

eric lott love and theft

Eric Lott Love and Theft: Exploring the Complexities of Race, Culture, and Appropriation

eric lott love and theft stands as a pivotal phrase in American cultural studies, encapsulating a profound and often controversial dialogue about race, art, and appropriation. Eric Lott's groundbreaking work, most notably his book **Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class**, dives deep into the paradoxical relationship between African American culture and white American society. His analysis sheds light on how cultural borrowing can simultaneously express admiration and perpetuate exploitation—a theme as relevant today as it was in the 19th century.

In this article, we'll unpack the core ideas behind Eric Lott's **Love and Theft**, explore its significance in understanding American history and culture, and consider how these concepts resonate in contemporary discussions about race, identity, and cultural exchange.

Who Is Eric Lott and Why Does His Work Matter?

Eric Lott is a scholar and professor whose work focuses on American literature, culture, and race relations. His book **Love and Theft** (1993) is regarded as a seminal text in cultural studies and critical race theory. It investigates the phenomenon of blackface minstrelsy—a popular form of entertainment in the 19th and early 20th centuries where white performers donned black makeup and mimicked African American music, speech, and dance.

What makes Lott's analysis compelling is his argument that this cultural practice was not simply about racism or mockery but also involved a complex form of "love" or fascination with Black culture. This duality of "love and theft" captures the contradictory feelings white Americans had toward African Americans: admiration intertwined with exploitation.

The Core Concepts of "Love and Theft"

At the heart of Eric Lott's thesis is the idea that cultural appropriation is not a one-dimensional process. Instead, it involves both desire and domination, appreciation and erasure. Let's break down these core ideas:

1. Cultural Appropriation with Ambivalence

Lott describes how white performers in blackface minstrelsy both admired and dehumanized Black culture. They borrowed Black music, dance, and vernacular, which they found captivating and exciting. Yet, this borrowing was wrapped in racist caricatures and stereotypes that reinforced white supremacy.

This ambivalence—simultaneously loving and stealing—reflects the complicated racial dynamics of America, where Black culture has often been a source of inspiration for white artists, even while Black people themselves faced oppression.

2. The Performance of Race

Blackface minstrelsy wasn't just entertainment; it was a performance that constructed and communicated ideas about race. Lott shows how these performances shaped public perceptions of Black identity and allowed white audiences to engage with Black culture on their own terms.

By "performing" Blackness, white minstrels created a distorted image that both enthralled and reassured white audiences, maintaining racial hierarchies even as they appropriated Black cultural forms.

3. The Working-Class Connection

An important aspect of Lott's analysis is the role of the American working class in this cultural exchange. Minstrelsy was popular among working-class whites, who saw in Black culture something both threatening and alluring. The entertainment provided a way to negotiate anxieties about race, class, and economic change during a period of rapid social transformation.

Why "Love and Theft" Remains Relevant Today

Eric Lott's insights into "love and theft" are not confined to historical analysis. They offer a framework for understanding ongoing debates about cultural appropriation in music, fashion, and art. From hip-hop sampling to fashion trends inspired by Indigenous designs, the tensions Lott describes continue to surface.

Understanding Cultural Appropriation Beyond Simple Labels

One of the key takeaways from Lott's work is that cultural appropriation involves complex emotional and social dynamics. It's rarely a matter of simple theft or innocent admiration. Instead, it's a tangled negotiation involving power, identity, and history.

This perspective encourages us to:

- Recognize the historical context behind cultural borrowing.
- Understand the power imbalances that influence whose culture gets appropriated and how.
- Engage critically with cultural exchange rather than dismissing it outright.

Impact on Modern Music and Arts

Many contemporary artists grapple with the legacy of “love and theft.” For example, hip-hop artists often sample older songs, blending influences from various cultures. Questions arise: When is this a respectful homage? When does it cross into exploitation?

Eric Lott’s framework helps us appreciate the nuances in these debates. It reveals how cultural exchange can be a form of creativity and connection but must be approached with awareness of historical injustices.

Eric Lott Love and Theft in Academic and Popular Discourse

Since its publication, *Love and Theft* has influenced scholars, artists, and activists. It’s frequently cited in discussions about race, identity politics, and cultural studies. The book offers a vocabulary for talking about race and culture that acknowledges contradictions and complexities rather than simplifying them.

Scholarly Influence

Lott’s work has opened avenues for examining other cultural phenomena through the lens of “love and theft.” Researchers have applied his ideas to analyze everything from jazz and blues to visual art and literature, demonstrating the wide applicability of his insights.

