Department of Political and Economic Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Helsinki

An Endeavor by Harlem Dancers to Achieve Equality – The Recognition of the Harlem-Based African-American Jazz Dance Between 1921 and 1943

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be presented, with the permission of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Helsinki, for public examination in hall XIV, University main building, Fabianinkatu 33, on 16 January 2016, at 10 am.

Helsinki 2016

Publications of the Department of Political and Economic Studies 28 (2015)
Political History

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Cover: Riikka Hyypiä

Distribution and Sales:
Unigrafia Bookstore
http://kirjakauppa.unigrafia.fi/
books@unigrafia.fi
PL 4 (Vuorikatu 3 A) 00014 Helsingin yliopisto

ISSN-L 2243-3635
ISSN 2243-3635 (Print)
ISSN 2243-3643 (Online)
ISBN 978-951-51-1043-5 (paperback)
ISBN 978-951-51-1044-2 (PDF)

Unigrafia, Helsinki 2015

CORRECTIONS

See the new ABSTRACT in the end of the dissertation. This replaces the old ABSTRACT in the beginning of the dissertation.

Page: 68 and the footnote 210: …described as "America's original jazz dance company". See: Giordano Dance Chicago: http://www.jazzdanceworldcongress.org . The link does not work anymore as of December 2015. The author of the study has a copy of it. You can find the same information in http://www.broadwayworld.com/israel/regional/Giordano-Chicago-Dance-151862 (accessed on December 16, 2015). See also: http://northcentralcollege.edu/news/giordano-jazz-dance-chicago-presents-energetic-performance-april-24 …

Page 77 and the footnote 254: …Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University Libraries, 2008…

Page 142 and the footnote 518: …copyright Peter BetBasoo, published in the Internet, 2009…

Page 273: The article discusses different aspects of the Lindy Hop…

Pages 304-305: Fayard Nicholas remembered the William Morris Agency to have told him…

Page 317: …as it also discussed the ten worst films in 1941…

Page 400: …in similarly positive general phrases than in the first half of the 1920s…

Page 406: …the mainstream press to the firm recognition of his status as the creator of the dance.

Page 410: …WBGO Radio, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University Libraries, 2008…

Page 410: *The Great American Broadcast*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1941.

Page 412: ...copyright Peter BetBasoo, published in the Internet, 2009.

Page 414: Giordano Dance Chicago: http://www.jazzdanceworldcongress.org and http://www.broadwayworld.com/israel/regional/Giordano-Chicago-Dance-151862 .

Page 418: The NAACP history: www.naacp.org .

Abstract

The dissertation discusses how the Harlem-based jazz dance was recognized in the mainstream press, that means in outside of Harlem, non-African-American newspapers and magazines, between 1921 and 1943. The topic was examined by exploring how the Harlem jazz dance was perceived in and outside of Harlem. The Harlem-based jazz dance means jazz and swing music dances like the Lindy Hop, the Charleston, and Tap dance, which were danced and propagated by Harlemites in and outside of Harlem. In addition to the mainstream press, especially African-American newspapers, dancers' interviews, articles about dancers, their memoirs, various studies and various archives, were used for building up the picture of Harlem entertainment both in and outside of Harlem.

The study mainly analyzes dancers and dance groups like Bill Robinson, the Nicholas Brothers, John W. Sublett and Buck Washington, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and George Snowden. How they were seen in the mainstream press was examined from newspapers and magazines by analyzing reviews and articles of the Broadway plays, movies, the Harvest Moon Ball contest, other contests, and their performances.

Harlem dancers were reported variedly on the mainstream press. As far as the reviews of the Broadway-connected plays are concerned, they mostly received mixed reviews. Especially, Bill Robinson seemed to be recognized mostly positively when compared to other Harlem dancers. Where movie reviews are concerned, Bill Robinson also got mixed reviews, in addition to others. The dancers were recognized mostly for their dancing, with an exception of Bill Robinson whose acting skills were occasionally praised in the movie reviews. Overall, the critics seemed to appreciate African-American, dance-related values like good rhythm which differed positively from white dancers' rhythm, and they occasionally recognized the Harlem dancers as rehearsed dancers. In other words, they were not considered stereotypically to be natural dancers. The mainstream press coverage seemed to differ among dancers. Bill Robinson was covered overwhelmingly in the mainstream press when compared to other Harlem dancers. In addition to the discussion of his private life, he was quoted even as a 'political advocate', and he was sometimes described even as a "superhuman" kind of person, where his dancing was concerned. He seemingly broke racial barriers in that sense. Although Robinson seemingly was distinguished from racial stereotypes, even he could not be fully distinguished from a stereotype of African-Americans as dancing kind of people.

Although the mainstream press reported on Harlem dancers positively and even sometimes stressed equality between races when publishing that kind of pictures especially concerning the Rockland Palace dance marathon in Harlem in 1928, the dancers were also occasionally dismissed. Especially, the mainstream press coverage of the Harvest Moon Ball underplayed Whitey's Lindy Hoppers who participated successfully in the contest. A reason for that was possibly their overwhelmingness in the contest: the sponsor of the contest, *Daily News*, probably wanted to give other dancers equal possibility to win the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive division in the Harvest Moon Ball. The Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive, which was the crucial dance in the Harvest Moon Ball because audiences appreciated it, was recognized powerfully in the *LIFE* magazine article in 1943 where was stated that the Lindy Hop was a national folk dance of the United States. Thus, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and George Snowden's hard work to promote the Lindy Hop culminated in the article. Snowden with his partner, Mattie Purnell, also created the Lindy Hop in the Rockland Palace dance marathon.

This thesis also explores how Political movements like Civil Rights Movement used jazz music and jazz dance in their events. Especially, the American Communist Party with its affiliates and the NAACP were notable for this activity. This happened mostly for gathering people to the support events like the events for the Scottsboro case and getting funds for different purposes. They did not promote actively the Harlem jazz dance as a remarkable cultural achievement. Where the NAACP was concerned, this was connected to the fact that the leaders of the NAACP were also active in the Harlem Renaissance Movement which neglected the Harlem jazz dances because it considered them mostly as 'lower art forms'. As far as the Communists are concerned, they seemingly preferred modern dance to the jazz dance.

The study also examined how the Harlem riots in 1935 and in 1943 where connected to Harlem entertainment. It seems that the riots did not directly decrease the number of Harlem places of entertainment which mostly stayed intact after riots. In addition, it was explored how the raising midtown, Manhattan entertainment competed with Harlem entertainment. It is possible that the rise in the midtown and other, outside Harlem, Manhattan entertainment led to the decreased number of white people visiting Harlem places of entertainment, starting, at the latest, at the end of the 1930s. Thus, Harlem entertainment was challenged by this outside Harlem entertainment.

The African-American jazz dance was also compared to other entertainment forms like American football and basketball. It seems that the African-American jazz dance was fully integrated before these other remarkable entertainment forms. It is presumable that the Harlem jazz dance had a significant part in the racial integrating process in the United States. The recognition of Harlem-based jazz dance diversified the image of African-American dancers as multifaceted dancers.

Acknowledgements

I express my sincerest gratitude to the numerous people and organizations who have helped me to reach the goal, and thus:

I would like to thank my mother, Riitta Heinilä, for everything. Without her, this would not be possible.

I would like to thank my doctoral supervisors Professor Pauli Kettunen and Senior Lecturer Tauno Saarela, and my pre-examiners, Professor Cheryl Greenberg and Professor Mikko Saikku for their invaluable advice, support and help.

I would like to thank following people, dance companies, and organizations, who have helped me to understand what I have really researched, and who have helped me tremendously to find out how "it was":

Savoy Lindy Hoppers, Sonny Allen and the Rockets, Mama Lou Parks Dancers, the Jiving Lindy Hoppers, the Harlem Hot Shots, The Harlem Swing Dance Society, The New York Swing Dance Society, staff at Emory University, staff at the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University, staff at Library of Congress, staff at National Museum of American History, staff at New York Public Library, staff at the University of Helsinki, Sonny Allen, Evita Arce, Gregory 'Waco' Arnold, Christian Batchelor, Margaret Batiuchok, Barbara Billups, David Butts Carns, Sylvan Charles, Marina Cohen, Samuel D. Coleman, Harry Connor, Mickey Davidson, Alazar R. Deas, the late Charles Desisso, Etta Dixon, Charles J. Dorkins, Bernard Dove, Eric Durham, Topsy Durham, George Gee, Paul Grecki, Leroy Griffin, Viola Hamilton, Eugene 'Ice' Hammond Jr., Ralph Hopkins, the late Delilah Jackson, Joya James, Calle Johansson, Beverly Lindsay-Johnson, Crystal Johnson, Barbara A. Jones, Ronald Jones, Vikram Kamath, Raymond McKeathen, Gary Lewis, Anders Lind, Peter Loggins, Catrine Ljunggren, the late Frank Manning, Charlie Meade, Norma Miller, Cynthia R. Millman, the late Terry Monaghan, Richard Moultrie, Yvell and Rudy Nelson, Dominika McPartland, Michele Pelkonen, Beatrice Pierce, Tina Pratt, Malcolm Prince, Judy Pritchett, Lena Ramberg, Ruby Reeves, Joyce Roach, Sarina Robinson, Larry Schulz, Simon Selmon, Russell Sergeant, Sally Sommer, George Sullivan, Sugar Sullivan, Gerald Sullivan and Sheryl Sullivan, Valerie Thacker, Clementine 'Tiny' Thomas, Donald Thomas, Tommy Tucker, Al Vollmer, Lennart Westerlund, Chester Whitmore, Rudy Winter, all Harlem dancers and musicians, not mentioned yet: no matter what you have danced and played, and all "authentic" jazz dancers around the world.

I also would like to thank *Oskar Öflunds Stiftelse*, *the Doctoral Programme in Political, Societal and Regional Change*, and *the University of Helsinki* for grants which made it possible to complete my dissertation.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank especially Emeritus Professor Martti Turtola and Emeritus Professor Seppo Hentilä for acknowledging my abilities as a researcher when I did my master's thesis and licentiate thesis so many years ago. I also would like to thank *Suomen Kulttuurirahasto* and *Jenny ja Antti Wihurin Rahasto* for grants at the time when I had a previous attempt at writing my doctoral thesis which concerned a different subject and area. Now, I have accomplished it, although it is probably not what you wanted it to be.

If you were not mentioned in the list, and you feel that you deserve to be mentioned, I apologize that and say thank you!

Contents

Abstract 3

Acknowledgements 5

The List of Tables 11

1 Introduction: Why Harlem and Jazz Dance? 12

1.1 From the Racist Characterizations to the Swing Integration – Views of African-American Presentation 14

1.2 Earlier Research 21

1.3 Main Research Questions 31

1.4 Sources 34

1.5 Composition of the Study 39

2 Jazz Dance and Music 43

2.1 What Is Jazz Dance 43

2.1.1 The Historical Background 46

2.1.2 The Beginning of Jazz Ballet 58

2.1.3 Authentic Jazz Dance Term Comes In 61

2.1.4 The Variety of Variations – Back to Jazz Dance in Its Original Context? 65

2.2 Jazz Music in Harlem from the Jazz Age to the Swing Era 70

2.2.1 The Jazz Age and the Birth of Swing 71

2.2.2 The End of the Swing Era 76

Chapter Conclusion 77

3 Jazz Dance - Inside Harlem 79

3.1 Harlem Background: Infrastructure and Its Population from the 1870s Until 1943 79

3.2 The Beginning of the Harlem Jazz Dance Entertainment 87

3.3 The Charleston Performances and Competitions in Harlem Between 1923 and 1928 102

3.4 Tap Dance and Eccentric Dance Inside Harlem – Harlem Cabarets 107

3.5 The Charleston as Social Dance in Harlem Between 1923 and 1926 110

3.6 The Savoy Ballroom Between 1926 and 1943 114

Chapter Conclusion..... 131

4 The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance – Out from Harlem: The Contests 134

4.1 The Savoy Lindy Hoppers' First Generation: George Snowden – The Unsung Hero 134

4.2 The Rockland Palace Dance Marathon in 1928 145

4.3 Savoy Lindy Hoppers' Second Generation Between 1934 and 1943 168

4.3.1 The Beginning.....169

4.3.2 From the First Big Break in 1935 to the End of White's Dancers.....172

4.3.3 The Consequences of Herbert White's Methods in Guiding His Dance Group..... 182

4.4 Harvest Moon Ball and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers Between 1935 and 1943..... 188

4.4.1 Background..... 189

4.4.2 Participants and Audience 198

4.4.3 The Harlem Success in the Harvest Moon Ball 203

4.4.4 Harvest Moon Ball in the Daily News Pictures 209

4.4.5 Harvest Moon Ball in the Daily News Articles 219

Chapter Conclusion..... 226

5 The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance – Out from Harlem: The Shows and Movies 229

5.1 Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson – A "Freedom Fighter" 229

5.1.1 Robinson Interviewed in the Mainstream Press 235

5.2 The World's Fair 1939 - 1940 in Queens 241

5.2.1 The Savoy Pavilion 242

5.2.2 The Hot Mikado of the World's Fair 249

5.3 The Harlem Jazz Dance on Broadway Theaters and the Mainstream Press Between 1921 and 1943 257

5.3.1 The Beginning of Harlem Dance Entertainment in the Broadway Plays 258

5.3.2 The Middle of the 1920s – The Turning Point of the African-American Broadway Plays? 264

5.3.3 Dancing Gets Mixed Reviews 269

5.3.4 John W. Sublett and Buck Washington – Buck and Bubbles 277

5.3.5 The Real Progress in Acknowledging African-American Star Dancers: From Blackbirds to Bill Robinson 280

5.3.6 The Nicholas Brothers from 1936 Onwards 286

5.3.7 Whitey's Lindy Hoppers Step In 289

5.3.8 Bill Robinson's Comeback to Broadway in 1939 293

5.3.9 Connection Between the Reviews of the Shows and the Success on Broadway 298

5.4 The Harlem Jazz Dance in Movies and the Mainstream Press Between 1929 and 1943 299

5.4.1 How African-American Dancers Were Described in the Movies 303

5.4.2 Bill Robinson 305

5.4.3 Whitey's Lindy Hoppers 314

5.4.4 The Nicholas Brothers 318

Chapter Conclusion 325

6 The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance and Political Movements 327

6.1 Civil Rights Movement Between 1921 and 1943 327

6.2 The NAACP and Their Dance Activities in Harlem 332

6.3 The Communists and Their Dance Activities in Harlem 346

Chapter Conclusion 369

7 The Harlem Riots and Aftermath 371

7.1 The Harlem Riot in March 1935 371

7.1.1 The 1935 Riot Background 372

7.1.2 The 1935 Riot Consequences in Harlem Entertainment 374

7.2 The Harlem Riot in August 1943 376

7.2.1 The 1943 Riot Background 377

7.2.2 The Savoy's Temporary Closing 378

7.2.3 Did the 1943 Harlem Riot Change the Popularity of Harlem Entertainment? 380

7.3 West 52nd Street and Other Manhattan Clubs – Competitors to Harlem Entertainment? 387

Chapter Conclusion 391

8 Conclusion 393

Sources 408

Index 423

The List of Tables

Table 1. The Mainstream Newspaper Circulation in 1921 and in 1943 ---------- 35

Table 2. Swing Dance/Swing Dancing vs. Jazz Dance/Jazz Dancing Terms-----69

Table 3. Harlem Ballrooms and Places of Entertainment in 1923----------88

Table 4. Harlem Ballrooms and Places of Entertainment in 1929----------89

Table 5. Harlem Ballrooms and Dance-Related Places in 1935----------96

Table 6. The Harvest Moon Ball Judges Between 1935 and 1943----------194

Table 7. The Harvest Moon Ball Preliminary Ballrooms Between 1935 and 1943----------197

Table 8. The Harvest Moon Ball Couples Between 1935 and 1941----------198

Table 9. The Harvest Moon Ball Audiences Between 1936 and 1943----------202

Table 10. The Savoy Ballroom Harvest Moon Ball Winners Between 1937 and 1942----------204

Table 11. The NAACP-Connected Dances in Harlem Between 1923 and 1943----------333

Table 12. The Events of the ACP and the ACP-Connected Organizations in the New York-Connected Newspapers Between 1929 and 1936----------348

Table 13. The Social Dances in Harlem in January 1934, According to the *Daily Worker*----------352

Table 14. The Social Dances in Harlem in January 1935, According to the *Daily Worker*----------354

1 Introduction: Why Harlem and Jazz Dance?

The words of Norma Miller, an extraordinary entertainer and the jazz dance veteran inspire this study:

> Everybody came to Harlem to swing [to dance]. Harlem had a spirit, and that spirit was freedom.[1]

According to Miller, freedom was part of Harlem's atmosphere from the beginning of the Jazz Era, meaning from the beginning of the 1920s, when Harlem was taking shape with new inhabitants.[2] This dissertation discusses Harlem-based jazz dance, a term we use to describe jazz dance affiliated to Harlem by means of Harlemites in and outside Harlem, who danced and propagated it, and its recognition especially in magazines and newspapers outside Harlem, starting from the era which Miller refers to in her statement.

The freedom however, also had its flip side. Harlem was a changing community ever since the very beginning of the twentieth century. Harlem had been practically an "all-white neighborhood" until the very beginning of 1900, when African-Americans began to settle there. The main reason for the Harlem African-American migration were living conditions in the West Side Manhattan, where the New York African-American community had moved from lower Manhattan in the nineteenth century. A violent race riot began in August 1900, and created increasing anti-African-American feeling in the area. In addition to this, the overcrowded tenements of the area created an atmosphere where African-Americans started to move to Harlem where there were more houses available.[3] By 1920, at least 73,000 African-

[1] Norma Miller, *Swing, Baby, Swing! When Harlem Was King...And The Music Was Swing!* (Blurb Inc., 2009), p. 8. Norma Miller has been a jazz dancer as the title of her earlier book suggests. See: Norma Miller and Evette Jensen, *Swingin at The Savoy – The Memoir of A Jazz Dancer* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996).

[2] Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 20.

[3] Jervis Anderson, *This Was Harlem – Cultural Portrait, 1900-1950* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1982), pp. 3 and 5; Gilbert Osofsky, *Harlem: The Making of A Ghetto – Negro New York, 1890 – 1930* (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, Ivan R. Dee, 1996), pp. 46-52.

Americans lived in Harlem. That meant two-thirds of Manhattan's African-American population.[4] According to historian Gilbert Osofsky, Harlem had then become "the Mecca of the colored people of New York City".[5]

If the exodus from West Side Manhattan to Harlem sounded like a step to better living conditions, it really was not so. Gilbert Osofsky has researched how the new African-American community emerged in New York between 1890 and 1930. He states that the "potentially ideal community" of Harlem was emerging in the 1920s as a slum instead, which had various social and economic problems: apartments were full packed of tenants, with some of the apartments below every standard. Crime rate was increasing. Harlem became "the center of the retail dope traffic of New York", where "narcotics addiction became a serious problem". The combination of high rents and low income jobs in Harlem was an important cause to all of this.[6]

At the same time, visitors discovered Harlem. According to historian Lewis A. Erenberg, by 1925, more and more white people began to visit in Harlem, partly because of the opportunities for alcohol, and partly because of the area and the idea that African-Americans were considered as exotic. In addition, new nightclubs were opened in Harlem. Nightclubs, which already existed in the area, began to accept white customers. Whites recognized Harlem as the place of entertainment.[7]

Harlem became known worldwide as a place of having fun and dancing. Osofsky argues that the Harlem portrayal was "a product of broader changes in American society". At the time, intellectuals began to notice "the standardization of life", which was a result of mass production and industrialization. These people attacked puritanical middle-class values, and as such, a by-product was created, "a semi mythical dreamland", which they idealized as "storied Harlem".[8]

One remarkable part of "storied Harlem" and Harlem entertainment was dancing, which is referred to in the study as jazz dance. Jazz dance is a collective term which contains all jazz music-related dance forms. Originally, jazz music-related dance forms were known as 'jazz dance'. The term 'jazz dance', which has existed from the end of the 1910s, at the latest, was changed, starting in the first half of the 1950s to mean modern dance, and mostly non-jazz-connected dance forms. Some jazz dancers and researchers began to use the term 'authentic jazz dance' from the end of the 1950s to mean old jazz dance, in order to distinguish "modern jazz dance" from the original jazz dance, after the "modern jazz dance" movement was taking over the term 'jazz dance' for their purposes. Some of old time jazz dancers stayed with the 'jazz dance' term, in spite of the increasing meaning of the term connected to "modern", non jazz music-connected forms of it. This study defends using the term

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4 See chapter 'Harlem Background: Infrastructure and Its Population from the 1870s Until 1943'.

5 Osofsky 1996, p. 123.

6 Ibid., pp. 135-149.

7 Lewis A. Erenberg, *Steppin' Out – New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture, 1890-1930* (Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 255-257.

8 Osofsky 1996, pp. 179-180.

jazz dance in its original meaning, which is discussed later in the chapter concerning the background of the term 'jazz dance'.

Harlem-based jazz dance existed inside Harlem and outside Harlem. Inside Harlem, the entertainment was mostly based on African-American entertainers who were employed by Harlem nightclubs, ballrooms and theatres in the 1920s.[9] Outside Harlem, the Broadway theatres employed African-American entertainers starting from 1896.[10] Harlem entertainment succeeded in groundbreaking during the very beginning of the 1920s, when shows like *Shuffle Along* (from 1921) and *Runnin' Wild* (from 1923) were very popular. They were real showcases of the African-American talent in dancing. The last one has been claimed to have begun the Charleston dance craze. In fact, these shows were probably the beginning of recognizing the importance of Harlem entertainment, not only in New York, but also around the United States.[11]

1.1 From the Racist Characterizations to the Swing Integration – Views of African-American Presentation

An important part of this study is to find out how the Harlem-connected dance performances were recognized in the outside Harlem newspapers and magazines. Different forms of African-American presentation (that means how African-Americans were presented) have been, for example, various African-American dances like Buck and Wing, Ring Dance, and Cakewalk, and musical performances, which have existed since the slavery in the United States[12]. One of the most remarkable forms of performing was Minstrelsy. According to Marshall Stearns,

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9 Erenberg 1981, p. 255. Erenberg claims, "Most of the big clubs were white owned...Blacks made up the entertainment core, but the creative and business talent was usually white." He lists the Cotton Club, Connie's Inn, and Ed Small's Paradise as the most famous clubs in Harlem. It is true that African-Americans made the entertainment core, but even if whites owned the Cotton Club and Connie's Inn, African-American Robert Smalls owned Ed Small's. Concerning the Savoy Ballroom, which became a famous ballroom in Harlem, part of its management was African-American, such as Charles Buchanan, who worked as the ballroom manager. Similarly, the Cotton Club management hired African-American Clarence Robinson to create and stage the *Rhythmania* show in 1931. Robinson also choreographed Cotton Club dances. See: Jim Haskins, *The Cotton Club – A Pictorial and Social History of the Most Famous Symbol of The Jazz Era* (New York, New York: Random House, 1977), pp. 27, 69-70 and 115. Thus, it can be stated, unlike Erenberg claims, African-Americans were also part of creative and business talent of Harlem entertainment.

10 Marshall and Jean Stearns, *Jazz Dance – The Story of American Vernacular Dance* (New York, New York: Da Capo Press, 1994 – originally published in 1968), p. 118.

11 Stearns 1994, pp. 112, 132-135, 139 and 145-146.

12 For example, Lynne Fauley Emery discusses plantation dances and musical performances in the chapter 'Dance On The Plantations' in her study. See: Lynne Fauley Emery, *Black Dance From 1619 to Today* – Second, Revised Edition (Hightstown, New Jersey: Princeton Book Company, 1988), pp. 80-130.

Minstrelsy, with its various dances and singing, was "the most popular form of the entertainment in the U.S." between the middle and the end of the nineteenth century. Although African-Americans were part of Minstrelsy, whites had almost a monopoly in it.[13] During the Minstrelsy period in the United States, there were "derogatory racial characterizations of African-Americans" used in the Minstrelsy entertainment. The white playwrights established the image of an "American stage Negro" already in 1769, when Isaac Bickerstaff created a comic opera: *The Padlock*. The opera introduced the Mungo character: West Indian slave, who "loved to sing and dance", but was "lazy, impudent, talkative, crafty, lewd, and habitually intoxicated". This character spread to other white playwrights' texts, which portrayed African-American characters as "comic slaves, buffoons and shiftless servants."[14] Thus, this racist image had its part from the beginning on how whites saw and described African-Americans in the entertainment business.

Terry Monaghan, who has researched Harlem's Savoy Ballroom and swing phenomenon in general, states that these characterizations were subverted partially by African-American dancers who rejected the racial characterizations in the beginning of the twentieth century during "the major revival of interest" in the Cakewalk. As he states:

> By absorbing the useful parts of other recently imported cultures, the African cultural retention was re-worked into compulsive urban and industrialized musical and dance idioms that took possession of the US imagination.[15]

If the African-American dancers rejected the racial characterizations, some white dancers began to convert African-American dance expressions to "whitened" versions in the beginning of the twentieth century. Irene and Vernon Castle were especially successful in this case in the 1910s. They are credited for "redefining" original "primitive", in other words, African-American dance forms like the Turkey

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13 Stearns 1994, pp. 43, 49-56.

14 Bernard L. Peterson, Jr., *Early Black American playwrights and dramatic writers: a biographical directory and catalog of plays, films and broadcasting scripts* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990), pp. 2 and 5. Another researcher, Kevern Verney, who has researched African-American popular culture, claims that modern representations of African-Americans in the U. S. popular culture began in the beginning of the 1830s, when blackface minstrelsy emerged with white actors. However, he seems to be wrong with his claim. See: Kevern Verney, *African Americans and US Popular Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), p. 1. Otherwise, Verney discusses various racist stereotypes and features in the minstrelsy and in American society. All the stereotypes were somehow comical, and seemed to be based on the '*Mungo'* character with the exception of '*Uncle Tom', a* character which became associated with an African-American character who had no racial pride, and who was loyal to white authorities. See: Verney 2003, pp. 3-12. See also: Terry Monaghan, *"Stompin' At the Savoy" -Remembering, Researching and Re-enacting the Lindy Hop's relationship to Harlem's Savoy Ballroom*, (Dancing At The Crossroads. African Diasporic Dances in Britain. Conference Proceedings 1-2 August 2002), p. 36. Even if the proceedings seem originally to be published in 2002, the copyright of the collection is from 2005. Also Monaghan updated his article in 2005. That is why I use 2005 instead of 2002, and later this is called Monaghan 2005.

15 Monaghan 2005, p. 36.

Trot, which they converted to the One-Step, and to their trademark Castle Walk. Ironically, they used African-American orchestra leader James Reese Europe and his orchestra to provide music for their dancing.[16]

Later, in the beginning of the 1920s, there began a dance craze which allowed exceptional freedom in its dance movements. According to dance historian Sally Sommer, the Charleston, which was a dance craze between 1923 and 1926, liberated American social dance forms from European styles, by stressing more the lower body movements, especially using the legs, when compared to the European ballroom styles, which had an emphasis on upper body movements.[17] The Charleston also created freedom of expression for dancing with its "truly generic" step form. Like jazz dancer Roger Pryor Dodge stated in the end of the 1950s, "The greatest step was the Charleston; it is truly generic in character. When done to a Charleston rhythm in the music it could be infinitely varied without losing any of the quality that we sense to be Charleston."[18] Similarly, a contemporary observer, Jane Grant stated in her *The New York Times Magazine* article in 1925, "The steps have such infinite possibilities that there is simply no pinning the dance down to a set formula."[19]

As the Charleston became a dance craze, it affected the masses with its freedom of expression. Joel Dinerstein has researched African-American culture and the machine aesthetics of its dances. He argues that "The Charleston represented a turning point in American social dance: suddenly new Broadway dances were seen less as artistic spectacles than as new cultural forms for participation." He also states "The Charleston became a hallmark of the Jazz Age, and its emphasis on the undulating torso and the lower body continued the American rebellion against the erect, rigid torso of European Ballet and folk dance, suggesting a cultural desire for torsion, dynamic movement, and whole-body movement."[20]

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[16] Karen Sotiropoulos, *Staging Race – Black Performers in Turn of the Century America*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2006, pp. 220 – 223.

[17] Sally Sommer, 'II. Social Dance' in Eric Foner and John A. Garraty (editors), *The Reader's Companion to American History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991), p. 264. The Charleston as the dance craze. See for a short summary of the Charleston Craze, for example: Ralph G. Giordano, *Social Dancing in America – A History and Reference – Volume Two – Lindy Hop to Hip Hop 1901-2000* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), pp. 53-56. Giordano's summary contains at least one fault concerning the Charleston in the play as he claims, "It was later re-choreographed by two black dancers Cecil Mack and James Johnson for an all black Harlem show 'Runnin' Wild'." That is not true, because Mack and Johnson were responsible for the song of the show, The Charleston. However, Giordano's summary gives a picture of how big the Charleston craze was. For the Charleston craze, see also Stearns 1994, pp. 110-112 and 145.

[18] Selected and edited by Pryor Dodge, *Hot Jazz and Jazz Dance – Roger Pryor Dodge collected writings – 1929-1964* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 282.

[19] Jane Grant, 'The Charleston Prances into Favor', *The New York Times Magazine*, August 30 1925, p. 2.

[20] Joel Dinerstein, *Swinging The Machine – Modernity, Technology, And African American Culture Between The World Wars* (Amherst, Ma: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), p. 254.

In addition to the Charleston, swing, which includes music, dance and even lifestyle, has been connected as a cultural form to American society by various researchers. According to Monaghan, ”Swing as a cultural form facilitated an unprecedented degree of ’race mixing’ that subverted the segregationist divisions which had taken a grip on American social life since that abolition of slavery.”[21]

Similarly, David W. Stowe, who has examined the significance of swing phenomenon in the United States, has stated how swing included possibilities for mutual respect, tolerance, and even affection between African-Americans and whites. Swing changed race relations in the way that culture and race could be thought as separate and distinct. Basically, swing became part of American society.[22]

Lewis A. Erenberg has researched big band swing music and its effects on American culture in particular. He states that swing had a crucial role in making jazz an essential part of American music. Swing had an enormous impact on American youth, which turned swing into a mass culture. According to Erenberg, swing bands especially gave to the youth ”powerful visions of personal freedom and generational solidarity”, and even defined a mass youth style which was connected to music, dance, and fashion. “Swing dancing” created freedom by allowing the couple to improvise in a more egalitarian way than it was possible in the private life. Thus, swing became public, democratic art which decreased gender and social tensions in the 1930s.[23]

Likely the most crucial dance idiom, which was connected to the swing culture, was the Lindy Hop, which became one of the most important African-American dances during the twentieth century.[24] Various researchers have tried to connect the Lindy Hop to part of American culture during the decades. Probably one of the most remarkable has been Marshall Stearns with his *Jazz Dance* study. Stearns states concerning the dance:

> Writers have referred to the Lindy as ’the only true American folk dance,’ but it is more that. The Lindy is a fundamental approach, not an isolated step… The Lindy caused a general revolution in the popular dance of the United States.

He cites an older generation dancer George Wendler from Detroit who pointed out, “the Lindy became the bread-and-butter style of all the following generations… I don’t recall any conservative style of dancing making a hit since the Lindy revolution.”[25]

Gena Caponi-Tabery, who has researched African-American culture in the

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[21] Monaghan 2005, pp. 35-36.

[22] David W. Stowe, *Swing Changes – Big-Band Jazz In New Deal America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 244-245.

[23] Lewis A. Erenberg, *Swingin’ the Dream – Big Band Jazz And The Rebirth Of American Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 250-251.

[24] Monaghan 2005, p. 36.

[25] Stearns 1994, p. 329.

1930s, has found similarities between jazz, the Lindy Hop, and basketball. She claims that they were the cultural practices which African-Americans used for challenging authorities. All of them include jump action, which she calls the jump. The identifiable and powerful African-American jump became ”a central gesture of African-American culture”. Thus, jump jazz tunes, especially air steps in the Lindy Hop, and the jump shot in basketball defied the Jim Crow stereotype in the 1930s. According to Caponi-Tabery that led to a new, uplifted African-American image.[26]

If Caponi-Tabery has connected the Lindy Hop to jump action, Joel Dinerstein, who considers the Lindy Hop, tap dance, and big band swing as “adaptive cultural forms” which answered to “the threat of over-mechanization”, stresses smoothness in the dance. He argues that the contrast between the vertical air steps and the smooth, continuous horizontal motion made the Lindy Hop as thrilling. According to Dinerstein, the audiences and dancers, especially liked the continuous movement of the dance. He also connects smooth, horizontal flow as typical to African-Americans and more upright dancing to whites.[27] Caponi-Tabery agrees with Dinerstein that the Lindy Hop has both vertical and horizontal elements, which are in balance, but she stresses the jump, the vertical movement, as a crucial part of the dance.[28] Thus, they end up with different views of what was typical for the African-American Lindy Hop in the 1930s, and what made it as part of American culture.

Terry Monaghan has defined the essence of the Lindy Hop by connecting it to changing cultural values in the United States at the time. His explanation is worth quoting at its almost whole length:

> [T]he Lindy Hop was the first noteworthy African American dance to be created in the North as opposed to being brought from the South as part of the turn-of-the-century Great Migration. In effect, it was a major reordering of almost the entire African American social dance experience. The Lindy Hop also involved a redefinition of gender relations that struck at the core of prevailing derogatory and demeaning racial characterizations of African Americans. Developing into a comprehensive and rhythmically charged critique of the European partner-dancing tradition, it articulated a new aesthetic of cultural equality. Dominated by continuous rhythmic play in its defining swing-out, the two partners rhythmically improvised while separating apart and drawing back together. The driving reciprocal dynamic of both partners characterized the essential vitality of the dance that paid minimal deference to the ballroom conventions of leaders and followers. Through such mutually assertive roles of independently and jointly sustaining a combined interactive rhythmic response to swing music, the new Lindy Hoppers made a major contribution to transforming the way these dancing African Americans not only saw

[26] Gena Caponi-Tabery, *Jump for Joy: Jazz, Basketball, and Black Culture in 1930s America* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), pp. 138-139 and 195.

[27] Joel Dinerstein 2003, pp. 265-267 and 319.

[28] Caponi-Tabery 2008, p. 55 and 138-139.

> each other but also how other blacks and whites perceived them. Defining individual expression in the context of working closely with another person (i.e. thus revealing its true jazz character) enabled the Lindy Hop to make such a dramatic impact. Black dancing bodies became ”hep” and respectfully imitated.[29]

Monaghan seems to suggest that the Lindy Hop connected different cultures, European and African, in the North American context in a way which generated cultural equality with the help of African-Americans' role in the dance. Also, Joel Dinerstein argues that the Lindy Hop in the 1930s ”helped unify a large industrial nation in a period of existential crisis brought on by machine worship and technological unemployment.” Dinerstein cites Robert P. Crease who states the Lindy Hop was, by the 1940s, ”much more than a hot and exciting black vernacular dance; it had become a symbol of America, the great melting pot.”[30] Thus, the Lindy Hop had a crucial role in the unification of Americans during the Swing Era.

Another essential dance form is tap dance which, according to Joel Dinerstein, is the synthesis of “Irish clog dance, Scottish step dancing, African dance, African American buck dancing, and the American Machine Age soundscape…” Thus, tap dance was affected by “American ethnic diversity”.[31] Tap dance historian Constance Valis Hill argues that tap dance evolved as ”a fusion of Irish and African musical and step-dancing traditions in America” a three hundred years long cultural exchange during the development of the American society.[32] Thus, tap dance was multicultural in the American context a long time already, before swing began to integrate the United States in the 1930s.

Dinerstein states that tap dance “was so popular in the U.S. between the world wars that it was taught in public schools, dance academics, community centers, and even at the college level”. Also, commercial tap schools around the United States had tap in their program.[33] In spite of its popularity, tap dance was not likely a similar kind of mass phenomenon like, for example, the Lindy Hop was, because the Lindy was also danced in ballrooms and other social dance floors, in addition to its performance and competition forms. Tap was more connected to performance and competition forms of dancing.[34]

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[29] Karen Hubbard and Terry Monaghan, ‘Negotiating Compromise on a Burnished Wood Floor – Social Dancing at the Savoy’ in Julie Malnig (editor), *Ballroom, Boogie, Shimmy Sham, Shake – A Social and Popular Dance Reader* (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2009), p. 133. Monaghan made the similar kind of analysis in his earlier study. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 36.

[30] Dinerstein 2003, pp. 253 and 380.

[31] Ibid., p. 227.

[32] Constance Valis Hill, *Tap Dancing America – A Cultural History* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 13.

[33] Dinerstein 2003, p. 231-232.

[34] As it becomes clear through the study, tap dance was connected to performance and competition forms of dancing. The Lindy Hop also had mass popularity on social dance floors.

Jazz dance and its different manifestations like the Charleston, the Lindy Hop, and tap dance also were remarkable entertainment forms as it is argued in this study. In addition to those, there also were other entertainment forms which succeeded even earlier. For example, boxing became one of the favorite entertainment forms among African-Americans, when African-American heavyweight boxer Jack Johnson knocked out whites starting from the beginning of twentieth century. He reigned so sovereignly that he began to think himself as some kind of race leader. He succeeded in the role among African-Americans, especially in bars and backstreets. However, he lost his success among them after legal problems.[35]

After Johnson, there came Joe Louis, who also knocked out whites, but whites also respected him, especially when he fought against German Max Schmeling in 1938.[36] An athlete, Jesse Owens, who won four gold medals in 1936 Olympics, was honored with a huge celebration in New York.[37] Also, African-Americans who excelled in baseball and basketball should not be forgotten. As an entertainment form, jazz dance, however, seems to have distinguished itself from boxing, baseball and basketball, where segregation is concerned.

Jazz dance was both African-American and white, where social dancing in the integrated ballrooms like the Savoy Ballroom was concerned. It included both African-Americans and whites. There was no similar confrontation in the social dance as in, for example, boxing, where fighting against each other has been essential in the boxing ring. Different people danced together, and they could talk with each other at the Savoy Ballroom.[38] People were able to communicate with different people. There were no limitations in that. Dancing also was teamwork, not only an individual representation.[39] Dance competitions included confrontation, because everybody could not win. Those are comparable to boxing competitions and other kind of competitions. In addition to social dance, competitions, and performances in front of an audience were also a part of jazz dance. It could be argued that individualism and teamwork both were parts of the sport forms, too. So basically dancing and the sports forms were alike in this sense.

Concerning segregation in the team-based sports, which were originally white, and in which African-Americans participated in successfully later, baseball was segregated until 1946, when Jackie Robinson became the first African-American who participated openly in "organized" white baseball. Although baseball was

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35 Stephen Tuck, *We Ain't What We Ought to Be –The Black Freedom Struggle From Emancipation to Obama* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 127-132.

36 David Margolick, *Beyond Glory: Joe Louis vs. Max Schmeling, and a World on the Brink* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006), p. 5 and 10.

37 Caponi-Tabery 2008, p. 45.

38 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 127.

39 It stays arguable, how much dancing is about teamwork and how much it is based on individual expressions. Concerning the Lindy Hop, for example, Terry Monaghan argues that the Lindy Hop is based on both individual expressions and teamwork. See: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 133. Basically, the same claimed the originator of the Lindy Hop George Snowden. See: Stearns 1994, pp. 323-324.

becoming integrated, African-American baseball fans still sat in segregated benches in order to see Jackie Robinson playing. Baseball players' integration did not happen quickly. Only Robinson's team, the Dodgers, and the Cleveland Indians, were integrated by 1959, when the Phillies and the Red Sox also hired their first African-American players.[40] The African-American baseball leagues, however, were among the largest African-American businesses in the United States before the final collapse of segregation in the 1960s, when the Negro American League was closed. At their best, those leagues were "a multi-million-dollar operation".[41] They were important businesses in the United States. Basketball was integrating at the end of the 1940s, when National Association of Intercollegiate Basketball allowed African-American players in 1948, and later, in the beginning of the 1950s, African-American colleges were allowed to participate in the tournament.[42]

Additionally, professional football was segregated between years 1934 and 1946. Although at least thirty African-American athletes participated in American football at the college and university levels between the end of the 19th century and 1914, and thirteen African-American athletes were a part of professional football teams between 1919 and 1933, the number of African-American players who played in the teams, was relatively low when compared to the total number of players in the sport. Fourteen professional football teams had a total of twenty athletes on each team. Definitive reasons for the ban of African-American players in the period between 1934 and 1946 are unclear. Deriving from speculation, it seems that the reasons were related both to the racist attitudes of the football team owners and to the *Great Depression* which caused economic hardships in the United States.[43] Basically, football, basketball, and baseball were really integrated after swing began to integrate the United States in the 1930s. Thus, the swing integration was an important predecessor to the later integration process in the sports.

1.2 Earlier Research

This dissertation is in African-American Studies - a field which emerged in the United States in the middle of the 1960s. The emergence of the field was catalyzed by the increasing number of African-Americans in U.S. colleges and universities at the time, which in itself, was a result of the gains and pressures of the African-American Freedom Movement. The mixture of activism, a confrontation of cultural

40 Donn Rogosin, *Invisible Men – Life in Baseball's Negro Leagues* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007 – first printed in 1983), pp. 19-20.

41 Ibid., pp. 5-6.

42 Caponi-Tabery 2008, pp. 89-90.

43 Ibid., p. 46. See also: Demas, Lane, *Integrating the Gridiron – Black Civil Rights and American College Football* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), p. 7; Ross, Charles K., *Outside the Lines – African Americans and the Integration of the National Football League* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), p. 21, 45-47.

sensibilities, political imperatives, and intellectual perspectives led to the induction of African-American Studies as an academic discipline.[44] Traditionally, the classic core areas of the discipline have been Black History, Black Religion, Black Social Organization, Black Politics, Black Economics, Black Psychology, and Black Creative Production which includes, in essence art, music, dance, and literature.[45] This dissertation, is particularly related to not only Black History research, it is additionally apposite to Black Creative Production since African-American jazz dance is a focal point of this work.

African-American jazz dance did not seem to be considered an important topic of research or study in African-American Studies in the beginning of 21st century. Both the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* in 2005, which introduces "the work of nearly 200 scholars", and *African American Studies* (2010) confine their discussion to hip-hop and break dance and contain no mention of other African-American jazz dances like the Lindy Hop and the Charleston. As far as dancing is concerned, African dance seemed to be an important topic to the scholars who edited the studies.[46] The lack of discussion or mention of other African-American jazz dances was possibly linked to the dismissive attitude of the Harlem Renaissance Movement towards jazz dances like the Lindy Hop. The Harlem Renaissance Movement and its attitude towards African-American jazz dances are discussed later in this study. Despite the reluctance of some academics to include other African-American jazz dances in their work, various other scholars of African-American Studies have been interested in the subject, which is conveyed in various sections of this dissertation.

In regard to the Black History branch of Black Studies, this dissertation falls under the category of African-American popular culture research, which is a relatively new branch of history research. It really began to get interest from the 1970s onwards.[47] The African-American cultural history can be divided in various sections. An example of dividing this branch into different topics was presented in *the Blacks In America* study from 1971, which was described by the authors as "an attempt" to "provide teachers, students, and interested readers an up-to-date guide to

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44 Perry A. Hall, 'African American Studies: Discourses and Paradigms', in Jeanette R. Davidson, (editor), *African American Studies* (Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 15-16.

45 Jeanette R. Davidson and Tim Davidson, 'African American Studies: Vital, Transformative, and Sustainable', in Jeanette R. Davidson (editor), *African American Studies*, 2010, p. 283.

46 Jeanette R. Davidson (editor), *African American Studies*, 2010, pp. 3, 8-9, 227, 229, 232-233; Molefi Kete Asante and Ama Mazama (editors), *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 2005), pp. xx-xxi, 36-37. Both studies do not recognize, for example, the terms, 'lindy hop', jitterbug, jive (as a dance), 'tap dance', 'tap dancing', 'black bottom', charleston, 'jazz dance', 'jazz dancing', 'swing dance', and 'swing dancing'. *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* discusses, however, hip-hop dancing and break dancing, and *African American Studies* discusses B-boy floor work (hip-hop/break dancing). See: Molefi Kete Asante and Ama Mazama (editors), *Encyclopedia of Black Studies*, 2005, pp. 265-267, and Melanie Bratcher, 'Song and Dance Nexus in the Africana Aesthetic: An Approach' in Jeanette R. Davidson (editor), *African American Studies*, 2010, p. 233.

47 Verney 2003, p. vi.

Afro-American history and culture". The study listed all works considered as remarkable about the African-American cultural history research by the date. According to the study, one of the most important topics at the time was the African-American literature movement, especially, in the form of the Harlem Renaissance Movement and its various writers. Other areas were African-American painters and sculptors, African-Americans in films and theater, African-American music in the form of "Soul Music": blues, jazz, and variations, African-Americans in opera and symphonic music, the African-American press in the form of various newspapers and magazines, and African-Americans in various sports.[48]

African-American jazz dancing is placed logically next to the African-American music forms, blues and jazz. Because the Harlem Renaissance Movement usually neglected the African-American art forms like the Lindy Hop and other jazz dances which it considered, at least indirectly, as lower art forms,[49] this disesteem probably affected an academic interest in the jazz dances, which can be seen when looking at the topics of the various lists in the 1971 study. It is striking that any kind of African-American dancing did not seem to raise any primary interest, jazz dancing or any other kind of African-American dancing have no topics of their own in the lists. For example, Stearns' *Jazz Dance* study is placed under the subject, 'Soul Music: Blues, Jazz, and Variations'.[50] First of all, this describes the lack of interest among the authors who made those lists, and it also gives a reference in the case that there likely was not a strong interest in that kind of history at the time.

Otherwise, the lists of the various works include "the history of black Americans" divided into over one hundred different topics from sixteenth century and slaves, to the Civil Rights Movement and the beginning of the 1970s. The lists include the strictly entertainment-related "Afro-Americans in Films" studies for about two pages, "Soul Music: Blues, Jazz and Variations" studies for about four pages, and "Blacks and the American Theatre" studies for eleven pages. These themes are included in "Blacks in American Culture, 1900-1970" part of the study which contains almost sixty pages. The whole study is over four hundred pages long.[51] That refers to the fact that the entertainment-related subjects overall were not of the highest importance as far as the African-American culture research and its researchers were concerned.

An interest in studying African roots and their connections to African-American culture has existed from the beginning of the twentieth century, when some white scholars characterized African culture as primitive and uncivilized. W.E.B. Du Bois published his work, *The Negro,* in 1915, which was possibly the first corrective to earlier, biased white views about African culture. Another pioneer in the area is

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48 James M. McPherson, Laurence B. Holland, James M. Banner Jr., Nancy J. Weiss, Michael D. Bell, *Blacks In America: Biographical Essays* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971), pp. xiii-xix. The pages concern the contents of the chapter 'Blacks In American Culture, 1900-1970' which lists different parts and studies of the African-American culture research.

49 Monaghan 2005, pp. 39 and 66.

50 McPherson, Holland, Banner Jr., Weiss, Bell 1971, pp. 286 and 288.

51 Ibid., pp. ix and xv-xix.

Melville J. Herskovits, who published various studies about the subject in the 1930s and the 1940s. In the studies like *Rebel Destiny* from 1934, and *The Myth of the Negro Past* from 1941, he discusses African roots in jazz dance-connected dances. Later, the connection between African roots and African-American jazz dances was examined, for example, in Stearns' *Jazz Dance*, where Stearns discusses various African influences and various scholars in the subject. Similarly, Robert Farris Thompson has discussed in various articles and studies, particularly, Mambo dance and its African influences. One of the latest examples is Brenda Dixon Gottschild's *Digging the Africanist Presence in American Performance – Dance and Other Contexts* from 1996, where she examines African presence in American dance forms like the Lindy Hop, Cakewalk, and American Ballet.[52]

Since the 1970s, African-American popular culture research has reached a lot more interest. Countless studies have examined different African-American entertainment forms. The jazz music-connected eras from the 1920s to nowadays have been presented in numerous works. The quality of the research, however, has varied quite a bit as it is argued later in this study.[53]

The remarkable African-American popular culture-connected studies, which are also connected to Harlem and its jazz dance, can be divided into the following main themes: jazz dance as part of American culture, African-American dancing and race politics, Harlem places of entertainment, swing and jazz music, Civil Rights Movement and Harlem, Harlem infrastructure, and personal memoirs of Harlem dancers.

Concerning jazz dance as part of American culture, there are various studies which have connected the theme to American culture. Marshall Stearns tried to establish the term 'jazz dance' as part of American dancing, and thus part of American culture, with the help of his numerous interviews from the African-American and white jazz dancers[54], which are the strength of his *Jazz Dance* study. Otherwise, various inaccuracies in details decrease the value of the study[55].

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52 Ibid., pp. 25-26 and 32. Marshall Stearns especially discusses African influences in jazz dances and the scholars in the subject in the chapter '2 Africa and the West Indies'. See also: Stearns 1994, pp. 12-14, 25-27, 372-373; Robert Farris Thompson, 'Teaching the People to Triumph Over Time – Notes from the World of Mambo' in Susanna Slout (editor), *Caribbean Dance From Abakuá To Zouk: How Movement Shapes Identity* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2002); Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-African Art & Philosophy* (New York: Random House Inc., 1984); Brenda Dixon Gottschild, *Digging the Africanist Presence in American Performance – Dance and Other Contexts* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998 - first published in 1996).

53 Also, Terry Monaghan has listed and reviewed different jazz dance-connected studies in his Savoy Ballroom study. See: Monaghan 2005, pp. 55-56. Basically, Monaghan had critical considerations about the current jazz music and jazz dance-related studies through his whole study, but the mentioned pages especially include the criticism of the earlier research.

54 Stearns 1994, pp. xvi-xvii.

55 Some of the inaccuracies are brought out in this study. Also, Terry Monaghan discusses in detail the inaccuracies in Stearns' study. See: Terry Monaghan, 'The Legacy of Jazz Dance' in *Annual Review of Jazz Studies*, 1997/1998, the Institute of Jazz Studies

Joel Dinerstein, in his African-American cultural study, tries to connect the Lindy Hop, tap dance, and swing music to a significant part of American culture via machine aesthetics of the dances and big band swing, which humanized the American machine culture.[56] His analysis is more like a noted discussion of the African-American culture as part of the swing culture, and as part of the American image, rather than a profound study. He does not analyze deeply the newspapers, magazines, and other sources where opinions of people outside Harlem, especially the opinions of whites, could be found. The same concerns African-Americans' opinions about their culture: He does not analyze thoroughly the African-American press or other sources where African-Americans' opinions could be found.[57]

Terry Monaghan's Savoy Ballroom study examines how the original practitioners and the new enthusiasts have seen the Lindy Hop in the context of the

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(Newark, New Jersey: Rutgers University, 1997), p. 321-322. There also is *Jazz Dance – A History of the Roots and Branches* study which seems to be some kind of a continuation to Stearns' work. The work tries to describe different jazz dance forms with a clear emphasis on the modern jazz dance in the sense of the post 1950s period. The part of the work which concerns the history of jazz dance is no way comparable to Stearns' study. It is only an introduction to the history of jazz dance, compared to Stearns' work. See: Lindsay Guarino and Wendy Oliver (editors), *Jazz Dance – A History of the Roots and Branches* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2014). The jazz dance history part of the work is only 35 pages long, when the whole work is 310 pages long. See: *Jazz Dance* 2014, pp. 33-68. In addition to that, the work includes profiles of the master teachers and choreographers between 1930 and 1990. From these profiles, only Pepsi Bethel's profile represents an "authentic" side of jazz dance, in the sense it was considered before the end of the 1950s period. See: Karen Hubbard, 'The Authentic Jazz Dance Legacy of Pepsi Bethel', *Jazz Dance* 2014, pp. 75-81. The work includes an article about 'Vernacular Jazz Dance and Race in Hollywood Cinema' with nine pages. See: Susie Trenka, 'Vernacular Jazz Dance and Race in Hollywood Cinema', *Jazz Dance* 2014, pp. 240-249. The work also includes fourteen pages about tap dancing: Ray Miller, 'Tappin' Jazz Lines', *Jazz Dance* 2014, pp. 139-153 and history about Hip Hop dance in nine pages: Moncell Durden, 'Hip-Hop Dance as Community Expression and Global Phenomenon', *Jazz Dance* 2014, pp. 184-193. Thus, the work contains about 73 total pages of history connected to the "authentic" side of jazz dance.

56 Dinerstein 2003, pp. 7, 25-28.

57 This can be understood when the notes of the chapters: 'Tap Dancers Rap Back at the Machine', 'America's National Folk Dance: The Lindy Hop' and 'The World of Tomorrow...in the Groove: Swinging the New York World's Fair, 1939-40' are examined. It seems that Dinerstein has used a lot of different *Daily News* issues for analyzing the Harvest Moon Ball contest, but otherwise there seems to be only occasional mentions about using *The New York Times*, *Variety, The New Yorker*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *The New York Amsterdam News* etc. He also does not mention any method, how he has chosen his sources, or examined those papers for his study. There also is no source list attached in the book, only notes as listed by chapters. Another study, which discusses tap dance as part of American culture, is Constance Valis Hill's *Tap Dancing America – A Cultural History*. The study discusses the whole tap dance history from the beginning to the recent times. The biggest problem of Hill's tap study is that she has not built a proper basic picture of the history of tap dance. She discusses numerous tap dancers and tap groups, but does not tie these stories to a bigger picture from the history of tap. Her tap history is too scattered in the sense of basic research, and it is mainly the reader's task to build up a picture of how these different tap dancers and their history are related to the full picture of the history of tap dance. See: Hill 2010.

ballroom. That means how the original Lindy Hop dancers, in other words, the dancers from the Savoy Ballroom period (1926-58), and the newcomers, mostly enthusiasts from the 1980s and later, have seen the Lindy Hop, and what kind of differences there have been in the case. Because Monaghan's study connects various themes together in a short study (it is only 52 pages long), it stays mainly as an introduction to these themes, without the depth needed as far as basic research is concerned.[58]

Gena Caponi-Tabery has connected jazz, the Lindy Hop, and basketball together as a remarkable part of African-American culture. Basically, she builds an otherwise proper story, especially about basketball as part of the culture, but her basic assumption about vertical jumping action as a remarkable part of the Lindy Hop is contradictory, compared to other historians' suggestions about the nature of the Lindy Hop as more horizontal, smooth, and a continuously moving dance. Thus, her basic assumption about the nature of the Lindy Hop seems to be weak. Otherwise, her work suffers with unchecked facts of the history of the Lindy Hop, which decrease the value of her otherwise well-written study.[59]

Brenda Dixon Gottschild has primarily discussed African-American dancing and race politics in the connection to the Swing Era in her work. Gottschild has researched the subject via two African-American ballroom dancers, Margot Webb and Harold Norton. She tries to find out how the African-American vaudevillians and performers were treated in the entertainment world, and what kind of challenges they encountered during their careers, concerning their racial status, between the end of 1920s and the 1940s.[60] However, her work is more like an introduction to the

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[58] Monaghan 2005. Monaghan also wrote, together with Karen Hubbard, an article about the social dancing of the Savoy Ballroom. The article briefly presents various social dance-connected dances and examines different Savoy Ballroom functions connected to dancing during the lifetime of the ballroom between 1926 and 1958. See: Monaghan and Hubbard 2009. The latest study about the Savoy Ballroom is Alexandre Abdoulaev's *Savoy: Reassessing The Role Of The "World's Finest Ballroom" In Music And Culture, 1926-1958*. The work has several inaccuracies, unchecked information, inabilities to discuss between different sources, and the lack of source criticism. Thus, it lacks all the characteristics of a proper research. See: Alexandre Abdoulaev, *Savoy: Reassessing The Role Of The "World's Finest Ballroom" In Music And Culture, 1926-1958*., Boston University – Graduate School Of Arts And Sciences – Dissertation. Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2014.

[59] Even Caponi-Tabery states in her study: "the Lindy acquired a horizontal flow and feel..." Thus, her study is built on the contradictory. See: Caponi-Tabery 2008, p. 52. Concerning the unchecked facts, for example, she states that the Savoy Pavilion at the Fair had the Lindy Hop competition on May 21, 1939. See: Caponi-Tabery 2008, p. 64. She seems to use the *New York Times* article for the claim. Actually, according to the article, the contest was organized at the World's Fair's Hall of Special Events. See: 'Building Quivers As Jitterbugs Vie', *The New York Times*, May 21, 1939, p. 40. Also she claims that Leon James and Willa Mae Ricker were in the pictures of *LIFE* magazine in December, 1936. See: Caponi-Tabory 2008, pp. 65 and 213. In fact, the dancers were George Greenidge and Ella Gibson. See: Monaghan 2005, pp. 40 and 67. See otherwise for the nature of the Lindy Hop for example: Dinerstein 2003, pp. 265-268, Stearns 1994, p. 325 and Monaghan 2005, p. 36.

[60] Brenda Dixon Gottschild, *Waltzing in the Dark – African American Vaudeville and Race Politics in the Swing Era* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 2000). Another study which discusses race politics, is Alan Pomerance's *Repeal Of The Blues – How Black Entertainers*

racial attitudes and problems which the vaudevillians encountered, and to the survival tactics they used for overcoming the racial problems in their career during the period. It is not an extensive research concerning the recognition of those vaudevillians. Her focus is different, because her viewpoint is too narrow for that. However, Gottschild's study works as a thought-provoking source for my dissertation.

Harlem places of entertainment are discussed in various studies, but there does not seem to be a proper basic study which discusses the places in general. George Hoefer's liner notes to the collection of jazz music LPs in 'Jazz Odyssey, Vol. 3: The Sound of Harlem' are used as the basis for the Harlem ballrooms and nightclubs analysis in this dissertation. Hoefer presents in general, numerous Harlem ballrooms and nightclubs between the 1920s and the 1960s. The liner notes do not have any notation, so, it is not technically a basic research.[61] It is rather a reference collection to the Harlem ballrooms and nightclubs. In spite of that, it seems to have been used in numerous studies as the reference to the Harlem places of entertainment.[62] Overall those notes are only directional.

As Hoefer's notes obviously are the only comprehensive description about the Harlem places of entertainment, this indicates how big the lack of basic research concerning those places is. The Harlem ballrooms and nightclubs definitely need comprehensive basic research. It seems that the Savoy Ballroom, the Cotton Club, and the Apollo Theatre are mainly the Harlem dance-connected places of entertainment which have earlier been researched as single entities in the studies[63].

Three important works, which describe the various Harlem places of

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Influenced Civil Rights (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991). The study tries to discover how African-American entertainment was connected to Civil Rights. Pomerance particularly goes through the years from 1933 to 1952, although he continues on occasion to the 1980s. However, his study is an unnoted discussion which covers the NAACP, actors, musicians, and African-Americans in World War II etc., without a profound analysis of any of these themes. Dancing is discussed only on a few occasions; mostly concerning the Nicholas Brothers and Bill Robinson, who have been mentioned occasionally in the study.

[61] George Hoefer, 'Jazz Odyssey, Vol. 3: The Sound of Harlem' (Columbia Records, Jazz Archive Series, Mono-C3L 33, 1964), the United States of America.

[62] See for example: Erenberg 1981; Thomas J. Hennessay, *From jazz to swing: African-American jazz musicians and their music* (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1994); Steve Watson, *The Harlem Renaissance: Hub of African-American Culture, 1920-1930* (New York, New York: Pantheon Books, 1995); Jacqui Malone, *Steppin' on the Blues – The Visible Rhythms of African American Dance* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Robert G. O'Meally (editor), *The jazz cadence of American Culture* (New York, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

[63] See for the Savoy Ballroom: Monaghan 2005. See for the Cotton Club: Haskins 1977. See for the Apollo Theatre: Jack Schiffman, *Uptown: The Story Of Harlem's Apollo Theatre* (New York, New York: Cowles Book Co., 1971); Jack Schiffman, *Harlem Heyday – A Pictorial History of Modern Black Show Business and the Apollo Theatre* (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1984); Ted Fox, *Showtime At The Apollo* (New York, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983); Ralph Cooper with Steve Dougherty, *Amateur Night At The Apollo – Ralph Cooper Presents Five Decades Of Great Entertainmen*t (New York, New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1990).

entertainment, and also bring out African-Americans and whites' close social interaction in the Harlem places of entertainment, especially in the 1920s, are as follows: The first of them, Burton W. Peretti's study concerning the Manhattan nightclubs, only explains in general the Harlem nightlife, but mostly examines the entertainment outside Harlem[64]. The second of them, Chad Heap's cultural study, goes deeper into the Harlem nightlife via the 'slumming' phenomenon and its sexual encounters[65]. The third of them, Michael A. Lerner's Prohibition study, examines the Prohibition Era between 1920 and 1933, and discusses in general the Harlem places of entertainment.[66]

Swing and jazz music in the Harlem context are discussed in numerous studies. Marshall Stearns' jazz music study, which is an early basic research concerning the jazz, swing and bebop music from 1956,[67] still is a competent basic research about jazz and swing music. In addition to that, Gunther Schuller's work concerning the early jazz[68] and his later study concerning so-called Swing Era, are other similar kind of basic studies.[69] However, their otherwise remarkable value as basic studies, is decreased for their emphasis on recorded music, and the lack of the live music analysis.[70]

The Civil Rights Movement and Harlem are discussed in various works. Mark Naison's American Communist Party study connects the American Communist Party as part of the Civil Rights struggle in Harlem, where music in particular, and also dancing had a role. Naison's work is a basic research for finding out the Communists' role in the Harlem politics, particularly in the 1930s, and it also discusses their role in the swing entity inside and outside Harlem.[71] Also Ellen Graff's work about dance and leftist politics in New York discusses the Harlem and the Communists[72]. Other remarkable studies, which discuss the Communists in the

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64 Burton W. Peretti, *Nightclub City – Politics and Amusement in Manhattan* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

65 Chad Heap, *Slumming – Sexual and Racial Encounters In American Nightlife – 1885 – 1940* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

66 Michael A. Lerner, *Dry Manhattan – Prohibition in New York City* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007).

67 Marshall W. Stearns, *The Story of Jazz* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970 – originally published in 1956).

68 Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz – It's Roots and Musical Development* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

69 Gunther Schuller, *The Swing Era – The Development of Jazz 1930 – 1945* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

70 Terry Monaghan has criticized Gunther Schuller for neglecting live music in his analysis and for concentrating only on recordings in his jazz histories. Monaghan argues that Schuller's studies have had a methodical weakness for the lack of the live music analysis. Monaghan's Schuller critic concerns mostly the two Savoy Ballroom orchestras: Teddy Hill Orchestra and the Savoy Sultans which he claims to have been underestimated by Schuller. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 55.

71 Mark Naison, *Communists in Harlem during the Depression* (New York, New York: Grove Press Inc., 1984).

72 Ellen Graff, *Stepping Left – Dance and Politics in New York* City, *1928-1942* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

U.S. context and also touch the Harlem struggle, are especially Mark Solomon's Communists and African-Americans study, and Jacob A. Zumoff's work which describes how the U.S. Communists worked in the 1920s with the help of the Communist International[73].

The NAACP and its cultural campaign for Civil Rights is discussed in Jenny Woodley's study which examines the NAACP's participation in cultural issues also in the Harlem context between the 1910s and the 1970s.[74] Especially, Wendy Perron has examined the problematic relationship between the Harlem Renaissance Movement and African-American dancing. Her article discusses also how the Harlem Renaissance regarded popular dances like jazz dances.[75] As the NAACP and the Harlem Renaissance Movement had same leaders, these leading figures and their relationship to the African-American dancing are also discussed in various biographies and studies. Walter White and W.E.B. Du Bois' biographies, and James Weldon Johnson's Harlem study from 1930 are the most remarkable in this respect.[76]

Where early phases of the Civil Rights Movement are concerned, Stephen Tuck's study examines numerous Civil Rights organizations starting from the Civil War in the 1860s and continuing through the decades to the twenty-first century[77]. His study is a consistent presentation of the main Civil Rights organizations during the time

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73 Mark Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity – Communists and African Americans, 1917-36* (Jackson, MS: the University Press of Mississippi, 1998); Jacob A. Zumoff, *The Communist International and US Communism, 1919-1929*, (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2014), p. 1. Also Harvey Klehr's study about the Communists in the 1930s has been useful for my for this dissertation because its analysis of the Communist organizations. See: Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism – The Depression Decade* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1984).

74 Jenny Woodley, *Art for Equality – The NAACP's Cultural Campaign for Civil Rights* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014). The author of the dissertation prefers the form NAACP to the form N.A.A.C.P. The form NAACP was slightly more popular between 1921 and 1943 than the form N.A.A.C.P. The former was used 20,821 times and the latter 18,720 times. The search with the key words, NAACP and N.A.A.C.P was done into the New York Public Library database on November 12, 2014.

75 Wendy Perron, 'Dance in the Harlem Renaissance: Sowing Seeds' in Dorothea Fischer-Hornung and Alison D. Goeller (editors), *EmBODYing Liberation – The Black Body in American Dance*, (FORECAAST; 4) (Hamburg: LIT, Transaction Publishers (in North America), 2001).

76 According to Jenny Woodley, especially White, Johnson and Du Bois were important leaders both in the Harlem Renaissance Movement and in the NAACP. See: Woodley 2014, pp. 8, 35-36, 43, 54-55. See also: Walter White, *A Man Called White* (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1969); Kenneth Robert Janken, *White – The Biography of Walter White, Mr. NAACP* (New York: The New Press, 2003); David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois – The Fight For Equality And The American Century – 1919-1963* – (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000); James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (New York, New York: Da Capo Press, 1991 – original published in 1930). In addition to these works, there are also the NAACP histories which discusses mainly non-dance-related events. See for example: Langston Hughes, *Fight For Freedom – The Story of the NAACP* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962) and Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice – The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York, NY: New Press, 2009).

77 Tuck 2010.

period. Similarly, Manning Marable's article[78] outlines consistently the essential lines of the Civil Rights Movement from the same time period that Tuck has researched.

Harlem infrastructure is discussed in the connection to the Harlem culture, especially in Jervis Anderson's Harlem study, which presents Harlem's history in general, as a community, and its infrastructure between 1900 and 1950. Anderson's study is a well-written report about Harlem's cultural portrait from the first half of the twentieth century.[79] Accordingly, Gilbert Osofsky's study about the African-American Harlem's early phases is a well-written study of the formation of Harlem, when African-Americans began to settle down in the area between the end of the 19th century and 1930.[80] In addition, Cheryl Lynn Greenberg's Harlem study examines the economic conditions of Harlem between the 1920s and the beginning of the 1940s. Greenberg presents in great detail information on the Harlem economics and different organizations which worked for bettering those conditions.[81]

Important examples about the dancers who have had their biographies published are Bill Robinson, whose dance career and private life have been examined in a well-written biography, which has helped quite a bit for defining his significance in jazz dance.[82] In addition, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' Norma Miller and Frankie Manning, whose memoirs have been essential for understanding different the Savoy connected functions inside and outside the Savoy, particularly where dancing is concerned.[83]

In spite of all the kudos for their significance in jazz dance, Manning and Miller's memoirs, are based on personal experiences: the discussion concerning the development of jazz dance, especially in the form of the Lindy Hop, has revolved around their recollections, without a sufficient analysis to connect their memories to the Harlem community, and to the bigger picture. It seems that the Lindy Hop-connected jazz dance research mostly has used Manning and Miller's recollections, without challenging those memories by researching other sources. The conclusion from that would be that the Lindy Hop has not been properly researched, especially after the 1940s period. For example, the Savoy Ballroom-based Lindy Hop still

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78 Manning Marable, 'Introduction: Black Intellectuals and the World They Made' in Manning Marable and Elizabeth Kai Hinton (editors), *The New Black History – Revisiting the Second Reconstruction* (New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

79 Anderson 1982.

80 Osofsky 1996.

81 Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, *"Or Does It Explode?" – Black Harlem In The Great Depression* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

82 Jim Haskins and N. R. Mitgang, *Mr. Bojangles – The Biography of Bill Robinson* (New York, New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1988).

83 Norma Miller's memories of the Savoy can especially found from her memoir: Miller and Jensen 1996. Frankie Manning's memories of the Savoy can accordingly be found from his memoir: Manning and Millman 2007.

continued in to the 1950s, when both Manning and Miller had mostly left the ballroom.[84]

Otherwise, the scope of the studies seems to have been in discussions of how African-American dancing was connected to the American culture, particularly between the 1920s and the 1940s, and what kind of racial issues dancers encountered. In addition, how political movements were connected to Harlem, and what kind of place Harlem was, socially and economically. The studies have only touched on the issue as to what kind of picture there has been of African-American dances in the connection to the Harlem community, inside Harlem and outside Harlem. The Harlem-based jazz dance and its recognition inside and outside Harlem still needs thorough research.

1.3 Main Research Questions

The recognition of the Harlem-based jazz dance outside Harlem is the main task of this dissertation. This means how the Harlem jazz dance was really recognized outside Harlem in the outside Harlem existing, non-African-American press. This recognition process does not seem to have been examined comprehensively. The existing press outside of Harlem frequently reviewed African-American Broadway plays, movies, and discussed African-American entertainment and entertainers in its articles. Therefore, it is a remarkable source to find out how the recognition really happened and what kind of aspects were recognized.

Because the most important sources of this study are various newspapers and magazines, these are defined with the help of the work terms as follows. The term 'the mainstream press' describes newspapers and magazines which were not strictly connected to Harlem. That means they were not published in Harlem, and they were not so-called African-American newspapers and magazines. As a counterbalance, the term 'the African-American press' is used, which means so-called African-American newspapers and magazines which were published in Harlem or outside Harlem, and which concentrated mainly on reporting about Harlem and African-Americans' matters. The terms are sometimes opened and used, in various forms, such as: the mainstream newspapers or the mainstream magazines, the African-American newspapers or the African-American magazines. If there is a need to be more exact, then that part of the press is particularly noted in the case.

Harlem entertainment seems to have been recognized remarkably for the first time, when Harlem-based African-American jazz dance had its breakthrough on Broadway in 1921. That supports the idea that the year 1921 is a reasonable start year to my research. In some cases, the study discusses earlier years, especially,

[84] Especially Terry Monaghan discussed the Savoy Ballroom Lindy Hop and problems of its presentation. See: Monaghan 2005, and Monaghan and Hubbard 2009.

where the background of Harlem, political movements, the terms used in the study, are concerned. In most cases, the study begins at the earliest from 1921. It is thus that 1921 is mentioned to be the year at which the study starts. In 1943, the Savoy Ballroom, probably the most important ballroom and cultural center of Harlem, was closed for six months, and Harlem was changing musically at the time, when the popularity of be bop was increasing. Thus, the year 1943 is a reasonable finish point to my research. In some cases, especially in Bill Robinson's case, the research continues beyond 1943 because of the later events are important for understanding the significance of the case. Mostly, the research ends in 1943, and thus the year is mentioned to be the year at which the study ends.

The dissertation tries to find out how the Harlem-based African-American jazz dance was recognized in the mainstream press, especially among white people between 1921 and 1943. This also means how the African-American image was changed in the mainstream press by the Harlem-based jazz dance, or even if the image changed at all. It is also possible that the picture of the Harlem-based African-American dance entertainment stayed the same during the research period. Similarly, it is questioned, did this possible image change affect in any way the African-Americans' racial or cultural position?

However, it is clear that a pivotal moment in American Civil Rights, one that came in the midst of a multi-decade long struggle in 1954, was when the U.S. Supreme court ruled in favor of the NAACP and the African-American Freedom Movement, making racial segregation in public schools illegal. This was the dawn of the new phase of the Civil Rights struggle that made the reduction of legal segregation possible.[85] This crucial change happened decades later, after the remarkable breakthrough of the Harlem-based African-American jazz dance on Broadway. The change of the social environment would likely be too difficult to examine properly enough in this dissertation, because of a too long time period, if the end of the research period was in the 1950s.

To find out possible jazz dance-related achievements which paved the way for the change in 1954, it is reasonable to examine how the Harlem-based jazz dance was connected to the political movements, especially to the Civil Rights Movement. Did these political forces use the jazz dance for their purposes in the Harlem context, and if so, what were the results? It is conceivable that Harlem jazz dance had some part in creating the basis for this success, in the decades leading up to the pivotal change. This study also considers these possible changes and how they affected the recognition of the Harlem-based jazz dance.

The key term to the study is 'recognition'. The recognition of different features like poetry and folk roots in African-American culture, and modern dance, in connection to African-American culture, has been researched in various works, particularly concerning the Harlem Renaissance Movement.[86] The definition of the

[85] Marable 2011, p. 10. See also: Risa Lauren Goluboff, *The Lost Promise Of Civil Rights*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2007, pp. 4, 12 and 252.

[86] See for example: Nathan I. Huggins, Arnold Rampersed, *Harlem Renaissance* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 105, 152, 169, 214, 295; Daphne

recognition term in this study reflects philosopher Charles Taylor's definitions of the term recognition. His ideas are paraphrased in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, which states, "Recognition has both a normative and a psychological dimension". To recognize another person normatively means to admit, that the person has a certain feature with embracing "a positive attitude towards" the person "for having this feature". The psychological dimension of the term is connected in "the feedback of the other subjects" and "of the society as a whole". People depend on the feedback. Basically, recognition constitutes a vital human need.[87]

The 'recognition' term is used normatively in the study. In this sense, the term is used in the following ways: 1. There is a hierarchy of the races where African-Americans are basically compared to whites, when different features are examined. This is based on the well-known fact that there were racist practices in the United States in the twentieth century. African-Americans and whites were not considered as equals in the racist practices. 2. There is a feature of dancing which has no ethnical divisions. This idea comes from Savoy Lindy Hopper Frankie Manning's statement, how there were no race divisions at the Savoy Ballroom, where dancing was concerned. According to Manning, "They never looked at your face, only at your feet", they only asked, "Can you dance?"[88] 3. African-American culture was considered either lower forms of art or higher forms of art. For example, the Harlem Renaissance Movement divided the African-American culture into these two art forms[89].

The recognition of the Harlem-based jazz dance is researched in this study with the help of different factors that are analyzed as follows: Was the Harlem jazz dance recognized as a segregated or integrated dance form? Was the Harlem jazz dance appreciated? Mitchel G. Adler and N. S. Fagley have defined the term 'appreciation' as "acknowledging the value and meaning of something – an event, a person, a behavior, an object – and feeling a positive emotional connection to it."[90] If the Harlem jazz dance was appreciated, and there is information of this, it is determined

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Lamothe, *Inventing the New Negro – Narrative, Culture, and Ethnography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 54, 81, 88, 99, 122, 164 and 220; Eric King Watts, *Hearing the Hurt – Rhetoric, Aesthetics, and Politics of the New Negro Movement* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012), pp. 17, 42, 57, 60, 99, 103, 127, 136, 159, 168, 175, 179 and 196. Also African-American culture researchers have used the term in different studies. See for example: Verney 2003, p. vi and Michael L. Hecht, Ronald L. Jackson II, Sidney A. Ribeau, *African American Communication: Identity and Cultural Interpretation* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2008), pp. 6-7.

87 Mattias Iser, *Recognition*, 2013, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/recognition/ . The site was accessed on April 30, 2015. See also: Charles Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition' in Amy Gutmann (editor), *Multiculturalism: examining the politics of recognition* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 25-73.

88 Frankie Manning and Cynthia R. Millman, *Frankie Manning – Ambassador of Lindy Hop* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), p. 71.

89 Monaghan 2005, pp. 39 and 66. The Harlem Renaissance Movement and its disdain for the lower forms of art are discussed later in the dissertation.

90 Mitchel G. Adler and N. S. Fagley, 'Appreciation: Individual Differences in Finding Value and Meaning as a Unique Predictor of Subjective Well-Being', *Journal of Personality* 73:1, February 2005, p. 81.

whether it was appreciated was based on racial stereotypes of African-Americans as naturally gifted dancers, or if it was based on a perception of them as trained dancers? Similarly, it is examined if the Harlem jazz dance was recognized as part of American culture, and if the Harlem jazz dance was appreciated as part of the political movements like the Civil Rights Movement.

1.4 Sources

This study uses newspapers and magazines as sources. The newspapers and magazines are used both as sources that documented the events of the time, and as sources that reflected the opinions of newspapers, magazines and their editors about said events. The analysis is mainly on qualitative in nature, in that it focuses on what *kind* of opinions the aforementioned had. Quantitative analyses are performed if there have been reasons, for example, for finding out how many times terms like 'jazz dance', jazz and swing were used,[91] the results of which are used, for instance, to study how certain terms were used overall, and how parties like the Communists and the NAACP used jazz dance in their activities.[92]

The recognition process of jazz dance in the dissertation is examined from the reviews and the articles of the mainstream newspapers, especially *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Hartford Courant* and *The Chicago Daily Tribune,* which were chosen as the main mainstream newspapers for the study, because of their regular reporting about the New York theatrical plays and movies, which also included the Harlem-based jazz dance.[93]

The circulation of those newspapers was usually quite large during the time period of the study, which also supports using the newspapers. All the values are about the daily circulation. See Table 1.

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91 The analysis of the newspapers and magazines is based on newspaper research methods in political history, which are introduced in Timo Soikkanen's text book of studies of political history. See: Timo Soikkanen (toimittanut), *Poliittisen Historian Tutkimusopas* (Suomi: Turun yliopisto – Poliittinen historia – Julkaisuja C:24, 1987), pp. 87 and 94.

92 The Communists, the NAACP and the terms 'jazz dance', jazz and swing are discussed especially on chapters 'Harlem-Based Jazz Dance and Political Movements' and 'What Is Jazz Dance'.

93 Although there does not seem to exist any exact statistics concerning the case, it seems that, according to the reporting of the papers, they frequently reported theatrical plays especially on Broadway. See chapters: 'The Harlem Jazz Dance on Broadway Theaters and the Mainstream Press Between 1921 and 1943' and 'The Harlem Jazz Dance in Movies and the Mainstream Press Between 1929 and 1943'.

Table 1. The Mainstream Newspaper Circulation in 1921 and in 1943.[94]

	1921	1943
Newspaper		
The New York Times	327,275	440,086
The Wall Street Journal	18,750	32,242
The Washington Post	56,685	150,775
New York Herald Tribune	211,320	310,447
The Boston Daily Globe	286,886	132,198
The Hartford Courant	24,898	48,228
The Chicago Daily Tribune	420,703	1,005,992

Although it seems that *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Hartford Courant* clearly had a smaller circulation when compared to the other newspapers, they also had regular reporting about the New York-connected dance performances. Accordingly, the reason for the decreasing circulation of *The Boston Daily Globe* is unknown, but its circulation still was large enough in 1943 to be included in the papers for this study.

In addition to the newspapers, there also have been magazine publications used, especially mainstream magazines *The Billboard* and *Variety*, which reported frequently on the events in U.S. entertainment, and also in the New York area, including the Harlem-based jazz dance-connected events. Similarly, various other mainstream magazines like *LIFE*, *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Vogue* reported occasionally on Harlem jazz dance-related events. All the aforementioned magazines are used insofar as they reported on the Harlem jazz dance.

The *Daily News* is mainly used for this dissertation because it organized the Harvest Moon Ball contest between 1935 and 1974, and reported on the contest. In addition to that, it reported on the Harlem dance marathon in 1928. Both events have been used as examples of the success of the jazz dance in my dissertation.

The African-American newspapers, *The Afro-American, The Chicago Defender, The New York Amsterdam News*, *The Pittsburgh Courier, The New York Age,* and *The People's Voice* have been used for this work because of their connection to the Harlem events. Additionally, four of the first mentioned can be found from the database of the New York Public library which the author has been able to use. The copies of *New York Age* and *The People's Voice* also can be found in the New York

[94] The table is based on *Ayer & Son's American Newspaper Annual And Directory* (Philadelphia, PA., U. S. A.: N. W. Ayer & Son, Advertising Headquarters, 1921), pp. 129, 144, 218, 406, 671, 688 and 690 and *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* (Philadelphia, PA., U. S. A.: N. W. Ayer & Son, Incorporated, 1943), pp. 136, 151, 224, 401, 643, 665 and 668. All the values are about the daily circulation, which usually had smaller circulation figures, when compared to the Sunday or Evening circulation of the newspapers.

Public library, but they can be searched only from microforms[95], which slows down the process, when compared to the database searches. The database searches have a possible downside: if there are mistakes in database indexes, that can lead to the situation that some of the articles cannot be found. As it was searched from multiple newspapers and magazines in the database, it is likely that the most of the articles were found. Additionally, *The People's Voice* was only published between 1942 and 1948[96].

The general methodology used for searching for newspapers and magazines, both mainstream and African-American specific, was by making database, microform or papery copy searches using various key words. References to the relevant keywords and databases are made in places where results of the searches are used first time in this dissertation. Otherwise, the searches are usually only referred to by name. The only exceptions being references to searches for plays, movies, events, places etc. These entities were searched by the name of the entity. The searches were executed in different databases, microforms, and paper copies. Mainstream newspapers and magazines like *The American Dancer* (*The Dance* magazine), *Daily News*, *Daily Worker*, and *Vanity Fair* were searched using microforms and additionally, *Daily Worker* and *The American Dancer* (*The Dance* magazine) were searched using their respective paper copies. Mention is made in the source list at the end of the dissertation about how extensively the newspapers and magazines were researched; also mentioned, is the time range in every newspaper and magazine bibliography entry.

In addition to the U.S. press, British press content is also used to some extent. British newspapers like *The Manchester Guardian* and *The Observer*, which discussed the Harlem jazz dance-connected events, are especially used for analyzing those events in the United Kingdom - the papers being used to analyze how the term 'jazz dance' was used outside the U.S. Both newspapers can be found in both the University of Helsinki, and the New York Public Library newspaper databases. The circulation of the papers paralleled that of the U.S. newspapers (see Table 1): *The Manchester Guardian* had a circulation of 48,000 in 1937, and *The Observer* had a circulation of 224,465 in 1939.[97] Their circulation was large enough for consideration of inclusion to this dissertation.

The African-American newspapers are used for building the picture of the Harlem entertainment scene, and some cases they have been used for recognizing Harlemites' reactions in the cases like the Harlem riots. They are not used for picturing the recognition process of the Harlem-based jazz dance, like the mainstream newspapers, with the few exceptions of when downtown people's attitudes towards African-Americans were reported in the African-American press.

Concerning the Civil Rights Movement, the NAACP's role in Harlem

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95 New York Public Library catalog and there *New York Age* and *The People's Voice.*

96 New York Public Library catalog and there *The People's Voice.*

97 See: 'The Observer – The Largest Issue Since 1939', *The Observer*, May 1, 1955, p. 13; '1855-1955: A Century As A Daily Paper', *The Manchester Guardian*, July 2, 1955, p. 4.

entertainment also was discussed in the African-American press. The papers are used for recognizing the NAACP's role in Harlem jazz dance. Accordingly, the Communists and their participation in Harlem were discussed in the African-American press. As far as the Communists are concerned, the *Daily Worker* newspaper, which was the news outlet of the U.S. Communist Party from 1924[98], advertised various jazz music-related events in Harlem. The paper is used for analyzing the places and their dance activities.

Marshall Stearns' papers in the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University are used in the dissertation, especially for interviews which Stearns made for his *Jazz Dance* study. The Marshall Winslow Stearns Collection includes 125 interviews which were conducted with jazz dance-related dancers.[99] Most of the interviews were used in Stearns' *Jazz Dance*.[100] This study uses the interviews in the cases when information in *Jazz Dance* concerning Harlem-connected jazz dancers seems to be insufficient.

Dancer Mura Dehn, who came to New York in 1930 to explore jazz dance and its dancers, researched jazz dance as part of African-American culture until her passing in 1987. Dehn's archives in the New York Public Library have been used especially for defining the 'jazz dance' term in my study. She wrote different notes and articles about jazz dance, and interviewed jazz dancers. Possibly her most remarkable work is *The Spirit Moves,* which is a four volume documentary about jazz dance and its various dances.[101] Karen Backstein, who has written an article about Dehn and her jazz dance work, seems to accuse Dehn of racial "paternalistic" undertakings and even "plundering". [102] Terry Monaghan has defended Dehn, as according to Monaghan, "Dehn developed through her life's work a pronounced awareness of the true classic stature and resilience of the African retention and how the dancers embodied it in their movement and vocabulary."[103] Thus, there are contradictory estimates about the value of her work.

The Committee of Fourteen papers between 1920 and 1932 have been used for finding out possible race mixing in the Harlem places of entertainment. The papers

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98 Alfred McClung Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America – The Evolution of a Social Instrument* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1937), p. 193.

99 The Marshall Winslow Stearns Collection: http://newarkwww.rutgers.edu/IJS/collections/Marshall%20W%20Stearns.pdf . The site was accessed on November 15, 2015.

100 Monaghan 1997, p. 297.

101 Mura Dehn papers. See also: Backstein 1995, pp. 229-231.

102 Papers on Afro-American social dance circa 1869-1987, Mura Dehn, 1902-1987, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, the New York Public Library (Mura Dehn papers). Especially Terry Monaghan blamed Backstein for criticizing Dehn for "racial "paternalistic" undertakings and even "plundering" ". See: Monaghan 1997, p. 301. Monaghan's accusations seem to be correct, and that is why Monaghan's statement is used here. See also: Karen Backstein, 'Keeping Spirit Alive: The Jazz Dance testament of Mura Dehn' in Krin Gabbard (editor), *Representing Jazz* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), pp. 232-233.

103 Monaghan 1997, p. 301.

can be found in the New York Public Library.[104] The Committee of Fourteen was the organization which was funded by wealthy industrialists like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller Jr.. The committee was organized in 1905 as the successor of the Committee of Fifteen, which was organized by the Chamber of Commerce in 1900. The Committee of Fourteen was fighting against prostitution in New York City, but the committee sometimes encountered prohibition violations. Its undercover investigators occasionally reported on African-American and white interactions in Harlem places of entertainment. The committee was dissolved in 1932.[105]

According to the study of those papers, the committee inspectors paid occasional attention to the dance activities of the places they visited. The notices seemed to have varied from short comments about the dancing in the places visited, to longer explanations about the dancers and even about their racial status.[106] The notices have been taken into account in the study as far as dancing in the Harlem places of entertainment and other functions of the places are concerned.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Collection in the Library of Congress is used for finding out the NAACP's role in Harlem entertainment.[107] The collection has papers concerning Harlem in general and the Savoy Ballroom, when the ballroom was closed for half a year in 1943.

Concerning the places of entertainment, which were connected to Harlem, but located outside Harlem, one important collection has been the New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, which are located in the New York Public Library. The collection is used for finding out information about the functions of the Savoy Ballroom and *the Hot Mikado* play at the World's Fair, which have been examined in their own chapters.

Otherwise, information concerning various Harlem places of entertainment and dance activities inside and outside Harlem, is mostly gathered from numerous individual stories and interviews, which can be found in various dancers' and musicians' biographies, histories, audio, and video tapes.[108] Some of the interviews

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104 'Committee of Fourteen Records, 1905-1932', The New York Public Library – Manuscripts and Archives Division.

105 Heap 2009, pp. 50 and 89. Peretti 2007, pp. 33-50. Lerner 2007, pp. 216-217.

106 'APOLLO BURLESQUE THEATRE – 125th St. near Seventh Ave. MAY 12th 1926.', folder 1926, box 35 and '6th Div. October 6th, 1927. COMMERCIALIZED AMUSEMENT 2 TO 5 AM. $16.80. Barron Wilkins' Club, 198 W. 134th Street', folder 1927-29, box 35. 'Committee of Fourteen Records, 1905-1932', The New York Public Library – Manuscripts and Archives Division.

107 NAACP papers, Library of Congress.

108 Concerning the biographies see for example: Haskins and Mitgang 1988; Miller and Jensen 1996; Manning and Millman 2007. Concerning the audio and video tapes see for example: Norma Miller interviewed by Ernie Smith, September 7-8, 1992, Smithsonian Institute Jazz Oral History Project; Albert 'Al' Minns interview by Swedish Swing Society, October 1984. This can be found in YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6DlmqOWBlg and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQvlwNxKJHo . The film clips were accessed on February 28, 2015. The author of the study also has a copy of the interview.

can be found from public sources like YouTube, and different archives and libraries. Also, the author of the dissertation has interviewed dancers who have been connected to the Harlem jazz dance scene and have participated, in various ways, in the scene during the decades. In some cases, the interviews are called discussions because the situation was less formal than actual interviews. Overall, the discussions and interviews were executed in a free format without constant questions in every discussion and interview. The author has maintained both audiotapes and notes from the interviews and discussions in question. Additionally, Robert P. Crease conducted interviews where he interviewed various dancers particularly from *Whitey's Lindy Hoppers*' group. His interviews were published in the Footnotes series of the New York Swing Dance Society. Because the interviews were published in a form where it is sometimes hard to distinguish between content from the interviewer and the interviewee, Crease's interviews are limited to being included in the literature section as far as the sources are concerned.[109]

Various audio and video sources like videoed interviews about jazz dance-connected dancers have been used for exploring background information about dances and their history[110]. Especially the British Pathé archives, which include various clips about jazz dances from the 1920s onwards, have been remarkable in the case. In addition, various movie videos are used for analyzing, in particular, the dress code in these movies. This is discussed in the chapter 'How African-American Dancers Were Described in the Movies'.

In addition to the other sources, the earlier discussed studies are used in the analysis to build the picture of Harlem, its entertainment, the dances, the entertainers, the places of entertainment, the Harlem music and the Civil Rights Movement. They also are used as support for building the picture of the recognition process.

1.5 Composition of the Study

For reaching the goal of how Harlem-based African-American jazz dance was recognized between 1921 and 1943 in the mainstream press, the study progresses as follows: In the first chapter, the background of the study is presented on how Harlem-based jazz dance fits the picture of earlier research in African-American

109 See for example: Robert P. Crease, 'Pal Andrews', *Footnotes: November-December*, 1991, Vol.4, No. 3, published by New York Swing Dance Society; Robert P. Crease, 'Eunice Callen', Footnotes: November-December, 1989, Vol. 4, No. 3, published by New York Swing Dance Society.

110 See for example: Pamela Katz & Louise Gherthler, "In a Jazz Way: Portrait of Mura Dehn," photographed by Pamela Katz, edited by Louise Gherthler (New York, N.Y.: Filmmaker's Library inc., 1985), DVD. This is called later Dehn 1985. The DVDs in Margaret Batiuchok, 'The Lindy.', submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts to the faculty of the Gallatin Division of New York University, May 16, 1988.

popular culture and African-American cultural studies, which are part of the larger entity, African-American Studies. Earlier studies, main research questions, and sources for the study are explained in the same chapter. In addition, various forms and interpretations of African-American presentation are presented to find out what kind of views were prevalent before this study especially in regard to important African-American dances and their importance to the African-American and American culture. In this chapter, African-American jazz dance is also compared to other important entertainment forms like basketball and boxing to find out how the African-American jazz dance fits to the larger picture of the African-American entertainment.

In the second chapter, the main term of the study, 'jazz dance', is connected to its historical background since the beginning of the twentieth century. How the term was recognized in the mainstream press is especially analyzed. Also, varied use of the term and its numerous variations are discussed. Similarly, the birth of swing music and its importance during the so-called Swing Era are presented. Swing's connection to the Lindy Hop is discussed in the last part. The term 'jazz dance' and its connection to dancing and music have been integral to jazz culture. It is reasonable to find out the historical context of the term for establishing the term as a crucial part of this study.

The third chapter establishes jazz dance as an essential part of Harlem dance entertainment. First, it presents the main features of the Harlem infrastructure during the decades from the end of nineteenth century to the 1940s. In other words, it presents the main features from the time when Harlem was changing to an African-American community. The Harlem jazz dance was connected to its surrounding community via its Harlem practitioners. The surrounding community probably affected dances. The dance did not happen in a "vacuum".

After founding the infrastructure, the main features of Harlem jazz dance entertainment are explained in the sub-chapters concerning the beginning of the Harlem jazz dance entertainment, the Charleston performances and competitions, and Harlem cabarets, the latter particularly where tap dance is concerned. The Harlem social dance is analyzed in connection to the Charleston and the Lindy Hop. In particular, the latter was connected to the Savoy Ballroom, which is used as an example of a Harlem ballroom which had social dancing. Possible references in the mainstream press are especially analyzed in the Savoy Ballroom sub-chapter, where it is examined how social jazz dance of the Savoy Ballroom was recognized in the mainstream press. How the surrounding community affected the Harlem jazz dance entertainment is also analyzed in this chapter and later in the study, especially, in chapters 6 and 7.

The fourth chapter discusses how the Lindy Hop was born and how it spread outside Harlem since its beginning. George Snowden and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were important factors in the Harlem Lindy Hop. Their background and how they were recognized in the mainstream press are presented in the chapter with the help of the Rockland Palace dance marathon and the Harvest Moon Ball contest. George Snowden's dance career had its beginning in the dance marathon. Whitey's Lindy

Hoppers participated frequently in the Harvest Moon Ball contest, in addition to their performances in theatres, nightclubs/ballrooms and movies.

