

From the Archive #2: Miss Lena Horne (1917-2010) Takes on Radio

Jennifer Stoever 

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Abstract

In a Chicago Defender interview from the late 1940s, badass even then: “Almost every day, I hear someone on the radio hailing America as the home of democracy. Yet almost every network is guilty of discrimination against the Negro performer.

Keywords

Music (Subfield), Archival, Music, Politics, Race, Radio

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lena horne in the 1940sIn a *Chicago Defender* interview from the late 1940s, badass even then:

“Almost every day, I hear someone on the radio hailing America as the home of democracy. Yet almost every network is guilty of discrimination against the Negro performer. There are a few isolated cases of Negroes in broadcasting, but the lily-white policy is seldom violated. When I was on the Ed (Gardner) show, the script had to be revised so that I wouldn’t address the star as “Archie.” They wanted me to call him “Mr. Gardner.” It wasn’t considered proper for a Negro girl to speak a white man’s name.

‘But I refused to consent to the change. So the earth-shattering problem was finally solved by deleting the name from the script. It is encouraging to know that Actor’s Equity is fighting against racial discrimination in the theatre. I hope there will also be a crusade of this type in radio in the near future.’”

JSA