Pop Culture Reflections

Interestingly, the phrase “Love and Theft” has penetrated popular culture itself. For instance, the country music duo Love and Theft draws their name from Lott’s concept, reflecting the ongoing relevance of these themes in music.

Tips for Engaging with Cultural Appropriation Thoughtfully

Inspired by Eric Lott’s work, anyone interested in cultural exchange can take steps to engage responsibly:

1. **Educate Yourself:** Understand the history and significance of cultural elements before adopting or referencing them.
2. **Respect Origins:** Acknowledge the source communities and their experiences.
3. **Avoid Stereotypes:** Steer clear of caricatures or reductive portrayals

that can cause harm.

4. **Support Authentic Voices:** Amplify creators from the cultures whose traditions you admire.
5. **Reflect on Intent and Impact:** Consider how your actions affect others, beyond your personal intentions.

By applying these principles, we can foster more meaningful and equitable cultural interactions.

Final Thoughts on Eric Lott Love and Theft

Eric Lott's *Love and Theft* offers a powerful lens to examine the intertwined histories of race, culture, and power in America. His exploration of blackface minstrelsy reveals how cultural appropriation is rarely black-and-white but filled with contradictions and complexities. Understanding these dynamics not only enriches our grasp of American history but also equips us to navigate contemporary cultural conversations with greater sensitivity and insight.

Whether you're a student of cultural studies, a creator, or simply an engaged citizen, reflecting on Eric Lott's ideas encourages a deeper awareness of how culture is shared, transformed, and sometimes stolen. This awareness is crucial as we continue to grapple with questions of identity, belonging, and respect in an increasingly interconnected world.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Eric Lott and what is his book 'Love and Theft' about?

Eric Lott is a cultural historian and professor known for his book *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*, which explores the complex cultural dynamics of blackface minstrelsy in 19th-century America.

What is the main thesis of Eric Lott's 'Love and Theft'?

The main thesis of *Love and Theft* is that blackface minstrelsy was a contradictory cultural practice that involved both the appropriation and admiration of African American culture by working-class white performers, reflecting racial tensions in America.

How does Eric Lott define 'love' and 'theft' in the context of minstrelsy?

In *Love and Theft*, Eric Lott uses 'love' to signify the fascination and admiration white performers had for African American culture, while 'theft'

refers to the appropriation and exploitation of that culture for entertainment and profit.

Why is 'Love and Theft' considered an important work in cultural studies?

'Love and Theft' is important because it provides a nuanced analysis of racial representation, cultural appropriation, and identity formation in American history, influencing scholarship on race, performance, and popular culture.

What impact did Eric Lott's 'Love and Theft' have on the understanding of American minstrelsy?

'Love and Theft' challenged simplistic views of minstrelsy as merely racist by highlighting its complexities, including the ambivalent attitudes of performers and audiences toward race, thus reshaping academic discourse on the subject.

When was Eric Lott's 'Love and Theft' first published?

Eric Lott's 'Love and Theft' was first published in 1993.

Has Eric Lott's 'Love and Theft' influenced contemporary discussions on cultural appropriation?

Yes, 'Love and Theft' has influenced contemporary discussions on cultural appropriation by providing a historical framework to understand how cultural exchange can be both exploitative and admiring, informing debates on race and culture today.

Additional Resources

Eric Lott *Love and Theft: An In-Depth Exploration of Race, Culture, and Appropriation*

eric lott love and theft stands as a seminal work in American cultural studies, particularly in its examination of race relations and the complex dynamics of cultural appropriation in the United States. First published in 1993, this book by Eric Lott delves into the paradoxical relationship between African American culture and white fascination, focusing on how "love" and "theft" intertwine in the appropriation of black culture by white society. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of Lott's arguments, themes, and the continuing relevance of his work in contemporary discourse around race, identity, and cultural exchange.

Understanding Eric Lott's Thesis in Love and Theft

At its core, Eric Lott's **Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the*

American Working Class* investigates the phenomenon of blackface minstrelsy—19th-century theatrical performances where white actors impersonated African Americans. Lott argues that this form of entertainment was a paradoxical blend of genuine admiration ("love") for black culture and blatant exploitation or "theft" of African American identity and art forms.