The fifth chapter presents Bill Robinson who was the one of the most important tap dancers in the twentieth century. His background and how he was recognized in the mainstream press are analyzed. Because Robinson was clearly connected to different political entities and ideas, his private life is also worth discussing to find out how white people, who the mainstream press mainly represented, really recognized him. Robinson and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers are discussed both together and separately in 'The World's Fair 1939 - 1940 in Queens' chapter. The World's Fair was an important case where the Harlem jazz dance reached the white, downtown people in the outside Harlem context. The World's Fair overall was a global exhibition which was connected to various cultural forms. The chapter analyzes how the mainstream press recognized Robinson and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers at the Fair and in the Fair-connected articles. Where the remarkable *the Hot Mikado* play at the Fair is concerned, they are also analyzed concerning their post-World's Fair performances with a reference to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' participation in the Broadway version of *the Hot Mikado*.

Similarly, the Harlem jazz dance was performed in the Broadway-connected shows. How the mainstream press recognized the shows is discussed in its own sub-chapters. Important examples about how the mainstream press recognized the dance acts are Bill Robinson, Buck and Bubbles, the Nicholas Brothers, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, and one of the most important Broadway-connected shows, *Blackbirds,* which presented different African-American jazz dance acts. How the dancers and acts were recognized in the mainstream press is discussed, and concerning their recognition in the mainstream press, they also are compared to each other, especially in the cases where they performed in the same shows. Accordingly, the recognition of Bill Robinson, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and the Nicholas Brothers are analyzed with references to other jazz dancers in the chapter which discusses the Harlem jazz dance-connected movies.

The sixth chapter brings out how the early Civil Rights Movement-connected political parties recognized and used jazz and the Harlem-based jazz dance for their activities in the Harlem context. Particularly, the NAACP and the Communists are discussed in this context. They were important political operators in Harlem at the time, and they clearly had connections to the Harlem ballrooms and jazz culture. It is therefore considered reasonable to discuss them in this study. The possible changes in African-Americans' position by the actions of the parties also are analyzed.

The seventh chapter discusses the Harlem riots in 1935 and 1943. The background of the riots and how the riots affected the Harlem jazz dance entertainment is brought out in the sub-chapters. The Savoy's temporary closing in 1943 was on the background, when the 1943 riot broke out. The Savoy Ballroom was an important dance-related institution in Harlem and the riots were clearly connected to the ordinary Harlemites in the political context of Harlem. That is why their possible consequences to the Harlem entertainment are reasonable to explore. Another question analyzed is how the emerging swing scene in midtown Manhattan,

on West 52nd Street and other Manhattan places of entertainment affected the Harlem entertainment, including how Harlem entertainment survived after the increasing competition, and how World War II affected the Harlem dancers. The results of the main chapters are gathered together in conclusion chapters in the end of the main chapters, and the results of the study are gathered together in the last chapter of the dissertation, which presents the conclusion of the whole dissertation.

2 Jazz Dance and Music

The term ‘jazz dance’ will be established as part of the historical continuum in the mainstream press, which starts from the beginning of the twentieth century, when the mainstream press recognized the term and added meanings to the term, to the end of the 1950s, when new modern meanings of the term began to supersede the original definitions of jazz dance. Different uses of the variations of the term after the 1950s period are also discussed. Similarly, the term ‘swing dance’ is discussed in comparison to the term ‘jazz dance’, and the historical use of the term ‘swing’, in connection with Harlem music, starting from the 1920s to the end of the Swing Era, is brought out in the chapter after that.

2.1 What Is Jazz Dance

The term ‘jazz dance’ generally describes different African-American dance forms which are derived from jazz music and from other jazz-related African-American music forms like rhythm and blues, and mambo[111]. Similarly, like other remarkable dance entities such as ballet and modern dance, jazz dance has included different dance styles. Unlike ballet and modern dance, however, the jazz dance has consisted of various dances which have collectively been called jazz dance as is argued in this chapter.

One of the best-known defenders of the term ‘jazz dance’ was Marshall Stearns who discusses in his *Jazz Dance* study in 1968, how jazz dance developed

[111] Marshall Stearns connects both rhythm and blues and mambo music to jazz music. See: Stearns 1970, pp. 99-108 (The Blues) and 243-256 (Afro-Cuban Music). Roger Pryor Dodge takes a stand against mambo as part of jazz dance in his article ’Jazz Dance, Mambo Dance’ from November 1959 or January 1960 (It is not clear, which one of these alternatives is right one, because the article was re-printed later). See: Dodge 1995, pp. 285-287. Dodge re-explains the history between jazz and mambo music, which is presented in Stearns’ *The Story of Jazz*. From Stearns’ presentation, we can see, that there have been clear connections between jazz and the development of mambo. Later Stearns also found that, ”By the late forties and well into the fifties, dancers at New York City’s Palladium Ballroom on Broadway and 53rd Street, reinforced by jazz dancers from the Savoy, were incorporating a variety of vernacular steps into the Mambo, Cha Cha Cha, and other Latin dances.” See: Stearns 1994, pp. 360-361.

accordingly with jazz music, and how its source was similarly a blend of European and African traditions in the American environment.[112]

In 1959, Stearns made note of the difference between 'modern jazz dance' and 'jazz dance' in his earlier article 'Is Modern Jazz Hopelessly Square?'. According to him, 'modern jazz dance' is "a blend of Euro-American styles, that owes little to jazz and less to jazz rhythms". Although Stearns stated, "the phrase jazz dance has a special meaning for professionals who dance to jazz music (they use it to describe non-tap body movement)", he also considered tap dancing as part of jazz dance.[113]

He described in more detail how jazz music differs from European music[114]:

> To oversimplify radically, European music – and particularly classical music – is more complex harmonically (musical architecture), while African music is more complex rhythmically (sound in flight). The former places the accent on the down beat – when there is any consistent rhythm – much like an unsyncopated march, which makes for relatively abstract or static movements. The latter places the accent off the beat or, indeed, all around it, which makes more realistic flowing movements.

Stearns also explained how African music is polyrhythmic with two or more rhythms played at the same time. He compared this with the analogy of stepping stones across a brook:

> [I]f only four, evenly spaced stones exists, a dancer is forced pretty much to march cross; if many stones are scattered about, a dancer can improvise [a] more fluid crossing. The African dancer – and the real jazz dancer – take advantage of this rhythmic complexity by creating a swinging movement (It can also, of course, become monotonous, depending upon the talent of the dancer.)

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[112] Stearns 1994, xvi (in Introduction). Stearns admits, that his definition is "an oversimplification, of course, for the process is complicated and varies widely in time, place, and intensity". Stearns 1994, xvi-xvii (In Introduction). The study was originally published in 1968. See Stearns 1994 and the publishing information in it.

[113] Stearns 1994, xvi (in Introduction). Stearns says that jazz dance has been described, for example, as non-tap body movement, but jazz dance does contain tap dance movement among other moves. I argue later that tap dancing has been a part of "authentic" jazz dance and thus a part of jazz dance, as it was originally described before new modern jazz dance connotations in the 1950s. See the example about the original jazz dance description: John Martin, 'The Dance: When Jazz Becomes', reprinted, by permission, *The New York Times*, July 1929 in Gus Giordano, *Anthology of American Jazz Dance* (Evanston, Illinois: Orion Publishing House, 1978), pp. 6-7. Martin states in the article, that tap dancer Bill Robinson is part of the jazz dance. Martin also states clearly, "In the vernacular of its practitioners, jazz dancing is classified as ["hoofing"]". Additionally, Stearns describes in his *Jazz Dance* various tap dancers, which clearly refers to the fact, that he considers them to be jazz dancers.

[114] Until 'the talent of the dancer' phrase, the next paragraphs are based on Marshall Stearns: 'Is Modern Jazz Hopelessly Square?', reprinted, by permission, *Dance Magazine*, May 1959 in Giordano 1978, pp. 43-44.

He clarifies later in his *Jazz Dance* study of how European march rhythm accents the first and third beat in four beats measure. He stresses that to real jazzmen this is "square". They would rather play stressing second and fourth beats. In other words, they play by syncopating.[115]

In his earlier article, Stearns takes a stand against Hindu movements and music as part of jazz dance[116]. Hindu movements and music was used at the time by some contemporary dancers like Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman and Jack Cole. Jack Cole was strongly connected to "modern jazz dance" in Stearns' sense of it. Stearns states concerning Hindu music:

> Hindu music does not swing at all in the jazz sense. It's complicated rhythmically, but the complication is linear rather than polyrhythmic; that is, time signatures changes frequently for any number of bars, but two or more time signatures never occur simultaneously.

He also claims that African dancing has "direct, realistic communication", while Hindu dancing communicates by "indirect and formal symbolism". That is why Hindu movements, when connected to jazz, look phony. Thus, 'modern jazz dance' differed from real jazz dance.

Stearns also deals with the term 'American vernacular dance' in his later work, *Jazz Dance*. He clarifies that he uses the term 'vernacular' with a meaning "native and homegrown". Thus, he is stressing its American nature. He also states that "the characteristic that distinguishes American vernacular dance –as it does jazz music- is swing, which can be heard, felt and seen, but only defined with great difficulty."[117]

Stearns' jazz dance study was followed with another jazz dance study from 2014 which tries to define the term jazz dance from the contemporary view of the subject. The authors of the new *Jazz Dance*, Lindsay Guarino and Wendy Oliver have defined jazz dance as a "complex subject" which has become a genre meaning "many things to different people".[118] Their vague definition of the term is clarified by the numerous definitions of the variations of the jazz dance term in the course of the study. Most of the definitions are clearly connected to the modern jazz dance in

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[115] Stearns 1994, p. 176.

[116] The next three paragraphs are based on the sources as follows: Stearns 1959, p. 44. See concerning Jack Cole and his dancing: Constance Valis Hill, 'From Bharata Natyam to Bop – Jack Cole's "Modern" Jazz Dance' in Malnig 2009, pp. 234-236.

[117] Stearns 1994, xvi (in Introduction). Also Bill Treadwell claims the same after interviewing some leading musicians of the Swing Era. See: Bill Treadwell, 'Introduction – What Is Swing?', edited by Bill Treadwell, *Big Book of Swing* (New York: Cambridge House, 1946), pp. 8-10.

[118] Guarino and Oliver 2014, p. 2.

Stearns' sense of modern jazz dance since the end of the 1950s.[119] Thus, they are practically useless in the study which uses the term in the original sense.

2.1.1 The Historical Background

When looking at the earliest examples of using jazz-related dance terms, comic Joe Frisco billed himself as 'The First Jazz Dancer'.[120] He began to call himself a 'jazz dancer' at the latest in the end of March 1917.[121] There exists no earlier evidence of his first jazz dancer claim.[122]

The term 'jazz dance' was used in newspapers, at the latest, in 1917.[123] There is an advertisement in *The New York Times* on both March 8 and 9, where it is stated,

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[119] Ibid., p. 2. The Jazz Dance history part of the work is only 36 pages long, when the whole work is 310 pages long. See: Guarino and Oliver 2014, pp. 33-68. In addition to that, the work includes profiles of the Master Teachers and Choreographers, 1930-1990. From these profiles only Pepsi Bethel's profile represents "authentic" side of jazz dance in the sense of the before the end of the 1950s period. See: Karen Hubbard, 'The Authentic Jazz Dance Legacy of Pepsi Bethel' in Guarino and Oliver 2014, pp. 75-81. The work also includes an article about 'Vernacular Jazz Dance and Race in Hollywood Cinema' with 9 pages. See: Susie Trenka, 'Vernacular Jazz Dance and Race in Hollywood Cinema' in Guarino and Oliver 2014, pp. 240-248 and 14 pages about Tap dancing: Ray Miller, 'Tappin' Jazz Lines' in Guarino and Oliver 2014, pp. 139-152 and history about Hip Hop dance in 10 pages: Moncell Durden, 'Hip-Hop Dance as Community Expression and Global Phenomenon' in Guarino and Oliver 2014, pp. 184-193. Thus, the work contains totally about 76 pages history connected to the "authentic" side of Jazz Dance. It is "about" because there are mentions about "authentic" jazz dances in different chapters of the study. The bottom line, however, is that the most of the study is connected to "modern" jazz dance.

[120] Stearns 1994, p. 190.

[121] 'Cabarets', *Variety*, March 30, 1917, p. 8.

[122] The author of the study has not found any earlier advertisements or articles concerning Frisco's 'jazz dance'. Stearns writes that Frisco billed himself inaccurately as 'The First Jazz Dancer'. See: Stearns 1994, p. 190. Also Roberta C. Martin has not found the date for when Frisco began to use 'jazz dance' term. See for Martin's Frisco article: Roberta C. Martin: ' "Loretta, How Could You?" – An Essay on Chronology', Edited by Paul M. Levitt, *Joe Frisco – Comic, Jazz Dancer, and Railbird, Ed Lowry with Charlie Foy* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999), p. 136.

[123] The next newspapers were examined via ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Manchester Guardian* (1821-2003) and *The Observer* (1791-2003). *The New York Times* (1851-2007) with Index (1851-1993). *The Wall Street Journal* (1889-1993). *The Washington Post* (1877-1994). Jazz and jass-related terms have been searched in this way in the study if not mentioned otherwise. The searches accessed in ProQuest between January 1, 2012 and January 15, 2012. Later this is referenced as the jazz search January 2012. In addition, *The Billboard*, (1894-1960), *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922), *Los Angeles Times* (1886-1922), *New-York Tribune* (1911-1922), *St. Louis Post - Dispatch* (1879-1922) and *Variety* (1905-2000) were searched via ProQuest Historical Newspapers. The search was accessed in ProQuest on July 14, 2015. It is possible that there exists, elsewhere, an earlier mention about 'jazz dance'. The term 'jazz' was used at the latest from 1915. In the article, which discusses both jazz and blues in connection to music, jazz is referred as a thing which "had

"Original "Jazz" Dance and Cuban Danzon Will be introduced by Miss Perot and Mr. Anderson".[124]

According to Marshall Stearns, W. Benton Overstreet assembled 'The Jazz Dance' (subtitled 'Song and Foxtrot') song in 1917. In this song, the Texas Tommy, the Eagle Rock, the Buzz and the Shimmy-She were named as part of the dance routine[125]. Overstreet and his partner Estella Harris' "The Jazz Dance" song was advertised in *The Chicago Defender* during July 1917.[126] Also, the New Orleans newspaper *Times-Picayune* published an article about 'the jazz - the dance' in September 1917. The steps of the dance and music for those steps were described in detail in the article.[127] All the articles refer to the fact that the 'jazz dance' term was spreading around the United States by 1917.

Soon 'jazz dance' got new prefixes and forms as to how the term was written. *The Chicago Daily Tribune* used the terms 'a jazz walking step' and 'jazz steps' in its article in September 1917. The mainstream paper also explained how the steps were executed.[128] *The Chicago Defender* mentioned "[Overstreet's] Jass Dance" in August 1917, and *The Afro-American* mentioned "1918 Special Modern Jazz Dance' in December 1918.[129] From 1918, the mainstream newspapers used the term 'the modern jazz dances', without any definition of this term.[130] At the latest, from 1919, the mainstream newspapers used the terms 'American jazz steps' and 'jazz dances', without any definition of the terms.[131]

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put pep into legs". However, it was not described as a dance in the article. See: Gordon Seagrove, 'Blues Is Jazz and Jazz Is Blues', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 11, 1915, p. E8.

[124] *The New York Times,* March 8, 1917, p. 8 and *The New York Times,* March 9, 1917, p. 7. The place, where they introduced their dances, is "Paradise" At Reisenweber's Columbus Circle.

[125] Stearns 1994, p. 109.

[126] 'Harris & Overstreet', *The Chicago Defender*, July 7, 1917, p. 14 and 'Overstreet Kicks', *The Chicago Defender*, July 28, 1917, p. 8.

[127] 'Girls To Dance Yet Despite The Draft – Latest, the Jazz, Has Made the Once Despised Trombone Famous.', *Times-Picayune*, September 16, 1917, unknown page number.

[128] 'Jazziest Jazz', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 18, 1917, p. 15.

[129] 'Raiding a Cabaret', *The Chicago Defender*, August 18, 1917, p. 4; "Dancing Master's Syndicate Will Give Their 1918 Special Modern Jazz Dance', *The Afro-American*, December 6, 1918, p. 2.

[130] Concerning 'the modern jazz dances' see: Roy L. McCardel, 'The Jarr Family', *The Washington Post*, July 30, 1918, p. 7. Concerning 'modern jazz dances' see: 'Chaffeurs Provide Royal Ball in Berlin', *The New York Times*, April 13, 1927, p. 52. *The New York Times* wrote, "Modern jazz dances were interspersed with the waltz, the cherished national dance of Russia called "kosack" and the equally popular Polish mazurka." The prefix 'modern' seems to be used in the case as a reference to the fact that jazz dances were modern at the time.

[131] 'Dance Craze Grips London', *The New York Times* April 6, 1919, p. 25. See also: 'Swiss Learn Our Dances', *The New York Times* September 14, 1919, p. 25. At least, the Fox Trot, the Tango and old-fashioned waltz were not classified as 'jazz dances' as it was explained in the article, "Swiss visitors are most interested in the Fox Trot and Jazz dances. Many of them are already proficient in the Tango and old-fashioned waltz."

Later, in the 1920s, there were also examples of using 'jazz dance', 'a jazz dance', 'the jazz dance', ' "jazz" dances', 'the jazz dances', 'jazz dancing', 'jass-dancing', 'the jazz and jazz' (in connection to dancing), 'the jazz dancer', 'jazz dancer', 'jazz steps', 'jazz dance steps' and 'the modern jazz dancing', 'modern jazz steps', 'the modern "jazz" steps', 'modern jazz' (in connection to dancing), and 'modern jazz dance' as terms in the newspaper articles.[132] It seems clear that the 'modern' term was used in connection to "authentic" jazz dances. That speaks for those dances that were considered as "modern" at the time, thus not being from a different branch when compared to the other jazz dances. However, there was an exception in the form of Turkish jazz dance invention in 1928. The dance was called

[132] Concerning 'jazz'-related terms see as follows: concerning 'Jass-Dancing': 'The O'Brien Girl' Wistful.', *The New York Times*, October 4, 1921, p. 19. Concerning 'jazz' and 'jazz dancing': 'Forbids Jazz in Schools', *The Washington Post*, February 10, 1922, p. 11. Concerning ' "jazz" dances': 'Church A Sinful Bride to Straton', *The New York Times*, March 20, 1922, p. 8. Concerning 'jazz dance and the jazz': Diana Rice, 'Pavlowa Sees Passing of Jazz Dance', *The New York Times*, May 14, 1922, p. 103. Concerning 'the jazz dance and the jazz dancer': 'One Form of Jazz Departs', *The New York Times*, December 17, 1924, p. 20; Diana Rice, 'New Setting For Old Dances Shows Waltz Again In Favor', *The New York Times*, November 5, 1922, p. 106. Concerning 'the jazz dance': 'Art Exhibitions Of Illustrations, Sculpture and Painting - The Whitney Studio Club.', *The New York Times*, March 4, 1923, X10 and 'Making A Musical Show Behave', *The New York Times*, March 27, 1927, p. X2. Concerning 'the jazz dances': Isaac Anderson, 'The Awkward Age of America', *The New York Times*, March 9, 1924, p. BR3. Concerning 'jazz dance': 'Sodas oust London Tea. American Drinks Popular in Jazz Dance Halls', *The New York Times*, February 14, 1926, p. E7; 'Strange Studio Requests', *The New York Times*, September 26, 1926, p. X5; 'Walker Won Pool Had Tunney in 10th', *The New York Times*, September 1927, p. 17. Concerning 'jazz dancer': 'Boy Jazz Dancer in Court', *The New York Times*, April 6, 1927, p. 18. Concerning 'a jazz dance': Alexander Bakshy, 'Through Alien Eyes', *The New York Times*, May 22, 1927, p. X1. Concerning 'jazz steps': 'Bill To Ban Dances.', *The New York Times*, March 8, 1922, p. 18; 'Dance Revolution In Musical Comedy', *The New York Times*, September 6, 1925, p. RE22; 'Smith Joins Fete For Honeymooners', *The New York Times*, January 9, 1927, p. 29; 'Belgian Priests Place Embargo on Jazz Steps', *The Washington Post*, February 3, 1929, p. S11. Concerning 'jazz dance steps': 'Shriners Will Tread Mystic Maze Of Dance', *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 5, 1922, p. 13; Frederick Arnold, 'The Wiggly Jazz Dance Is On Its Last Legs', *New York Tribune*, June 25, 1922, p. E7; 'At Vaudeville Playhouses', *The Baltimore Sun*, June 6, 1926, p. MT4. Concerning 'the modern jazz dancing': 'Menace of Jazz to The Young.', *The Washington Post*, March 21, 1921, p. 6. Concerning 'the modern "jazz" steps': 'Strand-"Dance Evolutions," Featuring Vlasta Maslova', *The Washington Post*, October 30, 1922, p. 5. Concerning 'modern jazz steps': ' "Little Old New York" Brings Back Old Dances', *The Washington Post*, May 13, 1923, p. 65. Concerning 'modern jazz': 'Forbids Jazz In Schools.', *The Washington Post*, February 10, 1922, p. 11; 'Old-Time Grace 1927'. The clip can be found in the British Pathé archives: http://www.britishpathe.com/video/old-time-grace/query/modern+jazz . The film clip was accessed on November 15, 2015. Concerning 'a modern jazz dance' see: Martha Lee, 'Parents Are Becoming Aroused To Evils Of Jazz Mania', *The Sun*, March 19, 1922, MA3; 'Fair Colleen Better Than Fair Dancer', *The Washington Post*, November 4, 1928, p. A2. It was surprising to find out, that there were not used in the papers the terms 'jass dancer', 'jass dance', 'jasz dancer', 'jasz dance', 'jasz dancing', 'jazs dancer', 'jazs dance' or 'jazs dancing' as searched with the help of the jazz search January 2012. It should be also noticed that 'jass-dancing' term was found only once. In spite of this, 'jass band' was found as a term concerning orchestras. See: 'Drum Is Banished as "Provocative Lure" at Chicago Coed's Dance', *The Washington Post*, November 26, 1916, p. ES13 and 'Display Ad 80 (Carnegie Hall, Clef Club)', *The New York Times*, February 13, 1919, p. 13.

Stamboul, which was danced both to jazz and to Turkish music, in fact, lacking a clear connection to jazz music. The dance thus reminds us of "modern jazz dance" inventions in the way of Stearns' 1959/1968 definition.[133] It also should be noted that most of these articles did not define the 'jazz dance' terms they used.

However, there were exceptions in the 1920s articles, which were mostly connected to a negative stance on jazz dance. It seems that the negativity towards jazz dance led to definitions of the term.[134] In the first of them, as " "jazz" dances" were mentioned as "such dances as "the shimmy", the cheek and jowl shuffle"[135]. In the second of them, jazz dance forms were defined "the toddle, the camel walk, the Chicago flop, the face-to-face or any other of the shivering, shaking, sinuous, distorting convulsions"[136]. In the third of them, jazz dances were defined as the "Shimmy" and the "camel's step" with a mention of "imitation of animal movements".[137] In the fourth of those articles, jazz dancing was known as "wicked hipshaking".[138] Also the Charleston as a jazz dance was defined in several articles. In one of them, bandleader Ted Lewis stated, "the real jazz dance can only be done to jazz rhythm" and he praised "colored choruses". However, he neglected acrobatic, eccentric, ballroom, and even tap dance, and claimed, "the pure jazz styles" are these three: "the blackface or Charleston, the shimmy or Gilda Gray, and the thumb-licking (Ann) Pennington type". According to Stearns, all African-American dancers in the Lewis article were sorted into the Charleston category, which gave an impression about the African-American dancers as "a faceless mob".[139]

Jazz dance was also defined in film clips. In one of them, in the British Pathé film clip called *Old Time Grace* from 1927, it is stated, "The Charleston, Black Bottom, and other movements of Modern Jazz." Additionally, the clip mentions, "Charleston – Heebee Jeebees (or whatever name Jazz is adopting for the nonce)". Thus, according to the clip, the Charleston, Black Bottom and Heebee Jeebees are part of modern jazz or jazz for short. The clip also includes examples of the English country dances. It is clearly stated in the clip that the English country dances were

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133 'Turkey Invents Jazz Dance But "Stamboul" Lacks Music', *The New York Times*, August 24, 1928, p. 14.

134 It seems that only two articles of seven articles, which are included in the next five examples, had a positive attitude towards jazz dance. The positive articles are 'Bezdek Makes Football Squad Charleston; Penn State Adopts Dance as exercise', *The New York Times*, March 11, 1926, p. 15. and 'A Success in London', *The New York Times*, August 22, 1925, p. 4.

135 'To Suppress 'Jazz' Dances', *The New York Times*, February 4, 1920, p. 13.

136 'Ban All Forms of Jazz Dance in Syracuse Public Places', *The New York Times*, February 22, 1921, p. 2

137 'Vatican Organ Condemns Jazz Dances as Immoral', *The New York Times*, February 25, 1924, p. 1.

138 'Italy Bans Hip Wiggles. Italian Police Raid Dance Halls to Save Jazz-Mad Flappers.', *The New York Times* January 29, 1926, p. 10.

139 Stearns 1994, pp. 149-150. The Ted Lewis article was quoted in Stearns 1994 and was from July 1925. See for the latter: Stearns 1994, p. 383. See also: 'Bezdek Makes Football Squad Charleston; Penn State Adopts Dance as exercise', *The New York Times*, March 11, 1926, p. 15 and 'A Success in London', *The New York Times*, August 22, 1925, p. 4.

old-time dances compared to modern jazz.[140] Another British Pathé film clip called *The Jazz Dance – The burlesque by Billy Wells and the Eclair Twins* from 1928 states that burlesque is also part of jazz dance.[141]

The first article about the folk origin for jazz dancing seems to be from May 20, 1928, when *The New York Times* published an article titled 'Tamiris and Busby Berkeley's Troupe Are To Give Europe American "Folk Art" '[142]. In the article 'J. M.' (likely John Martin, the critic of *The New York Times* at the time) writes as follows:

> It seemed beyond the reaches of possibility to find a folk origin for jazz dancing. It's no more a natural product of the soil…Negro dancing contributes to it in large measure, to be sure, but it is the negro dancing of Harlem and not of Africa. The negro of the 135th Street district is far from being a peasant-he is a sophisticated citizen, and his music and his dancing are conscious creations of art, no matter how far back into the past they may echo.

As Martin recognizes jazz dancing and also African-American music, in other words, jazz music, positively as "conscious creations of art", he discusses incongruously and even inaccurately about the origins of jazz, when he states, "the negro is not the only contributor to the development of jazz. By far the most important part of it comes through Ellis Island and the Lower East Side…there is nothing essentially American about it". A couple of decades later, Marshall Stearns argued to the contrary in his *The Story of Jazz*, for the importance of African-Americans in the creating of jazz and for the American character in jazz[143].

In spite of his recognition of African-American jazz dance, Martin explains, "the greatest artistic achievements have been by those least concerned with "Art." Fred Astaire, Buster West, Harland Dixon, Carl Randall and Busby Berkley".[144] All the

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140 *Old-Time Grace* 1927. The clip can be found from the British Pathé archives: http://www.britishpathe.com/video/old-time-grace/query/modern+jazz . The clip was filmed in Harrogate College, Yorkshire. The film clip was accessed on November 15, 2015.

141 The clip can be found from the British Pathé archives: http://www.britishpathe.com/video/the-jazz-dance-a-burlesque-by-billy-wells-and-the/query/jazz+dance. The outlook of the couple which dances in the clip also resembles 'Apache dance', although the dance is not named or defined in the clip. The film clip was accessed on November 15, 2015.

142 Until mentioned otherwise, the main text is based on 'Tamiris and Busby Berkeley's Troupe Are To Give Europe American "Folk Art" ', *The New York Times*, May 20, 1928, p. 107. The letters 'J. M.' likely mean John Martin, the critic of *The New York Times*. See for example: 'Dance Recital Given By Wiener', *The New York Times*, February 27, 1933, p. 10.

143 It is clear that the author of the article could not know all the facts at time. Marshall Stearns argued later for the importance of African-Americans in the creating of jazz and for the American character in jazz in his *The Story of Jazz*, which was first published in 1956. See: Stearns 1970.

144 'Tamiris and Busby Berkeley's Troupe Are To Give Europe American "Folk Art" ', *The New York Times*, May 20, 1928, p. 107.

artists were whites.[145] Thus, it seems that Martin preferred white artists to African-American artists, where jazz dancing was concerned.

W. Adolphe Roberts wrote about jazz dancing in *The American Dancer* article in May 1929 where he deals with jazz dance as a national contribution[146]. He calls it: ”Negro-American jazz dancing”, which is “a unique art form” and which roots are traced in Africa. He describes jazz dancing as a dance where “the entire body is employed as the medium of the expression.” He compares jazz dancing to ballet as an opposite extreme. He also recognizes the connection and longevity between jazz dancing and jazz music:

> [T]he spirit of jazz dance cannot be understood unless we take jazz music into consideration. Which was invented first is an open question. They have, at least, set a furious pace for one another in the past fifteen years…

He uses musicians Ted Lewis and Paul Whiteman as examples of jazz music, and tap dancer Bill Robinson as an example of jazz dancing. Roberts also stresses the fact that jazz dance is racially mixed, when he states:

> So much for the purely Negro aspects of the new technique. I think I have made it clear that I regard jazz dancing as having become the expression of white and as well as black America.

John Martin returns to the subject in the article of *The New York Times* in July 1929. He discusses the idea of jazz dancing as “a possible contributor to the arts”[147]. He uses as an example Clifton Webb’s ’Moanin’ Low’ and George Gerswin’s ’Rhapsody in Blue’, and Charles Weidman’s setting of Gershwin’s ’Preludes’. Martin notes, ”dancers of serious turns of mind turned in the direction of jazz dancing”. He claims that one cause for this has been ”recognition of the merits of certain jazz music by musicians standing”. He likely means that dancers are interested in jazz dancing because of high standard of jazz music. According to Martin, another cause might have been:

> […] the strange notion that in the field of jazz dancing lay the solution of the problem of finding the real American dance. That jazz

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145 All the artists were white. See for Astaire for example: ’Photo Standalone 6’, *The New York Times*, January 18, 1925, p. RP7; for West: Stearns 1994, p. 245; for Dixon: Stearns 1994, p. 53; for Randall for example: Jane Grant, ’The Charleston Prances Into Favor’, *The New York Times*, August 30, 1925, p. SM2; for Berkley for example: ’The Dance: New Musical Comedy Talent’, *The New York Times*, July 22, 1928, p. 96.

146 Until mentioned otherwise, the main text is based on W. Adolphe Roberts, ‘Jazz Dancing’, reprinted, by permission, *The Dance Magazine*, May 1929 in Giordano 1978, pp. 2-5. *The Dance Magazine* was originally *The American Dancer*.

147 Until mentioned otherwise, the main text is based on John Martin, ‘The Dance: When Jazz Becomes’, reprinted, by permission, *The New York Times* July 1929 in Giordano 1978, pp. 6-7.

> is not native to our soil more than any other, even though it has been manufactured among us, is for the moment beside the question.

He seems to claim how the origins of jazz were non-American. However, he adds, ”Whatever the underlying motive, a considerable number of American concert dancers have spent time and energy in the attempt crystallize into significant form the spirit of jazz”. He also criticizes, ”to be sure, none of these efforts has been successful. Perhaps the nearest approach to success was in Charles Weidman’s setting of Gerswin’s ’Preludes’ ”.

Martin continues his criticism by stating that the ”jazz dance is a purely physical manifestation. Its origin coarse and its purpose crude; its effect is upon the senses, not upon the emotions or the intellect”. He states, that “jazz dancing is classified as [hoofing]” which connotes especially to physical skills, and which:

> […] has nothing to do with beauty or feeling, with line or composition or musicality, with movement per se or choreographic substance in any form. It appeals entirely to eye and ear, while dancing reaches through them to the understanding…

After all the criticism, Martin surprisingly admits, ”There is no question of comparative merit here involved: the jazz dance may or may not be good…” adding, ”[t]here is an indisputable authority, almost amounting to genius, in the best performances of Harland Dixon, of Bill Robinson, of Buster West, or Jack Donohue or Fred Astaire”. By mentioning African-American Robinson among white top performers, Martin recognized also an African-American artist as one of the best.

There also existed the “contemporary disdain” against jazz in the end of the 1920s by so-called modern dancers from the modern dance world[148]. One of them, Isadora Duncan, writes in her autobiography like this:

> It seems to me monstrous that anyone should believe that the jazz rhythm expresses America. Jazz rhythm expresses the primitive savage. America’s music would be something different. It has yet to be written…shining boys and girls will dance to this music, not the tottering, ape-like convulsions of the Charleston, but a striking, tremendous upward movement, mounting high above the Pyramids of Egypt, beyond the Parthenon of Greece…[149]

Similarly, in 1926, another modern dancer, Ted Shawn, called the claim that jazz is an American expression as “a lie” and he added, “Jazz is the scum of the great boiling that is now going on, and the scum will be cleared off…”[150] Two decades later he still expressed his disappointment by stating that he “was sick at heart

148 Monaghan 2005, pp. 34 and 63-64.

149 Isadora Duncan, *Isadora: My Life* (London: Cardinal, 1928), p. 244.

150 Ann Daly, *Done Into Dance – Isadora Duncan In America* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1995), p. 219.

that…this whole vast country of millions of white people, still kept on dancing dances of Negro derivation".[151]

Attacks against jazz dance and jazz in the 1920s might have affected the use of the term. According to Terry Monaghan, the original jazz dancers abandoned the 'jazz dance' term because of the attacks. The dancers began to describe themselves as eccentric dancers, chorus dancers, rhythm tap dancers, etc., according to their specialty in dance.[152] Monaghan's claim is supported by Marshall Stearns. Stearns interviewed dancers who danced to jazz music, and who usually called themselves with the terms of their specialty, but not with the 'jazz dancer' or 'jazz' -like terms.[153]

In spite of that, some dancers, like Mura Dehn and Roger Pryor Dodge, still called their dancing as jazz dance in the end of the 1930s.[154] The term 'jazz dance' as a term was used to some extent concerning original jazz dances in the decades between the 1930s and the 1950s, and beyond that, in effect, never disappearing.[155]

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151 Ted Shawn as quoted in Monaghan 2005, p. 63.

152 Monaghan 2005., p. 62.

153 Stearns 1994. Stearns had interviewed "dozens of dancers" (Stearns 1994, An Appreciation, p. XV), so his study gives good picture about the reality, how dancers called themselves, where jazz dance is concerned.

154 An advertisement in *The New York Times*, January 16, 1938, p. 156. The advertisement states: "The Dance Theatre of The Y.M.H.A. Presents Mura Dehn and Roger Pryor Dodge And Group in a Concert Jazz Dance Recital Guest Artist William Matons..." Like Mura Dehn, also Roger Pryor Dodge used the term 'jazz dancing' in 1936. See: 'Negro Jazz as Folk Material for Our Modern Dance', Dodge 1995, pp. 27-32. This was originally from the publication 'National Dance Congress, 1936'. Mura Dehn also used the terms like 'the jazz dance', 'the jazz dancers' and 'jazz' (the last one describing dancing). See: Mura Dehn, 'A Few Words About Jazz Dancing', National Dance Congress and Festival. Proceedings. 1st, 1936. New York, 1936, Mura Dehn papers.

155 There are articles from various years of the 1930s and the 1940s, and the 1950s, where the terms 'jazz dance' or 'jazz dancing' were used. See for example these articles from the 1930s: 'Agnes De Mille Give Fine Dance Recital', *The New York Times*, February 13, 1930, p. 21; 'Old Fiddler Won't Play For 'Hugging Set to Music' ', *The New York Times*, May 27, 1934, p. E6; 'Truckin' To Be Shown.', *The New York Times*, December 8, 1935, p. N3; John Martin, 'Thamar' Revived By Ballet Russe', *The New York Times*, October 12, 1935, p. 13; Chanticleer, 'Amateur Night Draws Throng To Night Club', *The Washington Post*, April 14, 1937, p. 10; an advertisement in *The New York Times*, January 16, 1938, p. 156. The advertisement states: "The Dance Theatre of The Y.M.H.A. Presents Mura Dehn and Roger Pryor Dodge..." See for example these articles from the 1940s: Jean Craighead, 'New Boogie Woogie Dance Steps, With Strange Names, Born of Night Life', *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1943, p. B3; Mura Dehn, 'More Respect For The Clown' Reprinted, by permission, *The Dance Magazine*, March 1946 in Giordano 1978, pp. 24-26; Mura Dehn, 'Is Jazz Choreographic?', *The Dance Magazine*, February 1948, pp. 24-25, Mura Dehn papers. See for example these articles from the 1950s: Howard Thompson, ' 'Of Pictures and People' – 'Le Jazz Hot' ', *The New York Times*, July 25, 1954, p. X5; John MacCormac, 'Reds Crack Down on 'Hooliganism' ', *The New York Times*, April 18, 1954, p. 30; 'Newport Jumps: From Louis to Dizzy', *The New York Times*, July 14, 1957, p. 168.

Similarly, Mura Dehn also continued to use the term 'jazz dance' through the following decades, even in to the 1980s, never stopping the use of it.[156]

In fact, it stays unclear how the abandonment of the term 'jazz dance' as a dance term really happened where eccentric, chorus, and rhythm tap dancers, etc., are concerned. Considering the fact that the term was used throughout the decades, at least to some degree, it would be better to talk about the common reluctance to use the term in public.

The reluctance to use the term 'jazz dance' can probably be seen in the African-American newspapers. When searching the terms 'jazz dance', 'jass dance', 'jasz dance', 'jazs dance', 'jazz dancing', 'jass dancing', 'jasz dancing', 'jazs dancing' from *The Chicago Defender*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Afro-American*, *The New York Amsterdam News,* and *The New York Age*, it seems that these terms were in use, at least in the form of 'jazz dance', in *The Chicago Defender* in June 1917, in *The Baltimore Afro-American* in October 1917, and in *The New York Age* in February 1919, and in *The New York Amsterdam News* in February 1929, respectively. As it has been mentioned before, *The Chicago Defender* also used the form 'jass dance' in August 1917. The term was used in the form of 'jazz dancing', in *The Pittsburgh Courier* in December 1925.[157]

The Pittsburgh Courier, the first issue of which was published in 1911, and *The New York Amsterdam News*, the first issue of which was published in the beginning of the 1900s[158], had years between their start and until they began to use jazz dance-

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[156] In 1946, Dehn used jazz (as connected to dancing), jazz dancing and jazz dancer terms in correlation with jazz dance. Additionally, she used the term 'concert jazz'. See: Mura Dehn, 'More Respect For The Clown' Reprinted, by permission, *The Dance Magazine*, March 1946 in Giordano 1978, pp. 24-26. In 1948, she used the terms jazz, jazz dancing, jazz dances, and she also used jazzmaster as a term, which describes some kind of "director" in a jazz choreography. See: Mura Dehn, 'Is Jazz Choreographic?', *The Dance*, February 1948, pp. 24-25, Mura Dehn papers. In 1966, she used for example the terms jazz dancer and jazz dance. See: Mura Dehn, 'Jazz Dance', *Sounds and Fury Magazine*, June 1966. Reprinted in Giordano 1978, pp. 89-91. Dehn used 'jazz dance' term in the 1970s. See: Mura Dehn, 'Jazz Profound James Berry With Mura Dehn', *Dance Scope*, fall/winter 1976/77, p. 18. Mura Dehn still used 'jazz dance' term in 1985. See Mura Dehn's interview: Dehn 1985. Dehn passed away in 1987. See: 'Mura Dehn, a Choreographer And Specialist in Black Dance', *The New York Times*, February 14, 1987, p. L 15.

[157] 'Raiding a Cabaret', *The Chicago Defender*, August 18, 1917, p. 4; 'Drafting the Boys' King & Co. in Laughable Sketch; Johnny Woods at Monogram; Tim Owsley at the Owl', *The Chicago Defender*, June 23, 1917, p. 4; 'Now It Is The Jazz', *The Baltimore Afro-American*, October 6, 1917, p. 2; 'French Now Want Colored Musicians From United States', *The New York Age*, February 8, 1919, p. 6; 'Alcidian Club Gives Formal Dinner Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 13, 1929, p. 4; 'Seven-Eleven Captures Chicago', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, December 26, 1925, p. 10.

[158] *The Pittsburgh Courier* probably was published from 1910 as there is stated in *The Pittsburgh Courier* issue from March 25, 1911, p. 1, that is "VOL. II". *The New York Amsterdam News* probably was published from the beginning of the 1900s, because in *The New York Amsterdam News* issue from December 6, 1922 is mentioned in the front page "VOL. XVII", which refers to the year 1906 as the beginning (16 years before year 1922). See: *The New York Amsterdam News,* December 6, 1922, p. 1. New York Public Library, which collections the author of the study has been able to use for his dissertation, has *The New*

related terms. A reason for that might have been the reluctance to use 'jazz dance' and 'jazz dancing' as terms, because of the attacks Monaghan mentioned. However, it needs more profound research to find out if that is so. In any case, they began to use jazz dance-related terms clearly later when compared to the other African-American newspapers.

Dancers like Mura Dehn and Roger Pryor Dodge were exceptions among 'professional jazz dance' artists, who gave definitions of jazz dance in the 1930s and, for Dehn at least, in the 1940s and later. Mura Dehn especially tied jazz dance in 1936 to the two different forms, the popular expression of the dance hall, and theatrical jazz or the professional jazz of the theater[159]. Dehn stated that it was the dance hall where new steps, new dances and new rhythms were constantly invented and added to popular dances as she wrote in her article in 1936. According to Dehn, theatrical jazz took its influences from the jazz of the dance hall by bringing in "difficult tricks from other kinds of dancing-turns, kicks, adagios, acrobatics." Similarly, theatrical jazz vice versa influenced dance halls as Dehn claims:

> Such a characteristically theater form as tap, for example, begins to mingle with the steps of the Lindy Hop, Shim Sham Shimmy, etc. Likewise the Adagio combinations now so often done to slow music in the dance halls have come there from the theater."

Thus, bringing in the idea about free interactions between various jazz dances and their different modes. In other words, none of these dances were isolated into any fixed format. In 1946, she considered 'concert jazz' as a form where "the traditional movements, steps and rhythms" were "re-assembled, away from their social or tribal form into a form usable in choreographic composition".[160] In practical terms, that meant to make new versions of the original ones.

Mura Dehn also gave more technical definitions of the jazz dance conception in 1946. She found similarities and differences between African and jazz dancing; similarities especially in rhythm and relaxation, and differences especially in absence of syncopation in African dancing, as according to her, syncopation is essential to jazz. She also stated:

> The basic steps and even rhythms of the jazz are American and not African, although they may not have existed before the Negro people originated it. Just as jazz music has its origin in the Negro adaption of

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York Amsterdam News issues only from November 29, 1922. See: www.nypl.org and there 'Amsterdam News'.

159 This paragraph from now on and the next paragraph are based on Mura Dehn, 'A Few Words About Jazz Dancing', National Dance Congress and Festival. Proceedings. 1st, 1936, Mura Dehn papers.

160 See: Mura Dehn, 'More Respect For The Clown' Reprinted, by permission, *The Dance Magazine*, March 1946 in Giordano 1978, pp. 24-26.

> the white people's melodic and musical structure, jazz dancing has its origin in the country, folk and social dances of America.[161]

Thus, Dehn stressed the fact that jazz dance was basically more American than African. Also Roger Pryor Dodge emphasized the American aspect of jazz dance, when he gave a more general explanation about it in 1936[162]:

> Negro jazz, the folk form I propose for American consideration, is an actual new folk form, susceptible of extension. It is a valid basis for American art. Neither jazz music nor jazz dancing is pure African art, but Negro development of our art – and by our art I mean the forms a combined Western culture has been evolving for hundreds of years.

He also connected jazz dancing to folk dancing by comparing the former to walking and thus bringing out two different aspects of jazz dance, which reminds the way Dehn explained the same by showing how jazz dance relates to both the dance hall and theatrical forms. According to Dodge:

> In jazz dancing, as probably in all folk dancing, there are two forms of movement. One comprises a series of juxtaposed movements which except for the addition of dynamics, depend entirely upon repetition for adequate presentation. The other form of movement is as natural as walking. When a person walks, we do not say "Oh, all he is doing is repeating the placing of first his left foot and then his right." No. The function of walking is thought of as a thing in itself which might take too long, but is never too repetitive. Jazz has in its various forms of the strut and particularly in its latest development, trucking, accomplished a natural function of movement that is as repetitive as walking, but like walking, still remains a flowing thing in itself."

In addition to the Dehn and Dodge articles, critic Jean Craighead wrote about jazz dancing in *The Washington Post* in 1943. She had at least two different articles about jazz dance in *The Washington Post* at the time. In the first of them, she explained how African-Americans had contributed to "the rise of Jazz", and how they "borrowed from folk dances and tribal dances to enlarge their fitting vocabulary".[163] Craighead stated in her later article as follows:

> The furious development of jazz dancing has not stopped. Although many of the steps have been set and tabbed with strange names from

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[161] Mura Dehn, 'More Respect For The Clown' Reprinted, by permission from *The Dance Magazine*, March 1946 in Giordano 1978, pp. 24-26.

[162] This and the next three paragraphs are based on 'Negro Jazz as Folk Material for Our Modern Dance from Hot Jazz and Jazz Dance', Dodge 1995, pp. 27, 29 and 32. This article was originally from National Dance Congress, 1936.

[163] Jean Craighead, 'Washington Frolics in Full Stride; It's a Wartime Tradition of Ours', *The Washington Post*, December 4, 1943, p. B3. Jean Craighead's article also contains racist connotations, because she writes, "The Negro, with his inherent sense of rhythm..."

> the vocabulary of hot dance, it is not yet a completed art form such as folk dancing and ballet.[164]

She also analyzed different jazz connected dances like Big Apple, Cakewalk, the Charleston and the Shag, and thus brought out the larger scope of different jazz dances. She stressed African-Americans' part in this as she wrote, "Nevertheless, the Negro race remains the dominant creator of new Americanisms in jazz dancing". Craighead also connected jazz dancing to the surrounding dress and language culture in the Washington context by explaining how:

> […] the language and the costume becomes Washington's original contribution to the jazz dancing. Although it was stirring and rising in Harlem, it went wild in Washington's high schools and became nationally famous in the halls and ballroom of the Hotel Washington.

It becomes clear, with the help of the articles, that Jean Craighead used jazz dancing and the jazz dance terms in connection to original jazz dances and to the surrounding culture of these dances. She credits Harlem as the place from where the culture began to spread to Washington D. C., thus implying the importance of Harlem in the case.

The beginning of so-called modern jazz dance in the Stearns' 1959/1968 use of the term is obvious in the 1940s, when there were modern dancers like Jack Cole who experimented with mixing American Modern, African-American social dance forms and classical East Indian dance technique, and who danced to the rhythms of fast swing. Cole has been heralded as the 'Father of Modern Jazz Dance', even if he did not call his dancing 'modern jazz dance' in the 1940s, and he denied later that he was responsible for "modern jazz dance".[165]

"Jazz dancing" with the modern dance approach and without a clear connection to jazz music was labeled as 'modern jazz dance' around 1958.[166] The term 'modern jazz' was used earlier, at least from 1954, indicating the modern dance approach

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[164] This and the next two paragraphs are based on Jean Craighead, 'New Boogie Woogie Dance Steps, With Strange Names, Born of Night Life', *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1943, p. B3. It is possible, but not sure, that Craighead's articles were inspired by the idea of the U.S. war politics which boasted about national unity to some degree at the time. This is discussed in the chapter 'The Consequences of Herbert White's Methods in Guiding His Dance Group' concerning the *LIFE* 1943 article.

[165] Constance Valis Hill, 'From Bharata Natyam to Bop – Jack Cole's "Modern" Jazz Dance', Malnig 2009, pp. 234-236. Constance Valis Hill claims that Jack Cole danced his 'Sing Sing Sing' to the "rhythms of swing in the tempos of bop". Even if average tempos were possibly higher in be bop music than in swing, also swing music was played to very fast tempos.

[166] *The New York Times* February 9, 1958, p. X10. There is an advertisement in 'musical education' section, where it is stated, "A New community of the arts - The Seven Arts Center, a university of the arts...Department of Modern Dance...Classes in Primitive and Modern Jazz Dance under the direction of TALLEY BEATTY." It seems clear, that 'modern jazz dance' in this case was derived from the modern dance approach because 'modern jazz dance' classes were located in Department of Modern Dance.

which lacked a clear connection to jazz music.[167] The term 'modern jazz dance' was defined in 1959, when Marshall Stearns wrote his earlier-discussed article 'Is Modern Jazz Dance Hopelessly Square?'[168] In it, Stearns claimed it "was crucial – Broadway went for ballet and the contemporary dance." He connected George Balanchine's work in *On Your Toes* (from 1936) and Agnes De Mille's choreography for *Oklahoma!* (from 1943), as the innovators to the process. As he puts it: "The dance earned an important place on Broadway, but Jazz Dance disappeared."

However, jazz dance did not disappear totally. Stearns admits that there were still exceptions on Broadway, where jazz dance was used, at least partially, like *Knickerbocker's Holiday* (from 1938), *the Hot Mikado* (from 1939), and *Swingin' The Dream* (from 1939). And there was still jazz dance in the Broadway play *Gentleman Prefer Blondes* (from 1949), where two jazz dancers, Honi Coles and Charles Atkins, were performing.

2.1.2 The Beginning of Jazz Ballet

Ballet was connected to jazz much earlier than in *On Your Toes* from 1936. The term 'jazz ballet' was used already in 1920 when *San Francisco Chronicle*

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[167] 'Display Ad 97 – No Title', *The New York Times*, June 20, 1954, p. X12. The article states, "Lenox Workshop of Performing Arts (Lenox, Mass.—(near Tanglewood) ...Ethnic...Ballet...Modern & Choreography...Modern Jazz & Choreography – Leon Palmisano, Jr...Theatre...Music...Art..." It is possible that 'modern jazz' was taught with the modern dance approach concluding from the names of other dances. However, that is not sure. There also is an advertisement in *The New York Times* in December 1954, where it is stated, "The New York Academy of Dance – Ballet – Modern, Tap, Modern Jazz, Mimo-Drama – Ballroom". It is not clear if 'modern jazz' was taught with the modern dance approach, especially because they also taught tap dance, which has been part of the original jazz dances. See the advertisement: 'Display Ad 149 – No Title', *The New York Times*, December 12, 1954, p. X18. There also is an advertisement in *The Washington Post* on September 4, 1955, p. H5, where it is stated, "The Jones-Haywood School of Ballet – Ballet – Toe – Modern Jazz – Modern Tap..." It is possible that the school taught jazz and tap with the modern dance approach. However, that is not sure. The same also goes to 'introducing the June Taylor School of The Dance...Ballet – Toe – Tap – Acrobatic – Musical Comedy – Modern – Modern Jazz...' The school advertised itself to be "New York's most modern dance school". The advertisement can be found in *The New York Times*, May 13, 1956, p. 132. There also is a similar advertisement in *The New York Times*, January 2, 1957, p. 131: "Ballet Arts... Ballet, Modern Jazz, Musical Comedy, Tap, Modern Plastic, Drama Dance, Spanish, Character, Oriental, Actor's Workshop...Ballet Arts School "61" Carnegie Hall, New York 19, N.Y.".

[168] This paragraph from now on and the next paragraph are based on Stearns 1959, pp. 41-42. Stearns seems to be inexact as far as *On Your Toes* is concerned. Ray Bolger hoofed (tap danced) in *On Your Toes*, and hoofing overall was part of the show. Otherwise the show had a clear connection to ballet. See: 'Boston Premiere For 'On Your Toes' ', *The New York Times*, March 23, 1936, p. 22 and 'The Play – 'On Your Toes,' Being a Musical Show With a Book and Tunes and a Sense of Humor.', *The New York Times*, April 13, 1936, p. 14.

advertised 'Jazz Ballet and Beauty Chorus'.[169] The connection between jazz and ballet happened, at the latest, around 1925, when Mikhail Mordkin, the Russian dancer said that he "hopes to see an American ballet, which will embody the elements of modern Jazz". He continued:

> I want a jazz ballet – one that will achieve the emotional effect of an animal's cry, a primitive wail or a woman's scream – a ballet that can be interpreted by animal movements epitomizing perfection of lithesomeness and graceful bodily action in faultless rhythm.
>
> I want a jazz ballet where that can be interpreted by jazz movements, entirely new renditions where the dancer first indulges in the most imperceptible hesitation and then throws himself into the beat of the dance.[170]

Mordkin's wish seemed to be partially fulfilled the next year, when *Skyscrapers* jazz ballet opened on Broadway. *Skyscrapers* and its music were composed by John Alden Carpenter in collaboration with Robert Edmond Jones. Indeed, Carpenter said, "it is not really a jazz ballet. But that is merely a way of saying it…" adding the phrase "More power to jazz!" to his statement. Thus, he emphasized the jazz aspect of the play.

Skyscrapers had a real connection to jazz dancing, because the play was staged and directed by Sammy Lee, who was assigned to give a real jazz quality to the show as he was "a hoofer" from the dance team of Ryan and Lee. In addition to him, the play included Paul Whiteman, whose orchestra was playing music in *Skyscrapers*[171], and Roger Pryor Dodge who performed as a dancer and acted in one of the leading roles[172].

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169 'Techau Tavern', *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 30, 1920, p. 5.

170 See for Mikhael Mordkin in 1925: 'What is to become of the Jazz', *The Washington Post*, February 1, 1925, p. SM3. *The New York Herald* published most of Mordkin's statements already on November 30, 1924. See: 'Jazz to Revive Dying Ballet Is Mordkin's Aim', *The New York Herald*, November 30, 1924, p. 15. Indeed, John Alden Carpenter had a jazz ballet "Krazy Kat" already in 1922 which possibly was connected to dancing to jazz. See: Oliver M. Sayler, 'Theatre of Let's Pretend', *Variety*, June 9, 1922, p. 39. There also seemed to be other experiments with jazz and ballet between 1920 and 1925. See for example: 'Forty-two Cities To Send Visitors To Sciots Affair', *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 26, 1920, p. C8; the picture, 'MISS MURIEL VANDERBILT', *The New York Herald*, December 16, 1924, p. 20.

171 H. I. Brock, 'Jazz Is To Do A Turn in Grand Opera', *The New York Times*, February 14, 1926, p. SM5.

172 'American Ballet 'Skyscrapers' Feb. 19', *The New York Times*, February 8, 1926, p. 26. It is stated briefly in the article, 'Roger Dodge'. Roger Pryor Dodge's son Pryor Dodge confirms, that his father was in *Skyscrapers* in 1926. See Dodge 1995, p. x in preface. *The New York Times* article on February 8 claims, "Robert Edmund Jones, who designed both novel dances and stage settings...Samuel Lee has supervised the dance drama and a negro group has been organized by Frank Wilson." *The New York Times* had an article, where it is stressed Sam (Samuel or Sammy) Lee's role in *Skyscraper*s as the director of the dance scenes. John Alden Carpenter was interviewed in the latter article, so it seems to be more

In addition to that, the Imperial Russian Ballet, where Mordkin also danced, was planning for 1927, "a world première of a new ballet to express the effect of modern jazz music".[173] At approximately the same time, between 1927 and 1928, "Baby in der Bar" jazz ballet, composed by Wilhelm Grosz, had its first production in Hanover. Later, in 1931, the jazz ballet got its first American presentation in Cincinnati. The jazz ballet was, according to an article, "the combination of a grotesque comedy libretto and a jazz score". The article also referred to the lack of jazz music in the production as "In the original German production the music was supplied by a jazz band seated on the stage, but, possibly because of lack of space, this was not the case here".[174]

Mura Dehn explained in 1936 how ballet had absorbed and reshaped "all the important vital dance movements throughout the centuries of its existence." She claimed, "Even now ballet is ready to absorb the influence of modern dance and jazz contributions." Dehn found examples such as Muriel Stuart, who taught modern dance technique at the School of American Ballet, and Paul Draper who mixed ballet with classical tap. Dehn also complained about the part of modern dance in this process: "It's very much to be regretted that at the present time the rich sources in jazz are for the most part going to waste so far as the modern dance is concerned."[175] Thus, she implied that ballet, modern dance, and jazz dance in the "authentic" sense were mixing at the time.

Mura Dehn used later the term ballet in connection to jazz as she created The Animal Circus Jazz Ballet in 1948. She used original jazz dance artists like Leon James in her jazz ballet.[176] She also choreographed a "Swing America" presentation which was staged at Madison Square Garden in 1939 by the Young Communist League. The presentation used swing music and the apposite dance vocabulary. As punchlines, there were "There'll be no Tango, no Charleston, no Black Bottom, or Lindy Hop, Quadrille, Castle Walk, or Rumba. There [will] be no Ragtime or Jazz. Just SWING AMERICA!".[177] Mura Dehn's mentioned presentations seemed to be some kind of "modern" versions of her other jazz dance activities, and thus they were in contrast to her more "authentic" jazz dance interpretations.

In 1938, Ray C. B. Brown discussed "the development of an independent ballet characteristic of our own life". He suggested developing their own "American ballet" according to the ideas which director Lincoln Kirstein had presented in his

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reliable, where Lee's role in *Skyscrapers* is concerned. See: 'Jazz Is To Do A Turn In Grand Opera', *The New York Times*, February 14, 1926, p. SM5.

173 'Diaghileff Ballet To Appear Here Soon', *The New York Times*, November 28, 1927, p. 18.

174 John Martin, 'The Dance: A Fantastic Jazz Ballet', *The New York Times*, July 26, 1931, p. X7.

175 Mura Dehn, 'A Few Words About Jazz Dancing', National Dance Congress and Festival. Proceedings. 1st, 1936. New York 1936, Mura Dehn papers.

176 Mura Dehn, 'Is Jazz Choreographic?', *Dance*, February 1948, p. 25, Mura Dehn papers.

177 Monaghan 2005, p. 60.

Blast at Ballet: A Corrective for the American Audience pamphlet. Kirstein stated in the pamphlet how "authentic" jazz dance forms were the base for this new innovation, connecting "Charleston, Black Bottom, Suzy Q, Lindy Hop, Shag and Big Apple" and "elements of rhumba and tango, fragments of Negro, Mexican, Cuban and Argentine gesture and movement" to this process of creating the new ballet version. Brown summarized this process in his statement of how "It is with native dance material that Kirstein would have our American choreographers exercise their creative ability."[178]

The term jazz ballet was connected to the pure ballet dance techniques in 1940, when *A Thousand Times Neigh* was presented at the World's Fair in New York. According to John Martin's review in *The New York Times*: "the dancing remains within the field of genuine ballet. The girls are on point and there is no tap. It is, however, a distinctly jazz ballet, for Mr. Kirstein reports that the music is very hot and the dancing quite in accord with it."[179] Thus, Martin, in his review, referred to jazz music. Later, until the Stearns article in 1959, the term jazz ballet was connected varyingly to both jazz and ballet, where jazz ballets were concerned.[180]

2.1.3 Authentic Jazz Dance Term Comes In

According to Marshall Stearns and Roger Pryor Dodge's similar kind of observations, the original jazz dance was disappearing from TV and dance schools by the end of the 1950s.[181] After the Stearns' 1959 article, the term 'modern jazz dance' was used more and more.[182] Jack Cole stated his disappointment in the

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[178] Ray C. Brown, 'Kirstein Indignant In 'Blast at Ballet' ', *The Washington Post*, October 23, 1938, p. TS5.

[179] John Martin, 'The Dance: At The Fair', *The New York Times*, May 5, 1940, p. 155.

[180] Concerning Dehn's 'Animal Circus' Jazz Ballet in 1948 see Dehn 1948, p. 25. Al Minns and Leon James did "native" (original) jazz steps in their Jazz Ballet No 1 in 1959. See: Monaghan 1997, p. 304. Jerome Robbins made his 'N.Y. Export, op. Jazz' Ballet in 1958, which was described as "Ballet In Jazz", and which preferred ballet to jazz. See: 'Ballet in Jazz', *The New York Times*, August 31, 1958, p. SM42.

[181] Stearns 1959, pp. 40-44. Also Roger Pryor Dodge saw in the end of 1959: "While the great Lindy Hoppers stood on the sidelines, a new breed of dancer, fortified with ballet and modern dance training, took over show business and danced to some form of jazz music. The new dance has none of the style, refined or not, of the Negro dance. With its few movements derived from jazz, it became a choreographer's idea of what dancers with ballet or modern training should do to jazz music. All of TV, movie, and musicals are loaded with this type of dance.", 'Jazz Dance, Mambo Dance', Dodge 1995, p. 284.

[182] Giordano 1978 and there especially articles Jack A. Miller, 'Modern Jazz Dance Midwest', reprinted by permission, *Dance Magazine*, January 1961; Jana Czernitzka Homsey, 'Luigi', Reprinted, by permission, *Dance Magazine*, April 1962; William Como, 'The "Big Noise" is Jazz Tap', reprinted with permission, *Dance Magazine*, January 1963 and Clayton Cole, ' "It's gone silly!" ', Reprinted with permission, *Dance Magazine*, December 1963. Both terms 'modern jazz' and 'modern jazz dance' were used in the articles. In addition to those, 'modern jazz' was cited as a music term in John Martin, 'Dance: Ballet resume-1', Reprinted, by permission, *The New York Times*, March 1961 in Giordano 1978.

quality of modern jazz (dance) in 1963: ”almost all that is called modern jazz today is a misnomer. I personally believe the quality of such dancing is closer in style to ’pop’ music than to jazz.”[183]

Terry Monaghan claims, concerning the professional jazz dancing artists at the time:

> [They] appeared to feel no special need for a general descriptive ”generic” term for their activities until after WW2. The claims of the new Broadway styles of theatrical dance to be ”Modern Jazz Dance” or even ”Jazz Dance” provoked only limited responses.[184]

Likely, as a counter reaction to the increased use of the term ‘modern jazz dance’ in the connection of modern dance, Marshall Stearns began to use the term ‘jazz dance’ in the form of ‘real, authentic jazz dance’ in 1959, when the term ‘jazz dance’ with the prefix ‘authentic’ was possibly used first time.[185] At the beginning of the 1960s, such dancers like Al Minns and Leon James began to use the term ’authentic jazz dance’, when they advertised their dance teaching activities with the help of the one and the same advertisement appearing in *Dance Magazine* every month between December 1960 and October 1961. They advertised themselves as “The Jazz Dancers”, but in the lower right corner of the advertisement is mentioned, “Specialists in the History of Authentic Jazz Dance”.[186] They also called themselves

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[183] Clayton Cole, ‘ ”It’s gone silly!” ‘, Reprinted with permission, *Dance Magazine*, December 1963 in Giordano 1978, p. 73.

[184] Monaghan 2005, p. 63.

[185] Marshall Stearns used ’real, authentic jazz dance’ as the term in the Playboy Club clip from 1959, where he discusses various styles of jazz dancing. See: ‘Al Minns and Leon James; Playboy Club Show, excerpt’, Ernie Smith Jazz Film Collection, 1894 - 1979 #491, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Washington D.C. The collection description claims, that the copyright of the excerpt is from 1964. See: http://amhistory.si.edu/archives/d4491-1.htm and there: ‘18. Al Minns and Leon James; Playboy Club Show, excerpt’. The site was accessed on November 15, 2015. It is possible that the copyright is from 1964, but the clip was done already in December 1959. That can be confirmed in Stearns’ *Jazz Dance*. See: Stearns 1994, p. 425. Ernest (Ernie) Smith did the film list for Stearns’ *Jazz Dance*. See: Stearns 1994, pp. 403-404. Also ‘Playboy’s Penthouse – Show Run-Down Sheet’ (The date of the sheet is unknown) confirms that the date is December 1959. That can be found from ‘Subseries 2E: Television, 1951-65, Undated’, Marshall Stearns papers, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University Libraries.

[186] Monaghan 2005, p. 63. See also: Terry Monaghan, ‘Al Minns: The Incorrigible Lindy Hopper, 1920-1985’, unpublished. Monaghan sent a copy of this to the author of the dissertation in the end of December 2009. Monaghan claimed in the unpublished article: ”They (Al Minns and Leon James) regularly advertised their activities at the time in *Dance Magazine* as the leading Authentic Jazz Dance teachers.” There, however, are no notes in Monaghan’s Al Minns article. Instead of that, Monaghan writes in his ‘Jazz Legacy’ article in 1997/1998, that James and Minns advertised themselves as ”Al-Leon, The Jazz Dancers – Specialists in the History of Authentic Jazz Dance” in April-August editions of Dance Magazine in 1961. See: Monaghan 1997, p. 309. Monaghan is clearly wrong with dates as Minns and James advertised with the same advertisement in *Dance Magazine* once a month between December 1960 and October 1961. See: ‘Al Minns – Leon James – “The Jazz Dancers” ‘, *Dance Magazine*, December 1960, p. 27; ‘Al Minns – Leon James – “The Jazz Dancers” ‘, *Dance Magazine*, January 1961, p. 28; ‘Al Minns – Leon James – “The Jazz

"The Authentic Jazz Dancers" in an advertisement in January – February, 1961.[187] A Russian immigrant, dancer Mura Dehn also used the terms 'authentic jazz dance' and 'the authentic jazz' from at least 1964, and she still used it, at least, until 1982.[188] Dehn, who originally danced jazz in Europe, came to New York in 1930, because she wanted to come home to where jazz dance was created.[189]

Dancer Pepsi Bethel joined them at the beginning of the 1970s when he began to use the term 'authentic jazz dance'[190]. Also rhythm tap dancer and choreographer Cholly Atkins used the term 'authentic jazz dance', but mostly in the form of 'authentic jazz'[191]. The term 'authentic jazz' which described jazz music was used much earlier, from at least 1919.[192] The terms 'authentic jazz dance' and 'authentic jazz' mean the same original jazz dances that Stearns has described.[193]

Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, February 1961, p. 28; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, March 1961, p. 56; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, April 1961, p. 50; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, May 1961, p. 57; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, June 1961, p. 61; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, July 1961, p. 12; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, August 1961, p. 12; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, September 1961, p. 30; 'Al Minns – Leon James – "The Jazz Dancers" ', *Dance magazine*, October 1961, p. 53.

187 'Al-Leon Go On Tour With Randy Weston', The Dancing Newsletter, Volume II No.1, January – February 1961, Minns Albert – Dance Clipping File, the New York Public Library.

188 Mura Dehn used 'authentic jazz dance' term concerning her course in fall 1964. See: *Down Beat* (magazine) March 26, 1964, vol. 31, no 8, p. 193. There is stated, "...dancer Mura Dehn will give a lecture-demonstration course "Authentic Jazz Dance," assisted by James Berry and Teddy Brown. The fall semester begins Sept. 21". There also is an advertisement, where it is stated as follows, "A New Course – Authentic Jazz Dance – Fri., 6:00 P.M. M. Dehn". See: 'Display Ad 136, The Dance', *The New York Times*, August 30, 1964, p. E12. She still used the authentic jazz term in 1982. See: Glances at past: Documentation of jazz dance. Produced by ARC videodance as part of television series on Eye on dance. Recorded June 1, 1982 at ARC video studios in New York. This is called later Dehn 1982.

189 Dehn 1985.

190 Monaghan 2005, p. 63. Pepsi Bethel likely started to use the term 'authentic jazz dance' in the very beginning of the 1970s as it is stated in *Dance World:* "Since 1971 [he] has been (an) artistic, director-choreographer for Pepsi Bethel Authentic Jazz Dance Theatre". See: John A. Willis, *Dance World 1978* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1979), p. 186. Pepsi Bethel used the term 'authentic jazz dance', at least, until the beginning of the 1990s, when he published his autobiography. See: Pepsi Bethel, *Authentic Jazz Dance: a retrospective* (unknown publishing place: American Authentic Jazz Dance Theatre, 1990).

191 Cholly Atkins and Jacqui Malone, *Class Act – The Jazz Life of Choreographer Cholly Atkins* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001). Atkins used mostly the 'authentic jazz' term in his autobiography.

192 The earliest article, where the 'authentic jazz' term is used might be 'The Real, Right Jazz.', *The Manchester Guardian,* April 4, 1919, p. 6. The term 'authentic jazz' is used there in the connection with music like in the other similar kind of articles later. See for example: 'The Wonderful World of Jazz', *The Washington Post*, June 18, 1939, p. B8 and Austin Stevens, 'Books of The Times', *The New York Times,* January 9, 1943, p. 11.

193 This becomes very clear, when examining dance activities of James, Minns and Bethel at the time. See for James and Minns: *Ebony,* August 1961, pp. 32-34, 36 and 38. See for Bethel for example: 'Dance: A Final Mixture: Bethel's 'Jazz Suite' and 'New Orleans' Bring New York Festival to a Close', *The New York Times*, September 10, 1974, p. 37; Mark

There was also used the term 'authentic jazz ballet' in 1959, when Al Minns and Leon James defined their Jazz Ballet No. 1. They used original jazz steps in the program's first half, with Marshall Stearns narrating, and the second half consisted of "reinterpretation of the Harlequin, Pantaloo, Pierrot and Columbine" plot with Minns, James, Jacqueline Walcott and Will Sandberg. That was likely the only jazz ballet from them.[194] Ten years later, in 1969, both James and Minns criticized jazz ballet and jazz ballet dancers. They both felt that jazz ballet was "more ballet than jazz". Minns also said, "You can't find any strong jazz-ballet dancers today. Kids who are trained in ballet are too effete. They just don't lay down any leather."[195]

In spite of their use of the term 'authentic jazz dance', Al Minns and Leon James also used 'jazz dance' without any prefix, as a term for their dancing activities through the 1960s, and also referred to themselves as 'jazz dancers' at the end of the 1960s.[196] They used these terms meaning the same jazz dances as Stearns did in his *Jazz Dance* study. Al Minns still used the 'jazz dancing' term in a 1984 interview in Sweden.[197] Dehn also continued to use the term 'jazz dance' without any prefix, as she filmed *The Spirit Moves* documentary starting at the beginning of the 1950s and finishing the documentary in 1986.[198]

Mura Dehn and Louise 'Mama Lou' Parks Duncanson, both Savoy Ballroom dancers and dance company owners, also used the 'traditional jazz dance' term[199]

Deitch, 'Pepsi Bethel – Master of Jazz Dance', *The New York Times*, August 6, 1978, p. D12 and 16. However, it is unclear, when Charles 'Cholly' Atkins began to use the term 'authentic jazz' to mean same dances like James, Minns and Bethel did. His autobiography does not give a clear answer to this. See: Atkins and Malone 2001.

194 Monaghan 1997, p. 304. This Jazz Ballet was advertised in *The New York Times* at the same time. See: Joan Spindler, 'So Small, So Full', *The New York Times*, June 7, 1959, p. XX37.

195 'Laying Down Some Leather', *The New Yorker*, February 15, 1969, p. 31.

196 'Popular Dances From The Cakewalk to The Watusi – Popular dance team traces fascinating history of American social dancing', *Ebony* magazine, August 1961, p. 33. The article uses the terms 'jazz dances' and 'jazz-based dances'. James and Minns also called themselves as 'the Jazz Dancers' in 1961 and 1962. See for 1961: the earlier 'authentic jazz dance' discussion in this study, and for 1962: 'A Generation of Jazz' article in *Ballroom Dance Magazine*, February 1962, p. 4. They still used 'jazz dance' term in 1969. See: ' Laying Down Some Leather', *The New Yorker*, February 15, 1969, p. 29. Minns and James also called themselves as 'jazz dancers' and used 'jazz dancing' term in 1969. See: 'TOP NEGRO STARS FEATURE DANCE IN JAZZ AT TOWN HALL FAMILY SERIES', *The "Queens Voice"*, January 17, 1969, p. 11, 'James & Minns' folder, Marshall Stearns papers, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

197 Albert 'Al' Minns interview by Swedish Swing Society, October 1984. This can be found in YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6DlmqOWBlg and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQvlwNxKJHo . The film clips were accessed on February 28, 2015. The author of the study also has a copy of the interview.

198 See for the summary of Mura Dehn's Spirit Moves documentary and her jazz dance activities: Karen Backstein, 'Keeping Spirit Alive: The Jazz Dance testament of Mura Dehn' in Gabbard 1995, pp. 229-243.

199 Concerning Dehn: 'Traditional Jazz Dance Company, Inc.' was occasionally pre-printed in her papers. See for example: Mura Dehn papers and there box 21, folder 254 (The Spirit Moves (film). According to that: "Traditional Jazz Dance Company, inc was co-

basically in the same way 'authentic jazz dance' was used by the dancers[200]. Parks also used 'jazz dance', 'jazz dancers' and even 'authentic jazz dance' terms meaning the same jazz dances as Atkins, Bethel, Dehn, James, Minns and Stearns did.[201]

2.1.4 The Variety of Variations – Back to Jazz Dance in Its Original Context?

The term 'jazz dance', with various prefixes and forms concerning jazz music-connected dance forms, was used frequently in the past, even when modern jazz dance began to disconnect the term from jazz music in the 1950s. Because the term 'jazz dance' is still connected to modern jazz dance in the sense that the term has been used from the end of the 1950s, it seems difficult to use 'jazz dance' in the way Stearns used it to describe original jazz dance forms without confusion with modern jazz dance.[202]

This confusion is increased with newer 'jazz dance'-related terms like 'club jazz dance', 'rhythm-generated jazz dance', 'theatrical jazz dance', 'Broadway jazz dance/musical theater jazz dance', 'classic or classical jazz dance', 'commercial jazz dance', 'contemporary jazz dance', 'Latin jazz dance', 'lyrical jazz dance', 'pop jazz

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founded by Mura Dehn and James Berry in 1954". See also: Dehn 1976/1977, p. 18. Concerning Louise Parks Duncanson: 'Mama Lu Parks 61; Actress and Dancer Headed Jazz Troupe', The New York Times, September 1990, D25. See also: Terry Monaghan, ' "Mama Lou" Parks CRASHING CARS & KEEPING THE SAVOY 'S MEMORY ALIVE'. This was published in http://www.savoyballroom.com/dancefloor/mama_lou.htm . As of 2014, the site was not working. The author of the study has a copy of this. See also: Monaghan 2005, p. 63.

[200] Dehn used terms 'jazz dance', 'traditional jazz dance' and 'authentic jazz' basically in the similar way, because she stated in 1982, that she "was learning the authentic jazz and I was doing the authentic jazz with the russian accent all my life". She also said, "I recreated it (the authentic jazz) on my way. Probably you wouldn't recognize this jazz, but however, I never did modern dance." See: Dehn 1982. Also already mentioned "SWING AMERICA!" choreography seems to be, at least, modernistic version of jazz dance. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 60. Dehn also was originally "trained in the movement style of Isadora Duncan". See: Backstein 1995, pp. 231-232. However, it seems that, in spite of Dehn's dance background, her interest in jazz dance in the "authentic" sense was real, and she tried to research and write about jazz dance in terms of authentic jazz dance. See: Monaghan 1997, pp. 300-302, where Monaghan defends Dehn's life work in jazz dance.

[201] Monaghan 2005, p. 63. 'Mama Lu Parks 61; Actress and Dancer Headed Jazz Troupe', The New York Times, September 1990, D25. See also: Terry Monaghan, ' "Mama Lou" Parks CRASHING CARS & KEEPING THE SAVOY 'S MEMORY ALIVE'. This was published in http://www.savoyballroom.com/dancefloor/mama_lou.htm . As of 2014, the site was not working. The author of the study has a copy of this.

[202] This is easy to prove, when using Google and search for "jazz dance". There are 929,000 hits. When using "modern jazz dance", there are only 184,000 hits. However, it seems that many of "jazz dance" hits are about modern jazz dance, when comparing the content of the websites by choosing randomly the links from the enormous material. www.google.fi accessed on February 28, 2015.

dance', 'West Coast jazz dance', etc. The terms seem to have risen from the modern jazz dance background in the post-1950s sense. Dance historians Lindsay Guarino and Wendy Oliver present and define these forms briefly in their article 'Jazz Dance Styles', published in 2014. Most of these terms do not seem to have been used before the 1970s with the exception of "commercial jazz dance", which seems to have been used in the 1960s[203]. Thus, the terminology is clearly connected to the post-1950s use of 'jazz dance' term in the modern jazz dance sense.

Terry Monaghan, who has researched the origins of the 'jazz dance' term, has dealt with the problems of various 'jazz dance' terminology. He brings out how the original jazz dance and also the original Lindy Hop scene are described as "vernacular", meaning, according to Monaghan, "populist ordinariness" by the newer enthusiasts of the Lindy, and by those who are connected to various modern jazz dance versions. These parties use the original jazz dance and the original Lindy Hop as some kind of "primitive" initial stage or source to their dance activities. They also have begun to use the term 'vernacular jazz dance' to describe these activities. According to Monaghan, 'vernacular jazz dance' is complicated to use, because it stresses the 'vernacular' term. The original jazz dance forms were not literally 'vernacular' (defined as 'ordinary'). The forms were many times highly practiced, and they contained complex techniques.[204] Similarly, historian Thomas F. DeFrantz

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[203] Guarino and Oliver 2014, pp. 24-31. See also: 'Television Programs: Monday Through Saturday', *The New York Times*, June 7, 1964, p. X16. The term ' "commercial" jazz dance' seemed to be used there for the first time. The other terms seemed to be used at the earliest from the end of the 1970s. Concerning 'Broadway jazz dance' see: 'Other Events', *Boston Globe*, February 24, 1977, p. A14; concerning 'contemporary jazz dance': 'Ballet Hispanico of New York Offers Varied Works', *The New York Times*, April 9, 1978, p. 52; concerning 'pop jazz dance': 'Dancing: Evening of Eleo Pomare', *The New York Times*, June 12, 1978, p. C18; concerning 'Latin jazz dance': 'Performance', *The Washington Post*, July 4, 1980, p. 17; concerning 'classical jazz dance': 'Westchester/this Week', *The New York Times*, March 29, 1981, p. WC14; concerning 'musical theatre jazz dance', which was already used in 1983 as connected to music: 'Best Bets – Jazz Concert In Manchester', *The Hartford Courant*, April 28, 1983, p. E3D. And when connected to dancing: 'Residential Summer Theatre School', *The Stage and Television Today*, July 2, 1987, p. 20; See concerning 'theatrical jazz dance': 'Dance: Jazzdance Troupe, With Danny Buraczeski', *The New York Times*, January 21, 1988, p. C22; concerning 'lyrical jazz dance': Leslie D. Netting, *A course of study in lyrical jazz dance in secondary education* (New York: New York University, 1995); concerning 'club jazz dance': 'The 28th Annual IAJE Conference, New York, New York: January 10-13, 2001', *Jazz Educators Journal*, January 2001, Manhattan, Kansas, p. B63; concerning 'West Coast jazz dance': Mary Beth Garrick and Andrew Gross, 'Competition Guide 2004', *Dance Teacher*, October 2003, Raleigh, N. C. and there: 'Dupree Dance Expo'. The searches were executed both in the newspaper database of the Helsinki University Library and in the newspaper database of the New York Public Library. The former search was executed September 4, 2014 and the latter July 28, 2014.

[204] Terry Monaghan's comment in http://www.yehoodi.com/comment/64567/what-is-the-history-of-lindy/3/#comment_90 (March 15, 2005) and Monaghan 2005, p. 58. The site was accessed on November 15, 2015. See also Terry Monaghan, 'A Lindy Double – Frank Manning and the JLH celebrate anniversaries. Part II: Frank Manning', *The Dancing Times*, London, June 1995, p. 861. I agree with Monaghan, that 'vernacular' term can give too ordinary picture about original jazz dances and jazz dancers. Although Monaghan criticized the use of 'vernacular jazz dance' term, he also had used it at least in three different articles: first in 1995, when he wrote about Frankie Manning and in 1996, when he wrote Mary Bruce's obituary, and then in 1998 in the form of 'vernacular jazz' in his 'Jazz Legacy' article

has criticized Marshall Stearns for the "vernacular" aspect which threatens overshadow the professional achievements of the artists which Stearns and his wife interviewed for their research.[205]

In spite of the criticism, Lindsay Guarino and Wendy Oliver try to connect the term 'vernacular jazz (dance)' to "everyday dances done by ordinary people". However, their definition is highly arguable and confusing as it tries to distinguish 'vernacular jazz' from 'authentic jazz (dance)' by claiming:

> [They] are similar but not exactly the same. All authentic jazz is vernacular jazz, but vernacular jazz is not limited to authentic jazz. While authentic jazz is vernacular jazz from the early twentieth century, vernacular jazz refers to more than one period. It is fluid and constantly evolving.[206]

Their definition is highly "artificial" from the view of the historical use of the 'vernacular jazz (dance)' term. The term 'vernacular jazz dance' seemed to be used first time in *Dance Magazine* in June 1982. There, it is stated in the article, "The highlight of the program, however, was 'In the Circle: Stories from the Savoy', a collaborative effort of champion Lindy Hoppers Al Minns and Sugar Sullivan, and choreographer Marleen Pennison…Minns has been a master of vernacular jazz dance since the 1930s". However, it is unclear if Minns or any other member of the company used the term.[207]

According to Monaghan, the term 'traditional jazz dance' is also complicated to use, because it is a music term in Europe and the United States, essentially meaning New Orleans jazz music, and in Europe it sometimes refers to the type of Skip Jiving danced to early New Orleans music. The original jazz dances were connected to other jazz music forms than just New Orleans jazz.[208]

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concerning the formation of Stearns' *Jazz Dance* study. See: Terry Monaghan, 'A Lindy Double – Frank Manning and the JLH celebrate anniversaries – concluded', *The Dancing Times*, July 1995, p. 953. See also: Terry Monaghan, 'Mary Bruce –Dancing on mean streets', *The Guardian*, February 8, 1996, p. 15 and Monaghan 1997, p. 314. However, it should be noticed that Monaghan did not use the term extensively in the articles and he also used other terms like 'authentic jazz dance'. He obviously changed his mind later concerning the use of the terms as it can be seen in the year 2005 writings.

[205] Thomas F. DeFrantz, 'African American Dance: A Complex History' in Thomas F. DeFrantz (editor), *Dancing Many Drums – Excavations In African American Dance* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University Of Wisconsin Press, 2002), p. 13.

[206] Guarino and Oliver 2014, pp. 29-30.

[207] 'Riverside Dance Festival', *Dance Magazine*, June 1982, p. 32. The author of the study executed the search with the search words 'vernacular jazz' both in the Helsinki University Library newspaper database and in the New York Public Library newspaper database. He could not find any earlier example. However, it is possible that the terms were used to some extent in magazines or newspapers which are not in the databases. Anyway, those terms were not used widely in the past. The Helsinki University Library search was executed on September 4, 2014 and the New York Public Library search was executed on July 28, 2014.

[208] Terry Monaghan's comment in http://www.yehoodi.com/comment/64567/what-is-the-history-of-lindy/3/#comment_90 (March 15, 2005) and Monaghan 2005, p. 58. The site

The term 'original jazz dance' could be a general term concerning earlier jazz dance forms, because the first use of 'original jazz dance' term seems to be from 1917.[209] Nowadays, the term seems to be connected to both "authentic" and modern jazz dance forms.[210] Using the term to mean only African-American jazz music-related jazz dance forms, however, can be confusing for the non-jazz-connected modern jazz dance dimension.

Some authors have also used the term 'swing dance' to describe African-American jazz and swing music-connected dance forms.[211] The terms 'swing dance' and 'swing dancing' refer clearly to swing music, even if there existed Texas Tommy Swing dance long before swing music was born.[212] Even Texas Tommy

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was accessed on November 15, 2015. See also Terry Monaghan, 'A Lindy Double – Frank Manning and the JLH celebrate anniversaries. Part II: Frank Manning', *The Dancing Times*, June 1995, p. 861.

[209] 'Display Ad 49 – No Title', *The New York Times*, March 8, 1917, p. 8. The article states: 'Original "jazz" dance and Cuban Danzon Will be introduced by Miss Perot and Mr. Anderson'. The same advertisement was published in *The New York Times*, March 9, 1917, p. 7. The term 'original jazz dance' also was used in *Baltimore and Ohio Magazine*, November 1921, p. 56.

[210] Using www.google.fi for "original jazz dance" gave 6,250 hits. www.google.fi accessed on November 23, 2015. When comparing the content of the websites and examining both "authentic" and "modern" meanings of jazz dance from those sites, the term was connected, for example, to the Giordano Dance Chicago which is described as "America's original jazz dance company". See: http://www.jazzdanceworldcongress.org and http://northcentralcollege.edu/news/giordano-jazz-dance-chicago-presents-energetic-performance-april-24 . See for the description of the company: Shapiro, Lynn Colburn, 'Jazz Dance Opens Up', *Dance Magazine*, April 1, 2013: http://www.dancemagazine.com/news/Jazz_Dance_Opens_Up/ . The sites were accessed on November 23, 2015. According to the description, "Today's GDC boasts a repertoire of over 30 pieces that integrates the genres of jazz, modern, hip-hop, and ballroom". Thus, the company represents "modern" meanings of jazz dance, in other words, the modern jazz dance.

[211] The term 'swing dance' is defended by Tamara Stevens and Erin Stevens. See: Tamara Stevens with editorial contributions by Erin Stevens, *Swing Dancing* (Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood, 2011). However, it becomes clear from the first page, that word "swing" is used to mean limited number dances like the Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Jive etc. Even if there seems to be an inaccuracy, when the author claims that swing dancing has been "developed by dancers at New York's Savoy Ballroom in Harlem". See: Stevens 2011, pp. 1 and 187. Terry Monaghan, who criticizes the contemporary use of 'swing dance' term instead of using the term 'the Lindy Hop', states that the New York African American community used the term "Swing Dancer" to mean someone, who had not learned to "Lindy Hop" properly. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 73. Monaghan, who researched the Savoy Ballroom, does not mention in his articles anything which concerns swing dancing at the Savoy Ballroom, not even, when he examines social dancing at the Savoy Ballroom. See: Monaghan 2005 and Hubbard and Monaghan 2009.

[212] See for 'Texas Tommy Swing' dance: Rebecca R. Strickland, 'The Texas Tommy, Its History, Controversies, and Influence on American Vernacular Dance', A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Dance In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts, Florida State University, The United States of America, 2006, p. 3. Strickland states, that Texas Tommy Swing was "One of many social dances that swept the nation in the early 1910s". Both Marshall Stearns and Gunther Schuller claim that swing music formula

Swing was not the first 'swing dance'. The first mention about 'swing dance' is likely from 1907, when *The Sun* described 'the swing dance' which was "an extremely graceful dance". As *The Sun* was published in Baltimore, 'the swing dance' likely was not Texas Tommy Swing, which did not exist in Baltimore at the time.[213] Otherwise, the first mention about the Texas Tommy dance seems to be from 1910 and about Texas Tommy Swing from 1911.[214]

Table 2. Swing Dance/Swing Dancing vs. Jazz Dance/Jazz Dancing Terms.[215]

	"swing dance" or "swing dancing"	"jazz dance" or "jazz dancing"
Before 1920	57	329
1920 – 1935	33	1538
1936 – 1943	476	78

When the terms 'swing dance' or 'swing dancing' are referenced, it seems that the use of the terms was really increasing from 1936 (see Table 2).

In spite of that, the 'swing dance' and 'swing dancing' terms were not as largely used as the 'jazz dance' and 'jazz dancing' terms between 1921 and 1943. The 'swing dance' and 'swing dancing' terms started to reference the swing music after 1935, when the popularity of the swing music increased.[216] The new 'swing dance' also was distinguished from the old Dixieland jazz type of music.[217] As the popularity of the 'jazz dance' and 'jazz dancing' terms decreased hugely at the same time, it seems that 'swing dance' surpassed 'jazz dance' at the time because of the

was originated and developed later from the middle of the 1920s by Fletcher Henderson and his orchestra. See: Schuller 1968, pp. 260-279 and Stearns 1970, p. 200.

213 'Fete Acts Rehearsed', *The Sun*, Baltimore, February 6, 1907, p. 6. 'The Swing Dance' likely is not 'Texas Tommy Swing', because the latter came from the West Coast U. S. to the East Coast U. S. and to New York in the beginning of the 1910s. Baltimore was not the place at the time, where 'Texas Tommy Swing' existed. See: Strickland 2006, pp. 7-12. Also the author of the study has not found any connection between 'the swing dance' and 'Texas Tommy Swing'.

214 See for The Texas Tommy: 'The Dives Of 'Frisco', *Variety*, December 10, 1910, p. 22. See for Texas Tommy Swing: 'Representative Artists', *Variety*, March 18, 1911, p. 38.

215 As keywords were used "swing dance", "swing dancing", "jazz dance", and "jazz dancing". As time ranges were used "before January 1, 1920", "between January 1, 1920 and December 31, 1935", "between January 1, 1936 and December 31, 1943". The newspaper database of the New York Public Library accessed on November 7, 2015. When only the African-American newspapers, *The Afro-American*, *The Chicago Defender*, *The New York Amsterdam News*, and *The Pittsburgh Courier* were accessed with the keywords, "swing dance" and "swing dancing", and with the time range between January 1, 1920 and December 31, 1943, there were only 34 hits. This refers to the fact that mainly the mainstream press used the terms between 1920 and 1943.

216 See for example: 'Teachers Adopt 'Swing Dance,' Drop Piccolino', *New York Herald Tribune*, August 6, 1936, p. 13 and 'Teachers Declare 'Swing Dance' Leads', *The Boston Daily Globe*, September 19, 1936, p. 8. Marshall Stearns connects the beginning of the popularity of swing music to the start of 'Swing Era' in 1935. See: Stearns 1970, pp. 211 and 214.

217 Cecelia Ager,'Swing Dancing', *Variety*, January 6, 1937, p. 188.

increasing use of the former term. However, the latter term did not disappear from the public view. It was still used during the later decades. On the other hand, the 'swing dance' term is difficult to connote to all jazz music-related dances, because of its connection to the swing music-related dances. That is why 'jazz dance' is a more reasonable choice.

To avoid confusing terminology, 'jazz dance' should be transubstantiated to reference original jazz dances in Stearns' manner, as the term 'jazz dance' was mainly used from 1917 until so-called modern jazz dance world in the 1950s started to transubstantiate the term to concern jazz dancing with the modern dance approach, and without a clear connection to jazz music.

This study defends the term 'jazz dance' in its original connotation to jazz music-connected dances. That is why 'jazz dance', without any prefix, is the term which is used in this work to describe Harlem-based jazz dance in the period between 1921 and 1943. It is time to bring jazz dance back to its roots.

2.2 Jazz Music in Harlem from the Jazz Age to the Swing Era

Jazz and jazz music-related music styles have usually been defined as the era between years 1921 and 1943 as follows: the Jazz Age, which is defined to begin somewhere between 1896 and 1917 depending on different historians, and to end, correspondingly, at the time of the Great Depression, at the end of the 1920s or in the very beginning of the 1930s.[218] The Swing Era, which is usually defined as starting in 1935, when Benny Goodman kept his famous Palomar Ballroom concert in Los Angeles, and played swing music at the end of the concert. The era is usually defined to end around the middle of the 1940s, when big bands started to fade off.[219]

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[218] See for the Jazz Age: Stearns 1970, p. 154, where Stearns defines year 1917 as the start of the Jazz Age. On page 189, he defines year 1929 as the end of the Jazz Age, when he claims: "With a few notable exceptions, jazz was not heard from until 1935, six years later." He claims on page 155 that mainly sweet music and commercial jazz bands survived. Stearns' claims do not seem to be according to his other claims, and they are exaggerated which becomes clear in this chapter of this dissertation. Gunther Schuller suggests that "jazz age" started somewhere between 1896 and 1917. See Schuller 1968, p. 63. He suggests that it ended somewhere in the first half of the 1930s, when after the Depression "gangster ridden "jazz age" gave way to an audience characterized by a more personal, deeper involvement with jazz." See: Schuller 1968, p. 356.

[219] Marshall Stearns defines the Swing Era from 1935 to 1945. See: Stearns 1970, pp. 211 and 217. Gunther Schuller defines the Swing Era between years 1932 and 1945. See: Schuller 1989, p. 845. Albert McCarthy defines the Swing Era starting from 1935 and ending somewhere in the middle of the 1940s. See: Albert McCarthy, *The Dance Band Era – The Dancing Decades From Ragtime to Swing 1910-1950* (Radnor, Pennsylvania: Chilton Book Company, 1982), pp. 122, 129 and 130. There also has emerged "new thinking" about the

The jazz music eras cannot, however, to be defined exactly to begin from some year and ending in some year. In reality, the eras overlapped each other. For example, swing music was played in Harlem much earlier than 1935, and it still was played in Harlem ballrooms after 1945, as argued later in the chapter.

