

After hearing about Hazel Scott, I became fascinated by her popularity as an instrumentalist and how it was stolen from her because she chose to fight against discrimination. Scott's music, itself a form of expression, attracted wide audiences that gave weight to her words. She then voiced opposition to the discrimination she was subjected to. This public communication was the key for businesses, entertainment executives, and anti-communists to understand that she would make noise and never let them exploit her fame to actively further racism.

I began my research online by listening to Scott's recordings, learning about her music career, civic actions, their impact, and general music and civil rights history to contextualize these aspects of Scott's life. I then sought diverse, detailed perspectives through books and journals alongside many shorter primary sources showing snapshots of Scott's life and her dynamic relationship with the public. Finally, I interviewed Scott's son for a firsthand perspective of her legacy and character.

After familiarizing myself with Scott's story, I created a site design inspired by Scott's album covers. I then compiled Scott's story in writing, dividing it by the kinds of spaces she worked and protested in, and selected quotes to feature that would provide detail and various perspectives on Scott's life. Additionally, I included recordings of Scott that showed her unique style, stage personality, and skillful playing.

I argue that in the 1940s, pianist Hazel Scott made those she encountered inside the entertainment industry and elsewhere understand that she would hold them accountable for their discrimination. She used her pioneering musicianship as leverage in communicating her demands, leaving lasting contributions to music and civil rights.

Scott advanced music using her distinct background and diverse skillset; she spearheaded "swinging the classics," and her interpretations expanded on existing jazz and classical music.



Scott influenced, inspired, and collaborated with other musicians of her time, changing the musical world she lived in. Scott made impressions on music that have since been furthered and diverged into new forms. Scott's obvious talent put her in a position to be in spaces averse to her while having relative safety to protest discrimination. Scott shocked agents of discrimination that were otherwise negligent to their harmful actions and brought needed attention to prevailing civil rights issues. Years of public pressure that Scott contributed to led to official changes with the Daughters of the American Revolution ending the ban on performers of color, the National Press Club, Senate Press Gallery, and University of Texas accepting their first Black members, and Washington State expanding governmental civil rights protections. When Scott made history as the first Black person to host their own show, white supremacists took her down because they knew she mattered and would continue to fight for justice. Grassroots organizing and Scott's activism on the cultural front were interdependent forces for lasting shifts in American racial practices. Hazel Scott's significance in history is reflected in changes towards liberation and related art created in collective efforts she supported that echo into current times.