Lott's analytical framework situates minstrelsy as a cultural site where racial boundaries were both reinforced and transgressed. White performers, by donning blackface, simultaneously mocked and appropriated African American music, dance, and dialects, creating a complicated relationship that reflected wider societal tensions of race, class, and power.

The Historical Context of Blackface Minstrelsy

To fully grasp Eric Lott's perspective, it is essential to consider the historical backdrop of minstrelsy. Emerging in the early 19th century, this entertainment form became the first distinctly American theatrical genre, gaining immense popularity across the United States and even internationally.

- **Origins:** Blackface minstrelsy originated in the 1830s as a predominantly white working-class form of entertainment.
- **Performance Style:** It involved exaggerated caricatures of African Americans, often portraying them as lazy, superstitious, or buffoonish.
- **Cultural Impact:** Despite its racist underpinnings, minstrelsy introduced African American musical styles and vernacular speech into mainstream culture.

Lott's *Love and Theft* posits that these performances simultaneously perpetuated racist stereotypes and expressed a complicated fascination with black culture among white audiences and performers.

The Duality of "Love" and "Theft" in Cultural Appropriation

A central theme in Eric Lott's analysis is the dual nature of cultural appropriation embodied in minstrelsy. The "love" aspect points to a genuine admiration and desire to engage with African American culture. Conversely, "theft" highlights the exploitative extraction of cultural elements without acknowledgment or respect for their origins.

Love: Affinity and Fascination

Lott emphasizes that white minstrels did not merely seek to ridicule black culture but also showed an intense fascination with it. This admiration can be seen in the adoption of African American musical rhythms, dance forms, and storytelling techniques, which contributed to the shaping of American popular culture.

For example, the syncopated rhythms and call-and-response patterns of black music found their way into minstrel songs and later influenced jazz and blues. This cultural exchange, according to Lott, was driven by a complex mix of desire and curiosity, which complicates simplistic narratives of cultural oppression.

Theft: Exploitation and Erasure

At the same time, Eric Lott highlights how minstrelsy was fundamentally an act of theft. White performers profited from black cultural expressions while reinforcing harmful stereotypes and marginalizing the very communities from which these traditions originated.

This theft was not only economic but also symbolic. The authentic voices of African Americans were replaced by caricatures, and the original cultural meanings were distorted or erased. This process contributed to the systemic devaluation of black artistry and identity in American society.

Love and Theft in Contemporary Cultural Discourse

Eric Lott's work remains highly relevant in today's discussions about cultural appropriation, particularly in music, fashion, and media. The tensions he identified between admiration and exploitation continue to surface whenever cultural elements cross racial or ethnic boundaries.

Modern Examples of Cultural Appropriation

From hip-hop fashion adopted by mainstream brands to white musicians drawing heavily from African American musical traditions, modern culture often repeats the dynamic of love and theft described by Lott. Debates around these phenomena focus on issues such as:

- **Authenticity:** Who has the right to perform or profit from certain cultural expressions?
- **Power Dynamics:** How do historical inequalities affect contemporary cultural exchanges?
- **Recognition:** Are original creators and communities properly credited and compensated?

Such questions demonstrate the enduring complexity of cultural interactions in a multicultural society and underscore the importance of Eric Lott's framework for analyzing these issues.

Critiques and Further Scholarship

While *Love and Theft* has been widely praised for its nuanced approach, some critics argue that Lott's focus on white fascination risks underestimating the violence and harm caused by cultural appropriation. Others suggest expanding the analysis to include perspectives from African American scholars and artists who have experienced these dynamics firsthand.

Nevertheless, Eric Lott's contribution provides a foundational lens for understanding the ambivalent relationship between race, culture, and power in American history.

The Legacy of Eric Lott's *Love and Theft*

Over three decades since its publication, *Love and Theft* endures as a critical text in American studies, cultural history, and race theory. Its interdisciplinary approach—combining history, literature, musicology, and critical race theory—allows readers to appreciate the layered meanings behind cultural appropriation.

The book's influence extends beyond academia, informing conversations in popular culture, education, and social justice movements. By exploring the uneasy mixture of admiration and exploitation, Lott's work encourages a more thoughtful engagement with cultural borrowing and the ongoing struggles for racial equity.

In examining Eric Lott's *Love and Theft*, readers gain insight into how cultural identities are constructed, contested, and commodified, revealing the persistent challenges and possibilities inherent in America's multicultural landscape.