2.2.1 The Jazz Age and the Birth of Swing

Jazz music was brought to New York by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band on January 15, 1917, when the band opened in the new Reisenweber's Restaurant near Columbus Circle in Manhattan. The band consisted of five white musicians who played in the racially segregated venue. The band did not succeed for the first two weeks, when it only played a couple of numbers between sets of the local dance orchestra. When the band moved to the 400 Club of the venue to play on their own, it succeeded among dancers. Alyn Shipton states that concerning the significance of the band, when it played jazz in public, the band got inappropriate fame about the music, the true innovators of which were Creole and African-American people.[220] Later, Dixieland jazz evolved to charleston format as James P. Johnson composed his successful Charleston song for the *Runnin' Wild* show in 1923.[221]

Both Marshall Stearns and Gunther Schuller claim that the swing music formula was originated and developed later by Fletcher Henderson and his orchestra which began to experiment with the sounds in the middle of the 1920s, which affected the development of the formula.[222] The sound started to be more horizontal, more linear and more driving. According to Don Redman, Henderson's arranger at the time, the result came from Louis Armstrong, who was part of the orchestra between the end of 1924 and November 1925: "[Armstrong] changed our whole idea about the band musically"[223]. The swing formula was later worked further by multiple Harlem connected orchestras like Chick Webb, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Don Redman, Jimmie Lunceford, and Cecil Scott before Benny Goodman picked up the formula after buying Fletcher Henderson's arrangements in 1934. In addition, white

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Swing Era in terms of the Earlier Swing Era and the Later Swing Era. The Earlier Swing Era is set between 1930 and 1941, and the Later Swing Era is set between 1942 and 1955. The Earlier Swing Era is, in effect, same as the mentioned historians' Swing Era and the Later Swing Era is the era after the Swing Era. The author of the study will argue later in the study for the Swing Era term concerned also the 1950s. See for the Early Swing Era: Dave Oliphant, *The Early Swing Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), p. Introduction viii-ix. See for the Later Swing Era: Lawrence McClellan Jr., *The Later Swing Era, 1942-1955* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), p. Introduction xiii and xv.

220 Alyn Shipton, *A New History of Jazz* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2001), pp. 97 and 103.

221 Stearns 1994, p. 145. Schuller 1968, p. 20.

222 Schuller 1968, pp. 260-279. Stearns 1970, p. 200.

223 Jeffrey Magee, *The Uncrowned King of Swing – Fletcher Henderson and Big Band Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 94-95.

orchestras like The Dorsey Brothers and the Casa Loma band picked up the swing formula, starting in the beginning of the 1930s.[224] That all speaks for the fact that years before Benny Goodman started the Swing Era in his 21 August, 1935 Palomar Ballroom concert[225], swing as music was already known in Harlem and elsewhere by the mentioned orchestras and others, who picked up swing before Benny Goodman.

According to Seppo Lemponen[226], who has examined the use of the term for his PhD dissertation, 'swing' as a music term was used in 1899, when a tune 'In the Hammock' (composed by Richard Ferber) was published with the blurb "Swing Song. With just the right swinging motion". Jelly Roll Morton used the term in the title of his composition Georgia Swing in 1927. Lemponen also states, "swing is not in evidence as a generic term for jazz nor did it convey the now accepted sense until about 1930. Such words as syncopation or simply rhythm were used".

In spite of that, Louis Armstrong used 'swing' as a term to describe Coleman Hawkins' playing, somewhere in 1925. Hawkins was another member of the Fletcher Henderson orchestra. However, it seems that 'swing' as a music term really stuck from 1932, as Lemponen explains:

> [In] February 1932 Duke Ellington recorded his composition from the previous year 'It Don't Mean a Thing If it Ain't Got That Swing', which presaged the Swing Era and brought the word into common currency. Jazz, as pointed out above, began to be referred to as swing music, and such exhortations as "Swing it!" And comments like "really swinging" came into regular use.

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224 Stearns 1970, pp. 200-211. Stearns explains the background of the Swing Era, where swing music is concerned. All the mentioned bands were connected to Harlem before 1935. Chick Webb, Cecil Scott and Jimmie Lunceford played at the Savoy Ballroom before 1935. See for Webb and Scott: Hennessay 1994, pp. 97 and 110-111. See for Lunceford: Eddy Determeyer, *Rhythm is our business: Jimmie Lunceford and the Harlem Express* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2009), p. 69. Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway played in the Cotton Club. See: Cab Calloway and Bryant Rollins, *Of Minnie The Moocher & Me* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976), pp. 91 and 106. Don Redman played in Connie's Inn in 1931. See: Stearns 1970, p. 200. Fletcher Henderson played at the Savoy Ballroom, Connie's Inn and elsewhere in Harlem. See: Magee 2005, pp. 111, 120, 136 and 168. Also Schuller stresses Harlemites' appreciation of bands like Duke Ellington, Chick Webb, Jimmie Lunceford, Cab Calloway and Fats Waller in the early 1930s. See: Schuller 1989, p. 201.

225 Stearns defines the date as the birthday of the Swing Era. See Stearns 1970, p. 211.

226 The next paragraphs are based on Seppo Lemponen's PhD dissertation from 2001 until the phrase "came into regular use". See: Seppo Lemponen, *Swing to Bop – Hep to Hip. A Study in Jazz Parlance* (Jyväskylä, Finland: University of Jyväskylä, 2001), pp. 47-49. Lemponen does not specify when Louis Armstrong began to use the swing term. It has to have happened during 1925, because Armstrong left the Henderson orchestra in November 1925, and Lemponen cites William 'Buster' Bailey who was a member of the Henderson orchestra between 1925 and 1926. Bailey heard Armstrong talking about 'swing', as far as Coleman Hawkins' playing was concerned. Lemponen also states "The Trolley Car Song, a popular tune published in 1912, includes the following line, "It's the cutest little thing/Got the cutest little swing" ". However, it is hard to say if 'swing' in the case really meant music. Concerning Armstrong's departure from the Henderson Orchestra see also: Magee 2005, p. 95.

The Swing Era and swing music were usually based on large bands, which were known as big bands. Benny Goodman claimed that those bands were standardized in 1934 or a little earlier with five brass, four saxes and four rhythm. Stearns explains that 'five brass' were three trumpets and two trombones. The rhythm section was based on string bass and guitar. According to Stearns, the Benny Moten orchestra innovated "walking" (playing all the four beats in a bar) string bass and guitar in jazz in 1932.[227] Stearns seems to be partly incorrect: Although Walter Page played "two-beat" string-bass in the Blue Devil's Squabblin' in 1929, there was also "four beat" guitar playing in Squabblin'.[228] For comparison, Fletcher Henderson used guitar playing starting in 1928, when he recruited Clarence Holiday for the job. According to Jeffrey Magee, Henderson also began to use string-bass on regular basis starting in 1933, when John Kirby rarely played tuba anymore. Kirby was alternating between tuba and string-bass before that. However, Kirby was able to play tuba in 4/4 –rhythm like string-bass. Kirby was in Fletcher Henderson Orchestra between April 1930 and March 1934.[229]

Outside of Harlem and New York, there was also developing a more linear sense of playing. Gunther Schuller states, that in addition to Walter Page's string-bass, there were drums and piano as well as other instruments in the rhythm section. Schuller argues, "The antecedents of this development go back to two earlier Kansas City orchestras: Walter Page's Blue Devils and the remarkable Bennie Moten band of the early thirties." Schuller gives credit about the development to Page and Count Basie, who both worked in the mentioned orchestras at the end of the 1920s and in the beginning of the 1930s.[230]

The Fletcher Henderson orchestra recorded "Hot and Anxious" in 1931, which presented, according to Gunther Schuller, the composition and arrangement formula by Horace Henderson, which Schuller claims to have been:

> […] worked to death in hundreds of Swing Era bands, only to peter out gradually in the world of rhythm and blues and early rock and roll in the 1940s and 1950s. The formula consisted of three primary elements: (1) a steady four-to-the-bar 'chomp-chomp' beat, unvaried and relentless in all four rhythm instruments, (2) simple riffs whose melodic contours could fit any one of the three major steps (I, IV, V); and (3) the gradually receding 'fade-out' ending, preferably with bent blue notes in the guitar.[231]

Stearns explains that in big band swing, the four saxophones play together as one voice and the brass play together as the second voice, except when the three

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227 Stearns 1970, pp. 198-199 and 205.

228 Schuller 1968, pp. 297-298.

229 Magee 2005, pp. 143-144.

230 Schuller 1989, pp. 226-229.

231 Schuller 1968, pp. 276-277.

trumpets and two trombones follow different lines[232]. He claims "the trick of making a big band swing had been amazing simple." According to Stearns:

> […] arrangers returned to the West African pattern of call-and-response, keeping the two sections answering each other in an endless variety of ways…There were still hot solos on top, with one or both sections playing a suitably arranged background…The repeated phrases which the brass and reed sections threw back and forth became known as 'riffs'…The individual musician had to work harder than before. He had to be able to 'swing' separately as well as with his section. And then the sections had to swing together, too.

Although Stearns claimed "the trick of making the big band swing has been amazing simple", he also admitted that it meant endless rehearsals and high-level team work, but also a comparative loss of identity, except for the solo-stars.

Henderson's "Hot and Anxious" in 1931 might have been the real beginning of the Swing Era, as far as record publishing is concerned. How early the swing music was heard in Henderson's live performances is not known. Where Harlem is concerned, it can be argued that "Swing Era" started there between the middle of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s.

The connection between the Lindy Hop and swing music also proves for that. Historian Howard Spring claims that the Lindy Hop influenced musicians when they started to use more 4/4 rhythms at the end of the 1920s. In other words, swing music developed according to the Lindy Hop.[233] On the contrary, Savoy Lindy Hopper Frankie Manning claims that emerging swing music in the 1930s was one reason for changing his lindy hopping to a more horizontal posture compared to earlier vertical dance postures.[234] In this case, that means music affected the dance, not vice versa like Spring claims. Terry Monaghan states that concerning the Lindy Hop, creators George Snowden and Mattie Purnell's invention, "Hitherto prevailing two-beat 'Ragtime' and 'Jazz' steps were rephrased in line with the parallel developments in jazz music that were similarly experimenting with lengthened time signatures."[235] Thus connecting the dance and the music to each other, but not stating which affected which.

Additionally, Marshall Stearns connects the development of the Lindy Hop to swing music and especially to big band swing music. He explains that the Lindy is "choreographed swing music" in the way in which it flowed more horizontally and smoothly compared to earlier dixieland jazz, and to the Toddle, which was danced to dixieland jazz. Stearns stresses the similarity between swing music and the Lindy as

232 This and the next three paragraphs are based on Stearns 1970, pp. 198-199.

233 Spring 1997, pp. 183-207.

234 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 80-81.

235 Monaghan 2004, pp. 49 and 51.

jazz dancers closely followed the music. When the band arrangement led into a solo, dancers went into a breakaway and improvised individual steps.[236]

Big bands as a concept were already known in the 1920s and even before that, at least, in New York, New Orleans, and Chicago.[237] There were brass bands in New Orleans which contained over ten players by the 1910s[238]. Also, James Reese Europe had the Clef Club Symphony orchestra with tens of players in New York by 1911.[239] Later, in the 1920s, for example, the Fletcher Henderson orchestra consisted of eleven players in 1924 and of twelve players in 1927.[240] Paul Whiteman had an orchestra with over twenty players in New York in 1924.[241] Chick Webb and his Harlem Stompers consisted of eleven pieces in 1927.[242]

Overall, large orchestras and their orchestral concepts were nothing new in the Swing Era as Schuller states:

> Historically, of course, jazz started with small groups. In the early years, except for the parade bands of New Orleans and the larger ragtime ensembles of the teens, the latter sometimes expanded to twelve or fifteen players in the richer and larger venues, jazz ensembles rarely exceeded the quintet size. The big orchestras such as Henderson's and Ellington's did not come along until the mid-1920s…the full flowering of what one could accurately call orchestral jazz did not occur until the dawn of the Swing Era in the early 1930s. But, as noted, even some of the small units, though limited in physical numbers, often tried to emulate the orchestral concepts initiated by Henderson or Ellington or Moten – and Whiteman.[243]

Small swing music ensembles also were known in the Swing Era. Schuller states concerning those groups:

> When big bands roamed the land, small groups were rare and were considered, as in the case of the Goodman Trio, the John Kirby Sextet,

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236 Stearns 1994, pp. 324-325.

237 Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns, *Jazz – A History of America's Music* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000). See pictures on pages 41, 42, 44 and 58-59, which show some of those large bands. See also: Schuller 1989, pp. 806-807.

238 Ward and Burns 2000, p. 41, includes the picture of The Colored Walf's Home Brass Band in 1913 with over ten players. See also page 42, with the picture of Johnny Fischer's Marching Band, around 1910, with over ten players, and page 44, the picture of Papa Jack Laine's Reliance Marching Band, in 1912, with over ten players.

239 Ward and Burns 2000, pp. 58-59, includes the picture of the Clef Club Symphony orchestra in 1911.

240 Magee 2005, unnumbered pages between 114 and 115, includes the pictures of Henderson orchestra in 1924 and 1927.

241 Ward and Burns 2000, p. 100, includes the picture of Paul Whiteman and his Palais Royal Orchestra in 1924.

242 'Night Club Reviews – Rose Danceland (New York), *Variety*, December 21, 1927, p. 54.

243 Schuller 1989, pp. 806-807.

> or the Nat King Cole Trio, a refreshing novelty. Such groups offered a distinctive type of chamber-music jazz, often in direct reaction to the ever-expanding, louder orchestral forces so overwhelmingly favored in the late Swing Era.[244]

Schuller explains of the small groups at the time, that they were mostly "miniature big-bands", which were cut to smaller size by economic reasons or other reasons, but in spite of that, these bands tried to sound "as ample as the bigger bands."[245] Thus, it could be argued that most of the orchestras played "big band swing" in the United States during the Swing Era.

2.2.2 The End of the Swing Era

As for the end of Swing Era, there have been different thoughts. For example, Schuller explains:

> Inevitably jazz turned to the small combo: quartets and quintets, occasionally ranging to octets and nonets…With this new music (bebop) challenging the primacy of the big bands, with the postwar period now dominated by singers and the whole field experiencing dramatic economic changes, the end of the Big Band Era was in sight.[246]

Accordingly, Stearns has given some reasons for the end of the Big Band Era or the Swing Era:

> Another war, the record ban, a tax on dance floors, the microphone (which gave volume to any weak voice), a new style, and other imponderables brought the big-band boom to an end around 1945.[247]

Kenneth J. Bindas connects 'the decline of swing' to the change of the popular music taste and to the rise of the new technology. The Swing Era teenagers matured during WWII and their music taste changed. At the same time, the need of individuality rose as the Cold War caused fear of the collective identity of totalitarianism. Television became a vehicle which informed viewers about the outside world, while "promising domestic bliss with the products it advertised"[248]

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244 Ibid., p. 806.

245 Ibid., p. 806.

246 Ibid., pp. 848-849.

247 Stearns 1970, p. 217.

248 Kenneth J. Bindas, *Swing, That Modern Sound* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), pp. 158-167. Even though Bindas claims that "rock and roll officially ended swing" in the end of the 1950s, swing did not disappear during next decades.

Coinciding with the swing era of the 1940s, happened the grand transition from swing to bebop. Bebop or bop for short was already developing from the end of the 1930s, and it was completed somewhere in 1946-47.[249] According to Stearns, bebop was a refusal to "play the stereotype role of Negro entertainer" which was associated with Uncle Tomism. Bebop musicians wanted to be "judged on the merits of the music alone".[250]

However, it seems that the Big Bands did not disappear totally. For example, Duke Ellington did not disband his big band after World War II, continuing until his death in 1974.[251] Also, Count Basie restarted his big band in 1952 after a break in 1950-1951.[252] White big bands like Ray Anthony, Stan Kenton with a short break for health reasons in 1947, and Woody Herman with a short break between 1946 and 1947 and with a short small group phase between 1949 and 1950, continued to perform through the 1950s.[253]

In spite of the declining big bands, swing music was played through the 1940s and the 1950s, although with lesser amounts than in the peak 1930s years. Swing was also danced after WWII as, according to Terry Monaghan, the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem was swinging until the ballroom closed in 1958.[254] It can be argued that the end of the Swing Era did not happen in the 1940s, but rather it happened at the end of the 1950s when the Savoy Ballroom was closed.

Chapter Conclusion

The 'jazz dance' as a term concerning jazz music-related dances was in use, at least from 1917. The term was defined from the beginning to concern jazz music-related dances and steps. The 'jazz dance' term spread around the United States with the help of the mainstream press through the decades. By the 1920s, it got new prefixes and forms such as 'modern jazz dance', 'the modern jazz dances', 'jazz steps', and 'jazz dances'. The prefix 'modern' meant that the dances were modern at the time. By the late 1920s, also term variations like 'jazz dancing' and 'jazz dancer', which still were connected to jazz music, were established in the common use in the mainstream press.

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[249] Schuller 1989, pp. 846-847. For the bebop origins in the 1930s see: Stearns 1970, pp. 226-234.

[250] Stearns 1970, pp. 219-222.

[251] Leo Walker, *The Big Band Almanac – Revised Edition* (New York, New York: Da Capo Press, 1989), pp. 119-120.

[252] Stanley Dance, *The World of Count Basie* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980), p. 15.

[253] McClellan 2004, pp. 27-29 (for Herman), pp. 42-43 (for Anthony) and pp. 57-58 (for Kenton).

[254] 'Jazzing To the End: The 50th Anniversary of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom's closure is chronicled by hosts John Clement and dance expert Terry Monaghan'. The program is part of jazz from The Archives series (executive producer: Vincent Pelote), WBGO Radio, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University Libraries. The writer has a copy of the tape. This program is later called Monaghan 2008.

Critics like John Martin, from the mainstream newspaper *The New York Times,* and W. Adolphe Roberts, from *The American Dancer,* connected jazz dance to the Harlem dancers, at the latest, in 1928. Both critics recognized jazz dance as a remarkable art form, and brought out racially mixed African-American and white aspects of jazz dance and jazz music in their articles. There were differences between the critics where African-American and American aspects of jazz dance were concerned. Roberts considered jazz dance as a white and African-American mix in the American context. Martin stressed its white and non-American aspects, which were not native in America. Later, Mura Dehn and Roger Pryor Dodge, from the 1930s onwards, critic Jean Craighead in the 1940s, and historian Marshall Stearns from the 1950s onwards, recognized jazz dance as a racially mixed American art form, which was originated by African-Americans.

White contemporary modern dancers like Ted Shawn and Isadora Duncan, dismissed jazz dance, the former even comparing it to "scum". There also was criticism against jazz dance in the mainstream press articles which defined various jazz dances likely so that dancers could avoid them. The criticism possibly led to the reluctance to use 'jazz dance'-related terms among jazz dancers. They tended to use their specialty-connected terms like eccentric dancer and tap dancer. However, there were jazz dancers, like white Mura Dehn and Roger Pryor Dodge, who still used the term 'jazz dance' in the 1930s and beyond. Thus, jazz dancers did not abandon using the term during the decades. Also, the term and its different variations were used in the mainstream press through the decades.

The term 'jazz dance' began to get new non-jazz-related meanings from the 1920s, when it was connected to ballet, and the term jazz ballet was formed. That probably later led to new connotations of the term jazz dance, when new "modern jazz dance" began to take over the term jazz dance. Another rival to the term jazz dance came in the middle of the 1930s, when the terms 'swing dance' and 'swing dancing' were clearly used more than before in the mainstream press. The terms exceeded even the use of 'jazz dance' and 'jazz dancing' terms. Probably the popularity of big bands, which played swing music during the Swing Era, led to the increased use of the swing-related terms. The Lindy Hop was especially connected to swing music, so that swing and the Lindy Hop even affected each other. The Lindy Hop flowed horizontally, similar to swing music. Because the term 'swing dance' was mostly connected to swing music in the 1930s and in the 1940s, it is difficult to connote to all jazz music-related dances. In spite of the decreasing use of the term jazz dance from the 1930s, it never disappeared from public. It was still used in the 1980s to mean jazz music-connected dances. That is why it is a proper choice for the term to describe all jazz music-connected African-American dances.

3 Jazz Dance - Inside Harlem

Jazz dance was connected to the surrounding community via dancers who danced, performed, and even lived in Harlem. It is reasonable to first find out what kind of a community Harlem was during the years to understand why dance existed in the way it did. The Harlem environment probably had a significant effect on the Harlem entertainment and dancers. These effects are brought out especially in the Savoy Ballroom chapter. The Harlem entertainment had its beginning inside Harlem in the form of ballrooms and nightclubs which existed in the area. These places are examined for finding out what kind of places they were racially and where dancing is concerned. The integration and segregation of the places is explained if there has been information about the racial status of the places.

In addition, the Charleston performances and competitions in Harlem in the 1920s are analyzed. The Charleston was one of the remarkable jazz dances that were performed in Harlem. Similarly, it is examined how tap dance was performed in the Harlem places of entertainment. Social dance, in the form of the Charleston, is analyzed in its own chapter. The Savoy Ballroom, where, in particular, the Lindy Hop was danced through the decades, is used as an example of social dance, and examined to find out how important the ballroom was as far as dancing, integration, and the community are concerned. It also is analyzed as to how the mainstream press reported on the Harlem-based jazz dance of the Savoy Ballroom.

3.1 Harlem Background: Infrastructure and Its Population from the 1870s Until 1943

Harlem was changing from a rural county to an urban area starting from the 1870s, when improvements in infrastructure like sanitation, water supply, transportation, communication, lighting, and building were settled. It was annexed to New York City in 1873. According to Gilbert Osofsky, Harlem was becoming an upper- and upper-middle-class community at the time, when investors made fortunes buying Harlem land, and reselling it later at great profit. Older and wealthier New Yorkers were attracted to Harlem. Many of the late nineteenth century Harlemites

were born in downtown Manhattan or immigrated to America in the middle of the nineteenth century. They mostly came from Great Britain, Ireland and Germany.[255]

Although Harlem was primarily a white community at the time, there were likely already substantial numbers of African-Americans living there at the end of the 1890s. Because they were scattered around the neighborhood, it looked like Harlem rapidly changed to an African-American community when migration to Harlem increased during the next decades.[256]

After the Civil War, there was a small, but steady African-Americans movement northwards from the Southern United States, approximately 41,000 persons for each decade between 1870 and 1890. After that, it increased to about 108,000 persons, that when the New York African-American population almost tripled by 1910, there were about 92,000 African-Americans in New York. At that time, Washington D.C. had the largest, and New York had the second largest, African-American population. By 1920, New York, with about 152,000 African-Americans, had become the largest African-American urban center in the United States, because of the migration movement. Also foreign-born African-Americans had a part in this development as 55 percent of them, approximately 55,000, lived in New York in 1930. The total African-American population in New York was expanded to about 328,000 by the time.[257]

Harlem was not originally the primary target for the migration, as the most of African-Americans in New York lived in poorer housing on the West Fifties and Sixties streets in midtown, in the very beginning of the twentieth century.[258] However, Harlem became the primary target for the migration during the very next decades.

The increase in Harlem migration was the result of the aftermath of the real estate boom which happened at the very end of the nineteenth century and in the very beginning of the twentieth century. The boom collapsed between 1904 and 1905, because "too many houses" were built at the same time. That caused problems to get houses rented, which obviously led to decreasing prices. African-American realtors used the situation for their benefit and as a consequence many African-Americans began to relocate to West Harlem.[259]

There also were other reasons for the rapid increase in African-Americans' migration to Harlem: first of all, there were violent race riots in the West Side of Manhattan, where African-Americans were living at the time. The first of those riots started in August 1900, when African-American Arthur Harris hit a police officer with his penknife, who then struck him with his club, after Harris tried to rescue his wife from the police officer who had arrested her for soliciting. The police officer

255 Osofsky 1996, pp. 75-79.

256 Ibid., pp. 83-85 and 105.

257 Ibid., pp. 17-18 and 128. See also for the foreign-born African Americans: Greenberg 1991, p. 17.

258 Greenberg 1991, p. 14.

259 Osofsky 1996, pp. 87-91.

died and a riot broke out in the West Side. As the consequence of tensions in the area, African-Americans, who lived in the area, started to move northwards and especially to Harlem.[260]

As another consequence of the African-Americans' move from midtown to Harlem, major African-American institutions also moved to Harlem by the beginning of the 1920s. That made it possible for the Harlem community to maintain social services on its own.[261]

By 1920, at least, two-thirds of Manhattan's African-American population, approximately 73,000-84,000 African-Americans, were living in Harlem, an area which was bordered, depending on the source, from about 125th or from 130th Street to 145th Street, and between 5th Avenue and 8th Avenue.[262]

By 1930, at least two-thirds of Manhattan's African-American population, about 165,000-190,000 African-Americans, were living in Harlem in an area which was bordered between Amsterdam Avenue and Harlem River southwards to about 110th Street, and northwards at least to 155th or even to 166th Street. Additionally, Harlem continued between 8th Avenue and Amsterdam Avenue southwards to 98th Street, and possibly northwards to between 126th Street and 166th Street from Harlem River to the Hudson River.

When African-Americans were moving to Harlem, white Harlemites moved out from Harlem. Between 1920 and 1930, about 119,000 whites, especially Italians and Jews, left Harlem, and about 87,000 African-Americans arrived. Osofsky argues that the Italians' and Jews' move from Harlem did not only happen because of the African-Americans' move, but also because of the conditions of life which were better outside Harlem.[263]

In addition to that, by 1930, about 45,000 Puerto Ricans moved into flats vacated by the Italians and Jews. Especially in East Harlem, where Italians used to live in the area which was located between Harlem River and Third Avenue, and between 110th and 125th Streets, was settled by Puerto Ricans. African-Americans settled the former Jewish area from 110th to 125th Street and between west of Lexington Avenue and Seventh Avenue.

There was also the white opposition against the African-American settlement in Harlem. This white opposition consisted of community groups like white realtors, businessmen, journalists, clergymen, members of the Board of Commerce, and local

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260 Anderson 1982, pp. 42-45.

261 Osofsky 1996, p. 120.

262 This and the next paragraph are based on the sources as mentioned in this footnote if not otherwise stated. Osofsky 1996, pp. 123 and 130, and 'the Principal Negro Area of Manhattan, 1930' which also is named '3. Black Harlem, 1930. New York City census'. See also: Greenberg 1991, p. 15.

263 This and the next paragraph are based on Osofsky 1996, pp. 82, 88 and 130.

citizens. However, this opposition collapsed because it could not gain "the total and unified support of all white property owners" in Harlem.[264]

At the same time, the rents were higher in Harlem than in any other African-American section of New York. African-Americans, who were able to pay the high rents, moved in at the turn of the century. It was also a common practice to increase rents when African-Americans moved in to the Harlem houses. Segregation in other parts of New York was possibly the main reason for this: African-Americans had no choice to live elsewhere in New York. Landlords set up higher rents and did not upkeep their buildings. In addition, African-American landlords fleeced their African-American tenants.[265]

It should be noted that African-Americans owned real estate in Harlem worth $60 million in 1925.[266] Even if the figure implies that African-Americans had power in Harlem real estate business, it seems to be connected largely to well-to-do African-Americans who bought those buildings for themselves.[267] They were in the minority of all African-Americans in New York. Also, different African-American churches had a remarkable share in this. When the churches became largest real estate owners in Harlem, at the latest by 1920, that helped the Harlem transformation to the African-American section. Osofsky states that in addition to this, and to African-American Phil Payton's Harlem real estate business in the beginning of the twentieth century, there were 21 African-American real estate firms in Harlem in 1920. Those firms were specialized in Harlem property. In fact, real estate dealers composed the largest single African-American professional group in the 1930 census. Osofsky claims that even so, African-Americans' holdings in Harlem stayed limited and could not be compared with white landlords' holdings in the area.[268]

Osofsky summarizes concerning Harlem:

> Initially, its name was a symbol of elegance and distinction, not derogation; its streets and avenues were broad, well-paved, clean and tree-lined, not narrow and dirty; its homes were spacious, replete with the best modern facilities…Harlem was originally not a slum, but an ideal place in which to live. For the first and generally last time in the history of New York City, Negroes were able to live in decent homes in respectable neighborhood.[269]

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[264] Ibid., pp. 106-109.

[265] Ibid., pp. 92, 111-112 and 136. See also: Greenberg 1991, p. 31.

[266] Greenberg 1991, p. 15.

[267] Osofsky 1996, pp. 119-120. There are no signs that the buildings were rented to those African-Americans in Harlem who could not have afforded to those houses.

[268] See for Phil Payton Jr.'s real estate business in Harlem: the chapter 'Race Enterprise: The Afro-American Realty Company', Osofsky 1996. See also: Osofsky 1996, pp. 115 and 119. However, Osofsky does not specify, how big of a difference there was exactly between the holdings of African-American and white real estate companies in Harlem. That part seems to stay unclear in his study.

[269] Osofsky 1996, p. 111.

He continues by stating that the most profound change that Harlem experienced during one decade in the 1920s, was its emergence as a slum with various social and economic problems[270]. Osofsky quotes the chairman of a city housing reform committee in 1927, who said that the State would not even allow cows to live in some of these apartments where African-American people lived in Harlem.

Osofsky claims that the most important factor which led to the deterioration of Harlem housing was the high cost of living in Harlem. Basically, Harlem buildings were built for larger families with larger incomes. So-called rent parties were organized for paying rents. The high rents and poor salaries led to conditions where those apartments were crowded with lodgers, so that even "The bath tub was used to sleep on, two individuals taking turns!" as African-American educator Roscoe Conkling Bruce wrote. Some landlords even lost interest in taking care of their property and the buildings wore out. Osofsky also claims that the migrants themselves caused a significant part of the deterioration in Harlem as they did not take care of their homes and buildings.

Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, who has researched Harlem during the Great Depression, agrees with Osofsky that Harlem was emerging as a slum in the 1920s. Both Greenberg and Osofsky think that poverty, overcrowding, and poor housing conditions led to high illness and mortality rates. For example, in 1925 there were 16.5 deaths for every thousand African-Americans in New York City. That was forty percent higher than the figure of the city generally and thirteen percent higher than in Manhattan. According to Greenberg, Harlem's illness and mortality rates were almost comparable to the African-American rate in the rest of the city and nationwide. That seemed to indicate that Harlem's African-Americans' lower life-expectancy was similar to the life-expectancy of all African-Americans of the period.[271]

When it comes to the crime in Harlem at the time, homicides were much more common in Harlem than elsewhere in Manhattan, and almost four times higher than in the whole of New York City. More than 67 percent of those murdered in Manhattan were African-Americans.[272] The numbers game, bootlegging and prostitution flourished in Harlem. In addition, drugs were around at that time, as the *Lincoln News* newspaper reported in 1929, that the sale of dope and drugs in Harlem still continued to be a problem to the Police Department. The newspapers claimed that cocaine, heroine and morphine could be purchased in Harlem.[273]

African-American employment in the New York area was problematic, too, as two-thirds of all gainfully employed African-Americans in New York were classified as unskilled workers in 1920[274]. In 1925, the number of gainfully employed African-Americans was increased to three-quarters which included both

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270 This and the next paragraph are based on Osofsky 1996, pp. 135-141.

271 Greenberg 1991, p. 31.

272 Ibid., p. 32.

273 Ibid., pp. 38-39.

274 This and the next paragraph are based on Greenberg 1991, pp. 20-25.

unskilled and service occupations. About ninety percent of all employed African-American males were blue-collar workers. The African-American community remained lower class and earned correspondingly low wages.

According to investigations, $33 a week minimum income was needed to maintain a decent ""American standard" of living for a family of four in Manhattan". In 1928, African-American unskilled workers in New York City earned $20 a week and skilled African-American workers at the highest around $30 a week. The same applied to employed African-American women in Manhattan. Almost seventy percent of them worked in domestic and personal service in 1920. They earned approximately $15 a week in the 1920s. Almost a fourth of African-American women in New York worked in manufacturing and mechanical industries. They usually received from $2 to $5 a week less than white workers.

African-Americans ran less than a fifth of all Harlem's businesses in 1929, approximately 1,908 out of a total of 10,319. Those African-Americans businesses were usually poorly capitalized and were not able to compete with better-financed white businesses. That is why African-Americans moved into low-profit branches.[275]

Although the migration influx to Harlem and the impossibilities to control this process well in the segregated society were the main reasons for Harlem's transformation from a well-doing community to a slum during the 1920s, there also was internal friction in Harlem's African-American community.

According to Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, the relationship between migrants from the Southern United States and the established African-American community "were often strained" in Harlem. Because Southern African-Americans lacked education and skills, they were looked down on, so much so, that Charles Johnson, the editor of the National Urban League's journal *Opportunity*, wrote in 1925 that the differences between Southern and Northern African-Americans were even "greater than the differences between whites and Negroes". Greenberg argues that there were similar differences between native-born and foreign-born African-Americans. The latter, who were usually more skilled than native-born African-Americans, felt little kinship with the native-born African-Americans. On the other hand, native-born African-Americans resented the foreigners for being "dismissive and overbearing" toward other African-Americans, and foreigners were considered to be "too radical politically". As a result, "different groups tended to cluster in smaller, separate neighborhoods" in Harlem.[276]

During the Great Depression, the next phase in the Harlem history, there is a commonly quoted phrase from African-American journalist George S. Schuyler, who stated in 1960: "The reason why the Depression did not have the impact on the Negroes that it had on the whites was that the Negroes had been in the Depression all the time." Schuyler seemed to be correct as far as 1920s African-American Harlem is concerned. Harlem was already economically down when the Great Depression

[275] Greenberg 1991, p. 27.
[276] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

started in 1929, and when the unemployment rate quadrupled in New York during the first depression year. As the Great Depression continued, African-Americans, however, found themselves in a new situation in the labor market when white unemployed workers started to compete with unemployed African-Americans for previously all African-American jobs. When work was slow and there was a need to reduce workforce, the result usually was that African-Americans were fired first, and when there was work, white workers were hired first.[277]

In 1930, most African-Americans in New York worked in service, manufacturing and mechanical occupations. Practically all African-American workers were employed in menial jobs as hall men or porters, cleaners and messengers.[278] For example, in one of Harlem's communities, whites owned approximately 83 percent of the 2,308 business establishments in 1931. Of the white owned establishments, almost 29 percent employed African-Americans, mostly in menial, low-paying positions. The rest of the mentioned white-owned establishments did not have any African-American employees.[279]

Many Harlemites went on welfare during the Depression years. Between 1929 and 1931, African-American relief applications tripled[280]. Overall, in the end of 1929, 25,000 families and individuals in New York City received some kind of financial help from either public or private organizations. In addition to the governmental organizations, the most remarkable of the private and public organizations in Harlem were the Urban League, Father Divine with his followers, and different churches like the Abyssinian Baptist Church, St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church, and the Catholic churches in Harlem.

By 1932, the relief amount in New York had multiplied to 164,000. When Franklin D. Roosevelt became the president in 1933, the amount had climbed to 217,000. By 1936, African-Americans constituted a fifth of the New York City's relief rolls, which was above their proportion to New York City's population, when compared to the 1930 figure of 5.5 percent of the total New York City population.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt started his New Deal program in 1933 for bettering economic conditions, there was also an option for work relief[281]. That meant that

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277 Ibid., pp. 41-43 and 69.

278 Fogelson and Rubenstein 1969, pp. 30-32.

279 Winston Charles McDowell, *The Ideology of Black Entrepreneurship and Its Impact On the Development of Black Harlem. 1930-1955.* A Thesis submitted to the faculty of the graduate school of the University of Minnesota. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy. Clarke A. Chambers. Advisor. June 1996, p. 92.

280 This and the next paragraph are based on the sources as follows: Greenberg 1991, pp. 47, 56-61, 144. See the New York City African-American population figure from Greenberg 1991, p. 225. There is only the 1930 figure available. That is the closest possible figure about the New York City African American population. The amount 5.5 % comes from the equation where the New York City native African-American and the New York City foreign-born African-American population figures are summed and compared to the New York City total population figure.

281 This and the next paragraph are based on Greenberg 1991, pp. 143, 145, 162, 164 and 190.

different administrations like the Civil Works Administration between 1933 and 1934, the Temporary (later Federal) Emergency Relief Administration (1931, 1933) and the Works Progress Administration (1935-) provided income support and jobs. At the lowest level, more than 100,000 men and women participated in work relief programs. By the beginning of 1936, African-Americans held eleven percent of WPA-jobs. In 1935, the Communist party estimated that eighty percent of "Harlem household heads were unemployed" in New York, while the Urban League estimated that figure as sixty percent.

WPA-projects also offered educational programs for Harlemites. At least 30,000 participated regularly in at least one of these programs. Cheryl Lynn Greenberg states that educational levels overall rose in the 1930s because African-American children attended school for longer during the Depression than before.

Despite dropping mortality statistics, homicides rose from 19 per 100,000 in 1925 to 24 per 100,000 in 1937, while the rates in New York City fell. Overall, adult crimes rose, where arrests of all types were concerned. Two of the most crime-ridden areas in 1931 were in Central Harlem and they were still like that years later.[282]

When the United States entered World War II, New Yorkers did not benefit much from early war preparations. New York City contained more consumer industries than it had war production-related industries. New York City had more unemployed persons in 1942 than in 1939. In 1940, forty percent of African-Americans still were on relief in New York City and thirty percent of the labor force in Central Harlem were on work relief or were totally unemployed. In addition, racist practices in military production were common. For example, only five percent of the participants in war production training programs were African-Americans, and only 194 of over 4,500 United States training courses accepted African-Americans. Only 142 African-Americans were occupied in the ten New York area war plants which had 29,215 positions overall.[283]

Eight American Federation of Labor unions and seven non-American Federation of Labor unions still excluded African-Americans in the middle of the 1940s, although African-Americans began to organize in the 1930s into political parties and trade unions, so that the number of African-American union members nationally rose from 180,000 in 1935 to 1,250,000 in 1945.[284]

Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802 in June, 1941, which required all defense industries and training programs receiving governmental contracts to provide for the full and equitable participation of all workers without discrimination because of race, creed, color or national origin. The order led to better employment opportunities for African-Americans as their proportion of skilled and semi-skilled jobs doubled in New York between 1940 and 1944.

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[282] Greenberg 1991, pp. 187 and 192.

[283] Ibid., pp. 199-200.

[284] This and the next paragraph are based on Greenberg 1991, pp. 201-202.

According to Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, Harlem's economic and social situation did not change substantially in the very beginning of the 1940s. Despite expanded economic opportunities, discrimination continued. African-Americans did not improve their economic standing at the same rate as whites did.[285]

However, it seems that Harlemites were in a better position in 1943 than before the Depression. The New Deal improved the conditions of Harlem with relief programs. Work relief projects in Harlem not only provided employment, they also improved the community with better infrastructure and brought, for example, day care, health, and educational services. In spite of that, most of problems of the African-American ghetto remained.[286] Also the segregation definitely did not disappear, in spite of more laws which existed in 1943 prohibiting discrimination. African-Americans continued to face discrimination because many public agencies and private organizations ignored those laws. African-Americans were still excluded from several unions and training programs and they still continued to be discriminated against in hiring and promotions, just to mention a few examples about the segregation at the time.[287]

3.2 The Beginning of the Harlem Jazz Dance Entertainment

Langston Hughes argues that the musicals *Shuffle Along* and *Running Wild*, and the Charleston dance, started Manhattan African-American Renaissance. He also claims, "certainly it was the musical revue 'Shuffle Along', that gave just scintillating send-off to that Negro vogue in Manhattan", even so, that "it gave the proper push – a pre-Charleston kick –to that Negro vogue of the 20's that spread to books, African sculpture, music and dancing."[288] Hughes seems to be right as by 1923, Harlem was the center of New York's African-American population, and its theaters, clubs, and dance halls provided most of jobs for the city's African-American musicians. At the time, the part of Harlem with the greatest concentration of African-American residents extended roughly from 125th Street on the south to 145th Street on the north, and from Lexington Avenue on the east to Eight and St. Nicholas avenues on the west.[289]

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285 Greenberg 1991, p. 207.

286 Ibid., pp. 210, 216 and 223.

287 Ibid., pp. 218-219.

288 Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea – An Autobiography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993 - originally published in 1940), pp. 223-224.

289 Mark Tucker, *Ellington – The Early Years* (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 92. Tucker's conclusion is a synthesis of different studies. One of these studies is Jervis Anderson's *This Was Harlem*.

Table 3. Harlem Ballrooms and Places of Entertainment in 1923.[290]

Alamo Café (in the basement of the Hurtig and Seamon's)	253 West 125th Street
Alhambra Theatre	2110 Seventh Avenue (near 126th Street)
Barron's Exclusive Club	198 West 134th Street
Capitol Palace	575 Lenox Avenue (near 139th Street)
Club Cabaret	416 Lenox Avenue.
Connie's Inn (from 1923)	2221 Seventh Avenue (near 131th Street)
Congress Casino Ballroom	Seventh Avenue at 132nd Street
The Cotton Club	644 Lenox Avenue (near 142nd Street)
Garden of Joy	Seventh Avenue between 138th and 139th Streets
Happy Rhone's Orchestra Club (later Lenox Club)	652 Lenox Avenue (near 143rd Street)
Harlem Opera House	209 West 125th Street
Herman's Inn (at the latest from 1924).	2493 Seventh Avenue (near 145th Street)[291]
(The) Hurtig and Seamon's (later the Apollo Theatre)	253 West 125th Street
J.W. Connors Café	71 West 135th Street
Lafayette Theatre (next to Connie's Inn)	2227 Seventh Avenue (near 132nd Street)
Leroy's Restaurant (until 1923)	2220 Fifth Avenue (near 136th Street)
Lincoln Theatre	58 West 135th Street
Manhattan Casino (Rockland Palace from 1928)	280 West 155th Street at Eight Avenue
The Nest Club	169 West 133rd Street[292]
New Star Casino	107th Street at Third Avenue
One-Hundred-One Ranch Club	101 West 139th Street

[290] The list is based on Hoefer 1964 if not otherwise mentioned.

[291] 'Rendezvous for New York 'Night Goers' – Herman's Inn Club', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, July 19, 1924, p. 12; 'Plays Six At a Time', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 27, 1924, p. 9; 'Famous Eastern Band To Play for Herman's Inn Club', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 4, 1924, p. 13. The Herman's Inn was mentioned as a place in 1925: 'New York Orchestras', *The Billboard*, January 24, 1925, p. 20. The club was likely known as Herman's Inn still in 1928: 'Lloyd Scott's Band Makes Debut at Herman's Inn', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 4, 1928, p. 12. There exists a claim for the club was known as 'Hermit's End', but no proof for that has been found. 'Herman's Inn' also was known as 'Basha' less than for six months between 1926 and 1927. See: Hoefer 1964, 'Club Basha'.

[292] According to *The Afro-American*, the Nest Club had "first anniversary" in 1924. See: 'Clubs', *The Afro-American*, November 29, 1924, p. 14. Jacque Malone, who has researched African-American dance, claims that the Nest Club opened already in 1923. See: Malone 1996, p. 89.

The Palace Garden Club (opened in March 1923)	2389 Seventh Avenue (near 140th Street)
Renaissance Casino and Ballroom	150 West 138th Street
Rhythm Club	168 West 132nd Street
Small's Sugar Cane Club	2212 Fifth Avenue (near 135th Street)
Tempo Club	138 West 136th Street

Table 4. Harlem Ballrooms and Places of Entertainment in 1929.[293]

Alhambra Theatre	2110 Seventh Avenue (near 126th Street)
Alhambra Ballroom	2110 Seventh Avenue (near 126th Street)
Alhambra Grill	2120 Seventh Avenue
Bamboo Inn (earlier The Palace Garden)	2389 Seventh Avenue (near 140th Street)[294]
Barron's Exclusive Club (or Theatrical Grill)	198 West 134th Street
Capitol Palace	575 Lenox Avenue (near 139th Street)
(The) Clam House	136 West 133rd Street
Club Harlem (Possibly opened already in 1928, or definitely in 1929.)	West 130th Street and Lenox Avenue[295]
Connie's Inn	2221 Seventh Avenue (near 131st Street)
Congress Casino Ballroom	Seventh Avenue at 132nd Street
The Cotton Club	644 Lenox Avenue (near 142nd Street)
Lenox Club (earlier Happy Rhone's Orchestra Club)	652 Lenox Avenue (near 143rd Street)
Harlem Opera House	209 West 125th Street
Herman's Inn	2493 Seventh Avenue (near 145th Street)
Hollywood Cabaret	41 West 124th Street
(The) Hurtig and Seamon's (later the Apollo Theatre)	253 West 125th Street
J.W. Connors Café (or possibly	71 West 135th Street[296]

293 The list is based on Hoefer 1964 if not otherwise mentioned.

294 The place became Bamboo Inn in 1925. See: 'Grand Opening Tues. Eve'g, Oct. 6 – Bamboo Inn – (Formerly the Palace Garden)', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 30, 1925, p. 6. The place became Dunbar Palace in 1930. See: ' "Club Chats" ', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 6, 1930, p. 4.

295 'Club Harlem Opens', *The Chicago Defender*, October 6, 1928, p. 11 and 'Club Harlem Opens', *The Chicago Defender*, February 2, 1929, p. 7. The club was closed at the latest in November, 1929. See: Maurice Dancer, 'Stage Facts', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, November 23, 1929, p. A3.

Murray's Roseland from the very end of 1926)	
Lafayette Theatre (next to Connie's Inn)	2227 Seventh Avenue (near 132nd Street)
Lincoln Theatre	58 West 135th Street
Rockland Palace (from 1928. Manhattan Casino earlier.)	280 West 155th Street at Eight Avenue
Mexico's	140 West 133rd Street
The Nest Club	169 West 133rd Street
New Star Casino	107th Street at Third Avenue
Odeon Theatre	256 West 145th Street
One-Hundred-One Ranch Club	101 West 139th Street
Performer's And Entertainer's Club	2221 Seventh Avenue
Pod's And Jerry's (officially Catagonia Club)	168 West 133rd Street[297]
Renaissance Casino and Ballroom	150 West 138th Street
The Rhythm Club	168 West 132nd Street[298]
Rose Danceland	209 West 125th Street
The Savoy Ballroom	596 Lenox Avenue
Silver Dollar Café	721 St. Nicholas Avenue
Small's Sugar Cane Club	2212 Fifth Avenue (near 135th Street)
Smalls' Paradise	Smalls' Paradise: 2294 ½ Seventh Avenue (near 135th Street)
Tillie's Chicken Shack (or Tillie's Chicken Inn at the latest from 1930)	134 West 133rd Street (or 148 West 133rd Street)[299]
Victoria Café	West 141st Street and Seventh Avenue
Vo-De-Do Club	2110 Seventh Avenue
(The) Yeah Man	2456 Seventh Avenue (or 2350 Seventh Avenue)

[296] An advertisement from the very end of 1926 mentions "Murray's Roseland – Harlem's Newest Dance Palace...(Formerly Connor's Inn)". See: *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 29, 1926, p. 12. The same kind of an advertisement was published again in the very beginning of 1927. See: "One Big Night at Murray's Roseland...(Formerly Connor's Inn)", *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 5, 1927, p. 11. See also: Hoefer 1964. Hoefer gives a picture that the place worked as J.W. Connors Café until 1930.

[297] Willie The Lion Smith with George Hoefer, *Music On My Mind – The Memoirs Of An American Pianist* (New York, New York: Da Capo Press, 1978 - originally published in 1964), pp. 166-167.

[298] The place was known as the Rhythm Club in 1930. See: Floyd G. Nelson, 'Harlem limited Broadway bound', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 6, 1930, p. A6.

[299] ' "Make this holiday stop, where eating is truly a pleasure" – Tillie's Chicken Inn', *The New York Times*, December 31, 1930, p. 18. George Hoefer claims, that the place was called 'Tillie's Chicken Shack' and its street address was 134 West 133rd Street. See: Hoefer 1964. It is possible that the place was earlier located elsewhere, but there is no other evidence for that.

The Harlem ballrooms and places of entertainment in 1923 and in 1929 (see tables 3 and 4) seem to follow the concentration of African-Americans in Harlem, which supports the view about Harlem as being the place for African-American entertainment during the 1920s[300].

It seems that the Harlem entertainment venues increased between 1923 and 1929, when Table 3 is compared to Table 4. There were, at least 26 places in 1923, and, at least 38 places in 1929. That supports the fact that Harlem's popularity increased in the 1920s. However, the lists are only directional. There were many more places of entertainment in Harlem in addition to the listed examples. The content of this chapter makes this assertion clearer.

Harlem also was filled with so called 'lap joints', which mean cheaper speakeasies. It was estimated that in 1929, there were nearly ten of those to every square block.[301] The famous cartoonist Elmer Simms Campbell estimated that there were 500 speakeasies in Harlem in 1932.[302] According to the Committee of Fourteen report in 1928, only five percent were owned by African-Americans, five percent were owned both by African-Americans and whites, and ninety percent by whites, as based on the sample of 85 Harlem speakeasies[303]. The primary functions of those speakeasies were drinking and discussions. There were no signs of large social dance activities in the speakeasies which would have been difficult, as they usually had small spaces.[304]

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300 See for the concentration of African-Americans in Harlem the chapter 'Harlem Background: Infrastructure and Its Population from the 1870s Until 1943'.

301 Allon Schoener, *Harlem In My Mind: Cultural Capital Of Black* America, 1900-1968 (New York, NY: The New Press, 2007), p. 84.

302 Elmer Simms Campbell was cartoonist, who made the Harlem Night Club map obviously in 1932 like it is signed in the lower left corner of the map. Whether the map was published already in 1932 is unclear. It was published in Campbell's friend Cab Calloway's autobiography in 1976. Calloway and Campbell were friends already in the 1930s. Calloway and Rollins 1976, the map and p. 120.

303 Committee of Fourteen hired African American investigator Raymond Claymes to investigate for Committee of Fourteen. He made the report 'A Brief Summary of Conclusions of Vice Conditions in Harlem' in 1928 based on his personal findings concerning Harlem nightlife. See: Heap 2009, pp. 81 and 318-319. The report is unsigned and undated, but it can be verified to come from Claymes in 1928. See for the report: 'A Brief Summary of Conclusions of Vice Conditions in Harlem – Based on Personal Observations by investigator', Committee of Fourteen Papers, box 82, 'Harlem-Report On Conditions' folder, New York Public Library. See also: Lerner 2007, p. 220.

304 Lerner 2007, p. 140. Kathleen Drowne, *Spirit of Defiance: National Prohibition and Jazz Age Literature, 1920-1933* (Columbus: The Ohio State University, 2005), pp. 97, 105-111. Drowne discusses the speakeasies, especially, in the chapter 'Hidden in Plain Sight: The Drinking Joints'. The earlier mentioned evaluation "There was nearly ten of those in one square block in Harlem" also refers to "small joints" where the space was small. Neither Michael A. Lerner nor Chad Heap, who have used the Committee of Fourteen papers in their studies and also have discussed the Harlem dance activities in their works, found any proof for common dance activities in the Harlem speakeasies. See: Lerner 2007, pp. 199-226 and Heap 2009, pp. 81-82 and 190. Also the author of this dissertation has not found any proof for common dance activities in the Harlem speakeasies by going through the same Committee of Fourteen papers which Lerner and Heap have examined. Although it is clear that the main focus of the investigators was not on dancing, they seemed to report if there

However, dance parties were not unknown in Harlem. Carl Van Vechten has described the Harlem nightlife and dancing in an account of his *Nigger Heaven* in 1926, which is reasonable to quote in full length for getting the idea what it was about:

> Dancing parties, assuredly, were no novelty in Harlem. A night in which there was no opportunity to go to one might be counted as exceptional. There were, first, the modest rent-parties, to which little groups were invited to dance to the music of the phonograph in somebody's small apartment, individual contributions of fifty cents helping to defray the occupant's exorbitant rent. Similar small, informal dances in apartments were often given without expense to the participants, although it cannot be said that hostess was likely to complain if one of the guests brought in a bottle of gin. Moreover, on any occasion when two or four wanted to dance, and had the money, they might visit a cabaret. Finally, at least once a week and not seldom twice, some society or institution or club arranged a ball in one or another of the larger halls. These naturally varied considerably in importance. The parties given by the theatrical set were small and more or less exclusive. The sporting set, too, interested in prize-fighting and gambling, pretty much flocked by itself. There were other dances, however, at which the intellectuals and the smart, fast set mingled to an extent which never happened at dinners or small social gatherings of any kind.[305]

According to Van Vechten's description, Harlem nightlife in its various forms was popular at the time. He also describes "mingling of the intellectuals and the smart, fast set". However, he does not take a stance on racial mixing in these cases. Michael A. Lerner claims that "Of the hundreds of speakeasies, nightclubs, and cabarets…in Harlem during Prohibition, only a handful maintained the strict racial segregation"[306]. As there are no statistics about the racial policy of the Harlem places of entertainment like speakeasies, nightclubs and ballrooms, the correctness of Lerner's statement cannot be verified. However, it seems that when based on newspaper articles, advertisements, memories, and earlier research, that there were

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was any kind of dancing in the Harlem places of entertainment. That happened usually by mentioning dance activities in general, but sometimes by reporting in a more detailed way. See for examples: 'Barron Wilkins' Club, 198 W. 134th Street', October 6, 1927, Box 35, Committee Of Fourteen Papers, New York Public Library and 'Barron's Club, 134th Street', 4/22/27, Box 35, Committee Of Fourteen Papers, New York Public Library. In spite of lack of the evidence, there have been claims about social dancing was an important function in speakeasies. See for example: Kathleen Drowne and Patrick Huber, *The 1920s* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), p. 226 and Ralph G. Giordano, *Satan in The Dancehall. Rev. John Roach Straton, Social Dancing, and Morality in 1920s New York City* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2008), p. 13.

305 Carl Van Vechten, *Nigger Heaven* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, unknown publishing year), pp. 143-144. Van Vechten's Nigger Heaven was originally published in 1926.

306 Lerner 2007, p. 222.

both segregated and integrated places in Harlem during the 1920s. Some of the places changed their policy from integration to segregation and vice versa during the 1920s.

Segregated places were at least as follows: Alamo Café, Cotton Club, Hollywood Cabaret, and Rose Danceland, which were for whites, and possibly the Harlem Opera House, which started later to take colored entertainers, when West 125th became an area in Harlem in the 1920s[307]. Hurtig and Seamon's seemed to discriminate against African-Americans to some degree by segregating African-Americans to different seating areas, although African-Americans were allowed to enter the place.[308] Connie's Inn started as an integrated place in 1923, but changed to segregation by 1926, when the place became almost exclusively for white customers[309].

Alhambra Theatre had switched their segregation policy to integration by August 1927, when it opened under new management as an integrated theatre.[310] It was reported that Alhambra "reopened primarily for the patronage of Negroes", even if the management had always maintained "a policy of strict equality for all". It was also was reported from time to time that at least forty per cent of its income came from other sources than African-Americans.[311] Thus, it is possible that the Alhambra Theatre had the policy for racial equality for a longer time, possibly from spring 1927.[312] The theatre also used African-American stage acts. Different dances like Cakewalk, the Charleston, Black Bottom, and chorus line were performed on the

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307 'Alamo Café', 'Cotton Club', 'Hollywood Cabaret' and 'Harlem Opera House', Hoefer 1964. For Rose Danceland see: 'Night Club Reviews – Rose Danceland (New York)', *Variety*, December 21, 1927, p. 54 and 'Webb's Orchestra Is Mainstay Of Rose Danceland', *The Afro-American*, January 7, 1928, p. 7. According to the articles, Rose Danceland catered to whites, but it had African American orchestra Chick Webb and his Harlem Stompers as the orchestra.

308 For Hurtig and Seamon's see: 'Separated Colored and White at Negro Show', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 25, 1925, p. 1 and 3 and 'Corroborates Rogers' Charge of Discrimination in Hurtig-Seamon's', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 11, 1925, p. 12.

309 'Broadway at Its Best Has Nothing on Connie's Inn', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 25, 1923, p. 7; 'Easter to Be Fittingly Celebrated at the Savoy – Connie's Inn Revue to Be One of the Special Features at Harlem's Most Beautiful Resort', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 31, 1926, p. 5; Jimmy Perry, 'Society Slants', *Atlanta Daily World*, July 22, 1936, p. 3.

310 'Alhambra Theatre Will Open Under New Policy Monday, August 22', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 17, 1927, p. 10; 'Alhambra Revue Went Over Fine', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 7, 1927, p. 13. See also: Hoefer 1964.

311 'Alhambra Theatre Rounds Out a Year Under Management of Milton Gosdorfer', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 15, 1928, p. 7.

312 *The Pittsburg Courier* stated in December 1927, that Alhambra went colored last spring. See: ' "Harlem Expansion Has Amazed New Yorkers" – Calvin', *The Pittsburg Courier*, December 3, 1927, p. 2. It is possible that Alhambra Theatre changed its racial policy gradually between spring 1927 and September 1927, when their policy change was announced in public.

stage. Notably, the theatre was only for stage performances, not for social dancing.[313]

Integrated places were places like Barron's Exclusive Club, where whites and African-Americans were reported to sit at the same tables in the very beginning of the 1920s[314]. However, Ada 'Bricktop' Smith, who worked in the club in 1922, claimed that only light-skinned African-Americans or African-Americans of importance were allowed to enter to the club.[315] It is possible that the club changed its politics for selective integration because also Ethel Waters claimed that ordinary African-Americans could not enter it, and Harlem Renaissance writer Rudolf Fisher stated that he was not allowed to enter Barron's because he was too dark.[316] Small's Paradise was mostly for African-Americans in 1926, but also some whites frequented the place. According to Langston Hughes, both nationally respected African-Americans and whites could be found there almost every night in 1927.[317] Also *The New Yorker* advertised Small's in 1928 as "among the better places for first [white] visitors not under expert guidance".[318] The Garden of Joy, the Nest Club, and the Savoy Ballroom were for both African-Americans and whites. The Savoy Ballroom, which started in March 1926, had, at best, fifty percent African-Americans and fifty percent whites in its audience. Lafayette Theatre and Lincoln

313 'Audience Shares "Joys of 1928" ', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 4, 1928, p. 10; 'The High and The Low', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 22, 1929, p. 13.

314 Lerner 2007, pp. 216 and 332. According to Lerner: "colored men and white women were sitting at the same tables" at Baron Wilkins' in 1920. Lerner's statement is based on Committee of Fourteen reports. The Committee investigators visited the places. Thus, it is clear, that Baron Wilkins' was surely racially mixed to some extent. See also: Anderson 1982, pp. 172-173.

315 Bricktop with James Haskins, *Bricktop* (New York: Atheneum, 1983), p. 75.

316 Shane Vogel, *The Scene of Harlem Cabaret – Race, Sexuality, Performance* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 80.

317 Grant Dixon, 'Lights of New York', *The Hartford Courant*, October 31, 1926, p. C7. See also: 'About Town – Calendar of Events Worth While', *The New Yorker*, March 27, 1926, p. 5; 'About Town – Calendar of Events Worth While', *The New Yorker*, April 3, 1926, p. 5; 'About Town – Calendar of Events Worth While', *The New Yorker*, April 10, 1926, p. 5. It becomes clear from the Small's Paradise descriptions in *The New Yorker* and in *The Hartford Courant*, that African-Americans were the majority in Small's Paradise: even 90 % of the customers were African-Americans. See for Langston Hughes: "These Bad New Negroes: A Critique on Critics," LHP 3773 (March 22, 1927) in Christopher C. De Santis (editor), *The Collected Works Of Langston Hughes* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2002), p. 39. On the contrary, Rudolf Fisher claimed in 1927 that Small's Paradise was mostly for whites. See: Rudolph Fisher, 'The Caucasian Storms Harlem' in Nathan Irvin Huggins (edited by), *Voices From The Harlem Renaissance* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 75. This suggests that the ratio between African-Americans and whites in Small's in 1927 varied depending on the night. Anyway, the place was for both African-Americans and whites.

318 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, June 16, 1928, p. 6. *The New Yorker* advertised the Small's in the similarly way in its other issues in 1928: 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, June 9, 1928, p. 4; 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, June 23, 1928, p. 2; 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, June 30, 1928, p. 4; 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, July 7, 1928, p. 2; 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, July 14, 1928, p. 6.

Theatre were open to African-Americans and probably whites, too.[319] As for dancing in the Lafayette and Lincoln theaters, they seemed to have only stage acts and stage dancing like the Charleston, Black Bottom and tap dance.[320]

There were also places which were meant for mostly or for only African-Americans. *The New Yorker* claimed in its issues between June and July 1928, that only the Nest, Connie's Inn, and Small's were suitable clubs for a first time white visitor in Harlem without a guide who knows those places. *The New Yorker* even claimed that a visitor should have "a friend who'll personally conduct you" as "most amusing places [are] not open to unknown whites".[321] It is possible that most of the Harlem places of entertainment, including speakeasies, were not strictly for whites, but that there was no "tight racial segregation" in those places[322]. However, it is clear

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319 For Lafayette and Lincoln theaters see: Anderson 1982, p. 110 and Hoefer 1964. For Garden of Joy see: Watson 1995, p. 136. Watson also claims, that 'Garden of Joy' was gay. Watson 1995, p. 136. There, however, is no other evidence for that. For the Savoy Ballroom see: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 132-135; Anderson 1982, p. 313. On October 16, 1929, *Variety* magazine published an article about Harlem. *The New York Amsterdam News* stated concerning the correctness of the article, "...for the lack of space we would consider it a labor of love to pick every untrue item". According to *The New York Amsterdam News,* the *Variety* article listed "eleven class white trade night clubs", Cotton Clubs, Connies Inn, the Nest, Small's Paradise, Barrons, Spider's Webb, Saratoga, Ward's Swanee and Catagona. See: 'Is This Really Harlem?', *The New York Amsterdam News,* October 23, 1929, p. 9. The list is exactly same in the original article. See: 'Black Belt's Nite Life', *Variety*, October 16, 1929, pp. 1 and 12. As the list includes the Nest Club, it is possible that the Nest Club was segregated at some time point. In addition, Rudolph Fisher stated in 1927 that the Nest was mostly for whites. See: 'The Caucasian Storms Harlem' in Huggins 1995, p. 75. The Nest also was mentioned regularly in *The New Yorker* as the place for the first time white visitor between June and July 1928. See : 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, June 9, 1928, p. 4 and 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, July 14, 1928, p. 6. According to *The New York Amsterdam News,* the Nest, however, was frequented by both African-Americans and whites in 1928. See: 'Nest Club Cabaret Submits to Padlock', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 5, 1928, p. 3. It seems that the Nest was integrated in 1928. The *Variety* list also contains for example Small's Paradise, which was not really a "white trade" club at least in 1926 because even 90 % of customers were African-Americans at the time. Also another nightclub mentioned in the list: Barron's (Exclusive Club) was racially mixed to some degree. Thus, it is possible that the list contains also racially mixed clubs listed as "white trade" nightclubs. The Saratoga Club had the NAACP.'s 'Spring Cabaret Party' in 1930. See for The Saratoga Club: 'Clubs', *The Chicago Defender*, April 19, 1930, p. 11 and 'Tid-Bits of New York Society', *The Chicago Defender*, May 10, 1930, p. 11. Connie's Inn was mostly for "white trade" at the time as stated earlier in the chapter.

320 Some examples of dancing in Lincoln Theater and Lafayette Theater: 'Lincoln Theater, N.Y. (Reviewed Week of December 8)', *The Billboard*, December 20, 1924, p. 16; 'Hudgins Still In Limelight', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 22, 1928, p. 6; ' "Broadway Rastus" ', *The Billboard*, May 16, 1925, p. 48. Also Bill Robinson performed at least in Lafayette Theater: Salem Tutt Whitney, 'Timely Topics', *The Chicago Defender*, August 4, 1928, p. 7 and Stearns 1994, p. 187.

321 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, June 16, 1928, p. 6; 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, June 23, 1928, p. 6. See also: 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, July 14, 1928, p. 6; 'Goings On About Town', *The New Yorker*, July 21, 1928, p. 4.

322 Michael A. Lerner states in his Prohibition study, "Of the hundreds of speakeasies, nightclubs, and cabarets...in Harlem during Prohibition, only a handful maintained the strict racial segregation". See: Lerner 2007, p. 222.

that there were more places for whites than *The New Yorker* claimed in 1928. For example, there was the segregated Cotton Club, which was not mentioned in *The New Yorker*. *The New Yorker* also forgot the integrated Savoy Ballroom.

Additionally, the Manhattan Casino was for African-Americans and also for whites, to some extent. The Renaissance Casino and Ballroom was mainly for African-Americans. Leroy's Restaurant was for African-Americans. The Sugar Cane was mostly for African-Americans, but there was a sprinkling of white customers.[323] Alhambra Ballroom, which was opened in 1928, was also mostly for African-Americans.[324]

Table 5. Harlem Ballrooms and Dance-Related Places in 1935.[325]

Alhambra Ballroom	2110 Seventh Avenue (near West 126th Street)
The Apollo Theatre	253 West 125th Street
The Cotton Club	644 Lenox Avenue (at West 142 Street)
Dickie Wells (formerly the Nest Club)	169 West 133rd Street
Dunbar Palace (formerly Bamboo	2370 Seventh Avenue (near West

[323] See for the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom: 'New Renaissance Ballroom to Open Next Week', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 18, 1926, p. 11; Timme Rosenkrantz (adapted and edited by Hamilton Garner), *Harlem Jazz Adventures – A European Baron's Memoir*, 1934-1969, Studies in Jazz, No. 65 (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2012), p. 99. See for Manhattan Casino: Anderson 1982, p. 72. It seems that Manhattan Casino was for both African-Americans and whites as the famous ballroom dance couple Vernon and Irene Castle had danced there, too. See: Anderson 1982, p. 75. Also the dance marathon between June and July 1928 gathered whites into the audience. See: 'The Rockland Palace Dance Marathon in 1928' chapter. See for 'Leroy's Restaurant': Malone 1996, p. 85. See for The Sugar Cane: Watson 1995, pp. 128-129. Watson claims, that The Sugar Cane was a 'speakeasy'. See: Watson 1995, p. 128. Because 'the Sugar Cane Club' - as it was known - was mentioned in newspaper articles as a "party place", Watson's claim does not seem to be correct. The place seemed to be a legal club. See: Viola Woodlyn James, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 3, 1927, p. 6; 'Woman Stabs Man To Death With His Knife After Party', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 22, 1928, p. 1; 'Woman Slain by Man In Taxicab', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 4, 1928, p. 1; 'Club Chats', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 27, 1929, p. 4.

[324] 'Many at Opening Of Alhambra Hall', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 10, 1928, p. 6. Although the headline of the article uses the name 'Alhambra Hall', the term 'Alhambra Ballroom' is used in the article text. It also becomes clear from the article, that the ballroom was located above the Alhambra Theatre, so it was the Alhambra Ballroom which was located at the same address. The ballroom was obviously closed for a while between 1928 and 1929 as it opened again in September 1929. 'Grand Opening Alhambra Ballroom', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 4, 1929, p. 8. According to the article, in the end of September 1929, it also was "entirely renovated". That refers to the fact that it was reopened in September 1929. See: 'Alhambra Ballroom Has Grand Opening', *The Chicago Defender*, September 21, 1929, p. 11. It is possible, that the ballroom was reopened twice as there is a claim, that it was opened already in 1926. No evidence for that can be found in the newspapers. The claim can be found from the official homepage of The Alhambra Ballroom: http://www.alhambraballroom.net/. The site was accessed on April 30, 2015.

[325] The list is based on Hoefer 1964 if not mentioned otherwise.

Inn)	139th Street)[326]
Harlem Opera House	211 West 125th Street[327]
Hoofer's Club	2235 Seventh Avenue (near West 132nd Street)
Lafayette Theatre	2227 Seventh Avenue (between West 131st and 132nd Streets)
Lincoln Theatre	58 West 135th Street
Renaissance Casino and Ballroom	138th Street and 7th Avenue
Rockland Palace	155th Street and 8th Avenue
Rose Danceland (possibly until 1935)	209 West 125th Street
Small's Paradise	2294 ½ Seventh Avenue (near West 135th Street)
The Savoy Ballroom	140th and 141st Street and Lenox Avenue
Ubangi Club (formerly Connie's Inn)	2221 Seventh Avenue

See Table 4 and Table 5. When compared to the 1929 list, there were clearly less places of entertainment in Harlem in 1935. Similarly to before, the list only gives a directional picture of the Harlem entertainment. There were likely more places for entertainment in the area. Basically, the list refers to the fact that the popularity of the Harlem places of entertainment decreased between 1929 and 1935.[328] A reason for that was possibly the Great Depression, which affected New York as well as Harlem.

According to Burton W. Peretti, who has researched New York nightlife between the 1920s and the 1940s, the Great Depression affected "the pernicious ghettoization" of Harlem as Harlem nightclubs like Barron's and Connie's Inn perished, because of the effects of the Depression.[329] In spite of that, Harlem nightlife still continued as it can be found from Table 5, and is reinforced by the contents and evidence presented in this chapter. Although affected by the Depression, its effects were not critical in

[326] The correct address can be found: 'Breckinridge Continues Drive', *The New York Times*, October 21, 1934, p. 25.

[327] The correct address can be found: 'Harlem Theatre On Auction List', *The New York Times*, June 15, 1934, p. 42. Although the theatre was offered in the auction, it still continued at the same address in 1937. See: 'Thieves' Ruse Starts A Theatre Stampede', *The New York Times*, August 17, 1937, p. 40.

[328] It becomes clear that there were more places of entertainment in Harlem at the time, when reading the chapter 'Harlem-Based Jazz Dance and Political Movements'. However, it seems that there were less regular places in 1935 than before, when comparing the lists.

[329] See: Peretti, 2007, p. 104. This is supported by the fact that the Savoy Ballroom also had economic problems during the Great Depression as it becomes clear in the chapter 'The Savoy Ballroom Between 1926 and 1943'. In addition, although Connie's Inn was closed somewhere in the period between 1933 and 1934, it was re-established in midtown, New York in 1935. Thus, it perished only in the Harlem context. See: Harri Heinila, 'Sad Losses in Harlem', 2013, published in https://authenticjazzdance.wordpress.com/2013/03/11/sad-losses-in-harlem/ . The site was accessed on November 15, 2015. Also Chad Heap states in general, as based on the contemporary reporting in the very beginning of the 1930s, that the beginning of the Depression decreased Harlem entertainment. Heap 2009, p. 82.

determining the survival of Harlem entertainment, at least as far as nightclubs and ballrooms in Harlem are concerned.

The ballrooms and places on the 1935 list in Table 5, which had social dances, were, at least, the Savoy Ballroom, Renaissance Ballroom and Casino, Rockland Palace, Dunbar Palace, Alhambra Ballroom, and Rose Danceland.[330] The rest of the places shown in Table 5 mostly had performances and other non-social dance-related activities.[331]

Where Harlem and social dance from the period between 1923 and 1943 is concerned, and when sampling from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*, it seems that the mainstream press only rarely reported on dance-related events in different Harlem ballrooms like Rockland Palace, Renaissance Casino and Ballroom, Dunbar Palace and the Alhambra Ballroom. The reports were mostly included in articles which told about different events with a few details.[332] The Savoy Ballroom was a distinct exception where Harlem social dance is concerned. It seemed to be mentioned quite frequently in the mainstream press articles especially between 1935 and 1943, as shown in the chapter 'The Savoy Ballroom Between 1926 and 1943'. The Savoy seemed to be the most advertised Harlem ballroom in the mainstream press.

Where performances are concerned, it also seems that the Harlem nightclubs and theaters did not usually advertise frequently in the mainstream newspapers like in *The New York Times* and in *The Wall Street Journal* between 1920 and 1931. The

330 Concerning all the ballrooms in the list see: Hoefer 1964. Additionally, concerning the Savoy Ballroom see: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009; concerning the Renaissance Casino and Ballroom and Alhambra Ballroom see: Millman and Manning 2007, pp. 47-48, 62 and 66; Rockland Palace, which was known as Manhattan Casino until the end of 1920s, had occasional dance-related events like a dance marathon in 1928. The ballroom also had dance-related political events like President Roosevelt's Birthday Ball in 1937. See: 'Dances Tomorrow Honor Roosevelt', *The New York Times*, June 29, 1937, p. 16. And it had theatrical events with dancing like the St. Ambrose Protestant Episcopal Church organized theatrical ball in 1937. See: 'Coronation Is Set To Swing In Harlem', *The New York Times*, May 13, 1937, p. 21.

331 Concerning the places mentioned in the list see: Hoefer 1964.

332 The search concerning the Savoy Ballroom, Rose Danceland, Manhattan Casino/Rockland Palace, Renaissance Casino and Ballroom, and Alhambra Ballroom between January 1923 and December 1943 was performed in ProQuest database and with *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal* during March 2014. Concerning Rockland Palace see: 'Dances Tomorrow Honor Roosevelt', *The New York Times*, June 29, 1937, p. 16 and 'Coronation Is Set To Swing In Harlem', *The New York Times*, May 13, 1937, p. 21. Concerning Renaissance Casino and Ballroom, there seems to be only one advertisement which possibly refers to social dancing in 1936: 'Santa 'Trucks' In Harlem – 800 Children Press About Bill Robinson at Celebration', *The New York Times*, December 25, 1936, p. 4. Concerning Alhambra Ballroom, there is an article which briefly mentions Alhambra Ballroom as the place for the ball in 1937. See: 'Panorama: The New York Scene', *The New York Times*, May 9, 1937, p. E9. In addition to these ballrooms, Dunbar Palace was searched in the same three newspapers from January 1923 to December 1943, on April 30, 2015. Only *The New York Times* once briefly reported a dance in the Dunbar Palace. See: 'Jinx Up In Harlem Fells Defiant Six', *The New York Times*, October 14, 1933, p. 17.

Cotton Club advertised in *The New York Times* only in the very beginning of its existence in 1924.[333] When sampling from the *New York Herald Tribune* between 1924 and 1931, the Cotton Club was mentioned only in articles which reported on the bands which played in the club, or when the articles reported on something else, like crimes which happened in the connection to the club. The club did not advertise actively during the period.[334] The Cotton Club in Harlem, however, still was mentioned in *The Wall Street Journal* as a favorite place in December 1935.[335]

When searching *Variety* and *The Billboard* from 1924 to 1930, Harlem's Cotton Club was mentioned occasionally in reviews and advertisements.[336] The Cotton Club was frequently mentioned in *Variety*'s 'Broadway Guide' as a recommended place in Harlem from 1926 to 1929.[337] In addition, the club and its acts were also frequently mentioned in *Variety*'s 'Cabarets' list from 1929 to 1936 along with different New York places of entertainment and names of their weekly acts without further information.[338] Thus, the Cotton Club in Harlem was mentioned frequently at least in *Variety* between 1926 and 1936. The readers of the magazine were likely able to recognize the club as a place of entertainment.

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333 'Cotton Club' advertisement, *The New York Times*, December 14, 1924, p. X10; 'Cotton Club' advertisement, *The New York Times*, December 7, 1924, p. X12.

334 The search concerning *New York Herald Tribune* was done into the New York Public Library database in July 2014. See for example: 'Cotton Club and Eight Other Places Padlocked', *The New York Herald*, June 23, 1925, p. 32. 'Bootlegger Testifies Dry Agent Accepted $600 Bribe, at Trial', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 17, 1927, p. 10. 'The Infinite Variety', *New York Herald Tribune*, August 17, 1930, F4. 'The Infinite Variety', *New York Herald Tribune*, November 16, 1930, p. H6. 'Block, Partner In Night Clubs, Slain After Feud', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 1, 1930, p. 3.

335 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, December 5, 1935, p. 13.

336 See for example: 'Colored Revues in Harlem', *Variety*, September 17, 1924, p. 40; 'Lucille Hegamin', *Variety*, January 31, 1925, p. 51; 'Cotton Club', *Variety*, October 14, 1925, p. 47; 'Colored Cabaret Suits', *Variety*, February 3, 1926, p. 47; 'Cotton Club', *Variety*, March 23, 1927, p. 49; 'Cotton Club', *Variety*, December 7, 1927, pp. 54 and 56; 'Cotton Club', *Variety*, April 3, 1929, p. 65; 'Johnny Hudgins High Pay For Colored Nite Club', *Variety*, May 7, 1930, p. 75. See also: 'Chas. A. Matson', *The Billboard*, February 21, 1925, p. 53; 'Hurtig & Seamon Sponsoring Another Black And White Show', *The Billboard*, March 28, 1925, p. 36; 'Walter Brooks Presents "The Cotton Club Revue" ', *The Billboard*, April 4, 1925, p. 36; 'Cotton Club Gets Judgment', *The Billboard,* December 4, 1926, p. 23; 'Vaude. Notes', *The Billboard*, August 10, 1929, p. 13.

337 See for example: ' "Variety's" Broadway Guide', *Variety*, November 17, 1926, p. 2; ' "Variety's" Broadway Guide', *Variety*, March 9, 1927, p. 33; ' "Variety's" Broadway Guide', *Variety*, June 8, 1927, p. 33; ' "Variety's" Broadway Guide', *Variety*, December 7, 1927, p. 42; ' "Variety's" Broadway Guide', *Variety*, March 7, 1928, p. 44; ' "Variety's" Broadway Guide', *Variety*, March 13, 1929, p. 47.

338 The search with key words, 'variety bills" and 'cotton club' was done in the New York Public Library database on November 11, 2014. 'Variety Bills' is the main headline of the lists which contain the cabarets. See for example: 'Cabarets', *Variety*, December 18, 1929, p. 45; 'Cabarets', *Variety*, April 23, 1930, p. 55; 'Cabaret Bills', *Variety*, April 29, 1931, p. 71; 'Cabaret Bills', *Variety*, April 5, 1932, p. 62; 'Cabarets', *Variety*, April 25, 1933, p. 48; 'Cabarets', *Variety*, April 24, 1934, p. 50; 'Cabarets', *Variety*, April 24, 1935, p. 50; 'Cabarets', *Variety*, January 29, 1936, p. 49.

Lafayette Theatre seemed to be mentioned in the mainstream newspapers during the year 1936, for its Work Progress Administration's (WPA's) Federal Theatre Project's activities. The theatre was mentioned mostly positively in these reviews. It was stated in *The New York Times* in the end of June 1936, "The Lafayette Theatre has become one of the brightest spots in Harlem." Those plays rarely included dancing, and if they were included, like the play in the beginning of December 1936 did, it seemed to be African, but not jazz dancing.[339] The Apollo Theatre, after its beginning in Harlem in 1934, was rarely mentioned in those articles.[340] An exception seemed to be *Variety* and *The Billboard* magazines, which had, according to a sampling between 1934 and 1941, occasional reviews and advertisements concerning bands and different acts in the Apollo Theatre.[341]

Where other Harlem nightclubs are concerned, especially Dickie Wells restaurant on West 133rd Street, and Ubangi Club on West 131st Street, they were mentioned quite frequently in the articles and advertisements of the mainstream press, like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* in the middle of the 1930s. Ubangi Club in Harlem was mentioned mostly in the 1935 issues, at least once a month, but during February 1935, the club was mentioned four times in *The New York Times*. Dickie Wells was mentioned at least three times a year between 1935 and 1936. Dickie Wells was mentioned only occasionally between 1937 and 1941.[342] In

339 For June 1936: 'The Play – Pine Forest', *The New York Times*, June 27, 1936, p. 21. For December 1936: John Martin,' 'Bassa Moona' Seen In Harlem Theatre', *The New York Times*, December 9, 1936, p. 35. See also: 'News Of The Stage', *The New York Times*, January 30, 1936, p. 15; Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, February 5, 1936, p. 15; Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play – Harlem Mumbo-Jumbo', *The New York Times*, March 12, 1936, p. 18; Bosley Crowther, 'Macbeth' The Moor', *The New York Times*, April 5, 1936, p. X1.

340 Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play: Apollo Theatre in Harlem Is Staging Tabloid Revues for Weekly Engagements – Notes on 'Tropicana', *The New York Times*, March 6, 1941, p. 24; 'Apollo to Show Negro Pageant', *The New York Times*, March 19, 1942, p. 17.

341 See for example: 'Variety House Reviews – Apollo, Harlem', *Variety*, November 13, 1934, p. 17. 'Band Reviews – Al Cooper's Savoy Sultans With Evelyn White', *Variety*, April 24, 1940, p. 42. 'Andy Kirk and his "Clouds of Joy" ', Variety, October 23, 1940, p. 40. 'New Acts and Band Reviews – Jeni Le Gon', *The Billboard*, December 12, 1936, p. 19. 'The One And Only – Jimmie Lunceford And His Orchestra', *The Billboard*, February 6, 1937, p. 14. 'Reviews of Acts and Bands – Nicholas Kids', *The Billboard*, March 6, 1937, p. 19. 'Andy Kirk And His Clouds Of Joy', *The Billboard*, May 31, 1941, p. 13.

342 See for Dickie Wells: 'Cochran Calls Off 6 New Productions', *The New York Times*, March 2, 1935, p. 18; Leonard Lyons, 'The Post's New Yorker', *The Washington Post*, September 11, 1937, p. 20; Jack Gould, 'News Of The Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, December 12, 1937, p. 194; Leonard Lyons, 'Candid Cameras Sometimes Snap The Wrong Man', *The Washington Post*, February 20, 1938, p. 3; Leonard Lyons, 'New Yorker', *The Washington Post*, January 25, 1939, p. 14; 'Leonard Lyons:', *The Washington Post*, March 4, 1941, p. 8. See for Ubangi Club: 'Harlem's Hot Spot!', *The New York Times*, January 29, 1935, p. 37; 'Places to Dine', *The New York Times*, February 8, 1935, p. 26; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, February 9, 1935, p. 11; 'Places to Dine', *The New York Times*, February 15, 1935, p. 22; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, February 23, 1935, p. 15; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, March 30, 1935, p. 10; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, April 13, 1935, p. 11; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, April 20, 1935, p. 16; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, May 4, 1935, p. 16; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, May 11, 1935, p. 20; Ed Sullivan, 'Broadway', *The Washington Post*,

addition, another Harlem nightclub which advertised quite frequently its dance performances in the mainstream press, especially in *Women's Wear Daily* between 1937 and 1939, was the short-lived Plantation Club which was located in the site of the former Cotton Club between 1936 and 1939.[343]

Otherwise, it is possible that the Harlem nightclubs and ballrooms already were known well enough among the downtown people that there was no need for

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May 24, 1935, p. 7; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, June 8, 1935, p. 12; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, July 20, 1935, p. 16; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, August 3, 1935, p. 16; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, August 31, 1935, p. 16; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, September 21, 1935, p. 18; 'Harlem's Hot Spot!', *The New York Times*, October 16, 1935, p. 26; 'Harlem's Hot Spot!', *The New York Times*, October 23, 1935, p. 19; 'Harlem's Hot Spot!', *The New York Times*, October 30, 1935, p. 17; 'Harlem's Hot Spot!', *The New York Times*, November 27, 1935, p. 15. See for both Dickie Wells and Ubangi Club: 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, December 5, 1935, p. 13; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, December 21, 1935, p. 11; 'Places to Dine', *The New York Times*, February 22, 1936, p. 12; Ed Sullivan, 'Broadway', *The Washington Post*, March 5, 1936, p. 24; 'Places to Dine', *The New York Times*, March 14, 1936, p. 11.

343 The Plantation was established in the end of 1936. See: 'Plantation To Take Over Former Cotton Club Spot', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, August 29, 1936, p. 17; It was closed in 1939. See: 'Plantation Club Is Fined', *The New York Herald Tribune*, September 19, 1939, p. 17; 'Harlem's Closed Plantation Under Gun For 7 Grand', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 30, 1939, p. 20. Although the articles claimed that the Plantation Club was closed in May 1939, the club still advertised after that and even had a show in the beginning of August. Thus, it is likely that the Plantation was closed by September 1939. See for example: 'Harlem's Hot Spot', *Women Wear Daily*, June 2, 1939, p. 40; 'News in Brief', *Women Wear Daily*, July 7, 1939, p. 47; 'News and Notes of Night Clubs', *Women Wear Daily*, August 4, 1939, p. 42. Otherwise see for example: Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, May 27, 1937, p. 23; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, July 1, 1937, p. 22; 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, July 3, 1937, p. 18; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, July 8, 1937, p. 30; 'Dining and Dancing', *The New York Herald Tribune*, August 21, 1937, p. 4A; 'Plantation Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, October 1, 1937, p. 18; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, October 8, 1937, p. 15; 'Dining and Dancing', *The New York Herald Tribune*, October 9, 1937, p. 10; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, November 22, 1937, p. 19; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club - New Plantation Club Revue', *Women's Wear Daily*, February 4, 1938, p. 18; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, February 8, 1938, p. 33; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, February 23, 1938, p. 34; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, April 6, 1938, p. 27; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club – Returns to Plantation', *Women's Wear Daily*, April 15, 1938, p. 16; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, October 5, 1938, p. 16; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club – Plantation Keeps Harlem on Map', *Women's Wear Daily*, November 4, 1938, p. 18; Theodore Strauss, 'News Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, November 6, 1938, p. 174; 'Night Club Reviews – Plantation Club, New York', *The Billboard*, November 12, 1938, pp. 20-21; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club', *Women's Wear Daily*, November 18, 1938, p. 15; 'Night Club Reviews – Plantation Club, N.Y.', *Variety*, November 30, 1938, pp. 42 and 45; 'Plantation', *Women's Wear Daily*, December 16, 1938, p. 16; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club – Sheila Barrett Stays' and 'Plantation, *Women's Wear Daily*, December 23, 1938, p. 14; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club – News of the World of Night Clubs', *Women's Wear Daily*, March 10, 1939, p. 30; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club – News of the World of Night Clubs', *Women's Wear Daily*, March 24, 1939, p. 34; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club – News of the World of Night Clubs', *Women's Wear Daily*, March 31, 1939, p. 30; Theodore Strauss, 'News Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, April 2, 1939, p. 132; Ben Schneider, 'The Night Club – New Plantation Revue Due', *Women's Wear Daily*, April 21, 1939, p. 30.

advertisements. It also seems that those ballrooms and nightclubs were mentioned in the mainstream press if there happened to be incidents like shootings, boxing-matches, political meetings, and dance marathons[344]. Thus, the articles also informed the downtown people about the Harlem places, although not always in a positive way. Exceptions seemed to be *Variety* and *Women's Wear Daily*. The former mentioned the Cotton Club in Harlem frequently in its lists of recommended places and cabaret between 1926 and 1936. The readers of the magazine likely recognized the club as a place of entertainment in a positive sense, although information of the entertainment was limited mainly to the names of the acts in the shows. Another exception, *Women's Wear Daily*, advertised quite frequently dance activities of the Plantation Club between 1937 and 1939. Thus, the readers of the newspapers and magazines were able to perceive the Harlem jazz dance in Harlem cabarets from the mainstream press, at least, between the 1920s and the end of the 1930s. In other words, the continuation of Harlem places of entertainment during the years was recognized in the mainstream press.

3.3 The Charleston Performances and Competitions in Harlem Between 1923 and 1928

The Charleston, which became a dance craze in the United States, also became part of Harlem entertainment in the 1920s. It was performed on stages and competitions in Harlem.[345] Some of the best-known ballrooms and theatres like the Savoy Ballroom, Manhattan Casino, and Lafayette Theatre occasionally had those competitions between 1925 and 1928. The Savoy announced in *The New York Amsterdam News* its plans for the Charleston competition every Tuesday for the next

344 See for example concerning Connie's Inn: 'Woman Slain In Gun Volley From Auto', *The Washington Post*, March 27, 1932, p. M2; 'Gang Shots Kill Woman Passer-By', *The New York Times*, March 26, 1932, p.16. And for example concerning Manhattan Casino: 'Gonzales Stopped By Fletcher in 4th', *The New York Times*, May 15, 1928, p. 23; 'Smith Draws With Corri.', *The New York Times*, April 12, 1928, p. 23; 'De Valera Farewell Attended By 7000', *The New York Times*, April 28, 1927, p. 12; 'Harlem's Dance Derby On.', *The New York Times*, June 18, 1928, p. 11.

345 Frankie Manning recalls that the Charleston was "very big" in Harlem, and he adds, "You heard it all over, on records, at parties, and in vaudeville shows. Chorus girls or showgirls or somebody was always doing it, and there were lots of Charleston competitions." Manning and Millman 2007, p. 49. Norma Miller remembers, too that the Charleston was "the big dance" in Harlem. Miller 1996, p. 25. The Charleston as the dance craze see for a brief summary of the Charleston Craze, for example: Giordano 2007, pp. 53-56. Giordano's summary contains at least one fault concerning the Charleston in the play as he claims, "It was later re-choreographed by two black dancers Cecil Mack and James Johnson for an all black Harlem show 'Runnin' Wild'." That is not true, because Mack and Johnson were responsible for the song of the show, The Charleston. However, Giordano's summary gives a picture, how big the Charleston craze was. For the Charleston craze also see Stearns 1994, pp. 110-112 and 145.

two months, July and August 1926[346]. *The Pittsburgh Courier* claimed over a decade later, that the Savoy had the Charleston competitions on Sundays in 1926. Nothing concerning possible Sunday competitions has surfaced.[347] Lafayette Theatre organized the Charleston competition in August 1928.[348] There does not exist any results or participant list. The biggest Charleston contests in Harlem, however, were organized in the Manhattan Casino between 1925 and 1926. These Manhattan Casino competitions were noted in the African-American newspapers.

The Manhattan Casino had at least three different Charleston competitions between April and June in 1925. 'Clef Club of New York' organized the first of them on Easter Monday, April 13. The winner, African-American Clyde Parks got the Al Jolson silver cup from African-American Garland Anderson, who was white comedian Al Jolson's protégée.[349] The reason why Al Jolson did not present the cup to the winner is unclear. It was announced over a week before the contest that he was to "personally present the winner of the contest a beautiful silver loving cup"[350]. In addition to that, he was claimed to have been the originator of the contest[351]. The competition judges or other competitors' race is unknown.

The second of the competitions, 'World's Championship Charleston Contest', was organized in the Manhattan Casino on May 1, 1925. The competition judges included both whites and African-Americans. Ernest Truex, W.C. Fields, George White, and the Duncan Sisters represented whites, and Flournoy Miller and Aubrey Lyles represented African-Americans as the judges. The Duncan Sisters also sang and danced in the event. The committee, which organized the event, included African-Americans. The contestants were announced to be from Broadway's best shows and revues.[352] The fact that contest authorities were racially mixed means that

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346 'Unusual Holiday Program Planned for Local Popular Savoy Ballroom', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 30, 1926, p. 6.

347 *The Pittsburgh Courier* claimed in its article in 1940, that the Savoy held the Charleston competition every Sunday afternoon in 1926. See: 'Savoy Has Played Host To Almost 10,000,000 People In Last 13 Years', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 9, 1940, p. 20. That is possible, but nothing else has surfaced about that. It also is possible that the paper mixed the dates and those competitions were actually held on Tuesdays as stated before in this chapter.

348 'Hudgins Still In Limelight', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 22, 1928, p. 6.

349 'Fifteen Anniversary Reception – Clef Club of New York City', *The Chicago Defender*, April 4, 1925, p. A7; Thelma E. Berlack, 'Post Lenten Dances Give Many Thrills', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, April 25, 1925, p. 3. The winner Clyde Parks lived on 309 West 131st street, which was an African-American area in Harlem in 1925. Thus, Parks was probably African-American. Garland Anderson was African-American. See: Anthony Duane Hill, *Garland Anderson*, http://www.blackpast.org/aah/anderson-garland-1886-1939 . The site was accessed on April 30, 2015. The competition judges' race is unknown.

350 '15th Anniversary Reception – Clef Club', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, April 4, 1925, p. 15.

351 'Famous Clefties Ready for Big Easter Monday Night Doings at Manhattan Casino', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 25, 1925, p. 4.

352 'May Carnival And Dance', *The Afro-American*, May 2, 1925, p. A2; 'To Give May Carnival', *The Chicago Defender*, May 2, 1925, p. A5. At least, Mrs. Bessye Bearden and H. Binga Dismond were African-Americans among the committee members of the event. See

the contestants were probably also both African-Americans and whites, but there does not exist any list of participants or winners.[353]

The third of the Manhattan Casino Charleston competitions, 'Greatest Charleston Contest', happened on June 5, 1925. It was advertised with the theme 'Broadway vs. Harlem', which suggests that the competition was racially mixed, although again, there is no list of the competitors or the winners. The event was advertised: "The colored employees of the Keith-Albee Circuit and its theaters are holding their annual dance and entertainment". John Cassidy, who was white, was announced to be master of ceremonies in the event. Two weeks before the event it was announced that one of the performers in the event would be Allan K. Foster and His 16 Hippodrome Dancing Beauties "Direct From Broadway"[354]. This group possibly included white dancers.

