

SO! Amplifies: Regina Bradley's Outkasted Conversations

Regina N. Bradley

Blog post published April 17, 2014 in *Sounding Out!*

<https://doi.org/10.59350/4ky3h-jpz92>

Abstract

SO! Amplifies. . .a highly-curated, rolling mini-post series by which we editors hip you to cultural makers and organizations doing work we really really dig. You're welcome! — As folks rightfully celebrate the 20th anniversary of Nas' *Illmatic* album, I wanted to make sure space was made to equally celebrate and critically think about the stank that Outkast put on hip hop.

Keywords

Music (Subfield), Black Studies, Cultural Studies, Gender, Identity, Music

Recommended citation

Bradley, R. N. (2014, April 17). SO! Amplifies: Regina Bradley's Outkasted Conversations. *Sounding Out!*. <https://doi.org/10.59350/4ky3h-jpz92>

Copyright

Copyright © Regina N. Bradley 2014. Distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.



SO! Amplifies. . .a highly-curated, rolling mini-post series by which we editors hip you to cultural makers and organizations doing work we really really dig. You're welcome!

As folks rightfully celebrate the 20th anniversary of Nas' *Illmatic* album, I wanted to make sure space was made to equally celebrate and critically think about the stank that Outkast put on hip hop. I want to take the conversation outside of the academy into spaces where others could join the conversation. To do this, I set up a *YouTube* channel and sent out invitations to friends and colleagues I knew were vested in Outkast or whose work could be used to situate Outkast in creative and critical conversations. The response to the project thus far has been overwhelmingly positive. I have conversations scheduled to broadcast until the end of the year. Here's episode #4, a teaser to bring the *Sounding Out!* crowd in on the conversation.

My *Outkasted Conversations* project started with a fleeting thought while speaking with a friend: "It's the 20th anniversary of [Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik](#)? Damn. It's really been twenty years?!" I was ten years old when *Southerplayalistic* dropped and didn't really understand or appreciate the brilliance of the album back in 1994. I was in the initial stages of becoming someone vested in music, let alone hip hop. My definition of music was still deeply attached to what I learned in my music class. I could play the hell out of a recorder. I did a recorder solo at my school's spring concert and was applauded like a boss.

I flirted around with being a 'Kast fan – I remember [them on Martin](#) and later wearing out the track "In Due Time" on the *Soul Food* soundtrack – but it wasn't until 1998 that I really became "Outkasted." I permanently moved to my grandparents' house in Albany, GA. I was tall, lanky, and awkward. I was a black Keds white socks connoisseur because you never wear white shoes in red clay. I battled the teenaged pangs of wanting to be popular and visible. I wouldn't consider myself 'hip hop' at the time but I knew the heavy hitters from days of listening to WKYS out of Washington, D.C. I could school anyone on the latest single from Busta Rhymes, Tupac, Biggie Smalls, Nas, Lil' Kim, and Foxy Brown and Go-Go-ed with the best of them. Down South, though, those artists were important but they weren't *folk*. As I listened to the radio, the artists that I was familiar with got no play. I tried to wax (northern) hip hop philosophical at lunch and got some serious side-eyes. A classmate scolded, "those up north n— don't matter down here. What you

listening on from 'round hea (here)?' Round hea? Nothing but a mix tape I made off of the radio before leaving Virginia, gospel cavalcade on Sunday morning rides to church, and Paw Paw's juke joint blues on Saturday morning while cleaning up the house. If I wanted to survive, I needed to adapt. I recorded multiple radio mixtapes, meticulously blending the artists I heard kids at school talking about and my own musings after browsing the record store in the mall. Slowly, Wyclef Jean and Montell Jordan were replaced by Three Six Mafia, Goodie Mob, and Outkast. *Aquemini* and *Still Standing* held a chokehold on my playlist. I became a full-fledged member of the Dungeon Family Chuch of Modern Day (S)Aints.

The following episode of *Outkasted Conversations* is with [Dr. Treva B. Lindsey](#), Assistant Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the Ohio State University. This conversation features discussion of how the sonic elements of women's pleasure complicate gender and identity politics in Outkast's body of work.



<https://youtu.be/609oISruBtw>

To subscribe to Regina Bradley's *Outkasted Conversations* via Youtube click [here](#).

Featured Image: SO CLEAN PSP by Flickr User John Bracken

[Regina Bradley](#) recently completed her PhD at Florida State University in African American Literature. Her dissertation is titled "Race to Post: White Hegemonic Capitalism and Black Empowerment in 21st Century Black Popular Culture and Literature." She is a regular writer for Sounding Out!



REWIND!...If you liked this post, you may also dig:

[“Death Wish Mixtape: Sounding Trayvon Martin’s Death”](#)-Regina Bradley

[“From Illegitimate to Illmatic: On Tiger Mothers, Ethnoburbs, and Playing the Violin While Dreaming of Nas”](#)-Christie Zwahlen

[“Sounding Out! Podcast #5: Song and Spirit on the Highway”](#) -David Greenberg