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eric lott love and theft: Love and Theft Eric Lott, 1993 Blackface and blackness : the minstrel show in American culture -- Love and theft : racial production and the social unconscious of blackface -- White kids and no kids at all : working-class culture and languages of race -- The blackening of America : popular culture and national cultures -- The seeming counterfeit : early blackface acts, the body, and social contradiction -- Genuine Negro fun : racial pleasure and class formation in the 1840s -- California gold and European revolution : Stephen Foster and the American 1848 -- Uncle Tomitudes : racial melodrama and modes of production.

eric lott love and theft: Love and Theft : Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class Department of English University of Virginia Eric Lott Associate Professor, 1993-10-28 For over two centuries, America has celebrated the very black culture it attempts to control and repress, and nowhere is this phenomenon more apparent than in the strange practice of

blackface performance. Born of extreme racial and class conflicts, the blackface minstrel show sometimes usefully intensified them. Based on the appropriation of black dialect, music, and dance, minstrelsy at once applauded and lampooned black culture, ironically contributing to a blackening of America. Drawing on recent research in cultural studies and social history, Eric Lott examines the role of the blackface minstrel show in the political struggles of the years leading up to the Civil War. Reading minstrel music, lyrics, jokes, burlesque skits, and illustrations in tandem with working-class racial ideologies and the sex/gender system, *Love and Theft* argues that blackface minstrelsy both embodied and disrupted the racial tendencies of its largely white, male, working-class audiences. Underwritten by envy as well as repulsion, sympathetic identification as well as fear--a dialectic of love and theft--the minstrel show continually transgressed the color line even as it enabled the formation of a self-consciously white working class. Lott exposes minstrelsy as a signifier for multiple breaches: the rift between high and low cultures, the commodification of the dispossessed by the empowered, the attraction mixed with guilt of whites caught in the act of cultural thievery.

eric lott love and theft: Freakery Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, 1996-10 A groundbreaking anthology that probes the disposition towards the visually different Giants. Midgets. Tribal non-Westerners. The very fat. The very thin. Hermaphrodites. Conjoined twins. The disabled. The very hirsute. In American history, all have shared the platform equally, as freaks, human oddities, their only commonality their assigned role of anomalous other to the gathered throngs. For the price of a ticket, freak shows offered spectators an icon of bodily otherness whose difference from them secured their own membership in a common American identity--by comparison ordinary, tractable, normal. Rosemarie Thomson's groundbreaking anthology probes America's disposition toward the visually different. The book's essays fall into four main categories: historical explorations of American freak shows in the era of P.T. Barnum; the articulation of the freak in literary and textual discourses; contemporary relocations of freak shows; and theoretical analyses of freak culture. Essays address such diverse topics as American colonialism and public presentations of natives; laughing gas demonstrations in the 1840's; Shirley Temple and Tom Thumb; Todd Browning's landmark movie *Freaks*; bodybuilders as postmodern freaks; freaks in *Star Trek*; Michael Jackson's identification with the Elephant Man; and the modern talk show as a reconfiguration of the freak show. In her introduction, Thomson traces the freak show from antiquity to the modern period and explores the constitutive, political, and textual properties of such exhibits. *Freakery* is a fresh, insightful exploration of a heretofore neglected aspect of American mass culture.

eric lott love and theft: Michael Jackson and the Blackface Mask Harriet J. Manning, 2023-06-16 Michael Jackson challenged the power structure of the American music industry and struck at the heart of blackface minstrelsy, America's first form of mass entertainment. The response was a derisive caricature that over time Jackson subverted through his art. In this expanded, all-new edition, *Michael Jackson and the Blackface Mask* argues for the tangible relationship between Jackson and blackface minstrelsy. It reveals the dialogue at minstrelsy's core and, in its broader sense, tracks a centuries-long pattern of racial oppression and its resistance and how that has been played out in popular theatre. *Michael Jackson and the Blackface Mask* explores Jackson's early talent and fame and the birth and escalation of 'Wacko Jacko'. In relation to all this, the book examines Jackson's dynamic art as it evolved, from his live performances and short films to the very surface of his own body. Scholarly and interdisciplinary, this work is suitable for readers across a diverse spectrum of academic fields, including African American studies, popular music studies and cultural theory, media and communication, gender studies and performance and theatre studies. Academic but accessible, this book will also be an engaging read for anyone interested in Michael Jackson and especially in his role as an icon of difference, in America's dynamics of race and his mass media image.