A couple of days before the event, performers of the event were announced as, "the revue from the "Club Alabam"; Sissle and Blake, Covan and Walker." All four performers were African-Americans. In addition to them, it was mentioned, "There are others on the same bill and the entertainment will naturally be of the highest." However, it is unclear if Allan K. Foster and his dancers still were included in the event. Paul Whiteman's Orchestra was "Among Attractions" in the event as *the New York Amsterdam News* announced only two days before the event.[355] That suggests that they also played there, but it is not certain, because the Will Vodery Orchestra as the orchestra in the event, was only mentioned a week before[356]. It is possible that the orchestra was changed during last days before the event.

A big Charleston competition in the Manhattan Casino in November 1926, was mentioned in *The New York Amsterdam News* on October 20, 1926.[357] There had not likely been any similar competitions during 1926, because, according to the paper, indications were that the masquerade and the Charleston competition in the event "will be the biggest thing in Manhattan Casino in this season". This time, the competition seemed to have a clear racial aspect as *The New York Amsterdam News* stated:

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for example: 'New York City Briefs', *The Chicago Defender*, March 29, 1924, p. 12 and Mrs. H. Binga Dismond , 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, January 23, 1926, p. 6.

353 The author of the study could not find anything, where the names of the participants are mentioned.

354 "They're Here Again! The Theatre Boys of the Keith-Albee Circuit', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 20, 1925, p. 6; 'Colored K.-A. Help Will Make Merry', *The Billboard*, May 30, 1925, p. 18.

355 'Paul Whiteman's Orchestra Among Attractions at Theatre Boys' Frolic', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 3, 1925, p. 5.

356 'Colored K.-A. Help Will Make Merry', *The Billboard*, May 30, 1925, p. 18.

357 This and the next two paragraphs are based on the articles as follows: 'Liet. Simpson and Monarch Band to Entertain at Manhattan Casino', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 20, 1926, p. 10; 'Are You Getting Ready for the Masquerade Ball and Charleston Contest?', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 27, 1926, p. 10; 'Big Charleston Contest Feature of Monarch's Band Entertainment', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 27, 1926, p. 11.

> [N]owhere in this country is there a race band as capable as Liet. Simpson's Monarch Band, and few bands of the opposite race excel this band, which is allied with Monarch Lodge...the men might be encouraged to carry on in their work and keep the race and New York in the forefoot musically, they should be greeted with a capacity house that night…

Also Edwin Small, the proprietor of Small's Paradise Cabaret had donated "a handsome silver loving cup" for the Charleston competition. Again, there does not exist the results or participant list[358].

The Charleston was not only performed in competitions in Harlem ballrooms. It was also performed there on the stages. Count Basie remembers in his autobiography of how he saw a Charleston performance at the Capitol Palace on summer 1924. He claims that the Charleston was becoming a ballroom fad at the time. Basie also states "the undisputed Charleston dancer in Harlem was a cat known as Brownie, whose act was called as The Three Browns, and it was them I saw dancing in that floor show [in the Capitol Palace]".[359] Brownie was possibly Russell Brown, who was mentioned as "the fastest Charleston dancer in show business" by another member of the group, Joe Peterson.[360]

The African-American newspapers like *The New York Amsterdam News* and *The Pittsburgh Courier* also had occasional references to the Charleston performances. New Star Casino advertised a "Dance until you tire with the Charleston Steppers" event in March 1925. "The Charleston Steppers" referred to the Charleston dance.[361] In September 1926, Bramville Club had the Charleston performance by an amateur dancer from "Latin Row" which is the name for 114th Street, East of 7th Avenue.[362] In addition, the Savoy Ballroom had the Charleston dance performance as part of circus performances in December 1926.[363]

Manhattan Casino (later Rockland Palace) had, in addition to its Charleston competitions, the occasional Charleston performances between 1925 and 1928. *The New York Amsterdam News* reported on the basketball contest between Renaissance Five and Italian Catholic Club on New Year's Night at the very end of 1925: "An unknown youngster went on the floor early and did the Charleston to the accompaniment of a rain of silver and other coins thrown to him for his efforts." It

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358 The author of the dissertation could not find anything, where the results or the participants are mentioned.

359 Albert Murray, *Good Morning Blues – The Autobiography of Count Basie as told to Albert Murray* (Boston, Ma.: Da Capo Press, 2002), p. 52.

360 'Chicago Interviews – Joe Peterson – Dec. 31, 1959' interview, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

361 'Chatter and Chimes By Thelma E. Berlack', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 21, 1925, p. 14.

362 'Calvin's Weekly Diary of The New York Show World', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 4, 1926, p. 9.

363 'And the Circus Comes to Town', *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 8, 1926, p. 11.

was likely an impromptu performance, because the organizers of the event apparently did not plan it beforehand.[364] The 'Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters' event in the Manhattan Casino in November 1926 might have had a Charleston and Black Bottom performance.[365] In addition to that, a few couples were reported to have done a Charleston exhibition during the 1928 Dance Marathon in Rockland Palace.[366]

Small's Paradise had dancing waiters who danced the Charleston when they served customers in October 1926.[367] Small's also had Charleston performances in August and September 1926, when Ms. Scott from The Grand St. Follies gave "the interpretation of the Charleston" and dancer Malinda was later reported to have given "her Charleston to an encore" in another Small's event.[368]

The Charleston also was performed in Harlem theaters between 1923 and 1926. Lincoln Theatre had Alberta Hunter, with Laura Miller as the pianist, and Leroy Broomfield who was described as "a remarkable fast dancer". They all worked as a feature act and had "a fast Charleston finish" in their act in December 1924.[369]

Lafayette Theater had various Charleston-based numbers between August 1923 and June 1926. The Sheik of Harlem production was staged in August 1923. It had a number called 'Original Charleston Strut'.[370] In January 1925, the theatre had *"Alabam' Fantasies"*, a play which included a 'Do The Charleston' episode.[371] In May 1925, Lafayette Theatre had a "handsome, lithe Charleston-dancer" doing a performance with his wife and "two unique youngsters".[372] During the same month, the Charleston was possibly performed in another Lafayette play called *Broadway Rastus*. The Black Bottom was surely danced in the play.[373] The Black Bottom really came into popularity in 1926.[374]

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364 'More Than Three Thousand Fans at Manhattan Casino New Year's Night', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 6, 1926, p. 6.

365 'Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters – Pullman Porters' Ball', *The New Leader*, November 27, 1926, p. 3. The advertisement of the event stated briefly: "See the Black Bottom and Charleston as it SHOULD Be Done". That refers to a possible performance. In another advertisement it was referred to the Charleston, but without mentioning anything about a possible performance. See: 'Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters', *The New Leader*, November 27, 1926, p. 3.

366 'Marathoners Continue Their Athletic Gyrations at the Manhattan Casino', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 27, 1928, p. 6.

367 Grant Dixon, 'Lights Of New York', *The Hartford Courant*, October 31, 1926, p. C7.

368 'Calvin's Weekly Diary of The New York Show World', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, August 14, 1926, p. 9; 'Calvin's Weekly Diary of The New York Show World', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 4, 1926, p. 9

369 'Lincoln Theater, N.Y.' (Reviewed week of December 8)', *The Billboard*, December 20, 1924, p. 16.

370 "The Sheik of Harlem", *The Billboard*, August 25, 1923, p. 52.

371 'The New Plays On Broadway', *The Billboard*, January 31, 1925, p. 38.

372 'Vaude. at Lafayette', *The Billboard*, June 6, 1925, p. 48.

373 "Broadway Rastus", *The Billboard*, May 16, 1925, p. 48. One of the performers was named as 'Miss Charleston', which refers to the Charleston dance. It is possible, but not sure,

The Lafayette Theater might have had a Charleston performance in March 1926. The name of the play, *Charleston Frigase* could be a reference to that, but there is no description of the play.[375] Charleston Steppers, featuring Andrew Tribble, performed in the theatre in June 1926.[376] The name Charleston Steppers refers to the Charleston, although there is no description about the event. Before them, Clarence E. Muse and his Charleston Dandies performed in the Lafayette Theater for one week during the same month. They were supported by the Chorus Of Charleston Babies[377], which refers directly to dancing. The group probably danced the Charleston on the Lafayette stage. Otherwise, the Charleston Dandies obviously contained acting, and thus the performance was basically a theatrical play.[378]

Overall, it seems that the Charleston was part of the Harlem entertainment scene, at least between 1923 and 1928, where theaters and ballrooms are concerned. It seems that the Charleston competitions, in particular, were occasionally racially mixed. That refers clearly to some kind of effort for integration in the competitions, although racially mixed Charleston competitions did not seem to be a regular in the Harlem context. However, these efforts rarely surfaced to the mainstream press, which mostly seemed to stay quiet about them. An exception was *The Billboard* which reported possibly only once on the mixed Harlem competitions, in addition to its occasional reports on the Charleston performances.[379]

3.4 Tap Dance and Eccentric Dance Inside Harlem – Harlem Cabarets

The Harlem tap dance and other jazz dance activities were part of the Harlem cabarets like Small's Paradise, Cotton Club, Connie's Inn, and theatres like Lafayette and Lincoln. The Hoofers' Club in the basement of Lafayette Theatre became perhaps the most important place for serious tap dancers[380]. It was a place

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if there was the Charleston in the play. One of dance numbers was named as 'Black Bottom Dance'. There is no doubt about that refers to the dance.

374 Stearns 1994, pp. 110-112.

375 Amon Davis, 'Amon's Pen', *The Chicago Defender*, March 27, 1926, p. 6.

376 'Stars That Shine', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, June 19, 1926, p. 10.

377 'Lafayette 7th Avenue, At 132nd Street – One Week, Beginning Monday, June 14 – Clarence E. Muse And His Charleston Dandies', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 9 1926, p. 6.

378 'Given Big Ovation In Harlem - Muse Is Taking Harlem By Storm After Long Absence', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, June 26, 1926, p. 11.

379 This can be concluded from the chapter and its footnotes.

380 This and the next paragraph are based on the sources as follows: Stearns 1994, pp. 153, 173-174, 212, 338. Baby Lawrence (Laurence Jackson) interview February 1960, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

where great tap dancers like Honi Coles, King Rastus Brown, Eddie Rector, John W. Sublett (known as 'Bubbles'), and Laurence 'Baby Lawrence' Jackson rehearsed and performed frequently. The Hoofers' Club differed from the ordinary rehearsal halls and performance stages because it was not for the ordinary public. There was no regular audience like in cabarets and theatres. The audience consisted only of other performers and musicians.

The performers had to be good to enter the stage there, because otherwise they were booed off of the stage. The significance of the Hoofers' Club during its existence between the 1920s and the 1940s, was that it kept tap dance standards high, because the performers had to work hard with their steps to convince other tap greats. It created a continuous competitive atmosphere which likely took tap forward, and it was the place where tap dancers were able to perform when their work in ballrooms, cabarets, and theatres was slow. They could keep their performance standards high even when they did not dance in the front of an ordinary audience. The Hoofers' Club was reminiscent of the Savoy Ballroom's Circle phenomenon and Corner, which were similar "performance stages". The dancers had to be good to enter to the Circle and the Corner or they were removed by different methods[381].

Especially, two theaters, the Lafayette Theatre and the Apollo Theatre, and two clubs, the Cotton Club, and Hoofers' Club were the places where tap dancers performed in Harlem. The Lafayette started in 1912, and soon changed from the segregated theater to the integrated theater. The theater became a stepping-stone for a successful career. It was in the other end of the TOBA circuit (= Theater Owners' Booking Association circuit). Tap dancer and choreographer Leonard Reed stated "you had to work your way up from the TOBA circuit…to Washington. Then you'd go to Philadelphia…and when you got to New York you passed through the Hoofers Club on the way to the Lafayette". Lafayette Theatre gathered tap stars from Bill Robinson and The Nicholas Brothers to Buck and Bubbles.[382]

The Apollo Theatre was known earlier as the Hurtig & Seamon's Burlesque House, which was partly segregated. When Frank Schiffman bought the Hurtig & Seamon's in 1934 and transformed it to the Apollo Theatre, it became an integrated theater and a cultural core of the Harlem African-American community. To perform on the Apollo Theatre stage was a test for performers. Like Apollo Chorus Line dancer Marion Coles put it: "If you got past that audience you were good…If they didn't like you, they let you know…" The competition between the acts was also fierce. According to tap dancer Howard 'Sandman' Sims, the Apollo Theatre audience mostly consisted of other tap dancers when the big name dance acts played at the Apollo. The audience challenged the stage performers who had to do their best to impress the audience. The stage shows were built around well-known orchestras like Duke Ellington, Don Redman, Chick Webb, Lucky Millinder, and Fletcher Henderson. The Apollo Theatre chorus line was especially famous for its dancing

[381] The Savoy also had "circles" where ordinary dancers were able to perform. This is discussed in the chapter 'The Savoy Ballroom Between 1926 and 1943'.

[382] Hill 2010, pp. 99-100, 102, 110 and 112. Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 167-168. Schiffman 1971, p. 47. See also for Lafayette: Hoefer 1964.

skills. According to dance historian Constance Valis Hill, the Apollo Chorus line dancers were considered to be the best female dancers in New York.[383]

The Cotton Club, which was located in Harlem between 1924 and 1936, and after that on Broadway near Times Square[384], was a segregated nightclub for whites. It was also a showplace for African-American dancers who frequently were recruited for performances at the club. Where jazz dance and its dances like tap and the Lindy Hop were concerned, the artists usually underlined the high level of performances at the Cotton Club. It seems that in spite of segregation and underpayment in some cases, these artists considered performing at the club as a step to higher artistic level in their career.[385] Savoy Lindy Hopper Frankie Manning even thought that he was ready for a professional career after he had proven his skills at the Cotton Club[386].

Tap was regularly included in the Cotton Club shows. The Cotton Club had tap artists like the Nicholas Brothers, Bill Robinson, Peg Leg Bates, Tip, Tap and Toe, the Four Step Brothers, Buck and Bubbles, with other jazz dance acts like the Berry Brothers, Three Chocolateers, Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker, and Dynamite Hooker, just to mention a few of the countless acts working there. Although the club blatantly exploited African-American stereotypes and had, according to the Cotton Club Orchestra leader Cab Calloway, been decorated in that way whites could feel they were being catered to and entertained by African-American slaves[387], there also was a certain kind of "integration" as Calloway explained, "There was integration to a certain extent…the performers could go [to the club]. Even if whites come to see blacks perform, you still have integration…when we were performing, when we were making it possible for the people to come see us."[388] It could be argued with Calloway to what extent those performers could represent the attitudes of ordinary African-American people and how that helped the audience to communicate with ordinary African-Americans if they were not allowed to come to the Cotton Club.

The Cotton Club seemed to divide its entertainers, where its wage and racial politics are concerned. Musician Sonny Greer stated that concerning the wage he earned and the owners of the Cotton Club, who were related to organized crime, "I keep hearing how bad the gangsters were…All I can say is that I wish I was still working for them."[389] On the other hand, singer and actor Lena Horne stated:

> The Cotton Club veterans felt that they were blocked and used by white people. They were full of stories about how white people had drawn on their experience, taken their ideas for individual numbers –

383 See for the Apollo Theatre: Hoefer 1964. See also: Hill 2010, p. 102-103 and 107.

384 The exact opening date on Broadway is unknown, but that happened between February 1936 and September 1936. See: Haskins 1977, pp. 111 and 116. See also: 'Cotton Club' advertisement, *The New York Times*, December 7, 1924, p. X12. Cotton Club was described as "Society's newest rendezvous' in the advertisement.

385 Malone 1996, pp. 87-88.

386 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 123.

387 Malone 1996, pp. 87-88.

388 Haskins 1977, p. 91.

389 Ibid., pp. 58-59.

> even for complete shows – and given them nothing in return. Not even a credit line in a program, much less any payment[390].

Thus, it stays contradictory how much performing in the Cotton Club really helped its African-American entertainers financially and artistically.

3.5 The Charleston as Social Dance in Harlem Between 1923 and 1926

Dance historians have had various definitions as to what social dance has been. Ralph G. Giordano, who has written about social dancing in America, seems to think that social dancing has been ”social activities that included dancing”. Lynne Fauley Emery, who has researched “black dance” from the seventeenth century to the twentieth century, explains that there were social dances like the Charleston, Black Bottom, rhumba, and Conga etc., without making any differences between social, performance, and competition modes of the dances. Terry Monaghan has argued that concerning the Lindy Hop there were three different modes of the Lindy Hop: social, performance, and competition. However, Monaghan does not give any definitions as to what these modes have been exactly.[391] In this study, social dance is defined as dancing in general which is done by people who are not performers or competitors at the moment of their dancing.

It seems that African-American and whites socialized and danced together in the Harlem places of entertainment during the 1920s. Michael A. Lerner claims, ”with nightclubs and speakeasies of the Prohibition era, the social mingling of the races became more widespread than at any time since the Civil War.” This interracial mingling got positive notes in *The Messenger* and in *The New York Amsterdam News*. Lerner paraphrases Chandler Owen from *The Messenger*, who wrote in the first half of the 1920s, that in the long run the nightclub would help break down the barriers of both race and class in the United States. Owen called the ”black and tan” cabaret which catered to whites and African-Americans as ”America’s most democratic institution”. He also explained concerning nightclubs: ”It is here that white and colored people mix freely”.[392]

Theophilus Lewis stated in *The New York Amsterdam News* in March 1930, that interracial dancing was ”one of the quickest, as well as the most enjoyable and innocent ways of bringing about understanding between individuals.” It was also ”one of the best ways of reducing friction between whites and blacks”, and this is

390 Ibid., p. 104.

391 Giordano 2007, p. xv. Emery 1988, pp. 351-352. Monaghan 2005, pp. 54-55.

392 Lerner 2007, pp. 215 and 332 (note 33).

why "the night clubs have done more to improve race relations in ten years than the churches, white and black, have done in ten decades".[393]

According to Michael A. Lerner, the reports from The Committee of Fourteen, Police Department and the Bureau of Prohibition, also told about race mixing in Harlem in the 1920s. Places like Actors Inn, the Shuffle Inn (Connie's Inn from 1923), the Nest Club, the Elks Restaurant, the Pullman Café, the Black Gold Cabaret, Edmond's, The Oriental, and the Capitol Palace with dozens of other clubs and speakeasies, overwhelmingly indicated that race mixing was common "in most of Harlem's nightspots" as Lerner puts it. A remarkable social environment in which whites and African-Americans mixed characterized the Harlem nightlife. Lerner argues that it paved a way for breaking down racial barriers in the long run.[394] Although, it seems that Lerner has generalized those reports too much with concern to the whole Harlem entertainment scene, when considering other reports about the racial status of the Harlem places of entertainment,[395] the reports, however, refer firmly to the fact that racial mixing was real in the Harlem entertainment.

Lewis A. Erenberg, who has researched New York nightlife, states that as whites owned the most of big clubs and they thus "appealed to a white vision of Harlem life", African-Americans' role was to serve whites and perform to them[396]. Whites could "act black and feel primitive personally" without changing their public lives. "The "real life" of Harlem was the creation of white fantasies". However, Erenberg states correspondingly like Lerner:

> The nightclubs of the twenties continued to bring diverse groups together for an evening in the exploration of a new and vital popular culture that offered a way out of many of the limitations and controls of nineteenth-century society, culture, and institutional identity.

Erenberg's last statement seems to be contradictory compared to the roles of African-Americans and whites in Harlem as he defined earlier and it stays unclear if he really claims that Harlem nightclubs brought together different races.

The Charleston dance, which played a part in socializing with different people, seemed to be danced about everywhere, by about everybody between 1923 and 1926, according to Ralph Giordano. He states:

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393 Theophilus Lewis, 'The Harlem Sketch Book', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 26, 1930, p. 9.

394 Lerner 2007, pp. 216-217 and 223. Also Roy Wilkins, who was part of the NAACP, claimed that "the races mixed –like nowhere else in America", where Harlem is concerned. He used as an example a breakfast dance "at one of Harlem's large casinos" in 1929, where he "saw perhaps 300 whites in a crowd of 2,000 black people", who were dancing with each other. The name of the casino is unknown. See: Roy Wilkins with Rom Matthews, *Standing Fast – The Autobiography Of Roy Wilkins* (New York: The Viking Press, 1982), pp. 83-84.

395 See chapter: 'The Beginning of the Harlem Jazz Dance Entertainment'. Lerner clearly has generalized the reports he has examined to concern the whole Harlem scene. Those reports do not cover all the Harlem places of entertainment. Concerning the reports see: Lerner 2007, p. 332 and notes 35 and 36.

396 This and the next paragraph are based on Erenberg 1981, pp. 255-258.

> Young schoolchildren did it in the schoolyard, and performers did it on Broadway and in Hollywood movies…They danced within their homes, inside ballrooms, on college campuses, outside, on roofs, on the boardwalks, on the beach, even with sailors on the decks of battleships. Charleston dance contests drew major media attention all across the country.

At the same time, Giordano describes how dance halls and cities banned the Charleston as too wild to them.[397] Thus, it stays unclear how frequently the Charleston really was danced socially in those dance halls.

In Harlem, and elsewhere in New York, the Charleston was done on the street corners by juvenile traveling troupes, which were African-American or white. They might have had a mouth organ, a ukulele or a comb as a musical instrument, like Jane Grant noted in her *New York Times* article in August 1925. The lids of garbage cans and even a tub seemed to be used for that kind of music. According to Grant: "Overnight Harlem became a dancing emporium, turning out Charleston dancers, good and bad, by the dozens."[398] Similarly, J. A. Rogers wrote in *Survey Graphic* already in March 1925, "The cleverest 'Charleston' dancers perhaps are urchins of five and six who may be seen any time on the streets of Harlem, keeping time with their hands, and surrounded by admiring crowd."[399] Eric Walrond explained in *Vanity Fair* in 1926:

> The mulatto maids of white actors [are asked to teach Charleston and]...Colored men… are engaged to conduct classes in the Charleston to which come the smart folk of Park Avenue…the Charleston five years ago made its descent upon Harlem. Its coming quiet, its presence dynamic, its influence was instantaneous and contagious. Bands of Negro street urchins at dusk, at dawn, overran the teeming sidewalks doing it. With its pounding, stamping, barbaric rhythm, Upper Fifth Avenue tenements reeled giddily.

According to Walrond, everybody in Harlem was not happy about the Charleston, as he stated, "Dark, flame-clad, slow gaited émigrés, at best an unquestioning lot, depopulating isles shining on a tropic sea, rigidly kept themselves

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397 Giordano 2007, p. 55 and Giordano 2008, p. 83.

398 Jane Grant, 'The Charleston Prances into Favor', *The New York Times*, August 30, 1925, p. SM2. There also is a picture of the black juvenile group, where a dancer is dancing 'Camel Walk' kind of step and others around him clapping their hands. Flournoy Miller claimed to Marshall Stearns, that the juvenile group, which he saw in Harlem and which he brought next afternoon to the Runnin' Wild rehearsal, used "the lids of garbage cans and a tub on which they drummed" for their dancing. See Stearns 1994, p. 145.

399 J. A. Rogers, 'Jazz At Home' in Alain Locke (editor), *The New Negro* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997), p. 219. Rogers' article was published originally in *Survey Graphic* in March 1925. See: *Survey Graphic* March, 1925. Also dancer Al Minns remembers that he danced on street corners in Harlem in the middle of the 1920s. Minns danced, for example, the Charleston and the dance was done to the sounds of clapping hands. See: Al Minns interview by Swedish Swing Society, October 1984. The author has a copy of the video.

free of it."[400] It stays unclear, what "émigrés" he meant. However, it seems that Harlemites' majority was for the Charleston.

The sidewalk activity led to consequences: *The New York Times* reported in October 1925, that "Sidewalk Charleston" was banned in New York by the police department. The newspaper stated, "For the last two years, young boys have held audiences before places of amusement and made money by doing the Charleston dance. It is understood that the owners of the stores before which the youngsters did their stuff protested."[401] It is unclear if this ban was really obeyed as the before-mentioned *Vanity Fair* article refers to the fact that in 1926 the Charleston still was done on the sidewalks, at least in Harlem. *The New York Times* reported that the Elks organization, with its 30,000 African-American participants, "marched, charlestoned and cakewalked" from 61st Street to Harlem and from there to 149th Street in August 1927.[402]

The ban article from October 1925, supports the evidence that the popularity of the Charleston was really increasing in New York during 1923, as the article mentions that the "Sidewalk Charleston" was done for the last two years. Police had also intervened with "Sidewalk" Charleston dancing by August 1925, when they stopped a Charleston competition between Harlem's Lenox Avenue and Brooklyn on Brooklyn's Hudson Avenue, after the competition had continued almost through the night and residents in the neighborhood had complained about the noise. Although the most of competitors which police arrested were African-American Brooklynites, the group was racially mixed, as it included at least one white Brooklynite. It was also reported that many of "the would be champions" had dropped out a couple of hours before police's intervention.[403] It is unclear if this incident was connected to the later "Sidewalk" Charleston ban.

The Charleston also was done in the house rent parties in Harlem in the 1920s, where it was done in a similar fashion by forming a circle around the dancer and by clapping the hands.[404]

There also exists evidence that the Charleston was danced socially in Harlem dance halls such as the Renaissance Casino in March 1925, when "John C. Smith's popular combination furnished the "Charleston stuff" " as *The Chicago Defender* put it. The paper reported that "Tribe 9, Napthall, one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel"

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400 Eric Walrond, 'Charleston, Hey! Hey! – An Attempt to Trace the Origin of America's Newest Dance Madness', *Vanity Fair*, April 1926, pp. 73 and 116.

401 ' "Sidewalk Charleston" Banned In New York', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 3, 1925, p. 16.

402 '30000 Negro Elks Parade In the Rain', *The New York Times*, August 24, 1927, p. 9.

403 'Local Cops Claimed They Saw the Famous "Charleston Dance" ', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 26, 1925, p. 8.

404 Frankie Manning remembers that he was in those parties somewhere between the beginning and the middle of the 1920s. He recalls that they danced in the middle of the circle with people around clapping their hands. He also is sure, that he saw the Charleston steps in those situations. See: Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 25-26. Also Norma Miller remembers that she saw and did the Charleston in house rent parties at the same time. Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 20-21.

organized the dance.[405] According to Terry Monaghan, the Charleston was danced at the Savoy Ballroom, at least in 1926, although there was an attempt to tone it down. The freedom of the Charleston had its limits in those dance halls. It would be realistic to say that the Charleston became a popular stage dance which took a root in ballrooms, including rent parties and streets.[406] Also, whites seemed to dance the Charleston and Black Bottom socially in Harlem as Cabarets claimed to be filled nightly with handsomely dressed white slummers in the 1920s.[407] According to Jervis Anderson, African-Americans were "in the ascendancy" in 1926, as almost everyone was dancing the Charleston or singing spirituals and the blues music.[408]

3.6 The Savoy Ballroom Between 1926 and 1943

According to Frankie Manning, one of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers and Herbert White's dancers, the Savoy Ballroom at 141st Street stayed on the top, where the Lindy Hop is concerned. Harlem's Renaissance Ballroom at 138th Street was number two on the list and Alhambra Ballroom at 126th Street was number three. In addition to regular social dancing, all of the ballrooms which Manning mentioned, also had other activities like club events, basketball games and other, possibly dance connected events.[409] The Savoy was the only one of the ballrooms which had a regular, seven nights per week program at the time, although Wednesdays and Fridays were reserved for clubs and different organizations.[410] The Savoy also seemed to be the most advertised ballroom in the mainstream press as it is discussed earlier in this study, and is discussed in this chapter concerning the Savoy in the mainstream press. That is why the Savoy Ballroom is used as the example about the Harlem social dance concerning the period between 1926 and 1943.

The Savoy Background

Carl Van Vechten's famous novel, *Nigger Heaven,* had its part in the Harlem hype in 1926, as it almost immediately sold 100,000 copies and was a success

405 'New York Society Notes', *The Chicago Defender*, March 14, 1925, A11.

406 That is the conclusion based on this chapter. See also: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 130 and Julie Malnig, *Dancing Till Dawn. A Century of Exhibition Ballroom Dance*, New York University Press, New York, 1992, p. 111.

407 Osofsky 1996, p. 185.

408 Anderson 1982, p. 168.

409 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 47-48, 62 and 66. Rockland Palace had different events like boxing events between the 1920s and the 1940s. See: 'Old Boxing Club to Reopen', *The New York Times*, October 14, 1936, p. 32. In addition to that, Rockland Palace became as the 'peace mission' place for religious preacher Father Divine and his followers in 1940. See: 'Divine Acquires New Unit', *The New York Times*, July 15, 1940, p. 19.

410 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 128 and 137.

among white readers.[411] According to Langston Hughes, African-American readers in Harlem were largely mad at Van Vechten for *Nigger Heaven*.[412] It seems that it did not increase mutual understanding between races as to how Harlemites perceived the novel. Samuel B. Charters and Leonard Kunstadt, who have researched the history of the New York Jazz Scene, think that the real rush to Harlem began about in 1926 after Van Vechten's novel had been published, and the sensational play *Lulu Belle,* starring Harlem cabaret performer Lenore Ulric, with 466 performances at the Belasco Theater, focused on Harlem. There began to be nightly radio programs from the larger clubs in Harlem, and the Harlem bands got frequent notice from the magazines and newspapers.[413]

At the same time, the most remarkable ballroom in Harlem opened its doors to the public on March 12, 1926. The Savoy Ballroom, which was located between 140th and 141st streets at Lenox Avenue, is claimed to have been the stomping ground, during its 32-year operation for 25 million people, becoming the most important social center in Harlem for decades. It was an integrated, medium-size ballroom, where different social organizations gathered and where jazz dance, especially the Lindy Hop, was developed to its heights by its regular social dance crowd and, especially by the semiprofessional dance group which were known as the Savoy Lindy Hoppers. With the help of the group, the Lindy Hop spread around the United States, and around the world. The Savoy Ballroom became known as the place where dance and music standards were exceptionally high. It was also a unique ballroom for its seven days a week schedule.[414]

Two white businessmen, Moe Gale and I. Jay Faggen, who came to Harlem in 1925 to open an elegant ballroom for Harlemites' dance activities, established the Savoy Ballroom. Thus, from the beginning, they connected the Savoy Ballroom to the surrounding community. The main function of the ballroom was social dancing, which gathered dancers from the local Harlem community that contained new arrivals from the Caribbean and the Southern United States. The Savoy also became an entertainment destination for the African-American communities of Brooklyn, New Jersey, the Bronx, and Connecticut.[415]

Customers' Racial Background

In spite of the Savoy Ballroom advertisements in *The New York Age* in March 1926, according to which, the ballroom was "dedicated exclusively to Colored

411 Anderson 1982, p. 217.

412 Hughes 1993, p. 270.

413 Samuel B. Charters and Leonard Kunstadt, *Jazz – A History of the New York Scene* (New York, New York: Da Capo Press, 1981), pp. 193 and 196. See also: 'Lulu Belle On Boards This Week', *The Washington Post*, March 4, 1928, p. F1.

414 Charters and Kunstadt 1981, p. 188. Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 128-129. Monaghan 2005, pp. 32-38. The customer amount of 25,000,000 figure should be considered critically as it was possibly exaggerated as it is shown later in this chapter.

415 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 127-128.

People" with "entire personnel composed of Colored People"[416], white people also entered the ballroom. There exist various estimates about the ratio of whites and African-Americans during the lifetime of the Savoy. It seems that, at some time point, the Savoy had fifty percent whites, and fifty percent African-Americans and others. That likely happened between the end of the 1920s and the first half of the 1930s. After the middle of the 1930s, the ratio seemed to have been on average 15-35 percent whites, and 85-65 percent African-Americans and others. By 1946, the ratio of whites, and African-Americans and others was only fifteen percent of whites, and 85 percent of African-American and others.[417]

Terry Monaghan states that the Savoy Ballroom management's attitude to keep quiet about the emerging Lindy Hop scene turned the Savoy into a popular place for the rich, white carriage trade in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The Great Depression also changed the rich, white carriage trade to poor, and even radical, white dancers who began to frequent the ballroom to learn from and dance with the ballroom regulars. Those white dancers were, according to Monaghan, "with a pronounced interest in integration" taking to the Savoy's dance floor.[418]

The change in the ratio of African-Americans and whites concerning the customers of the Savoy was possibly connected to the end of the 1930s period when, according to Terry Monaghan, the mainstream press initiated a scare campaign about how unsafe Harlem had become in 1939. That happened when the African-American business operations tried to attract the World's Fair customers to Harlem. The campaign possibly affected whites' willingness to enter Harlem places of entertainment.[419] At the same time, there also seemed to be larger economic problems in the United States, which also possibly affected the situation. *The Pittsburgh Courier* stated in December 1938, how "Uptown [possibly Uptown House], Small's Paradise, the Plantation, Dickie Wells' and all the other spots…are pulling hard to keep going." The paper connected this "pre-Christmas business slump" to the larger economic problems around the United States at the time.[420] All of the mentioned Harlem entertainment spots were so-called cabaret places with shows. Social dancing was not their primary function.[421] There does not exist any information on how the economic slump affected the Savoy.

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[416] 'Carry This Message To Your Friends', *The New York Age*, March 27, 1926, p. 6; '$1,000 Reward', *The New York Age*, March 20, 1926, p. 8.

[417] Jerry Wexler and David Ritz, *Rhythm and the Blues – A Life In American Music* (New York, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 8 and 23; Anderson 1982, p. 313; Robert P. Crease, 'Harry Rowe', Footnotes: July-September, 1989. Vol.4, No. 2, published by The New York Swing Dance Society; 'Life Goes to a Party – At the Savoy with the boys and girls of Harlem', *LIFE*, December 14, 1936, p. 64; Jack Gould, 'News and Gossip of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, February 20, 1938, p. 2 X; 'The Home Of Happy Feet', *Ebony*, October 1, 1946, p. 33.

[418] Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 133-135.

[419] Monaghan 2005, p. 42.

[420] 'Harlem And Broadway Amusement Spots Are Feeling Depression', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, December 10, 1938, p. 21.

[421] Hoefer 1964. The Plantation Club is discussed in the chapter 'The Beginning of the Harlem Jazz Dance Entertainment'.

The Savoy Social Dancing

When the Savoy Ballroom started in 1926, the Charleston still was the dance of the day at the time. The Savoy Ballroom bouncers were directed to prevent vigorous expressions of dances like the Charleston and the Shag.[422] *Variety* magazine reported in 1926:

> The youngsters are scrupulously moral in their conduct. None of the fantastic ankle pirouetting and physical gyrations encountered in the white man's dance hall are tolerated in Harlem. The Negro takes his dancing seriously, and any attempt at "open" dancing is not a penchant for "showing off"[423].

According to Terry Monaghan, the Savoy also had a special Waltz night on Mondays from the very beginning. Originally the ballroom was closed on Mondays, but when Waltz night started, it was possible to keep the Savoy open for a full week. In addition, the Lindbergh Hop was a dance that was still danced in 1930 at the Savoy, even if, according to Monaghan, it did not create a great stir in Harlem. Other Savoy Ballroom dances at the time were, among others, the foxtrot, one step, and possibly slow drag. After George Snowden, with his partner, Mattie Purnell, created the Lindy Hop in the dance marathon in 1928, the Lindy Hop likely became a remarkable Savoy Ballroom dance in 1929. In addition to its regular dances, the ballroom tried cabaret and fancy-dress nights in the 1920s, thus becoming a center for Harlem entertainment from the very beginning.[424]

Variety magazine headlined in its article a month after the beginning of the Savoy of how the existence of the dance hall affected other Harlem places of entertainment. According to the article:

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422 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 130-131. George Snowden tells in his interview concerning the beginning of the Savoy Ballroom, "At first they prohibited the Charleston – everybody had to be sedate." In spite of that, Snowden only moved away from the Savoy bouncer who tried to deny him to dance certain steps, and then he was again chased by another bouncer, because of those steps. See: George Snowden interview December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University. According to the picture which Snowden gives in his interview, they were able to dance the Charleston and forbidden steps, when bouncers could not see them in the middle of the crowd.

423 'Ballroom Reviews – Savoy, Harlem', *Variety*, March 31, 1926, p. 46.

424 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 129-132. Concerning the Lindbergh Hop in 1930 see: 'Dance Exhibition at Corona', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 7, 1930. See also: Carl Van Vechten, *Parties – Scenes from Contemporary New York Life* (Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Press, 1993 - originally published in 1930), p. 184. There also is an article which confirms that the Lindy Hop was known at the Savoy Ballroom in May 1929. The article briefly refers to "those New York Lindy Hoppers" at the Savoy. See: 'Happy Pals Off For New York City', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, May 4, 1929, p. A3.

> [T]he new Savoy, which features dancing, and has two bands, also offers food and has prices regarded as within reason. This has helped decrease the former popularity of the smaller dance cafes.[425]

Similarly, *The New York Amsterdam News* reported a couple of months after the article, that the Savoy was ”sweeping everything in its path aside” in Harlem:

> Dances which were held here every Saturday night are closing down. Until this year the Renaissance Casino has been the mecca for hundreds every Saturday night, but the place has passed from under the management of those who made the Saturday night dances a success.[426]

One and half a year after opening, *The New York Age* reported in August 1927, that the Savoy had become the ”most famous institution in Harlem”. The newspaper used as an indicator the Elks’ Convention in Harlem, in which thousands of participants visited the Savoy Ballroom rather than other institutions in Harlem. The Savoy “did a record business during the week”, although “several ”official” dances were given in other places for the visitors.”[427]

There seems to have been different reasons for the Savoy’s popularity at the time. Possibly the Savoy Ballroom’s seven days per a week operation was one reason for that, as *Variety* magazine claimed in its Savoy review, two weeks after the opening: ”With only an occasional dance at an assembly hall or other meeting place, terpsichorean amusement was accordingly limited up [in Harlem] until Faggen with his Savoy came along.”[428] The Savoy’s ‘two bands during one night policy’ possibly affected that as well. Indeed, the ‘two bands during one night’ policy was used at least also in Renaissance Casino and Ballroom where the Harlem ballrooms between 1926 and 1927 are concerned[429]. The Savoy was advertised in Harlem newspapers like *The New York Age* at the time. The ballroom was reported to be “kept scrupulously clean” and “a corp of special police” taking care of any kind of rowdyism which was claimed to happen in other dances. Part of the success was likely the Savoy Ballroom’s diversified ideas for entertaining. The ballroom organized revues and other features for customers who did not dance.[430] The Savoy

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425 ’Dance Hall Uptown Affects Colored Cafes’, *Variety*, April 21, 1926, p. 44.

426 ’Savoy Hitting ’Em Hard’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 9, 1926, p. 6.

427 ’Savoy Ballroom, In Less Than 2 Years Has Become Most Famous Institution In Harlem – A Rendezvous For Visitors’, *The New York Age*, August 27, 1927, p. 6.

428 ’Ballroom Reviews – Savoy, Harlem’, *Variety*, March 31, 1926, p. 46.

429 See for example: ‘The Newly and Richly Renovated Renaissance Casino – Ballroom’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 18, 1926, p. 10; ‘Renaissance Casino Ballroom’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 8, 1926, p. 12; ‘Keith-Albee Ready for Dance’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 23, 1927, p. 13; ‘Anderson to Direct at The Renaissance Casino’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 14, 1927, p. 12. See for the Savoy’s ‘two bands during one night’ policy: ‘Birthplace of Swing’ chapter in *The Savoy Story* (unknown publisher, 1951). There are no page numbers in the story.

430 ’Savoy Ballroom, In Less Than 2 Years Has Become Most Famous Institution In Harlem – A Rendezvous For Visitors’, *The New York Age*, August 27, 1927, p. 6. For example, the Savoy Ballroom advertised its opening several times in *The New York Age*

also had a lounge, where, according to *Variety* magazine, food was served with prices ”within reason”.[431]

The Savoy seemed to maintain its popularity during 1928, as *The Pittsburgh Courier* reported that the Savoy was doing a million dollars gross per year. The ballroom had paid, as wages $200,000 per year to 100 employees, and $150,000 for advertising in two years, which mostly went to the Harlem newspapers.[432] The wages were on average $2,000 per employee in one year, which comes to approximately $167 per employee in one month. The net income per person in the U. S. at the time was, on average, about $209 in year.[433] When compared to that, the Savoy employees were paid well. Also, as the Savoy manager Charles Buchanan stated in 1929, he does not pay less than $40 per week to his married employees and, on average, $75 per week to musicians.[434]

When the Great Depression started, that also affected the Savoy Ballroom, as the ballroom was close to the bankruptcy at the time, and its economics still weak in the end of 1934.[435] Monaghan explains that the popularity of the Lindy Hop waned for a while, and during that time the Savoy management began to favor Latin music and dancing, which became a regular feature of the Savoy programming. Monaghan also claims that there was a significant difference at the time between the elite Savoy dancers, which were known as the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, and the ordinary social dance audience, because of Latin music. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers tried to avoid Latin dancing, and the social dance audience, on the contrary, expected the ballroom’s programming on the latest Latin dances.[436]

The popularity of the Lindy Hop possibly waned at the Savoy for a while, but outside the Savoy, the dance seemed to continue spreading. It seems to be clear that the Savoy management did not support the Lindy Hop at the waning moments, which corroborates Monaghan’s earlier statements about the Savoy management’s opposition against the Lindy. Snowden and the other Savoy Lindy Hoppers, who were later known as the first generation, as Mura Dehn began to call them in the

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during March 1926. See: the Savoy Ballroom advertisements in *The New York Age*, March 6, 1926, p. 3; March 13, 1926, pp. 6-9; March 20, 1926, pp. 6 and 8; March 27, 1926, p. 6.

431 ’Dance Hall Uptown Affects Colored Cafes’, *Variety*, April 21, 1926, p. 44. ’$1,000 Reward’, *The New York Age*, March 20, 1926, p. 8.

432 ’Savoy Doing Million Dollar Business’, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 25, 1928, p. 4.

433 When calculated from the income statistics, the population of the U. S. was 120,380,000 persons in 1928 and the total net income: 25,226,326,912 dollars. That means 209,55 dollars per person in 1928. See: *Statistics Of Income For 1928* (Washington: United States – Government Printing Office, 1930), p. 72.

434 ’Savoy Takes Over New Alhambra Ballroom’, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 14, 1929, p. A3.

435 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 135. Even the Savoy manager Charles Buchanan temporarily resigned in August 1930. See: ’Buchanan Resigns As Savoy Head’, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, August 9, 1930, p. 16. The economic situation of the Savoy Ballroom still was weak in the end of 1934. See: Roi Ottley, ’This Hectic Harlem’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 1, 1934, p. 9.

436 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 135.

1960s, had a so-called on-again, off-again relationship with the Savoy Ballroom programming. They were needed only for the ballroom programming, when the Lindy popularity was big, but otherwise they were not part of the ballroom program. Snowden and his dancers likely made their remarks about the situation as they performed largely outside the Savoy, and began to perform later at the Smalls' Paradise in Harlem.[437]

Monaghan states that the Savoy management overall stayed uncertain over what direction to move during the Great Depression. In addition to the Latin music, they tried cabaret again, in 1933.[438] The ballroom also was used for various benefits, social clubs, and organizations, at the latest, from fall 1926. The most known organizations, which used the Savoy for their events, were the NAACP and the Communists.[439]

The management also supported Shim Sham (the chorus line routine) and organized demonstrations and competitions about that. As usual, the Lindy Hop was left without the Savoy management support.[440] A new generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, which came to be known as the second generation, began to emerge when the Great Depression was turning for the better in 1934. This generation was integrated into the ballroom operations in a totally different way than their predecessors.

The Savoy Ballroom began to support the Lindy Hop forcefully when the second generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers started to emerge. The ballroom organized

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437 Mura Dehn obviously was the first one, who used 'generation' terms like 'second generation' and 'third generation' about the Savoy Lindy Hoppers. See: Dehn 1966. See also: Monaghan 2004. Also George Snowden told to Marshall Stearns in 1959, that Snowden and his fellow dancers did not first like the Savoy manager Charles Buchanan, because he did not originally want them to dance to the Savoy crowd. When Snowden and others became popular with the audiences, Buchanan "wanted us all the time". Obviously at that point money was involved. Buchanan possibly did not want to pay for their dancing until they became popular. See: George Snowden interview December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

438 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 135. 'Revues Topped At Dance Hall', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 17, 1933, p. 8.

439 'Revues Topped At Dance Hall', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 17, 1933, p. 8. The first benefit seemed to be "A benefit for sick and needy negro theatrical performers" on November 1, 1926. See: 'Benefit for Needy Negro Actors.', *The New York Times*, November 1, 1926, p. 21. Later, for example, the NAACP and the Communists used the Savoy for their purposes. See: chapter 6 in this study. The clubs, which had dances at the Savoy, were for example: Utopia Club, The Marching Club of Excelsior Temple No. 35 of Brooklyn, The Bon Gre Club and The Tea Rose Social Club. See: 'Courts of Clanth and Knights of Pythias', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 20, 1927, p. 7; 'Utopia Neighborhood Club', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 13, 1927, p. 11; 'Utopia Club in Summer Night's Dance Frolic', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 11, 1928, p. 10; 'Utopia Stages Season's Largest Bridge Party', January 2, 1929, p. 4; 'Club Chats', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 29, 1930, p. 7; 'I. B. P. O. E. W. – Notes.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 10, 1930, p. 18; 'Utopia Club Plans Feature At Savoy', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 18, 1933, p. 4.

440 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 133, 135-136.

preliminaries for the Harvest Moon Ball contest from 1935, and helped Herbert White's dancers to get gigs outside the ballroom. Terry Monaghan states that Herbert White's dancers' domination in the Harvest Moon Ball contest, and White's dancers' influence on performances and on social dance at the Savoy, had played a remarkable part in getting the Savoy crowded.[441] At the same time, the Savoy started to promote new steps like Truckin' in 1935, Suzie-Q in 1936, and Peckin' in 1937. Also the new dance at the time, the Big Apple, got the support of the Savoy, when the social dance version of the Big Apple was organized by the 400 Club on Tuesdays, and when White's dancers performed the Big Apple on different occasions. The Savoy dancers also created a new dance called the Ballroom, somewhere in the middle of the 1930s. The dance was an adagio type of slow Lindy Hop. Later, in the 1940s, the Tranky Doo, which is based on a sequence of basic jazz steps, was created at the Savoy. Other dances at the Savoy were the Peabody and the Shag. Especially the latter was danced by white Lindy Hoppers at the Savoy in the 1930s.[442]

One remarkable Savoy Ballroom invention was the Corner. It was the place for the group of the elite dancers, who became to be known as the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, to dance without disturbing other patrons at the Savoy Ballroom. Thus, the Corner allowed the Lindy Hop performances without interfering with the circular flow of the ballroom.[443] The crowd was allowed to look at those performances from the side of the Corner. The Corner was established possibly in 1927, when Herbert White, the Savoy Ballroom floor manager, claimed to have convinced the Savoy Ballroom manager Charles Buchanan to reserve the north end of the ballroom to "wild dancers".[444] According to Stearns, first generation Lindy Hoppers, George 'Shorty' Snowden and George 'Twist Mouth' Ganaway contributed to that, when they selected the northeast corner of the Savoy as their as the area for their dance activities in early 1928.[445] Thus, it is possible that all three: White, Snowden, and Ganaway contributed to the emergence of the Corner.

The function of the Corner has been argued for years. Savoy Lindy Hopper Frankie Manning has stressed that it was for "better dancers", but there were no

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441 Terry Monaghan claims that "the success of increasingly mutually depended co-ordination of the different modes of the Lindy Hop played a major role in packing audiences into the Savoy...The core of this relationship was the domination of the Lindy Hop category of New York's major dance competition, the Harvest Moon Ball..." However, he does not analyze Harvest Moon Ball contest profoundly, so it stays unclear, how their domination really happened. See: Monaghan 2005, pp. 40-46 and 49.

442 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 136-137.

443 The Corner was known later erroneously as Cat's Corner. The term Cat's Corner came from Marshall Stearns, who used the term likely based on George 'Shorty' Snowden interview. Snowden seems to have talked about Cat's Corner according to the notes of the interview. However, it is unclear if Snowden really used the prefix 'Cat's' or if Stearns added the prefix afterwards. Robert P. Crease interviewed in the 1980s several Savoy Ballroom dancers who remembered the place only as the Corner. See: George Snowden interview December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University. See also: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 134 and 144.

444 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 64.

445 Stearns 1994, p. 322.

sanctions if outsiders came in. Savoy Lindy Hoppers Leon James, Albert 'Al' Minns, George Snowden, and Ruth 'Sugar' Sullivan have agreed with Manning otherwise on that, but they have stressed that outsiders were not allowed to dance at the Corner. If they did, they were ejected by differing methods.[446] As Snowden came from the end of the 1920s period, Manning, Minns, and James from the 1930s period, and Sullivan from the end of the 1940s and the 1950s period, it seems likely that the Corner, for its lifetime, was only for those who were the elite dancers.

In addition to that, Al Minns and Leon James claimed in the *New Yorker* article in 1969, that there was the 'caste system' in the Corner. When the king (the best dancer) had left the floor, nobody could dance at the Corner. If someone did, there might have been trouble. James also stressed, "you had to work your way up" in the system.[447] Minns returned to this 'caste system' claim in his 1984 interview and explained that the worst couple danced first, and then next worst. Finally, the best couple danced.[448] However, there has not been other evidence for the caste system. The 1950s leading Savoy Lindy Hopper George Sullivan denied the system when asked, and stressed, "we didn't care who was the best" at the Corner.[449] Because Sullivan is from the 1950s Savoy Ballroom period, it is possible that the system was already gone by then, but there does not seem to exist any evidence for the caste system other than James and Minns' statements.

The Corner also was connected to the phenomenon called the 'circle'. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers, who danced in the Corner, danced in the middle of the Circle. The Circle was the formation where dancers and others were watching in the circumference of the Circle and usually one couple at time was dancing in the middle of the Circle. At the Savoy, the Circle was not only for the dancers in the Corner. Sometimes the whole ballroom was full of circles, where other Savoy dancers participated.[450] Although dancing in the middle of the Circle could be

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446 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 65. George Snowden interview December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University. Stearns 1994, pp. 322 and 326-327. Sugar Sullivan interview, interviewed by Sally Sommer, March 19, 2001, Durham, New York Public Library.

447 'Laying Down Some Leather', *The New Yorker*, Feb 15, 1969, p. 30.

448 Albert 'Al' Minns interview by Swedish Swing Society (Lennart Westerlund, Henning Sörensen and Anders Lind) between the end of May and the beginning of the June 1984, New York. The exact date is unknown. The author has a copy of the tape.

449 The discussions with George Sullivan August 28 and 30, 2012, Miami, questions and notes by Harri Heinilä. The author has the notes.

450 Monaghan 2005, p. 55. Earle Warren, who was a musician in Count Basie's band, remembers seeing many Circles around the ballroom, when people danced the Lindy Hop. That happened in 1937. See: Determeyer 2009, pp. 89-90. Also social dancer Malcolm Prince, who frequented the Savoy Ballroom before World War II, remembers seeing a lot of Circles around the ballroom. However, he did not dance in the Circles. See: Malcolm Prince interview in July 2011 interviewed by Malin Grahn and Harri Heinilä. The author of the dissertation has the original audio. Ruby Reeves, who also danced socially at the Savoy, confirms that, at least, two Circles at the same time were still occasionally done in the 1950s, when she social danced in the ballroom. See: Ruby Reeves interview, interviewed by Harri Heinilä, November 11, 2014, New York, the author of the dissertation has the original audio. Thus, the phenomenon of the numerous Circles at the same time likely happened through

considered a performance, the Savoy dancers, however, were connected to each other via these Circles and the Circles happened during regular nights. Thus, they were part of the social dancing at the Savoy. The Circles also proves that Savoy dancers other than just the "Corner dancers" were able to 'show off ' in the Circles, if they wanted to.

The 400 Club was a Savoy Ballroom innovation which probably started in 1927. When the Savoy Ballroom became the place for Lindy Hoppers, the 400 Club had a promotion for those who want to prove their Lindy skills in fall 1929.[451] Mura Dehn, who frequented the Savoy Ballroom from 1930, remembered that there was a promotion for those who wanted to be members of the club. They had to pass examination by "exhibiting current steps" judged by the members of the club. If they failed, they got "punished". Dehn, in her article 'Jazz Dance', refers to the fact that those 400 Club initiations happened in 1930. Dehn's statement gets support from the Savoy Ballroom 25th Anniversary publication, *Savoy Story* from 1951, where it is mentioned that there were 'hilarious initiations', when the 400 Club gathered on Tuesdays.[452] This is supported by *"PIC"* magazine, which published an article concerning the initiations of the 400 Club in 1938. According to the article, the candidate had to pass the test, becoming a member of "400" Club. If the candidate failed, he was punished.[453]

Savoy Lindy Hopper Leroy Griffin, who frequented the Savoy Ballroom before World War II, starting from 1939, only remembers about the 400 Club membership that he signed his name, and he got the green and yellow jacket with the text: 'Savoy Ballroom 400 Club'. Frankie Manning, who started to go to the Savoy in 1934, claimed, "anyone who filled the registration form could join in"[454]. It is possible that there were different ways to get the membership at different times. In any case, the

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the decades at the Savoy Ballroom. It seemed to be a permanent fixture in the Savoy dancing.

451 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 134. See also: 'This is Savoy! This is Harlem!' chapter in *The Savoy Story* (unknown publisher, 1951).

452 'Part III – Four Hundred Club – in Savoy', folder 230, box 20, Mura Dehn papers. See also: Mura Dehn, 'Jazz Dance' in *Sounds and Fury Magazine*, June 1966. Reprinted in Giordano 1978 and 'This is Savoy! This is Harlem!' chapter in *The Savoy Story* (unknown publisher, 1951).

453 'Dance-Drunk Harlem', *"PIC",* Picpix, Inc., New York, New York, April 5, 1938, pp. 26-27.

454 Leroy Griffin interview, interviewed by Judy Pritchett and Harri Heinilä in New York, August 14, 2012. Heinilä has the original audio. See also: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 66. Although Leroy Griffin remembered that there was the text 'Savoy 400 Club' in the jacket, he might have forgotten some details. There is a picture, where the jacket is shown. According to the picture, there is the text 'Savoy Ballroom 400 Club' and the colors are green and yellow. Words 'Savoy' and '400 Club' are bolded, but 'ballroom' is written with a weaker font. It is possible that Griffin could not remember 'ballroom' word, because of the weaker font. The author of the dissertation has the picture. The jacket in the picture is from Rudy Winter Jr. who inherited the jacket from his father who was a member in the 400 Club. See: Rudy Winter Jr.'s explanation about the background of the jacket in the October 2013 dance event which was organized by Harlem Swing Dance Society. Rudy Winter discussions in The Harlem Swing Dance Society, October 2013. The author has the notes. See also: 'Jazz Dance' by Mura Dehn, *Sounds and Fury Magazine*, June 1966. Reprinted in Giordano 1978.

club was for those who were "better dancers". Terry Monaghan argues that the Corner and the 400 Club innovations were linked, as the Savoy Ballroom management began to see the benefits of working with those dancers, rather than against them.[455] The realization of this idea, however, seemed to have really happened a couple of years later with Herbert White's dancers.

Competitions were also a part of the Savoy Ballroom scene from the very beginning. Because the Lindy Hop was born in the dance marathon, it was connected to competitions from the beginning. The Saturday night Lindy Hop contests at the Savoy, which began during the Great Depression, increased interest in those nights, as Saturday at the Savoy originally was so-called 'squares' night, in which gathered ordinary African-Americans and whites. Celebrities frequented the ballroom on Sundays at the time. The ballroom management used George 'Shorty' Snowden and other elite dancers for entertaining those celebrities.[456]

Terry Monaghan argues that the longer the Savoy survived, the more it became to have different Harlemites from various social classes. The Wednesdays and Fridays were for the club and special social event bookings. The former was for less formal activities and the latter was for the more formal activities. The ballroom was for the regular young crowd and for visitors on Thursdays and from Saturday to Monday. Sunday afternoons, before World War II, white college boys gathered, who danced the Shag, and who even taught the Savoy hostesses to dance it. The Savoy also had different special events, where the Afro-Caribbean community had dances, and the ballroom had fancy-dress events such as Arabian, Russian, and Chinese nights, and even the annual Barn Dance on Labor Day with undefined "folk dances".[457] Also, various political organizations hired the ballroom for their purposes as it is discussed later in 'The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance and Political Movements' chapter.

The Savoy Ballroom in the Mainstream Press

The mainstream newspapers, like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, and magazines like *LIFE*, *"PIC",* and *Variety* occasionally reported on the Savoy dancing. The papers told mostly about different events which were organized at the ballroom, but sometimes they also reported on dancing in general at the ballroom.

Variety magazine reviewed the Savoy in its article at the end of March 1926. The article described the ballroom and its music with some details. It also brought out ownerships of the Savoy as it stressed I. Jay Faggen as "the unofficial white mayor of Harlem". The article refers to his ownership of the Savoy, and via that to the Savoy's positive effects for the Harlem community. It was stated in the article that the Savoy was "a community need" which completely employed African-American employees, when white owners Faggen, Charles Galeski and Murray Gale (likely

455 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 133-134. See also: 'The Savoy Story. This is Savoy! This is Harlem!' chapter in *The Savoy Story* (unknown publisher, 1951).

456 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 134-135.

457 Ibid., pp. 135-137 and 139.

means Moe Gale) were excluded. Where dancing was concerned, the article gave a contradictory picture. The article stressed how African-Americans took dancing seriously, but they were not "particularly good dancers, regardless all theories to the contrary", and thus, in effect, being "poor dancers" as was stated in the article. On the other hand, there was an exception to the rule concerning the African-American dancers in the ballroom: an "unusually wicked stepper" who danced as well as stepping like "a hound". The article stated positively at the end of it, that the "Savoy is going over with a bang, and justly so". Thus, the article predicted the Savoy's success in the ballroom business.[458]

The New York Times wrote on November 1, 1926, about the benefit which was organized for "sick and needy negro theatrical performers", and which gathered both white and African-American entertainers.[459] The next time *The New York Times* reported on the Savoy dancing and benefits in March 1935, was when the Scottsboro boys' benefit with white and African-American performers like singer Mildred Bailey, dancer Paul Draper, and musician Duke Ellington, was organized at the Savoy Ballroom.[460] *The New York Times* reported on the 'Art Front Ball' in November 1935. The ball was organized for raising funds to support the new edition of the Art Front. Various groups of sponsors, likely white and Asian, supported the ball.[461] Similarly, *The New York Times* reported on the third annual Art Front Ball with various sponsors, at least with some white, in November 1937.[462]

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458 'Ballroom Reviews – Savoy, Harlem', *Variety*, March 31, 1926, p. 46.

459 'Benefit for Needy Negro Actors.', *The New York Times*, November 1, 1926, p. 21.

460 Indeed, *The New York Times*, reported briefly on "a program" at the Savoy Ballroom in January 1935, where African-American musicians honored Paul Whiteman for "his services to jazz". See: 'News Of The Stage', January 19, 1935, p. 9. Otherwise see: 'News Of The Stage', *The New York Times*, March 1, 1935, p. 17. All the mentioned performers were Mildred Bailey, Paul Draper, Duke Ellington, Luella Gear, Molly Picon and Frances Williams. At least, Duke Ellington was African-American and Paul Draper was white. See: Terry Teachout, *Duke: A Life of Duke Ellington* (New York, New York: the Penguin Group, 2014), see chapter 1: "I Just Couldn't Be Shackled – Fortunate Son, 1899-1917'. The book does not have page numbers. See also: Hill 2010, p. 190. Mildred Bailey was half a white, because her mother was partly Indian. See: Gary Giddins, *Weather Bird: Jazz at the Dawn of its Second Century* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 257-258.

461 'Art Front Ball.', *The New York Times*, November 19, 1935, p. 21. According to the list of the sponsors, Raphael Soyer, Stuart Davis, Ben Shahn, Moses Soyer, Ben-Shmuel, H. Glintenkamp and Isamu Noguchi, all sponsors were white, but Isamu Noguchi who was Asian. See: 'Raphael Soyer, Social Realist Artist, Is Dead at 87', *The New York Times*, November 5, 1987, p. B10; 'Stuart Davis, Artist, Is Dead', *The Washington Post*, June 27, 1964, C6; 'Ben Shahn, Artist, Is Dead Here at 70', *The New York Times*, March 15, 1969, p. 1; 'Moses Soyer, 74, Dead; Traditional U.S. Painter', *The New York Times*, September 3, 1974, p. 38; 'H. Glintenkamp, Artist, 58, Dead', *The New York Times*, March 20, 1946, p. 22; 'Isamu Noguchi, the Sculptor, Dies at 84', *The New York Times*, December 31, 1988, p. 1. Only Ben-Shmuel's race stays unclear.

462 'Thirty Exhibitions On Art Calendar', *The New York Times*, November 22, 1937, p. 17. As sponsors were mentioned as follows: Art critics Ruth Green Harris and Emily Genauer. As well known artists were mentioned as follows: Joe Jones, Stuart Davis and Max Weber. At least, Stuart Davis and Max Weber were whites. See: 'Stuart Davis, Artist, Is Dead', *The Washington Post*, June 27, 1964, C6 and 'Paintings by Russian-Americans Now on Display at Phillips Gallery', *The Washington Post*, April 26, 1942, p. L4.

Both *"PIC"* and *LIFE* magazines had articles about the Savoy. *LIFE* mentioned the Savoy in its article from December 1936, as the "biggest and far and away the best-liked dance hall in Harlem". The article generally described the Savoy and its dancing. There are pictures of the hostesses of the Savoy Ballroom, dancers, and general crowd. The pictures show well-dressed people who were mostly African-Americans. A lot of whites in the audience can be seen in only one picture of the Savoy Lindy Hop competition. One of the picture labels mentions, "Hopping and hoofing…at the Savoy causes many a white fun-seeker from downtown to look on in admiration at the Negroes' contortions." Another picture label states, "Mixed black-and-white dancing is also allowed and visitors see a good deal of it." That gives the reader a clear picture about the mixed dancing at the Savoy, although there are no pictures about the mixed couples in the article.[463]

Similarly, *"PIC"* magazine published an article with pictures about the Savoy in April 1938. In those pictures, there clearly can be seen white people in the audience and dancing, although there are no pictures about the mixed couples. All people in the pictures are similarly well-dressed as in the *LIFE* pictures. *"PIC"* even stated, "all dressed up fit to kill" concerning the dress code of the Savoy. Where the dancing at the Savoy is concerned, *"PIC"* reported with a positive note of how white people came to see fancy stepping, and how "every kind of dance ever invented is seen on the floor of the Savoy". At the same time, the magazine labeled some of its pictures with texts like "Swing your lady! This is good for a headache", when a dancer was turning his partner over the arm, and "This looks like mass murder, but [it] is only the Savoy version of hot dancing", when a couple of dancers were dragging their partners on the dance floor.[464] Thus, the positive message of the pictures concerning superb dancing skills was dampened with the humorous tone of the texts which undervalues the serious side of the dance.

As already mentioned, celebrities also went to the Savoy. *The New York Times* wrote about white politician Jimmy Cromwell and his wife Doris Duke, who were observing "gleefully the stompin' at Harlem's Savoy ballroom" in the beginning of December 1937. They had comedian Lou Holtz with them, who told to the paper that he "went to find out how the other half of 1 per cent lives", presumably meaning overall rich people and his company of Cromwell and Duke, of whom, at least, Duke was rich.[465] At the end of December 1937, the paper reported briefly on the Savoy Ballroom Christmas Eve dance, where there were "50 10c-a dance-men", who danced with those who paid. The dancers were veterans of the Abraham Lincoln

463 'Life Goes to a Party – At the Savoy with the boys and girls of Harlem', *LIFE*, December 14, 1936, pp. 64, 66-68. Also *Variety* reported "intermixing" of whites and African-Americans at the Savoy at the beginning of 1937. See: Albert Scharper, Jr., 'A Dude From Dixie Sees 'Em Stompin' At the Savoy 'n' Is Jes' Dumb-Struck', *Variety*, February 24, 1937, p. 69.

464 'Dance-Drunk Harlem', *"PIC"*, April 5, 1938, pp. 28-31.

465 Leonard Lyons, 'The Post's New Yorker', *The Washington Post*, December 8, 1937, p. 14. Doris Duke was known as the tobacco heiress and she was at the time the wife of politician James H. R. (Jimmy) Cromwell. See: 'From Rubrisa - Doris Duke Gets Surprise Reno Divorce', *The Washington Post*, October 28, 1948, p. 6. Lou Holtz was stage and screen comedian. See: 'Lou Holtz to Wed Miss Gillman', *The New York Times*, March 13, 1937, p. 23.

Brigade which participated in Spanish Civil war. It is unknown from what race these dancers were.[466] In February 1941, *The Washington Post* reported briefly on movie star Greta Garbo, who visited at the Savoy Ballroom without anybody paying attention to her.[467]

The New York Times also reported on the 'Negro Actors Guild Plans Ball' which was organized by Negro Actors Guild in the beginning of March 1938 and March 1939. In the first, event proceeds went to "initial expenses of the organization", and the second event was for "the benefit of unemployed Negro performers". In the last mentioned event, Mayor La Guardia headed the committee of the ball which contained celebrities like playwright Marc Connelly, film and stage innovator Orson Welles, Broadway producer Vinton Freedley, license commissioner Paul Moss, and Representative Caroline O'Day.[468] The paper later reported in June 1940 on the British War Relief Society, Inc. which gave a benefit for 'Allied war relief' at the Savoy Ballroom. Citizens of Harlem were supposed to participate in the event.[469]

The New York Times reported on the Beaux Arts Costume Ball events in both 1941 and in 1942. The events were organized annually at the Savoy Ballroom, starting in March 1941. The first ball was held under the auspices of the Citizens Sponsoring Committee of the Harlem Community Art Center. The committee included African-American sculptor Richmond Barthé, curator of eastern art at the Metropolitan Museum Alan Priest, Radio City Music Hall costume designer Nat Karson, author Fannie Hurst, and Mrs. Geraldine Diamond.[470] Priest, Karson and Hurst were whites, so the committee consisted of at least one African-American and the rest whites.[471] The proceeds of the ball went to the fund for establishing a permanent art center in Harlem.[472] *The New York Times* wrote about the next Beaux Arts Ball at the Savoy in March 1942. The proceeds were planned to be divided between the Harlem Center for Active Service Men and the Allied War Relief. The committee still sponsored the event, but the members of the committee were not

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466 Leonard Lyons, 'The Post's New Yorker', *The Washington Post*, December 21, 1937, p. 12.

467 'Leonard Lyons:', *The Washington Post*, February 26, 1941, p. 19.

468 'Negro Actors Guild Plans Ball', *The New York Times*, February 27, 1938, p. 37. 'Negro Actors Plan for Ball', *The New York Times*, February 12, 1939, p. 44. See for statuses of Connelly, Wells, Freedley and Moss: 'Marc Connelly, Playwright, Dies; Won Fame With 'Green Pastures' ', *The New York Times*, December 22, 1980, p. A1; 'Orson Welles Is Dead at 70; Innovator of Film and Stage', *The New York Times*, October 11, 1985, A1; 'Deaths Elsewhere – Producer Freedley, 77', *The Washington Post*, June 7, 1969, p. B8; 'Paul Moss Is Dead; Ran City Center', *The New York Times*, February 26, 1950, p. 76. In addition to the persons, also Bruce Barton was in the committee. That could be 'author and advertising specialist' Bruce Barton, but that is not sure. See: 'Bruce Barton Out For Congress Seat', *The New York Times*, August 18, 1937, p. 9.

469 'Nazi March Speeds War Relief Plans', *The New York Times*, June 18, 1940, p. 16.

470 'Art Notes', *The New York Times*, March 20, 1941, p. 18.

471 See for racial status of the committee members: 'Alain Priest Dies; Museum Curator', *The New York Times*, January 23, 1969, p. 27; 'Nat Karson, 46, Scenic Designer', *The New York Times*, September 28, 1954, p. 29; 'And What Fannie Liked, Fannie Did', *The New York Times*, October 5, 1958, p. BR7.

472 'Benefit Ball In Harlem', *The New York Times*, March 22, 1941, p. 13.

mentioned.[473] For unknown reasons, *The New York Times* did not report on the 1943 event. The 1943 Beaux Arts Costume Ball committee had a different sponsor, as this time, the National Urban League Guild sponsored the event. The event seemed to be racially mixed, as the Guild consisted of about 58 African-American and white supporters of the National Urban League.[474]

Harlem's Savoy Ballroom was mentioned as one of the spots where "swing cultists congregate[d]", when *The New York Times* wrote about a new dance craze, Big Apple, in November 1937.[475] The paper also reviewed the Savoy Ballroom in its February 1938 issue.[476] According to the article, the Savoy was not place for those who preferred "formal cheek-to-cheekin' and a dainty little dip on the downbeat". Rather, it was the place was for those who wanted to "abandon the traditional inhibitions…the Savoy is the place to clap your hands, stomp your feet and ride away to the upper strata of swingland." The article wrote that the Savoy management estimated to the paper that 25 per cent of its customers were whites, including celebrities from which the vast majority came solely to dance. The article noted, "a communication between musician and dancer" and claimed that it "is perhaps the key to the Savoy's steady growth since its founding twelve years ago". It was also brought out how the dancers responded to the music of the bands with "unpremeditated routines which have both astonished and delighted many of the country's best dance teachers."

Instead of analyzing the real idea behind those routines and their connection to the music, the article oversimplified, when it stated, "the naturalness and unpretentious behavior…is characteristic of the Savoy faithful" and "rhythm is an inheritance and not something to be learned in ten easy lessons" to the Harlem folk. To claim rhythm as "an inheritance" seemed too simple, especially when considering the countless rehearsal hours of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, who frequented the Savoy at the time, and also masqueraded as social dancers in front of the Savoy audiences, when they were actually well-rehearsed performers.[477] The article also credited the

473 'Art To Be Shown At British Center', March 12, *The New York Times*, 1942, p. 22.

474 'Hey, Wanna Buggy Ride To The Beaux Arts Ball Friday Nite?', *The New York Amsterdam Star-News*, February 6, 1943, p. 10. The author of the study has not found any mentions in *The New York Times* or in *The Washington Post* concerning The Beaux Arts Ball event in 1943.

475 Bosley Crowther, 'From "Turkey Trot" To The "Big Apple", *The New York Times*, November 7, 1937, p. 14.

476 The next explanations are based on the article in *The New York Times* until the phrase "to the Harlem folk". See: Jack Gould, 'News And Gossip Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, February 20, 1938, p. 148.

477 Concerning Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and their rehearsal hours see for example: 'Wake of the News', *New York Post*, May 7, 1936, p. 21. Concerning Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and their masquerading as social dancers in the front of The Savoy audiences see: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 129. Also Norma Miller referred to the fact, that they were "well rehearsed" for their performances in the front of the Savoy audience. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 63.

Savoy management for keeping the handsome and tastefully furnished place for the Harlem folk and not pandering to the visitors[478].

The Savoy was mentioned only briefly in the other mainstream press articles between 1939 and 1940. There was a sightseeing article of *The New York Times* in April 1939, which described Harlem as an area which ”perplexes the sociologist as a problem in slum clearance and discrimination, but the jitterbugs who slither in the groove every night at the Savoy Ballroom…seem to leave dull care behind.”[479] *The Washington Post* reported briefly how the Savoy Ballroom started to serve blintzes to its customers in July 1939. In August-September 1939, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* reviewed Leonard Q. Ross' The Strangest Places collection of short sketches, which also contained a description about dancing at the Savoy. However, the papers did not present the actual Savoy story in the book.[480] Columnist Leonard Lyons reported in a *The Washington Post* article in October 1940, about a movement which planned to change the name of the Lindy Hop to the La-Guardia Hop. The reason for the idea was not mentioned in the article.[481]

Dance critic John Martin evaluated more analytically the various dances of the Savoy in his *The New York Times* article of May 1941:

> The exhibition dancer in the first place is simply recreational dancer who finds himself especially skillful and concentrates on his skill so that his friends will assemble to watch him and admit his superiority. To see this process developing we need only go to the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem and watch the Lindy Hoppers, still thoroughly non-professional and recreational, extending themselves with a full realization of their especial gifts. Or stop for a moment on Broadway at theatre time to applaud the little Negro boys who dance for pennies with a real pride in their accomplishments, meager though they generally are. It is a long step from here to the achievements of an Alicia Markova or a Paul Haakon, but it is a step in the same direction.[482]

The Savoy dancing was acknowledged even further by *The Washington Post* columnist Katharine Brush, who stated in February 1942: ”At the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem they do a fantastic dance of their own devising which they call the Lindy Hop. This is like nothing ever seen on earth before.”[483] The real acknowledgement

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478 See: Jack Gould, 'News And Gossip Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, February 20, 1938, p. 148.

479 'The City: First Aid To Sightseers', *The New York Times*, April 30, 1939, p. 144.

480 Leonard Lyons, 'The New Yorker', *The Washington Post*, July 31, 1939, p. 12; John T. Appleby, 'Some Americana', *The Washington Post*, September 17, 1939, p. B7; Beatrice Sherman, 'Mr. Ross Sees the Queerest People', *The New York Times*, August 27, 1939, p. BR3.

481 Leonard Lyons, 'The New Yorker', *The Washington Post*, October 15, 1940, p. 11.

482 'Joy In Motion, i. e., Dancing', *The New York Times Magazine*, May 19, 1940, p. 23.

483 'Out of My Mind – It Comes Out Here', *The Washington Post*, February 22, 1942, p. L3.

of the Savoy Lindy Hop, however, once again came from *The New York Times*' John Martin, when he stated analytically in his article from January 1943:

> For real spectator excitement there is probably nothing within hailing distance of the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem, especially on a Tuesday night when the Four Hundred Club is in session. The white jitterbug is oftener than not uncouth to look at, though he may be having a wonderful time and dancing skillfully, but his Negro original is quite another matter. His movements are never so exaggerated that they lack control, and there is an unmistakable dignity about his most violent figures. The relation of partners to each other is almost casual; phrases are executed apparently independently at times and often in the midst of a dance a couple will separate without warning of kind and walk out of the dance area. There is a remarkable amount of improvisation and personal specialty mixed in with the Suzy-Q and familiar Lindy Hop figure; some of it superficially erotic, and all of it full of temperament and quality. Of all the ballroom dancing these prying eyes have seen, this is unquestionably the finest[484].

Acknowledging the Savoy dancing in a positive light seemed to have increased during the decades, when comparing the article to the *Variety* article mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. It seems that the dancing of the Savoy Ballroom, or in other words, jazz dance at the Savoy, had a positive effect on the recognition of the Harlem-based jazz dance in the mainstream press.

When customer figures of the ballroom are reviewed, the African-American newspapers like *The Pittsburgh Courier* and *The New York Amsterdam News* claimed that the Savoy Ballroom had almost 10,000,000 customers by March 1940. *The New York Amsterdam News* reported that the figure was based on the Savoy manager Charles Buchanan's books.[485]

In October 1946, *Ebony* magazine reported even greater customer figures at the Savoy. According to the magazine, approximately 28,000,000 customers had been at the Savoy by the time. When the magazine stated that there were on average 700,000 customers per year and 1,500 customers per night at the ballroom, the confusion about the total customer figure was set.[486] With the average of 700,000 customers

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484 'The Dance: Social Style', *The New York Times*, January 10, 1943, p. X5.

485 'Savoy Begins Celebration of 14th Year, Nation's Leading Ballroom', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 9, 1940, p. 21 and 'Savoy Has Played Host To Almost 10,000,000 People In Last 13 Years', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 9, 1940, p. 20.

486 'The Home Of Happy Feet', *Ebony*, October 1, 1946, p. 33. In addition to that, *LIFE* magazine claimed in December 1936 that there were "some 500000 paying guests" per year at the Savoy. It stays unclear if there also were customers who did not pay. Anyway, this supports smaller customer figures than claimed in the other articles. See: 'Life Goes to a Party – At the Savoy with the boys and girls of Harlem', *LIFE*, December 14, 1936, p. 64. The customer attendance records of the Savoy seemed to be from 6,000 customers who attended the Savoy to hear Guy Lombardo in April, 1929 to 6,600 in 1932, Columbus Day when Cab Calloway performed. See: 'Savoy Begins Celebration of 14th Year, Nation's Leading

per year figure, there should have been only 14,700,000 customers during 21 years by the end of 1946. When it is counted with an average 1,500 customers per night figure and with the seven nights per week operation for every week since the very beginning, the total is even smaller 11,466,000 (= 21 years x 52 weeks x 7 nights x 1,500 customers per night).

The total of 28,000,000 customers by 1946 is impossible with the variants. Even the figure of almost 10,000,000 customers by March 1940 is slightly exaggerated, when considering the average of 1,500 customers per night figure. The 10,000,000 customers would mean, on average, there were 1,831 customers per night, if the ballroom was open every night during 15 years by the end of 1940. According to Terry Monaghan, it was closed on Mondays at the very beginning. The ballroom was also closed later in 1943 for almost half a year, which may mean that the customer figures are exaggerated to some degree.[487]

In either case, millions of mixed customers by 1940 clearly refers to the popularity of the Savoy during those years, and that also speaks for the positive influence of the Savoy social dancing on relations between races, and thus for the recognition of the Savoy dancing. The Lindy Hop especially, made the Savoy the place to be from the end of the 1920s to the 1940s, and even beyond that. Acknowledging the significance of the Savoy Ballroom as the crucial place for the dance activities clearly increased in the mainstream press towards the 1940s, especially when the *New York Times* critic John Martin recognized the Savoy Lindy Hop in a positive manner in his articles. Otherwise, the Savoy was recognized as the place for social activities, when it was reported in the mainstream press that the ballroom was used by various organizations outside and from Harlem. Thus, it likely became commonly known as the center for the social activities in Harlem.

Chapter Conclusion

Harlem emerged as a slum by the end of the 1920s. It had various economic and social problems between the 1920s and the 1940s. During the course of WW II, Harlem seemingly benefited little from war production programs and military production. However, the New Deal-generated relief programs brought real improvement to Harlem with better infrastructure and services since the Great Depression, but Harlem's status as an African-American ghetto still remained in 1943.

The African-American musicals on Broadway, especially *Shuffle Along* and *Running Wild* in the beginning of the 1920s, were the breakthrough of the Harlem jazz dance entertainment outside Harlem. The latter also started the national Charleston craze in the U. S.. Harlem became part of the dance craze as the Charleston was competed and performed in the Harlem ballrooms and theaters,

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Ballroom', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 9, 1940, p. 21. Because these customer attendance records happened occasionally, they cannot explain the bigger customer figures.

[487] Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 129.

which occasionally had racially-mixed Charleston competitions during the 1920s. Similarly, the Charleston was danced on the sidewalks and in ballrooms in Harlem to some degree, by both African-Americans and whites. The mainstream press reported only occasionally the Harlem Charleston activities, mainly with a positive tone. An exception seemed to be the sidewalk Charleston activity which was reported to have led to attempts to ban it. It also seems that mainly *The Billboard* of the mainstream press briefly reported the Charleston performances and competitions in the Harlem places of entertainment.

Tap dance, and also other jazz dance was crucial in performances in various Harlem entertainment venues like Smalls' Paradise, the Cotton Club, Connie's Inn, and also in the theaters like the Lafayette and the Apollo. The Hoofers' Club was remarkable as a place where great tap dancers gathered for practicing and maintaining their tap skills when there were no other gigs available. The Hoofers' Club likely took tap forward because the audience consisted of other tap dancers, and thus the atmosphere in the club was very competitive. Similarly, the communication with the audience in the Apollo Theatre created an atmosphere where you had to be good enough to be accepted by the critical audience, or they let you know your failure, as chorus line dancer Marion Coles explained. The Cotton Club was a step above other places, because performing in the Cotton Club was considered as a step forward in the career. The club was segregated, which divided the dancers into those who accepted the situation, for example, for getting properly paid, and to those who felt that they were used by white people. As the dance activities of Harlem cabarets were quite frequently mentioned in the mainstream press between the 1920s and the 1930s, the readers of the press were able to perceive the Harlem jazz dance in those cabarets, and the continuation of Harlem places of entertainment was recognized in the mainstream press during the time period.

Overall, the number of the Harlem entertainment venues increased clearly between 1923 and 1929, which suggests the increasing success of Harlem entertainment. On the other hand, Harlem stayed a slum between the 1920 and the 1940, and its places of entertainment decreased between 1929 and 1935 probably because of the Great Depression. Harlem still had the remarkable places of entertainment like the Savoy Ballroom and the Renaissance Ballroom in 1935. Thus, its entertainment disappeared only to some degree. Harlem was also full of so-called speakeasies during the Depression, where people drank and talked, but there was not similar dancing in the speakeasies, as was in the bigger Harlem ballrooms. Racial mixing happened in social dancing in various Harlem places of entertainment. The best-known ballroom was the Savoy Ballroom, where racial mixing varied from fifty-fifty African-Americans and whites at the end of the 1920s and in the beginning of the 1930s to 85/15 percent African-Americans and whites in the middle of the 1940s. Also, various white celebrities visited the ballroom.

When considering the fact that millions of customers entered in the ballroom between 1926 and 1943, the social racial mixing was huge at the Savoy for the time, when segregation was a reality outside the ballroom. Thus, white people, who visited and danced at the Savoy Ballroom, recognized the ballroom and its dance culture as an integrated ballroom and place of culture. The Lindy Hop had an important part in

this process. It was likely the most important social dance of the Savoy in the long run. Similarly, the Lindy Hop was an important performance and competition dance at the Savoy Ballroom. The dance was strongly connected to the Corner, where the best Lindy Hoppers of the ballroom, the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, danced, and audiences viewed their dancing. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers got the ballroom crowded. The Corner was connected to the phenomenon called Circle, where the couples danced in the middle of the Circle. Sometimes, there were even more Circles in the ballroom. That made it possible for regular social dancers to ”perform” in the Circle, too, as the Corner was reserved for the best dancers. Thus, the Circle phenomenon integrated dancers as well.

The mainstream press reported various events which were organized at the Savoy Ballroom. The reports mentioned different white culturally important persons, which indicates the fact that the Savoy was recognized in the mainstream press as a culturally remarkable place. Also intermixing of the races was reported, which refers to the fact that the Savoy was recognized in the mainstream press as an integrated ballroom. The Savoy dancing was reported in the mainstream press in a way which was partly contradictory. Different mainstream newspapers and magazines published articles which described the dancing, sometimes with pictures. The comments varied from abbreviated comments to sarcastic and humorous comments, which can be interpreted as dismissive. The textual messages sometimes differed from the pictures which gave an appropriate picture about dancing couples. However, positive acknowledgment of the Savoy dancing by the mainstream press seemed to increase during the years, culminating to praising comments, especially from *The New York Times* critic John Martin in 1943.

4 The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance – Out from Harlem: The Contests

The Harlem jazz dance broke out from Harlem with the help of the dance contests and dancers who performed outside Harlem. Crucial examples of this process are George Snowden and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. George Snowden himself danced in the theater plays and in public with the help of success in the dance marathon. Snowden and his partner Mattie Purnell's dance creation, the Lindy Hop, is analyzed with Snowden's other accomplishments, as the Lindy Hop has a crucial significance as part of the Harlem-based jazz dance. Following Snowden, it is analyzed how the next generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, danced themselves into an important part of the entertainment world with the help of the Harvest Moon Ball contests. The analysis has emphasis on how these instances were recognized by the mainstream press.

4.1 The Savoy Lindy Hoppers' First Generation: George Snowden – The Unsung Hero

Terry Monaghan has stated that concerning George Snowden, the creator of the Lindy Hop:

> Of all twentieth century American seminal dance figures (Balanchine for American ballet, Isadora Duncan in Modern, Jack Cole for Jazz Show Dance, Bill Robinson for Rhythm Tap Dance...) Snowden remains the least known.[488]

Monaghan's statement is revealing: George Snowden's role in the development of the Lindy Hop has stayed contradictory during the decades. He has not received unambiguous appreciation for his accomplishments in dancing. It is very telling that

[488] Terry Monaghan, 'George Snowden'. This article was originally published in *The Dancing Times*: Terry Monaghan, 'Remembering "Shorty" ', *The Dancing Times*, July 2004, pp. 49 and 51. Monaghan also published an enlarged version of this article in his late www.savoyballroom.com site. As of 2014, the site was not working, but the author of the study has the enlarged version. The citation is based on this enlarged article. The bottom line concerning Snowden's anonymity is the same in the articles.

there does not exist a proper biography about his life and dance career. Other "seminal dance figures", such as George Balanchine, Isadora Duncan, Jack Cole, Bill Robinson, and even other remarkable Lindy Hoppers, such as Frankie Manning and Norma Miller, have been examined in various studies, and their life and careers have been brought out in biographies.[489]

Snowden's anonymity can be the result of the various claims from other people who alleged to have created the Lindy Hop.[490] No one else, however, can be tracked down to the 1928 dance marathon where Snowden and Purnell likely devised the basic principle of the Lindy Hop: "separate apart – come together" pattern. The pattern was also known as a "breakaway", which Snowden and Purnell practically reinvented, and which later came to be known as 'swing' and 'swing-out'. Snowden's own varied story through the years about how the Lindy was born, also caused confusion in the case. The story and Snowden's dance activities were reported in newspapers and magazines throughout the years as it can be seen in the next two chapters.

George 'Shorty' Snowden's role in creating the Lindy Hop has been explained in various ways. In 1959, Snowden claimed to Marshall Stearns that he invented the dance in a dance marathon in 1928.[491] The dance marathon happened in the Rockland Palace (former Manhattan Casino), in Harlem, between June 17 and 4 July, 1928.[492] According to Stearns, the invention happened when Snowden flung his partner out and improved "a few solo steps of his own". Stearns states that the invention happened when Snowden "got tired of the same old steps and [he] cut loose with a breakaway".[493]

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489 Concerning biographies see for example as follows. Jack Cole: Glenn Loney, *Unsung Genius – The Passion Of Dancer-Choreographer Jack Cole* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1984). George Balanchine: Davida Kristy, *American Ballet Master* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company, 1996). Isadora Duncan: Duncan 1928. Bill Robinson: Haskins and Mitgang 1988. Additionally, this dissertation brings out some of other studies concerning the dance figures. There is no comprehensive biography about Snowden. Details from his dance career and life have been published in various accounts, as it can be seen in this chapter.

490 For example, George 'Twistmouth' Ganaway, Herbert 'Whitey' White and Ray Bolger claimed to have invented the Lindy Hop. See for Ganaway: 'In "Lindy Hop" Contest', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 28, 1931, p. 5. See for Herbert White: 'Developing New Dance In Honor Of Joe Louis', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 28, 1940, p. 21. See for Ray Bolger: Stearns 1994, p. 323.

491 Stearns 1994, pp. 315-316 and 323-324.

492 The Manhattan Casino dance marathon started on June 17 and ended on July 4, 1928. See: '29 Couples Remain in Dancing Derby', *The New York Times*, June 16, 1928, p. 13; 'Harlem Dance Derby Prize Divided.', *The New York Times*, July 7, 1928, p. 11; '19 Couples Left in Harlem Derby', *The New York Times*, June 21, 1928, p. 27.

493 Stearns 1994, pp. 315 and 323. Snowden's statement is abbreviated in the Stearns' notes of the interview. The notes are not exactly similar to those expressions which Stearns wrote in his *Jazz Dance*. It is impossible to know afterwards if all the expressions in *Jazz Dance* were from Snowden. However, it comes out in the notes that Snowden thought in the marathon, "Let's start something here" and "He'd start to jitterbug". According to the notes of the interview, Snowden used mostly the terms the Lindy, Lindy and Lindy Hop

Snowden claimed to Archer Winsten, who researched the Lindy Hop and its development somewhere in 1935, that he was in a dance marathon in 1927 where he did the then-popular Collegiate dance and improvised, and "the result was called the Lindy-hop".[494] Later, in 1938, he described to Wilbur Young, a Work Progress Administration writer, who wrote about the Harlem dances, how this invention happened. Young wrote in his article that the invention had happened at the Savoy Ballroom, which might be a misunderstanding or Snowden changed his story in this sense. Snowden claimed that he invented the dance by accident, when his partner lost her grip in the middle of spinning, and she became separated. Snowden did a couple of steps for masking the mistake until he got back to his partner. The crowd of hundreds roared with "fiendish delight" to them. Snowden decided to do it again, this time with purpose. It seems the crowd reacted to it positively, as according to Snowden: "Soon all the Savoy was doing it and from there it spread downtown and then North, East and South and West…"[495]

Snowden's claim that he invented the Lindy Hop in a dance marathon is confirmed by other sources. First of all, he and his partner, Mattie Purnell, were couple number 7, which won various prizes during the competition and was mentioned frequently in the newspaper articles. Secondly, Carl Van Vechten wrote about the Lindy Hop in his Parties novel in 1930. He states there:

> The Lindy Hop made its first official appearance in Harlem at the Negro Dance Marathon staged at Manhattan Casino in 1928. Executed with brilliant virtuosity of a pair of competitors in this exhibition, it was considered at the time a little too difficult to stand much chance of achieving popular success. The dance grew rapidly in favour, however, until a year later it was possible to observe an entire ball-room filled with couples devoting themselves to its celebration.[496]

Although Snowden and Purnell's names were not mentioned in Van Vechten's novel, Snowden and Purnell's role as the originators of the Lindy Hop in the dance marathon can be confirmed by the other, earlier mentioned articles. In addition, *The Pittsburgh* Courier stated in September 1930 that Snowden won "many prizes in the marathon dance contest at Manhattan Casino" when he and his unnamed partner gave "exhibitions" of the Lindy Hop.[497] The article clearly connected Snowden to

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concerning his dancing. He seemed to use the term 'jitterbug' in the spirit of the time in 1959, when 'jitterbug' term was commonly used in public.

494 Archer Winsten, 'Wake of the News', *New York Post*, May 7, 1936, p. 21.

495 Wilbur Young, 'History Of Negro Dances, Folk Origin, etc.', 'Group XVI Negro Group', 3.3.1938, p. 4. This is part of bigger collection of articles named as 'The Dance', which was compiled by workers of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration in New York City. See: 'The Dance', Writers' Program (New York N.Y.), Sc Micro R-6544, Reel 2, no. 8, the New York Public Library. Also Terry Monaghan has used the story for his Snowden article as it can be verified from the article, although there are no notes in the article. See: Monaghan 2004, pp. 49 and 51.

496 Van Vechten 1993, p. 184.

497 'Ethel Will Have Her 'Othello' ', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 6, 1930, p. A6.

the dance marathon and the Lindy Hop. According to the evidence, Wilbur Young's claim about the Savoy Ballroom as the birthplace of the Lindy, where Snowden did the invention, seems an unlikely alternative. *The Chicago Defender* told in its article in the beginning of February 1930, concerning "Lindy Hop" that "Nobody knows how it came into being…"[498] After one year, in March 1931, Lee "Harlemania" Posner claimed in another *Chicago Defender* article, that "A youthful chap, George Ganaway by name, is said to be the originator of the Lindy hop, first performing it at the Savoy ballroom", thus claiming publically the first time that the Lindy Hop's origin was at the Savoy.[499] Van Vechten's timing with his *Parties* and the *Pittsburgh* Courier article seemed to be lucky for Snowden: by 1930, the Lindy Hop's origin had already been connected to the dance marathon where Snowden and Purnell likely created the Lindy.

Van Vechten and *The Pittsburgh Courier* were supported later, when in 1940, an article was published, in which reporter Edgar T. Rouzeau claimed to have first witnessed "a demonstration of the Lindy Hop during the course of a dance marathon at the Harlem Manhattan Casino". Rouzeau also disputed in the article Savoy Ballroom manager Charles Buchanan's claim that "the Lindy Hop originated" at the Savoy, thus, connecting the birth of the Lindy Hop to the dance marathon.[500]

Indeed, Rouzeau had claimed (a year before in his the Savoy Ballroom article) that "the Savoy has had more influence on the innovation of the American dance step than any other dance hall in America. The Lindy Hop, the Susie-Q, and the Boogie-Woogie all came into existence at the Savoy". Perhaps, Rouzeau meant that the Lindy Hop got its true form especially at the Savoy, although it really originated in the Harlem dance marathon.[501]

Even if Snowden and Purnell's dance marathon invention seemed to be groundbreaking, it is possible that the invention was based on already existing elements of dancing which they only reinvented by accident, as Snowden explained in 1938. Snowden told Marshall Stearns in 1959, how they called the dance as the Hop before the Lindbergh flight. Snowden also said that some people started to call the dance the Lindbergh Hop after the Lindbergh flight in 1927.[502] As later mentioned in the chapter, it seems that the Lindbergh Hop and the Lindy Hop were two different dances. Terry Monaghan argues that Snowden's account about the relation between the Lindy Hop and the Lindbergh Hop was based on the idea that Snowden was trying to preserve the memory of the critical role he had in creating the Lindy, without challenging the popular myth about Lindbergh's part in the creation.[503] However, Snowden's account to Stearns might refer to the fact that there

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498 'The "Lindy Hop" Captivates All Harlem's Dance Lovers', *The Chicago Defender*, February 1, 1930, p. 6.

