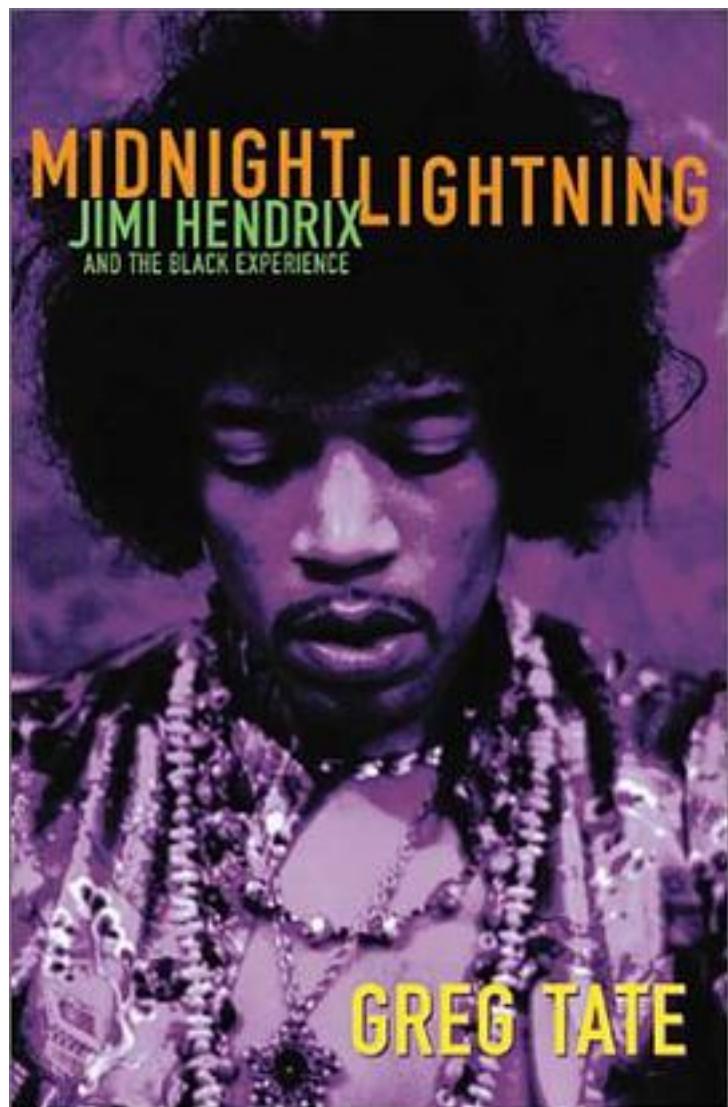


Midnight Lightning



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Jimi Hendrix's social meaning, his sexual mystery, and his scientific explorations in the field of sound are here addressed from a black perspective. This unique introduction to a man who, despite his popular appeal, has never made it into the pantheon of 20th-century black icons, incorporates extensive interviews with black Americans who shed light on Hendrix's complicated racial relationships. *Midnight Lightning* explores how Hendrix exploded the complacently segregated world to emerge as an icon for white boys, why his songs were not heard on black radio, and why black people once viewed him as a hippie Uncle Tom. Also explored are his connection to the Black Power movement, how he electrified soul music and made the electric guitar supplant the human voice, how he revolutionized the use of technology in popular music, and how black his music really was. His sex appeal—especially for black women—is discussed, as are how he redefined rock fashion, why nobody was really mad at him for sleeping with white women (at the same time as Sammy Davis, Jr. was being harassed and threatened for kissing a white woman onstage), and how he was marketed as a white performer. Explained are the ways in which Hendrix subverted and destabilized black masculine stereotypes, changing the way black music and black identity are perceived.

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