eric lott love and theft: American Fun John Beckman, 2014-02-04 Here is an animated and wonderfully engaging work of cultural history that lays out America's unruly past by describing the ways in which cutting loose has always been, and still is, an essential part of what it means to be an American. From the time the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Americans have defied their stodgy

rules and hierarchies with pranks, dances, stunts, and wild parties, shaping the national character in profound and lasting ways. In the nation's earlier eras, revelers flouted Puritans, Patriots pranked Redcoats, slaves lampooned masters, and forty-niners bucked the saddles of an increasingly uptight middle class. In the twentieth century, fun-loving Americans celebrated this heritage and pushed it even further: flappers "barney-mugged" in "petting pantries," Yippies showered the New York Stock Exchange with dollar bills, and B-boys invented hip-hop in a war zone in the Bronx. This is the surprising and revelatory history that John Beckman recounts in *American Fun*. Tying together captivating stories of Americans' "pursuit of happiness"—and distinguishing between real, risky fun and the bland amusements that paved the way for Hollywood, Disneyland, and Xbox—Beckman redefines American culture with a delightful and provocative thesis. (With black-and-white illustrations throughout.)

eric lott love and theft: Recorded Music in American Life William Howland Kenney, 1999-07-08 Have records, compact discs, and other sound reproduction equipment merely provided American listeners with pleasant diversions, or have more important historical and cultural influences flowed through them? Do recording machines simply capture what's already out there, or is the music somehow transformed in the dual process of documentation and dissemination? How would our lives be different without these machines? Such are the questions that arise when we stop taking for granted the phenomenon of recorded music and the phonograph itself. Now comes an in-depth cultural history of the phonograph in the United States from 1890 to 1945. William Howland Kenney offers a full account of what he calls the 78 r.p.m. era—from the formative early decades in which the giants of the record industry reigned supreme in the absence of radio, to the postwar proliferation of independent labels, disk jockeys, and changes in popular taste and opinion. By examining the interplay between recorded music and the key social, political, and economic forces in America during the phonograph's rise and fall as the dominant medium of popular recorded sound, he addresses such vital issues as the place of multiculturalism in the phonograph's history, the roles of women as record-player listeners and performers, the belated commercial legitimacy of rhythm-and-blues recordings, the hit record phenomenon in the wake of the Great Depression, the origins of the rock-and-roll revolution, and the shifting place of popular recorded music in America's personal and cultural memories. Throughout the book, Kenney argues that the phonograph and the recording industry served neither to impose a preference for high culture nor a degraded popular taste, but rather expressed a diverse set of sensibilities in which various sorts of people found a new kind of pleasure. To this end, *Recorded Music in American Life* effectively illustrates how recorded music provided the focus for active recorded sound cultures, in which listeners shared what they heard, and expressed crucial dimensions of their private lives, by way of their involvement with records and record-players. Students and scholars of American music, culture, commerce, and history—as well as fans and collectors interested in this phase of our rich artistic past—will find a great deal of thorough research and fresh scholarship to enjoy in these pages.

eric lott love and theft: Opera Parody Songs of Blackface Minstrels (1844-1860) Renee Lapp Norris, During the American antebellum period, minstrelsy was a ubiquitous form of theatrical entertainment. Typically performed by white men in blackface makeup, minstrelsy was based in oppressive misrepresentation of people of color, and it created enduring stereotypes. Beginning in the mid-1840s, minstrels burlesqued various types of popular non-blackface entertainments, including Shakespeare's plays, touring European concert musicians, and opera, which often was performed in the United States in English-language adaptations. Minstrels' burlesques were advertised on playbills and mentioned in the press, but there are few sources for their actual music and lyrics. The thirty-eight pieces of this edition survive as complete, discrete songs published as musical sources. Minstrels' opera parody songs typically recast operatic characters as slaves who are happy, childishly reliant on their paternalistic masters, and primitively agrarian. Such portrayals supported the so-called "happy darkey" caricature that was central to mid-century political ideology. Minstrels used this imagery to parody up and down social hierarchies, exploiting people of color and debasing opera's ostensibly elevated aesthetics. Alongside minstrelsy's racial politics, the parodies

demonstrate creative musical adaptation. Each of the thirty-eight songs parodies opera differently, suggesting minstrels' inventiveness. The songs are rare and specific examples of the widespread practice of inter-genre borrowing and musical arrangement that was fundamental to minstrelsy. Content Warning: The scores in this edition are intended for research rather than performance. Performance of these scores is discouraged. The original song titles and lyrics in this edition are evidence of and tools for racial oppression and are maintained here to present an accurate and reliable account of minstrelsy.