499 Lee "Harlemania" Posner, ' "Lindy Hop" Outdoes Even the 'Rhumba' ', *The Chicago Defender*, March 7, 1931, p. 5.

500 Edgar T. Rouzeau, 'Star Dust', *New Journal and Guide*, August 31, 1940, p. 17.

501 Edgar T. Rouzeau, 'Star Dust', *New Journal and Guide*, September 16, 1939, p. 16.

502 Stearns 1994, p. 323. See also: George Snowden interview December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

503 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 132-133.

already existed the elements of the dance, which Snowden used, when the accident happened in the dance marathon. Thus, he and Purnell might have made the invention by using those elements in the dance marathon. In fact, Stearns claims that Snowden only "rediscovered" the breakaway in the dance marathon as according to Stearns:

> [T]he breakaway is a time-honored method of eliminating the European custom of dancing in couples, and returning to solo dancing – the universal way of dancing[504].

If Snowden and Purnell can be acknowledged as the inventors of the Lindy Hop, there have been disputes about who really named the invention they performed in the dance marathon, and when that really happened. According to Marshall Stearns' abbreviated notes, Snowden stated to Stearns in the 1959 interview, "But the majority of them [obviously prize offers] wanted to see this dance Shorty did – they called it the Lindy. Fox Movietone took pictures of Shorty's and his partner's feet. They'd say 'What are you doing with your feet?' Many people would come up and watch them do the Lindy."[505] Stearns wrote this in *Jazz Dance*, " 'What are you doing with your feet', asked the interviewer, and Shorty, without stopping, replied, 'The Lindy' ".[506]

There has obviously surfaced a short film about the Harlem dance marathon in which Snowden and Purnell, and a couple who got married during the dance marathon, were pictured by Fox Movietone News during the marriage process. It is also possible that Snowden, in his statement to Stearns, mixed a later occasion to the dance marathon. Fox Film Corporation pictured Manhattan and also dancing in its *Manhattan Medley* from 'Magic Carpet of Movietone' series in 1931. There is one scene in the film, where Snowden and his partner can be seen obviously dancing the Lindy Hop on an otherwise empty floor. The dance can be concluded from the "separate apart – back together" pattern they did, although the Lindy Hop is not mentioned in the film. That could be the occasion, when "Fox Movietone" filmed him. According to David Shepard, who wrote the introduction to the film, the film was made by Bonney Powell who worked for Fox Movietone News.[507]

Snowden told about his role in creating and naming the Lindy Hop to other interviewers, too. Frankie Manning claimed that he heard about this straight from

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504 Stearns 1994, p. 324.

505 George Snowden interview December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

506 Stearns 1994, p. 316.

507 The University of South Carolina: http://libcat.csd.sc.edu:81 and there 'MVTN C4980: Couple Dance on Way to Get Marriage License' (accessed on December 13, 2015); the chapter: 'The Rockland Palace Dance Marathon in 1928'. See also: 'Magic Carpet of Movietone – Manhattan Medley'. Distributed by Fox Film Corporation. According to the later added introduction text Bonney Powell made that film for Magic Carpet of Movietone, Fox Film Corporation in 1931. Film is published in courtesy: Film Preservation Associates. It is distributed by Image Entertainment in 'Unseen Cinema – Early American Avant-Garde Film 1894-1941' series. It is published by Anthology Film Archives, 2005.

Snowden.[508] There also is an article in the *LIFE* magazine from 1943, where it is stated:

> One evening in 1927, after Lindbergh's flight to Paris, some young Negro couples began improvising eccentric off-time steps in a corner of the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem. On the sidelines a connoisseur of dancing named "Shorty George" Snowden watched critically, then muttered, "Look at them kids hoppin' over there. I guess they're doin' the Lindy Hop."

It is unclear if it was Snowden or the writer of the article, or even someone else, whose idea it was to write the story like that. The story kept changing throughout the years, and the confusion about naming the Lindy Hop was set.[509]

Terry Monaghan states that it is unlikely that Snowden and Purnell named their invention as the Lindy Hop in the dance marathon, especially because there was no sign of using the name during the next three months.[510] He claims that Snowden and Purnell apparently considered naming their innovation 'Walk That Broad', following

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[508] Manning and Millman 2007, p. 79. In Frankie Manning's version there is mentioned a newspaper article, where it was stated 'Lindy Hops Over Atlantic'. Nobody has found the article yet. Terry Monaghan states that article with the mentioned headline is a fictional thing which was created by newcomer Lindy Hoppers Warren Heyes and Ryan Francois in their light-hearted comedy routine in 1986. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 73. However, it is otherwise possible that Snowden told Manning about his role in creating the Lindy Hop in the dance marathon.

[509] *LIFE* magazine, August 23, 1943, p. 95. There is not mentioned the writer in the article.

[510] Terry Monaghan's comment in http://www.yehoodi.com/comment/79178/anyone-track-down-the-lindy-hop-newspaper-cover/1/#comment_12 (December 8, 2009) in the thread: 'Anyone track down the Lindy Hop newspaper cover?'. The site was accessed on November 15, 2015. Monaghan states, "only rich and powerful were filmed talking for the news at the time". This concerns the claim that a newspaper reporter asked from Snowden the name of his invention. Monaghan continues, "By all accounts Snowden and Purnell would have been in the throes of a tremendous burst of creativity and thus naming anything would have been the least of their considerations. Typically for the time, downtown people would have assumed that when dancing ordinary African-Americans were only doing what came naturally to them, and thus they would have gone to a white social dancing expert to find out the name of the dance." Monaghan's claim is arguable, because Snowden was mentioned so many times in newspaper articles and even pictured in these articles during the marathon. So, he was really noticed by press. It could be possible that there was a newspaper reporter, who asked what dance Snowden did. If this happened, information about it, however, did not come out in the newspapers as shown later in the chapter. Monaghan's claim that there was nothing for three months in newspapers concerning the Lindy Hop is more convincing, although it was a few days less than three months, when counted from the beginning of the dance marathon, and when considered that the term 'lindy hop', as connected to the Harlem invention, was used first time in the newspapers on September 12, 1928 as discussed later.

the dance marathon[511]. This claim is supported by the *New York Amsterdam News* article from August 8, 1928, where it is stated:

> One dance number in the show deserves special mention. It is called "Walk That Broad." The number is lead by George Snowden and Mattie Purnell…This clever pair were forced to respond to many encores for "Walk That Broad" and for their "Lindbergh Hop"[512].

That implies that the "Lindy Hop" was not named then, and Snowden and Purnell possibly called their invention 'Walk That Broad' in the show or they called their invention the 'Lindbergh Hop', and 'Walk That Broad' was something different.

The fact that Snowden and Purnell's invention was not named the 'Lindy hop' in the Harlem dance marathon is also supported by *The New York Amsterdam News,* which reported on July 11 how Purnell and Snowden were "scheduled to do their specialty – the "Lindbergh Hop" – in some local amusement house." The report gives a clear picture that the "Lindbergh Hop" was their specialty, not the "Lindy Hop". There has been a theory that Snowden and Purnell named their dance invention as the 'Lindbergh Hop' in the marathon and that was changed later to the form 'Lindy Hop'.

Some of the newspapers from the time of the marathon stated that Snowden and Purnell danced the 'Lindbergh Hop'.[513] In particular, there is one article where it is mentioned that 'The smallest pair on the floor, Mattie Purnell and George Snowden garnered a $15 gold prize for the fanciest performance of a new dance called the "Lindbergh Hop".[514]

The claim that Snowden and Purnell named their invention first as 'Lindbergh Hop' does not sound convincing, because there exists various articles after Charles Lindbergh's flight in May 1927, and before the dance marathon (the latest one is from May 1928), where 'Lindbergh Hop' as a dance in New York is mentioned. The articles concerning the Lindbergh Hop in Harlem, New York can be found after the marathon, and until at least the year 1930, when George Snowden was advertised as

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511 Monaghan 2004, pp. 49 and 51. There are no notes in his article. It seems that he got the idea for his claim from *The New York Amsterdam News* article which is discussed next in the main text.

512 ' "Scuffle Along" Scoring Big Hit', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 8, 1928, p. 6.

513 Dance historian Judy Pritchett has suggested to the author of the study that Snowden named the dance originally as 'Lindbergh Hop' in the contest. The name changed after that to 'Lindy Hop'. However, there does not exist proof for the name change. Concerning 'Lindbergh Hop' see: '5 Couples Quit Harlem Dance; 20 Start Third Day', *The New York World*, June 20, 1928, unknown page number; 'Marathoners Continue Their Athletic Gyrations at the Manhattan Casino', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 27, 1928, p. 6 and 'Remaining Couples in Dance Race Get Money', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 11, 1928, p. 10.

514 '5 Couples Quit Harlem Dance; 20 Start Third Day', *The New York World*, June 20, 1928., unknown page number.

the winner of the Savoy Ballroom Lindbergh Hop Contest.[515] According to Monaghan, the Savoy Ballroom manager Charles Buchanan, choreographer and producer Leonard Reed, and the first generation Savoy Ballroom Lindy Hopper Alfred Leagins, affirmed that the Lindbergh Hop was a different dance.[516]

In addition to that, Snowden and Purnell were mentioned in the article, where it is stated, "they [Snowden and Purnell] have a little specialty dance of their own which they mix up with the 'Lindbergh Hop' and feature during practically every dance period, especially in the evenings."[517] The article was published during the dance marathon. The "little specialty dance" could be their invention which later was known as the Lindy Hop.

When combining the fact that Snowden and Purnell danced both the "Lindbergh Hop" and their "little specialty dance" in the dance marathon, it seems clear that they had at least two specialties, Lindbergh Hop and the "little specialty dance", which could have been "Walk That Broad", in August 1928.

The Lindy Hop was surely named, by the latest, on September 12, 1928, when it was mentioned for first time in the *New York Amsterdam News* article: 'Dance Revue Contest at Lincoln' in the form: "Lindy Hop". The article mentioned that George (Shorty) Snowden and Pauline (meaning Pauline Morse, Snowden's new partner) also were featured in the show. It is unclear if it was Snowden or the author of the newspaper article or someone else, who named the Lindy Hop for the advertisement. After that, the Harlem-connected 'lindy hop' became established as the term in the African-American newspapers articles. The term was established in the mainstream newspapers, at the latest, in 1930, when *The New York Times* advertised the Roseland Ballroom Lindy Hop contest, by mentioning that the origin of the dance was in Harlem, and when *The Emporia Weekly Gazette* in Kansas quoted parts of Van Vechten's *Parties,* where the Lindy Hop was discussed[518].

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515 See for Lindbergh Hop these articles: 'New Broadway Dance Is Lindbergh Hop', *The Washington Post*, May 29, 1927, p. S12; 'Hotel Mohawk Reception Last Week a Success', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 2, 1928, p. 9; 'Dance Exhibition at Corona', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 7, 1930, p. 18.

516 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 132.

517 'Marathoners Continue Their Athletic Gyrations at the Manhattan Casino', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 27, 1928, p. 6.

518 'Dance Revue Contest at Lincoln', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 12, 1928, p. 6 and 'The First Colored Theatre in Harlem – Lincoln', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 12, 1928, p. 6. Also Howard Spring has discussed the latter advertisement already in 1997. See: Howard Spring, 'Swing and the Lindy Hop: Dance, Venue, Media, and Tradition', American Music, Vol. 15, No. 2, Summer 1997, pp. 190 and 204. The author of the dissertation examined extensively from the New York Public Library newspaper database, and from the Helsinki University newspaper database, for the term 'lindy hop', and he has examined the term from the microfilms of the Harlem-based newspapers like *The New York Age* and *The New York Amsterdam News*, and from the microfilms of the mainstream newspapers and magazines like *Daily News*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *Vanity Fair,* and *New York Evening Post,* during several occasions. There did not exist any earlier article, where the term was mentioned in connection to the Harlem Lindy Hop. Of course, it is possible that the term 'lindy hop' was mentioned elsewhere. However, it seems to be sure that the term 'lindy hop' in connection to the Harlem Lindy Hop did not become popular

Another question concerning the naming of the Lindy Hop has been how the naming of the 'Lindy Hop' was connected to Charles Lindbergh, who did first solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927. Terry Monaghan claims that concerning the supposed Charles Lindbergh connection in the naming of the Lindy Hop, the origin of the connection came six years after the naming of the dance. According to him, "Savoy representative" George Ganaway gave a speech in February 1934, where Ganaway connected the term to Lindbergh with the Savoy management's support. Monaghan criticizes the connection, because by presenting the Lindy Hop "as an anonymous, novelty response to Lindbergh's flight rather than an aesthetic expression of evolving African-American consciousness in Harlem, in effect obscured its true identity". In other words, the Lindy Hop was obscured from its true character as the dance which "rhythmically harmonized improvisational creativity of the two people's partnership with the mass of other dancers with whom they responsively shared the dance floor" as Monaghan puts it.[519]

As Monaghan might otherwise be correct with his claim, he is wrong with the year. *The Chicago Defender* in its article connected the Harlem dance to "the air god" Lindbergh in February 1930, by claiming "Lindy Hop" to have been "one of the curious honors bestowed on" Lindbergh.[520] On the other hand, George Ganaway claimed the connection between the Lindy Hop and the Lindbergh flight in the newspaper article in 1931, where it was stated: "The dance was born shortly after Lindbergh's history making flight with George Ganaway as the originator."[521] Although George Ganaway's part as the originator of the Lindy Hop is likely

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until after September 1928. Thus, the term was established from September 12, 1928 in the African-American newspapers. See for example: ' "Lindy Hop" Hops At Lincoln', *The Afro-American*, September 29, 1928, p. 8 and 'Fourth Annual Concert and Dance by Monarch Band', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 14, 1928, p. 7. The mainstream newspapers established the term in connection to the Harlem Lindy Hop, at the latest, from 1930. See: "TONIGHT! Harlem's Newest Dance Craze LINDY HOP Championship ...Roseland', *The New York Times*, November 20, 1930, p. 35. There is also an advertisement concerning *Hot Rhythm*, where the Lindy Hop is mentioned, but it is not sure if the dance was the Harlem version. See: *The New York Times*, September 23, 1930, p. 37. Another example from 1930 can be found from *The Emporia Weekly Gazette*, which discusses Carl Van Vechten's *Parties,* and quotes Van Vechten, when it mentions that the Lindy Hop made its first official appearance in Harlem. See: 'The Negro's Art', *The Emporia Weekly Gazette*, August 28, 1930, p. 3. The term "The Lindy Hop" seemed to be used for the first time in 1927, when the Association of Dancing Masters of America presented the dance in New England. See: 'Dancing Masters here Introduce New 'Lindy Hop', *The Hartford Courant*, June 14, 1927, p. 12. Peter BetBasoo has found references to the earlier use of the term 'Lindy Hop' in connection with dances which were not connected to the Harlem version, starting from June 1927. See: Peter BetBasoo, Lindy Hop and Argentine Tango, copyright Peter BetBasoo, published in internet, 2009, pp. 14 and 15. The author of the study has a copy of the article.

519 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 131-132 and 143.

520 'The "Lindy Hop" Captivates All Harlem's Dance Lovers', *The Chicago Defender*, February 1, 1930, p. 6.

521 'In "Lindy Hop" Contest', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 28, 1931, p. 5.

wrong[522], the articles bring the claim about the Lindbergh connection closer to the actual birth year of the Lindy Hop, although it still remains unclear if the dance was named for Lindbergh's flight.

The significance of Snowden and Purnell's invention speaks to the fact that the Lindy Hop seemed to have a certain basic structure through the decades, although the dance was improvised at times. George Snowden explained the nature of the Lindy Hop to Stearns in his 1959 interview. Snowden said, "Anything you could create was good for the Lindy. Everybody has to do the basic step but after that it's everybody for himself. In the break-away you tried to do all kinds of thing."[523] Concerning the basic Lindy steps, Stearns states in *Jazz Dance*, "The Lindy has a basic step of its own – a syncopated two-step or box step – accenting the offbeat."[524]

Terry Monaghan claims that the 'swing-out' pattern defines the Lindy Hop. In this pattern, the two partners rhythmically improvise while "separating apart and drawing back together".[525] Even if Monaghan is correct in his claim that 'swing-outs' are typical patterns in the Lindy Hop, based on the evidence of the surviving film clips and descriptions of the dance, there have been various versions concerning the basic steps and the basics of the Lindy Hop during the years.

At the end of the 1980s, Margaret Batiuchok interviewed three Lindy Hop dancers from the 1930s to the 1950s: George Lloyd, Frankie Manning, and Charlie Meade, concerning 'What is the basic step of the Lindy Hop?' She got varied answers. Charlie Meade said that the basic step is 'swing-out'. Frankie Manning claimed that the basic steps are jockey (which sets a tempo and a mood when hanging out together with the partner) and jigwalk (a step, which typically is defined by slow, slow, quick, quick rhythm). He added after Margaret's question about the swing-out, that the basics are jockey, jigwalk, and swing-out. George Lloyd argued that (the Lindy Hop) "came out of the two-step. You can push your partner out and going to anything…Push your partner out and then right back and two-step again. That's to me the basic".[526] Additionally, Albert 'Al' Minns stated in 1984 that the

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522 There is no evidence for Ganaway's role as the originator of the Lindy Hop. Also Archer Winsten stated in his article in 1936 that Ganaway's claim about the role as the originator of the Lindy Hop "was rejected on account of insufficient evidence". See: Archer Winsten, 'Wake of the News', *New York Post*, May 7, 1936, p. 21.

523 George Snowden interview December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University. Concerning Snowden's statement, Stearns writes in his *Jazz Dance*, "Everybody did the same starting step, but after that, look out, everybody for himself." See: Stearns 1994, p. 323. I have used Snowden's interview statement instead of the story, as it was written later in *Jazz Dance*.

524 Stearns 1994, p. 323.

525 Monaghan 2009, p. 133.

526 Margaret Batiuchok. "The Lindy." Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts to the faculty of the Gallatin Division of New York University, May 16, 1988. Margaret Batiuchok's theses includes four different DVDs about different dancers and their dancing styles filmed between 1987 and 1988. These dancers are Tom Lewis, George Lloyd, Frankie Manning and Charlie Meade. I have used George Lloyd, Frankie Manning, and Charlie Meade DVDs. There is the 'basics' section in each DVD, where questions are asked such as, "What is the basic step of the Lindy Hop?".

basic form (of the Lindy Hop concerning the basic step) is "one two three-one-two, one two three-one-two"[527]. Thus, it can be argued that there has not existed any fixed basic step or basics in the Lindy Hop. George Snowden's claim that "everybody has to do the basic step before its everybody for himself" should be seen in the context that the dance has a basic structure, even if the dance is improvised at times, and there are several variations to define this basic structure.

Terry Monaghan states that there has existed three different modes of the Lindy Hop: social, performance, and competition.[528] The Lindy Hop was danced socially at the Savoy Ballroom at the end of 1928.[529] That was the beginning of the Lindy Hop on ballroom floors. The Lindy Hop seemed to have become a main part of the social dance scene within a year.[530]

The competition scene was created, at the latest, when the Savoy Ballroom started to host their original Sunday opportunity contest, which later became Saturday night competitions.[531] There was also the annual Savoy's National Lindy Hop Competition on President's Day between 1931 and 1935.[532]

The performance scene was created early, too. As stated earlier in this chapter, the 'Lindy Hop' was performed in September 1928. The first film clip showing early "Lindy Hop"-related dancing is from 1929. The clip is called *After Seben*. There are three couples performing in the clip. Marshall Stearns writes, "Steps include examples of Charleston, the Breakaway, and Cakewalk."[533] All three couples perform the Breakaway and the Collegiate (Charleston style) kind of dancing. Only the first couple performs a 'swing-out' –type of movement which is familiar from the Lindy Hop, where partners go away from each other and come back together, holding each other with one hand when separated. The third couple: George Snowden and his partner ends their dance with Cakewalk.[534]

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527 Albert 'Al' Minns interview by Swedish Swing Society (Lennart Westerlund, Henning Sörensen and Anders Lind) between the end of May and the beginning of the June 1984, New York. The exact date is unknown. The author has a copy of the tape.

528 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 129.

529 A reporter Edgar Rouzeau claimed that "the Lindy Hop devotees began to make the Savoy their stamping ground" months after the Manhattan Casino dance marathon. See: Edgar T. Rouzeau, 'Star Dust', *New Journal and Guide*, August 31, 1940, p. 17. See also: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 132.

530 Van Vechten 1993, p. 184.

531 The opportunity contest was originally organized on Sundays. See: Stearns 1994, p. 322. See also: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 135.

532 Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 143.

533 Stearns 1994, p. 405.

534 Stearns writes, "Three pairs of Lindy dancers from Savoy Ballroom performs early Lindy". See: Stearns 1994, p. 405. However, it is clear that only the first couple dances with 'swing-out' type of movements. The second couple is connected with both hands when "separated" without any indication of "separate apart" from each other like in the 'swing-out'. This resembles the Breakaway, and their dancing also resembles the Collegiate, when in a close position. The third couple: George 'Shorty' Snowden and his partner dance the Breakaway and Collegiate kind of movements. This analysis is based on the reference of the film clip, where the two-step, the Breakaway, Collegiate, and the Lindy Hop are

The significance of the Lindy Hop is pointed out in the fact that the dance started to spread outside Harlem after Snowden and Purnell's invention in the dance marathon. The competitions and performances had an important role in this process.[535]

4.2 The Rockland Palace Dance Marathon in 1928

The Rockland Palace (former Manhattan Casino) was the place where the Lindy Hop was born. It is reasonable to examine how the marathon was presented in the mainstream press, and find out how the Harlem dancing was described in the articles and pictures of the *Daily News,* which likely reported the most frequently on the dance marathon, as far as the mainstream press is concerned. The African-American press is used for bridging the gaps concerning the background of the marathon and events in it, when the mainstream press did not report on them.

The Rockland Palace had the dance marathon between June 17 and July 4, 1928, which was mainly for African-Americans. It was advertised in *The New York Age* as "World's Championship Colored Endurance Dancing Contest".[536] One of the contestants remembers the competition as racially mixed, but it is not clear if it really was so, or how many couples were not African-Americans.[537] According to the surviving pictures of the competition, the couples were African-Americans.[538]

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demonstrated by Albert 'Al' Minns and Leon James with Marshall Stearns narrating, publishing year is unknown. The author has the clip. In addition to that, Frankie Manning recalls that the Collegiate was like "doing the Charleston, but with your partner, and without swinging your legs so much." See for this: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 47. Also Lillian Ray describes in her *Modern Ballroom Dancing* dance manual Collegiate steps, which look similar to what the couples performed in the clip. See: Lillian Ray, *Modern Ballroom Dancing* (Chicago: Franklin Publishing Company, 1934), pp. 211, 217 and 225.

535 See chapters: 'Savoy Lindy Hoppers' Second Generation Between 1934 and 1943', 'Harvest Moon Ball and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers Between 1935 and 1943' and 'The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance – Out from Harlem: The Shows and Movies'.

536 '$1,000 CASH PRIZE –TO THE WINNING COUPLE OF THE World's Championship Colored Endurance Dancing Contest' and 'Marathon Dancers At Rockland Palace June 17', *The New York Age*, June 9, 1928, p. 6.

537 Carol Martin, 'Reality Dance – American Dance Marathons', Malnig 2009, pp. 94-95. The competitor's name is Edna Smith and she was from Pittsburgh. Edna Smith's name cannot be found from the articles, which list all competitors. There were likely 24 couples in the competition, It is explained later in the chapter, how the participant list is concluded. It is possible that Edna Smith had different last name at the time. There was an Edna Dorsey from Pittsburgh in the competition. It is possible that Edna Smith used name Edna Dorsey at the time. See: 'Marathoners "Doing Their Stuff" at Manhattan Casino in Endurance Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 20, 1928, p. 10.

538 These pictures are mentioned in this chapter and they all were published in *Daily News*. Some of these pictures were group pictures including probably the most of the participants. It is likely that the competition was for African-Americans.

The contest was organized by "A group of theatrical men"[539], called Forr Producing Co, Inc. John Lazaro worked as managing director. *The New York Age* reported that the group promoted the event.[540] John Lazaro was white and he was from Pittsburgh. He was claimed to have plagiarized the dance marathon at Madison Square Garden, which started earlier, on June 10, and was still going on at the time. According to the *New York Herald Tribune,* the only difference was the prize money, which was $1,000 in the Harlem marathon, compared to Madison Square Garden, where it was $5,000 to the winning couple.[541] In addition to that, there was at least one more difference: race. The Madison Square Garden marathon was for whites.[542]

Originally 100 couples were supposed to participate in the Rockland Palace dance marathon[543]. Eventually, only 24 couples participated in the competition. John Lazaro had received applications from couples in the New York area, including applications from the Bronx and Harlem; Flushing, Long Island, and Jamaica, Long Island. Other states and towns were also represented: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Newark, New Jersey; Bloomfield, New Jersey; Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington D.C.[544] Thus, the applicant list indicates a larger interest outside of New York in the competition.

However, the participants of the competition turned out to be mostly from Harlem: 32 participants, one participant from the New York area, and two participants from Brooklyn (New York). New Jersey was represented as three participants came from Newark, one participant came from Elizabeth, and two participants came from Englewood[545]. In addition, one participant came from

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539 '$1,000 CASH PRIZE –TO THE WINNING COUPLE OF THE World's Championship Colored Endurance Dancing Contest' and 'Marathon Dancers At Rockland Palace June 17', *The New York Age*, June 9, 1928, p. 6.

540 'World's Championship Colored Endurance Dancing Contest', *The New York Age*, June 23, 1928, p. 6. John Lazaro also was mentioned as a theatrical producer. See: 'Dance Marathon At Manhattan', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 6, 1928, p. 6.

541 'Negroes Strut Dance Marathon As Garden Rival', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 18, 1928, p. 8. The Madison Square Garden dance marathon started on June 10. 'Couples on the Hoof Legging It At Garden's Marathon Dance Fest', *Variety,* June 13, 1928, p. 37.

542 Although there is no strict mention of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon as being only for whites, this becomes clear, for example, from the article: James Cannon, 'Law Doesn't Tread On 26 Flaming Feet', *Daily News*, 'Extra edition', June 23, 1928, p. 3. In the article, the Manhattan Casino dance marathon is referred as 'colored' and according to the article, the Madison Square Garden dance marathon had white participants.

543 'Many Entries For Big Marathon', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 13, 1928, p. 10.

544 Ibid., p. 10.

545 This and the next paragraph are based on the articles as follows: 'Marathoners "Doing Their Stuff" at Manhattan Casino in Endurance Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 20, 1928, p. 10. There were only 23 couples, when summing all the couples which were named in the article (The article listed all the participants. This list is practically a "participant list", although not named so in the article.) *The New York Times, New York Evening Post, New York Herald Tribune and Daily News* claimed that there were 24 couples. See: '14 Couples Survive Eleven Days' Dance', *The New York Times*, June 21, 1928, p. 27; 'Harlem Dancers Dwindle.', *The New York Times*, July 3, 1928, p. 11; 'To Wed While Dancing.", *The New York Times*, June 27, 1928, p. 27; 'Harlem Dance Derbyists Can't Make

Providence (Rhode Island), four participants came from Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania), one participant came from Baltimore (Maryland), and one participant came from Chicago (Illinois).

The judges were all African-Americans, and "from the rank and file of prominent Negroes", as *The New York Amsterdam News* stated. They were Mrs. Bessye Bearden, Mrs. Sadie Warren Davis, Alderman Fred R. Moore, Mrs. Amy Ashwood Garvey, Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson, Sergeant Samuel J. Battle, Sam Manning, Edgar M. Grey, and Alvin Moses. The dance marathon was a national competition with an emphasis on Harlem, when considering the participants.

The competition rules defined that "the partners are to dance in laps of one hour and rest 15 minutes." According to *The New York Age,* the competition was "the first Negro dancing marathon".[546] *New York Evening Post*, however, claimed that Lazaro staged two African-American contests in Pittsburgh before the Harlem dance marathon. It is not clear if those contests were dance marathons.[547] The challenge to white dance marathoners was set in the Harlem-based newspapers, as *The New York Age* stated, "the sponsors declare that it will settle the question of physical superiority between the races."[548] Also *The New York Amsterdam News* stressed that:

> More than ordinary interest attaches to this dancing marathon, since it is an effort of the colored people, who have proven themselves physically superior in nearly all sports and tests of endurance, to out dance the white couples who are now competing at Madison Square

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Feet Behave', *New York Evening Post*, June 18, 1928, p. 5. 'Negroes Strut Dance Marathon As Garden Rival', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 18, p. 8; ' Negro Steppers' Marathon Gay At 25th Hour', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 19, p. 6; '20 Dancing Pairs Circle Weary Way Past 190th Hour', *Daily News*, June 19, 1928, p. 16. Some papers also claimed that even more couples participated as *The Chicago Defender* claimed, "More than 100 couples will be in position on the floor of Manhattan Casino...when the starter...gives the signal for the beginning". See: 'New York Endurance Dancing Contest On', *The Chicago Defender*, June 23, 1928, p. 6. Later, *The Chicago Defender* claimed, "eight couples of the 26 original entered were still left". See: 'N.Y. Marathon Dancers Wed While Dancing', *The Chicago Defender*, July 7, 1928, p. 1. *The New York Age* claimed that there were 25 couples in the beginning of the competition. See: 'World's Championship Colored Endurance Dancing Contest', *The New York Age*, June 23, 1928, p. 6. However, it seems that 24 couples is the correct number, because, in addition to the participant list which was reported in *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 20, 1928 issue, there also was one couple which left the Harlem competition, but was mentioned in *New York Herald Tribune*, June 27, 1928 issue. The couple was Mary Davis and John Scott from Newark, N.J. They were not listed in the mentioned participant list. See: 'Strike Rumors Fly at Garden Dance Contest', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 27, 1928, p. 19. Davis and Scott's withdrawal from the competition also was reported in *The New York Times*. See: 'To Wed While Dancing.', *The New York Times*, June 27, 1928, p. 27.

546 'Marathon Dancers At Rockland Palace June 17', *The New York Age*, June 9, 1928, p. 6.

547 Dorothy Ducas, 'Harlem Dance Derbyists Can't Make Feet Behave', *New York Evening Post*, June 18, 1928, p. 5. The author of the dissertation has not found any other mention of African-American dance marathons before the Harlem dance marathon.

548 'Marathon Dancers At Rockland Palace June 17', *The New York Age*, June 9, 1928, p. 6.

> Garden…The dancing contest is regarded as the greatest test of human strength yet devised[549].

Snowden, who essentially rose from almost zero to hero in the dance marathon of the Rockland Palace between June 17 and July 4, 1928, was mentioned only as one of the "local residents," in the article of *The New York Amsterdam News* on June 20. The article mentioned that speculation was rising as to which couple would win the dance marathon. Tommy "Pussyfoot" Dash and his partner, Josephine Jefferson, both from Pittsburgh, were mentioned to be backed by "a good portion of the crowd". They were winners of the dance marathon in Pittsburgh, where they "danced 111 hours to establish a local record."[550]

The New York Times stated in the next day's issue, on June 21, how after 62 hours into the competition at the Manhattan Casino, there were 19 couples left out of the original 24 couples. The paper stated regarding the sub-competitions in the dance marathon, "All the prizes offered for fancy stepping and other competitions during the evening were won by George Snowden and Mattie Purnell".[551] Also, the *New York Herald Tribune* reported on June 21, "The Lindbergh Hop is enlivening things at the Negro mar[a]thon in the Manhattan Casino…The Hop yesterday was won by George Snowden and Malty Pursel [Mattie Purnell]."[552]

The New York Amsterdam News in the June 27 issue still seemed to believe in that Couple No.1, Tom (Pussyfoot) Dash and his partner Josephine Jefferson, who were "still favored to win the contest, although Dash has grown very grumblesome and fusses continually about the food, sleeping quarters and everything in general". According to the paper, Dash "would have called quits long ago, but his optimistic little partner, Josephine, who is always consoling him and urging him to keep on." *The New York Amsterdam News* also reported on Couple No. 2, "John T. Bell…and Edna Peynado, popular hostess of the Savoy and Renaissance ballrooms", who were reported to be staging "an endurance duel with No.1 Tom Dash and his partner." In addition to them, "Edna Dorsey and Melachi Meli, No. 12" were reported to be "taking things easy with the expectation that unless sickness intervenes they will still be dancing on the Fourth of July."

Although Snowden and Purnell had not been mentioned as a favorite of the competition by the local Harlem newspapers, *The New York Amsterdam News*,

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549 'Many Entries For Big Marathon', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 13, 1928, p. 10.

550 'Marathoners "Doing Their Stuff" at Manhattan Casino in Endurance Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 20, 1928, p. 10. Also *The Afro-American* stated, how Dash and Jefferson were "the No. 1 entry" in the Harlem dance marathon. See: '24 Couples In Dancing Derby: Record 13 Days', *The Afro-American*, June 23, 1928, p. 1. Dash and Jefferson's participation in the Pittsburgh marathon can be confirmed by the article in *The Pittsburgh Courier*, where their names are on the list of the participants. See: 'Marathon Dancers Continue To Shuffle At Motor Square', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, June 16, 1928, p. 10.

551 '19 Couples Left in Harlem Derby', *The New York Times*, June 21, 1928, p. 27.

552 '14 Dance Couples Remain In Garden at 239th Hour', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 21, 1928, p. 20.

however, stated on June 27, ”No. 7 is by far the most popular team on the floor. It is composed of Mattie Purnell…and George Snowden”.[553] This claim is supported by *The New York Age*, which wrote on June 30, ”the marathon dancers who are now close on their 200th hour of continuous dancing have drawn large crowds to the spacious hall every night…Between Saturday and Sunday evenings a vote was taken to determine the most popular couple”. The vote resulted in a way that Couple No. 7 (Snowden and Purnell) got 2,805 votes. The next couple got only 275 votes. The couple with the least amount got 24 votes. The total vote amount was 4,001 votes.[554] Thus, the winner of the popularity contest was clear. Although *The New York Age* was published on Saturday, it is likely that the vote happened a week before, somewhere between June 23 (Saturday) and 24 (Sunday). Indeed, the mentioned closeness of ”their 200th hour” in the contest refers to a couple days later, but there could have been a mistake in the number of hours or the dates.

Snowden and Purnell also seemed to win most of the prize money in the sub-competitions of the dance marathon. As *The New York Amsterdam News* reported in the June 27 issue on Snowden and Purnell, it also mentioned other couples which won part of about $300 in extra prizes. However, these sums were small money compared to Snowden and Purnell, who won a total of $148 of the $300”for demonstrations of various dances”. The next couple, No. 16, won only $15 of the $300”for exhibition of the ”slow drag” and for neatness”. In addition to that, there also were several ”other prizes” which had ”also been won by entertainers and other individuals who have been contributing their specialties during the various rest periods.”[555] However, those individuals’ names were not mentioned in the article.

A reason for not mentioning Snowden and Purnell as favorites in the dance marathon, which was based on endurance, might have been their energy-consuming dancing appearance. They might not have been supposed to manage to the end of the marathon without wearing themselves out before that. Another reason is that they were not widely known by the local community before the dance marathon. The reporting in the local newspapers clearly indicated that.

New York Evening Post, in its June 18 issue, quoted racist expressions from the event organizers, “ “The colored people excel in a great many things, but nothing is more natural, more instinctive to them than dancing”, says the program announcement…”Slow and easy” is not easy for men and women with African blood in their veins. When they hear the blare of the saxophone and the beat of the drums – even if the noise comes out of a victrola, which is inclined to screech – they want to “get hot” and “strut their stuff” “. The paper also explained how Couple No. 1, Tom Dash and Josephine Jefferson “kept right on swaying to the music and hardly moving their feet at all. By and by, the others noticed them, and as quickly as the

553 ’Marathoners Continue Their Athletic Gyrations at the Manhattan Casino’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 27, 1928, p. 6.

554 ’Marathon Dancers Draw Large Crowds To Manhattan Casino’, *The New York Age*, June 30, 1928, p. 6.

555 ’Marathoners Continue Their Athletic Gyrations at the Manhattan Casino’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 27, 1928, p. 6.

little flare of "hot steppin' " had arisen, it died…"Gotta save your strength," murmured Nazimova Hollywood, a brunette from St. Nicholas Avenue."[556]

Thus, Hollywood probably revealed the secret for surviving in the dance marathon was endurance. This was confirmed by the *New York Herald Tribune* which stated on June 20 how the Harlem dance marathoners who "danced swiftly" in the beginning, had taken up "the slow and easy methods" which had prevailed at the Madison Square Garden dance marathon "since the opening night".[557] The methods seemed to stay as the paper reported on June 22 that "everything was quiet along the Harlem".[558]

The New York Times mentioned in its Harlem dance marathon article on June 27, that a marathon couple would be married on the floor the night of June 29.[559] Before that night, the couple, Aurelia Hallback and Bernard Paul, traveled down to the Municipal Building for a marriage license. They were asked to "dance every step of the way in a truck", and "take another couple with them to see that they don't cheat."[560] The "soon-to-be-married" couple possibly was an already-married couple, as one of the contestants explained later. Thus, it was probably only a public stunt, likely for getting more interest in the dance marathon and getting more money, both to the organizers and to the couple.[561]

There were contradictory reports as to who were accompanying the "soon-to-be-married" couple in the marriage ceremony. The mainstream newspaper *New York Herald Tribune* stated the couple was "accompanied by…Mattie Purnell and George Snowden, the favored pair of the Negro marathon".[562] Later, the *New York Herald Tribune* stated that William Robinson (Bill Robinson) "gave the bride away" and his

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556 Dorothy Ducas, 'Harlem Dance Derbyists Can't Make Feet Behave', *New York Evening Post*, June 18, 1928, p. 5.

557 'Gayety Deserts Harlem Dance In 48th Hour', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 20, 1928, p. 14.

558 ' 'Pitying' Actress Gets Writ to Halt Dance Marathon', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 22, 1928, p. 13.

559 'To Wed While Dancing.', *The New York Times*, June 27, 1928, p. 27.

560 'Dancers Spurred By Bets On Derby', *The New York Times*, June 28, 1928, p. 27. One of the participants of the competition remembered that the "married-couple" was Puerto Rican. See: Martin 2009, p. 95. According to *The New York Amsterdam News*, Bernard Paul was from Chicago and Aurelia Hallback was from Harlem. See: 'Marathoners "Doing Their Stuff" at Manhattan Casino in Endurance Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 20, 1928, p. 10. It is possible that the couple was originally from Puerto Rico. Anyway, they were African-Americans, according to the *Daily News* picture, where the "married" couple is pictured in the truck somewhere between the Manhattan Casino and the Municipal Office, where they got the marriage license. See: *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 29, 1928, p. 29. According to the picture, the other couple in the truck was George Snowden and Mattie Purnell.

561 One of the contestants: Edna Smith (possibly Edna Dorsey in the contest) explained later how the "soon-to-be-married" couple was already married. Some of the contestants got upset for that, but it was squashed. See: Carol Martin, 'Reality Dance – American Dance Marathons', Malnig 2009, p. 95.

562 'Garden Dancers Ordered to Do Real Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 28, 1928, p. 18.

wife was matron of honor. Percy Winters, who participated in the Harlem dance marathon, was reported as best man.[563] In spite of the confusion, Snowden and also Purnell's reputation likely increased, when their accomplishments were reported in both the mainstream and Harlem connected newspapers.[564] It seems that the audience of the Harlem dance marathon especially consisted of whites. *The Philadelphia Tribune* reported after the dance marathon, that it was frequented "by a large number of whites". The paper stated that Harlemites did not support the Rockland Palace dance marathon in the way the promoters hoped for.[565] Thus, Harlemites most likely recognized Snowden and Purnell from the newspapers and from the aftermath of the dance marathon.

In particular, the *Daily News* published the Harlem dance marathon pictures in its various issues, and in different editions during the dance marathon, unlike other mainstream press, which mostly commented only briefly on the events of the Harlem dance marathon. The pictures were published between June 20 and July 3. The Madison Square Garden dance marathon pictures were published at the same time and even on the same pages.[566]

Daily News pictures of the Harlem dance marathon described the marathon dancers, in addition to dancing, in various kinds of typical nondancing situations, where a dance marathon is concerned. The pictures described them eating, resting, talking with each other, being taking care by nurses and doctors, waiting their turn in a line, and posing to the camera. In general, the pictures described the dance marathoners appropriately, with a few exceptions, which are explained later in the chapter.

Similarly, the Madison Square Garden dance marathoners were described in the *Daily News* pictures in various situations like dancing, sleeping, smoking cigarettes, drinking, running, posing as couples, and as a group. All the pictures seemed to describe dancers positively without clear intentional purposes to disdain persons in

563 'Dancers Strike After Writ Halts Harris Closing', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 30, 1928, p. 6.

564 In addition to the mainstream press, Snowden and Purnell were reported as bridesmaid and best man of the couple in the African-American newspaper *The Chicago Defender*. See: 'N.Y. Marathon Dancers Wed While Dancing', *The Chicago Defender*, July 7, 1928, p. 1.

565 'Dance 'Derby' Is Stopped By Physicians', *The Philadelphia Tribune*, July 12, 1928, p. 1.

566 All the available *Daily News* issues and editions can be found from the New York Public Library, where these can be found on microfilms in the Schwartzman building microform room. The library has not explained how comprehensively the *Daily News* issues and editions are in the microfilms. According to the analysis, when the author of the study examined those microfilms, the library had constantly different daily issues and editions. The author of the dissertation also contacted the *Daily News* concerning the issues and editions, but without any success in the case. Otherwise, the author of the dissertation has not found the Harlem dance marathon pictures from other mainstream newspapers and magazines similar to the *Daily News*-published pictures. The *Daily News* seemed to publish those pictures regularly, sometimes almost every day, during the dance marathon as it becomes clear in this chapter of this dissertation.

the pictures. The pictures were taken in ways that were appropriate for a dance marathon, and were not staged in any way to make anyone look bad.

However, there was a clear difference concerning the amount of different pictures which were published in various *Daily News* issues and editions. The *Daily News* published many more different pictures of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon than it published different pictures of the Rockland Palace dance marathon at the time, when the Harlem marathon was happening. There were, at least, 49 different pictures connected to the events of the Madison Square Garden marathon, compared to 12 different pictures from the Rockland Palace marathon. In addition to that, the Madison Square Garden marathoners made the front page or the back cover of Daily News at least 11 times. The Rockland Palace marathoners did not make those pages at all.[567] The difference is clear: the white dance marathon clearly got

[567] All the figures can be counted from the next lists where there are mentioned different Rockland Palace pictures and different Madison Square Garden pictures. All the pictures differ from each other if not mentioned otherwise. Basically, the lists do not contain all the published pictures. *Daily News* published same pictures in various issues and editions. The different pictures from the Rockland Palace dance marathon can be found from these *Daily News* issues and editions: **two pictures:** 'Picking 'Em Up and Putting 'Em Down, Mile After Mile!', *Daily News*, June 20, 1928, p. 20; **two pictures:** 'Dancing On, Without a Thought for the Fiddler's Pay!', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 23, 1928, p. 14; **one picture:** 'Dancing On, Without a Thought for the Fiddler's Pay!', *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, June 23, 1928, p. 14; **one picture:** 'Dancers Smash Record', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 24, 1928, p. 3; **two pictures:** 'On With the Dance!', *Daily News*, June 25, 1928, p. 17; **One picture:** *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 26, 1928, p. 3; **one picture:** *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 29, 1928, p. 29. There is no headline above the picture; **two pictures:** *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 3, 1928, p. 13. There are no headlines in the pictures.

The different pictures from the Madison Square Garden dance marathon can be found from the *Daily News* issues and editions mentioned next. **Three pictures**: 'Picking 'Em Up and Putting 'Em Down, Mile After Mile!', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 20, 1928, p. 20; **one picture**: 'Law Threatens to Banish Jaded Marathon Dancers From Garden', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 21, 1928, p. 3; **one picture**: 'Police May Step In To Stop Steppers!', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 21, 1928, p. 20. **Two pictures**: 'Law Threatens to End Marathon Dance', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 21, 1928, p. 3; **One picture**: *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 23, 1928, **front page**; **two pictures**: 'Health Peril? They Dance On!', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 23, 1928, p. 3; **One picture**: 'Dancing On, Without a Thought for the Fiddler's Pay!', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 23, 1928, p. 14; **Two pictures** on the **back cover**: 'Dancing Circus Still With Us!', *Daily News*, 'Home' edition, June 24, 1928; **One same picture** from the earlier back cover in the **front page**: 'Circus Is Still With Us', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 24, 1928; **One picture**: 'Love Lopez's Pep Up', *Sunday News*, 'Final' edition, June 24, 1928, p. 4; **One picture**: '12,000 Cheer Dancers', *Sunday News*, 'Final' edition, June 24, 1928, p. 3; **Three pictures**: 'The Torture-Trot', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 25, 1928, p. 3 and 17. There is no headline in two of the pictures; **two pictures**: 'Aching Ankles Amble Into 359th Hour', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 26, 1928, p. 3; same picture than before, but in the **front-page**: 'Of Those Poor Pedals!', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 26, 1928; **One picture**: 'Keep Them Dogs Barking!', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 27, 1928, p. 2; **One picture**: Irene Kuhn, 'Daddy Takes All Of Sugar, Hoofers' Kick', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 27, 1928, p. 2; **One picture**: 'Suffering Soles Talk War', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 27, 1928, p. 9; **three pictures**: 'Still Hoofing in Dance of the Hours', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 28, 1928, p. 20; **One picture**: 'Exhaustion Exhibition', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 29, 1928, p. 29; **One picture**: 'Dance Derby's Promoter Acts To Balk City Closing Order', *Daily*

more publicity than the African-American dance marathon during the same time period.

Some of *Daily News* pictures had an interracial aspect included in them. The *Daily News* published pictures of the Harlem dance marathon, where African-American dance marathoners interacted with whites in different situations at the Rockland Palace dance marathon. For example, the white dance marathoners from the Madison Square Garden marathon visited the Harlem dance marathon, which was pictured in *Daily News*. Another kind of racial connection was between the pictures of the dance marathons, which described only African-American or white dance marathoners, when the pictures were published on the same pages at the same time. In essence, the *Daily News* published on the same pages pictures of the dance marathons where couples were either dancing or the dancers were in nondancing situations. That is why both kind of pictures are analyzed next, at the same time, when the picture were published in the same pages.

The interracial pictures, where African-Americans were in contact with whites, were three different pictures which were published between June 25 and July 3. In the first of them, a white night club dancer gave prize money to African-American couple Joe Riddick and Dorothy West (the picture was published on June 25)[568]. In the second of them, white Eddie Leonard from the Madison Square Garden marathon shook hands with George Snowden, and Mattie Purnell was in the background of the picture (the picture was published in the 'Pink' and 'Final' editions on July 3). The third of these is a group picture, in the same editions, where both Madison Square Garden dance marathoners and the Harlem dance marathoners were described.[569]

News, 'Pink' edition, June 30, 1928, p. 4; **two pictures** on the **back cover**: *Sunday News*, 'Final' edition, June 30, 1928; **one picture** on the **front page**: 'Dizzy Dance Dirge', *Sunday News*, 'Home' edition, July 1, 1928; **one earlier picture** on the **front page**: 'Of Those Poor Pedals!', *Sunday News*, 'First' edition, July 1, 1928; **four pictures**: 'Health Writ Calls Off Dance Race At Midnight', *Sunday News*, 'Home' edition, July 1, 1928, p. 3; **two pictures**: 'Mad Dance Stops At Midnight', *Sunday News*, 'Home' edition, July 1, 1928, p. 4; **one picture** on the **front page**, *Sunday News*, 'Final' edition, July 1, 1928; **one picture**: 'City Halts Dance Derby At End Of 20 Dizzy Days', *Sunday News*, 'Final' edition, July 1, 1928, p. 3; **two pictures**: 'Brains of Dance Derby', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 3; **three pictures**: *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 16. There is no headline in the pictures; **two pictures**: 'And After the Dance...!', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 17; **one picture**: 'One Look – No Hoofers For Shubert, Says He', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 3, 1928, p. 3; **one picture**: 'Cash and Clash Thrill Bunioneers at Pay-off', *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, July 3, 1928, p. 3; **one picture** on the **back cover**: 'Was It Worth It?', *Daily News*, 'Extra edition', July 3, 1928.

568 'On With the Dance!', *Daily News*, 'Pink' and 'Final' editions, June 25, 1928, p. 17.

569 *Daily News*, 'Pink' and 'Final' editions, July 3, 1928, p. 13. There are no headlines in the pictures. The picture where Eddie Leonard is shaking hands with George Snowden also was published in Terry Monaghan's Savoy study. Monaghan cut the picture in the way, where it can be seen only Snowden and Purnell. Eddie Leonard had mostly cut off from the picture. It looks like Snowden shook hands with someone whose hand and part of his leg only can be seen in addition to Snowden and Purnell. Monaghan labeled the picture, "George Snowden and Mattie Purnell are congratulated for being one of the four couples to complete the 1928 Dance Marathon during which they devised the first Lindy Hop swing-out." Monaghan's version of the picture with his self-made picture label gives misleading

Overall, the pictures presented the persons positively. In the last picture, the Harlem dance marathoners and the Madison Square Garden dance marathoners, posed to the camera mostly as couples. Some of them are located in the picture without their partners. The couples and people without their partners are located in the picture in the way which suggests that some of them interacted with each other. African-Americans mingled with whites and vice versa. Snowden and Purnell, pictured as hugging each other, are located in the middle of the picture. The picture is labeled with a positive tone, "Wishing 'em well. Some of white dance derbyites on visit to the colored jamboree". Similarly, the shaking hands picture is labeled "Eddie Leonard, who danced on team No. 7 in the Madison Square Garden whirl, gives a few tips on how to do it to team No. 7 at the Manhattan Casino."[570]

The "shaking hands" picture was cut out in at least two of editions of the *Daily News* on July 3. There was no dance marathon picture as a substitution. The dance marathoners' group picture still was located on the lower right corner. The picture is labeled, "EVEN IF THE LAW did step in and put the kibosh on that white dance in Madison Square Garden, the colored contemporaries of the marathon foot flippers still were pounding merrily along last night at Manhattan Casino. Here are some of the white dancers wishing them well."[571]

It is questionable if the "shaking hands" picture was cut off for a reason that it gave too much impression about racial equality. If so, that does not explain why the group picture survived. The group picture clearly presents African-Americans and whites as equals, even to the point that an African-American couple (Purnell and Snowden) is in the middle looking straight to the camera. Possibly, the "here are some white dancers wishing them well" expression was meant to express that it was whites who could start the conversation between participants from different races, not African-Americans? If so, it still does not explain the positions of white and African-American dancers in the picture, which refers to them as equals. Overall, the outlook of the picture is giving an impression of ordinary interaction in a racially equal context.

The *Daily News* picture collages of the dance marathons, which were published on the same pages, and which included pictures of both the Madison Square Garden dance marathoners and the Rockland Palace dance marathoners, without them being in the same pictures, are described as follows: First, a picture collage of the dance marathons which was published in the June 23 'Final' editions. There is a group portrait of the Madison Square Garden dance marathoners. The couples are neatly dressed in close dance positions. In the first of the 'Final' editions, the picture is labeled with a comment: "Here are those dance derbyites liftin'em up and puttin'em down in Madison Square Garden. The carnival entered the 285th hour at 8 o'clock last night with 13 couples still going through the motions." The hour figure is bigger

information about the situation, where the picture was taken. See for Monaghan's version of the picture: Monaghan 2005, p. 35.

570 *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition and 'Final' editions, July 3, 1928, p. 13.

571 *Daily News*, 'Final' and 'Extra' editions, July 3, 1928, p. 12. These editions came after the 'Pink' edition, so the picture was cut out. There is no headline in the picture.

in the other 'Final' editions, but otherwise the picture is labeled similarly. Below this picture, there are two pictures of the Harlem dance marathon: in the lower left corner there is pictured a couple kissing each other in the tent. The picture is commented, "Percy Winter[s] and wife Cora prettying up during rest period in colored hopping derby." On the right side of this picture is a picture from the same dance marathon, where the described marathoners are laying on beds and a doctor is taking care of one of them. They all are African-Americans. The picture is labeled, "And here, [a] scene in [the] Manhattan Casino, where colored dancers are strutting their stuff. Doctor administering stimulant to Vivian Ferguson at end of 91st hour."[572] Overall, none of these pictures gives any negative impression of the participants.

The *Daily News* published almost the same pictures in its June 23 'Extra' edition, as it had published in its 'Final' editions from the same date, but "the kissing couple" picture on the lower left corner was changed to a picture where Mattie Purnell is shown feeding George Snowden. The picture is labeled, "George, the waiter, brings chow to Mattie Purnell at the Harlem callous carnival, and she proceeds to feed her partner, George Snowden."[573] The picture comments are otherwise the same in the 'Extra' edition, but the total dance hours figure in the Madison Square Garden picture is "296th" as it was "293rd" in the last 'Final' edition picture. That suggests that the 'Extra' edition was published later than the 'Final' edition. George Snowden, Mattie Purnell, and the waiter are all African-Americans and neatly dressed. It is questionable if the picture gives a somehow negative impression about the couple. In any case, it promoted Snowden and Purnell as participants of the contest.

Another example of the interracial picture collage is the one in which the earlier mentioned Joe Riddick and Dorothy West photo was placed with two other pictures on the same page in the 'Pink' and 'Final' editions on June 25. One of the pictures describes a couple, Edna Younger and Ernie White, in the Harlem dance marathon. A doctor was taking care of Edna Younger's ankle. Above the picture is a headline, which says "On With the Dance!" The picture is otherwise labeled, "Dr. Edgar Perkinson dressing Edna Younger's sprained ankle that she may continue to shuffle along with Ernie White." The picture looks like an appropriate picture without any negative meanings. All persons in the picture are African-Americans. The third picture describes a white dance marathoner who was holding his partner and having a discussion with his trainer in the Madison Square Garden marathon. The latter picture is similarly appropriate where a dance marathon is concerned.[574] The Joe Riddick and Dorothy West picture was cut out from other 'Final' and 'Extra' editions on June 25 where the two other pictures were still published. There was no dance marathon picture as a substitution. As the picture appropriately described the scene of giving the money prize to the competitors, it is not likely that the reason for cutting it out was because it clearly portrayed racial equality.[575]

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572 'Dancing On, Without a Thought for the Fiddler's Pay!', *Daily News*, 'Final' editions, June 23, 1928, p. 14.

573 'Dancing On, Without a Thought for the Fiddler's Pay!', *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, June 23, 1928, p. 14.

574 'On With the Dance!', *Daily News*, 'Pink' and 'Final' editions, June 25, 1928, p. 17.

575 'On With the Dance!', *Daily News*, 'Final' and 'Extra' editions, June 25, 1928, p. 17.

The Edna Younger and the white dance marathoner pictures were published later in the *Sunday News* (The Sunday-published version of the *Daily News*), which published a picture collage depicting both the Harlem dance marathon and the Madison Square Garden dance marathon in its 'First' edition on July 1. In the picture collage, the Edna Younger picture is labeled, "Doctor dressing Edna Younger's sprained ankle in Harlem shuffle derby." The white dance marathoner picture is located below that. The picture is labeled, "Robert Schade dragged partner toward rest tent at Garden. She's holding onto him as trainer urges him on." In addition to that, there is a comment located on the right side of the last picture and below the comment of the Edna Younger picture, where it is stated, "ACHING feet featured dance derbies in Harlem and Madison Square Garden."[576] The last statement described equally the situation in the both marathons. The Edna Younger picture was not published in the other editions of *Sunday News* on July 1 which likely concentrated on the Madison Square Garden dance marathon because it just ended.[577]

In its June 26 'Pink' and 'Final' editions, the *Daily News* published pictures of both the Madison Square Garden dance marathon and of the Harlem dance marathon. Pictures are group pictures of the dancers who are dancing, and are located on different pages in the editions. The Madison Square Garden picture is located on the top of page 3, and the Harlem dance marathon picture is located on the bottom of page 19.[578] In the later 'Final' and 'Extra' editions, the pictures are located on the same page 3, with the Madison Square Garden picture on the top and the Harlem dance marathon picture is below. The Madison Square Garden picture is labeled, "The above picture will give you an excellent idea of what the dance derby looks like. You will observe two of the couples are making some attempt at dancing, with a third, at the left, walking. At the right can be seen a nurse attending one of the girl contestants." The Harlem dance marathon picture is labeled accordingly, "And over in the Manhattan Casino those colored derbyites are still lifting 'em up and putting 'em down. Alnia Smith (on platform), is shown dancing to amuse…her dancing compatriots."[579]

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576 'On With the Dance!', *Sunday News*, 'First' edition, July 1, 1928, p. 17.

577 'City Halts Dance Derby At End Of 20 Dizzy Days', *Sunday News*, 'Final' edition, July 1, p. 3. See otherwise: the 'Second', 'Home' and 'Final' editions on July 1, 1928. In fact, *Sunday News* reported in its 'Second' edition that the Madison Square Garden dance marathon "became hit with public after all". See: 'On With the Dance', *Sunday* News, 'Second' edition, July 1, p. 17. The *Sunday News* reporting after the 'First' edition implied that the dance marathon was ending when the 'Second' edition was published. That could explain why the Edna Younger picture was not published anymore after the 'First' edition when the paper concentrated on the Madison Square Garden dance marathon.

578 *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, June 26, 1928, pp. 3 and 19; *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 26, 1928, pp. 3 and 19. The page 3 picture is headlined, "Aching Ankles Amble Into 359th Hour" in these editions. The page 19 picture is not headlined at all.

579 *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 26, 1928, p. 3; *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, June 26, 1928, p. 3. It can be concluded from the total number of dance hours figure, which editions are later ones. There is a headline on page 3 in the 'Pink' edition: "Aching Ankles Amble Into 359th Hour". The same headline with the same total number of dance hours figure still can be found from one of 'Final' editions, too. The total number of dance hours figure is in the

If the idea was to stress the superiority of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon by placing the Harlem dance marathon picture below the Madison Square Garden picture in the later 'Final' and 'Extra' editions, the comments in the pictures give opposite impression. It even seems that the comment of the Madison Square Garden picture gives a humoristic kind of impression about the dance marathon, compared to the Harlem dance marathon picture, which gives an appropriate impression that the Harlem derbyites were still able to dance properly.

Mattie Purnell and George Snowden came back into the picture in the June 29 *Daily News* editions, in a picture of two African-American couples in the truck. Snowden and Purnell were in the middle and the other couple was on the right side. They were surrounded with two other African-Americans who look like the authorities of the contest. Only the "soon-to-be-married" couple, Aurelia Hallback and Bernard Paul, are named in the picture. The same picture is in different locations in different *Daily News* editions. In the earlier, 'Final' and 'Pink' editions, the picture is on the lower right corner of the page. On the left side of the picture is another picture from the Madison Square Garden marathon, where a few couples are dancing and posing to the camera. The picture is simply labeled, "Group of dancers still shuffling in Madison Square Garden". The Harlem dance marathon picture is labeled accordingly, "Hey hey! Aurelia Hallback and partner, Bernard Paul, stepped in syncopated rhythm all the way from Manhattan Casino to the Municipal building to be wed yesterday. They're shown (right) dancing on truck."[580] The pictures look like appropriate pictures with a positive attitude.

If the pictures of the Harlem dance marathon and the Madison Square Garden dance marathon, which were published in the *Daily News* editions between June 20 and July 3, 1928, gave glimpses of the racial equality between African-Americans and whites, the published articles in various *Daily News* issues and its daily editions between June 19 and July 5 definitely did not do that to the same extent.

It seems that the *Daily News* started to report on the Harlem dance marathon in its 'Final' edition on June 19, where it was stated briefly at the end of the article how the Manhattan Casino dance marathon "was still going strong after twenty-four hours of hoofing at 9 o'clock. None of the twenty-four couples which started had dropped out."[581] The article told otherwise about the Madison Square Garden dance marathon. The whole article without the headline is 25 lines long. The Manhattan

later 'Final' editions on page 3 accordingly: "363rd Marathon Hour" and "365th Marathon Hour", and in the 'Extra' edition: "367th Marathon Hour".

[580] *Daily News*, 'Pink' and 'Final' editions, June 29, 1928, p. 29. In one of the later 'Final' editions, both the Harlem dance marathon and the Madison Square Garden dance marathon pictures were removed.

[581] '20 Dancing Pairs Circle Weary Way Past 190th Hour', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 19, 1928, p. 16.

Casino part is six lines long. Slightly different versions were published in various editions on the date[582].

The same terse reportage policy about the Harlem dance marathon continued in the *Daily News* between June 19 and July 5. The Manhattan Casino dance marathon was mentioned only briefly at the end of the Madison Square Garden articles. The *Daily News* published an article on June 20, where it was briefly stated at the end of the Madison Square Garden marathon article:

> In the shadow of the L at 155th St. and 8th Ave., the colored dance marathon jazzed into its forty-fifth hour at 6 o'clock. Twenty-three couples still swayed to the brassy blare of the band, which filled Manhattan Casino.[583]

In a similar fashion, the *Daily News* reported on the Manhattan Casino dance marathon in its different editions during the time period. Only the contest hour and couple amount figures kept changing in those articles. An exception seemed to be on June 21, when the paper stated in its 'Final edition' as it had before, but added at the end of article a mention about the other "record dance marathon" either in Kensington, Pa., or in Chicago, or in Pittsburgh, depending on the edition. This part is located at the very end of article. Otherwise, the article only discussed the Madison Square Garden dance marathon. In other editions of the *Daily News*, the Madison Square Garden part of the article is larger with pictures of the Madison Square Garden marathon. The basic structure of the article is otherwise similar in the other editions as it is in the 'Final' edition.[584]

Another exception in the reports of the Harlem dance marathon was when Snowden and Purnell were mentioned positively in the 'Pink edition' and 'Final edition' of *Daily News* on June 23, where it is stated at the end of the Madison Square Garden article:

> Harlem's colored dance marathon yesterday writhed into its ninetieth hour and seventeen teams, loped madly about the floor of Manhattan Casino, 155th St. and Broadway. The colored marathoners spurt at night but barely move during the matinee hours. Mattie Purnell and George Snowden are the jesters of the colored marathon. They are both short and squat and spin and dip with funny, short-legged sweeps.

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582 '40 Still Dance; Find First 190 Hours Longest', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 19, 1928, p. 7 and '40 Still Dance, 62 Hours To Go To Beat Record', *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, June 19, 1928, p. 7.

583 James Cannon, 'Sleuth Makes Third In Jazz Race Team', *Daily News*, 'Final' Edition, June 20, 1928, p. 3

584 James Cannon, 'Law Threatens to Banish Jaded Marathon Dancers From Garden', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, June 21, 1928, p. 2'; James Cannon, Pecora Cites Statute To Stop Long Grind', *Daily News*, 'Brooklyn edition - Extra-edition', June 21, 1928, p. 3; James Cannon, 'Pecora Cites Statute To Stop Long Grind', *Daily News*, 'Brooklyn Edition - Final-edition', June 21, 1928, p. 3.

This time the Manhattan Casino dance marathon part in the article was longer than usual, and the Madison Square Garden part before that was even shorter than the Manhattan Casino part.[585] This short article was a continuation of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon article in the earlier page, where it discussed much longer the Madison Square Garden dance marathon.[586]

The 'Final' editions of the *Daily News,* which were published later on that date, had a new article where the Manhattan Casino dance marathon part was published in a new form. The Harlem dance marathon part started positively from almost the beginning of the article.[587] The last version of the article states:

> Meanwhile the colored, dance marathon at Manhattan casino, 8th Ave., and 155th St., started to grow whiskers, too – going into its 101st hour at 2 a. m. Three of the colored couples had dropped out in the last twenty four hours, leaving sixteen. Downtown none of the white dancers had quit.

The last two sentences of the quote raises the question of if the idea for publishing the Harlem part in the beginning of the article, was that the Harlem dance marathon dancers were intentionally presented negatively, compared to the Madison Square Garden marathon dancers. However, the article then continues positively:

> The Harlem dancers, spurred on by prize offers from enthusiastic spectators and the management kicked up their heels in an effort to provide an artistic mixture of waltz, fox-trot, Charleston, Black Bottom, double shuffle and cakewalk. The winners split $15 cash.

Although the last part refers to the positive message, the idea for presenting the Manhattan Casino dance marathoners negatively is supported by the later 'Extra' edition on the same date, where the same article was published with some modifications. This time only the first quoted part of the Manhattan Casino column was published, but otherwise in the same position in the article. The last two sentences are identical to the quoted part:

> Three of the colored couples had dropped out in the last twenty four hours, leaving sixteen. Downtown none of the white dancers had quit.[588]

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585 'Health Menace Or Not, Dancers Keep Shuffling', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition (and 'Final' edition), June 23, 1928, p. 4.

586 James Cannon, 'Health Peril? They Dance On!', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition (and 'Final' edition), June 23, 1928, pp. 3-4.

587 This sentence and the next paragraphs until the phrase ' The winners split $15 cash' are based on James Cannon, 'Law doesn't treat on 26 flaming feet', *Daily News*, 'Final' editions, June 23, 1928, p. 3.

588 James Cannon, 'Law Doesn't Tread On 26 Flaming Feet', *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, June 23, 1928, p. 3.

The message seems to be clear: the Madison Square Garden marathoners remained longer compared to the Harlem marathoners. After that, similar kind of reporting continued during the next two days. *Daily News* on June 24 in its 'Home' and 'Final' editions stated that certain Madison Square Garden dance marathoners were "champions all, greater with every gesture". After listing the champion couples, the paper commented briefly on the Harlem dance marathon by stating that they "are dancing hard and fast" in the Manhattan Casino. It looked to *Daily News* like "the rugged [Manhattan Casino] contestants will soon fall by the wayside."[589] The paper seemed to predict the end of the Harlem dance marathon. In the later 'Final' editions, the Harlem dance marathon comment was shortened to the number of participating/surviving couples and their dance hours.[590] *Daily News* reported again on June 25 that certain Madison Square Garden dance marathoners, who were "champions all", beat the earlier Pittsburgh dance marathon record. After listing the record breaking couples, the article stated that the Harlem dance marathon "dragged a bit as fourteen weary couples limped into their 141st hour". The statement was published in all the editions of *Daily News* on June 25.[591] It seems that *Daily News* intentionally downplayed the Manhattan Casino dance marathon in its June 23, 24 and 25 articles.

The textual reporting from the Rockland Palace dance marathon seemed to decrease at the end of June. Between June 26 and June 27[592], and between June 29 and July 1 there were no comments about the Harlem dance marathon in the *Daily News* articles. There were only the Harlem dance marathon pictures with the label texts in the June 26, June 29, and July 1 issues.[593] The textual reporting from the Madison Square Garden marathon in the articles of the *Daily News* continued during the days when the Rockland Palace dance marathon was not reported.[594]

However, the Harlem dance marathon still was reported occasionally in the *Daily News* articles. In the June 28 issue, there was a slightly longer comment at the end of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon article concerning the earlier mentioned "soon-to-be-married" couple, whose trip to the City Hall was reported in the article:

> Even romance can't stop the Colored Hoofing Hop uptown. Aurelie Hall-Back and Bernard Paul, two of the marathoners will travel to the Municipal building today for a marriage license. They will keep

589 '12 Teams Crack Dance Record In 304-Hour Grind', *Daily News*, 'Home' and 'Final' editions, June 24, 1928, p. 4.

590 '12 Teams Crack Dance Record In 315-Hour Grind', *Daily News*, "Final' editions, June 24, 1928, p. 4

591 'Dance Grinders Enter 335th Hour', *Daily News*, June 25, 1928, p. 7.

592 The author of this study has not found any mentions in the *Daily News* articles in those dates.

593 See the picture descriptions earlier in this chapter.

594 Concerning the reporting of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon during the days see: 'Aching Ankles Amble In 363D hour', *Daily News*, June 26, 1928, p. 4; 'Suffering Soles Talk War', *Daily News*, June 27, 1928, p. 9; 'Dance Derby Given Air (Bad?) In Drop to Elephant Cellar', *Daily News*, June 29, 1928, p. 2; 'City-Dance Derby Fight', *Daily News*, June 30, 1928, p. 2; 'Health Writ Calls Off Dance After 482 Hours', *Daily News*, July 1, 1928, p. 3.

> dancing on the truck all the way from Harlem to City hall and while filling in the application, and for the return trip.[595]

A reason for why Snowden and Purnell were not mentioned in the comment is unclear. As stated earlier, there was a picture in the *Daily News,* where they were on the truck with the married couple. In spite of that, the article gives an appropriate and positive picture.

The 'Pink edition' of the *Daily News* on July 2, predicted the end of the Manhattan Casino dance marathon in the article, which was longer than usual, and which was published after the longer Madison Square Garden dance marathon article:

> Two of Health Commissioner Louis I. Harris' men yesterday strolled into the colored marathon, where fourteen Harlem hoofers are grinding away into their fourteenth day. The men inspected the tents and gave the dancers coldly professional scrutiny, but departed without saying a word to any one. It won't be long now for Harlem, either, for Commissioner Harris, when he closed the Garden marathon Sunday, indicated that he would look into the Harlem gallop. "I can only swallow one fish at a time," he replied when asked then if he would close down the Harlem shuffle at once.[596]

Additionally, there was a short comment on the Madison Square Garden dance marathon in another article of the same *Daily News* edition where it was announced that the Madison Square Garden marathoners will attend the Harlem dance marathon.[597] This comment was also in the 'Final' edition and 'Extra' edition of the same day, but the above-quoted, longer article was cut off from the latter editions.[598] Because of cutting off the article, it stays unclear if the article was published for giving negative picture of the Rockland Palace dance marathon.

There was confusion concerning the end of the Harlem dance marathon. The *Daily News* reported varyingly on the dance marathon in its different issues and editions between July 3 and July 4: The paper both predicted the end of the dance marathon and reported positively its continuing. A reason for ending the dance marathon was mentioned in the 'Extra' edition article on July 3, which is located at the end of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon article. It was stated by the organizers that the dance marathon "may break up within 24 hours because of poor

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595 'Hoof Marathon Hinted In The Bag', *Daily News*, 'Final' version, June 28, 1928, p. 4.

596 'City Officers Call At Harlem Hop', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 3.

597 'Dizzy Dancers Glide On Into Rich Spotlight', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 4.

598 'Dizzy Dancers Glide On Into Rich Spotlight', *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 4. The same comment on the Madison Square Garden dance marathoners attending the Harlem dance marathon also was in the end of the other Madison Square Garden dance marathon article in another 'Final' edition and 'Extra' edition of the *Daily News* at the same day. See: 'Dancers Set To Hoof For Stage Dough', *Daily News,* 'Final' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 2 and 'It's All Over But Hoofers Can't Resist', *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, July 2, 1928, p. 2.

attendance". The article also mentioned how two teams from the Harlem dance marathon were disqualified.[599]

The 'Pink' edition of the *Daily News* on July 4 reported only briefly that the dance marathon was still going on without predicting the end of the marathon as they had before.[600] It was not until the 'Pink edition' of *Daily News* on Thursday, July 5, that it was announced, as part of the Madison Square Garden dance marathon promoter Milton D. Crandall article, at the very end of it, of how the Harlem dance marathon "was quietly closed at 11:30 p. m. Tuesday following visits of health department officials." The $1000 prize was announced to "be distributed among the four couples that were in at the finish."[601]

Although the *Daily News* seemed to have reported on both the Madison Square Garden dance marathon and the Rockland Palace dance marathon with an occasional slightly humoristic and light tone, the main line of the articles, was serious. The *Daily News* reported frequently on the total dance hours of the competitions and presented the highlights of those events. The *Daily News* seemed to present the Madison Square Garden dancers more prominently than the Rockland Palace dancers. The *Daily News* rarely mentioned the Rockland Palace marathoners' occupations and backgrounds, but reported occasionally on the Madison Square Garden marathoners' occupations and backgrounds.

The length of the articles concerning the Madison Square Garden dance marathon was striking compared to the Rockland Palace dance marathon articles, which were mostly additions at the end of the Madison Square Garden marathon articles. Similarly, the *Daily News* presented the white dance marathoners in 49 different pictures compared to 12 pictures of the Manhattan Casino dance marathoners. In addition to that, the Madison Square Garden dance marathoners appeared at least 11 times either on the front page or the back cover of *Daily News*. The Harlem dance marathoners were not at all on those pages. Thus, there is no doubt that the downtown dance marathon was clearly reported more profoundly than the Harlem dance marathon.

In spite of that, the *Daily News* articles did not report on the Rockland Palace dance marathon at the same length or as detailed, than about the Madison Square Garden marathon; the dance marathon pictures of the *Daily News* mostly showed the Rockland Palace dance marathoners in a positive light and even in interaction with white Madison Square Garden dance marathoners, which stressed the equality between the dancers. The reason for the terse reportage of the Harlem dance marathon could have been, in part, the poor audience attendance starting at least

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599 'Cash and Clash Thrill Bunioneers at Pay-off', *Daily News*, 'Extra' edition, July 3, 1928, p. 3; See the comment below the pictures in the page, *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, July 3, 1928, p. 13; see the comment labeled in the group picture in the lower right corner of the page, *Daily News*, 'Final' edition, July 3, 1928, p. 12.

600 'Derby Dancers Get $1,229 Each; Booster $52,480', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 4, 1928, p. 13.

601 'Who'll Pay Dance Derby Piper $1,800', *Daily News*, 'Pink' edition, July 5, 1928, p. 24.

from the end of June; there was not enough public interest in the Harlem dance marathon. The terse reporting before that, however, refers to the fact that there might have been a racial reason for that: an African-Americans dance marathon was not generally considered as interesting as a white dance marathon.

Another reason could have been the rivalry between the marathons to see which of them lasts longer. *The New York Amsterdam News* and *The New York Age* from the Harlem newspapers advertised the Rockland Palace dance marathon as the test which was going to settle the question of physical superiority between the races. There were at least two articles where *Daily News* seemed to answer the challenge by insisting how the couples in the Harlem dance marathon were quitting or otherwise were weaker than their rivals in the downtown dance marathon who, at the same time, still kept going. Similarly, the terse reportage of the Rockland Palace marathon could have resulted from the rivalry.

In addition to the *Daily News*, another mainstream newspaper, *The New York Times,* reported quite frequently on the events of the Harlem Marathon. It is reasonable to compare the reportage of the papers to find out possible differences and similarities. *The New York Times* reported on June 21 and June 26 in short columns about the Harlem dance marathon events. *The New York Times* also occasionally mentioned the names of the competitors in the Manhattan Casino dance marathon. Snowden and Purnell were mentioned on June 21 as the winners of all the prizes at the 62nd hour of the Manhattan Casino marathon.[602] In a similar fashion, *The New York Times* reported on June 26 about the couple, Edna Peynado and Don T. Bell of Baltimore, who had to withdraw from the Harlem dance marathon. It also was stated in the article that Bell "had recently won two $500 contests in his own city and danced seven partners to exhaustion."[603] That was clearly different compared to the *Daily News*, which rarely reported on the Harlem dance marathon dancers' backgrounds.

The New York Times also reported on the Harlem dance marathon wedding between June 27 and 30. The paper reported on the wedding with even a 40 line article on June 29, which is longer than any article concerning the marathon in the *Daily News*. The married couple's names, and sometimes fiancé's occupation, were mentioned in most of the articles, and the articles discussed the background of the wedding. In addition to that, the articles mentioned the withdrawn couples' names and things about their dance background. The articles also discussed the marriage procedure and the reasons for the marriage.[604] Basically, *The New York Times* reported on the marriage procedure textually more in-depth than the *Daily News*.

The New York Times wrote on July 1, "The negro dance marathon…entered the fourteenth day last night with eight of the original couples still dancing and

602 '14 Couples Survive Eleven Days' Dance', *The New York Times*, June 21, 1928, p. 27.

603 'Ten Harlem Couples Dance On.', *The New York Times*, June 26, 1928, p. 25.

604 'To Wed While Dancing.', *The New York Times*, June 27, 1928, p. 27; 'Dancers Spurred By Bets On Derby', *The New York Times*, June 28, 1928, p. 27; 'Dance To License Bureau.', *The New York Times*, June 29, 1928, p. 27; 'Negro Couple Wed in Dance Derby.', *The New York Times*, June 30, 1928, p. 12.

apparently in good physical condition." The paper also stated, "All dancers who have exceeded 200 hours of actual dancing on the floor shared a $300 purse contributed by the fans and the management".[605]

The New York Times reported on July 3, that in the Harlem dance marathon, four couples remained out of two dozen. The article also stated, "Couples who competed in the Madison Square Garden were present to encourage the dancers yesterday."[606] *The New York Times* published the article on July 4, where it was stated that the Manhattan Casino dance marathon was stopped at 3 o'clock "this morning" on the order from Health Commissioner Harris. The paper also announced, "There were four couples left of the twenty-four" and "the prize of $1000 would be distributed among the four couples at the Savoy Ballroom"[607] *The New York Times* later told in its July 7 article, that eight finalists "received equal portions of the $1000 prize…The prize money was given to the four surviving couples before 1,500 people in the Savoy Ballroom."[608] Concluding from *The New York Times'* versatile reportage, there seemed to have been more interest in the Harlem dance marathon than the terse *Daily News* reportage indicated. This refers to the fact that the *Daily News* dismissed the Rockland Palace dance marathon possibly for the other earlier discussed reasons, like the rivalry between the marathons to see which of them survives longer.

The New York Times reportage of the Harlem dance marathon was textually clearly more profound than the *Daily News* reportage, although there were no pictures included in the reports. It is likely that the Harlem dance marathon woke interest in the African-American dancing. At the very least, it brought publicity to the African-American jazz dancing and also to Harlem jazz dancing, as many of the participants represented Harlem.

George Snowden and Mattie Purnell became the most popular dancers in the Rockland Palace dance marathon. Concluding from the reportage of the all papers, Snowden and Purnell were mentioned frequently as winners of sub-competitions in the Harlem dance marathon. Thus, they were favorites of the audience which mostly consisted of whites. The fact that local Harlem newspapers did not mention them as the favorites in the beginning of the dance marathon, suggests that they did not have a local reputation. For their success in the marathon, they were occasionally mentioned in the mainstream papers like *The New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune,* and the *Daily News*, but the readers of the papers probably were not able to perceive their personalities from the reportage, unlike the audience in the dance marathon. There is proof of Snowden and Purnell's increasing reputation among the audience as they were overwhelmingly voted as the most popular couple in the Harlem dance marathon somewhere between June 23 and 26. Also, *The New York Amsterdam News,* on its issue of July 4, mentioned them as the popular team at the

[605] 'Harlem Dancers Get Cash', *The New York Times*, July 1, 1928, p. 8.
[606] 'Harlem Dancers Dwindle.', *The New York Times*, July 3, 1928, p. 11.
[607] 'Negro Dance Derby Ends.', *The New York Times*, July 4, 1928, p. 9.
[608] 'Harlem Dance Derby Prize Divided.', *The New York Times*, July 7, 1928, p. 11.

end of the Harlem dance marathon.[609] Harlemites perceived them mainly from the newspapers and from the aftermath of the dance marathon.

The success in the marathon seemed to lead to new opportunities. According to *The New York Amsterdam News,* one of the winning couples in the Rockland Palace dance marathon, Cora and Percy Winters, claimed that they had a contract with Keith's Circuit for Vaudeville after the dance marathon. At the same time, Mattie Purnell and George Snowden were scheduled to perform in "some local amusement house".[610]

It is unclear if Cora and Percy Winters worked in Keith's Circuit after the dance marathon.[611] Obviously Snowden and Purnell performed for the first time since the dance marathon, in the *Scuffle Along* show at the Lafayette Theatre, where they were forced to respond to many encores for "Walk That Broad" and for their "Lindbergh Hop", and they were reported to be stopped only when completely exhausted.[612] According to *The New York Amsterdam News*, Snowden seemed to perform next with his new partner, Pauline Morse, in *The Lindy Hop Revue* of Harlem's Lincoln Theatre starting sometime after the middle of September in 1928.[613] Snowden and Morse, who probably danced the Lindy Hop at the time, also performed at Rockland Palace with Bill Robinson and three other couples on November 16.[614] Snowden claimed that the publicity of the dance marathon got him a week at the Lincoln Theatre, and he had a week at the Lafayette Theatre after the dance marathon.[615] The week in the Lincoln Theatre was possibly *The Lindy Hop Revue* show and other week was the earlier mentioned *Scuffle Along* show in the Lafayette Theatre. It is unclear how long the shows lasted. Otherwise *The New York Amsterdam News* did not report on those week-long gigs that Snowden possibly participated in.[616]

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609 'Health Department Ruling Forces Change in Marathon at Manhattan', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 4, 1928, p. 7.

610 'Remaining Couples in Dance Race Get Money', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 11, 1928, p. 10.

611 The author of this research has not found anything concerning the claimed deal with Keith's Circuit.

612 ' "Scuffle Along" Scoring Big Hit', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 8, 1928, p. 6.

613 'Dance Revue Contest at Lincoln', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 12, 1928, p. 6.

614 'Fourth Annual Concert and Dance by Monarch Band', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 7, 1928, p. 7. One of couples is Altha Leagus and Bertha Vanderbilt. Altha Leagus is likely Alfred Leagins, who knew Snowden at the time. Leagins was the Savoy Lindy Hopper. See: Terry Monaghan, 'Obituary – Alfred Leagins', *The Dancing Times*, January 2000, p. 349.

615 George Snowden interview, December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

616 As the author of the study has examined *The New York Amsterdam News* between 1928 and 1943 based on the database search in New York Public Library with search words 'George Snowden', 'Shorty Snowden', 'Shorty George' and 'Shorty', 'Pauline Morse' and 'George and Pauline', 'Snowden and Hinton', 'Shorty and Hinton', 'Shorty and Esaline', 'George and Esaline', 'Esaline', there is no sign of the mentioned week long gigs.

Snowden and his new partner, at least from 1930, Esaline Hinton's dance group The Lindy Hop Four, performed in Harlem's Alhambra Theatre in December 1930.[617]

The Lindy Hop competitions in Harlem likely began on September 17, 1928, when the Lincoln Theatre started to organize those competitions every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for a month. The winners got cash prizes and a weeklong engagement at Lincoln Theatre. Also, the Rockland Palace held at least one Lindy Hop competition on November 16, 1928. There was also one Lindbergh Hop event at the Rockland Palace, on October 19, 1928.[618]

The Lindy Hop kept spreading at almost the same pace as Snowden performed and competed. Snowden won the Lindbergh Hop competition at the Savoy in 1930,[619] and the Lindy Hop national competition at the Roseland Ballroom in midtown, New York in 1930. He also participated in the National Lindy Hop contest at the Savoy Ballroom in 1931, but did not win the contest.[620] Snowden claimed that the national Lindy Hop contests contained competitors from around the United States[621], which implies that the Lindy Hop spread very fast after Snowden and his partner Mattie Purnell devised it in 1928. Also, Terry Monaghan claims that according to one of the national Lindy Hop contest participants, there were "people from every state in the union".[622] According to *The Billboard*, the Roseland Ballroom also organized "the black and white lindy hop contest" in March 1933, where twenty African-American and twenty white couples participated. The results are unknown.[623] It seems that only the results from the 1931 National Lindy Hop contest at the Savoy exists, where two Newark couples beat "George, the original

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[617] The Lindy Hop Four consisted of Tiny Ganway, Baby Ray, Sorty and Hinton. See: 'News Of The Theatrical World – Frank Wilson Scores At Alhambra Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 3, 1930, p. 18. Sorty is likely George 'Shorty' Snowden. Hinton is likely his partner Esaline Hinton. Snowden participated with Hinton in the Lindbergh Hop competition in 1930. See: 'Dance Exhibition at Corona', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 7, 1930, p. 18. See also: 'Alhambra – 126th Street and Seventh Avenue – Wilton Crawley' advertisement, *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 10, 1930, p. 8.

[618] 'Fourth Annual Concert and Dance by Monarch Band', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 7, 1928, p. 7; 'Novelty Dance & Lindbergh Hop of the Douglas Invincible Club At Rockland Palace', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 17, 1928, p. 8.

[619] 'Dance Exhibition at Corona', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 7, 1930, p. 18.

[620] Terry Monaghan, 'George Snowden', *The Dancing Times*, July 2004, p. 51. Terry Monaghan claims that Snowden won in 1931. Monaghan's claim about Snowden's win in 1931 is challenged with the article from *The Afro-American*, where it is stated that two couples from Newark took first and second prize. See: George Tyler, 'Harlem Rambles', *The Afro-American*, March 7, 1931, p. 8.

[621] George Snowden interview, December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

[622] Terry Monaghan claimed in the Internet discussion thread, that he interviewed the female half of the couple which participated in the National Lindy Hop competition in 1932. See Monaghan's comment on April 2, 2008: http://www.yehoodi.com/comment/82776/clips-which-embody-blues-dancing/6/#comment_179 . The site was accessed on April 30, 2015.

[623] Bill Sachs, 'Ballrooms', *The Billboard*, March 25, 1933, p. 15.

"hopper" ", who could have been George Snowden or George Ganaway.[624] These Newark couples beat the Harlem couples, and placed first and second in the contest.

The Lindy Hop was already a part of Broadway by 1930, when Snowden and his group performed in the *Blackbirds*. They had already performed earlier in the Broadway show, *Harlem*.[625] In 1931, they performed in the Broadway production, *Singing the Blues*. Snowden's group likely disbanded and his new group continued with tap dancer Bill Robinson's touring production called *Stormy Weather*, which went on the road, possibly in 1933, and mostly to the Mid-West United States for two years. Paul Whiteman also recruited Snowden and his dancers. Snowden worked with Whiteman "on and off" for nine years all over the United States, and the Lindy Hop likely drew a lot attention, because, according to Snowden, "everybody wanted to know what it was".[626]

Snowden's reputation kept him in the public eye later in the 1930s. Snowden and his Lindy Hoppers were working at the Paradise club on Broadway and the Cotton Club in Harlem, in the middle of the 1930s, performing successfully, at least in the Cotton Club.[627] *The New York Amsterdam News* published a picture collage of the Savoy Ballroom dancers in September 1936, where Snowden was mentioned as "the king of them all".[628] George Snowden also was mentioned as the originator of the Lindy Hop in the *New York Post* article in May 1936.[629] Snowden and his partner Beatrice 'Big Bea' Gay, performed in the short movie *Ask Uncle Sol* in 1937, from which distribution was based on the Hollywood movie company, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. Their movie performance was basically a few minutes long Lindy Hop scene.[630] In the end of the 1930s, George Snowden had to give up professional dancing because of foot problems.[631] As already mentioned, George Snowden still was referred to in *LIFE* Magazine as the one who named the Lindy Hop, when the magazine had the article about the Lindy Hop in August 1943.[632]

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624 George Tyler, 'Harlem Rambles', *The Afro-American*, March 7, 1931, p. 8. Another possibility is George Ganaway who stated at the time to have been the originator of the Lindy Hop.

625 'Ethel Will have Her 'Othello' ', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 6, 1930, p. A6.

626 Terry Monaghan claims that Snowden's old group disbanded after *Singin' The Blues* and Snowden had a new group after that. See: Terry Monaghan, 'George Snowden', *The Dancing Times*, July 2004, p. 49. Otherwise see: George Snowden interview, December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

627 Monaghan 2004, p. 51. Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 93-94.

628 'They're Stomping at the Savoy---"Home of Happy Feet" ', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 26, 1936, p. 8.

629 Archer Winsten, 'Wake of the News', *New York Post*, May 7, 1936, p. 21.

630 Terry Monaghan claims that the movie is from 1935. See: Monaghan 2004, p. 51. According to the International Movie Database the movie is from 1937. *Ask Uncle Sol*, Educational Films Corporation of America, distributor: Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1937. See: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0292434/companycredits?ref_=ttrel_sa_4 . The site was accessed on November 15, 2015.

631 Stearns 1994, p. 334.

632 'The Lindy Hop – A True National Folk Dance Has Been Born In U.S.A.', *LIFE*, August 23, 1943, p. 95.

When considering George Snowden and his substance, he laid down the foundation for the success of the Lindy Hop, and spread it through the whole United States in the 1930s. Snowden paved the way for the next generation of Savoy Lindy Hoppers and for their success in show business, because Snowden and his dancers were the first Lindy Hoppers in the Broadway shows, and they were the first of the Lindy Hoppers who toured around the United States. They also performed with the famous Paul Whiteman Orchestra and Bill Robinson to whites outside of Harlem. They likely had a remarkable part in integrating the Lindy Hop as part of U.S. society. That is supported by the fact that George Snowden's name was connected to the dance step which he innovated, 'Shorty George'. Like the Lindy Hop, the step was also danced around the United States. Thus Snowden became one of those rare Lindy Hoppers who had a dance step named after him.[633]

4.3 Savoy Lindy Hoppers' Second Generation Between 1934 and 1943

The new generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers were particularly active between 1934 and 1943. This Second Generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers was generally known as Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, according to its manager, Herbert 'Whitey' White. During its function, the company was divided under different sub-groups with names like Whyte's Hopping Maniacs, Whitey's Congaroo Dancers, Whitey's Jitterbugs, Whitey's Dancers, Whitey's Hoppers, and Whitey's Steppers, just to name a few. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers was the company which worked at the Savoy Ballroom, participating in the Lindy Hop competitions, performances, and masqueraded as 'social dancers' in the front of the ballroom audience.

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers had diversified operations. One of the most important of the operations was their participation in the Harvest Moon Ball contest in New York. The Harvest Moon Ball contest was a New York area contest, which was organized in Madison Square Garden, and it was sponsored by the *Daily News* between 1935 and 1974. The contest had various dances such as the foxtrot, waltz,

633 Monaghan 2004, p. 51. There might be another example about naming the dance step after the Lindy Hopper. Savoy Lindy Hopper Sugar Sullivan mentioned a step called the 'Snooky step' in her interview, which she called by that name because the step was used by the Lindy Hopper named Snooky. See: *Sugar Sullivan* interview, interviewed by Sally Sommer, March 2001 in Durham, New York Public Library. As the author of this dissertation has discussed with different Lindy Hop dancers from the 1960s period, the Snooky step still was known as the name of the certain air step combination. However, the name never became popular among the white newcomers from the 1980s and later decades, to whom the combination is mostly unknown, at least, by the name. This is easily proved by googling with the search words "snooky step". The search gave 7 hits, which all concerned something other than the Snooky step. For comparison, the search words "shorty george" and "step" gave 35,100 hits. The search was done on January 17, 2015.

rhumba, tango, and the Lindy Hop, which gathered dancers from the greater New York area. It was sold out every year, at least between 1935 and 1943. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers dominated the Lindy Hop performances in the New York area. The company also became famous around the United States and the world as its nearly one hundred members continued to spread the Lindy Hop in the form of different sub-groups.[634]

4.3.1 The Beginning

Herbert 'Whitey' White, who was born sometime at the end of the nineteenth century in East Harlem, was the manager of the group. He started as a dancing waiter at Baron Wilkins' Exclusive Club at West 134th Street and 7th Avenue in Harlem, somewhere in the end of the 1910s. Next, he taught dancing waiters at Small's Sugar Cane Club at West 135th Street and 5th Avenue before 1925. There also have been claims about him as a 369th Regiment Sergeant in World War I, as a prizefighter, and as an Alhambra Ballroom bouncer. Herbert White himself only confirmed that he participated in World War I. At the latest, in 1927, he worked at the Savoy Ballroom as a bouncer, then becoming a floor manager there.[635] White's activities also concentrated on the Jolly Fellows social club, which was connected to different functions in Harlem, from the Lindy Hop and social leisure activities, to petty gangsterism. Herbert White was the founder of the Jolly Fellows and the leader of the club from the beginning, likely from 1923.[636]

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634 See for activities of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and the Harvest Moon Ball for example: Monaghan 2005, pp. 40-42, 67-68 and 72. See about different names of Herbert White's groups for example: Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 125, 135, 162 and 182.

