Americans have to examine their structural position as a "special market" and make appropriate modifications to disrupt the expectations that coincide with that role. A knowledge of epistemological heritage enables scholars to draw from African-American epistemological dispositions to make broader statements that disrupt the "spokesperson" paradigm.

The Ability to Roam the World of Ideas

As West (1993) has noted, African-American academics face multiple pitfalls in cultivating an academic identity. Specifically, African Americans frequently foster an alternative "black" canonical structure that replicates the dynamics of the mainstream canon, albeit in black form and thus limits the ultimate possibilities for intellectual development. African-American intellectual practice has to purposefully move through the world of ideas, integrating the best into our own framework. Confident in their idiom, the Bebop musicians did not fear losing themselves in the "jungle" of ideas, but relished the multiple sounds and novel possibilities. Bebop musicians embodied the music and created new interpretations that enabled new ideas to emerge. African-American academics need to foster intellectual encounters and novel interpretations that can

provide commentary regarding the most vital issues of our day. As discussed earlier, African-American epistemological constructs enable its users to engage a myriad of ideas and intellectual traditions and interpretations and provide fresh insight and commentary, revising and updating our own identities and perceptions as we integrate the multiple conceptions we encounter.

A Collective Ethos Integrating the Informal and the Social

The final area of implication bears the most on faculty climate and accommodations that can be made at the academic level. The academy, by ideology and tradition, can be an intensely individualistic and isolated profession. Advancement often depends on single-authored publications and service is far subordinate to the pursuit of making one's individual name. Whereas, constructed through scholarship and the media in terms of individual reputation and achievement, Bebop intellectual development involved a collective process of idea exchange and social discourse. These characteristics, while openly embraced by Bebop musicians, also function, albeit more informally, within the academy. Frequently, in contrast to the stated ideology of individual achievement, academic growth itself depends on a mentoring quality of relationships where vital information is exchanged interpersonally. To retain and enhance the excellence of African-American faculty, the academy must augment both the number and quality of occasions for collective consideration of issues. Beyond the mere lecture or symposium, these occasions should be linked to a larger sense of purpose regarding what might be accomplished in the way of social and intellectual impact. Especially when bringing in new faculty, a collective ethos may be encouraged through events that involve newer and experienced faculty taking in artistic events over time, to foster a sense of trust and communication through which more significant issues may be taken up.

Finally African-American faculty must be encouraged and supported for participation in African-American academic organizations. Participation in these organizations provides the motion and then collective experience that can also support intellectual development and provide needed support and sustenance as African-American faculty engage the rigors and pitfalls of the academic profession.

In conclusion, it must be kept in mind that given the qualities that contributed to the success of the Bebop idiom, African Americans face a difficult task in our effort to take on these qualities. As discussed earlier, multiple structural factors work specifically against the kinds of meaningful relationships that support and sustain culturally valid intellectual development. However,

these barriers constitute both the cross and the crossroads faced by the "many thousands" before us. In the same manner as African-American musical, spiritual, and academic intellectuals of the past have overcome, we must accept the difficulty, move improvisationally, and celebrate the insights gained from seemingly small but ultimately significant day-by-day victories. We would not be in the academy without such miracles.

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RETHINKING W. E. B. DUBOIS' “DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS”

IMPLICATIONS FOR RETENTION AND
SELF-PRESERVATION IN THE ACADEMY

Leon D. Caldwell and James B. Stewart

Lessons from DuBois: “Double Consciousness” and Psychic Liberation

The concept of double consciousness and psychic duality reflects the perception that the collective psyche of peoples of African descent has been bifurcated, that is, torn between competing cultural dictates as a result of its encounter with European culture. DuBois' perspectives on identity dynamics are captured in this paragraph:

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness—An American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts; two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder (DuBois, 1897, pp. 194-195).