eric lott love and theft: Reckoning Anne Dueweke, 2022-03-04 A 2023 SPE Outstanding Book Award Winner At a time when many individuals and institutions are reexamining their histories to better understand their tangled roots of racism and oppression, *Reckoning: Kalamazoo College Uncovered Its Racial and Colonial Past* tells the story of how American ideas about colonialism and race shaped Kalamazoo College, a progressive liberal arts institution in the Midwest. Beginning with its founding in 1833 during the era of Indian Removal, the book follows the development of the college through the Civil War, the long period of racial entrenchment that followed Reconstruction, minstrel shows performed on campus in the 1950s during the rise of the Civil Rights movement, Black student activism in the wake of Martin Luther King's assassination, the quest for multiculturalism in the 1990s, and the recent activism of a changing student body. This close look at the colonial and racial history of one institution reveals academia's investment in White supremacy and the permutations and contradictions of race and racism in higher education. Though the details are unique to Kalamazoo, other predominantly White colleges and universities would have similar historical trajectories, for in the end our institutional histories reflect the history of the United States. By examining the ways in which a progressive, midwestern college has absorbed, resisted, and perpetuated American systems of colonialism and racism, the book challenges higher education to use this moment to make the deep, structural changes necessary to eliminate disparities in experiences and outcomes among students of color and their White peers. *Reckoning* is a volume that can be used in a variety of courses that deal with topics such as History of Education, Social Justice in Higher Education, and more. Perfect for courses such as: Pursuing Diversity, Inclusion, Justice, and Equity | Education and Cultural Studies | Exploring Whiteness | Inquiry in Postsecondary Education | Proseminar in Adult and Higher Education | Education and Social Struggle in the U.S., WWII - Present | Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Student Affairs | Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education | History of American Education | Diversity in Higher Education

eric lott love and theft: Worlding the south Sarah Comyn, Porscha Fermanis, 2021-07-06 This electronic version has been made available under a Creative Commons (BY-NC-ND) open access license. This collection brings together for the first time literary studies of British colonies in nineteenth-century Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, South America, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific Islands. Drawing on hemispheric studies, Indigenous studies, and southern theory to decentre British and other European metropolises, the collection offers a groundbreaking challenge to national paradigms and traditional literary periodisations and canons by prioritising southern cultural networks in multiple regional centres from Cape Town to Dunedin. *Worlding the south* examines the dialectics of literary worldedness in ways that recognise inequalities of power, textual and material violence, and literary and cultural resistance. The collection revises current literary histories of the 'British world' by arguing for the distinctiveness of settler colonialism in the southern hemisphere, and by incorporating Indigenous, diasporic, and south-south perspectives.

eric lott love and theft: The Cambridge Companion to Bob Dylan Kevin J. H. Dettmar, 2009-02-19 A lively set of new essays on Dylan's work as a writer and composer and on his place in American culture.

eric lott love and theft: The Time out of Mind Ian Bell, 2014-10-15 By the middle of the 1970s, Bob Dylan's position as the pre-eminent artist of his generation was assured. The 1975 album *Blood on the Tracks* seemed to prove, finally, that an uncertain age had found its poet. Then Dylan faltered. His instincts, formerly unerring, deserted him. In the 1980s, what had once appeared unthinkable came to pass: the "voice of a generation" began to sound irrelevant, a tale told to

grandchildren. Yet in the autumn of 1997, something remarkable happened. Having failed to release a single new song in seven long years, Dylan put out the equivalent of two albums in a single package. In the concluding volume of his ground-breaking study, Ian Bell explores the unparalleled second act in a quintessentially American career. It is a tale of redemption, of an act of creative will against the odds, and of a writer who refused to fade away. *Time Out of Mind* is the story of the latest, perhaps the last, of the many Bob Dylans.