635 Archer Winsten, 'Wake of the News', *New York Post*, May 7, 1936, p. 21. About the prizefighter status see: Stearns 1994, p. 317. Leon James, who Stearns actually quotes, although Al Minns is mentioned as the quoted person, also claims that White was bouncer at Alhambra Ballroom and sergeant in 369th Regiment in World War I. However, there does not exist any other evidence for those claims. The 'Wake of the News' article was likely made according to White's own account to the reporter. He did not mention anything like that. When it comes to the prizefighter claim, White's dancers, Frankie Manning and Willie Jones, also mentioned that White was a prizefighter in the past. Possibly White himself said that to his dancers. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 75 and Robert Crease, 'Willie Jones', Footnotes: Spring 1990. Vol 5, No 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Also Robert P. Crease claims, based on Manning and Miller's interview in 1987, that White was an ex-prize fighter and born in the East Harlem in the end of the 19th Century. See: Robert P. Crease, 'Last Of The Lindy Hoppers', *The Village Voice*, August 25, 1987, p. 28. When it comes to White's bouncer status at the Savoy and his army career see: Lilian Johnson, 'From Bouncer to Jitterbug Trainer', *The Afro-American*, August 12, 1939, p. 11.

636 About White as the leader of the Jolly Fellows, see: Stearns 1994, p. 317; Manning and Millman 2007, p. 77; Monaghan 2004, p. 51; George Snowden interview December 17, 1959 and Leon James & Al Minns interview, December 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University; Robert Crease, 'Willie Jones', Footnotes: Spring 1990. Vol 5, no 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. See from the Minns & James interview Leon James' comments about White. In addition to that, George Snowden claimed in his interview that the Jolly Fellows was founded in 1923, and Leon

At the latest, around 1933-1934, White started to recruit dancers for his group at the Savoy Ballroom. His recruiting methods seem to have varied from ”rough persuasion” to “sweet talk” depending on the recruit. Dancers, who were beaten by White or his associates for their denying to join the group, were Alfred ‘Al’ Leagins and Robert ‘Rabbit’ Taylor. Norma Miller, who joined to the group after Leagins, remembers that White came with two ominous looking men to her door and said that he had “rather you worked with us than against us. I think you’d prefer that, too.” After that, Miller agreed.[637] Also, William Downes remembers the same kind of recruitment as Miller. Downes refused first, but he agreed after White told him that he could not enter the Savoy anymore if he did not join the group.

Frankie Manning, who joined after Miller and Downes, claims that he also first refused to join, because his friends were not invited to the group when White first asked Manning to join the group. White just turned away and became back after some weeks, inviting Manning and his friends to join to the group.[638] Willie Jones and Leon James, who were in the group before Manning, Miller, and Downes, became members of the Jolly Fellows, and thus part of White’s group.[639] Jolly Fellows, as an organization, was claimed to have broken up later, mainly because of White’s methods in the leading of the club.[640]

It was usually claimed that Herbert White was only a mediocre dancer, but he was recognized as a choreographer or an artistic director, and a coach who had ideas and the ability to train his dancers.[641] As Norma Miller puts it regarding the Savoy Ballroom tourist crowds, who thought that they saw “a spontaneous exhibition by a regular group of dancers”:

James claimed in the Minns & James interview that Herbert White was the 369th Regiment Sergeant and the Alhambra Ballroom bouncer.

637 Terry Monaghan, ’Obituary - Alfred Leagins’, *The Dancing Times*, January 2000, p. 349 and Crease 1987, pp. 28-29.

638 Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 62-64. Manning and Millman 2007, p. 76.

639 Willie Jones remembers having befriended Herbert White and becoming a member of the Jolly Fellows. He also remembers that White started to gather dancers to the group around 1934. See: Robert Crease, ‘Willie Jones’, Footnotes: Spring 1990. Vol 5, no 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Leon James recalls that he went through a “rough initiation”, when he joined the Jolly Fellows, but that obviously did not happen anymore, when he became a White’s dance group member. See: Leon James & Al Minns interview, December 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, The Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

640 ’Lindy Hop Racket Probe Looms’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 21, 1938, p. 5.

641 Leon James and Frankie Manning state the same that Herbert White was a good choreographer or an artistic director (as Manning puts it) and a mediocre dancer. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 129; Leon James & Al Minns interview, December 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, The Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University. Also Norma Miller agrees with the choreographer claim, but does not take a stance on the ‘mediocre dancer’ claim. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 63. Pepsi Bethel, who learned from White in the 1940s, remembered that White was the champ of the Lindy Hop. See: Carolyn Keleman, ‘Pepsi tries to keep tap dancing ‘authentic’ ’, *The Sun*, April 18, 1982, p. N5.

> [W]hat they were watching was rehearsed and choreographed dance. Whitey was the original stage mother. He left nothing to chance. Every detail was worked out in advance, and when the visitors came, he was ready for them. With nod of his head, or a gesture, Whitey would send a dancer out on the floor. They moved to his beat, and with the best bands in the country to practice with, getting results was never a problem.[642]

White's dancers were in demand at the Savoy Ballroom and especially in the Corner. There were about 9-10 couples already, who were referred to as the Savoy Lindy Hoppers or "those Savoy dancers", when Frankie Manning joined White's group in 1934. The Saturday night contest at the Savoy was a feature where White's dancers participated regularly and successfully. Occasionally, dancers from different New York boroughs (non-White's group dancers) also participated in Saturday competitions. They could win the competitions if they had enough friends in the Savoy crowd or if the Savoy crowd otherwise thought that they were good enough to be the winners. The competitions were judged by applauding: the couple which got the most applause won.[643]

Even a white couple could win in the Savoy Saturday contests, as Harry Rosenberg (later known as Harry Rowe) and Ruthie Rheingold's example indicates; Rowe claimed that they won on several occasions in the middle of the 1930s. He and Rheingold were part of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers.[644] The Savoy Lindy Hoppers also participated in competitions outside the Savoy at that time. The Apollo Theatre, which had the Lindy Hop competitions, seemed to be the White's group favorite in 1934.[645] It also seems that with the help of wins, White could get gigs outside the Savoy for his dancers from the beginning, as Frankie Manning and his partner earned a week-long gig in West Virginia for their Apollo Theatre contest win. After that, White sent more of his dancers to various events to perform as the demand for Lindy Hoppers was increasing.[646]

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642 Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 63.

643 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 75-76 and 82-86. When it comes to the Savoy Ballroom Lindy Hop contests and outsiders who were there, for example, George Snowden told in his interview about an outsider, Little Shirley from New Jersey, who beat him in the Savoy competition, obviously, because Shirley was a new talent at the Savoy and everybody knew Snowden. See: George 'Shorty' Snowden interview, December 17, 1959, Marshall Stearns papers, The Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

644 Robert P. Crease, 'Harry Rowe', Footnotes: July-September, 1989. Vol.4, No. 2, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

645 Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 44-47

646 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 85-86. Manning thinks that he and his partner were White's first couple that White was hiring out. Manning's claim gets support from Norma Miller, who states that Herbert White wanted to put the first Lindy Hop team on the stage at the Apollo, but failed, because Miller and her partner won the Apollo Theatre competition, of which the first prize was a week-long work at the Apollo Theatre. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 45-47.

4.3.2 From the First Big Break in 1935 to the End of White's Dancers

The real big break for White's dancers was the Harvest Moon Ball contest in August 1935. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers won the first and third prize in 'Lindy Hop' division. The first prize went to Savoy Lindy Hoppers couple, Leon James and Edith Mathews.[647] With the help of the first prize, the Savoy Lindy Hoppers likely secured being the authority on the Lindy Hop, at least in the New York area. Frankie Manning and Norma Miller, who both participated in the Harvest Moon Ball contests, have stressed that the success in the Harvest Moon Ball was a base for getting more gigs in the entertainment world. Manning states that after the first Harvest Moon Ball "things started to get busier for the Savoy dancers."[648]

White's group also kept its competition edge and fame as a winning team, when the Harvest Moon Ball contest was again organized in August 1936. This time White's group took two of top three spots in the Lindy Hop division. A white Roseland Ballroom couple came third. After that, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers took all three prizes annually in the Lindy Hop division (which was changed to a 'Jitterbug Jive' division in 1942) until 1942.[649] The continuous success in the Harvest Moon Ball seemed to result in gigs inside and outside of New York, and even in other countries.

With the help of the 1935 Harvest Moon Ball success, Herbert White was able to step up the pace in marketing his dancers. The Lindy Hop Champions, Leon James and Edith Mathews, and Norma Miller with her partner Bill Hill, billed as "winners and runners-up in the Madison Square Garden Lindy Hop contest" were recruited to the tour in Europe, including England, France, and Switzerland between October 1935 and June 1936.[650] White critic Leonard G. Feather claimed in *The New York Amsterdam News* that "Leon James, Edith Matthews, Bailey Hill and Norma Miller" were "well received by the lay press".[651] Even so, the New York mainstream and other U.S. press, outside of Harlem, did not seem to have any interest in the European tour, as the press did not publish any articles about it.[652]

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[647] The results and winners can be found from the chapter 'Harvest Moon Ball and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers Between 1935 and 1943'.

[648] Manning and Millman 2007, p. 92. Norma Miller states generally, that "The victory at the Harvest Moon Ball put Whitey [Herbert White] on top as far as Lindy Hop dancing was concerned". See: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 83.

[649] See the chapter 'Harvest Moon Ball and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers Between 1935 and 1943'.

[650] Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 86, 89 and 97; Leonard G. Feather, 'The London Lowdown', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 2, 1935, p. 13.

[651] Leonard G. Feather, 'The London Lowdown', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 2, 1935, p. 13.

[652] I have not found any mentions from *The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Variety, The Billboard, The Boston Daily Globe, The Christian Science Monitor, New York Herald Tribune* or *The Chicago Daily Tribune* concerning the mentioned tour.

The group kept touring abroad. Whyte's Hopping Maniacs, as White's dancers were named for the Cotton Club show, traveled to Europe during the summer of 1937. The tour included Paris, London, Manchester, and Dublin. The show also included, for example, the Berry Brothers (the eccentric dance trio), and Teddy Hill and his Cotton Club Orchestra.[653] *The Manchester Guardian* stated, "Whyte's Hopping Maniacs abandon themselves whole-heartedly to the primitive ebullience of the Lindy Hop".[654] *The Stage* reported that they "show agility" in a hilarious dance number.[655] They were noted positively for their performance, although the papers discussed them only briefly, and without in-depth analyses possibly, because the Lindy Hop was not considered a serious dance. The references to the humorous nature of the performance speaks for that as well. The tour overall was successful. One of the Lindy Hoppers, Naomi Waller, possibly made even the cover of the Paris version of Match magazine.[656]

The next international tour happened when Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were hired for a big production, called *Hollywood Hotel Revue*, containing about 60 entertainers, in August 1938. According to Manning, the Lindy Hoppers were the only African-American performers in the show. The show traveled to New Zealand and Australia, and returned back to New York, likely in July 1939.[657] The audiences of the revue received them with ovation.[658]

The last international tour of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers followed the participation in the movie *Hellzapoppin'* in 1941. White's movie group, minus one couple, went on the six to twelve week tour in Brazil, which lasted ten months, ending in October-November 1942. That lasted longer than was planned, because they did not have money for flight tickets earlier, and they could not use ships due to the U.S. participation in World War II; those ships were sunk by torpedoes.[659] *The Billboard*

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653 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 134-135 and 137.

654 'Variety At The Palace', *The Manchester Guardian*, September 7, 1937, p. 13.

655 'Manchester', *The Stage*, September 9, 1937, p. 12.

656 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 137; Terry Monaghan, 'Naomi Waller', undated. The author of the dissertation has a copy of this article. Monaghan claims in the article that Waller made the cover of the "Paris-Match" magazine. The issue of the magazine is unknown. The author of the dissertation has not found the issue. The Match magazine was possibly published from 1926. See: http://www.chevallet.eu/revues2.htm . The site was accessed on November 23, 2015.

657 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 153-154 and 159. See also: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 134-135. Concerning the return date, according to Eunice Callen, who was part of the revue, they returned in July 1939. See: Robert P. Crease, 'Eunice Callen', Footnotes: November – December, 1989. Vol. 4, No. 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Also Pal Andrews, who danced in the Savoy Pavilion at the World's Fair, remembers seeing the Australian group in the audience of the Savoy Pavilion in July 1939, when the group was just arrived. See: Robert P. Crease, 'Pal Andrews', Footnotes: Spring 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

658 See: Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 155-156 and 268. Manning and Millman's claim about the Lindy Hoppers' success is based on newspaper clippings from different articles. This is analyzed later in more detail in this chapter, when also the success in other events is discussed.

659 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 176 and 182-187. Manning claims that they spent ten months in Brazil. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 186. Also, according to Norma

reported on their Brazil tour in three different articles during winter and spring 1942, saying that audiences liked them.[660]

The first Harvest Moon Ball in 1935 also resulted in domestic gigs. Frankie Manning claims that he and his partner had a gig in New Jersey for four weeks after the first Harvest Moon Ball in 1935.[661] Manning has stressed how the Cotton Club-connected shows had an effect on the success of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. According to him, in the beginning of 1936, White's dancers were recruited to the Alhambra Theatre for the Cotton Club show, which lasted for only one performance. Manning heard from the Cotton Club choreographer Clarence Robinson, that even if Whitey's dancers succeeded, their act was cancelled because other acts were jealous of their success. After a 1-2 month break, they came back for a new show at the Alhambra Theatre. Manning claims that the Alhambra Theatre shows were a breakthrough, because they started to get an "awful lot of work" after that. He also claims that the Roxy Theatre gig followed for two to three weeks in March 1936 and the Apollo Theatre gig followed in June.[662]

Herbert White and his dancers got a new chance regarding the Cotton Club shows, starting from the end of September 1936. *Variety* advertised their performances under the name 'Whyte's Maniacs' in the new Cotton Club at Times Square for five months between the end of September 1936 and the beginning of March 1937. The show included, at least, the Cab Calloway orchestra, The Berry Brothers, Dynamite Hooker, and also Bill Robinson. Robinson likely performed in the show only between the end of September 1936 and the end of January 1937.[663]

Miller, they were ten months away and arrived in Miami, Florida in November 1942. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 181-182. Ten months in Brazil would mean that they came back at the beginning of October 1942 if counted from the day when Japan attacked to Pearl Harbor. Norma Miller remembers that they were in Rio de Janeiro at the time, when the attack was in the Brazil newspapers. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 175. The Pearl Harbor attack happened December 7, 1941. The attack was reported, for example, in *The New York Times* next day on December 8. See: 'Tokyo Bombers Strike Hard At Our Main Bases on Oahu', *The New York Times*, December 8, 1941, p. 1. Miller remembered earlier in 1987, that they arrived at Miami six months later counted from the beginning of December 1941. That means May-June 1942. See: Crease 1987, p. 32. However, it is likely that they arrived in Miami between October and November like Miller and Manning remembered later. According to *The Billboard* magazine, they still were in Brazil in the beginning of September, 1942. See: 'Several U. S. Acts Still in Rio Night Clubs', *The Billboard*, September 19, 1942, p. 5. The article was dated on September 5, 1942 and published on September 19. It also mentioned their booking into Casino Soa Vicente, which means that they likely stayed in Brazil longer than until the beginning of September.

660 'Night Club Reviews', *The Billboard*, January 3, 1942, p. 57; Casino Urca, Rio de Janeiro', *The Billboard*, January 24, 1942, p. 23; 'Casino Urca, Rio de Janeiro', *The Billboard*, April 11, 1942, p. 13.

661 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 92.

662 Ibid., pp. 111-116 and 123.

663 The Cotton Club show was discussed in *Variety* between September 30, 1936 and March 3, 1937. See: 'Night Club Reviews – Cotton Club, N. Y.', *Variety*, September 30, p. 51 and 'Cabaret Bills – New York City – Cotton Club', *Variety*, March 3, 1937, p. 51. The show seemed to continue all the months between the dates. See for example: 'Cabaret Bills – New York City – Cotton Club', *Variety*, January 27, 1937, p. 51 and 'Cabaret Bills – New York City – Cotton Club', *Variety,* November 25, 1936, p. 53. Concerning the show, Bill Robinson was

Paul Denis from *The Billboard* commented on Whyte's Maniacs briefly as "hot stuff" in his review of November 1936. For comparison, he reviewed The Berry Brothers as "outstanding sock" and their "tap and acrobatic dancing" as "spectacular". Bill Robinson, who tapped, according to the reviewer, with "his entire body and personality", was "swell".[664] Thus, the Lindy Hoppers received a shorter review than the others, although they otherwise were acknowledged. The *New York Herald Tribune* mentioned them equally with other acts at the end of September, 1936, as ones who "demonstrate superbly that there is no dancing like Negro dancing."[665]

White also had two other groups: a second group performing at the Harlem Uproar House in midtown Manhattan, and third group which toured at the same time with the famous African-American singer and actor, Ethel Waters, around the United States. The second group, which consisted of four Lindy hopping couples, seemed to be a success with its 400-pound leader, Tiny Bunch, in the Harlem Uproar House. George Colson from *The Billboard* called them "dynamic Lindy Hoppers" and described how Tiny Bunch was "menacingly heave-ho-ing his fragile partner" in April 1937.[666] *Variety* described the act in a considerably longer review in January 1937 than *The Billboard* did later. According to *Variety*, the teams were from the Savoy Ballroom and they were considered:

> […] the hottest and funniest seen in many a day. Lindy hop, truckin' and shag routines are sissy stuff to this aggregation. It's one of the show hits. Crowning point is the last minute bow of a 400-pound lindy hopper with a pint sized dame. Latter is one that lifts audiences out of seats. Tiny Bunch is his name and he's a bunch of smash as are his consorts in this number.[667]

Thus, Tiny Bunch became one of the Lindy Hoppers who was recognized as an individual from the group of Lindy Hoppers. *Variety* listed "Tiny Bunch" as part of the show for over half a year, between the middle of January and the end of June, 1937.[668] This proves Tiny Bunch's recognition as a remarkable performer of the show.

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mentioned for the first time at the end of September. See: 'Dining and Dancing - Cotton Club Moves Downtown', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 26, 1936, p. 8. He was mentioned for the last time in the *Variety* advertisement in the end of January, 1937. See: 'Cabaret Bills – New York City – Cotton Club', *Variety*, January 20, 1937, p. 53.

664 'Night Club Reviews – Cotton Club, New York', *The Billboard*, November 7, 1936, p. 12.

665 'Dining and Dancing - Cotton Club Moves Downtown', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 26, 1936, p. 8.

666 George Colson, 'Night Club Reviews – Harlem Uproar House, N. Y.', *The Billboard*, April 10, pp. 14-15.

667 'Nite Club Reviews – Harlem Uproar House (New York)', *Variety*, January 6, 1937, p. 196.

668 'Cabaret Bills – New York City – Harlem Uproar', *Variety*, January 13, 1937, p. 53 and 'Cabaret Bills – New York City – Cotton Club', *Variety,* June 23, 1937, p. 60. The show also was advertised between these dates. See for example: 'Cabaret Bills – New York City –

Before the longer Cotton Club gig in fall 1936, White's dancers performed at the Paradise Club in Atlantic City for two to three months, somewhere between July and August 1936.[669] Frankie Manning remembers that they started to work at that time with the famous African-American singer and actor, Ethel Waters, at the Lincoln Theatre in Philadelphia. That is why the group did both shows at the same time, in Atlantic City and in Philadelphia, for a week.[670]

The Ethel Waters cooperation continued on later with another tour in 1936-1937. The third group toured and performed with Waters in various places starting from the Apollo Theatre in September 1936, and continuing around the United States, to Washington D.C., Baltimore, Cleveland, Columbus, Chicago, and Los Angeles. The *Los Angeles Times* reported in January 1937, how "audience wouldn't let [the Lindy Hoppers] quit", when they performed in the Paramount Theater. [671] In Los Angeles, one of the producers of the *A Day At The Races* movie paid attention to the third group, and the movie became the first Hollywood movie White's dancers participated in 1937.[672] That started Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' movie career, which continued into the 1940s.

According to Frankie Manning, Cotton Club shows were followed with a three-week tour with the Cab Calloway Orchestra. The tour included Boston, Baltimore, and Washington. Later, in spring 1937, there followed gigs with the Count Basie Orchestra, Bill Robinson in Washington D.C., and after that there was a gig with Cab Calloway again in Atlantic City. White's group probably also did a few gigs in New York.[673]

Manning claims that "things really started to take off" overall for White's dancers after they came back from the summer tour in Europe in 1937. He recalls how swing bands like Count Basie, Cab Calloway, and Jimmie Lunceford loved to work with the Lindy Hoppers. Manning states that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers often did a month-long tour starting from the Apollo Theatre and continuing to Baltimore, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia for a week each. In addition to that, they performed approximately four times a year at the Apollo Theatre and two times a

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Cotton Club', *Variety,* April 28, 1937, p. 59 and 'Cabaret Bills – New York City – Cotton Club', *Variety,* February 24, 1937, p. 59.

669 Frankie Manning claims that happened in July-August 1936. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 117. Robert Crease claims that was for three months. See: Robert Crease, 'Mildred Cruse', Footnotes: January-March, 1988. Vol. 3, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

670 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 117 and 120.

671 See articles concerning the Apollo Theatre, Chicago and Los Angeles gigs: "Smart Show at Apollo Theatre', *The New York Times Amsterdam News*, September 19, 1936, p. 8; 'Stars That Shine', *The Chicago Defender*, January 16, 1937, p. 24; 'Stage Show High Light of New Bill', *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 1937, p. A16. See also: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 122, 128, 130 and Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 123-124.

672 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 129, and Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 128.

673 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 131-134. The last mentioned Atlantic City gig happened possibly with Cab Calloway as Manning and others were billed as Cab Calloway's Lindy Hoppers. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 266.

year at the Roxy Theatre in New York. They also worked at smaller nightclubs and hotels.[674]

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers performed in the local clubs, Club Alabam and El Morocco in Los Angeles at the time, where they were filmed for a Hollywood movie called *Everybody Sing* in the fall of 1937. On their way back, they performed a week at the Howard Theatre in Washington D.C. and two weeks at the Roxy Theatre in New York. They continued from the Roxy Theatre to Radio City in midtown, New York.[675] According to Norma Miller, another part of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers went to a tour in Toronto, Canada in 1938-39[676]. *The New Hollywood Hotel Revue* tour, with anywhere from three to six couples in the Mid West, followed in 1940[677].

Concerning the New York shows, a couple of White's dancers, Albert Minns and Mildred Pollard, performed in the Cotton Club Fall show with the Cab Calloway Orchestra between September 1938 and February 1939, and in *Prize Winning Jitterbugs* for a week in November 1938.[678] The Cotton Club based show, which included six Lindy Hoppers, was reviewed in *Variety* and *The Billboard* in December 1938 concerning their Loew's State Theatre performances. *Variety* stated how the Lindy Hop troupe "radiates the McCoy…Act looks good for work of this type" According to the review, the troupe was an "opening specialty" and performed briefly in the end of the show. *The Billboard* raved even more: "Whitey's Lindy Hoppers give a demonstration of their specialty…if one hasn't seen this particular group do it [the Lindy Hop] then he hasn't really seen it done."[679]

Various Broadway-connected shows followed between 1938 and 1939. The Broadway show called *Hellzapoppin'* came in September 1938. At the same time, eight male members of White's group were performing on a touring product called *Knickerbocker's Holiday*, which toured in the East Coast, and ended on Broadway in October 1938. The group performed at the New York's World's Fair at least between spring and summer 1939. They also participated in two short-lived

674 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 138-139.

675 Ibid., pp. 142, 146 and 149-150. See also: Terry Monaghan, 'Eleanor "Stumpy" Atkinson', published in www.savoyballroom.com . The site did not work anymore in 2014. The author of the dissertation has copy of this article.

676 Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 132.

677 Terry Monaghan, 'Al Minns: The Incorrigible Lindy Hopper, 1920-1985', non-published. The author of the study has copy of this article. See also: Robert P. Crease, 'Pal Andrews', Footnotes: Spring 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. See also: ' "Hollywood Hotel" Unit Opens Tour; D'Orsay Unit Set', *The Billboard*, October 5, 1940, p. 20. The article confirms that the Harvest Moon Ball Lindy Hop winners participated in the tour. There were even six couples according to *The Billboard*. See: 'Producers Blame Unit Scarcity On Lack of Available Film Names; 14 Big Units Out; Many Smallies', *The Billboard*, October 12, 1940, p. 18.

678 Terry Monaghan, 'Al Minns: The Incorrigible Lindy Hopper, 1920-1985', non-published. The author of the study has copy of this article. See also for the Cotton Club show: 'New Cotton Club Revue Orchided by New Yorkers', *The Afro-American*, October 15, 1938, p. 10.

679 'Reviews – Whitey's Lindy Hoppers (6)', *Variety*, December 14, 1938, p. 54 and 'State, New York', *The Billboard*, December 17, 1938, p. 24.

Broadway shows: *Blackbirds of 1939* in February 1939 and *Swingin' the Dream* between November and December 1939. The latter hired White's group under the name 'Whitey's Jitterbugs'.[680]

When the Brazil group came back to Miami in 1942, according to Miller, they worked there in various "black clubs" for weeks to raise money to return to New York.[681] When they came back to New York, most of White's best male dancers were drafted into the U.S. Army. In spite of that, and with help of new dancers, according to Frankie Manning, there was still a three week engagement at the Roxy Theatre, New York, between July and August 1943. On the contrary, Norma Miller remembers that there was a three week job at the Apollo Theatre, which continued to the Howard Theatre in Washington D.C., and to the Royal Theatre in Baltimore.[682] In addition to that, there was the *Born Happy* show with Bill Robinson, sometime between April and July 1943, and *Basin Street Revue* at the Roxy Theatre also in 1943. Both shows were obviously with different White's dancers than with the original Whitey's Lindy Hoppers which Miller and Manning represented[683].

Frankie Manning, Norma Miller, and tap dancers Pete Nugent and Howard "Stretch" Johnson, have claimed that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers performances "stopped the show" or at least got big applause from audiences. Those reactions happened in the Cotton Club show in the middle of 1930s,[684] and in the Hollywood Hotel Revue tour in Australia in the end of the 1930s. Local newspapers commented on the Eight Original Apple Dancers [the Lindy Hoppers] in Melbourne as follows:

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680 'Elevator Too Risky', *The Afro-American*, November 18, 1939, p. 14. Otherwise the World's Fair and the Broadway shows are discussed in their own chapters. See chapters: 'The Harlem Jazz Dance on Broadway Theaters and the Mainstream Press Between 1921 and 1943' and 'The World's Fair 1939 - 1940 in Queens'.

681 Crease 1987, p. 32. Frankie Manning remembers that they were in Florida and Miami "for quite a while". See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 186.

682 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 187-188. As far as the Roxy Theatre engagement is concerned, Manning was drafted on July 20, 1943. See: Frank B Manning, army serial number: 32987856, ca. 1938-1946 (Enlistment Records), The U.S. National Archives & Records Administration. The engagement was likely before Manning's draft to the U.S. army or he left before the gig was ended. See also: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 183.

683 See the chapter 'Bill Robinson's Comeback to Broadway in 1939'. As it becomes clear from the chapter, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were reviewed in April 1943. Pal Andrews claims that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were part of the show in March 1943. If so, there is no other evidence confirming that. See: Robert P. Crease, 'Pal Andrews', Footnotes: Spring, 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. See also: Terry Monaghan, 'Alfred 'Pepsi' Bethel', published: www.savoyballroom.com . The site was not anymore working in 2014. The author of the study has a copy of the article.

684 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 111-112. Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 100. Also Howard "Stretch" Johnson refers to the Cotton Club show. See: Howard Eugene Johnson with Wendy Johnson, *A Dancer In The Revolution – Stretch Johnson, Harlem Communist At The Cotton Club* (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2014) and there the chapter '3 Moving Up'. This is based on so-called Kindle version of the book. There are no page numbers in the Kindle version of the book. In addition to that, Pete Nugent stated generally, "Those Lindy Hoppers made it tough for everybody...With their speed and air steps they made all the other dancers look like they were standing still...they stopped the show wherever they appeared." See: Stearns 1994, p. 331.

> It is a revelation to watch the speed, dexterity, and symmetry of the eight original apple dancers…and the rounds of applause, which follow the whirlwind finish, prove without doubt its popularity with audiences.

And

> But in this array of talent we almost overlooked the ”sensation” of the show – those bouncing colored bundles of terpsichorean energy, the Eight Apple Dancers, who flung themselves around the stage in an amazing display of organized disorder and irresistible high spirits.[685]

In the same way, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were applauded in the Savoy Pavilion shows at the World's Fair in 1939, *Swingin' the Dream*, *the Hot Mikado*, the Radio City Music Hall shows at the end of the 1930s, and the Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' shows in Brazil in 1941-42.[686] It seems that audiences and reviewers received them positively in general. When comparing especially the Melbourne reviews to the British reviews, the Lindy Hoppers were analyzed more thoroughly and analytically than they were analyzed earlier in the British newspapers concerning their earlier mentioned performances in Europe in 1937. The evidence suggests that they were taken more seriously in Australia. Whether this can be attributed to cultural differences between the countries or differences between the performances, is unclear.

Herbert White's operations also were characterized by claimed illegal activities. Between March and May 1938, there seemed to be incidents which created the negative reputation of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. It seems that Herbert White had organized those Lindy Hoppers' beatings, because there were Lindy Hoppers who started to perform on their own, without White's management. At the least, dancers Theodore Rice, John Inniss, and "Snookey" Beasley were among those who were beaten. All these incidents happened separately.

Theodore Rice, of the six dancers' act, was beaten when he came out on the stage at the Apollo Theatre. Before that, there were about twenty Lindy Hoppers in the audience booing and hissing Rice and others' performance. Police were called to the theater to keep order, but the troublemakers in the audience were reported to have left before police came. Rice recognized Frankie Manning and Clyde Brown as his beaters. Herbert White was recognized as one who threatened Rice. The result,

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685 According to Frankie Manning and Cynthia Millman, the newspaper articles are from the Melbourne newspapers. Manning described his tour by saying: ”Everywhere we went, we got standing ovations and rave reviews.” Manning also claims that these two examples are only ”a couple of examples” from his albums. See: Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 155-156 and 268.

686 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 164 and 183. Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 139, 145-146 and 175. Stearns 1994, pp. 332-333. Manning and Miller's memories about the audience appreciation in Brazil are supported by *The Billboard*, which mentions, in at least three articles concerning the Brazil tour, that audiences liked them. See: 'Night Club Reviews', *The Billboard*, January 3, 1942, p. 57; Casino Urca, Rio de Janeiro', *The Billboard*, January 24, 1942, p. 23; 'Casino Urca, Rio de Janeiro', *The Billboard*, April 11, 1942, p. 13.

according to *The New York Amsterdam News*, was that theatre and club owners considered suspension of the Lindy Hop acts in the future. In addition to that, the six dancers act was removed from the bill because of those problems.[687] *The New York Amsterdam News* reported a week later that there were used "strong-arm methods" for controlling White's dancers, according interviews from "additional lindy hoppers, booking agencies, and others in the know". Brown, Manning, and White were expected to appear in "Harlem Court", but if that and the mentioned suspension really happened is unclear.[688] If so, the suspension did not last long. Helen Clark, who worked at the Savoy as a hostess, claimed that there existed "a lot of" Lindy Hoppers who stole "new things" inside the Savoy. This never spread to the news. However, it also refers to other criminal activities behind the "wings" of White's Lindy Hop operations.[689]

Herbert White had moved his operations mainly to Oswego, upstate New York, in the beginning of the 1940s. He had a restaurant for African-American soldiers in the area from at least July 1941. In spite of that, he still kept connected to the Lindy Hop and obviously to the Savoy, as he still landed gigs for his dancers[690]. He also continued to manage groups of dancers and several Lindy Hoppers shuttled back and forth between Oswego and the Savoy Ballroom[691]. According to one of White's former dancers, Elnora Dyson, White came down from Oswego to New York

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687 'Lindy Hop Racket Probe Looms', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 21, 1938, pp. 1 and 5. According to Norma Miller, Herbert White and his henchmen beat "Snookey" Beasley at the Savoy Ballroom. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 151. According to the *New York Amsterdam News* article, Bishop (= Beasley) was beaten two months before Rice. That means in March. It is not clear, when Inniss was beaten.

688 The article mentions that there were four members of the group who were beaten "some time ago". The names of the members were not mentioned in the article. See: 'Lindy Hop Addicts Eye Court Trial', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 28, 1938, p. 6. The author of the study has not found any other reference to charges concerning the case.

689 Helen Clark, who worked as a hostess in the Savoy Ballroom from 1931, claimed, that "lindy hoppers, those kids...a lot of them were stealing new things...from those rooms" referring to the Savoy Ballroom. See: Interview, Helen Clark [3], audiotape, interviewed by Delilah Jackson, Delilah Jackson papers, Emory University, Atlanta. It stays unclear, according to the Clark's interview, if Herbert White was behind those claimed stealings. If those really happened, it is likely that he knew about them when considering his authority over the Lindy Hoppers at the Savoy.

690 Robert Crease, 'Willie Jones', Footnotes: Spring 1990. Vol 5, No 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. There are various claims about White's Oswego operations. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 164-167. According to Norma Miller, White had bought his restaurant in Oswego, when they were in Hollywood in December 1941. Also Frankie Manning states that the restaurant was a new thing, when they returned from Hollywood to go to Oswego to meet White. According to Manning, White established the restaurant in 1941. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 181. Both Miller and Manning seem to be inexact in their claims as Herbert White wrote a letter to *Palladium-Times* newspaper, which was published on July 28, 1941. The letter concerned rooming accommodations in Oswego, and White presented himself as the owner of Whitey's Restaurant. See: James J. Cummins, 'The Black 369th in Oswego (1941)' in *Journal 1972 – Oswego County Historical Society – Founded 1896* (Oswego, New York: Oswego County Historical Society, Thirty-third Annual Publication, Beyer Offset Inc., 1973), pp. 62 and 69.

691 Robert P. Crease, 'Pal Andrews', Footnotes: Spring, 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

somewhere in 1943 for the purpose of collecting money from his former dancers who were working in the Roxy Theatre without his permission. However, he did not succeed in that case, as his former dancers refused to pay him.[692]

After his move to Oswego, White seemed to have an 'on and off' relation to the Savoy Ballroom. According to Terry Monaghan, White did not let a couple, George Greenidge and Eleanor Watson, who were qualified in the Savoy Ballroom preliminary, participate in the 1944 Harvest Moon Ball finals, because Watson refused to give her possible winning money to White.[693] White likely trained new Lindy Hoppers at the Savoy Ballroom at the end of 1946, as he was reported to be rejoined "the staff" at the Savoy. That happened because of Harlem's second loss of the Jitterbug Jive Championship in the Harvest Moon Ball at the same year. White was quoted in *The Afro-American* saying, after the loss, "They can't dance in Harlem, anymore".[694] White's statement also described the situation at the Savoy Ballroom, where the Lindy Hop was fading, and be-bop and ballroom dances were in fashion. Herbert White's efforts in the case possibly helped, because the Savoy Ballroom dancers won the title again in 1947.[695]

At the same time, there was emerging the new generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, whose leading figures participated in the Harvest Moon Ball Jitterbug Jive from at least 1946-1947. It is possible that the leading figures participated in White's Lindy Hop training in 1946, although there is no strict evidence for that.[696] There is

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692 Robert P. Crease, 'Elnora Dyson', Footnotes: January – March, 1989. Volume 4, Number 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

693 Terry Monaghan, 'Eleanor "Stumpy" Watson', posted May 21, 2007. See: http://www.yehoodi.com/comment/80372/eleanor-stumpy-watson/ The author of the study has a copy of this article. George Greenidge had already won the 1936 Lindy Hop Championship. See the chapter: 'Harvest Moon Ball and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers Between 1935 and 1943'.

694 'Lucky to Play for 'Lindy Hop' Revival in Harlem, *The Afro-American*, December 7, 1946, p. 8.

695 There are different references to the situation at the Savoy. Mura Dehn have described in her article, how the World War II affected the situation as the Savoy was "orphaned without its leaders" who were drafted into the U.S. Army. The new generation of the dancers, who concentrated on be bop influenced dances, emerged in the ballroom. See: Mura Dehn, Jazz Dance in Giordano 1978, p. 91. Another observer was Charles J. Dorkins who worked at the Savoy between 1946 and 1947. He remembered seeing "Bee-bop", in addition to, "ballroom dancing". See: Charles J. Dorkins, 'The enclosed brief statement", August 1, 2012. The author of study has a copy of this statement. Also *Dance* magazine stated in 1947, how fox trot, waltz and rumba were in the fashion at the ballroom. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 43. Herbert White's efforts in the case still need more research. Monaghan claims that White had only some indirect connections to the Harvest Moon Ball winners between 1946 and 1948. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 68.

696 These leading figures were Lee Moates and Ronald Hayes, who competed possibly for the first time in the 1947 Harvest Moon Ball Contest. The author of the study has not found their names from the preliminary results from the earlier years. Ronald Hayes competed under the name, James R. Hayes. See: Charles McHarry, 'Harlem Qualifiers for Harvest Final', *Daily News*, August 16, 1947, p. 9. Thomas King, who possibly was the Thomas King who later also became part of the Third Generation, was listed in the Savoy Ballroom preliminary results in 1946. See: William Murtha, 'Machito's Rumba Band For Harvest Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 18, 1946, p. 74. Terry Monaghan has listed the names of the

evidence that some of these new Lindy Hoppers, who came to be known as the Third Generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers in the 1950s, were taught by White's dancers.[697] That allows for the continuation in the Savoy-connected Lindy Hop tradition. Herbert White's dancers still participated in the Harvest Moon Ball in 1949, when two of his couples placed first and third in the contest. One of his couples led the Lindy Hop act at the Apollo Theatre before his death in September 1950, which finally ended Herbert White's career in the Harlem jazz dance.[698]

4.3.3 The Consequences of Herbert White's Methods in Guiding His Dance Group

When considering Herbert White's significance and how his dance group was recognized, it also should be noticed how White treated his own dancers. Many of his dancers have stressed how White educated them to respect themselves[699]. His methods varied from the beatings and punishments in training, to arguing with show producers about treatment of his dancers. If things in rehearsals did not proceed the way he had planned, he could fine his dancers. For example, they were fined if they did not land back onto the floor at the right time, or when they did air steps. The air steps had to be executed with military precision.[700] He also demanded from his dancers absolute dedication for his group, as they practiced about 6-7 hours per day in 1936. In addition to that, they performed at the Savoy and elsewhere.[701] The members of the group had rules: no smoking, no drinking, or going out with the band members, or with any person than her dancing partner, and no liaisons with other dancers with some exceptions. Like Norma Miller puts it, "Marriage, sex, reefer, drugs, drink – nothing was allowed to come before dancing".[702]

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leading Third Generation Savoy Lindy Hoppers in his undated article about the generation. The article was published in the late www.savoyballroom.com site. The author of the study has a copy of the article.

697 For example, Sugar Sullivan, who joined the Savoy Lindy Hoppers in the end of the 1940s, was taught by James 'Blue' Outlaw who was one Herbert White's dancers. See: *Sugar Sullivan* interview, interviewed by Sally Sommer, March 2001 in Durham, New York Public Library.

698 Monaghan 2005, p. 43.

699 Robert P. Crease, 'Pal Andrews', Footnotes: Spring, 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society; Robert Crease, 'Willie Jones', Footnotes: Spring, 1990. Vol 5, No 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society; Manning and Millman 2007, p. 142; Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 186.

700 Robert P. Crease, 'Eunice Callen', Footnotes: November – December, 1989. Vol. 4, No.3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society; Robert P. Crease, 'Wilda Crawford', Footnotes: November-December, 1988. Vol. 3, No. 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

701 'Wake of the News', *New York Post*, May 7, 1936, p. 21. Outside the Savoy performances are discussed in this chapter.

702 Crease 1987, p. 29. Miller's claims can be slightly criticized: Billy and Willa Mae Ricker were married, although they danced with different partners. See: Robert Crease, 'Billy

White also argued with the show producers for equal treatment of his dancers. The Whitey's Lindy Hoppers scene was cut from the *Everybody Sing* movie, because of White's arguments with the show producer about satisfactory rest periods for his dancers.[703] On the other hand, he kept his dancers working without satisfactory rest periods at the Savoy Pavilion.[704] He also asked his dancers to "pack up their things", when White's African-American and white couples were denied permission to dance at the same time, on the same floor, in a performance of a New Jersey gig. After arguing, the manager finally agreed that both couples could perform together.[705] There were also other examples about White's denials to let his dancers to perform, such as when his dancers were not treated well enough, or when things did not go in the way he had planned.[706]

Herbert White was described as having treated his dancers as slaves. It was claimed that the dancers did not make any money and were dressed like a little-league baseball team.[707] Even Bill Robinson first described Whitey's Lindy Hoppers as "that raggedy bunch of crazy kids", but after a show, in which Robinson and White's dancers did together, Robinson stated that "Nobody had better mess with me or the Lindy Hoppers – they take care of the first act and I take care of the second".[708]

Concerning the payments for the performances, Frankie Manning claims that White did not really make money until he opened his restaurant in Oswego, Upstate New York. Manning states, "Whitey did *everything* for us. In my opinion, the success of the group was due entirely to him and he deserved whatever he got." Manning explains how White, for example, created opportunities for performances in restaurants, bars, and night clubs. White arranged schedules, took care of rehearsals, transported them to gigs if needed, and helped to solve problems with show producers.[709] On the other hand, some other dancers, like William Downes, Elnora Dyson, and Billy Ricker claimed that White did not correctly pay them[710].

Some examples about White's payments to his dancers versus how much he got from those performances are as follows: White got $400 for a week for

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Ricker', Footnotes: July-September, 1987. Volume 2, Number 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

703 Monaghan 2005, p. 41.

704 See for example: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 137.

705 Robert P. Crease, 'Elnora Dyson', Footnotes: January – March, 1989. Volume 4, Number 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

706 Another example is *the Hot Mikado* at World's Fair, where White argued with the show producer Mike Todd. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 144-145.

707 Stearns 1994, p. 331. These claims came from tap dancer Pete Nugent.

708 Stearns 1994, p. 332.

709 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 140.

710 Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 64. Robert Crease, 'Billy Ricker', Footnotes: July-September, 1987. Volume 2, Number 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society; Robert P. Crease, 'Elnora Dyson', Footnotes: January – March, 1989. Volume 4, Number 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

performances with ten dancers at the Apollo Theatre in February 1938. He paid his Lindy Hoppers about $20-$25 and Big Apple dancers about $18 per week per person. The average payment for those dancers was about $25-$40 per week per person in New York. It is unclear how many of the performers were paid as Lindy Hoppers and how many were paid as Big Apple dancers. It seems that White took in from $150 to $220 per week, as far as the Apollo Theatre gigs are concerned. That is about 37.5 percent to 55 percent profit for the week. White was recalled to have received fifteen percent from gross receipts[711]. It is possible that his net profit was fifteen percent, especially if he had to pay different costs for his dancers.

Frankie Manning also has talked about White's payments for his dancers. According to Manning, White took $80 from the $400 Apollo Theatre gig. That means twenty percent of the net profit. Manning also claims that the dancers got about $75 per week from the Cotton Club show. However, he does not know how much White got paid for that. In addition to that, Manning claims that the Cotton Club Revue payment was $600 per week in Europe. Manning, who was the paymaster of the tour, claims that he gave $75 to every dancer per week and he kept $25 for White per week. That means only 4.2 percent from the net profit. Manning adds that White sometimes got even 20-25 percent (or less, if the job did not pay well enough) from the net profit. Obviously, being in the charge of the group also was a reason to get paid better. Manning was occasionally in the charge of the group. The same goes to Billy and Willa Mae Ricker, who were paid better than the others, and they also had group leader responsibilities.[712]

When comparing the salaries which White's dancers got, to other dancers' salaries, it seems that the Lindy Hoppers were not paid well. Brenda Dixon Gottschild, who has researched African-American Vaudeville, argues that dancers' salaries overall varied widely. She claims that only Bill Robinson and the Nicholas Brothers were able to draw the top salary compared to white dancers. For example, tap dancer Honi Coles got $60 per week, when he performed for first time in Harlem's Apollo Theatre, in 1934. The tap dancing team Buck and Bubbles were able to get $750 per week at the Harlem Opera House. The Nicholas Brothers could get, in the beginning of their career, $450 per week and by the end of the 1930s they got $1,000 per week. Bill Robinson, before his Hollywood career, got only $1,000 per week at the Apollo Theatre, but by 1937, he was able to get $3,500 for the Cotton Club Revue. For comparison, top white entertainers were able to get from $2,500 to $4,000 per week in the 1910s and in the 1920s.[713] As far as dancers' salaries are concerned, it seems that white dancers were generally, better compensated, and in that sense more appreciated than African-American dancers.

Although Herbert White did not pay generously to his dancers, he also was not paid well at times. Norma Miller has commented that, concerning the payments of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, how $25 a week was a great salary to them. She added,

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711 'Lindy Hop Racket Probe Looms', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 21, 1938, p. 5.

712 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 139-141.

713 Gottschild 2000, p. 94.

"To us, it was like getting selected by Ziegfeld. What were we going to say when the man [Herbert White] said he was going to pay us to do what we ordinarily did free? When we were going to get more money a week than our parents?"[714]

Herbert White and his dancers' public image changed through the times. It seems that his group had no reputation outside the Savoy Ballroom and Harlem in the beginning of the formation of the group somewhere in 1934. By the end of 1935, they had gained fame with the help of their first Harvest Moon Ball wins, so that they were recruited in less than two months for the European tour after the first Harvest Moon Ball contest. Also the domination of the Lindy Hop division in Harvest Moon Ball contest strengthened their reputation. White's dancers were recruited frequently to nightclubs, theaters and even in Hollywood movies. The theater performance in Los Angeles led to their first Hollywood movie participation in *A Day At The Races* in 1937. Their strong reputation as Lindy Hop experts and as the favorites of audiences seemed to keep them recruited frequently around the United States, and also around the world.

Although the Lindy Hoppers were received positively by the audiences and also by reviewers in the mainstream press, when their stage performances were reviewed, they stayed as dancers who usually were not named in those reviews with an exception of the Harvest Moon Ball reviews. They were mainly known as the Lindy Hoppers from Harlem or from the Savoy Ballroom, with various group names. Another rare exception was Tiny Bunch, who was advertised for over half a year in *Variety*. In spite of staying mostly as nameless dancers, Terry Monaghan states that "Leading Savoy Lindy Hoppers" could be "identified" in various features "carried by major magazines such as *LIFE, Paris-Match, Pix, Picture Post* and *Ebony* as characteristically urbane, fashionably dressed and celebrating a "European looking" ballroom culture."[715]

Concerning *LIFE* magazine, Monaghan uses the article from the December 1936 issue as an example of his statement. In this issue, there are shown two of White's dancers, George Greenidge and Ella Gibson, as dancing in the pictures of the magazine. They are called "an errand boy and a laundress" without naming them. However, *LIFE* praised them as "These Harlem Negroes are dancing Harlem's favorite dance with a native gusto and grace that no white couple can hope to duplicate." Monaghan does not otherwise specify his claim and does not give any other examples from the other magazines. However, he gives an impression that the leading Savoy Lindy Hoppers were not named in those other pictures.[716] This also becomes clear from the *"PIC"* magazine issue from April 1938, where the pictures of the Savoy dancers were published without naming the dancers[717]. There occurred development in the case, when *LIFE* published the article in June 1941, where Herbert White and two of his dancers were reported as persons with names.

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[714] Crease 1987, p. 29.

[715] Monaghan 2005, p. 40.

[716] Ibid., p. 40. See also: 'Lindy Hoppers – "Spreadin' Rhythm Around" ', *LIFE*, December 28, 1936, pp. 30-31.

[717] 'Dance-Drunk Harlem', *"PIC"*, April 5, 1938, pp. 28-31.

In the article, the magazine reported on ”Harlem’s newest dance”, the Congeroo, which had born from the mixing of ”Harlem’s sizzling Lindy Hop” and ”the hottest dance out of Latin America, the Conga”. The new dance was performed by ”a Harlem troupe especially trained by Herbert White, Negro originator of the Lindy Hop and the Suzy-Q.” The article also included pictures of the new dance. The performers were mentioned as Ann ”Popeye” Johnson and Frankie ”Musclehead” Manning. Additionally, it was mentioned that they were ”dancing to Erskine Hawkins’ band in Harlem’s classy Savoy Ballroom.” In spite of occasionally humoristic impressions in the attached pictures, for example, where Frankie Manning was kicked by Johnson in one of the pictures, with the label text, ”Ann satisfies her suppressed desire as Congeroo end”, the article’s pictures gave an overall positive review of Harlem’s newest dance invention, dancers, and the ballroom.[718]

LIFE magazine published an article in August 1943, where it declared the Lindy Hop as ”A True National Folk Dance”, and which had been born in U.S.A. The article introduced the Lindy Hop history, and had two couples: whites Kaye Popp and Stanley Catron, who worked at the time in the Broadway show, and African-Americans Leon James and Willa Mae Ricker. Like the white couple, James and Ricker were named in the article where it was stated, ”On these pages its [the Lindy Hop’s] most florid evolutions are interpreted by Leon James and Willa Mae Ricker, superlative performers who have exhibited their art throughout the world.”[719]

Terry Monaghan argues that the article obscured “the specifics of Harlem’s role in devising the dance”, and the ratio of pictures in the article possibly was meant to imply that whites had taken over the Lindy Hop, as there seemed to be more pictures about the white couple than about the African-American couple.[720] If so, it is remarkable that both couples were labeled as ”extraordinary dancers” [721]. James and Ricker were ”superlative performers” who did ”most florid evolutions” as it was

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[718] ’Harlem’s New ”Congeroo” Gives Girls A Workout’, *LIFE*, June 16, 1941, pp. 49-50. It should be noticed that Herbert White was not the originator of the Lindy Hop. It is also suspicious if he was the originator of Suzy-Q. There have been different claims about the origin of Suzy-Q. According to the *Ebony* magazine, musician Taps Miller originated Susie Q dance in 1938. See: ’Oldest Negro Smalls Paradise has catered to world celebrities’, *Ebony*, October 1, 1949, p. 45. Suzy Q was reported to be a new dance in Washington D.C. in February 1937 and it had been fashionable in New York. See: ’Washington Scene’, *The Washington Post*, February 28, 1937, p. S2. Suzy-Q also was part of Big Apple dance and was mentioned as one of ”swing steps” in August 1937. See: ’Swing It!’, *The Washington Post*, August 29, 1937, p. 5. *LIFE* magazine claimed in August 1943 that Suzy-Q is from Harlem and from 1937. However, there is no other mention its origins in the *LIFE* magazine issue. See: ’The Lindy Hop – A True National Folk Dance Has Been Born In U.S.A.’, *LIFE*, August 23, 1943, p. 98.

[719] ’The Lindy Hop – A True National Folk Dance Has Been Born In U.S.A.’, *LIFE*, August 23, 1943, pp. 95-103.

[720] Monaghan 2005, p. 43.

[721] This sentence and the next paragraphs until the phrase ‘it did not exclude African-Americans’ are based on ’The Lindy Hop – A True National Folk Dance Has Been Born In U.S.A.’, *LIFE*, August 23, 1943, pp. 20 and 95-103.

mentioned in the article, and Popp and Catron were ”professional dancers” who did ”the fall-down Jig-Walk…[which is a] difficult step” as was mentioned in the explanation of the cover picture. Otherwise, the article openly admitted, ”Negroes were its [the Lindy Hop's] creators and principal exponents”. The article also stated:

> [W]ith the renascence of swing the Lindy climbed the social scale. New steps like Suzy-Q, Trucking and Jig-Walk were invented and absorbed into its expanding framework. And as they spread across the land, invading colleges and dance schools, the Lindy Hop attained respectability as a truly national dance.

The article seemed to suggest that the Lindy Hop had achieved the whole of America's acceptance at the time. The article continued:

> It was during the late 1930's that the Lindy Hop took to the air. In entering new realms of creative invention, it is following the evolutionary cycle of all dances since the beginning of recorded time: first the rhythmic, primitive folk dance, sprung from the spontaneous responses of humble people to musical inspiration; then the social dance, popular with all classes and defined by fixed and basic patterns; and finally the classic form, far removed from proletarian origins and ornamented with complex flowery figures attainable only by those who spend years in their practice. The Lindy Hop is now in the second phase…It may be that the Lindy Hop 25 years from now will be as intricate and stylized as the ballet…

However, the explanation did not clarify exactly who were those who were supposed to take the Lindy Hop to the next level. Because the article stated after that of how James and Ricker interpreted the Lindy Hop's ”most florid evolutions”, it did not exclude African-Americans.

If the idea of the article was boast the superiority of white Lindy Hoppers at the time, it does not transmit from the text. The article gives an impression that the Lindy Hop was all of America's dance and that it still was developing. Thus, the article was analogous to the U.S. war politics at the time, when the latter boasted about national unity. At the same time, the same politics accepted that basic civil liberties were denied to African-Americans, especially, in the South.[722] In other words, racism still continued in the United States.

However, there does not seem to be any kind of racist impressions in the basic idea of the text, which differed from the U.S. wartime racist practices.[723] Also, the

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722 James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State – World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2011), pp. 51 and 76.

723 The U.S. military during the World War II is a good example about the racist practices. See for the U.S. military racist practices in World War II especially the chapter 'The Experience of War': Nat Brandt, *Harlem at War – The Black Experience in WWII* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996), pp. 100-112.

pictures do not give a racist impression, if the ratio of the pictures is not noticed. Because a white couple was pictured in the cover of the *LIFE* magazine issue, it could imply that whites had taken over the Lindy from African-Americans. When thinking about the whole article, it seems, unlike Monaghan claims, that the *LIFE* magazine article frankly was made for stressing that the Lindy Hop was all of America's national dance in 1943. This conclusion is reinforced with the fact that the magazine had a circulation of over 2.3 million in 1940 and over 3.75 million in 1943, mostly in the U. S.[724] It probably had an impact on many Americans. In this sense, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and other Harlem-based Lindy Hoppers' like George Snowden, and his dancers' achievements and work during decades had not been done in vain. It seems that their accomplishments, in the form of the Lindy Hop, were recognized powerfully in the 1943 *LIFE* article.

4.4 Harvest Moon Ball and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers Between 1935 and 1943

This chapter examines the Savoy Lindy Hoppers and their success in the Harvest Moon Ball contest. Most of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers who participated in the contest, during the time period were from Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. The contest was an important part of their operations. The next analysis is mostly focused on the finals, and the Loew's State Theatre performances, where champions performed, in order to find out how the Savoy Lindy Hoppers were recognized in the mainstream press. The preliminaries are not otherwise analyzed, except in a few cases. The goal for the dancers was to win the finals. That was the most important part of the contest.

For the whole picture of the Harvest Moon Ball, it would be important to examine the preliminaries. For that, comprehensive basic research about the contest is needed. It is not possible to describe the whole Harvest Moon Ball institution in this study, as the success of Harvest Moon Ball is only one important case among others. On the other hand, the finals at the Madison Square Garden happened outside Harlem, which also supports for examining the finals, and also, located outside Harlem, Loew's State Theatre performances, in order to find out how the downtown audiences perceived the Savoy dancers. *Daily News* pictures and articles are analyzed in the case. Where the mainstream press is concerned, the *Daily News* reported frequently on the contest in its various articles, especially about the preliminaries and the finals.

724 J. Percy H. Johnson (editor), *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* (Philadelphia, PA., U. S. A.: N. W. Ayer & Son, Incorporated, 1940), pp. 212 and J. Percy H. Johnson (editor), *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* 1943, pp. 217.

4.4.1 Background

The Harvest Moon Ball contest was a New York-based newspaper, *Daily News*-sponsored dance competition held between 1935 and 1974, which was organized in Madison Square Garden. After the *Daily News* ended sponsorship, the contest continued under different sponsors until 1989. The contest included various dances like the foxtrot, Viennese waltz, tango, rumba, and the Lindy Hop. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers have had an important part in the contest during the decades: first as participants, especially between 1935 and 1958, and later, when they taught new generations for the Harvest Moon Ball contests.[725]

The beginning of the Harvest Moon Ball contest has been explained in different stories. The *Daily News* claimed that the originator of the competition was *Daily News* editor, Miss Mary King, who originated the idea. 'Harvest Moon Ball' name came from the News Sunday editor Richard Clarke. Editorial promotion manager of the News, William F. Fritzinger, "carried out Miss King's idea for the dance to a successful conclusion".[726] The Lindy Hop was added afterwards to the other Harvest

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[725] Monaghan 2005, pp. 41, 46, 49 and 70. The Harvest Moon Ball contest was organized under the new sponsors between 1976 and 1984. See for the 1976 contest: *The Harvest Championship Ball '76 – the Felt Forum – Sat. Oct, 23rd 1976* program, unknown publisher. The final end year of the post-Daily News Harvest Moon Ball was 1984, when the Harvest Moon Ball competition was organized at Felt Forum of Madison Square Garden on October 20. The Lindy Hop was not included in the event. See: 'Other Events – Happenings', *New York Magazine,* October 22, 1984, p. 197. See also concerning the Harvest Moon Ball contest history until 1964: '30 Years of Harvest Moon Ball Champions', *30th Anniversary Harvest Moon Ball*, September 22, 1964, Madison Square Garden, The News Welfare Association, Inc. Where New York is concerned, there also was another Harvest Moon Ball contest between 1980 and 1989, which was organized by Louise 'Mama Lou' Parks Duncanson. This short introduction to the history of the Harvest Moon Ball contests is based on the late Terry Monaghan's winners list of the Harvest Moon Ball contests between 1935 and 1989. The list also contains the contest history. The list was originally published in the late Monaghan's site: www.savoyballroom.com . The site was not working anymore as of 2014. The original publishing date is unknown. The author of the study has a copy of the list. Although Louise 'Mama Lou' Parks Duncanson organized the competition until 1989, during the last two years, in 1988 and 1989, "the contest" was only a meeting, where participated both Old Timers and newcomers of the Lindy Hop. See also for the new Harvest Moon Ball generations and their connection to the Savoy Lindy Hoppers: Terry Monaghan's Harvest Moon Ball article, which was published on his site www.savoyballroom.com . The publishing date is unknown. The article in this study is called "The Harvest Moon Ball – The Savoy Ballroom". The author of the study has a copy of the article. The Harvest Moon Ball history has not been researched properly yet. For example, Joel Dinerstein claims that the *Daily News* sponsored the Harvest Moon Ball between 1935 and 1950. He is wrong as can be seen from other sources. Dinerstein's claim is not based on the typo, because he refers twice to the Harvest Moon Ball between 1935 and 1950 in his study. See: Dinerstein 2003, pp. 255 and 268. Also, a tragicomic example about "history research" concerning the Harvest Moon Ball is http://www.streetswing.com/histmain/d5harvst.htm , where can be found falsified, unchecked information about the beginning of the contest and generally about the contest. The site was accessed on February 4, 2015. The site claims, for example, that the contest began already in 1927. This information is quoted in Alexander Abdoulaev's Savoy Ballroom study without any corrections. See: Abdoulaev 2014, p. 125.

[726] 'News Harvest Moon Ball Due Again in '36', *Daily News*, August 30, 1935, p. 22.

Moon Ball contest dances of the foxtrot, rhumba, tango, and waltz. The *Daily News* claimed that James V. Mulholland, Supervisor of Recreation for the Parks Department, got the idea about the Lindy Hop as part of the contest, after he saw almost 15,000 dancers dancing the Lindy Hop at the Colonial Park dance in Harlem on July 11, 1935. The *Daily News* accepted his idea and included the Lindy Hop to the contest.[727] This is supported by the *Billboard* magazine article which confirmed on July 27, 1935 that "The contest will feature waltz, rumba, tango, Lindy hop and fox-trot competitions."[728]

Norma Miller, who participated in the first Harvest Moon Ball contest in the Lindy Hop division, claims that the Harvest Moon Ball competition was a try to refresh Harlem spirits after a disastrous Harlem riot in 1935. Miller states, "two men from the *Daily News*", who recognized the popularity of the Lindy Hop, met Herbert White and the Savoy Ballroom manager Charles Buchanan. These men wanted the Savoy Ballroom to participate in the contest.[729] Miller explains that the Lindy Hop was already included into the contest when the meeting happened, which would seem to indicate that their main reason for the meeting was to get the Savoy Ballroom to enter the ready-made contest. If the idea behind the Harvest Moon Ball contest really was for boosting Harlem spirits because of the riot, it does not come up in the *Daily News* articles.

The Lindy Hop competitions were not anything new in Harlem in 1935, when the first Harvest Moon Ball contest happened. The first Lindy Hop contests were organized in fall 1928 as told in 'The Savoy Lindy Hoppers' First Generation: George Snowden – The Unsung Hero' chapter. In 1934, one year before the first Harvest Moon Ball, Lafayette Theater had organized, at least once, a contest which included the Lindy Hop, Shim Sham, and Carioca.[730] Shim Sham was a tap dance routine which Leonard Reed and Willie Bryant initially devised. That was later done also without taps.[731] Carioca was a version of the Latin dance called Samba.[732]

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727 Robin Harris, 'Contest O.K.'s Harlem Step', *Sunday News*, July 14, 1935, p. 3. To be exact, James V. Mulholland said that he saw 15,000 dancers who almost all danced the Lindy Hop. *The New York Times* claims in the article dated July 17 that the dance of the 15,000 crowd happened "last night". According to the article the date was July 16. See: '15,000 Dance In Street', *The New York Times*, July 17, 1935, p. 21. It seems unlikely that the dance happened twice with the same crowd figure. It is possible that the article was done earlier and that is why "last night" referred to the earlier date. It is likely that *Sunday News* had the correct date "July 11".

728 'Big N. Y. Contest', *The Billboard*, July 27, 1935, p. 28.

729 Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 55-56.

730 There is an article, where the Lindy Hop, Shim Sham and Carioca were mentioned as the dances in the contest: 'Biggest Shows At Lowest Prices – 'America's Leading Colored Theatre' – Lafayette', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 14, 1934, p. 6. There are a few articles, where "Dance Contest Friday" and "Dance Contest Friday Night – 20.00 Cash Prizes" were advertised without mentioning the dances in the competition. It is possible that the Lindy Hop was competed in these competitions, but there is no definite proof for that. See: 'Lafayette – America's Leading Colored Theatre – 7th Avenue at 131st St.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 9, 1934, p. 6; 'Lafayette – America's Leading Colored Theatre – 7th Avenue at 131st St.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 7, 1934, p. 6.

731 Stearns 1994, pp. 195-196. See also: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, pp. 135-136.

732 Giordano 2007, p. 81.

Harlem's Apollo Theatre frequently organized its Lindy Hop and Shim Sham contests starting from March 1934, when the Apollo Theatre announced that they were going to organize a "new Lindy Hop and Shim Sham Club for patrons who can dance these difficult steps." The membership "entitles them to enter the contests which are held at the theatre on the stage every Thursday night."[733] The Apollo Theatre Lindy Hop contests seemed to be popular among youngsters, as *The New York Amsterdam News* reported in May 1934.[734] The contests were organized every Thursday until August 1934[735], when it was advertised only as "Thursday Lindy Hop Contest" without mentioning Shim Sham.[736]

The New York Amsterdam News also reported in May 1934 that the "Apollo Lindy Hoppers" and their Thursday contest had a "rare treat", when the contest also had "white hoppers" included by "the leading clubs" from "downtown, Brooklyn, New Jersey and Long Island" The results were not reported.[737]

It seems that interest in white Lindy Hoppers in Harlem was increasing in September 1934, when the Apollo Theatre started to organize every Tuesday a "Swing the Lindy Night" competition to white couples, and every Thursday ""Lindy Hop Night" with the Apollo Lindy Hop Club members". The latter was generally meant for African-American couples. In addition to that, there were "monthly championship contests to decide the championship among the weekly prize winners" as *The New York Amsterdam News* reported. The white and African-American couples also competed against each other in "cross-championship contests".[738] *The*

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733 ' "Chocolates" And Shim Sham At Apollo' , *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 24, 1934, p. 6.

734 'South Scores At the Apollo', The New York Amsterdam News, May 12, 1934, p. 6.

735 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 24, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 31, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 7, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 12, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 2, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 9, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 16, 1934, p. 8; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 23, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 7, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 14, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 21, 1934, p. 6; 'New 125th St. Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 28, 1934, p. 6. Although there did not seem to be advertisements about the competitions every week, it is likely that the competition still was organized every Thursday as advertised in the advertisements. The frequency of the advertisements refers to that.

736 'New 125th St. – Apollo Theatre', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 4, 1934, p. 6.

737 'Apollo Lindy Hoppers Will Have Rare Treat', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 5, 1934, p. 6.

738 ' 'Hoppers' Going Big On 125th St.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 22, 1934, p. 7. Although the idea about the Thursday contests for African-American couples was not literally expressed in the article, it, however, transmits from the article, when the article states about "cross-championship contests". It is possible that there also were some white

Pittsburgh Courier claimed in September that the last-mentioned contests "will take place each week".[739]

Concerning the September 1934 contest, both *The New York Amsterdam News* and *The Pittsburgh Courier* published the picture and article about the "Lindy Hop Winners at Apollo", and *The New York Amsterdam News* put it in September 1934. In the picture "the popular Lennie and Bettie, white [couple]…and Leroy and Dot [African-American couple]" were pictured together. The female partners of the couples were shaking hands in the picture. The article next to the picture mentioned the names of the couples as Leroy and Bee, and Lennie and Betty. *The Pittsburgh Courier* also named them similarly.[740] "Leroy and Bee" possibly were Leroy Jones and Beatrice 'Little Bea' Elam from George Snowden's dance group.[741] The both articles stated identically:

> It is a credit to the fairness and high regard for real talent shown toward performers irrespective of color that permitted this contest to be decided as a tie between one colored and white team since the preponderance of patrons in this popular Harlem theatre were colored.[742]

The article referred to the equality between races in the contest, where judging is concerned. Between September 1934 and June 1935, The Apollo Theatre seemed to have advertised frequently the contests. From June 11, 1935, there was only the Lindy Hop contest in the Apollo Theatre for "colored and white teams" on Tuesdays which continued until August 1935.[743]

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couples in the Thursday contests, but no evidence exists for that. The racially mixed competitions are also supported by African-American Frankie Manning and white Harry Rowe, who remembered to have participated in similar kinds of contests at the Apollo Theatre, where they danced against each other with their partners. See: Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 106-107 and Robert P. Crease, 'Harry Rowe', Footnotes: July-September, 1989. Vol. 4, No. 2., published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

739 'Lindy Hop Champions', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 22, p. 9.

740 'Sepians And Ofays Competitors For Lindy Hop Prizes', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 22, 1934, p. 9. See also: 'Lindy Hop Winners at Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 22, 1934, p. 7.

741 Manning and Millman 2007, p. 245.

742 ' 'Hoppers' Going Big On 125th St.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 22, 1934, p. 7 and 'Sepians And Ofays Competitors For Lindy Hop Prizes', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 22, 1934, p. 9.

743 'New 125th Street – Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 8, 1935 p. 12. Otherwise see for example: '125th Street Apollo Theater', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 22, 1934, p. 9; 'New 125th Street – Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 3, 1934 p. 11; 'New 125th Street – Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 26, 1935 p. 10; 'New 125th Street – Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 23, 1935 p. 10; 'New 125th Street – Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 27, 1935 p. 10; 'New 125th Street – Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 8, 1935 p. 12. Where *The New York Amsterdam News* is concerned, the last advertisement concerning the competition is from August 24, 1935. See: 'New 125th Street – Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 24, 1935 p. 7.

The Harlem Apollo Theatre Lindy Hop contest activities between March 1934 and August 1935, did not seem to propagate to the mainstream press otherwise, but only *Variety* reported briefly on the Tuesday night Lindy Hop contest in July 1935. The magazine reported on how African-American and white teams usually "split the honors for the first prize" as based on the applause from the predominantly African-American audience which also included "a fair quota" of whites.[744] The Apollo Theatre Lindy Hop contests in Harlem were an indication for the fact that the interest in the contests came from both African-Americans and whites, who both participated in the contests, although, in the beginning, usually separately and, in the end, already frequently together. The racially mixed contests of the Apollo Theatre, however, were part of the initial steps for integration in the Lindy Hop contests, and thus they made it possible to continue to the Harvest Moon Ball, where the integration was similarly achieved in the Lindy Hop finals at Madison Square Garden, as pointed out in this chapter.

The Harvest Moon Ball contest included the foxtrot, waltz (Viennese waltz), rhumba (rumba), tango, and Lindy Hop (renamed Jitterbug Jive from 1942), as dance divisions between 1935 and 1943.[745] In addition to those divisions, there was an 'All Around' championship, which was its own round in the contest.[746] For winning the 'All Around' championship in 1935, first, second and third divisional winners competed in four dances: waltz, rhumba, tango, and chose either the foxtrot or Lindy Hop as the fourth dance. In 1936, it was needed to compete in four optional divisions of the foxtrot, waltz, rhumba, tango, and Lindy Hop to win the 'All 'Round' championship.[747] In 1937, first place winners in each group competed in four dances: the foxtrot, waltz, rhumba, and tango for the all-round championship.[748] That indicates a decreasing appreciation for the Lindy Hop from the Harvest Moon Ball organizer, as the Lindy Hop was no longer one of the options.

The Collegiate Shag division was added to the contest in 1937, and it stayed until 1939.[749] In 1940, the Conga was added to the contest and it stayed until 1941.[750] In

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744 See: 'Apollo, N. Y.', *Variety*, July 10, 1935, p. 16. The author of the study has not found any other mention of the competitions in the mainstream press.

745 For 1935 and 1936 see: 'Program - The News Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 28th-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 28, 1935, p. 33; 'Program – The News Second Annual Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 26, 1936-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 26, 1936, p. 28. Otherwise see the program leaflet from 1964, where different dance divisions can be concluded: '30 Years of Harvest Moon Ball Champions', *30th Anniversary Harvest Moon Ball*, September 22, 1964, Madison Square Garden, The News Welfare Association, Inc. The leaflet has no page numbers.

746 Roger Dakin, 'Harvest Moon Ball Champs Score in Stage Debut', *Daily News*, September 1, 1939, p. 4.

747 'Program - The News Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 28th-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 28, 1935, p. 33; 'Program – The News Second Annual Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 26, 1936-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 26, 1936, p. 28.

748 'Harvest Moon Debut Wednesday at Rye', *Sunday News*, August 1, 1937, p. 6 C.

749 This can be concluded from the program leaflet: '30 Years of Harvest Moon Ball Champions', *30th Anniversary Harvest Moon Ball*, September 22, 1964, Madison Square Garden, The News Welfare Association, Inc. Collegiate Shag was mentioned as the division in various articles. See for example: 'Waltz Ends Prelims For Harvest Moon', *Daily News*,

addition to that, there were added similar divisions for 'men in uniform' of the armed forces in 1942. The *Daily News* reported that happened "because of the uncertainty of troop movements and the probability that regulations would prohibit the military contestants accepting any part of the main prize in the regular ball – a share in the $3,500 Loew's State stage contract".[751] In addition to that, the civilians and servicemen competed each other in the Jitterbug Jive finals.

The best 'all around' couple, both in the servicemen contest and in the civilian contest, was called the 'grand winners' in 1942. In 1943, the civilian champions were called 'All-Around Champions' and the servicemen champions called 'grand winners', although the *Daily News* also wrote about 'servicemen's all-around championship'.[752]

Table 6. The Harvest Moon Ball Judges Between 1935 and 1943.[753]

Judges	Occupation	Year
Thorbjorn Bassoe Jr.	Head of the Bassoe School of Dancing.	1942 – 1943
Joseph, H. Belford	The manager of Roseland ballrooms in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Boston, and a recognized authority on ballroom dancing and dance contests.	1939 and 1942 - 1943
Louis J. Brecker	The owner of Brooklyn and Manhattan Roseland ballrooms.	1935 - 1938 and 1940 - 1941

August 19, 1937, p. 26. 'Harvest Moon Ball to Draw 20,000 Tonight', *Daily News*, August 31, 1938, p. 49. 'Mickey, Judy at Harvest Ball Tonight', *Daily News*, August 30, 1939, p. B 40.

750 William Murtha, 'Finalists Vie for Harvest Ball Title On Wednesday', *Daily News*, August 28, 1940, p. 4 and 'Harvest Moon Crowd Lays Siege to Garden', *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. 4.

751 '20,000 And More Jam Garden For Harvest Finals', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 4.

752 '20,000 See Ball Finals; Big Winners to Wed', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 4; '22-Year-Olds Cop Crowns In Harvest Moon Finals', *Daily News*, September 9, 1943, pp. 4 and 17.

753 The table is based on articles: '18000 Pack Garden, Hail Dance Royalty', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20. 'Harvest Moon Rises On Finals Tonight', *Daily News*, August 26, 1936, p. 28. '22,000 Due Tomorrow at Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 24, 1937, p. 16. '35,000 Storm Ball – Finals at Garden', *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4. '20,000 See Harvest Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 32. 'Harvest Moon Ball Attracts Garden Crowd', *Daily News*, August 29, 1940, p. 4; '20,000 See Harvest Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. B 37. '20,000 At Garden Hail The Victors In Harvest Ball', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 4. 'Not Even SRO is Left At Harvest Ball Finals', *Daily News*, September 9, 1943, p. 6. Why there were only white judges in the Lindy Hop was questioned by a reporter Edgar T. Rouzeau in 1940. He got an answer from a *Daily News* authority who claimed to him that "the Lindy Hop was created by a white dancing coach...", and the authority had never heard about "any Negro authorities" in the Lindy Hop. See: Edgar T. Rouzeau, 'Star Dust', *New Journal and Guide*, August 31, 1940, p. 17.

Albert Butler	Society's leading dance instructor and author of numerous magazine articles on ballroom dancing.	1936 – 1938
Frances L. Chalif	A noted choreographer and ballroom director.	1939 – 1941
Dorothy Norman Cropper	Former president and honorary member of the New York Society Teachers of Dancing.	1939
Elsa Heilich	Past president of the New York Society of Teachers of Dancing and director of a well-known New Jersey studio.	1940 – 1943
Leon Leonidoff	Senior producer at Radio City Hall.	1935
Russell E. Markert	Founder of the Rockettes (the Radio City dance group) and Radio City's associate producer.	1935
Alma Morgan	Ballroom director at the Sawyer Studio.	1942
Arthur Murray	Head of the dancing school.	1935 – 1937
Fred Le Quorne	Dance creator and Coach.	1935, 1936
Thomas A. Riley	A Member of the faculty of the National School of Applied Arts ballroom, director of the famous Chalif School, and ballroom editor in the magazine 'Dance'.	1938 – 1943
Bernie Sager	America's No. 1 Lindy Hop and Collegiate Shag expert. The one "who popularized the rumba in America and is one of the country's leading authority of the Lindy Hop."	1937 – 1938 1940 – 1941
Donald Sawyer	Teacher and dancer.	1936 – 1939 and 1943

The competitors were judged by "world-renowned authorities in the professional dancing world" as the *Daily News* put it in 1935.[754] They came from various occupations like ballroom owner, producer, dancer, dance teacher, and choreographer. All the judges were males between 1935 and 1939, when two females were added to the judges. That lasted until 1943, when there was only one female among the judges. All the judges were whites. The judges can be seen in Table 6.

The judgements from all five judges were given by an Olympic point scoring system: posture and appearance; tempo and rhythm; proper execution; and originality.[755] Every individual judge gave five points for perfection, four points for good dancing, three points for fair dancing and two for poor dancing.[756] In a theory, a couple could achieve between 40 and 100 points as their total.[757]

As for the prizes for winners and top couples in 1935, there was a diamond ring for each winner, to second place couples, a belt with a gold buckle for the man and a diamond studded bracelet for the girl, and to third place couples, a silver cigarette case for the man and a combination compact-watch for the girl.[758] Winners also were awarded with a contract worth $100 a week and per pair for "appearances on Loew['s] theatre stages".[759]

It seems that the Harvest Moon Ball preliminaries concentrated on the New York area or areas very nearby. Thus, the contest was mainly organized in the New York metropolitan area. However, it is possible that there were competitors who were from outside the New York metropolitan area. There does not exist any participant lists with addresses. When sampling from years 1935, 1940, and 1943 preliminaries, the participant addresses were usually in the New York metropolitan area. There seemed to be only one exception, when a participant had an address in Washington D.C.[760]

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754 '18000 Pack Garden, Hail Dance Royalty', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20.

755 Ibid., p. 20.

756 '22,000 Cheer Victors In Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 24.

757 If one judge gave two points per a criterion of evaluation, it was at the minimum 40 points per couple. The *Daily News* article confirms that 100 points was the maximum points per couple. See: 'Harvest Moon Ball To Hail New Kings Of Dance Tonight', *Daily News*, August 25, 1937, p. 4.

758 'Jam Garden at Ball, 25000 Turned Away', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20.

759 'Throng at Ball Keeps 25,000 Out', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935 p. 3.

760 *Daily News* usually listed three top couples' addresses and professions. When sampling from years 1935, 1940 and 1943 preliminaries, the results are as follows: concerning the Palisades Amusement Park preliminary in 1935 and Budd's Lake, N. J. preliminary in 1940, and Roseland Ballroom preliminary in 1943, all participants addresses are from New York and New Jersey in the 1935 sample. See: 'Pick 11 Winners in Dance Contest', *Daily News*, August 3, 1935, p. 7. The same is with the 1940 sample. See: 'Harvest Ball Moon Shines at Budd's Lake', *Sunday News*, August 18, 1940, p. 67. The Roseland Ballroom preliminary in Viennese Waltz in 1943 had the most dancers from New York. Only one participant was from Washington D.C. See: 'Second Harvest Ball Prelim Tonight', *Daily News*, August 20, 1943, p. 11.

Table 7. The Harvest Moon Ball Preliminary Ballrooms Between 1935 and 1943.[761]

Ballroom	Location	Year
The Apollo Theater	Harlem, New York	1943
Blessed Sacrament Church Auditorium	94th Street and 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights, Queens	1939
Casino Ballroom, Playland	Rye, New York	1936
Casino Restaurant, Playland	Rye, New York	1937-1941
Club Fordham	The Bronx, New York	1937-1940
Club Fordham Pavilion	Budd's Lake, New Jersey	1938-1940
Colony Inn	Rockaway Point, New York	1935
Mardi Grass Ballroom, Palisades Amusement Park	Fort Lee, New Jersey	1936
Morris Park K. Of C. Ballroom	Queens, New York	1937
Olympic Park Ballroom	Irvington, New Jersey	1937
Palisades Amusement Park	Fort Lee, New Jersey	1935
Paramus Danceland	Paramus, New Jersey	1941
Playland Casino	Rye, New York	1935
Roseland Ballroom	Brooklyn, New York	1936-1937
Roseland Ballroom	Manhattan, New York	1935-1943
The Savoy Ballroom	Harlem, New York	1935-1942
St. Teresa's Church Auditorium	Brooklyn, New York	1938-1941
Vasa Temple	The Bronx, New York	1941-1943

[761] The table is based on articles: 'Go Into Your Dance! Tonight Is the Night', *Daily News*, August 1, 1935, p. 22. 'Elimination Dance Dates Announced', *Daily News*, August 3, 1936, p. 15. 'Where to Register For Harvest Ball', *Sunday News*, August 1, 1937, p. 6 C. 'Select First Couples For Harvest Ball', *Daily News*, August 11, 1938, p. 36; 'Where Preliminaries Will Be Judged', *Daily News*, August 11, 1938, p. 36; 'Harvest Ball Prelims Get Auspicious Start', *Daily News*, August 10, 1939, p. 20; 'The Time and The Place', *Daily News*, August 10, 1939, p. 20; 'Schedule for Ball Tryouts', *Daily News*, August 7, 1940, p. 46. 'First Harvest Moon Preliminary Tonight', *Daily News*, August 6, 1941, p. 48. 'First Harvest Ball Preliminary Tonight', *Daily News*, August 5, 1942, M 26; '7 Harlem Teams in Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 15, 1942, p. 20; 'Dozen Couples Waltz Way To Garden Finals', *Daily News*, August 8, 1942, p. 20. 'First Prelim Tonight For Harvest Mooners', *Daily News*, August 19, 1943, p. 39 B; 'Harvest Moon Finalist Chosen', *Daily News*, August 21, 1943, p. 6; '5 Jiving Teams Cut A Rug Into Harvest Final', *Daily News*, August 31, 1943, p. 36.

The Harvest Moon Ball preliminaries were kept in the ballrooms, as mentioned in Table 7. The concentration of the preliminary places also supports the idea that the contest concentrated on the New York metropolitan area.

The Harvest Moon Ball organization recognized the importance of the Savoy Ballroom and its dancing, when it included the ballroom in the metropolitan-wide contest. The ballroom had become one of the most important ballrooms in the New York area at the time. When considering Norma Miller's claim about the Harvest Moon Ball contest as a try to "refresh Harlem spirits after disastrous Harlem riot in 1935", it sounds exaggerated, when considering the fact that before the Harvest Moon Ball, there have been various Lindy Hop contests in Harlem and in New York, which also brought whites and African-Americans together. For example, there were contests such as the annual Savoy's National Lindy Hop Competition between 1931 and 1935, and "the black and white lindy hop contest" in Roseland Ballroom in March 1933. These are discussed in the chapters 'The Savoy Lindy Hoppers' First Generation: George Snowden – The Unsung Hero' and 'The Rockland Palace Dance Marathon in 1928'. The most recent of the contests were the Apollo Theater racially mixed contests which are discussed in this chapter. The current contests could not prevent the riot, so why try the same again, if the idea for the Harvest Moon Ball was to refresh spirits.

4.4.2 Participants and Audience

Table 8. The Harvest Moon Ball Couples Between 1935 and 1941.

Year	Different couples	Participated in the Lindy Hop	The Lindy Hop couples from the Savoy Ballroom
1935	82	20	6
1936	67	20	8
1937	73	16	8
1938	69	16	7
1939	63	15	7
1940	57	15	7
1941	55	15	7[762]

[762] The table is based on the sources as follows: concerning 1935: '18000 Pack Garden For Dance Final', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 3. After recounting the couples from the program, the 82 different couples seems to correct. 'Program - The News Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 28th-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 28, 1935, p. 33. See also: 'Program - The News Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 28th-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 28, 1935, p. 33. 'Pick Harlem Dance Champs In Last Prelim', *Daily News*, August 10, 1935, B7. Concerning 1936: '22,000 Crowd Arena to See Dance Finals', *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 3; 'Program – The News Second Annual Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 26, 1936-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 26, 1936, p. 28; 'Lindy

The numbers of the civilian couples which participated in the Harvest Moon Ball between 1935 and 1941 are mentioned in Table 8. After that, the servicemen divisions were added to the contest.

Hoppers Vie For Spot In Harvest Moon', *Daily News*, August 15, 1936, p. 26. Concerning 1937: '22,000 in Garden Cheer Winners of Harvest Ball', *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, p. 8; 'Third Annual Harvest Moon Ball', Madison Square Garden, August 25, 1937 program; 'Harlem Hoppers Try Lindy Hop Peckin' ', *Daily News*, August 14, 1937, p. 13. Concerning 1938: '30,000 Storm Ball Finals at Garden', *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4. 'Fourth Annual Harvest Moon Ball', Madison Square Garden, August 31, 1938 program; '14 Harlem Dancers Advance to Finals', *Daily News*, August 13, 1938, p. 8. Concerning 1939: '20,000 See Harvest Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 32. According to the articles concerning the Harvest Moon Ball preliminaries there were 15 Lindy Hop couples in the finals. See for Roseland Ballroom in Manhattan: '3 Lindy Hop Couples Win Harvest Chance', *Daily News*, August 18, 1939, p. 31; for The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem: '7 Lindy Hop Teams Win Harvest Tests', *Daily News*, August 26, 1939, p. 25; for Casino-Restaurant in Playland, Rye (1 The Lindy Hop couple): 'Harvest Ball Prelims Get Auspicious Start', *Daily News*, August 10, 1939, p. 20; for the Blessed Sacrament Church Auditorium (1 The Lindy Hop couple): 'Queens Pairs Compete For Dance Finals', August 11, 1939, p. 32; for the Club Fordham Pavilion on Budd's Lake (1 The Lindy Hop couple): '100 Jerseyites Dance In Harvest Prelim', *Daily News*, August 13, 1939, p. 67; for Club Fordham in the Bronx (1 The Lindy Hop couple): 'Select Bronx Victors In Harvest Prelims', *Sunday News*, August 20, 1939, p. 71; for St. Teresa's Church auditorium (1 The Lindy Hop couple): 'Brooklyn Teams Go To Harvest Finals', *Daily News*, August 21, 1939, p. 17. Concerning 1940: 'Harvest Moon Ball Attracts Garden Crowd', *Daily News*, August 29, 1940, p. 4. According to the articles concerning the Harvest Moon Ball preliminaries there were 15 The Lindy Hop couples in the finals. See for Casino Restaurant at Playland, Rye (1 The Lindy Hop couple): 'First Winners in Harvest Ball', *Daily News*, August 8, 1940, p. M 42; for Club Fordham Pavilion, Budd's Lake, N. J. (1 The Lindy Hop couple): 'Harvest Ball Moon Shines at Budd's Lake', *Daily News*, August 18, 1940, p. 67; for Club Fordham in the Bronx (1 The Lindy Hop couple): 'Eight Bronx Couples Win to Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 22, 1940, p. 47 M; for Roseland Ballroom in Manhattan (5 The Lindy Hop couples): 'Lindy Hoppers Win Way to Harvest Ball', *Daily News*, August 23, 1940, p. 16; for The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem (7 The Lindy Hop couples): 'Lindy Hoppers Hop To Harvest Finals', *Daily News*, August 10, 1940, p. 17. Concerning 1941: '20'000 Jam Garden to See Harvest Ball Final Winners', *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. 4. 'Ed Sullivan to Call Harvest Ball Turns', *Daily News*, August 5, 1941, p. 27. The articles claim that there were up to 85 couples, but that is a mistake. There were only 55 couples when different couples from the preliminary articles are summed up. See: Lindy hop ('7 Lindy Hop Teams Winners at Savoy', *Daily News*, August 7, 1941, p. 43; 'Happy Party Opens Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 7, 1941, p. 43; 'Eight Fox Trot Teams Win To Garden Finals', *Daily News*, August 8, 1941, p. 29B; 'Crack Dancers Meet In N. J. Preliminary', *Sunday News*, August 10, 1941, p. 29; 'Bronx Entrants Make Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 11, 1941, p. 10; 'Harvest Ball Tickets Gone in Record Rush', *Daily News*, August 12, 1941, p. 38; '11 Tango Teams Win; Finals the Next Stop', *Daily News*, August 14, 1941, p. 41; '6 Ball Finalists Improve Conga', *Daily News*, August 16, 1941, p. 10; 'Brooklyn Shines at Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 18, 1941, p. 15; '16 Waltz to Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 19, 1941, p. 35; 'Savoy Lindy Hop Sway Menaced This Year', *Daily News*, August 21, 1941, p. 23. There were 15 The Lindy Hop couples in the finals. See: 'Savoy Lindy Hop Sway Menaced This Year', *Daily News*, August 21, 1941, p. 20. For The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem: '7 Lindy Hop Teams Winners at Savoy', *Daily News*, August 9, 1941, p. 6.

In 1942, when the servicemen divisions were added, there were thirty-six different civilian couples and sixteen different servicemen based teams.[763] There were eleven couples in the civilian Jitterbug Jive division. Seven of them were from the Savoy Ballroom. In addition to that, there were five couples in the Servicemen Jitterbug Jive division.[764] One of the latter couples was African -American. The female partner of the couple might have been from Harlem.[765] In 1943, there were thirty-seven different civilian couples and thirteen servicemen based couples.[766] There were nine couples in the civilian Jitterbug Jive division, from which five were from Harlem's Apollo Theater preliminary. In addition to that, there were four couples in the Servicemen Jitterbug Jive division.[767]

The total amount of the final couples figure seems to have been shrinking between 1935 and 1943. During 1935 and 1936, there were 100 places per year for the final couples in the contest[768]. The total amount of the final couples shrank from 73 in 1937, to 50 in 1943, when the civilian and servicemen-based couples are summed together.

The amount of the final couples depended on how different couples managed to get into the finals from the prelims. In 1935, there were a total of 2,750 dancers in the Harvest Moon Ball preliminaries. That means 1,375 couples. There were places in different championship divisions only for 100 couples. The Savoy Ballroom preliminary contained 30 Lindy Hop couples from which six couples were chosen to go to the finals.[769] The Lindy Hop preliminary of the Roseland Ballroom in Manhattan had 68 couples at the time. Ten of them were chosen into the finals.[770] Thus, there were more white than African-American Lindy Hoppers in the preliminaries in 1935. That suggests the popularity of the dance outside Harlem. Otherwise, in the Roseland Ballroom preliminaries, there could have been from

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763 'Biggest, Best Harvest Moon Ball Is On Tonight', *Daily News*, August 26, 1942, p. 8.

764 '7 Harlem Teams in Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 15, 1942, p. 20; '20,000 See Ball Finals; Big Winners To Wed', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 4.

765 There is no address of the male partner of the couple. The female partner lived at 30 Manhattan Avenue. That could be near the West 101st Street and Manhattan Avenue, which was in the south part of Harlem or very nearby Harlem depending on the definition of Harlem. The address could have been also in Brooklyn. See: 'Service Men Show They Can Dance', *Daily News*, August 25, 1942, p. 33 M.

766 Howard Whitman, Finalists in Harvest Moon Ball Tap Out Victory Rhythm', *Daily News*, September 9, 1943, p. 4.

767 There were nine civilian Jitterbug Jive couples and four servicemen based Jitterbug Jive couples in the finals. See for Vasa Temple (1 Jitterbug Jive couple): 'Harvest Moon Finalists Chosen', *Daily News*, August 21, 1943, p. 6; for Apollo Theater in Harlem: '5 Jiving Teams Cut A Rug Into Harvest Final', *Daily News*, August 31, 1943, p. 36; for Roseland Ballroom in Manhattan (3 Jitterbug Jive couples): 'Jive Finalists Hand Harlem the Jitters', *Daily News*, September 2, 1943, p. 39 M; for the Servicemen Jitterbug Jive division (4 Jitterbug Jive couples): 'Service Men Set Pace For the Harvest Ball', *Daily News*, September 3, 1943, M 18.

768 'Program - The News Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 28th-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 28, 1935, p. 33; 'Program – The News Second Annual Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 26, 1936-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 26, 1936, p. 28.

769 'Pick Harlem Dance Champs In Last Prelim', *Daily News*, August 10, 1935, B7.

770 '68 Dance Pairs Win Lindy Hop Ovation', *Daily News*, August 9, 1935, p. 12.

about 100 couples to 291 couples in one prelim competition and possibly only seven to thirteen couples were chosen into the finals in Madison Square Garden.[771]

The *Daily News* explained the difference between earlier years and 1942, "Normally there are 71 places for finalists in the civilian division, but the individual couples were so outstanding in this year's preliminaries that only 36 teams will actually be competing. Many qualified in two or more of the five championship divisions"[772].

It also seems that the interest in the Lindy Hop, and later in the Jitterbug Jive of the Harvest Moon Ball at the Savoy Ballroom, stayed quite the same from year to year, when compared with the amount of the chosen couples. The ballroom was able to choose steadily the same amount of couples from the preliminaries. The other ballrooms had reduced the couple amount from twenty to fifteen during the years, which likely indicated the reduced interest in the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive in those ballrooms.

When comparing the audience statistics from the years, the popularity of the Harvest Moon Ball did not wane. Originally, the Harvest Moon Ball was to take place at the Central Park Mall on August 15, 1935, but the contest was canceled, because according to the *Daily News*, "an unprecedented crowd of 100,000 spectators filled every square foot of the Central Park Mall", and "that made dancing on the Mall impossible".[773] The event was re-organized in Madison Square Garden in August 1935, and it gathered about 20,000 people as the audience. 10,000-25,000 were turned away from Madison Square Garden in that year, because the place filled up.[774]

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771 '582 Waltz In Preliminary; 12 Teams Win', *Daily News*, August 7, 1935, p. 20; '10 Tango Teams in Harvest Moon Finals', Daily News, August 17, 1938, p. 22; 'Seven Waltz Teams In Harvest Finals', *Daily News*, August 12, 1939, p. 21; 'Fox Trot Teams Trot Into Finals', *Daily News*, August 14, 1942, p. M1. According to the 1935 article there were 582 dancers, which means 291 couples. According to the 1938 article there were 146 teams. According to the 1939 article there were 160 couples in the 1939 preliminary, and according to the 1942 article there were nearly 100 couples in the preliminary.

772 'Biggest, Best Harvest Moon Ball Is On Tonight', *Daily News*, August 26, 1942, p. 8.

