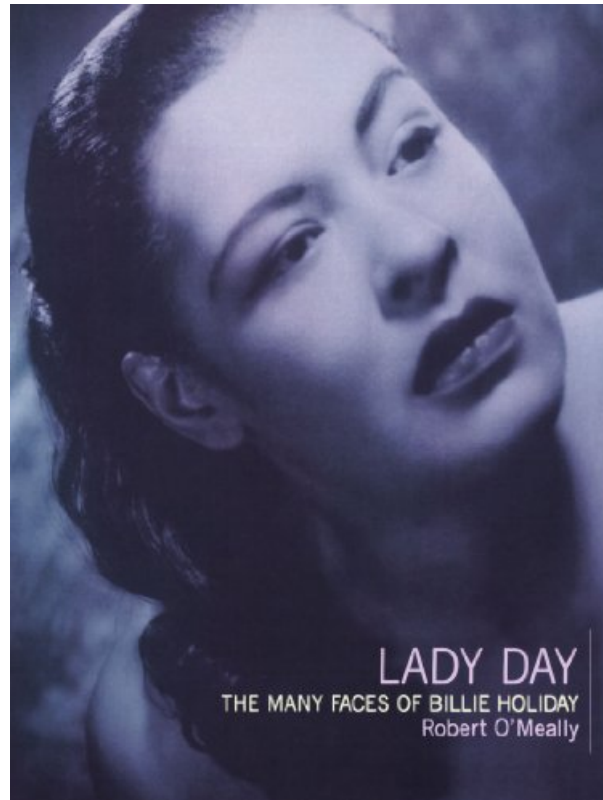
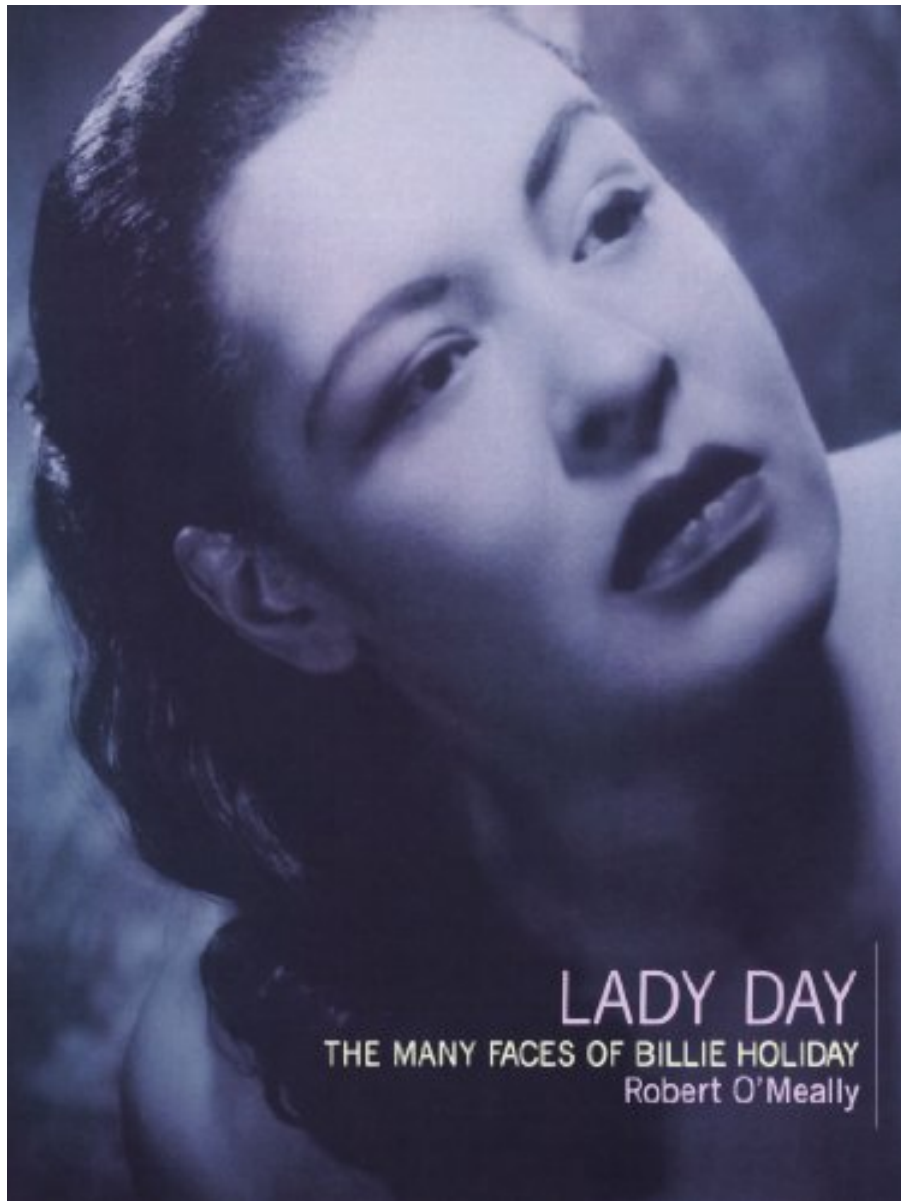