eric lott love and theft: Shakespeare and the Cultures of Performance Paul Yachnin, Patricia Badir, 2017-05-15 Theatrical performance, suggest the contributors to this volume, can be an unpredictable, individual experience as well as a communal, institutional or cultural event. The essays collected here use the tools of theatre history in their investigation into the phenomenology of the performance experience, yet they are also careful to consider the social, ideological and institutional contingencies that determine the production and reception of the living spectacle. Thus contributors combine a formalist interest in the affective and aesthetic dimensions of language and spectacle with an investment in the material cultures that both produced and received Shakespeare's plays. Six of the chapters focus on early modern cultures of performance, looking specifically at such topics as the performance of rusticity; the culture of credit; contract and performance; the cultivation of Englishness; religious ritual; and mourning and memory. Building upon and interrelating with the preceding essays, the last three chapters deal with Shakespeare and performance culture in modernity. They focus on themes including literary and theatrical performance anxiety; cultural iconicity; and the performance of Shakespearean lateness. This collection strives to bring better understanding to Shakespeare's imaginative investment in the relationship between theatrical production and the emotional, intellectual and cultural effects of performance broadly defined in social terms.

eric lott love and theft: Racist Love Leslie Bow, 2021-12-13 In *Racist Love* Leslie Bow traces the ways in which Asian Americans become objects of anxiety and desire. Conceptualizing these feelings as "racist love," she explores how race is abstracted and then projected onto Asianized objects. Bow shows how anthropomorphic objects and images such as cartoon animals in children's books, home décor and cute tchotchkes, contemporary visual art, and artificially intelligent robots function as repositories of seemingly positive feelings and attachment to Asianness. At the same time, Bow demonstrates that these Asianized proxies reveal how fetishistic attraction and pleasure serve as a source of anti-Asian bias and violence. By outlining how attraction to popular representations of Asianness cloaks racial resentment and fears of globalization, Bow provides a new means of understanding the ambivalence surrounding Asians in the United States while offering a theory of the psychological, affective, and symbolic dynamics of racist love in contemporary America.

eric lott love and theft: Extra-Ordinary Men Nicola Rehling, 2010-06-21 *Extra-Ordinary Men* analyzes popular cinematic representations of white heterosexual masculinity as the ordinary form of male identity, one that enjoys considerable economic, social, political, and representational strength. Nicola Rehling argues that while this normative position affords white heterosexual masculinity ideological and political dominance, such ordinariness also engenders the anxiety that it is a depthless, vacuous, and unstable identity. At a time when the neutrality of white heterosexual masculinity has been challenged by identity politics, this insightful volume offers lucid accounts of contemporary theoretical debates on masculinity in popular cinema, and explores the strategies deployed in popular films to reassert white heterosexual male hegemony through detailed readings of films as diverse as *Fight Club*, *Boys Don't Cry*, and *The Matrix*. Accessible to undergraduates, but also of interest to film scholars, the book makes a distinctive contribution to our understanding of the ways in which popular film helps construct and maintain many unexamined assumptions about masculinity, gender, race, and sexuality.

eric lott love and theft: Class Stanley Aronowitz, Michael J. Roberts, 2017-09-25 Using an innovative framework, this reader examines the most important and influential writings on modern class relations. Uses an interdisciplinary approach that combines scholarship from political

economy, social history, and cultural studies Brings together more than 50 selections rich in theory and empirical detail that span the working, middle, and capitalist classes Analyzes class within the larger context of labor, particularly as it relates to conflicts over and about work Provides insight into the current crisis in the global capitalist system, including the Occupy Wall Street Movement, the explosion of Arab Spring, and the emergence of class conflict in China

eric lott love and theft: Classical Hollywood Cinema, Sexuality, and the Politics of the Face Paul Morrison, 2020-11-30 Classical Hollywood Cinema, Sexuality, and the Politics of the Face examines the representation of iconic female faces in the golden age of Hollywood – Greta Garbo, Gloria Swanson, Elizabeth Taylor – and the gay male fetishization of those faces. Classical Hollywood cinema is given to an aesthetic and ideological struggle between rival scopophilic economies: an erotics of “to-be-looked-at-ness” is countered by a hermeneutics of “to-be-seen-through-ness.” The latter emerges triumphant, but the legendary female faces of Hollywood resist, in their different ways, a coercive and normalizing knowledge, which is the source of the gay male investment in them. A disciplinary society privileges a hermeneutics of gaze; the iconic female faces of classical Hollywood cinema demand an erotics. Classical Hollywood Cinema, Sexuality, and the Politics of the Face explores the tension between the two through detailed readings of *Ninotchka*, *Sunset Boulevard*, and *Suddenly, Last Summer* in the context of early and mid-century cinema and culture. It includes, for instance, an analysis of D. W. Griffith and blackface, the Stonewall riots and the coming-into-voice of the modern gay subject, several major films by Hitchcock, *Citizen Kane*, and the emergence of rival standards of beauty, both female and male, in figures such as Katharine Hepburn, Ingrid Bergman, Humphrey Bogart, Rock Hudson, and James Dean. This is an important study for students of queer theory, film theory and history, and gender and sexuality studies.