773 '100,000 Throng Mall and Dance Final Is Put On', *Daily News*, August 16, 1935, p. 3.

774 'Jam Garden at Ball, 25000 Turned Away', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20; '18000 Pack Garden, Hail Dance Royalty', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20; '20000 Hail Royal Couple of Dance at Harvest Ball, *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 3; '20000 Acclaim Royal Couple at News Ball', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20. See also: Ed Sullivan, 'Broadway + +', *The Washington Post*, August 31, 1935, p. 9. Obviously, the correct number of the audience was 20,000.

Table 9. The Harvest Moon Ball Audiences Between 1936 and 1943.[775]

	Audience in the contest	Left outside the building
1936	22,000	From thousands to 20,000
1937	23,500	Thousands
1938	20,000	10,000 – 15,000
1939	20,000	5,000
1940	20,000	Thousands
1941	20,000	At least hundreds
1942	20,000	Unknown
1943	20,000	At least 5,000

The Harvest Moon Ball continued yearly in Madison Square Garden. There were audiences between 1936 and 1943 as mentioned in Table 9. The figures prove for the steady popularity of the contest between 1935 and 1943. The audiences consisted of both whites and African-Americans. Like *Daily News* put it in 1935, concerning the audience: ”spectators from all parts of the metropolitan area and from all walks of life…” Celebrities and entertainers were part of the audiences. For example, there could be seen, Mayor LaGuardia, Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire, Mickey Rooney, and Judy Garland. Also tap dancers like Bill Robinson, Ray Bolger, and ballroom dancers like Irene Castle were part of the show and the contests.[776] All this proves the importance of the event: it was worth showing up, and it caught a lot of attention.

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775 The table is based on articles: ’22,000 Jam Arena For Harvest Dance’, *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 24. Jack Turcott, ’22,000 Cheer Harvest Moon Dance Winners’, *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 3. The latter article claims that there were left 20,000 outside the Garden. There is the label text of the picture, which talks about “thousands”, who were left outside the Garden. See: The picture in the last page of the *Daily News* issue, *Daily News*, August 27, 1936. Concerning 1937 see: ’23,500 See Harvest Moon Ball’, *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, p. 64 and Jack Turcott, ’23,500 in Garden Cheer Winners of Harvest Ball’, *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, p. 3. Concerning 1938 see: according to different *Daily News* editions from September 1, 1938, 30,000 – 35,000 people tried to get in the Madison Square Garden in 1938. 20,000 of them got in. See: Roger Dakin, ’35,000 Storm Ball Finals at Garden’, *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4 and Roger Dakin, ‘ 30,000 Storm Ball Finals at Garden’, *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4. See also: Roger Dakin, ’20,000 Cheer Ball Finals at Garden’, *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4. Concerning 1939 see: Roger Dakin, ’20,000 Hails Winners In Harvest Moon Ball’, *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 4. Concerning 1940 see: William Murtha, ’20,000 See Engaged Couple Win Ball Title’, *Daily News*, August 29, 1940, p. 4, and the centerfold picture, where it is stated ‘...Other thousands were disappointed’, *Daily News*, August 29, 1940, pp. 26-27. Concerning 1941 see: William Murtha, ‘Harvest Moon Crowd Lays Siege to Garden’, *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. 4 and ’20,000 Jam Garden to See Harvest Ball Final Winners’, *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. 4. Concerning 1942 see: William Murtha, ’20,000 See Ball Finals; Big Winners To Wed’, *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 4. Concerning 1943 see: Howard Whitman, ’Finalists in Harvest Ball Tap Out Victory Rhythm’, *Daily News*, September 9, 1943, p. 4 and William Murtha, ‘Not Even SRO is Left At Harvest Ball Finals’, *Daily News*, September 9, 1943, p. 6.

776 Concerning African-Americans and whites in the audiences see for example: the picture in the middle of the page with the label text ”The mobs arrived early...”, *Daily News*,

4.4.3 The Harlem Success in the Harvest Moon Ball

The Savoy Ballroom organized the preliminaries every year between 1935 and 1942, but not only in the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive. Between years 1935 and 1938 there were preliminaries in other dances, in addition to the Lindy Hop, which proves for the versatility of the ballroom repertoire. Between 1935 and 1936, there were preliminaries in the foxtrot, tango, rhumba, and waltz. In 1937, there were preliminaries in the foxtrot, rhumba, and waltz. In 1938, there were preliminaries in the foxtrot, tango, and waltz.

In 1935, there were two couples chosen in the foxtrot, tango, and waltz and one couple in rhumba. At least one couple, which won the rhumba and tango preliminaries in 1935, was a white/Latin American couple. In 1936 and 1937, there was only one couple per division chosen: one couple won rhumba and another couple won the rest (the foxtrot, waltz and tango in 1936, and the foxtrot and waltz in 1937). Both couples were also winners in the Lindy Hop preliminary in 1936. In 1938, one couple won the foxtrot and waltz preliminaries. Another couple won the tango preliminary. However, the couples did not succeed in the finals, because they did not place among the three best dancers in the championship divisions between 1935 and 1938.[777]

Concerning the Lindy Hop and Jitterbug Jive (the latter from 1942 onwards), the preliminary winners of the Savoy Ballroom succeeded every year between 1935 and 1942, to win the championship in the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive. In 1935, the Savoy Lindy Hoppers placed first and third, when Leon James and Edith Matthews won the

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August 29, 1935, p. 32 and 'They'll be Harvest Mooning.' picture, *Daily News*, August 12, 1941, p. 24. See concerning generally the crowd: Jack Turcott, 'Throng at Ball Keeps 25,000 Out', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 3. See concerning the celebrities and entertainers: 'Harvest Moon Rises On Finals Tonight', *Daily News*, August 26, 1936, p. 28; Jack Turcott, 'Harvest Moon Ball To Hail New Kings Of Dance Tonight', *Daily News*, August 25, 1937, p. 4; '23,500 Cheer Victors In Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily* News, August 26, 1937, p. 26; the picture with the label 'Expert', *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 31; 'Mickey, Judy at Harvest Moon Ball Tonight', August 30, 1939, M40; William Murtha, 'Finalists Vie for Harvest Ball Title On Wednesday', *Daily News*, August 28, 1940, p. 4.

[777] Concerning the white/Latin couple see: a picture on page 15 labeled as 'Harlem Dance Winners.', *Daily News*, August 10, 1935, 15. The couple looks like white or Latin American. Otherwise see: 'Pick Harlem Dance Champs In Last Prelim', *Daily News*, August 10, 1935, B7; 'Lindy Hoppers Vie For Spot In Harvest Moon', *Daily News*, August 15, 1936, p. 26; 'Harlem Hoppers Try Lindy Hop Peckin' ', *Daily News*, August 14, 1937, p. 13; '14 Harlem Dancers Advance to Finals', *Daily News*, August 13, 1938, p. 8. None of the couples, which were mentioned in the results of the preliminaries, were not among the three best couples in the results of the finals. See: '20,000 Acclaim Royal Couple at News Ball', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20; 'Champions At Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, pp. 3 and 24; '23,500 in Garden Cheer Winners of Harvest Ball', *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, pp. 3 and 26; '20,000 Cheer Ball Finals at Garden', *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4.

first prize, and Frank Manning and Margie 'Maggie' Millan won the third prize. The Roseland Ballroom couple (white), John Kay and Rita Mullen, were second in the Lindy Hop.[778] In 1936, the Savoy Lindy Hoppers placed first and second as George Greenidge and Ella Gibson won the first prize, and Willamae Ricker and Snookie Beasley were second. The Roseland Ballroom couple (white), Harry Rosenberg and Rose Steinberg placed third.[779]

Table 10. The Savoy Ballroom Harvest Moon Ball Winners Between 1937 and 1942.

1937:[780]	
	1. Eddie Davis and Gladys Crowder 2. Joe Daniels and Joyce James 3. Wilda Crawford and Ernest Harris[ton]
1938:[781]	
	1. Albert Minns and Mildred Pollard 2. Joe Daniels and Joyce James

[778] '20,000 Acclaim Royal Couple at News Ball', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20. Norma Miller states in her book, *Swingin' At The Savoy,* that "The Savoy Lindy Hoppers took first, second, and third prizes" in the Lindy Hop division of the 1935 Harvest Moon Ball contest. See: Miller 1996, pp. 81-82. As the author of the study has gone through the *Daily News* results concerning the Harvest Moon Ball on August 28, 1935, those results concerning the Lindy Hop division are the same in the different *Daily News* 'Final' editions on August 29, 1935. There is no sign of corrections in the later *Daily News* issues. Because it is possible that the incorrect results were reprinted in the different editions of the same day, the author of the study has gone through *Daily News* issues between August 29 and September 7, 1935 when the *Daily News* reported the Harvest Moon Ball winners' Loew's State Theatre performance. Concerning the Lindy Hop in the Loew's State Theatre performance, only the Champions, Leon James and Edith Matthews, performed. See: 'Theatre Crowds Hail News Dance Winners', *Daily News*, September 7, 1935, p. 25. There is no sign of the correction in the results between August 29 and September 7, 1935. The couple, John Kay and Rita Mullen, qualified into the finals from the Roseland Ballroom preliminary. See: '10 Pairs in Lindy Hop, 16 in Rhumba Finals', *Daily News*, August 9, 1935, p. 12.

[779] 'Champions At Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, pp. 3 and 24. Harry Rosenberg and Rose Steinberg qualified from the Roseland Ballroom preliminary. See: 'Lindy Hoppers Put On Original Show', *Daily News*, August 12, 1936, p. 24.

[780] The 1937 Lindy Hop winners: '23,500 Acclaim New Royalty of Dancing', *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, p. 26. Ernest Harris, who is mentioned as the winner with Wilda Crawford in the article and a winner of the Savoy preliminary in 1937, is possibly Ernest Harriston who was chosen with Wilda Crawford into the finals in the Savoy Ballroom preliminary also in 1938. See: '14 Harlem Dancers Advance to Finals', *Daily News*, August 13, 1938, p. 8. For 1937 see: 'Harlem Lindy Hoppers Try Lindy Hop Peckin' ', *Daily News*, August 14, 1937, p. 14. Also Frankie Manning remembered Ernest Harrison. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 247.

[781] The 1938 Lindy Hop winners: '20,000 Cheer Ball Finals at Garden, *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4. According to the article, the male winner was George Ricker. That was likely Billy Ricker who was Norma Miller's long time dance partner. Bunny Miller is Norma Miller as she was called as Bunny. See: Norma Miller interviewed by Ernie Smith, September 7-8, 1992, Smithsonian Institute Jazz Oral History Project.

	3. George Ricker (likely Billy Ricker) and Norma 'Bunny' Miller
1939:[782]	
	1. Russell Williams and Cornelia 'Connie' Hill 2. George Gren and Norma Miller 3. Frank Manning and Lucille Middleton
1940:[783]	
	1. Thomas Lee and Wilda Crawford 2. Billy Ricker and Esther Washington 3. Walter Johnson and Mae Miller
1941:[784]	

[782] The 1939 Lindy Hop winners:'20,000 Hail Winners In Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 19.

[783] The winners were listed in the article: '20,000 See Engaged Couple Win Ball Title', *Daily News*, August 29, 1940, p. 4. Norma Miller states in her book 'Swingin' At The Savoy' that "Tops [Thomas Lee] and Wilda [Crawford] took first prize, Frankie [Manning] and Ann [Johnson] came in second, and Billy [Ricker] and I, third." See Miller 1996, p. 156. It seems that Norma Miller remembers wrong about Manning and her placing in the contest. This is supported by the *Daily News*, which reported on the Savoy Ballroom preliminary, that Norma Miller danced with George Gren, Billy Ricker danced with Esther Washington, and Frankie Manning danced with Anne Johnson, who is likely Ann Johnson. The *Daily News* also listed the couples in its 'List of Winners' of the Savoy Ballroom preliminary exactly with the names. Even Anne Johnson was mentioned, not Ann Johnson. See: 'Lindy Hoppers Hop To Harvest Finals', *Daily News*, August 10, 1940, p. 17. Secondly, the *Daily News* reported on the Loew's State Theatre performance at the end of August 1940, where all the Harvest Moon Ball Champions performed, that "The fast moving show closed as usual, with the Lindy Hoppers from Harlem bringing down the house. Wilda Crawford...and Thomas Lee..., abetted by two other speedy teams which failed to place at the Garden, had the audience on the verge of hysteria." See: 'Theatre Hails Harvest Moon Ball Winners', *Daily News*, August 30, 1940, p. 4. As Norma Miller also tells about the Loew's State Theatre event, where she and Frankie, with their partners, performed with Lee and Crawford, it is likely that she remembers wrong regarding Frank Manning and her qualifications in the 1940 Harvest Moon Ball. See: Miller 1996, pp. 156-157. Indeed, the wrong results seemed to be reported in *Variety* and *The Billboard*, too, when they reported on the Loew's Theater performance. *The Billboard* reported that "The winning team (Thomas Lee and Wilda Crawford) is joined by the second and third prize winners in the finale". See: 'State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 7, 1940, p. 14. *Variety* stated, "The lindyhop winners are Thomas Lee and Wilda Crawford, augmented by Frankie Manning and Ann Johnson., who placed second, and George Green and Norma Miller, third." See: 'House Reviews - State, N.Y.', *Variety*, September 4, 1940, p. 46. Considering the *Daily News* sponsorship and reporting on the contest and its aftermath, it is unlikely that the *Daily News* got the results wrong in this case. The author of the study has gone through *Daily News* issues from that time period and has not found any mention of different results. Thus, it is unlikely that the results were reported incorrectly in the *Daily News*. It is possible that *Variety* and *The Billboard* announced the couples as second and third place winners, based on a assumption about their placing in the contest, because the couples were performing in the show. Otherwise the reason for why "speedy teams which failed to place at the Garden" (Manning and Miller with their partners) were added to the Loew's Theater performance is unknown.

	1. Bill Dotson and Rebecca Bruner 2. Walter Johnson and Mae Miller 3. James Outlaw and Alyce Pearson
1942:[785]	
	1. Paul Chadwell and Theresa Mason 2. James Walton and Pinkey Andrews 3. Alfred Bethel and Jerry De Moska

If the first two years of the contest had given hope for white Lindy Hoppers for winning the Lindy Hop championship, the next six years were hard for them, because the Savoy Lindy Hoppers took all three prizes between 1937 and 1942 in the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive division (See Table 10).

In 1943, a white Roseland ballroom couple, James Riccardi and Rose Romona, won the civilian Jitterbug Jive division for the first time. The second couple in the division was also from the Roseland Ballroom, Vic Marsalona and Julie Denors. The third couple was from Harlem's Apollo Theatre preliminary, James Brown and Lila Watkins.[786]

According to Joel Dinerstein, the Lindy Hop was always a success in both the Harvest Moon Ball and the Loew's State Theatre performances, where the champions performed. In 1936, the second place couple in the Lindy Hop division also received a one-week contract in Loew's State Theatre. In 1938, all three top Lindy Hop couples appeared in the Loew's State Theatre show[787]. Also, later in 1940 and 1941, three Harlem Lindy Hop couples performed in the show.[788] When comparing the *Variety* and *The Billboard* reviews of Loew's State Theater performances, which included Harvest Moon Ball winners, it seems that the Lindy Hoppers were appreciated varyingly among critics during the years, although their popularity among the audiences seemed to continue through the years.

In 1935, Sidney Harris, who reviewed the show in *The Billboard*, wrote, "those amateurs stole the show from the professionals, especially that colored team of

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784 The 1941 Lindy Hop winners: '20,000 See Harvest Ball Finals', *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. 37 B.

785 The 1942 Jitterbug Jive winners: '20,000 See Ball Finals; Big Winners to Wed', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 4.

786 '22-Year-Olds Cop Crowns In Harvest Moon Finals', *Daily News*, September 9, 1943, p. 4. See for the preliminaries: '5 Jiving Teams Cut A Rug Into Harvest Final', *Daily News*, August 31, 1943, p. 36 and 'Jive Finalists Hand Harlem the Jitters', *Daily News*, September 2, 1943, 39 M.

787 Dinerstein 2003, pp. 272-274.

788 'State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 7, 1940, p. 14. 'House Reviews - State, N.Y.', *Variety*, September 4, 1940, p. 46. 'Night Clubs-Vaudeville – State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 6, 1941, p. 23.

Lindy hoppers."[789] Similarly *The Variety* commented on the Lindy Hoppers in the Loew's State show in 1936, "Their dancing is the Savoy Ballroom (Harlem) style: plenty hot and lowdown, and surefire for any audience."[790] *Variety* reported that concerning the 1937 show, "The shagsters and lindyhoppers" had to "oblige with extra sessions invariably". Also, Sidney Harris from *The Billboard* stated that Lindy Hoppers got the best applause, but "the Shag kids ran them close."[791] Thus, both African-American (the Lindy Hoppers) and white (the Collegiate Shag) dancers seemed to succeed in the show.

The 1938 show seemed to divide the reviewers. Daniel Richman from *The Billboard* commented that concerning the top three Lindy Hop couples, "Only teams to show any sign of spirit or free effortless stepping were the Lindy Hoppers…almost make[s] the observer forget the foregoing puerile attempts at tangoing, waltzing, fox-trotting etc."[792] *Variety* magazine disliked all the winners of the contest as they were showing nothing unusual. According to the magazine, none of the winners rated a professional break.[793] Similarly, Paul Ackerman from *The Billboard* evaluated the 1939 show and its Harvest Moon Ball winners, from whom none "showed professional caliber", but the "audience followed their gyrations with terrific interest and applauded vociferously."[794]

The 1940 show seemed to be generally more appreciated by the magazines, as *Variety* considered "current dancers" as "far superior" than the year before in other divisions, but in the Lindy Hop, where "the same degree of sameness prevails…in the colored lindyhoppers." However, their "whirlwind, knockabout dancing" was "still sufficiently sensational to give to the show a terrific applause finish." Sam Honigberg from *The Billboard* praised the Lindy Hoppers as "of the six winning couples" only they furnished "any degree of entertainment" by figuratively tearing "the stage apart with a super jitterbugging routine."[795]

Paul Denis from *The Billboard* stated laconically concerning the 1941 show, that "the colored Lindy Hoppers", who closed the show, were "of course, the liveliest of the bunch."[796] In addition to the other reviews during the years, the white Lindy Hoppers, who won the 1943 Jitterbug Jive, were considered interestingly as "an

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789 Sidney Harris, 'Vaudeville Reviews – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 14, 1935, p. 17.

790 ' 'Variety House Reviews – Harvest Moon Winners (12)', *Variety*, September 2, 1936, p. 57.

791 Variety House Reviews – State, N. Y.', *Variety,* September 1, 1937, p. 31. Sidney Harris, 'Night Clubs – Vaudeville – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 4, 1937, p. 16.

792 Daniel Richman, 'Vaudeville Reviews – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 10, 1938, p. 20.

793 'Variety House Reviews – Loew's State, N. Y.', *Variety*, September 7, 1938, p. 46.

794 Paul Ackerman, 'Vaudeville Reviews – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 9, 1939, p. 20.

795 'House Reviews – State, N. Y.', *Variety*, September 4, 1940, p. 46. Sam Honigberg, 'Vaudeville Reviews – State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 7, 1940, p. 14.

796 Paul Denis, 'Vaudeville Reviews – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 6, 1941, p. 23.

exception" compared to other teams as they showed "possibilities for professional engagements on their own" as *Variety* put it in its 1943 show review.[797] This may indicate how the Lindy Hop was getting more acceptance among the critics. Another noteworthy feature in the Loew's Theatre reviews is that the Lindy Hoppers were usually named in those reviews. That also indicates critics' appreciation of the Lindy Hoppers.[798]

The approval of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers in the Harvest Moon Ball, however, was not universal. *The American Dancer/Dance* magazine reported almost annually on the contest, but its articles were mostly general reports about the event, with a few exceptions, especially when the magazine analyzed the score system of the contest in 1937, and the position of the Lindy Hop division in the contest in 1941.[799] In the latter article, Helen Dzhermolinska described how the program should have been divided into two sections: "exhibition ballroom dancing, and the Lindy hop (as danced by the Harlem contingent)." Dzhermolinska blamed the Lindy Hoppers on having too bewildering and rude costumes, "much too free movement" and "low comedy". Because of the Lindy Hoppers, she suspected that "all the judges of having to be rushed in desperate haste to the nearest sanatorium at the expense of the *Daily News*." However, she admitted that to the howling audience, there "was no one on the stage but the negro winners of the Lindy hop", when the Lindy Hop Champions "postured and clowned through a Viennese waltz in the finest traditions of the circus" during the all-around (grand) winner round, where all the Champions were on the floor at the same time. To her satisfaction, the judges had a different choice for grand winners.[800] The consequences of the criticism of the Lindy Hop were reflected in the *Daily News*' change of the Lindy Hop division into Jitterbug Jive in 1942. This is discussed in the chapter 'Harvest Moon Ball in the Daily News Articles'.

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797 'House Reviews – State, N. Y.', *Variety*, September 15, 1943, p. 54.

798 See for example: Sidney Harris, 'Vaudeville Reviews – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 14, 1935, p. 17; 'Variety House Reviews – Harvest Moon Winners (12)', *Variety*, September 2, 1936, p. 57; Sidney Harris, 'Night Clubs – Vaudeville – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 4, 1937, p. 16; 'Variety House Reviews – Loew's State, N. Y.', *Variety*, September 7, 1938, p. 46; 'House Reviews - State, N.Y.', *Variety*, September 4, 1940, p. 46; Paul Denis, 'Vaudeville Reviews – Loew's State, New York', *The Billboard*, September 6, 1941, p. 23.

799 *The American Dancer/Dance* magazine did not report on the Harvest Moon Ball in 1935 and 1938. Otherwise it reported every year between 1936 and 1943. See: Thomas E. Parson, 'The Ballroom Observer – A Forum of the Social Dance', *The American Dancer*, September, 1936, pp. 30 and 37. Thomas E. Parson, 'The Ballroom Observer – A Forum of Social Dance', *The American Dancer*, October, 1937, pp. 16-17 and 38. Thomas E. Parson, 'The Ballroom Observer – A Forum of Social Dance', *The American Dancer*, October, 1939, p. 14. Thomas E. Parson, 'The Ballroom Observer – A Forum of Social Dance', *The American Dancer*, October, 1940, p. 16. Helen Dzhermolinska, 'Harvest Moon Madness', *The American Dancer*, October, 1941, pp. 9 and 27. 'Harvest Moon Ball Comes Back to Town', *Dance*, October, 1942, pp. 14-15 and 29-30. 'The Harvest Moon Ball', *Dance*, October, 1943, p. 2.

800 Helen Dzhermolinska, 'Harvest Moon Madness', *The American Dancer*, October, 1941, pp. 9 and 27.

4.4.4 Harvest Moon Ball in the Daily News Pictures

It seems that no other New York City newspaper reported as frequently and largely about the contest than the *Daily News* between 1935 and 1943. As already stated, there are examples from different newspapers and magazines, where the contest was occasionally discussed.[801] The *Daily News* published pictures about the Harvest Moon Ball finals in its different issues during years. When sampling from three different years: 1935, 1939, and 1942, it seems that the *Daily News* published pictures where can be seen the finalists during the finals and the Loew's State Theatre performances, and between these events, as follows.

In 1935, there were, at least 36 different pictures, which differed from each other, and the same pictures could be published in various issues and editions. Seven pictures from the pictures described the African-American Lindy Hoppers. Two of the seven pictures were group pictures which included also all the white Champions.[802] Accordingly, the *Daily News* published at least nine different pictures in 1939. None of the pictures described the Lindy Hoppers.[803] In 1942, the paper published, at least 23 different pictures about the finalists, from which three pictures

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[801] Additionally see for example: Ed Sullivan, 'Broadway + +', *The Washington Post*, August 31, 1935, p. 9, 'Heads Loew's State Bill', *The New York Times*, September 1, 1939, p. 25; 'Speaking Of Pictures.....Pavlova Never Danced Like This', *LIFE*, September 15, 1941, pp. 10-11; 'Acclaim for John Boles Highlights N. Y. Finals Of Harvest Moon Ball', *Variety*, September 15, 1943, p. 51.

[802] **Two pictures**: 'Terpsichorean Royalty Crowded At The News Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, 'Final edition', August 29, 1935, p. 32-33; **three pictures**: Jack Turcott, '20,000 Hail Royal Couple of Dance; Crowd on Street', *Daily News,* August 29, 1935, p. 3; **three pictures** (**one Lindy Hop picture**): "They hopped their way to fame.", "Hail the new king and queen Terpsichore.", "Swanee Taylor (left), master of ceremonies...", *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 32-33; **10 pictures** (**two Lindy Hop pictures**): *Daily News*, 'Final edition', August 29, 1935, pp. 32-33; **one picture**: 'Dance King And Queen', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, front page; **one picture**: 'Does New York Like To Dance?', *Daily News*, 'Final edition', August 29, 1935, back page; **one picture**: 'Waiting for the Call', *Daily News*, 'Final edition', August 29, 1935, p. 20; **one picture**: 'Does New York Like The Dance?', *Daily News*, 'Final edition', August 29, 1935, front page; **one picture**: 'Best in The News Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 30, 1935, front page; **two pictures**: 'Fruits of Victory', *Daily News,* August 30, 1935, p. 2. There was only one article, but the pictures in the article were different in the different editions.; **seven pictures** (**two Lindy Hop pictures**): 'New York Takes Harvest Moon Ball To Its Heart', *Daily News*, 'Final edition', August 30, 1935, p. 30; **one picture (the Lindy Hop Champions with other Champions)**: 'Harvest Mooners Shine Tonight', *Daily News*, September 6, 1935, p. 34; **one picture**: 'Prize Dancers Head Theatre Revue Today', *Daily News*, September 6, 1935, p. 54; **one picture (the Lindy Hop Champions with other Champions)**: 'Reaping Dance Harvest', *Daily News*, September 6, 1935, p. 54; **one picture**: 'Shine Between Acts.', *Daily News*, September 7, 1935, p. 14.

[803] **Two pictures**: '20,000 Cheer – As Harvest Moon Ball Sells Out Garden Again', *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 24; **One picture**: 'Shaking the Garden Roof', *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 4; **two pictures**: '20,000 Cheer – As Secretary and Clark Win Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 24; **three pictures**: '20,000 Cheer – As Harvest Moon Ball Sells Out Garden Again', *Daily News*, August 31, 1939, p. 24; **one picture**: 'Toast to Dance Champs', *Daily News*, September 1, 1939, p. 4.

were connected to the Lindy Hoppers/ Jitterbugs. Two of the pictures included the African-American Lindy Hoppers and two of the pictures included white Jitterbugs (one of the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug pictures was a group picture which included all the Champions).[804]

It seems that the Lindy Hop was not pictured as often in the Harvest Moon Ball final pictures[805]. However, it was very popular among the audiences. It would have been reasonable to publish more pictures of the Lindy Hoppers to the readers of *Daily News,* which sponsored the contest. A reason for not publishing so many pictures about the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive might have been that the Lindy Hop was only one of the dances in the finals. There also could have been racist logic behind that: the Savoy Lindy Hoppers dominated the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive for years. The *Daily News* may have underplayed the Lindy Hoppers by publishing less pictures about them.

The Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive final pictures from the period between 1935 and 1943 can be divided roughly in to two different categories. In the first category, there are the pictures which describe dancers who were dancing on the dance floor of the finals. In the second category, there are the pictures which describe the Lindy Hoppers who usually were outside the final place, but the pictures are clearly connected to the finals.

As it was stated already earlier, the *Daily News* did not seem to publish any final pictures of the Lindy Hoppers in 1939. Otherwise, the *Daily News* published the first category kind of pictures of the Lindy Hoppers almost every year between 1935 and 1943, but not in 1943. The paper published the second category kind of pictures also almost every year, but not in 1940.

Where the first category is concerned, there were fifteen different pictures which were published between 1935 and 1942. Some of the pictures were published in different *Daily News* issues and editions. All the pictures included the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, but one picture from 1942, pictured only two white Jitterbugs. In 1936 and

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804 **One picture**: William Murtha, 'Harvest Ball Aces a Hit on Stage', *Daily News*, August 28, 1942, p. 8; **one picture**: 'Grand Winners', *Daily News*, August 28, 1942, p. 28; **two pictures**: 'All in Step.' and 'Voice of Experience', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, back page; **two pictures**: 'Harvest Moon-Struck', August 27, 1942, p. 28. The 'Married' picture was also published in a different edition (see 'five pictures' below). That is why it is not included in the figure; **one picture**: William Murtha, '20, 000 See Ball Finals; Big Winners To Wed', *Daily News,* August 27, 1942, p. 4; **five pictures**: 'Married', 'Grand Winners', 'Tango', 'Foxtrot', 'King And Queen', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 29; **one picture** (**African-American Lindy Hoppers** from civilian Jitterbug Jive division and **white Jitterbugs** from servicemen division): 'King and Queen...Of the Ball' , *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, front page. **Ten pictures** (**two Jitterbug (Lindy Hop) pictures in which one white couple from servicemen division and one African-American couple from civilian Jitterbug Jive division**): *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, pp. 28-29.

805 The pictures are called 'final pictures' for the sake of a clarity, although there are also pictures about the Harvest Moon Ball finalists during the Loew's State Theatre performances, and pictures about the finalists outside the final place and the Loew's State Theatre performances. *Daily News* took the last mentioned pictures between these events.

1938, there were three different pictures per year published from the category. In 1935 and 1937, and between 1941 and 1942, there were two different pictures published from the category per year. In 1940, there was only one picture published from the category.

The pictures where the couples were dancing can be divided into the pictures where both partners of the couple were on the dance floor, and to the pictures where they are doing air steps. The dance floor pictures were, published in 1935 and 1936, when there were two pictures per year from the category. Otherwise, there were not 'on the dance floor' pictures published during the years.

The air steps pictures were published as follows: In 1938, there were three pictures from the category. In 1937, 1941 and 1942, there were two pictures per year from the category. In 1936 and 1940, there was only one picture per year from the category. In 1935 and 1943, there were no pictures from the category.

Overall, it seems that the four dance floor pictures, which were published in 1935 and 1936, describe dancers respectfully. The pictures are typical in the Lindy Hop, where dancing on the floor is concerned. In two of them from 1935, the Lindy Hop Champions, Leon James and Edith Matthews were pictured, showing them on the dance floor doing the steps they did in the contest. The pictures are labeled positively, "The happy enthusiastic pair who took first prize in the Lindy Hop, Leon James and Edith Mathews, show two of the steps that won the coveted contract for stage engagement. James is a superintendent, Edith a housemaid."[806]

Similarly, the 1936 Lindy Hop Champions, George Greenich (Greenidge) and Ella Gibson, were pictured on the dance floor, where they were doing a typical pattern in the Lindy Hop. Because they were pictured in a way that Gibson's back is into the camera and Greenich's face is facing the camera, it looks like Greenich was bending Gibson backwards, although Gibson was leaning forward on Greenich. Greenich was smiling. The picture is labeled, "Ella Gibson and George Greenich, first in Lindy Hop, strut their stuff." The message of the picture is seemingly positive.[807]

Next to the picture, there is another picture, showing three Savoy Ballroom Lindy couples in the line, all doing similar kind of step and standing on one foot, free foot bent. On the right side of the picture, Greenich and Gibson were looking at other couples who were looking forward, but Helen Bundy from the middle couple was looking into the camera. Snookie Beasley from the left side couple had his hands up. Nobody was smiling. Everybody had the same kind of static posture. The

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806 *Daily News*, 'Final edition', August 29, 1935, p. 33.

807 See: the picture in the lower left corner of page 31, *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 31. Because it can be argued which is an ordinary pattern and which is not, as far as the Lindy Hop is concerned, it should be noticed that George Greenich and Ella Gibson did a similar kind of pattern in the Lindy Hop scene of Marx Brothers' *A Day at the Races* movie in 1937. See: *A Day at the Races*, 1937, Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer (MGM). Thus, they did the pattern once again; it was a typical pattern to them. *Daily News* called George Greenidge as George Greenich in the articles. That is why Greenich is used instead of Greenidge.

picture is labeled, "Three Lindy Hop contestants, all in line, give their variations of the dance. Left are Willamae Ricker and Snookie Beasley; center, Helen Bundy and Red Elan, and then Ella Gibson and George Greenich." Although dancers were not smiling, the picture is typical in the Lindy Hop. Thus, it gives a positive message, too.

Where the eleven air step pictures are concerned, there is seemingly more room for interpretation. In 1936, the *Daily News* published a picture where George Greenich was pictured lifting Ella Gibson up. The picture is labeled, "George Greenich gives Ella Gibson a boost at [the] finish." They were pictured as posing into the camera. Gibson was smiling. Greenich's face cannot be seen.[808] The pattern Greenich and Gibson were doing in the picture was a very familiar pattern in the Lindy Hop.[809] The picture describes appropriately the dance.

In 1937, the winning couple in the finals of the Lindy Hop, Joe Daniels and Joyce James, were shown as Daniels holding James nearly upside down.[810] The picture could be interpreted as describing the dancers disrespectfully, but the pose, in which the couple was pictured, however, was used later by white, so-called swing dancers in 1948.[811] The pose was appropriate to the Lindy Hop. Thus, it stays highly arguable if the picture is somehow demeaning.

The second picture from 1937 even made the front page of the 'Final' edition of *Daily News*. The Lindy Hop Champions, Eddie Davis and Gladys Crowder, were shown to do a pattern, where Davis lifts Crowder in the air. The picture looks again like a usual Lindy Hop picture without any negative meanings. It is labeled, "Lindy Hop Aided by Eddie Davis, Gladys Crowder flies through the air with the greatest of ease as they take first place in the Lindy hop class." The label text sounds positive. Next to the picture are other pictures about the tango dancers, Grand Champs, and Waltz champions. Only the Lindy Hop Champions and tango dancers were dancing. Other couples were celebrating their championships. The whole picture collage has the headline, "23,500 See Harvest Moon Ball".[812] The whole collage shows dancers positively.

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808 All three pictures are located at the bottom of page 31, *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 31.

809 The same kind of lift can be seen in the numerous Lindy Hop pictures during the decades. There is a picture of that kind of lift in Norma Miller's *Swingin' at The Savoy*, where the group of dancers are doing otherwise a similar kind of lift, but male dancers kick their right leg between the legs of their female partners at the same time when their female partners are jumping up and spreading their legs. See: Miller 1996, p. 159. In the picture, where Greenich and Gibson are pictured, Greenich keeps his both feet on the ground at the same time, when he is lifting Gibson, and Gibson does not spread her legs when she is jumping up. Otherwise the lift is similar with the lift in Miller's book..

810 See: 'Lindy Hoppers' picture on page 30, *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, p. 30.

811 The similar kind of a picture can be found from Tamara and Erin Stevens' *Swing Dancing*, where white Swing Dancers Hal Takier and Betty Roeser can be seen to do the same pose probably in 1948. They were called Swing Dancers, not Lindy Hoppers. See: Tamara and Erin Stevens 2011, p. 118.

812 '23,500 See Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, front page.

In 1938, the *Daily News* published three air step pictures. In the first of them, the Lindy Hop winners, Norma 'Bunny' Miller and George Ricker, were pictured in the middle of the air step, which looks like a usual air step picture. It is labeled, "Bunny Miller and George Ricker gyrate in nifty fashion in that swingy Lindy hop. They finished in third place."[813] The picture gives an appropriate picture of the Lindy Hop.

The Savoy Lindy Hop finalists, Sarah Ward and William Downes, were pictured in the later issue as Downes standing and holding Ward in his lap. The picture is labeled, "Sarah Ward and William Downes give their own version of the Lindy hop. Like it?" The picture otherwise would pass as a typical Lindy Hop picture, but this time there was another picture next to the picture, where there was shown the Harvest Moon Ball 1938 tango winner couple in a usual close position dance pose. The picture is labeled, "Lilian Warga and Luciano De Lucia glide through the graceful evolutions of the tango, which they won."[814] If the meaning of setting pictures was to present the tango as more graceful than the Lindy Hop, that meaning could have been interpreted from those pictures.

In the third picture from 1938, the Lindy Hop Champions, Mildred Pollard and Albert Minns, were pictured standing still, showing Pollard holding Minns high off the floor.[815] Because they were doing basically the same pose that they did at the end of their dance in the finals of the Harvest Moon Ball, that pose was part of their routine in the final competition.[816] It might have had a special meaning to them. To an outsider, who had not seen it before, it might have looked like a funny pose. The picture is labeled "Introducing… Mildred Pollard and Albert Mimms, whose devastating gyrations brought them victory in the Lindy hop. Try this one some time." The picture text supports the idea for it being a funny pose and the overall meaning of the picture seems to be humorous. Because the headline straight above the picture says, "TERRIFIC! Fourth Harvest Moon Ball Is a Sellout"[817], the meaning of the picture seems to be more positive than negative.

The Lindy Hop came back into the final pictures in 1940, when the Lindy Hop Champions of the 1940 Harvest Moon Ball, Thomas Lee and Wilda Crawford, were

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[813] Roger Dakin, '20,000 Cheer Ball Finals at Garden', *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4.

[814] The two pictures are located in the beginning of the article. See: '20,000 Cheer Ball Finals at Garden', *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 4.

[815] Joel Dinerstein, who has found some of the Harvest Moon Ball pictures as demeaning, argues that the picture is demeaning, because their mouths hang wide open. See: Dinerstein 2003, p. 275. Dinerstein's analysis stays incomplete, because he has not paid properly attention to how the picture is appropriate to the dance language of the Lindy Hop. The picture can be found: "TERRIFIC Fourth Harvest Moon Ball Is a Sellout", *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 31.

[816] According to Sandra Gibson, who was known earlier as Mildred Pollard, and who was Albert 'Al' Minns' partner in the 1938 Harvest Moon Ball contest, Al jumped into her arms at the climax in the finals. Thus, the picture was basically a remake of this final pattern. See Sandra Gibson interview: Robert Crease, 'Sandra Gibson', Footnotes: April-June, 1987. Volume 2, Number 2, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

[817] "TERRIFIC Fourth Harvest Moon Ball Is a Sellout", *Daily News*, September 1, 1938, p. 31.

pictured as Lee was throwing his partner Crawford over his head. The picture was taken as Crawford still "flew" in the air and Lee had his hands up, and he was looking at Crawford. The picture is labeled, "Yep, it's the good old violent Lindy hop, as she is done by last night's champ hoppers, Wilda Crawford and Thomas Lee."[818] The picture is clearly the Lindy Hop picture: its visual context is appropriate to the dance. The humorous tone of the label text is very clear, although the textual context can be interpreted negatively.

In 1941, the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, Walter Johnson and Mae Miller, were described in the picture, where Johnson was throwing Miller over his head. In the background of the picture can be seen an unidentified African American female Lindy Hopper dancing. The picture is labeled, "LINDY HOP dancers pack a terrific punch in Harvest Moon's sixth event. At right are Walter Johnson and Mae Miller."[819] The message of the picture is seemingly positive.

Walter Johnson and Mae Miller were again pictured in the next day´s *Daily News* issue. This time they were pictured when Johnson was standing and holding Miller's hands, and Miller was doing the pull-up (the front flip) pattern supported by Johnson. The picture is labeled "LINDY HOPPERS. Walter Johnson and Mae Miller, who took second prize in this event, give you a rough idea of why they scored." Above the pictures in the page is a headline were it is stated, "Many A Heart Is Merry – After The Ball – Quiz: What's a Good Way to Acquire Sudden Fame? The Answer: Be a Good Dancer". The last part of the headline starting from "The Answer…" is just above the Johnson and Miller picture.[820] Thus, it looks like very positive kind of a picture with the part of the headline. It is possible that the picture gave too positive a picture about the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, because there was another *Daily News* edition from the same day, with a group picture of the white 1941 Harvest Moon Ball winners, instead of the Johnson and Miller picture. The group picture did not include any African-American couples. Indeed, it stays unclear, which edition was published first.[821]

In 1942, there was published two air step pictures. In the first of them, it pictured two white Jitterbugs seaman, Frank Piro and his partner Ann Milne, taken Piro was swinging Milne around his back. Above the picture is a headline, "Servicemen". The picture is labeled, "JITTERBUG. Pride of the Coast Guard, Seaman Frank Piro swings his partner Ann Milne to victory in the servicemen's jive. Piro, stationed at the Barge Office, South Ferry, joined the Navy two days after Pearl Harbor. Ann lives at 600 W. 133d St."[822]

On the next page, in the same *Daily News* edition, there was a picture of the Jitterbug Jive Champions of 1942, and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, Paul Chadwell and

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[818] The picture in the lower left corner of page 26: 'Harvest Moon Ball – NO. 6', *Daily News*, August 29, 1940, p. 26.

[819] The picture in the upper right corner of page 27, *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. 27.

[820] The picture in the upper right corner of page 28, *Daily News*, August 29, 1941, p. 28.

[821] It is difficult to say, which one of these *Daily News* editions was published first. See: The picture in the upper right corner of page 28, *Daily News*, August 29, 1941, p. 28.

[822] The picture in the upper left corner of page 28, *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 28.

Theresa Mason, who were doing the 'over the head' air step. Chadwell was pictured his mouth open and his hands up, as he was throwing Mason over his head. Mason "flew" in the air with her hands spread out. The picture is labeled, "JITTERBUG. Paul Chadwell and Theresa Mason were champ jivers of the Ball."[823] When compared to the Piro and Milne picture, the Chadwell and Mason picture is labeled with less detail and without as much praise. The Chadwell and Mason picture might look slightly funny to those who did not know Jitterbug Jive (or the Lindy Hop). To those who knew, the picture was a typical Lindy Hop picture.

When considering the eleven air step pictures, the visual context of most of the pictures was appropriate to the Lindy Hop. However, there were a few pictures which could be argued to have negative meanings. Of the pictures, the Daniels and James picture from 1937, stays somehow arguable for how it presents the dancers. The Downes and Ward picture from 1938, and the Johnson and Miller picture from 1941, can be argued for their layout position: the former as "ungraceful" compared to the more graceful tango picture next to it, and the latter for its possible removal from the later edition, because of its too-positive message. Where the label texts are concerned, the label text of the Lee and Crawford picture from 1940 stays arguable. Otherwise there were not strikingly similar label texts.

Concerning the second category of the pictures, the *Daily News* published twelve different pictures between 1935 and 1943. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers were included in all the other pictures, but not in the picture from 1943, which described the white Jitterbug Jive Champions. In 1935, there were five pictures published from the category. In 1942, there were published two pictures. Between 1936 and 1938, and during years 1941 and 1943, there was only one picture published from the category each year.

The pictures can be divided into subcategories, according to where the picture was taken. The Lindy Hoppers were pictured at home, rehearsing, marching onto the dance floor, celebrating their win, gathering together with other Champions, and discussing.

In 1935, it was published a picture of Lindy Hop Champion, Edith Matthews, pictured at her home, when she was dancing in the front of her friends. The picture was labeled, "Edith Matthews (she teamed with Leon James as Couple No. 75) shows some friends at her home, how she sparkled in Lindy Hop to win first place."[824] Thus, it described Matthews very positively. It also is noticeable that Matthews was pictured at her home. There does not seem to be any similar picture of the Lindy Hop Champions between 1935 and 1943.

There were three pictures which showed the couples rehearsing. The first was published in 1935. The picture shows Leon James and Edith Matthews posing with other champions. James and Matthews were located on the left side of the picture.

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[823] The picture in the lower right corner of page 29, *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 29.

[824] *Daily News*, '2 cents in City Limits' edition', August 30, 1935, p. 32. *Daily News*, 'Final Edition', August 30, 1935, p. 30

According to the label text, Comedian Milton Berle, in the front, was counting beat for the rhumba, tango, and waltz. The position of the Lindy Hop couple on the far left could be argued, but otherwise the picture describes the couples positively.[825]

The next rehearsal picture was published in 1936. The Champions, George Greenich and Ella Gibson were pictured, when they did a dip kind of move. Both were smiling. In addition to them, there was Herbert 'Whitey' White looking at them on their right side. The picture is labeled, " "That's the stuff!" grins Herbert Whitey as he watches Ella Gibson and George Greenich rehearsing yesterday for debut today in Loew's State as Lindy hop winners. Whitey coached all three finalists in Harlem's specialty."[826] The picture describes White, Gibson and Greenich positively and appropriately in the situation.

In 1938, three Savoy Ballroom couples and their coach Herbert 'Whitey' White, were pictured in the group picture. The set of the picture has Herbert White, who was crouched, giving instructions to the couple in the middle of the picture, Mildred Pollard and Albert Minns. Others in the picture look like they were intently listening to White's instructions and looking at what the couple in the middle is doing. The picture is labeled, "LINDY HOP winners at Loew's. Crouching, Coach H. Whitey. L to r.: William Down[e]s and Sarah Ward, Millie Pollard and Albert Minns, Joyce James and Joe Daniels."[827] The picture describes appropriately the persons.

In 1941, the Lindy Hoppers were pictured when they were marching onto the dance floor of the finals. The white Lindy Hoppers marched in at the head of the line, and after them marched the Savoy Lindy Hoppers. The picture is labeled, "On Parade! It's the start of the Harvest Moon Ball at the Garden last night and here come the Lindy Hoppers trooping onto the dance floor."[828] Although there is no negative message in the label text, the set of the dancers in the line seems to give an impression that the white Lindy Hoppers were more appreciated because they were first in the line.

In 1942, it published a similar kind of picture, where there was described a line where the Lindy Hoppers were marching in the opening parade of the Harvest Moon Ball. In the picture, a white Jitterbug had turned around and kept his right hand up, and stood slightly backwards bended, looking like he was stopping the marching

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825 *Daily News*, 'Final edition', September 6, 1935, p. 34.

826 See the picture without headline on the bottom of page 32, *Daily News*, August 28, 1936, p. 32. Joel Dinerstein claims that Greenich and Gibson are "goofing around" in the picture. That is not true. The couple is doing very stationary pose. There is no sign of "goofing around". See: Dinerstein 2003, p. 275.

827 The 'Lindy Hop' picture almost on the bottom of page 28, *Daily News*, September 2, 1938, p. 28. Joel Dinerstein claims erroneously concerning the picture, that "all three winning lindy hop couples were photographed together". Dinerstein 2003, p. 275. That is not true as it is seen in the *Daily News* issue. William Downes and Sarah Ward did not place in the contest. Similarly, Dinerstein claims that the couples were "with overly wide, unnatural, minstrel-derived smiles." The statement is easily arguable, because, at least, Herbert White and William Downes did not smile at all.

828 William Murtha, '20,000 Jam Garden to See Harvest Ball Final Winners', *Daily News*, August 28, 1941, p. 4.

Savoy Lindy Hoppers. One of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, who was just next to the white Jitterbug, looked surprised and his hands were rising up. The picture is labeled, "WARMING UP in Harvest Moon Ball's opening parade, jitterbug Lester Young (28) cuts up in his zoot suit with the mad plaid. Partner, Sally Callora, warms up her smile." Above the picture is the headline, "HARVEST MOON-STRUCK – Jitterbugs Break Into Jive as the Band Opens the Ball".[829] The picture clearly gives a humorous impression, and even mocks the white Jitterbug.

In 1935 and 1943, there were published two pictures where the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive Champions were pictured celebrating their win. In the first picture from 1935, Leon James and Edith Matthews were likely pictured as they heard about their Championship. The picture shows James and Matthews walking hand in hand, and their free hands were in the air. They were smiling [830] Thus, it is a very positive kind of a picture. In the second of the pictures, the white 1943 Jitterbug Jive Champions, James Riccardi and Rose Romona, were pictured as Riccardi held Romona in his lap and they had a bunch of flowers in their hands. The picture is labeled, " 'Madhouse' winners, seen at their very maddest, were Rose Romona and James Riccardi, both of Manhattan, who took jitterbug crown against tough competition." If the label text gives a slightly humorous impression, the picture just shows a happy couple.[831] When the Riccardi/Romona picture is compared to the James and Matthews picture from years before, both pictures describe the persons respectfully. However, it is noticeable that similar kinds of pictures were not published about other Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive Champions during the years. Thus, it could be argued that the *Daily News* did not want to publish similarly respectful pictures. However, there were other pictures where the Champions were pictured at least positively if not even respectfully.

There also were two pictures from 1935 and 1942, where the Harvest Moon Ball Champions were pictured, when they were gathered together. In the latter of them, they were gathered for signing the contract for their prize performances in the Loew's State Theatre. The 1942 picture was even in the front page. In the middle of the picture were the Grand Winners of Harvest Moon Ball signing the contract. Other divisional winners were looking at the signing around them. All the couples were named in the article text, next to the picture. The Jitterbug Jive Champions, Paul Chadwell and Theresa Mason, were standing on the most utmost, right side of the picture.[832] The picture is a kind of remake of the picture in the *Daily News* in 1935, when then-divisional Harvest Moon Ball Champions were gathered together to see how Milton Berle gave "the winning couples pointers on stage poise" like the picture was labeled. Leon James and Edith Matthews, the 1935 Harvest Moon Ball Lindy Hop Champions, were standing in the most utmost, right side of the 1935 picture.[833] Both pictures give an otherwise positive picture of the couples, but the position of the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive couple can be argued to have a lower status,

829 The picture in the upper left corner of page 28, 'Harvest Moon-Struck', *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 28.

830 The picture in upper right corner of the page 33, *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 33.

831 The picture on the bottom of the front page, *Daily News*, September 9, 1943.

832 The picture on the front page, *Daily News*, August 27, 1942.

833 'Reaping Dance Harvest', *Daily News*, September 6, 1935, p. 54.

as they had to stand to the most utmost right in both pictures, compared to more centered white couples. Thus, the position refers to their lower status compared to the most of white couples.

The *Daily News* likely published only two pictures between 1935 and 1943, where can be seen the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive Champions discussing the prize rings with each other. In 1935, it published a picture where Champion Leon James showed his prize ring to his sister. The picture is labeled, ”Irma James tries on the diamond ring won in the Lindy Hop division by her brother Leon James, a Superintendent of 309 W. 116 St. James was paired as Team No. 75 with Edith Matthews, a housemaid, of 2112 Madison Ave. Their gyrations in this event were marvelous to see.”[834]

In 1937, the *Daily News* published a similar picture of the Lindy Hop Champions Eddie Davis and Gladys Crowder. They were pictured with Davis showing the ring he won in the finals to his partner. Both were smiling. The picture is labeled, ”Copesetic? Yowsuh! Eddie Davis shows ring he won to his partner, Gladys Crowder, in dressing room at Loew’s State Theatre. They won Lindy hop.”[835] The picture might pass as a usual picture, but the label text gives a comic impression. Although the term ”Copasetic” (there is a letter mistake in the label text) was from Bill Robinson who used the term to express the state, ”everything is perfect”[836], the term and a slang word ’Yowsuh’ give a simple minded kind of impression about the couple, especially, when compared to the James picture from 1935, which described the similar kind of the situation much more respectfully. Next to the picture is another picture of the Grand Champions of the 1937 Harvest Moon Ball reading the *Daily News*.[837] The contrast between the pictures is clear: the white couple looks more serious-minded, as the African American couple looks slightly frivolous.

There was a different version of the picture label text in another edition. In this version, the picture was the same, but it is labeled ”MORE CONTEST WINNERS Eddie Davis and his partner, Gladys Crowder, winner of Lindy Hop, admire ring Eddie won”.[838] It is difficult to say, which of the editions was published first. Anyway, the last version gives more positive picture of the couple, although there was not a similar kind of positive comment about their “gyrations” like there was in the James picture.

Joel Dinerstein, who has examined the Harvest Moon Ball pictures of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers between 1935 and 1938, has claimed that the Savoy Lindy Hoppers appeared usually in demeaning poses or with derogatory minstrel gestures, with an exception in 1935, when the Lindy Hop Champions James and Matthews were described respectfully in the *Daily News* pictures.[839] Dinerstein is clearly inexact

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834 *Daily News*, ’Two Cents in City Limits’ edition, August 30, 1935, p. 32.

835 The ’Copesetic? Yowsuh!’ picture on the bottom of page 28, *Daily News*, August 27, 1937, p. 28.

836 Stearns 1994, p. 261.

837 The ’Problem’ picture on the bottom of page 28, *Daily News*, August 27, 1937, p. 28.

838 ’More Contest Winners’, *Daily News*, August 27, 1937, p. 28.

839 Dinerstein 2003, p. 275.

with his claims. Basically, most of the pictures between 1935 and 1943, gave appropriate picture about the Lindy Hop and its practitioners.

There were only positive pictures concerning the first category pictures, where both dancers were described dancing on the dance floor. Where the air step pictures are concerned, there were four pictures from the eleven air step pictures which could be considered to have clear derogatory meanings. The last category pictures, where the Lindy Hoppers were usually described outside the final place, but the pictures were clearly connected to the finals, had clearly the most of arguably negative meanings. Five of the eleven pictures (the white jitterbugs picture from 1943 is not included in this figure) in the category could be argued for negative meanings. The clearly striking example in the category seemed to be the Crowder and Davis picture from 1937, the label text of which gave a derogatory picture of the couple.

Additionally, it could be argued that the utmost position of the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive Champion couples in a few group pictures expressed that the couples had a lower status compared to the most of the other white couples. It stays unclear, if the reason for that was racist: the couple was African-American and thus considered as having a lower status compared to white couples, or if the reason for that was that the Lindy Hop as a dance was considered being from a lower status compared to other dances. When considering any kind of ridiculous aspects in the pictures, it could be argued how ridiculously the white Jitterbug was presented in the 1942 picture, which had humorous tones in it. It was not only the Savoy Lindy Hoppers who were sometimes pictured arguably ridiculously.

When the Harvest Moon Ball pictures are compared to the Rockland Palace dance marathon pictures, the latter pictures presented African-American dance marathoners interacting with whites more often than the Harvest Moon Ball pictures. It seems that the *Daily News* pictured clearly less-similar kind of situations, where the Harvest Moon Ball was concerned. There was not anything similar in the Harvest Moon Ball pictures like an African-American shaking hands with a white, or African-Americans and whites pictured together as interacting in the racially-mixed setting like there was where the Rockland Palace pictures are concerned. Otherwise, the pictures from both contests pictured participants mostly appropriately and positively.

4.4.5 Harvest Moon Ball in the Daily News Articles

Similarly, when it published pictures of the Harvest Moon Ball contest, the *Daily News* published articles about the preliminaries, finals of the contest, and the Loew's State Theatre performances where Harvest Moon Ball Champions performed after the finals. The Lindy Hop and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers were recognized as an important feature of the contest from the very beginning. Concerning the first 1935 Harvest Moon Ball, there was an article published in the *Daily News* on August 23,

1935, where Jack Turcott discussed the Lindy Hop in the upcoming Harvest Moon Ball contest. According to the article:

> All kinds of dancing – from dreamy waltzes, smooth fox-trots and swashbuckling tangos to twisting rhumbas and snappy Lindy Hops – will be done to perfection by the finest amateur dancers… Just before the last event of the night goes on – the contest for the all-round championship – you'll see the finals of the Lindy Hop. And when Fletcher Henderson and his orchestra, the smoothest aggregation of colored musicians in town, start playing for the Lindy Hoppers you'll see action… We don't remember all of the 62 couples individually. But we'll never forget the stepping of a few of them. There's Norma Miller and Bill Hill as a starter. Norma and Bill are two of Harlem's favorites, a couple of youngsters who were born with syncopation in their veins, with a strutting in their nature. Then there's Frank Manning and Maggie McMillian. They're from Harlem, too, and when they get on the floor at the Garden your eyes will dart from Bill and Norma to Frank and Maggie. That's only a small part of what you'll see for the admission price[840].

The article was published on the left upper corner of page 19, which refers to the importance of the article. The Lindy Hoppers were mentioned in the *Daily News* between 1935 and 1943, where they were discussed in the labeled pictures, in the program list of Harvest Moon Ball, and usually only briefly in the articles, where the Savoy Ballroom preliminary results, final results and the Harvest Moon Ball Champions' Loew's State Theatre performances were reported.[841] However, there were exceptions in the *Daily News* reports about the Lindy Hop as it is showed in this chapter.

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[840] Jack Turcott, 'Dance Thrill Waits 18,500 at Garden', *Daily News*, August 23, 1935, p. 19. Joel Dinerstein, who has examined the Harvest Moon Ball contest, claims that the Lindy Hop and the Lindy Hoppers were noted only at the end of the *Daily News* articles, where the Harvest Moon Ball contest reportage is concerned. He is clearly wrong with his statement as it comes out in this chapter. See for Dinerstein's claim: Dinerstein 2003, p. 272.

[841] This becomes clear in this chapter of this study. The same came out when the pictures of *Daily News* were discussed. See for examples about the articles from first three years: for 1935: '20,000 Acclaim Royal Couple at News Ball', *Daily News*, August 29, 1935, p. 20; 'Program - The News Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 28th-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 28, 1935, p. 33; 'Theatre Crowds Hail News Dance Winners', *Daily News*, September 7, 1935, p. 25; Jack Turcott, 'Pick Harlem Dance Champs In Last Prelim', *Daily News*, August 10, 1935, p. B7. See for 1936: 'Champions At Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 24; 'Program – The News Second Annual Harvest Moon Ball – Wednesday, August 26, 1936-8:30 P.M.', *Daily News*, August 26, 1936, p. 28; Jack Turcott, 'B'way All Agog Over Harvest Ball Sellout', *Daily News*, August 28, 1936, p. 28; 'Harvest Mooners Make Stage Debut', *Daily News*, August 29, 1936, p. 21; Jack Turcott, 'Lindy Hoppers Vie For Spot In Harvest Moon', *Daily News*, August 15, 1936, p. 26. See for 1937: Jack Turcott, 'Six Harvest Ball Pairs Wow Stage', *Daily News*, August 27, 1937, p. 4; '23,500 Cheer Victors In Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, p. 26; Jack Turcott, 'Harlem Hoppers Try Lindy Hop Peckin' ', *Daily News*, August 14, 1937, p. 13; 'Third Annual Harvest Moon Ball – Madison Square Garden, August 25th, 1937. Sponsored by The News Welfare Association, Inc.' program leaflet.

There was a noteworthy feature in the Loew's State Theatre article in 1935, which reported on the Harvest Moon Ball Champions' performances in the theatre. The article stated how "The Lindy Hoppers, Edith Mathews and Leon James", whose performance received "terrific applause" from the audience, said that their dancing engagement "couldn't come too soon." The article stated briefly, straight after their comment, how other couples who were winners in rhumba, tango and foxtrot, "expressed a similar wish".[842] Thus, James and Mathews were seen as important enough to be quoted. The rareness of the occasion comes from the fact that next and last time, between 1935 and 1943, when an African-American couple was quoted as saying something about their success in the Harvest Moon Ball to the *Daily News* reporter, was in 1942, when the Jitterbug Jive Champions, Theresa Mason and Paul Chadwell's professions were presented and they were quoted saying how they felt great about their Championship.[843]

The Lindy Hop as a favorite of the audience in the Harvest Moon Ball contest also came out. The Lindy Hop also was mentioned positively, when the *Daily News* commented the finals in 1936:

> It was the Lindy Hop which really set the audience off. Shoulders swayed and 22,000 pairs of feet tapped in unison as the competing couples swung into this infectious step[844].

The statement is in the middle of the article, where otherwise was reported on events in the finals. The article can be found in the upper left corner of page 24 in the *Daily News* issue, which refers to its importance. The *Daily News* stated also in 1937, concerning the finals, how the Lindy Hop winners "brought down the house with their wild gyrations".[845] The statement about the Lindy Hoppers, who brought down the house when performing at the Loew's State Theatre, was repeated every year in the *Daily News* reports with slightly different words, between 1939 and 1943.[846]

At the latest, from 1938 onwards, the *Daily News* seemed to be tired, to some degree, about Harlem's domination in the Lindy Hop division. The *Daily News* predicted almost yearly Harlem's loss in the division. Roger Dakin stated in his *Daily News* article about the Roseland Ballroom preliminary of the Lindy Hop in 1938, that Harlem will face loss of the Lindy Hop title. Dakin explained how

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842 'Theatre Crowds Hail News Dance Winners', *Daily News*, September 7, 1935, p. 25.

843 William Murtha, '20000 See Ball Finals; Big Winners To Wed' *Daily News*, August 27, 1942, p. 4.

844 '22,000 Cheer Victors In Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 27, 1936, p. 24.

845 '23,500 Cheer Victors In Harvest Moon Ball', *Daily News*, August 26, 1937, p. 26.

846 Roger Dakin, 'Dance Champions Score on Stage', *Daily News*, September 1, 1939, p. 48; William Murtha, 'Theatre Hails Harvest Moon Ball Winners', *Daily News*, August 30, 1940, p. 4; William Murtha, 'Ball Winners Triumph Again In Stage Show', *Daily News*, August 29, 1941, p. 85; William Murtha, 'Harvest Ball Aces a Hit on Stage', *Daily News*, August 28, 1942, p. 37; William Murtha, 'Ball Champs Win Stage Rave, Too', *Daily News*, September 10, 1943, M22.

"Harlem's monopoly" was "seriously threatened", when judging the performance of the couples who won the Lindy Hop preliminary at the Roseland Ballroom.[847] However, the Roseland success in the finals did not happen. Burns Mantle in the *Daily News* article even raved about the Harvest Moon Ball winners who performed in the Loew's State Theatre:

> Mildred Pollard and Albert Mimms, the Lindy Hoppers, were given more latitude, but there was almost as much method as madness in their exhibit. Incidentally, if some musical comedy impresario doesn't pick up the six Lindy Hop winners who are on the State bill this week he will be cheating himself, and their publics.[848]

In 1939, the *Daily News* seemed to have stepped back slightly with its claims about the Roseland Ballroom couples' possible success in the Lindy Hop division. Roger Dakin commented in the *Daily News* article more hesitantly that "The unbroken four-year supremacy of the Savoy Ballroom dancers in the Lindy Hop…may be broken" by "gracefully agile couples" from the Roseland Ballroom, when Dakin commented on the Roseland Lindy Hop preliminary.[849] Accordingly, Dakin explained in his Savoy Ballroom preliminary report, that the Savoy had "won the Lindy Hop division four years in a row", but "this year there may be a surprise". Otherwise, he reported in another *Daily News* article how, at the Savoy "a capacity audience…enjoyed the show to the limit – both the amazingly complicated and humorous dancing".[850]

The *Daily News* belief about the upcoming Savoy Ballroom loss in the Harvest Moon Ball Lindy division, was repeated with a more firm attitude in 1940, when William Murtha stated that "the Savoyards will face keener competition than ever before. The Lindy, on which they once seemed to have a copyright, is now in the public domain."[851]

The Savoy won again, and after the finals, the *Daily News* had to admit, via Murtha's other article, with dissatisfaction and in an ironic tone:

> [T]he dance which brought the audience to the edge of its seats was – you guessed it – the Lindy Hop. They call it dancing, but it included

[847] Roger Dakin, 'Harlem Faces Loss Of Lindy Hop Title', *Daily News*, August 19, 1938, p. 20.

[848] Burns Mantle, 'Harvest Mooners Still Game, After 24 Hours' Dancing', *Daily News*, September 2, 1938, p. 43.

[849] Roger Dakin, '3 Lindy Hop Couples Win Harvest Chance', *Daily News*, August 18, 1939, p. 31.

[850] Roger Dakin, '7 Lindy Hop Teams Win In Harvest Test', *Daily News*, August 26, 1939, p. 25.

[851] William Murtha, 'Lindy Hoppers Hop To Harvest Finals', *Daily News*, August 10, 1940, p. 17.

> everything from the old fashioned airplane spin to something which looked like a baseball slide preceded by a cartwheel.[852]

There seemed to be a change in the tone of the *Daily News* reports to more enthusiastic expressions the next year as William Murtha reported at the end of his foxtrot preliminary report from Roseland Ballroom:

> Tonight is Harlem night. At the Savoy Ballroom, home of the Lindy Hop, the colored Lindy Hoppers who haven't yet failed to stop a Garden show with their breathtaking antics, are all set to stomp out their annual defiance of the law of gravity. Charles Buchanan, manager of the Savoy, reports that the Harlem youngsters have been working for months on the dazzling routines that exhaust the onlookers almost as much as the dancers. Just to make sure that the atmosphere will reach fever heights Buchanan has Lucky Millinder on hand to pour the music. Boogie-woogie will be served. It's a show well worth anyone's trip to Lenox Ave. and 140th St.[853]

Murtha seemed to even rave about the Savoy Ballroom preliminary, when he explained in his other *Daily News* article at length:

> Seven fantastically dexterous Lindy hop teams, pulling, tugging and hauling in unbelievable rhythm, stomped their way to the Grand Finals of the Seventh Annual Harvest Moon Ball at a preliminary last night at the Savoy Ballroom…As usual the affair showed a turnout in force of the uptown carriage trade, who enjoyed themselves immensely and wound up at the end of an hour almost as limp as the dancers. The eventual winners fully justified the prediction of Charles Buchanan, the Savoy's manager, that the 1941 contestants would put on a better show than any of their predecessors.[854]

In spite of that, the *Daily News* repeated again its belief in a Roseland Ballroom victory.[855] The same belief was repeated in slightly different words in 1942 and

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852 William Murtha, '20,000 See Engaged Couple Win Ball Title', *Daily News*, August 29, 1940, p. 4. Joel Dinerstein has stated, how William Murtha decreased the Lindy Hop to the level of a primitivist discourse as a cross between gymnastics and a sporting event in 1940, and later, in 1942, he equated the Lindy Hop with childishness and insanity. Dinerstein's analysis is justified, when Murtha's comments are discussed as such. When the comments are connected to Murtha's other comments about the Harvest Moon Ball and to other *Daily News* articles, the statement can be seen as part of the *Daily News*' dissatisfaction with the continuous winning streak of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers. See for Dinerstein's analysis: Dinerstein 2003, p. 274.

853 William Murtha, 'Eight Fox Trot Teams Win To Garden Finals', *Daily News*, August 8, 1941, p. 29 B.

854 William Murtha, '7 Lindy Hop Teams Winners at Savoy', *Daily News*, August 9, 1941, p. 6.

855 William Murtha, 'Savoy Lindy Hop Sway Menaced This Year', *Daily News*, August 21, 1941, p. 20.

1943.[856] This time, the *Daily News* also unloaded its disappointment concerning the Jitterbug Jive results in its other article concerning Loew's State Theatre performances in 1942. The article was written by Burns Mantle, who stated in a similar fashion as Helen Dzhermolinska did in *The American Dancer* magazine one year before:

> They are good fun, these jitterbugs. But I don't think they should be included in the final prize-winning contests at the ball. They distract attention from the really serious – the beautifully serious – business of the evening. Let them have a grand final of their own in which they can clown through as many dances as they want to. Five pairs of jitterbugs showing what they could do with the foxtrot, the waltz, the tango and the rumba should be a grand afterpiece for the ball. And send 20,000 fans home supremely happy. Or maybe they should have their finals before the champions take the floor[857].

The name change of the Lindy Hop division into the Jitterbug Jive division in the Harvest Moon Ball contest in 1942, seemed to be connected to the frustration which the *Daily News*, the organizer and sponsor of the Harvest Moon Ball, seemingly felt for the insuperability of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers in the contest. When reporting on the Jitterbug Jive preliminary at Apollo Theatre in 1943, the *Daily News* explained, via William Murtha's article, the reasons for changing the Lindy Hop division to Jitterbug Jive. The explanation can be found at the very beginning of the main text, which refers to its importance:

> In all eight previous balls the Harlemites have come through in the jive finals at Madison Square Garden but each year they've met increasingly sterner opposition. In the days of the Lindy the uptown couples appeared to have an overwhelming advantage but the jitterbug jive, as now set up by the sponsor of the Ball [*Daily News*], stresses smoothness and originality so the advantage of the seemingly inexhaustible Harlem dancers has been materially decreased.[858]

In other words, the name change of the division in 1942 from 'Lindy Hop' to 'Jitterbug Jive' with its emphasis on "smoothness and originality" was done for decreasing the Savoy's superiority in the Lindy Hop. However, Murtha admitted in the article that it was quite hard to compete with "the Harlem kids", where "sheer inventiveness and comic routine" are concerned.[859]

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[856] William Murtha, '6 Jitterbug Winners Rival Harlem's Best', *Daily News*, August 20, 1942, p. 31; William Murtha, 'Jitterbug Jive Finalists Give Harlem Something to Shoot At', *Daily News*, September 2, 1943, p. M14.

[857] Burns Mantle, 'Harvest Moon Prize Winners Take Over The Show at Loew's', *Daily News*, August 28, 1942, p. 43 M.

[858] William Murtha, The 'Harlem Struts Stuff In Ball Prelim Tonight', *Daily News*, August 30, 1943, p. 24.

[859] Ibid., p. 24.

This time the *Daily News* was able to state when reporting the Loew's State Theatre performances:

> In keeping with tradition the show closed with the jitterbug jive titlists; the first team of jive champs not from Harlem. Just as they had the night before, Rose Romona…and James Riccardi…brought down the house as they twisted and span through all the antics of the most frenetic dance ever invented.[860]

Howard Whitman, in his *Daily News* article, also stated briefly after the headline of the article, how a white couple won the Jitterbug for the first time in Harvest Moon Ball history, when reporting the results of the finals. In addition, he explained Rose Romona's background in a humorous way. *Daily News*' dismissive attitude against the Jitterbug Jive became clear in the article comments like "The madhouse crown was won by Rose Romona…and James Riccardi" and "How she and Riccardi came out of that dance in one piece will remain a mystery to this writer".[861]

Surprisingly, the historical championship was otherwise only noticed briefly in the middle of the article without any raving:

> The Jitterbug Jive, last of the division contests, was won in the civilian heat by Romona and Riccardi, as we told you above…[862]

That refers to the fact that the *Daily News* did not consider the civilian Jitterbug Jive division as important at the time. On the other hand, the white champions were pictured on the front page, which refers to the importance of the occasion.

Otherwise, the Jitterbug Jive finals were commented on only briefly in the label text of the picture of the Jitterbug Jive Champion couple, and in the results.[863] The front page picture seemed to be the biggest manifestation of the first white champions in the Jitterbug Jive division of the Harvest Moon Ball.

When comparing different *Daily News* articles, the attitude of the *Daily News* concerning the Savoy Lindy Hoppers changed from the appreciative comments in 1935, to the articles with tired tones by the end of the 1930s. That probably was connected to the disappointment which the *Daily News* felt because of the overwhelming success of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers in the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive. This disappointment culminated in the name change from Lindy Hop division to Jitterbug Jive division in 1942.

The dismissive tones of the Lindy Hop-connected articles, especially towards the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, could have been part of a carefully considered plan which

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860 William Murtha, 'Ball Champs Win Stage Rave, Too', *Daily News*, September 10, 1943, p. M22.

861 Howard Whitman, '22-Year-Olds Cop Crowns In Harvest Moon Finals', *Daily News*, September 9, 1943, p. 4.

862 Ibid., pp. 4 and 17.

863 These results and the picture were presented earlier in this chapter.

tried to decrease the interest in the Savoy Lindy Hoppers among the audiences of the Harvest Moon Ball, which favored the Savoy dancers. Possibly, there was a fear of losing other ballrooms in the contest if the Savoy's overwhelming streak of the Lindy Hop Championships continued. The *Daily News'* positive reports about the Savoy Ballroom preliminaries, at the same time when it expressed its dissatisfaction against the Savoy's supremacy, refers to the fact that the Savoy Lindy Hoppers still were important and otherwise appreciated. On the other hand, the dismissive tones concerning the Jitterbug Jive were still present in 1943, when the white couple won the civilian division. *Daily News* had negative attitudes in general towards the Jitterbug Jive. It can be assumed that the articles and the pictures had an influence on 1.4 – 2.0 millions readers of the *Daily News* between 1935 and 1943[864]. Obviously, the attitudes stayed positive enough, because the Savoy Lindy Hoppers won the first prize again in 1944, and the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive was part of the *Daily News* sponsored contest until the end of it in 1974.[865]

Chapter Conclusion

George Snowden and Mattie Purnell, who were practically raised from obscurity to fame in the Rockland Palace dance marathon in 1928, likely created the most powerful dance invention of the twentieth century: the Lindy Hop. The Lindy Hop had various forms and no fixed basic structure. Only the so-called swing or swing-out was a distinctive feature, which clearly distinguished it from other jazz dances. This freedom of the dance was possibly the main factor why the popularity of the Lindy Hop increased rapidly. In one year since the dance marathon, the whole Savoy Ballroom danced the Lindy Hop. Snowden spread the dance outside Harlem from the very beginning, when he performed around the United States. After the dance stuck, it was incorporated into Broadway plays and even Hollywood movies. Thus, it became a regular part of American dance culture and entertainment.

Herbert White, whose dancers were known as Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, was another crucial character in spreading the Lindy Hop around the United States, and even around the world. White trained and promoted his dancers very successfully. His methods were not always legal and morally acceptable, but they seemed to result in the winning streak of the Harvest Moon Ball contest, Broadway theater performances, Hollywood movies, and tours around the world. The *Daily News*-sponsored Harvest Moon Ball was a New York metropolitan area-wide dance contest between 1935 and 1974. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers dominated the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive division of the Harvest Moon Ball between 1935 and 1942, by winning the first prize every year, and they won all three top prizes between 1937 and 1942. Their success helped them to secure the possession of being the number

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[864] *Daily News* had a circulation of 1,428,908 on weekdays and on Saturdays in 1934. See: *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* (Philadelphia, PA., U.S.: N. W. Ayer & Son, Incorporated, 1934), p. 636. Later, in 1943, the circulation was 2,013,200. See: *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* 1943, p. 653.

[865] '20,000 Jam Garden, Cheer Ball Winners', *Daily News*, September 7, 1944, p. 10; Monaghan 2005, pp. 46-47.

one Lindy Hoppers group in the entertainment world. It seems that both audiences and reviewers in the mainstream press recognized the Lindy Hoppers positively, where their stage performances in theaters and nightclubs are concerned.

Where the Harvest Moon Ball contest and the Loew's State Theatre performances were concerned, audiences loved them, but the critics seemed to underrate them. The contest and Loew's State Theatre articles in *The Billboard*, *Variety*, and *The American Dancer* suggest that the reporting was varied, mostly critical, and even contradictory from 1938 onwards. *The Billboard* stated that only the Lindy Hoppers showed "any sign of spirit" in 1938, although *Variety* condemned even them with other dancers. In 1939, *The Billboard* could not find any proper couples in any division. In 1940, *Variety* considered dancers, other than the Lindy Hoppers, as "far superior" than they had from the year before. On the contrary, *The Billboard* praised the Lindy Hoppers as the ones who furnished "any degree of entertainment". In 1941, *The American Dancer* criticized the Lindy Hoppers as ones whose dancing takes judges to "the nearest sanatorium". The paper suggested that the contest should have been divided into the section where the Savoy Lindy Hoppers competed, and into the section which represented "exhibition ballroom dancing".

The *Daily News*, which frequently reported on the Harvest Moon Ball, clearly underplayed them in its contest pictures and articles. The Lindy Hop pictures and reports were in the minority of the *Daily News'* whole Harvest Moon Ball reporting. That was striking, when considering the fact that the Lindy Hop was the favorite of the contest audiences every year. Other dances of the contest, especially the white-dominated foxtrot, tango, rumba, and Viennese waltz, could not compete with the Lindy Hop in the popularity of the audiences.

When comparing the Harvest Moon Ball contest articles and pictures to the *Daily News* reporting on the Rockland Palace dance marathon, it seems that the Harvest Moon Ball reports did not picture African-Americans interacting with whites in the same way that the Rockland Palace dance marathon reporting did. Probably, the *Daily News* tried to make them as a distinct, unimportant feature in the contest. One reason for this could have been their overwhelming success in the contest. The paper possibly tried to underplay them because it did not want to lose other ballrooms which sent their dancers into the contest. It may have been they were afraid that the other ballrooms would lose their interest in the Harvest Moon Ball, due to the overwhelming success of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers.

Another reason could have been racist. When comparing the *Daily News* pictures from the Rockland Palace dance marathon, and from the white Madison Square Dance marathon, it is clear that the latter was pictured remarkably better than the Harlem dance marathon. Similarly, there are signs that the Savoy Lindy Hoppers were described in the pictures of the Harvest Moon Ball finals less than whites in those pictures. There were also textual differences in that Harlemites were less-discussed in the *Daily News* articles than whites, where both the dance marathons and the Harvest Moon Ball are concerned. Indeed, in the case of the dance marathons, a reason for the terse reporting could have been the competition between

the Harlem and midtown dance marathons. Possibly, the *Daily News* did not want to advertise the Harlem dance marathon so much because of the rivalry. If so, there possibly was the clear analogy between the 1928 dance marathons and the later Harvest Moon Ball: African-American dancers were considered as rivals to white dancers. This claim is challenged by the following facts. *The New York Times* reported textually clearly more on the Harlem dance marathon than the *Daily News*, which refers to the fact that not all the mainstream press was involved in the possible rivalry. In spite of that, *The New York Times* did not publish any pictures, so its reporting also stayed incomplete in the sense. Concerning the Harvest Moon Ball, the *Daily* News still had dismissive tones in its article where it reported on the first white Jitterbug Jive Champions in 1943. That refers to the fact that the *Daily News* dismissed Jitterbug Jive (the Lindy Hop) in general at the time. Anyway, the *Daily News* recognized the dancing of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom as remarkable, when the paper added the ballroom to the contest in 1935. In that sense, the *Daily News* seemed to have changed its attitude towards the dance through the years.

The Harlem winning streak in the Harvest Moon Ball seemed to lead to the name change of the Lindy Hop division, when the name was changed into Jitterbug Jive in 1942. The reason for the name change was explained in the *Daily News* as the way to reduce the possibilities of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers to express themselves in the contest. In other words, the *Daily News* tried to make it possible for other ballrooms to compete realistically against Harlemites. This led to the results of a Roseland Ballroom couple winning the Jitterbug Jive in 1943. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers still continued after the loss and came back to their winning streak the next year. Thus, it seems the *Daily News'* name change strategy backfired.

The accomplishments of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers seemed to result in the powerful way the Harlem Lindy Hop was recognized as America's national dance in the 1943 *LIFE* magazine article. The statement was presented with the help of both white and African-American couples, mostly in the way which stressed equality between the races. Indeed, the fact that a white couple was pictured on the cover of the magazine could be interpreted as the way that whites had taken over the dance. On the other hand, African-Americans were recognized as the originators and principal exponents of the dance. Otherwise, both textual and pictorial content suggest that the article tried frankly to support the view of the Lindy Hop as remarkable part of the American culture.

5 The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance – Out from Harlem: The Shows and Movies

The breakthrough of the Harlem jazz dance in the Broadway-connected plays from the beginning of the 1920s highlighted African-American Harlemites as performers outside Harlem. Numerous dancers and dance acts were acknowledged in the mainstream press when the Harlem jazz dance was performed in the plays. From the numerous dancers, the mainstream press especially focused on certain dancers. First, there was Bill Robinson, who participated in various activities during his lifetime. These activities were usually connected directly or indirectly to his dancing, and they were discussed, to some degree, in the mainstream press. That is why they are worth researching to find out how Robinson was really recognized among white people. His participation in the African-American Broadway plays and movies also was very extensive. In addition to Robinson, the mainstream press presented Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and the Nicholas Brothers, who all performed in various plays and movies. Robinson and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers are also discussed separately in 'The World's Fair 1939 - 1940 in Queens' chapter which focuses on a remarkable event which presented the Harlem jazz dance to white people in the outside Harlem context. Otherwise, they, the Nicholas Brothers, and other remarkable acts like Buck and Bubbles, are discussed in the chapters concerning Broadway-connected plays and movies. They are also compared to each other to find out how effective they were in the plays and movies. Similarly, they are compared to other jazz dancers, in some cases, when these dancers clearly paralleled them in the reviews and articles. The emphasis is again on how they were recognized in the mainstream press.

5.1 Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson – A "Freedom Fighter"

Bill Robinson's activities in tap were superior, but his efforts to create racial equality between African-Americans and whites were likely more superior. Robinson became known as the honorary Mayor of Harlem in 1934, by the New York League of Locality Mayors, an unofficial philanthropic and boosters

organization.[866] According to Jim Haskins and N. R. Mitgang, the editors of Bill Robinson's biography, the organization usually nominated unofficial mayors based on political favors. They also claim that those honored mayors usually were not well known in their communities. Robinson was an exception, as he had been 'Mayor of Harlem', in effect, for at least two years before his nomination.[867] Possibly, his nomination was connected to the fact that he was already well-known in Harlem, and, to some degree, also outside Harlem because of his entertainer and benefactor status. He had also befriended police chiefs and other officials by 1934. If there were any strict political favors from Robinson behind his nomination, nothing has surfaced. When considering his political status at the time, it is unlikely that he had even been considered to be as much of a public political commentator at the time as he had been considered later. This content of this chapter and this dissertation makes this assertion clearer.

In addition to that and to other memberships in various organizations, he was a Special Inspector of Motor Vehicles for the State of New York. He was also nominated as a Special Deputy Sheriff of New York County by 1934, and a Deputy Sheriff of Los Angeles County, and a detective lieutenant of the Los Angeles city police by 1936. When interviewed, he had badges to prove his claims about the nominations.[868] By 1939, he had probably received hundreds of gifts from governors and police chiefs.[869] Similarly, when Robinson was interviewed for *The New Yorker* in 1934, he had documents with him which proved his personal friendship with the police chiefs of all the larger U.S. cities, including the former Police Commissioner, Edward P. Mulrooney, and even former Governor Pollard of Virginia.[870] Obviously, Robinson's usual routine, when he visited in various cities, was that he went straight to the local police station to get a permit for his revolver. After that, he bought a ticket out of town for a quick getaway, should something unpleasant happen during his stay.[871] That could explain, at least partly, why he was known among police chiefs.

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[866] 'The "Mayor" Bids Bon Voyage To Calloway', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 28, 1934, p. 8. Richard Strouse, 'At 70, Still Head Hoofer', *The New York Times*, May 23, 1948, p. SM17.

[867] Haskins and Mitgang claim, that Robinson had been known for four years as "Mayor of Harlem" before his nomination. See: Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 214. However, the first mention of the term connected to Robinson can be found in 1932, two years before the nomination. See: 'Bojangles's Mother Was Choir Singer and His Father a Mechanic', *The Afro-American*, June 4, 1932, p. 18.

[868] 'Film Gossip Of The Week', *The New York Times*, July 5, 1936, p. X3; 'Noted Dancer Hurt When Some Think He Neglects Race', *Cleveland Call and Post*, May 7, 1936, p. 3. See also: St. Clair McKelway, 'Profiles – Bojangles -1', *The New Yorker*, October 6, 1934, p. 26 According to the *New Yorker* article, Robinson was the honorary member in the Grand Street Boys' Association. He had an American Legion membership card and he was an Admiral in the Great Navy of the State of Nebraska (a celebrity-catching organization).

[869] 'The Mikado, Himself', *The New York Times*, April 9, 1939, p. X2.

[870] St. Clair McKelway, 'Profiles – Bojangles -1', *The New Yorker*, October 6, 1934, pp. 26-27.

[871] Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 105-106.

Dancers and musicians carried weapons for various reasons. Terry Monaghan states that some African-American swing musicians carried gun when they travelled to the Southern United States. They prepared for possible racially motivated attacks against them. As far as dancers are concerned, for example, Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker carried a razor. One reason for Robinson's gun and Tucker's razor might have been their gambling habit. Robinson was sometimes in trouble when he could not pay off his gambling debt.[872] Similar to musicians, another reason might have been to protect themselves against racially motivated attacks. At least, Robinson dealt with those kind of situations by showing his gun as it becomes clear in this chapter.

Robinson was known for his good deeds in Harlem and elsewhere. Dancer Leight Whipper claims that if Robinson saw someone's furniture on the street in Harlem because of unpaid rent, he might generously pay the rent. Also, Robinson's last wife Elaine, remembers that her husband gave "away so much money" to the poor, and there were other people who remembered that Robinson had loaned money to African-Americans.[873]

Similarly Robinson's ex-wife Fannie Robinson stated that Robinson helped poor people generously in Harlem.[874] According to Haskins and Mitgang, Robinson probably became one of the greatest contributors to many of Harlem's relief programs and was possibly one of the biggest contributors to the police welfare fund.[875] Robinson also helped his former hometown of Richmond in Virginia, when he bought traffic lights for the intersection in the African-American part of the town.[876] Robinson also was famous in Richmond, where a theater was named for him in a ceremony where the mayor of the town and other remarkable people made speeches in 1938.[877] It also is claimed that Robinson performed at over 3,000 benefits, and he helped hundreds of unofficial charities and individuals during his lifetime.[878]

He had high-level connections to the politicians, even to United States President Roosevelt, who according to Rae Samuels, a wife of Robinson's long time manager Marty Forkins, was "crazy about Robinson".[879] Leight Whipper remembers to have witnessed the event where Robinson was even able to affect Roosevelt in a way that Roosevelt changed the plans of the U.S. Army during World War II, after Roosevelt

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872 See: Monaghan 2005, p. 40; Stearns 1994, p. 236; Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 298-299. See also for example: Alyn Shipton, *Hi-De-Ho: The Life of Cab Calloway* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 113; 'Eddie Rector Faces Prison', *The Chicago Defender*, March 10, 1934, p. 1.

873 Stearns 1994, pp. 184 and 186. Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 193-194 and 299.

874 Fannie Robinson, 'I remember Bojangles', *Ebony*, February, 1953, p. 58.

875 Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 119 and 193.

876 Ibid., p. 213. See also: 'Smart Aleck Is Fired Upon By Bill Robinson', *New Journal and Guide*, September 7, 1935, p. 1 and 10. 'Bill Robinson Overcame Two Broken Legs to Become Greatest Tap Dancer', *New Journal and Guide*, February 22, 1936, p. 16.

877 Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 245-246. See also: 'Richmond Greets Its Most Distinguished Son In Truly Regal Style', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, July 2, 1938, p. 21.

878 Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 215.

879 Ibid., pp. 28 and 222.

had a call from the Mayor of New York, Fiorella LaGuardia's office. The caller explained how Robinson did not like the Army plans about segregating African-American troops to Harlem's Hotel Theresa and white troops to Atlantic City. Whipper claims that after the call, "the Army's plans were changed then and there." It is unclear whether Robinson or LaGuardia was the one who actually asked that from Roosevelt and if those plans really did change. According to the story Robinson told, as explained to Mayor LaGuardia, what he had heard as "LaGuardia had President Roosevelt on the phone" after that. Whipper claimed to have been with Robinson in the Mayor's office, where the call was done.[880]

According to Haskins and Mitgang, Robinson had aims to get racial equality for African-American vaudeville artists already in 1921, when he considered whether to join in the association or to form a new African-American branch of the National Vaudeville Artists' Association, which had not given similar association rights to him and other African-American artists, as the association only was supporting white artists at the time[881]. Robinson sent a letter concerning the matter to the association leader Edward F. Albee, who answered that he was considering forming the African-American branch and saw no reason why Robinson and other vaudeville artists could not be members.

In spite of that, Albee explained that it was better for African-American performers to be "among themselves in some part of city best suited to their own convenience". Albee also added that it was possible for Robinson and other African-American artists to join in the association under certain circumstances, and they would have all benefits, except the clubhouse. When Robinson had suggested having a benefit to raise money for a new African-American branch of the association, the secretary of the association, Henry Chesterfield, answered that the association would arrange it. Possibly for the reason that Robinson did not have time for promoting his idea, as he stayed on the road all the time, the idea was never realized.

Robinson's efforts for racial equality were implemented in Miami in the 1940s. According to Rae Samuels Forkins, Robinson was one of the organizers in the benefit which was intended for what was likely the first all-white show in Miami to help underprivileged African-American children. Robinson insisted that African-Americans also be allowed to attend. The Mayor of Miami agreed to Robinson's request. Although African-Americans had to sit in the back, the event was a revolutionary occurrence in Miami where people were not used to mixed crowds before.[882]

Haskins and Mitgang have also brought out other stories about Robinson's attitude against racial prejudice.[883] Robinson was known for his short temper when he encountered racial injustice. He was a one-man force, when threatening with his

880 Stearns 1994, p. 186.

881 This and the next paragraph are based on Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 106-108.

882 Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 290-291.

883 This and the next paragraph are based on Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 160, 218-221.

golden gun, if he or his friends did not get service because of their race. After threatening, they were usually served, although sometimes officials were called, like in Decatur, Georgia, where Robinson was claimed to have threatened a train steward with a gun, after Robinson and his wife were mistreated in the train. Because the sheriff already knew Robinson well, the case was dismissed. There also was a case where Robinson and his company were not served for their complexions in Sioux Falls in North Dakota, where they had prearranged lodgings. After calling the president of Pennsylvania Railroad, who made arrangements, they had staff, heat, and full service in the dining and drawing room cars. It was also claimed that Robinson was to have socked an elevator man in the face, when this man did not allow him to enter the elevator because of his race. That happened when Robinson was going to teach white dance teachers.

Sometimes Robinson used different tactics to get racial equality to happen. He once refused to use an elevator which was meant only for white people. He was also noticed when he participated spontaneously in a theater play, where African-Americans were losing a battle against others. Robinson went onto the stage and started to throw bricks with African-American actors behind the theatrical barricades. He explained later to the audience that he had no conscious notion what had happened.

According to Robinson's ex-wife Fannie Robinson, Bill Robinson tried to take care of racial equality in different events where he performed and participated in the South, although he knew that he really could not change the segregated ways there[884]. When he performed for prison inmates, he asked that African-American inmates were allowed in on the program, and when he performed to children in orphanages, he asked that some white kids be invited into the otherwise all African-American group.

Robinson was able to get his African-American friends into the white-only audience after a discussion with the manager in Dallas where he performed. After the show, Robinson went to the local bank to cash his paycheck and talked to the bank president about getting to New York soon as possible. There were two different trains: slow, which was for African Americans, and fast, which was for whites. The president promised to arrange Robinson and his wife on the fast train and that happened. The Robinsons believed that they were in trouble on the train, but the white people on the train treated them well, as they were full of friendliness and admiration for Bill Robinson. They even brought their children to see Robinson, who loved Robinson, because of his performing with Shirley Temple in the movies. Fannie Robinson even claims that they later got a letter from their friends in Dallas, who wrote that three African-American policemen had been appointed to serve the African-American district in Dallas for the first time in the city's history. The appointments were announced to have been made in honor of Bill Robinson.

884 This and the next paragraph are based on Fannie Robinson, 'I remember Bojangles', *Ebony*, February, 1953, pp. 54 and 56.

Variety magazine also reported on an incident where three well-dressed, middle-aged women of the white audience in Baltimore hissed at Robinson in 1922. After those women were requested to leave the theater, Robinson gave a speech where he explained that kind of thing had not happened to him during his thirty years in show business, and he had been taught to ignore that when ever it happened. He was reported to have won the house over by the way he cleared the case.[885]

The *Oakland Tribune* newspaper reported on a similar incident in San Francisco in 1922, where Robinson substituted for a white blackface comedian in the Orpheum-theater, when the comedian was hospitalized and needed a substitute. Robinson offered himself as a substitute and asked the management to pay the hospitalized comedian his salary and Robinson was paid nothing. The comedian later told the newspaper how he had a lack of respect for African-Americans and Robinson unconsciously taught him a lesson, as they did not know each other beforehand. However, Robinson denied all kudos for his part in the case, in the article. According to Haskins and Mitgang, one week after the article, Robinson was the only African-American player in the National Vaudeville Artists baseball team, consisting of nine members of the theatre show, which played against the local newspaper sportswriters. It is not clear, how the incident affected including Robinson. He possibly was also a talented ballplayer, which had its part in case.[886]

There also were times when Robinson had to accept his racial mistreatment, such at the time when he was going shopping with his manager's assistant, Lillian Alpert Wolf. According to Wolf, Robinson suddenly started to run when they were entering Broadway. He shouted to her that he, an African-American, cannot walk with a white lady on Broadway, and asked Wolf to meet him in the shop. Robinson was also working with tap dancer and actor Eleanor Powell, who was told that she could use the front elevator, but Robinson had to use the freight elevator. Powell decided to travel with Robinson in the freight elevator.[887] There also may exist an explanation to Robinson's occasional acceptance of his mistreatment. According to Alan Pomerance, who has researched how African-American entertainers influenced civil rights, Robinson accepted his movie roles, which sometimes included disrespectful myths about African-Americans, because he thought that he would never be given any roles if he refused these. He wanted "to stay alive".[888]

Robinson also participated in public events which were connected to World War II. An example of this is the Freedom Rally in Madison Square Garden, in October 1941. *The New York Times* reported in the beginning of its article of how:

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885 'Hissers Of Colored Act Told To Leave Theatre', *Variety*, August 25, 1922, p. 4.