LADY DAY: THE MANY FACES OF BILLIE HOLIDAY HOLIDAY BY ROBERT O'MEALLY



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From Publishers Weekly

O'Meally concentrates on Holiday the musician in this profusely illustrated biographical study. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

Narcotics, jail, sexual abuse, and prejudice are often our first associations concerning the life of the great jazz singer, but this biography recalls only Holiday as artist. O'Meally (English, Barnard Coll.) puts her tragedy and talent into perspective, and what emerges is a critique of a singer. The book's first section is outstanding in this regard, employing stories, quotes, and interviews in describing Holiday's technique. Holiday and William Dufty's *Lady Sings the Blues* (LJ 8/56) is a serious and inspirational account; O'Meally's treatment is also serious, but he offers psychological analysis as well. Referring to the subtitle, O'Meally writes, "Through her music . . . she faced down a world full of trouble . . . her songs were confrontations." No index or footnotes are provided, but there is a large selected bibliography. For large public libraries and academic music collections. (Photos not seen).

- Ina M. Wise, Chicago

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About the Author

Robert O'Meally, Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and American Studies at Columbia University, is the author of *The Craft of Ralph Ellison* and the editor of *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture*. He is co-producer of the 5-CD Smithsonian set *The Jazz Singers*, nominated for a Grammy award. His articles on American music and literature appear in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*.

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"Billie Holiday deserves a biography in which her musicianship isn't overshadowed by the tragic events of her life. O'Meally has written that book," says Entertainment Weekly about this absorbing and authoritative account of the greatest jazz singer in history. O'Meally emphasizes Holiday's artistry and training rather than her personal miseries, and he uses voluminous archival material to correct common myths about Holiday. Chronicling her rigorous musical apprenticeship in Baltimore, her reception in New York by Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington, and her work with various musicians, particularly Lester Young, Lady Day is an impassioned testament to Holiday's genius that confirms her place in American jazz.

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Most helpful customer reviews

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful.

It's her music that made her special. . .

By Nicholas Antonucci

Tired of all the treatments of Holiday's life in film and print that forget it was her music that made her special, I was delighted to find Professor O'Meally's book. Fascinated with Holiday's life as musician, I had been routinely disappointed whenever I picked up a book or movie in hope of discovering more about her musicianship and less about the tragedies in her life. The book never loses its focus in this respect, making it quite unique.

What made this book even more enjoyable for me to read is that almost ten years ago I was fortunate enough to have taken a class taught by Professor O'Meally. His book conveys the same enthusiasm and passion he had for the subject matter and classes he taught and, no doubt, passed on to his students.

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful.

Pure Genius

By anonymous

The reason this book is so powerful is the perfect melding of photographs and text.

The author's rich, empathetic text makes plain Billie Holiday's genius as an artist and, unlike some of the so-called biographies of her life, don't simplify her to the point of caricature.

Mr. O'Meally focuses on what makes Billie Holiday special: her total mastery of her craft and her ability to share her vision of the world through song.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

beautiful reading about a gifted woman

By Midori

I am proud that I own this book. He divides her biography by each personal evolution she passed through. It wouldn't be good to give it away but I will say that O'Meally places value on each era of Billie. Every time I read it, it's a joy.

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