eric lott love and theft: Body Knowledge Mary Simonson, 2013-09-03 While female performers in the early 20th century were regularly advertised as dancers, mimics, singers, or actresses, they wove together techniques and elements drawn from a wide variety of genres and media. Onstage and onscreen, performers borrowed from musical scores and narratives, referred to contemporary shows, films, and events, and mimicked fellow performers. Behind the scenes, they experimented with cross-promotion and new advertising techniques and technologies to broadcast images and tales of their performances and lives well beyond the walls of American theaters, cabarets, and halls. The performances and conceptions of art that emerged were innovative, compelling, and deeply meaningful. *Body Knowledge* examines these performances and the performers behind them, highlighting the Ziegfeld Follies and *The Passing Show* revues, Salome dancers, Isadora Duncan's Wagner dances, Adeline Genée and Bessie Clayton's danced histories, Hazel Mackaye and Ruth St. Denis's pageants, and Anna Pavlova's opera and film projects. As a whole, it re-imagines early twentieth-century art and entertainment as both fluid and convergent.

eric lott love and theft: *Make It the Same* Jacob Edmond, 2019-07-30 The world is full of copies. This proliferation includes not just the copying that occurs online and the replication enabled by globalization but the works of avant-garde writers challenging cultural and political authority. In *Make It the Same*, Jacob Edmond examines the turn toward repetition in poetry, using the explosion of copying to offer a deeply inventive account of modern and contemporary literature. *Make It the Same* explores how poetry—an art form associated with the singular, inimitable utterance—is increasingly made from other texts through sampling, appropriation, translation, remediation, performance, and other forms of repetition. Edmond tracks the rise of copy poetry across media from the tape recorder to the computer and through various cultures and languages, reading across aesthetic, linguistic, geopolitical, and technological divides. He illuminates the common form that unites a diverse range of writers from dub poets in the Caribbean to digital parodists in China, samizdat wordsmiths in Russia to Twitter-trolling provocateurs in the United States, analyzing the works of such writers as Kamau Brathwaite, Dmitri Prigov, Yang Lian, John Cayley, Caroline Bergvall, M. NourbeSe Philip, Kenneth Goldsmith, Vanessa Place, Christian Bök, Yi Sha, Hsia Yü, and Tan Lin. Edmond develops an alternative account of modernist and contemporary literature as defined not by innovation—as in Ezra Pound's oft-repeated slogan “make it new”—but by a system of

continuous copying. *Make It the Same* transforms global literary history, showing how the old hierarchies of original and derivative, center and periphery are overturned when we recognize copying as the engine of literary change.

eric lott love and theft: Dig Phil Ford, 2013-07-16 Hipness has been an indelible part of America's intellectual and cultural landscape since the 1940s. But the question What is hip? remains a kind of cultural koan, equally intriguing and elusive. In *Dig*, Phil Ford argues that while hipsters have always used clothing, hairstyle, gesture, and slang to mark their distance from consensus culture, music has consistently been the primary means of resistance, the royal road to hip. Hipness suggests a particular kind of alienation from society--alienation due not to any specific political wrong but to something more radical, a clash of perception and consciousness. From the vantage of hipness, the dominant culture constitutes a system bent on excluding creativity, self-awareness, and self-expression. The hipster's project is thus to define himself against this system, to resist being stamped in its uniform, squarish mold. Ford explores radio shows, films, novels, poems, essays, jokes, and political manifestos, but argues that music more than any other form of expression has shaped the alienated hipster's identity. Indeed, for many avant-garde subcultures music is their *raison d'être*. Hip intellectuals conceived of sound itself as a way of challenging meaning--that which is cognitive and abstract, timeless and placeless--with experience--that which is embodied, concrete and anchored in place and time. Through Charlie Parker's *Ornithology*, Ken Nordine's *Sound Museum*, Bob Dylan's *Ballad of a Thin Man*, and a range of other illuminating examples, Ford shows why and how music came to be at the center of hipness. Shedding new light on an enigmatic concept, *Dig* is essential reading for students and scholars of popular music and culture, as well as anyone fascinated by the counterculture movement of the mid-twentieth-century. Publication of this book was supported by the AMS 75 PAYS Endowment of the American Musicological Society, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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