886 Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 140-142. Obviously *Oakland Tribune* issue was from November 17, 1922. See: Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 311 and note: 11. The Orpheum Theater episode also is confirmed by *The Chicago Defender* which reported, based on *Oakland Tribune,* Robinson's offer to perform as mentioned. See: 'What "Bo" Did', *The Chicago Defender*, December 16, 1922, p. 6.

887 Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 195 and 228. Wolf was Robinson's manager Marty Forkins' assistant. See: Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 164.

888 Pomerance 1991, p. 89.

> Bill Robinson, no Aryan, tap-danced on Adolf Hitler's coffin in Madison Square Garden last night before 17,000 persons…Bojangles, wearing gold pants, grinned happily through 'his tap-tap-tap a few minutes after the 17,000 onlookers had come close to having the wits scared out of them by a bombing and parachutist attack on the Garden, in the course of which thousands of soldiers descended from the vast ceiling[889].

Thus, his image was used for supporting the war efforts in public even before the U. S. had participated in World War II. Also African-American tap dance was recognized, via Robinson's dance, as an important part of American culture.

When considering Robinson's recognition among whites, his accomplishments in creating equality between races seemed to result from spontaneous actions in the course of his life. There likely was no bigger plan for the actions. He used force or his personal charm, depending on the situation and the actions cumulated in the way that he was able to make with his actions, at least, small fractures in the barrier of segregation. The proof for this is his increasing popularity among whites, which had led to friendships with white authorities. He was also recognized outside his dancing, which comes out in the reporting about his non-dancing activities. The proof for his increasing popularity is also the reported Madison Square Garden event where Robinson was used for supporting the war efforts.

5.1.1 Robinson Interviewed in the Mainstream Press

Bill Robinson was interviewed and presented personally in the mainstream press starting from 1928, when Robinson's success in the *Blackbirds* play on Broadway likely led to the interviews in the mainstream press[890]. For comparison, Robinson was not an unknown person in the African-American newspapers at the time, where interviews are concerned. For example, *The Afro-American* interviewed him in 1925.[891]

New York Herald Tribune and *The New Yorker* magazine introduced Robinson in July and September 1928. The former had an article about Robinson on July 15, 1928, where Whitney Bolton discussed Robinson or "the chocolate Nijinsky" as he was called in the article. Robinson told about various dance-related incidents in the article. The incidents varied from his childhood experiences as he invented his

889 'Freedom Rally Thrills 17,000', *The New York Times*, October 6, 1941, p. 1.

890 Robinson's success in the *Blackbirds* is discussed in the chapter 'The Harlem Jazz Dance on Broadway Theaters and the Mainstream Press Between 1921 and 1943'. It is quite clear that Robinson's success in the *Blackbird*s led to the interviews, although this connection is not clearly mentioned in the articles. Because the interviews were done at the same time when Robinson performed in the *Blackbirds*, it is quite clear that there was a connection between these two occurrences.

891 ' "Bill" Robinson Is A Dancing Genius', *The Afro-American*, August 22, 1925, p. 5.

trademark Stair Dance to meeting Al Jolson, and how he tore Jolson's bicycle in an accident. He also claimed to have raised Florence Mills, and he explained the background of dances like the Charleston and Black Bottom. However, none of the stories got to the depth of his non-dance-related activities or his personality.[892] *The New Yorker* magazine presented Robinson and his dancing briefly in its September 8, 1928 issue. Similar to the *New York Herald Tribune*, *The New Yorker* stayed mostly on dancing, but also brought out his sprinter activities and his "special hobby" to buy "fine gems" for his wife. Thus, it discussed a little about his private life.[893]

The *New York Herald Tribune* interviewed Robinson again for its 1934 article, where Robinson told about his running activities and especially about his ability to run backwards. Robinson told briefly about his tap dancing, in particular when he discussed his beginning in the dance and about people whom he had instructed.[894] *The New Yorker* even did a two-part profile about Robinson in 1934. Robinson told about his life and accomplishments much more deeper than before. His personal life was discussed, from how he lives to his health issues. His connections to various authorities were brought out, too. In spite of his private life being brought out more clearly than before, his dancing still was discussed more than other issues in the articles.[895]

Robinson talked about people he had met during his dance career to *The Hartford Courant* in 1935. The article concentrated only on his professional contacts without discussing his life outside dancing.[896] Otherwise, he seemed to have commented briefly on his dancing and running activities in the various articles of the mainstream press between 1934 and 1935.[897]

If the mainstream press had recognized Bill Robinson mainly for his dancing, things changed after he had a breakthrough in *The New York Times* in 1936, when B. R. Crisler interviewed him at the beginning of July. Robinson was described as a:

> […] professor of tap dancing and one of the most widely sought-after educators in the world today…[his students] have turned to Dr. Robinson as to a light in universal darkness, a spring of fresh water in a

892 Whitney Bolton, 'Concerning 8,791 Dance Steps And the Man Who Takes 'Em', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 15, 1928, p. F2.

893 'Tap Dancer', *The New Yorker*, September 8, 1928, p. 13-14.

894 'Robinson Dreams Routines Scoring Tap Dance Fame', *New York Herald Tribune*, January 14, 1934, p. D6.

895 St. Clair McKelway, 'Profiles – Bojangles -1', *The New Yorker*, October 6, 1934, p. 26-28 and St. Clair McKelway, 'Profiles – Bojangles -2', *The New Yorker*, October 13, 1934, p. 30-34. Also *The Afro-American* discussed the first *New Yorker* profile. See: 'Bojangles – He Rates a Profile in the New Yorker', *The Afro-American*, October 13, 1934, p. 7.

896 Bill Robinson, Mollie Merrick, 'Bill Robinson Looks Back Half-Century', *The Hartford Courant*, January 3, 1935, p. 18.

897 See for example: 'Bill Robinson Defies World's Best Sprinters', *Los Angeles Times*, February 19, 1935, p. A13; '1935 Dance Team: It's Shirley Temple And Bill Robinson', *New York Herald Tribune*, March 3, 1935, p. D4; 'Tap Dancer to Join in Symphony Concert', *Los Angeles Times*, December 6, 1935, p. A1.

> desert land, and have found him an inexhaustible source of new rhythmic patterns…and today his clinic in Hollywood, where he is under contract to Twentieth Century-Fox, is as crowded as that of the Mayo Brothers and twice as reverent. Professor Robinson, who is back in his six-room Harlem flat just being Bojangles for the Summer, has listed among his pupils such virtuosi as the late Marilyn Miller or the decidedly current Eleanor Powell, Dixie Dunbar and…Shirley Temple.

The article also described Robinson's dance teaching and appearances in various movies. His connections to numerous authorities were mentioned in a similar fashion as in *the New Yorker* profile. The terminology which he used was also discussed: it was brought out how his invention, the word 'Copasetic', which means 'ok' and 'fine', was interrogated by Funk & Wagnalls, the lexicographers. In the end of the article, Robinson was credited as the owner of the world's finest collection of autographed baseballs.[898] Overall, the article seemed to praise Robinson, and it went deeper into his personality than before, with its descriptions about Robinson's non-tap dance achievements.

The significance of the article comes out in the fact that the circulation of *The New York Times* at the time, was between 707,596 and 744,727 issues on Sundays, when the article was published.[899] When comparing this to the circulation of *The New Yorker* and *New York Herald Tribune*, the difference is clear: *The New Yorker* had a circulation of 115,489 in 1934, when its Robinson profiles were published, and *New York Herald Tribune* had a circulation of 426,432 on Sundays in 1934, when its Robinson articles were published.[900] In a sense, *The New York Times* article was a kind of breakthrough as to how Robinson was recognized in the mainstream press. It also was a breakthrough in the depth of the discussion, where Harlem-based jazz dance is concerned.[901]

When Robinson turned sixty years old in 1938, he was reported on in an over one page long article of *The New York Times Magazine*[902]. The article was headlined, "Bill Robinson, 60, Taps Out The Joy Of Living" with a smaller sub-headline, "Feet

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898 B. R. Crisler, 'Film Gossip Of The Week', *The New York Times*, July 5, 1936, p. X3. See for the term 'copasetic': Stearns 1994, p. 261.

899 The figures are according to *The New York Times* Sunday circulation between 1934 and 1939. See: *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* 1934, p. 645 and Percy H. Johnson (editor), *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* (Philadelphia, PA., U. S. A: N. W. Ayer & Son, Incorporated, 1939), p. 648.

900 See: *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* 1934, pp. 628 and 636.

901 The author of the dissertation has not found any other article from the major mainstream press, which discusses with similar depth about the personality and life of any African-American dancer at the time of the Robinson article. Even Josephine Baker, who might have come close, did not seem to be interviewed with the same depth than Robinson. See for example: Hubert Griffith, 'Josephine Baker At Home – English And French Theatres', *The Observer*, October 8, 1933, p. 29. Robinson seemed to be an exception in the case.

902 The next paragraphs until the phrase 'they couldn't help it' are based on S. J. Woolf, 'Bill Robinson, 60, Taps Out The Joy Of Living', *The New York Times*, May 22, 1938, p. 116.

Are the Fortune Of the Negro Dancer". The article had almost a half-page big picture, where Robinson's smiling face was pictured. In addition to that, there were sub-pictures in the article where he was described as he danced. The article states:

> But Bill Robinson is something more than a glorified hoofer. He has introduced a new note into dancing; he expresses himself in his particular art as surely as the painter does with colors and the poet with words. Tap dancing is not new. But never before his time has the tattoo of the dance been so integral a part of every action of the dancer. Dancing is as natural to him as leaping to a kangaroo; it is a part of him, his method of locomotion. Thus his steps are extemporaneous, and he never misses a tap; his rhythm is perfect and he is tireless. Dancing he portrays the joy of living.

Although the article mostly discussed Robinson's dancing, it also went through Robinson's life and brought out how he was shot four times, and slashed with knives and razors. The article even mentioned Robinson's old incidents, like an arrest in the past, when he was arrested because he hit an officer with a broken billiard cue. Robinson explained in the article that it was a mistake from him as he did not recognize the man as a policeman. The article also explained Robinson's involvements in charity outside and inside Harlem. As the article went through Robinson's life, it also discussed Robinson's past occupations and wages he got. Overall, the article described Robinson very positively, and even personally, although there were some racist kind of expressions at least, when the author of the article described how Robinson "brings up pictures of those happy-go-lucky darkies who lolled about columned plantation homes-who danced because they had no cares and who sang because they couldn't help it." Probably those "plantation" African-Americans had "cares" when they were treated as slaves.

Robinson's status seemed to be on a level at the time that even his whereabouts were reported on, to some degree, in the mainstream newspapers, when *The New York Times* commented shortly in April 1938, that Robinson was honored with a birthday party by The Grand Street Boys Association. That happened earlier than his actual birthday on May 25, possibly because, as it was explained, "Mr. Robinson…has to leave to tomorrow for Hollywood to appear in a motion picture".[903] The article seemed to stress Robinson's importance in Hollywood entertainment because his birthday had to be celebrated beforehand.

In 1939, Bill Robinson was interviewed in least two articles of the two mainstream newspapers. In the first one, which *The New York Times* published in April 1939, and headlined, "The Mikado, Himself", Robinson told about his participation in *the Hot Mikado*, the Broadway play where he was the main character. He also told about the history of his life and his performances in a detailed way. This time racist terminology had been mainly left off. Robinson was described as one who as "the great-grandson of a slave, a poor boy with no parents alive to guide him, raised by his grandmother, and a kid who wanted to be the best jockey of

[903] 'Robinson to Be Honored Today', *The New York Times*, April 3, 1938, p. 48.

all time, has come a long way since he left his birthplace in Richmond, Va." This description about his childhood is ordinary otherwise, but the word "darkies" mentioned once in the article is reminiscent of the racist terminology. The almost 170 line article about Robinson was possibly made because his upcoming 61st birthday in May 1939. The set of the article with expressions like "At 61 Bill Robinson is still dancing" and "At 61 Bojangles Bill Robinson has arrived" refers to that.[904]

In the second and shorter article, which *The Washington Post* published in December 1939, Robinson said, "He didn't want this country mixed up in the war and it wouldn't be "if that man stays in"", obviously referring to President Roosevelt, the president of the United States at the time. He also talked about things like his dancing in *the Hot Mikado*, about his dancing, and his good deeds in his hometown, Richmond. There is no sign of racist impressions in the article, and overall article gives a positive picture of Robinson. The idea of why the article was published was the fact that Robinson visited Washington D.C. Indeed, the town was not mentioned in the article, but that can be concluded about the article. It stays unclear if the paper wanted to use Robinson's negative stance on the United States participation in World War II. In other words, if Robinson was used as the messenger in the case. Robinson referred in the article that "he was talking like a third-term advocate".[905] The case probably was the first time that an African-American dancer was quoted in the mainstream press as a "political advocate" in U.S. foreign politics.

Later, *The New York Times* reported spectacularly on his seventieth birthday cruise, with 300 friends, on Hudson River in May 1948. The article had the picture at the top of it, where can be seen both African-American and white people on board the ship, which had 'Bojangles' as a name painted on the side of the ship. The article, which told warmly about the events in the cruise, took about a fourth of a page, and it was located almost to the left upper corner of the page.[906] Thus it was not as monumental an article as Robinson's sixty year article in *The New York Times Magazine* ten years earlier, but the article, however, was a respectable tribute to Robinson, who still danced and performed almost until the end of his life.[907]

Robinson talked for the last time to the *Hollywood Citizen-News* in January 1949, and worried about the movie of his life, if that ever happens. He also did a surprise appearance on *Ted Mack's Amateur Hour* in February 1949, where he advised the African-American performer on the stage how the stage behavior is fine, but off the stage, out in the street talking with people, takes him further up on the stage, if he

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904 'The Mikado, Himself', *The New York Times*, April 9, 1939, p. X2.

905 'Bill Robinson's Talk Dances Away From War and Politics', *The Washington Post*, December 9, 1939, p. 3.

906 Murray Schumach, 'Bill Robinson and 300 Friends Hail His 70th Birthday on Hudson Cruise', *The New York Times*, May 26, 1948, p. 27.

907 Robinson obviously stopped performing after February 1949, when he stayed mostly at home and danced only occasionally before his passing in November 1949. He had had heart attacks and healthy problems. See: Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 300-303.

knows how to act out there.[908] Robinson, who was already chronically sick because of his heart and health problems, revealed in the appearance his way to success on the stage and outside the stage.[909]

Bill Robinson, who tap danced through the decades in over half a century, was a unique example of an African-American who could pass over the racial limitations in the United States at the time, when segregation was still firmly applied in everyday life. A proof for his success as a "Freedom Fighter" for African-Americans is his funeral. When Robinson passed away in November 1949, there were, according to *The New York Times,* at least 31,942 people who passed the bier of Bill Robinson. Although they were reported to be "for the most part…friends and admirers from Harlem"[910], there were, as *The New York Times* stated, "Crowds that the police estimated at half a million lined at least eight miles of streets as the flag-draped hearse rolled slowly from church to cemetery."[911] *The Washington Post* reported that there were over 1,500,000 people in the crowd looking at the hundred-car long funeral cortege between the streets of Harlem and the heart of Broadway.[912] The funeral also gathered white celebrities like Milton Berle, Jimmy Durante, Bob Hope, Danny Kaye, L.B. Mayer, Darryl Zanuck, Joe DiMaggio, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, and Mayor of New York at the time, William O'Dwyer.[913] In addition to that, Governor Thomas E. Dewey wired his condolences to Robinson's widow:

> [The Passing of Bill Robinson] is a sad loss to all of us. It was not only his wonderful talent as a dancer that made him one of America's outstanding figures, but the qualities of good fellowship that he expressed were an inspiration to millions.[914]

Robinson seemed to be recognized in an exceptional way in the mainstream press, as far as African-American dancers from the time period are concerned. Although the recognition was mainly concentrated on his dancing, he seemed to be recognized even as a "political advocate", and parts of his private life were brought out in the articles. Thus, in this sense, his image was distinguished from the racist

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908 Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 300.

909 Ibid., pp. 300-303. Although Haskins and Mitgang do not mention that as a conclusion, it is quite clear how Robinson worked through his career.

910 'Paying Solemn Tribute To Bill Robinson – 31,942 File Past the Bier of Bill Robinson; 500 Policemen Assigned for Funeral Today', *The New York Times*, November 28, 1949, p. 21.

911 'Celebrities and 8 Miles of Crowds Pay Last Tribute to Bill Robinson', *The New York Times*, November 29, 1949, p. 1;

912 'Jazz Band Beats Out Score For Bojangles' Final Exit', *The Washington Post*, November 29, 1949, p. B2.

913 'Celebrities and 8 Miles of Crowds Pay Last Tribute to Bill Robinson', *The New York Times*, November 29, 1949, pp. 1 and 25; 'Jazz Band Beats Out Score For Bojangles' Final Exit', *The Washington Post*, November 29, 1949, p. B2; 'O'Dwyer To Speak At Robinson Rites', *The New York Times*, November 27, 1949, p. 104.

914 'O'Dwyer To Speak At Robinson Rites', *The New York Times*, November 27, 1949, p. 104. The article mentions only Governor Dewey. His whole name was Thomas E. Dewey. See: 'Dewey Approves $300 Million In N. Y. State Housing Bonds', *The Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 1949, p. 9.

stereotype where African-Americans were described as ones who sang and danced, but were otherwise foolish kind.[915] In that sense, he had positive effects on the public image of African-Americans, as Robinson really seemed to break racial barriers during his career that spanned decades.

5.2 The World's Fair 1939 - 1940 in Queens

Bill Robinson's activities were also remarkable in the World's Fair in 1939. Both Robinson and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers participated in *the Hot Mikado* play at the Fair, which has been discussed in its own subchapter. Before that, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' activities in the Savoy Pavilion at the Fair are discussed and explained, and how their operations in the Savoy Pavilion and in *the Hot Mikado* were connected. These activities are important examples about how the Harlem-based jazz dance was recognized outside Harlem.

Historian Robert W. Rydell argues that since London's 'Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations' in 1851, the expositions have concentrated on reflecting "profound concerns about the future, and deflected criticism of the established political and social order". He states that in the aftermath of World War I, international expositions turned to the way which reinforced the exposition promoters' own authority and the procedure which gave to ordinary citizens the direction "through the turbulent seas of the postwar period".[916] The World's Fair in Flushing Meadows park, New York, which was organized between April 30, 1939 and October 27, 1940, was likely part of this continuum.[917] The World's Fair contained cultural and commercial exhibitions from various countries and companies, and countless amusement spots in its 1939 form.[918] The World's Fair in 1939 grossed over $35,245,000, which tells about its financial importance: it was a big business.[919]

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915 This racist stereotype, Mungo character, is discussed in the chapter 'From the Racist Characterizations to the Swing Integration – Views of African-American Presentation'.

916 Robert W. Rydell, *World of Fairs: The Century-Of-Progress Expositions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 5.

917 Although New York's World's Fair between 1939 and 1940 was already close to WW II, it is reasonable to believe that the same principles applied to it, too. That is especially, when considering, how uncertain times were, because of the threat of new World War. See for the beginning and end dates of the World's Fair 1939-1940: Sidney M. Shalett, 'Rush As Fair Ends Brings Out 537,952, Its Biggest Crowd', *The New York Times*, October 28, 1940, pp. 1 and 10.

918 See for example the map from the World's Fair, where there are listed these exhibitions and spots: 'The Week's Leading Events', *The New York Times*, July 1, 1939, p. 8.

919 'N. Y. Expo's 37 Million', *The Billboard*, April 13, 1940, pp. 1, 126 and 127. There particularly, 'N. Y. World's Fair Grosses' on page 127.

5.2.1 The Savoy Pavilion

Moe Gale, who was owner of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom, sent the application for the Savoy Ballroom at the Fair to the World's Fair officials in November 1937.[920] Before that, the Director of Entertainment recommended the Savoy project for development in June 1937.[921] The Savoy application was finally approved for negotiation in March 1938. Director of Exhibits and Concessions, Maurice Marmey, mentioned in the notice that there was no other applications which were considered "for this type of show". Additionally, he stated how the type of dancing, which was seen in the Harvest Moon Ball and at the Savoy Ballroom, had "always proved most popular and receives a great deal of publicity".[922] It is possible that Marmey's comments were influenced by Moe Gale's promotion letter to the World's Fair Committee. Gale explained in his letter the background of the "Lindy-Hop" and its connection to the ballroom and the Harvest Moon Ball contest.[923] Anyway, Marmey made the notice, so it reflects his opinion. The approval of the Savoy Ballroom in the case refers clearly to the recognition of the Savoy dancing. The ballroom and its achievements had become remarkable at the time.

The whole process led to the Savoy's participation in the World's Fair. This participation was realized in the form of Herbert White's dancers who worked in the Fair, as these terms were used at magazines and newspapers, at the 'Savoy Pavilion' or at the 'Savoy Ballroom' or at the Savoy or at the 'Savoy Theatre' or at the 'Savoy exhibit' which, according to the Savoy Pavilion dancer, Norma Miller, was a weak replica of the Savoy Ballroom. The Savoy Pavilion was working between April 30 and July 31.[924]

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920 'Moe Gale's Application For Savoy Ballroom', November 15, 1937, folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library. Moe Gale was owner of the Savoy Ballroom at the time. See for example: 'Schiffman Strikes Back', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 10, 1934, p. 11.

921 'Memorandum – New York World's Fair 1939 Incorporated – To: Mr. George P. Smith Jr., From Alfred Stern, Subject: "The Savoy" – Moe Gale', February 11, 1938, p. 3, folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library.

922 'The General Manager – Director of Exhibits and Concessions – The Savoy – submitted by Moe Gale', March 28, 1938, folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library.

923 'Gale – Artists' Representatives -The World's Fair Committee', March 2, 1938, folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library.

924 Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 133, 137 and 139. Although Norma Miller claims that the Savoy Pavilion was closed in the end of June, according to *The New York Times,* the Savoy Ballroom in the amusement area of the World's Fair was closed in the end of July. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 143 and 'Fight For Fee Cut Continues At Fair', *The New York Times*, August 2, 1939, p. 1. Dinerstein claims that that the Savoy at the Fair was closed in mid-August. See: Dinerstein 2003, p. 303 and note 79, p. 396. He seems to be wrong, because there is the mentioned *New York Times* article, and it was wrote on the memorandum of New York World's Fair 1939 Incorporated, that "Savoy - This operation will remain closed until further notice". The sentence clearly refers to the fact that the Savoy Pavilion was closed at the time, which was on August 1 as it was dated in the memorandum.

The participation seemed to turn out to be a disaster. Norma Miller has brought out problems concerning the dancers of the Savoy Pavilion, as she claims that the working schedule of the Savoy Pavilion was ”brutal” and ”unrealistic” for only one group of dancers, who had to perform twelve shows per day.[925] According to Pal Andrews, one of the dancers in the Savoy Pavilion, they danced ”every hour for six hours a day, with only a few minutes in between shows”. Also Wilda Crawford, who was part of the dancers, has said that she danced ”over and over for several shows a day”. It is possible that all dancers did not dance in the same shows, and that is why there have been different opinions between the dancers about the schedule. However, it seems to be correct to claim that the timetable of the show was ”grueling” like Andrews and Crawford have stated[926] or ”brutal” like Miller has stated.

Using less dancers than was needed did not possibly happen intentionally, as *The Pittsburgh Courier* reported in the beginning of January 1939, of how the Savoy at the Fair had plans to bring in “teams and single dancers…from all parts of the country for contracted engagements”. Those dancers were chosen by contests, which were planned to be organized in Washington, Norfolk, Roanoke, Philadelphia and Baltimore. The contests would have had jazz dances like Lindy Hop, Boogie Woogie, Cakewalk, Suzi-Q and the Skronch.”[927]

According to the list of the Savoy Pavilion dancers in *The New York Amsterdam News,* there were 28 dancers involved in the show at the beginning of June. At least fifteen dancers had been part of Herbert White’s dancers or they had been at the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem before the World’s Fair.[928] That refers to the possible

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See: ‘Memorandum of New York World’s Fair 1939 Incorporated’, August 1, 1939, folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library. The Savoy Pavilion still was closed on August 4 as it was mentioned in the letter, issued to Mr. Moe Gale, Gale Enterprises, Inc. See: the letter, issued to Mr. Moe Gale, Gale Enterprises, Inc., dated August 4, 1939, folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library. The closing was reported in various newspapers. See: ’Boone Resigns As Press Head; 2 Shows Close’, *The Billboard*, August 12, 1939, p. 28. The article was dated August 5, so the closing happened by the date. See also: ’Savoy Is Closed Tightly At Fair’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 12, 1939, p. 17; ’World’s Fair Business Slump Closes Savoy; It’s Only Harlem Concession’, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, August 12, 1939, p. 20. See for opening of the Fair: ’Text of President’s Address Opening N. Y. World’s Fair’, *The Washington Post*, May 1, 1939, p. 9. See also for opening of the Savoy Ballroom at the Fair: ‘Play Area’s Gala Opening Put Off For Two Weeks’, *New York Herald Tribune*, May 1, 1939, p. 14.

925 Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 137 and 139.

926 Robert P. Crease, ‘Wilda Crawford’, Footnotes: November-December, 1988. Vol. 3, No. 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Robert P. Crease, ‘Pal Andrews’, Footnotes: Spring 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

927 ’World’s Fair Concession Seeking Colored Dancers’, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, January 7, 1939, p. 13. All the dances are jazz dances. See: ‘Contents’ – the list of Jazz Dances in the end of Jazz Dance, Stearns 1994, no page number.

928 ’Savoy Theatre On Fair Site Is Gala Spot’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 3, 1939, p. 3. The dancers who surely had been part of Herbert White’s dancers or were from the Savoy Ballroom before the World’s Fair were George Greenwich (Greenidge), Norma

recruits outside the Savoy Ballroom, but there exists no other evidence. Also, *The Chicago Defender* claimed, without listing the names in August, that there were ”more than 50 Lindy Hoppers dancing at each performance”. According to the article, the Savoy at the Fair employed 100 African-Americans. The professional status of these people stays unclear with an exception of the Lindy Hoppers mentioned in the *New York Amsterdam News* list.[929]

Jitterbugs were reported to ””Break Ground” For Savoy Theatre On Fair Grounds” on March 11, 1939, as *The New York Amsterdam News* headline read for its article where it was mentioned that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, who swung out to both Chick Webb's and Erskine Hawkins' hot music, were at the place. Over twenty buses of the dancers and their friends were transported to the World's Fair area in Flushing, New York. Grover Whalen, President of the World's Fair Corporation, and Charles Buchanan, manager of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom, with more than a thousand others, participated in the ceremonies. There also is the picture in the page where Mr. Whalen and others around him looked at the dancers in the middle of ”circle”, who went through ”a slow-motion routine of the Lindy Hop”. The audience included, according to the picture, both whites and African-Americans. The dancers were African-Americans.[930] The event also was reported briefly in the African-American newspapers, *The Chicago Defender* and *The Pittsburgh Courier*, and in the mainstream magazine, *Variety*, but without any picture.[931]

Miller, Joe Daniels, Joyce James, William Downes, Frances Jones, Louise 'Pal' Andrews, Billy Williams, Ann Johnson, Thomas Lee, Wilda Crawford, Johnny Smalls, Dottie Mae Johnson, Leroy Jones and Beatrice Elam. The dancers, Greenwich (Greenidge), Miller, Daniels, James, Downes, Johnson and Crawford can be found from the Harvest Moon Ball results before 1939. See: 'Harlem Hoppers Try Lindy Hop Peckin' ', *Daily News*, August 14, 1937, p. 13 and 14; 'Harlem Dancers Advance to Finals', *Daily News*, August 13, 1938, p. 8. According to Wilda Crawford, Thomas Lee was part of Herbert White's dancers since 1935. See: Robert P. Crease, 'Wilda Crawford', Footnotes: November-December, 1988. Vol. 3, No. 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Frankie Manning remembers Dottie Mae Johnson from the middle of the 1930s. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 106. Louise 'Pal' Andrews was recruited before the World's Fair. See: Robert P. Crease, 'Pal Andrews', Footnotes: Spring 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Andrews talks about sisters Mickey and Sales. According Andrews, Mickey was recruited in 1938. According to Manning, Mickey is Frances 'Mickey' Jones whose sister is Sales. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 251. Billy Williams was part of White's dancers from the middle of the 1930s, and Leroy Jones and Beatrice 'Little Bea' Elam were the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, who belonged earlier to George Snowden's dancers. See: Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 76, 114 and 245. Concerning Johnny Smalls see: Robert P. Crease, 'Divine Frivolity: Hollywood Representations of the Lindy Hop 1937 – 1942' in Gabbard 1995, p. 213.

929 'Fair's Savoy Theatre Closes During Battle', *The Chicago Defender*, August 12, 1939, p. 20.

930 Julius J. Adams, 'Jitterbugs ”Break Ground” For Savoy Theatre On Fair Grounds', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 11, 1939, p. 4 and '---- And Mr. Whalen Said, O.K.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 11, 1939, p. 4.

931 'Lindy Hoppers Give Preview At N.Y. Fair', *The Chicago Defender*, March 11, 1939, p. 18; 'Erskine Hawkins, Savoy's Lindy Hoppers To Rug-Cut Savoy's World's Fair Sod', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, January 28, 1939, p. 13; 'Spiked Lindy Hoppers Loosen Up Expo Ground For Savoy Spade-Dig', *Variety*, January 18, 1939, p. 37.

The World's Fair area, where the ground was broken, was claimed to be in a wrong area, as the mainstream newspaper, *The Washington Post,* reported on March 9. According to Leonard Lyons, who wrote the article, the officials of the World's Fair found out that "the jitterbugs had broken the wrong ground". The ground they had broken was the area where Morris Gest's Midget Village was to be constructed.[932]

However, it stays unclear if other papers reported on the "wrong ground" claim, and if Lyons was correct with his claim.[933] Anyway, the event was reported in the mainstream newspapers, although not always in a positive light, as the article shows.

Joel Dinerstein suggests that the World's Fair in the Flushing Meadows Park, Flushing, New York was a showcase of modern technology with its World of Tomorrow exhibition during 1939. According to Dinerstein, part of the "Machine Age aesthetics" were African-American males' dancing bodies. He states, "tap, big bands and the Lindy were artistic hits of the (World's) Fair". He argues that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, and Bill Robinson's tap dancing in *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair's Hall of Music were examples of "swing's humanized machine aesthetics of controlled power".[934]

African-American dancing bodies were seen in the form of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers at the Savoy Pavilion. According to Joel Dinerstein, the Savoy Pavilion was popular from the beginning, because of the regular show, *Cavalcade of Negro Dance,* which included the Lindy Hop number called "The Mutiny Swing". Dinerstein claims that "show was critically acclaimed by every local newspaper and several national publications". Audiences, which consisted mostly of white teenagers, however, could not dance there.[935]

The Savoy Pavilion had several Jitterbug and Lindy Hop contests during its opening night on April 30. The event had Glen Gray's Casa Lomas, Benny Carter, and the Savoy Sultans as bands. According to *The Chicago Defender*, the event "was packed and jammed with visitors to the Fair from both Broadway and Harlem."[936] Joel Dinerstein claims that the Savoy Pavilion had the Lindy Hop contest on May 21, where the participants were mostly of whites.[937] He is wrong, at least, with the place, as the contest was kept in Hall of Special events.[938] There was an "Interstate

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932 Leonard Lyons, 'The New Yorker', *The Washington Post*, March 9, 1939, p. 10.

933 There does not seem to exist other articles, where this "wrong ground" claim was commented. The newspapers and magazines, *The New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune, The Boston Daily Globe, The Hartford Courant, The Chicago Daily Tribune, The Christian Science Monitor, Variety and The Billboard* did not publish any pictures from the event.

934 Dinerstein 2003, p. 290.

935 Ibid., p. 303.

936 'Harlem Savoy Goes Out For Fair Visitors', *The Chicago Defender*, May 6, 1939, p. 21.

937 Dinerstein 2003, p. 303.

938 'Building Quivers As Jitterbugs Vie', *The New York Times*, May 21, 1939, p. 40.

”Jitterbug Contest” ” in the Savoy Ballroom (in the Savoy Pavilion) on July 5. There is no information about the participants.[939]

Norma Miller claims that she and her partner were asked to demonstrate the Lindy Hop on television, which was presented at the Fair. She and her partner introduced themselves by their first names and danced briefly. According to Miller, the occasion “was to be a first telecast”. It is doubtful that it was really the first telecast concerning jazz dancing because, dancer Josephine Baker claimed that, already in 1933, she was recorded for ‘television’ when she performed in London. Concerning the Fair broadcast and how widely it was aired is unclear. There is no other evidence for the occasion. The case talks for the recognition of the Lindy Hop and its dancers at the Fair.[940]

The New York Times wrote at the end of May, humorously, about the competition between ”the Savoy Jitterbug Temple” and Nils T. Granlund’s (N. T. G.’s) “Sun Worshippers” which was located next to the Savoy in the Fair. The latter had “been able to dominate the scene with its brassy tramp band”, but when the “Sun Worshippers” got ”a barker with the loudest-volumed loudspeaker yet to emerge in the amusement loop”, the Savoyards had to get additional equipment from the Savoy Ballroom and ”soon the rival barkers were blasting themselves-and the customers-into a state resembling deafness.” Also Sun Valley nearby ”stepped up the volume of its loudspeakers”.[941] *The New York Times* was not interested in the dancing of the Savoy Pavilion, because there was no kind of mention about that in the article.

Also, the African-American newspaper, *The New York Amsterdam News,* reported on ”boogie-woogie-shag-Lindy-hop dancers at the Savoy, a favorite Midway spot” in the World’s Fair, who seemed to ”enjoy their work more than any other group at the Fair”. The paper stated sarcastically that it is so exhausting to watch the dancers “tossing one another into the air and committing many more marvels with their torsos and tootsies that you’ll probably fall fast asleep right there.” The paper reported that even ”12,000 paid their way into see the Dancers of Tomorrow and Today”. *The New York Amsterdam News*, however, did not mention how many of these 12,000 visited in the Savoy Pavilion.[942]

The New York Amsterdam News had another article in the same issue and even on the same page, where the Savoy Pavilion was discussed with pictures. The article stressed the success of the Savoy in the Fair, particularly among white school kids. As it stated concerning the ”Whirl of Tomorrow” show at the Savoy Theatre:

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939 ’The Fair Today’, *The New York Times*, July 5, 1939, p. 13.

940 Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 142-143. See for Josephine Baker’s claim: Hubert Griffith, ’Josephine Baker At Home – English And French Theatres’, *The Observer*, October 8, 1933, p. 29.

941 ’Play Area at Fair Takes On New Life – Amusement Zone Starts to Boom’, *The New York Times*, May 28, 1939, p. 21.

942 Earl Brown, ’Reporter Spends Day Off At Fair’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 3, 1939, p. 3.

> Thirty rough-cutting, swing-made jitterbugs transplanted from the famed ”heart of Harlem” rendezvous [the Savoy Ballroom], have created a storm center in the midst of the amusement area and they’re rockin’ in rhythm daily before capacity houses. The show is rated one of the ”must [see]” features of the amusement area. Only Billy Rose’s much-publiced Aquacade and the Cuban Village with its fever temperatured display of terpsichorean pyrotechnics managed to out-draw the Savoy. ”Most of the afternoon crowd,” revealed an usher, ”is composed of school kids, mostly white, and they have a ball. They sit up there and shake their shoulders and like to pitch a fit sometimes.”[943]

The Savoy Pavilion was also mentioned in *The New York Times* at the end of May, for complaints which were made by ”women who had taken their children to the Savoy [Pavilion] because the children liked ”jitterbug” dancing”. Protests likely concerned ”sexy shows” and the ”vulgarity” of five shows in the Amusement Area of the World’s Fair. ”Suggestions” for toning down those shows concerned Crystal Palace, N.T.G’s Congress of Beauty, the Savoy, Norman Bel Geddes’s Crystal Lassies, and the Cuban Village.[944] Of the places listed, at least, the Savoy and the Cuban Village had dance performances.[945]

The case was discussed in *The New York Times* at the middle of June. According to the paper, the manager of the Savoy Ballroom at the Fair, Moe Gale, was one of those who was in danger of having his cabaret license taken at the Fair.[946] It seems that the case with charges was dropped later. *The New York Times* reported in the beginning of July, ”charges against Moe Gale…manager of the Savoy Ballroom at the World’s Fair, and George Ott…of the Casino of Nations, were dismissed”. The charges concerned lack of licenses.[947]

There are various claims about the closing of the Savoy Pavilion. Norma Miller, who was one of the Savoy Pavilion dancers, states that the group had an inhuman, daily performance timetable with twelve performances per day. The Savoy exhibit was closed because of too many injured dancers.[948] Pal Andrews, who also danced at the Savoy Pavilion, says that the Savoy Pavilion was closed “partly due injuries”[949]. Joel Dinerstein claims that the Savoy Pavilion was closed because of the competition between the newly arrived *the Hot Mikado* show and the Savoy Pavilion at the

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943 ’Savoy Theatre On Fair Site Is Gala Spot’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 3, 1939, p. 3.

944 ’Censor Descends Upon ’Sexy’ Shows’, *The New York Times,* May 30, 1939, p. 20.

945 The Savoy dance performances and competitions in the Fair can be found from this chapter. Cuban Village had at least Cuban rhumba dancers. See: ’Cuban Rhumba Dancer Star At Fair Opening’, *The Chicago Defender*, May 6, p. 21 and ’Reporter Spends Day Off At Fair’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 3, 1939, p. 3.

946 ’Decision Is Reserved In Nudity Show Case’, *The New York Times*, June 13, 1939, p. 20.

947 ’License Charges Are Dropped’, *The New York Times*, July 8, 1939, p. 7.

948 Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 133, 137, 139 and 143.

949 Robert P. Crease, ‘Pal Andrews’, Footnotes: Spring 1991. Vol 6, No. 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

World's Fair. He claims that when *the Hot Mikado* came to the Fair, it caused immediate drop in the attendance of the Savoy Pavilion. The play included tap dancer Bill Robinson and many couples from Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. The owner of the Savoy Ballroom and the Savoy Pavilion, Moe Gale, sued the Fair for breaking the contract as he claimed that he had an exclusive in presenting "Negro Dance". The lawsuit obviously did not succeed.[950]

It seems that Dinerstein is correct in his claim that the attendance dropped immediately after *the Hot Mikado* came in the fair. The analysis from a memorandum of the New York World's Fair 1939 Incorporated displays the smaller gross amount figure one week after *the Hot Mikado* came to the fair at the end of June. Indeed, those figures were weakening already before *the Hot Mikado* came to the Fair. It is difficult to say for sure if it was because of *the Hot Mikado* or for some other reasons, as to why the Savoy Pavilion did not succeed.[951] However, the main reason for the closing was weak business. According to the article of *The New York Times,* the Savoy Ballroom and also the Cuban Village in the amusement area, were closed because of low attendance.[952] Also Wilda Crawford, one of the Savoy Ballroom dancers in the fair, claimed that the Savoy was a "financial fiasco". The African-American *The Pittsburgh Courier* stated that it was closed for due to a "Business Slump".[953]

The Billboard reported in the beginning of June that the Savoy had grossed $12,350 between April 30 and May 23, which was, concerning the shows at the Fair, the sixth best profit from twenty different shows during the same time period.[954] The gross until the Savoy's closing was about $39,360, which was, in the middle of August, the ninth best profit from all the thirty different shows at the time.[955] However, the truth behind the figures was worse. According to the balance sheet

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950 Dinerstein 2003, p. 304.

951 'Memorandum – New York World's Fair 1939 – Incorporated', July 20, 1939, folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library. According to the memorandum, the Savoy Pavilion had made gross of $2,752.35 and $3,126.35 per week, during last two weeks before *the Hot Mikado*. One week after *the Hot Mikado* began at the Fair, the Savoy made gross of $2,684.50 per week. The gross raised to $2,924.80 during next week until it dropped to $1,582.35 one week after that. The highest figure seemed to be during the week of May 9, when it was $4,695.05 per week. After that the figures dropped first to $3,858.30 and then to $3,771.30 per week. After that they kept changing between $4,491.70 and $2,752.35 per week before *the Hot Mikado* came to the Fair. The figures were decreasing even before *the Hot Mikado* came to the Fair, thus it is difficult to conclude if the attendance dropped because of *the Hot Mikado* or if it dropped for some other reasons.

952 'Fight For Fee Cut Continues At Fair', *The New York Times*, August 2, 1939, p. 1.

953 Robert P. Crease, 'Wilda Crawford', Footnotes: November-December, 1988. Vol. 3, No. 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. See: 'World's Fair Business Slump Closes Savoy; It's Only Harlem Concession', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, August 12, 1939, p. 20.

954 'New York World's Fair', *The Billboard*, June 10, 1939, p. 30.

955 'New York World's Fair', *The Billboard*, September 2, 1939, p. 28. According to the article, the gross of the Savoy was 39,359 dollars. Later, in April 1940 *The Billboard* stated that the gross was 39,368 dollars. See: "N.Y. Expo's', *The Billboard*, April 13, 1940, p. 126. It is possible that the gross was revised later. That is why I use the expression, "about 39,360 dollars".

concerning the "Savoy At the Fair" dated July 1, 1939, Gale Enterprises, Inc. had invested $77,793.28 for the Savoy exhibit including construction cost, ground rent, pre-opening expense, and costumes and uniforms. According to the Profit & Loss Statement between April 30, 1939 and July 1, 1939, the Savoy had a net loss from the period of $2,401.66 as the income was $30,670.46 and the operating expenses were $33,072.12.[956]

The Savoy Pavilion was heavily unprofitable. The gross until the Savoy's closing in the end of July was about $39,360, and the investment to the Savoy Pavilion alone, was nearly $78,000. When considering Joel Dinerstein's claim that the Savoy Pavilion was closed because of *the Hot Mikado*, it would have been difficult to make profit enough to exceed the investment of nearly $78,000 plus the operating expenses, which were over $33,000 by July 1. The gross amount seemed to be over $12,000 during the first three weeks. The operation should have continued for seven months to get the investment and the operating expenses, which were accumulated by July 1, to be covered on the gross level of the first three weeks. In addition to that, there had been the operating expenses from the next month added to the total expenses. In that sense, it was obvious that the whole project was closed as an unsuccessful operation. Moe Gale sold the Savoy Pavilion building by August 18, 1939, which finally ended the Savoy Pavilion operation at the Fair.[957]

In the beginning of the operation, the Savoy at the Fair was a success for the Harlem jazz dance, because including it to the program of the World's Fair acknowledged the role of the Savoy Ballroom as an important ballroom in the New York area. In spite of the success among younger, white people, the exhibition turned out to be a financial catastrophe, which led to its closing after three months of operation. The mainstream press reported occasionally on the Savoy Pavilion, especially for the financial and other non-dance-related actions. Dancing seemed to stay mostly in the background in the mainstream press articles. It stays unclear if a reason for this was the brutal timetable which did not allow dancers perform fully in the way they were capable of. Thus, they were not able to compete against other acts in the Fair because of their unusual weak performances. After the Savoy Pavilion, Harlem's participation at the Fair still continued in the form of *the Hot Mikado*.

5.2.2 The Hot Mikado of the World's Fair

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers performed in the World's Fair production, *the Hot Mikado*, which had Bill Robinson in the main role. *The Hot Mikado* had a Broadway run before the World's Fair. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were part of the Broadway run, but the mainstream press did not seem to comment on their performance in the

956 'Gale Enterprises, Inc. – Financial Report – July 1, 1939', folder 7 (Savoy), Box 1547, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library.

957 'Contractors Take Over 2 Attractions', *The Billboard*, August 26, 1939, p. 44.

play.[958] According to Sandra Gibson, one of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers until 1939, she danced in the Broadway version of *the Hot Mikado*, which can be confirmed by the cast lists of the play of March – April, 1939.[959] Wilda Crawford claims that concerning the time when the show in the Savoy Pavilion was finally closed, that she danced in "the Broadway show the Hot Mikado", obviously meaning *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair.[960]

Also, Norma Miller states concerning *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair, after the closing of the Savoy Pavilion, that Herbert White had "new plans" for them, when he picked "his best dancers for the show"[961] If Miller means that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers began to perform in *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair after the closing of the Savoy Pavilion, she is probably wrong with her claim. Both the undated list of the performers of the show and the program leaflet listed 12 jitterbugs as part of *the Hot Mikado*. The names included in the list and in the leaflet were the same as in the cast lists of the Broadway play. Most of them were surely from Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. The names were not mentioned in the list of the Savoy Pavilion dancers, which means that *the Hot Mikado* did not take dancers from the Savoy Pavilion, at least not in the very beginning.[962]

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958 Names like Leon James, Eddie Davis, Connie Hill and Mildred Pollard can be found from the cast list from both *The Billboard* and *Variety*. See: Eugene Burr, 'New Play on Broadway', *The Billboard*, April 1, 1939, p. 16. 'Play on Broadway – The Hot Mikado', *Variety*, March 29, 1939, p. 42. They all were members of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers as shown in the chapter 'Harvest Moon Ball and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers Between 1935 and 1943'. Concerning the mainstream newspapers and magazines, the author of the study has not found any comments concerning their performance in the Broadway play, in addition to the cast lists.

959 'Robert Crease, 'Sandra Gibson', Footnotes: April-June, 1987, Volume 2, Number 2, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Sandra Gibson's name was Mildred Pollard at the time. See for the cast lists: Eugene Burr, 'New Play on Broadway', *The Billboard*, April 1, 1939, p. 16. 'Play on Broadway – The Hot Mikado', *Variety*, March 29, 1939, p. 42.

960 Robert P. Crease, 'Wilda Crawford', Footnotes: November-December, 1988. Vol. 3, No. 3, published by The New York Swing Dance Society. Crawford's name is not mentioned in the lists of the cast concerning the Broadway play. See: Eugene Burr, 'New Play on Broadway', *The Billboard*, April 1, 1939, p. 16 and 'Play on Broadway – The Hot Mikado', *Variety*, March 29, 1939, p. 42.

961 Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 143.

962 See for the name lists: 'Hot Mikado Company – Hall of Music', undated and there 'Jitterbugs', folder 7 (Hot Mikado Co. (1939)), box 519, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library; 'Michael Todd's Hot Mikado with Bill Robinson – Hall Of Music – New York World's Fair' playbill, undated, folder 5 (Japan, 1937-1940, 1 of 3'), box 1496, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library; Eugene Burr, 'New Play on Broadway', *The Billboard*, April 1, 1939, p. 16; 'Play on Broadway – The Hot Mikado', *Variety*, March 29, 1939, p. 42. At least, Gladys Crowder, Connie Hill, May Miller, Mildred Pollard, Eddie Davis, Leon James, Walter Johnson, Albert Minne (the name is written wrongly in the lists. That should be Albert Minns) and Russell Williams were part of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. See the chapter: 'The Harlem Success in the Harvest Moon Ball'. See also for the list of the dancers at the Savoy Pavilion: 'Savoy Theatre On Fair Site Is Gala Spot', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 3, 1939, p. 3 and the chapter: 'The Savoy Pavilion'. In addition, Joel Dinerstein claims that *the Hot Mikado* producer Michael Todd stole the best Lindy Hoppers from the Savoy to his *Hot Mikado* at the Fair by offering better pay and a less strenuous schedule. That lead closing of

It is possible that Miller and others from the Savoy Pavilion replaced later, at least temporarily, the dancers included in *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair. In addition to Miller and Crawford's references to that, Frankie Manning remembered that he filled in "occasionally for some of the Lindy Hoppers" who performed in *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair.[963]

The Hot Mikado at the Fair began on June 22, 1939.[964] *New York Herald Tribune* reported on June 21, on how the opening was "put off for one day while the stage carpenters raise the level of the platform seven inches so that the audience will be able to see Bill Robinson's feet",[965] thus revealing Robinson's crucial role in the play. Robinson's significance was illustrated in the unpublished agreement between New York World's Fair 1939 Incorporated and The Hot Mikado Company, Inc., dated May 29, 1939. It was stated in the agreement that, "If any understudy shall be used in place of Bill Robinson the Producer will immediately correct the billing and advertising to indicate such change and will honor any demands for refunds based on the absence of the said star."[966] The contract signing without revealing the details of the agreement was reported in *New York Herald Tribune* on May 30.[967] Joel Dinerstein argues that the Lindy Hoppers also had a crucial role in the show because they took care of the first act of *the Hot Mikado*, and Robinson took care of the second.[968]

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the Savoy Pavilion as, by August, the Savoy owner Moe Gale deemed it pointless to stay open. See: Dinerstein 2003, p. 304. Dinerstein's claim about Todd's stealing of Lindy Hoppers sounds odd as the original cast of the Lindy Hoppers for *the Hot Mikado* did not include the Savoy Pavilion dancers. Also Norma Miller gives a different picture about the Lindy Hoppers in the fair. According to Miller, Herbert White had the control over his Lindy Hoppers in the Fair, even so, that White denied Miller and other Lindy Hoppers to participate in *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair after an argument with Todd about how much Todd has to pay to White for the Lindy Hoppers in the show. After the argument was settled and White got his raise, White allowed the Lindy Hoppers enter again onto the stage. Miller and other dancers did not get the raise as White took all extra money. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 144-145. When considering White's earlier actions and control over his dancers, Dinerstein's claim about Todd's "stealing of Lindy Hoppers" for *the Hot Mikado* does not sound convincing. White's dancers likely moved to *the Hot Mikado* by White's order if the Savoy Pavilion dancers replaced *the Hot Mikado* Lindy Hoppers like Miller and Crawford have claimed.

963 Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 160-161.

964 Joel Dinerstein states that *the Hot Mikado* officially opened at the Fair on June 23, 1939, although Brooks Atkinson had his review of the Fair Hot Mikado show in *The New York Times* already on June 23. See: Dinerstein 2003, p. 304 and Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, June 23, 1939, p. 26. Also The Billboard confirms that *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair started on June 22. See: 'Hot Mikado Dives After Good Start', *The Billboard*, July 15, 1939, p. 5.

965 'News of the Theater - Premiere Postponed', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 21, 1939, p. 18.

966 'New York World's Fair 1939 Incorporated and The Hot Mikado Company, Inc. – Agreement – Dated: May 29, 1939.', p. 2, folder 3224 (Hot Mikado Co.), Box 1267, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, New York Public Library.

967 'Fair Replacing Music Classics By 'Hot Mikado' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 30, 1939, p. 6A.

968 Dinerstein 2003, p. 307.

Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times,* reviewed the World's Fair version of *the Hot Mikado* on June 23, 1939. He stated how *the Hot Mikado* was already a good show on Broadway, but it was a better show in its "concentrated version" at the World's Fair. He added humorously:

> As for Bill Robinson, he is one of the great men of this patchwork community-gleaming with ebony exuberance and taking the whole audience into his confidence…Probably it would be a good thing to raise a statue of Bill Robinson on top the Hall of Music like the rugged worker who bestrides the Soviet Pavilion. That would be a cheerful sight in the glare above the amusement area. Bill's eyes are as magnetic as his feet, and his pants are a dream of better times.[969]

Atkinson did not mention Whitey's Lindy Hoppers at all in the review. *The New York Times* reported later that *the Hot Mikado* was in the financial trouble because of its too-big wages in the middle of July, and similarly, *The Billboard* stated that *the Hot Mikado* took "a sharp dive" since the end of June.[970] In spite of that, the show reached the 200th show mark at the very beginning of August, when also the Broadway shows were counted into the amount.[971] Later, in the beginning of October 1939, *New York Herald Tribune* claimed that *the Hot Mikado* had already reached its 400th performance, including the Broadway shows. The play had audiences of 800,000 while at the Fair.[972] Indeed, *The Hartford Courant* claimed later that the show had reached even 500th performances at the end of October with only audiences of 100,000 at the Fair.[973] Although the figures stay arguable, they prove for the popularity of the play.

Bill Robinson kept busy at the Fair. *New York Herald Tribune* reported at the end of July, on how Robinson was in command of the 1,300 men with guns, when the "Fair "Invasion" " from Mars was repulsed.[974] On August 15, Frank S. Adams said in the article of *The New York Times*, which was headlined, "Bill Robinson Helps Fellow Workers Open Fair Campaign", that there was a campaign to sell 600,000 tickets in the next two weeks. The opening happened on "the steps of the Sub-Treasury Building in Wall Street". There were three hundred employees of the Fair with Robinson, who also entertained people at the place with Marion Eddy and Ann Pennington, and a group of chorus girls. Robinson was also reported to have helped

969 Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, June 23, 1939, p. 26.

970 'Poor Business and Pay Demands Ring Down Curtain on 'Streamlined' Shakespeare Plays', *The New York Times*, July 14, 1939, p. 10. 'Hot Mikado Dives After Good Start', *The Billboard*, July 15, 1939, p. 5.

971 '200th Show for 'Hot Mikado', *The New York Times*, August 1, 1939, p. 14.

972 'News of the Theater', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 7, 1939, p. 10.

973 'Will Present Robinson In 'Hot Mikado', *The Hartford Courant*, October 22, 1939, p. A1.

974 'Rainy Weather Blocks Efforts To Study Mars', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 28, 1939, p. 15.

some ”motherly looking woman” with $5.50, when the woman had only two dollars, and “a book of tickets” which Robinson auctioned off, cost $7.50.[975]

Bill Robinson was to be celebrated at the World’s Fair on August 25, 1939, when the Fair would have had ”Bojangles Day”.[976] The *New York Herald Tribune* reported that the event, with other special events, was canceled, because of a storm.[977] “Bojangles Day” was reorganized for August 28.[978] Sidney Shalett from *The New York Times* reported at the end of August, how Robinson celebrated his day at the Fair:

> To the delight of huge crowds, Mr. Robinson, in his gold derby, toured the grounds, made footprints in a block of wet concrete, and accepted a scroll thanking him for his efforts in behalf of the Fair employees’ ticket-selling campaign.
>
> Then he topped it off by proceeding to the amusement area, where he donned a track suit, ostentatiously wrapped an elastic brace around his right knee and raced backward against four college athletes employed as chair-pushers at the Fair. Mr. Robinson, who has made an art of running backward, had a generous handicap and won the 100-meter race.[979]

In addition, the *New York Herald Tribune* and *The Billboard* also reported on Bojangles Day. According to the *New York Herald Tribune,* the crowd of 5,000 followed Robinson’s running contest where he ran 75 yards backwards and won the contest.[980]

When it comes to Whitey’s Lindy Hoppers and their performance in *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair, there does not seem to be any reviews about them in the mainstream press.[981] Compared to Bill Robinson, they stayed unknown where the reviews are concerned.

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975 Frank S. Adams, ’Bill Robinson Helps Fellow Workers Open Fair Campaign’, *The New York Times*, August 15, 1939, p. 12.

976 ’The Fair Today’, *The New York Times*, August 25, 1939, p. 11.

977 ’Fair Crowds Cut by Heavy Rain; Several Events Put Off as Visitors Seek Shelter’, *New York Herald Tribune*, August 26, 1939, p. 26.

978 According to *The Billboard,* the event was organized on August 28. See: ’The Week’s Events in Capsule’, *The Billboard,* September 9, 1939, pp. 28 and 63.

979 Sidney Shalett, ’Crowds Continue Upswing At Fair’, *The New York Times*, August 29, 1939, p. 16.

980 ’Week-End Gate Over 600,000 For First Time’, *New York Herald Tribune*, August 29, 1939, p. 10. ’The Week’s-’, *The Billboard*, September 9, 1939, p. 63.

981 The author of the study has not found any reviews about Whitey’s Lindy Hoppers connected to *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair, where the mainstream newspapers are concerned. *The Chicago Daily Tribune, New York Herald Tribune, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Billboard and Variety* did not publish anything about them, where *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair is concerned. Also Joel Dinerstein has not found any reviews from the mainstream press, where the Lindy Hoppers were mentioned. See: Dinerstein 2003, p. 307.

The New York Times reported that concerning Bill Robinson's performances, both in the Cotton Club and in *the Hot Mikado*, at the very beginning of September 1939, that "For the great man of Harlem, Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, still is there, a commuter who shuttles from Broadway to the Fair, being gracious to both the Cotton Club and "Hot Mikado", the only person, apparently, who can be of such vast service to two rival transpontine places of amusement".[982] *New York Herald Tribune* in its article wrote about Robinson at the end of September. The paper explained how Robinson was in good physical condition. His diet was also introduced. It was brought out how a car was waiting Robinson at the World's Fair after the final show of the day to take him "to the Long Island Railroad platform, where a sympathetic station crew often holds the train as long as five minutes for their No. 1 passenger."[983] Thus, Robinson seemed to be recognized as an important person both in the papers and in the Fair-connected functions.

The Hot Mikado of the Fair was an overall success, because after a one month trial, the Board of the Fair was so satisfied with the success, that Todd was granted a contract for the remainder of the Fair season.[984] According to financial statistics, *the Hot Mikado* at the Fair did more profit than the Savoy Pavilion, $123,051 by August 15. The show was the fourth most popular show out of a list of thirty shows in the Fair. It was almost third in the list as *NTG Congress of Beauty and Sun Worshippers* defeated it only by $363. Overwhelmingly, the most profitable show was *Billy Rose Aquacade,* which made $1,507,462 profit by the date.[985] *The Hot Mikado* did a gross of $319,001 by the end of its operation in the 1939 Fair. At the time, at the end of October, it was already second in the list of "Shows and Specs", passing the *NTG Beauty Congress*, which was fifth in the list with its $132,154. *The Aquacade* still was the first with its $2,725,382 gross.[986]

The World's Fair version of *the Hot Mikado* closed on October 31, 1939.[987] After the World's Fair, the show went to Hartford, where it was to stay for two nights. *The Hartford Courant* reported that Whitey's Jitterbugs and the "Tap-a-teers" were featured in the company.[988] The paper reviewed the show. According to it, "Who can

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982 'News of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, September 3, 1939, p. X2.

983 'Five More Years on His Toes Take Five More Off His Age', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 24, 1939, p. E2.

984 Dinerstein 2003, p. 304.

985 'New York World's Fair', *The Billboard*, September 2, 1939, p. 28.

986 'N. Y. Expo's 37 Million', *The Billboard*, April 13, 1940, p. 126.

987 According to *The Afro-American,* Michael Todd announced in the end of October that *the Hot Mikado* stays at World's Fair until October 31. See: ' "Hot Mikado" to Tour October 31', *The Afro-American*, October 21, 1939, p. 14. Michael Todd claimed in the end of October that according to the road schedule of the play, *the Hot Mikado* was to be in Hartford on November 3 and 4. See: Joseph Pihodna, 'The Play Bill: House Famine For Musicals', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 22, 1939, p. E1. Surely, the World's Fair was closed on October 31, so *the Hot Mikado* was closed at the latest then. See for the closing: 'Fair Ends Season Tonight, Paid Gate Nearly 26,000,000', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 31, 1939, p. 1.

988 ' 'Hot Mikado' Arrives for Engagement', *The Hartford Courant*, November 3, 1939, p. 22.

describe the floating dream tap of Mr. Robinson when he is really going on down?" and continued, "who can describe the miraculous voodoo chant, once the words of Mr. Gilbert as they come rolling out of the wonderful teeth –and eyes- of Mr. Robinson. He swings the verses like so much Harlem music into a slightly incredible and absolutely astonishing poetry of his own." *The Hartford Courant* also referred to Whitey's Jitterbugs and to the chorus dancers appreciatively without naming them: "Around him are all the whirling dervishes of the show, comprising a rare variety of whooping jitterbugs and tapsters…Such mad antics and acrobatics as they turned last night, will limber up the stage for the pending ballet, as never before."[989]

The Hot Mikado company stayed on the road during the rest of the year. There still can be found references to the performances of the company from 1941, when there was a revival of the play in the New York area and in New Jersey.[990] *The Hot Mikado* with "a company of 150 jitterbugs" also was brought to the National Theater in Washington D.C., for three performances during one week at the beginning of December, 1939, as *The Washington Post* stated at the time.[991] *The Washington Post* stressed in its review Robinson's "incomparable hoofing, his sly sense of humor and his unobtrusive ability to galvanize even the dullest "business" into something that sparkles". The paper mentioned briefly how "the jitterbugs, "tap-a-teers" and others of the expansive ensemble" helped to make the play an experience which could not be forgotten soon. However, the jitterbugs and other "tap-a-teers" were not specified in the article.[992] The paper reviewed the show again a couple days later and according to the review:

> He danced so many encores that the final curtain was about 10 minutes later than usual…The Robinson "piano" is that flight of steps up and down which he dances so much better than anybody else that

989 ' 'Hot Mikado' ', *The Hartford Courant*, November 4, 1939, p. 12. The review was written by anonymous "T.H.P.".

990 According to the tour timetable, the show was to stay on the road until the week of December 25 in Pittsburgh. See: 'The Play Bill: House Famine For Musicals', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 22, 1939, p. E1. The timetable realized as there are various comments from the time period, where *the Hot Mikado* company's visit to those places is mentioned. See for example: 'Boston Sizzling; 'Mikado' 26G 'Warm' $21,500', *Variety*, November 15, 1939, p. 57; 'Mask – Wig 27G, 'Mikado' 20G In Philly', *Variety,* November 29, 1939, p. 45; 'Pitt Plays Santa To 'Hot Mikado', 23,000', *Variety*, January 3, 1940, p. 151. See for 1941 for example: 'News of the Theatre', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 22, 1941, p. 6 and 'News Of The Stage', *The New York Times*, August 26, 1941, p. 23. According to *The Chicago Defender* and *The New York Amsterdam News,* there was a revival of *the Hot Mikado* in 1941. See: 'Bill Robinson to Star In "Mikado" Revival', *The New York Amsterdam News,* August 9, 1941, p. 21 and 'Bojangles May Revive Hot Mikado', *The Chicago Defender*, August 16, 1941, p. 21. In spite of the word "may" in the headline of the article in *The Chicago Defender*, the article begins with words, "Bill Robinson will revive and star in "The Hot Mikado" ". Thus referring to the fact, that he was going to perform in the play again.

991 ' "Hot Mikado" Sets Pace for Theater Week', *The Washington Post*, December 7, 1939, p. 17.

992 ' 'Hot Mikado' Is Smash Hit At the National', *The Washington Post*, December 12, 1939, p. 16.

> none of his imitators has ever even come close. Bill Robinson, or "Uncle Billy," as Shirley Temple calls him, is the daddy of them all.[993]

The audience, which required the encores, was white, as an African-American audience probably was not allowed to enter the National Theatre where *the Hot Mikado* company performed in Washington D.C. The Jitterbugs were not reviewed at all.[994]

It seems that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were pushed to the sidelines as far as the reviews of the mainstream press are concerned. They were mentioned considerably less, or not at all, in the reviews, when compared to Bill Robinson, who clearly stayed as a star dancer in the mainstream press. Sometimes the tones of the articles gave an almost heroic picture of Bill Robinson, especially when his commuting between the World's Fair and Cotton Club was described. His participation also turned out to be a financial success, compared to the Savoy Pavilion and the Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' operations. Terry Monaghan claims that there was also another connection between the World's Fair and Harlem, as African-American businesses tried to attract World's Fair customers to Harlem, which lead to a scare campaign about the lack of safety in Harlem in the mainstream press.[995] Whitey's Lindy Hoppers came back to the World's Fair, at the latest, in July 1940, when the Fair had "Negro Week", where Whitey's Lindy Hoppers performed at the end of July.[996] That stresses the fact that in spite of the critics to whom they stayed as a less important act, they were recognized at least by the World's Fair organization as remarkable dancers.

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993 Nelson B. Bell, 'Playwrights' Company Shifts Into High Gear', *The Washington Post*, December 15, 1939, p. 26.

994 The author of the study has not found any reviews concerning the Jitterbugs or Herbert White's dancers from the mainstream press, as far as the National Theatre performances are concerned, but the short comment in *The Washington Post* about the Jitterbugs in the play, which is cited in the main text. According to *The Pittsburgh Courier,* African-Americans were not allowed to enter the National Theatre, when *the Hot Mikado* company performed there. See: 'Washington's National Theatre Bars Race', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, December 23, 1939, p. 12.

995 Monaghan 2005, p. 42.

996 Dinerstein 2003, p. 289. According to Dinerstein, the Lindy Hoppers performed on July 26. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were reported as part of the event only briefly in the Harlem connected press. See: 'Program Runs Rest Of Week', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 27, 1940, p. 24. According to the article, the event was on July 28. See also: 'Program For Today At The World's Fair', *The New York Times*, July 28, 1940, p. 29. According to the article, there was no swing-connected event at the Fair on July 28. There was a swing event at the Fair on July 26, although the Lindy Hoppers were not mentioned in the program. See: 'Program For Today At The World's Fair', *The New York Times*, July 26, 1940, p. 13.

5.3 The Harlem Jazz Dance on Broadway Theaters and the Mainstream Press Between 1921 and 1943

The Broadway theater plays were regularly reviewed by the mainstream newspapers and magazines. Thus, it is reasonable to examine how the Harlem-based jazz dance was presented in the Broadway-connected plays, and how the plays were recognized, especially in the mainstream press. The analysis is divided in different parts. The first part concentrates on the Harlem-based jazz dance at the time, when the plays had their breakthrough on Broadway. The second part analyzes if there were any changes from the middle of the 1920s. This question is based on Marshall Stearns, who also has examined the African-American Broadway plays. Stearns found especially the middle of the 1920s as the turning point in the success of the African-American Broadway plays, as in he claims that the time was "disastrous" to the plays.[997] Stearns' claim is tested in the analysis.

The third part of the analysis examines African-American Broadway plays which received mixed, both good and bad reviews, and tries to bring out the main points of the reviews, concerning especially the quality of the dancing and how racial values were highlighted in those reviews. Both aspects were discussed in the reviews.

The analyses are built systematically in order to find certain common factors between the plays. Otherwise, these factors can be lost in the jungle of the details, if only a chronological order was used, when it is discussed numerous shows.

The other cases for the analysis are the African-American acts, Buck and Bubbles, the Nicholas Brothers, Bill Robinson, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, and one of the most remarkable shows on Broadway, *Blackbirds*, with its various versions during the years. Robinson's beginning on Broadway was particularly connected to the *Blackbirds* saga. *Blackbirds* continued from the middle of the 1920s to the end of the 1930s. The play was connected to the Nicholas Brothers' story, whose Broadway-connected career is another case. Similarly, *Blackbirds* was connected to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers in the last part of the 1930s, and also Buck and Bubbles participated in the show. The analysis is finished when Bill Robinson's comeback to Broadway in the end of the 1930s and how he succeeded in those plays, is looked at. The analysis has an emphasis on a racial aspect and dancing quality factors, but also the dancers' other activities in the plays, such as acting, and reviewers' general comments about the quality of the shows, are discussed in the analysis.

997 Stearns 1994, p. 149.

5.3.1 The Beginning of Harlem Dance Entertainment in the Broadway Plays

African-Americans were known as dancers on Broadway, starting at the end of the nineteenth century. The beginning of the 1920s was the time period when so-called 'all black cast' African-American musicals broke onto Broadway. According to Marshall Stearns, between 1921 and 1924, there were at least nine African-American shows which had crucial impact on all Broadway musicals. Those gave dancing a new life and paved the way for recognition of African-American dancing stars. Especially noted are *Shuffle Along* and *Runnin' Away* as two of the shows which stood out for different reasons. *Runnin' Away*, which started in October 1923, at the 62nd Street theatre in Manhattan, New York, was known especially for the Charleston dance which became a national craze in the United States.[998]

Stearns claims when *Shuffle Along* broke through on to Broadway, a new trend of African-American musicals was set. After *Shuffle Along,* African-American musicals were in demand, and dancing in musical comedy took on "a new and rhythmic life".[999] There are profound differences between Stearns and Constance Valis Hill about how remarkable and influential the dancing in *Shuffle Along* really was. Marshall Stearns thinks that *Shuffle Along* "pioneered few steps new to Negro Vaudeville" and after that there was "an increasing demand for eccentric, comedy, and character dance".[1000]

On the contrary, Hill claims that *Shuffle Along* firmly established "jazz dance on the American musical stage", and adds that it contained numerous so-called traditional steps of which mostly were nothing new, but they were rendered differently in *Shuffle Along* than as they were done, according to early jazz, which differed from the earlier ragtime.[1001] Her analysis stays incomplete, because she does not consider the fact that jazz was already known in New York years before; it is likely that those steps were done already earlier to jazz. Otherwise, Hill does not go any further for supporting her claim that *Shuffle Along* really established jazz dance on the American musical stage. Her analysis stays insufficient in this case.

Stearns argues that the dancing of the sixteen-girl chorus line was the awesome innovation of *Shuffle Along*. He states that the chorus girls "started a new trend in Broadway musicals". The last one sounds exaggerated, as *Ziegfeld Follies* musicals and the Shubert Brothers' *Passing* shows, used versions of "chorus line girls" on

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998 Ibid., pp. 110-112, 117-118, 140, 145 and 148. See for a short summary of the Charleston craze for example: Giordano 2007, pp. 53-56. Giordano's summary contains at least one fault. He claims, "It [the Charleston dance] was later re-choreographed by two black dancers Cecil Mack and James Johnson for an all black Harlem show 'Runnin' Wild'." That is not true, because Mack and Johnson were responsible for the song of the show, The Charleston. However, Giordano's summary gives a picture, how big the Charleston craze was.

999 Stearns 1994, pp.138-140.

1000 Ibid., p. 141.

1001 Hill 2010, p. 69 and 71.

Broadway in the 1910s. Both Stearns and Hill, however, agree that *Shuffle Along* gave stardom to African-American dancers like Josephine Baker and Florence Mills.[1002]

The critics from the mainstream newspapers and magazines like *Variety*, *The Billboard*, *The New York Times*, *The New York Tribune*, *Chicago Tribune*, *The Christian Science Monitor,* and *The Washington Post,* had varied opinions about the Broadway shows between 1921 and 1924. African-American jazz dancing was usually appreciated in the reviews of the mainstream press. The plays like *Put and Take* in 1921, *Strut Miss Lizzie*, *Liza,* and *Plantation Revue* in 1922, *Runnin' Wild* in 1923, *Chocolate Dandies* and *Dixie To Broadway* in 1924, included jazz dance, for example, in the form of chorus dancing, ensemble dancing, acrobatic dancers, acrobatic buck-and-wing dancers, eccentric dancing, lazy dance, Cakewalk, and the Charleston.[1003]

The reviews highlighted countless individual dancers from various plays for different reasons. Most reviewers expressed their acknowledgement of the dancers: *Put and Take* presented Maxie, "the finest dancer seen in these parts in years" who "completely stopped the show", and Theresa West and Irvin Miller who were considered as excellent.[1004] *Strut Miss Lizzie* had Barrett and Fredericks as "The high spots of the performance".[1005] *Runnin' Wild* showcased Hazzard and Spellman, "Mae Janese and girls", and Tommy Woods.[1006] In addition to them, Elisabeth Welsh and chorus, Clarence Robinson, Ralph Bryson, and George Stamper were all

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[1002] Stearns 1994, p. 139 and 141. Hill 2010, pp. 50-52 and 73-74.

[1003] See for *Put and Take*: Percy Hammond, 'The New Play – "Put and Take" Gives All Show for Their Money', *New York Tribune*, August 24, 1921, p. 6; Gordon Whyte and James A. Jackson, 'New Plays – "Put And Take" ', *The Billboard*, September 3, 1921, p. 30; See for *Strut Miss Lizzie*: Percy Hammond, 'The New Play', *New York Tribune*, June 20, 1922, p. 6. See for *Plantation Revue*: Robert C. Benchley, 'Drama – The Negro Revues', *Life*, August 10, 1922, p. 18; ' "Plantation Revue" Lively Competitor For Show Honors', *New York Tribune*, July 18, 1922, p. 6. See for *Liza*: Gordon Whyte, 'New Plays – "Liza" ', *The Billboard*, December 9, 1922, p. 32; ' "Liza" in New York', *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 5, 1922, p. 7; 'J. A. Jackson's Page – Talking About Liza', *The Billboard*, February 3, 1923, p. 50. See for *Runnin' Wild*: Jonesy, ' "Runnin' Wild" With Miller And Lyles', *The Billboard*, September 8, 1923, p. 52; John Corbin, ' "Runnin' Wild" Is Bright', *The New York Times*, October 30, 1923, p. 17; Hughes, 'Runnin' Wild', *Variety*, October 4, 1923, p. 40; Gordon Whyte, ' ""Runnin' Wild" ', *The Billboard*, November 10, 1923, p. 36. See for *Chocolate Dandies*: ' "The Chocolate Dandies" ', *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 8, 1924, p. 6. The Review was written by anonymous "F.P."; 'The Chocolate Dandies', *Variety*, September 3, 1924, p. 44; See for Dixie To Broadway: Don Carle Gillette, 'The New Plays On Broadway – " Dixie To Broadway" ", *The Billboard*, November 8, 1924, p. 10; 'Out Of Town Reviews – Dixie To Broadway', *Variety*, August 6, 1924, p. 14.

[1004] See for Maxie: Gordon Whyte and James A. Jackson, 'New Plays – "Put And Take" ', *The Billboard*, September 3, 1921, p. 30. See for West and Miller: Percy Hammond, 'The New Play – "Put and Take" Gives All Show for Their Money', *New York Tribune*, August 24, 1921, p. 6.

[1005] Gordon Whyte, ' "Strut, Miss Lizzie" ', *The Billboard*, June 17, 1922, p. 41.

[1006] See for Hazzard and Spellman, and Mae Janese and the girls: Hughes, 'Runnin' Wild', *Variety*, October 4, 1923, p. 40. See for Tommy Woods: 'Runnin' Wild', *Variety*, November 1, 1923, p. 20.

acknowledged positively by the audience.[1007] Josephine Baker, Johnny Hudgins, Elisabeth Welsh, and Joe Smith stood out from *Chocolate Dandies*.[1008] Concerning *Dixie to Broadway*, *The New York Times* mentioned Winifred and Brown, Johnny Nit, Byron Jones, and Lew Keene.[1009] Some of the comments included a deeper acknowledgement of the artists: *Dixie to Broadway* had Florence Mills, who was praised by *The Billboard* as "a sensation", and *The New York Times* stated, "the evening was decidedly Miss Mill's".[1010] Indeed, *The New York Herald* only suggested that "she is a good dancer" as "she can dance almost as well as some of the more talented members of her chorus"[1011].

The reviewers also commented on the dancing with more informative expressions. *The Billboard* reported that *Liza* had a chorus which was the "star of the show", and which included "the best singers and dancers" that Broadway had seen "in many and many a year". Also, Margaret Simms was credited for "dancing prettily".[1012] *The Christian Science Monitor* stated how Donald Fields did "some remarkable dancing"[1013]. In addition to them, *The Billboard* later acknowledged Eddie Rector for rioting "the house with his triple pedaling", and Dotson and Mitchell for their acrobatic ghost dance which was "well executed".[1014]

Johnny Nit, Byron Jones, Lew Keene, U. S. Thompson, and Willie Covan were mentioned by *The Billboard* as ones who demonstrated in *Dixie to Broadway* "pretty near everything from the unique and extraordinary in the way of dancing".[1015] *Women's Wear Daily* gave Nit, Thompson, and Covan credit for the best expert dancing in the show.[1016] *Variety* magazine reported Keene, Jones, and Nit, who danced as "a specialty trio", as "big applause getters". Especially Jones' acrobatic dancing was considered as remarkable. According to the magazine, dancers U. S. Thompson and Willie Covan, on the contrary, were stated to be "far down in the

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[1007] Jonesy, ' "Runnin' Wild" With Miller And Lyles', *The Billboard*, September 8, 1923, p. 52.

[1008] See for Johnny Hudgins and Josephine Baker: Stark Young, 'Good Negro Musical Play.', *The New York Times*, September 2, 1924, p. 22; ' "The Chocolate Dandies" ', *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 8, 1924, p. 6. The Review was written by anonymous "F.P." See for Elisabeth Welsh and Joe Smith: 'The Chocolate Dandies', *Variety*, September 3, 1924, p. 44.

[1009] ' "Dixie To Broadway" Fine', *The New York Times*, October 30, 1924, p. 22.

[1010] ' "Dixie To Broadway" Fine', *The New York Times*, October 30, 1924, p. 22; Don Carle Gillette, 'The New Plays On Broadway – " Dixie To Broadway" ", *The Billboard*, November 8, 1924, p. 10.

[1011] Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *The New York Herald*, October 30, 1924, p. 12.

[1012] Gordon Whyte, 'New Plays – "Liza" ', *The Billboard*, December 9, 1922, p. 32.

[1013] ' "Liza" in New York', *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 5, 1922, p. 7.

[1014] 'J. A. Jackson's Page – Talking About Liza', *The Billboard*, February 3, 1923, p. 50.

[1015] Don Carle Gillette, 'The New Plays On Broadway – " Dixie To Broadway" ", *The Billboard*, November 8, 1924, p. 10.

[1016] Kelcey Allen, ' "Dixie to Broadway" Is Riot of Speed and Fun', *Women's Wear Daily*, October 30, 1924, p. 5.

program" with an addition that "there were so much stepping ahead of the duo that the edge was off".[1017]

Concerning the *Plantation Review* in 1922, U.S. Thompson was mentioned in *Variety* for doing "well enough in a dance specialty".[1018] *The Billboard* credited the dance duo, 'Pizarro and Braxton' for their "medley of songs, acrobatics, dances and some one-string melody" as they "set a promising standard for the evening's entertainment".[1019] Florence Mills seemed to get the highest praise of them all. Both *Variety* and *Women's Wear Daily* claimed that Mills was billed as "world's greatest colored entertainer".[1020]

The wider concept: entertainment seemed to be used in the reviews, at the latest, from 1921 when *The New York Times* referred to the cast of *Put and Take* as entertainers.[1021] In addition to the *Plantation Review* and *Put and Take* references, the term was also used in other reviews as, for example, *Variety* credited *Strut Miss Lizzie* in 1922 for good entertainment.[1022] Similarly, concerning *Dixie to Broadway* in 1924, Don Carle Gillette from *The Billboard* credited the show for "high-powered entertainment" in the very beginning of his review.[1023] Thus, African-American dancing was acknowledged as a remarkable part of entertainment.

Where the quality of the shows is generally concerned, *The Billboard* thought that "*Runnin' Wild*" overall was "a wonderful production".[1024] *Variety* magazine stated even more enthusiastically, that " *"Runnin' Wild"* rates as the best of the colored productions since "Shuffle [Along]" ".[1025] Similarly, *The Washington Post* stated positively on how *How Come* "swept New York theatergoers from their feet and was acclaimed a better show in every respect than "Shuffle Along" ". *Variety* credited "bright production, dances and comedy" as the "outstanding features" of the play[1026]. The critics continued their praising when *Chocolate Dandies* and *Dixie to Broadway* came out in 1924. *The New York Times* thought that the former play was "undoubtedly one of the best negro musical shows…in New York". *The New York Times,* in its later issue, appreciated the latter play as "among the smartest of the negro shows".[1027]

[1017] 'New Plays Produced Within Week ON B'Way – 'Dixie To Broadway', *Variety*, November 5, 1924, pp. 18-19.

[1018] 'On Broadway – Plantation Revue', *Variety*, July 21, 1922, p. 16.

[1019] 'J. A. Jackson's Page' – The "Plantation Revue" ', *The Billboard*, July 8, 1922, p. 42.

[1020] 'Lively Music, Good Entertainment In Plantation Revue', *Women's Wear Daily*, July 18, 1922, p. 48; 'On Broadway – Plantation Revue', *Variety*, July 21, 1922, p. 16.

[1021] ' "Put and Take" Is Lively', *The New York Times*, August 24, 1921, p. 19.

[1022] 'Strut Miss Lizzie', *Variety,* June 23, 1922, p. 15.

[1023] Don Carle Gillette, ' "Dixie to Broadway" ', *The Billboard*, November 8, 1924, p. 10.

[1024] Jonesy, ' "Runnin' Wild" With Miller And Lyles', *The Billboard*, September 8, 1923, p. 52.

[1025] 'Runnin' Wild', *Variety*, November 1, 1923, p. 20.

[1026] ' "How Come" Opens Today at Howard', *The Washington Post*, August 5, 1923, p. 48 and 'How Come', *Variety*, April 19, 1923, p. 21.

[1027] Stark Young, 'Good Negro Musical Play.', *The New York Times*, September 2, 1924, p. 22.' and "Dixie To Broadway" Fine', *The New York Times*, October 30, 1924, p. 22.

When the *Plantation Revue* was reviewed in *The New York Times and Life* magazine in 1922, there seemed to be exceptional references to the racial values at the time. *The New York Times* wished that "these natural entertainers" would not copy "the usual Broadway stuff" and rather be themselves where they are best at. Accordingly, *Life* magazine stated in August, that "In the series of Negro entertainments…"The Plantation Revue" seems to us the best, because it has less imitation of white Broadway in it…It has more singing and dancing and jazz orchestration, and less patter than the others".[1028] Thus, preferring aspects in the show which the magazine considered as African-American to white Broadway tones. Later, in 1924, *The New York Herald* compared one part of the chorus in *Dixie to Broadway* to the white Tiller girls, which were known for their unison dancing, that they danced "as much unison" as the Tiller girls, but the chorus had "more poetry" than the latter.[1029] Thus, preferring, to some extent, the part of the chorus to the famous white Tiller girls.

Liza, in 1922, added one more aspect to the acknowledgement of the shows: acting. Gordon Whyte from *The Billboard* credited dancers Greenlee and Drayton for playing "their roles well", in addition to that, they did a "splendid dancing specialty"[1030]. *The Christian Science Monitor* thought them also as "especially the very clever team".[1031] In addition to that, J. A. Jackson from *The Billboard* stated that "Greenlee and Drayton get them just as hard with the grace and style…They…are a tower of a strength to it." J. A. Jackson also considered the cast of the play as "smooth-running and well-balanced".[1032]

The shows, like the dancers, did not get unlimited appreciation. *The New York Times* criticized *Put and Take* about the limited stage facilities in Town Hall[1033]. The paper criticized *Strut Miss Lizzie* about slightly too long scenes[1034]. Also, *Variety* magazine thought that "as for comedy there is close to nothing" and added concerning the dancing that "At times there is conflict in the hoofing" without explaining more about that.[1035] *The Billboard* considered the show as "the noisy, bad

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[1028] ' 'Plantantion Revue' Lively', *The New York Times*, July 18, 1922, p. 22 and Robert C. Benchley, 'Drama – The Negro Revues', *Life*, August 10, 1922, p. 18.

[1029] See for the Tiller girls: Kara Reilly, 'The Tiller Girls: Mass Ornament and Modern Girl' in Kara Reilly (editor), *The Palgrave Macmillan Theatre, Performance and Analogue Technology – Historical Interfaces and Intermedialities* (the UK: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2013), p. 117. See also: Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *The New York Herald*, October 30, 1924, p. 12. Marshall Stearns has stated how Hammond wrote his review that the play had "just black performers in a white play". Stearns has used Hammond's comment as a general reference to the play. In fact, Hammond with his statement only referred to the comedians of the show, which becomes clear from the review. See for Stearns claim: Stearns 1994, p. 148.

[1030] Gordon Whyte, 'New Plays – "Liza" ', *The Billboard*, December 9, 1922, p. 32.

[1031] ' "Liza" in New York', *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 5, 1922, p. 7. The article was written by anonymous "F. L. S.".

[1032] 'J. A. Jackson's Page – Talking About Liza', *The Billboard*, February 3, 1923, p. 50.

[1033] ' "Put and Take" Is Lively', *The New York Times*, August 24, 1921, p. 19.

[1034] 'New All-Negro Revue', *The New York Times*, June 20, 1922, p. 26.

[1035] 'Strut Miss Lizzie', *Variety*, June 23, 1922, p. 15.

vaudeville show", which meant that there were "merely one mediocre song and dance team after another".[1036]

The New York Times blamed the *Plantation Revue* for "several rough jokes"[1037]. The paper also criticized *Liza* for crudeness and roughness and "comedians who look almost exactly alike"[1038]. Similarly, it judged *How Come?* as "simply a bad show", and how the show was "no more a negro show than "Blue Jeans" was a study in sawmills." Probably, the paper referred to the same race criteria as *Life* magazine did in the *Plantation Revue* reviews in 1922, but, in contrast to the positive remarks of the race values, it dismissed *How Come?* as a "whitened" show in 1923.[1039] *The Christian Science Monitor* referred similarly to the lack of racial values in 1924, when it stated that the chorus of *Chocolate Dandies* lacked "inherent fire of the Negro" because of copying the Ziegfeld, or in other words, white Broadway plays.[1040] The racial values seemed to be expected in the African-American Broadway plays.

The Billboard and *Variety* defined the lacking racial values more precisely in 1921-1922, when the former blamed *Strut Miss Lizzie* for slowness, because the speed "as characteristic of a Negro performance is almost wholly lacking"[1041], and when *Variety* magazine criticized the chorus line of *Put and Take* for not turning out "the pep expected of colored choruses, which should be wild and in perpetual motion…There was little display of limbs and arms, apparently a sad box office mistake".[1042] Overall, *Put And Take*, stayed on Broadway for five or six weeks.[1043]

When considering all the criticism, it seems that critics overall appreciated African-American jazz dancing in these shows. Various dancers were brought out in the reviews without highlighting only particular dancers from play to play. Although Harlem jazz dance and its dancers were appreciated in wide range among the critics, there were a lot of Harlem dancers who had not yet established themselves as acknowledged, popular personalities.

1036 Patterson James, 'Creole Producing Company Presents "Strut, Miss Lizzie"', *The Billboard*, July 1, 1922, p. 19.

1037 ' 'Plantation Revue' Lively', *The New York Times*, July 18, 1922, p. 22.

1038 John Corbin, ' "Liza" Is Melodious.' *The New York Times*, November 28, 1922, p. 28.

1039 John Corbin, ' "How Come?" Is Tame.', *The New York Times*, April 17, 1923, p. 26.

1040 "The Chocolate Dandies", *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 8, 1924, p. 6.

1041 Gordon Whyte, ' "Strut, Miss Lizzie" ', *The Billboard*, June 17, 1922, p. 41.

1042 Jack Lait, 'Jack Lait's Reviews – 'Put And Take' ', *Variety*, August 26, 1921, p. 17.

1043 According to *The Billboard, Put And Take* stayed on Broadway for 6 weeks. See: J. A. Jackson, 'Present Situation Of Colored Performer – The Most Handicapped, Yet The Most Hopeful Of Artists', *The Billboard*, December 10, 1921, p. 223. According to *The Chicago Defender*, it stayed only for five weeks. See: 'Put And Take', *The Chicago Defender*, October 8, 1921, p. 7.

5.3.2 The Middle of the 1920s – The Turning Point of the African-American Broadway Plays?

Marshall Stearns found certain remarkable points in the development of the plays on Broadway, concerning the time period after the beginning of the 1920s. First, Stearns argues that the middle of the 1920s were "disastrous" for African-American Broadway productions. Secondly, he sees how the change came in 1927, when the *Bottomland* show became part of "Negro musicals" which "began to gather momentum"[1044] Thirdly, he explains how "times and attitudes" were already changing in the beginning of the 1930s and it seemed to him that tap dancing "could no longer carry a musical". Stearns also argues that by 1931, African-American musicals "were folding rapidly".[1045]

Stearns is clearly wrong with all his claims as it turns out, in as far as numerous reviews of the Broadway plays are concerned. The African-American Broadway productions did not disappear in the middle of the 1920s. There were African-American plays on Broadway at least every year between 1925 and 1933. Tap did not disappear: tap dance still carried the musical through the 1930s to the 1940s, as Bill Robinson and the Nicholas Brothers' examples clearly show.

Basically, the reviews of the plays from the period can be divided roughly in to three different categories: the plays which were acknowledged almost totally positively. Secondly, the plays which received mixed, both good and bad reviews. Thirdly, the plays which received almost only bad reviews. There does not seem to be any kind of clear linear development in the sense Stearns describes. Basically, there was no time period when the plays received only good or only bad reviews. That came out clearly in this chapter, when the African-American Broadway plays from the beginning of the 1920s period were discussed. The mixed reviews repeated during the later years.

Only two shows between 1925 and 1929, seemed to receive almost only good reviews, and accordingly, only two shows between 1929 and 1933, seemed to receive almost only bad reviews. The shows with almost good reviews were *Lucky Sambo* in 1925, and *Hot Chocolates* in 1929. Ill-reviewed shows were *Pansy* in 1929, and *Hummin' Sam* in 1933.

All and all, at least seventeen African-American Broadway plays received mixed, both good and bad reviews, from the mainstream press between 1926 and 1933. These shows were, *My Magnolia* in 1926, *Bottomland*, *Africana*, *Rang Tang* in 1927, *Keep Shufflin'* in 1928, *Messing Around*, *Deep Harlem*, *Harlem*, *Bomboola* in 1929, *Hot Rhythm*, *Chance Your Luck* in 1930, *Rhapsody in Black*, *Singin' the Blues*,

[1044] Stearns 1994, pp. 149-150.
[1045] Ibid., p. 158.

Fast and Furious in 1931, *Blackberries of '32'*, *Yeah Man* in 1932, and *Shuffle Along of 1933* between 1932 and 1933.[1046]

Lucky Sambo, which received good reviews in 1925, was called by *The New York Times* an "excellent specimen of negro musical comedy"[1047]. *Variety* thought that the show "produced rattling good dancing in spots".[1048] In spite of that, it lasted originally only for nine days.[1049] By 1927, it had re-runs and it had gathered over 200 performances[1050].

The chorus dancing of the show was credited as *The New York Times* stated how "the fast and furious dancing" reached "its climax in a mad "Charleston" number" with the contribution of the chorus.[1051] *The New York Herald* named an unknown "male sextet" which danced "apparently with soul as well as body"[1052].

Later, when the show was moved from Broadway to the Burlesque circle, *Variety* praised the chorus as "it would be impossible to duplicate this attraction with white performers. In the first place they are not available and if they were burlesque could not compete with musical comedy and vaudeville for their services."[1053] Although the reason for this was not explained more precisely, a possible reason for that was money, because white performers seemed to be better paid for their performances than African-Americans[1054]. *Variety*'s statement was supported by *The New York Herald,* which stated accordingly, "the dancing numbers are entered into with a zest and a buoyancy of spirit never found among the more carefully drilled white choruses."[1055]

Various dancers were credited in the reviews. *Variety* stated that ""Charleston" number led by Mae Barnes…was hot all right". Acrobatic dancer Louis Keene was

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[1046] The amount of the mixed shows is based on the plays which are discussed in the next chapter, 'Dancing Gets Mixed Reviews'. Practically, there were more than 17 shows between 1926 and 1933, which got mixed reviews, when especially *Blackbirds* shows from 1926, 1928, 1930, 1933, and *Brown Buddies* from 1930 are added to the figure. These shows and their essential dance acts are discussed later in the separate chapters 'John W. Sublett and Buck Washington – Buck and Bubbles' and 'The Real Progress in Acknowledging African-American Star Dancers: From Blackbirds to Bill Robinson'.

[1047] ' "Lucky Sambo" Amusing. ', *The New York Times*, June 8, 1925, p. 19.

[1048] 'New Plays Produced Within Week On B'Way – Lucky Sambo', *Variety*, June 10, 1925, p. 25.

[1049] '5 Out – 5 More May Go', *Variety*, June 17, 1925, p. 20.

[1050] 'Coming Theater Attractions', *The Washington Post*, January 9, 1927, p. F4.

[1051] ' "Lucky Sambo" Amusing.', *The New York Times*, June 8, 1925, p. 19.

[1052] ' "Lucky Sambo," Negro Comedy, at Colonial', *The New York Herald*, June 8, 1925, p. 10.

[1053] 'Lucky Sambo – Columbia', *Variety*, October 21, 1925, p. 50.

[1054] This is discussed in the chapter 'The Consequences of Herbert White's Methods in Guiding His Dance Group'.

[1055] ' "Lucky Sambo," Negro Comedy, at Colonial', *The New York Herald*, June 8, 1925, p. 10.

mentioned to have succeeded in the show.[1056] Don Carle Gillette, from *The Billboard,* thought that Mae Barnes did the ”Charleston well” and ”Louis Keene presents more elaborate version of his ”Legomania” dance, which makes a tremendous hit.” Also Johnny Hudgins did ”the choicest bit in the show” with his specialties and with ”humorous dancing and clowning”.[1057] Similarly, *The New York Herald* credited Johnny Hudgins for being ”unlimited in agility”[1058] and *The New York Times* called Hudgins “an imaginative and highly comic dancer”.[1059] In addition to other names, *The Christian Science Monitor* acknowledged Clarence Robinson as an “excellent dancer” in the play.[1060]

Variety and The Billboard criticized *Lucky Sambo* especially for its music which lacked “outstanding numbers” and was “quite mild”. The latter magazine also criticized the play for “the glaring cheapness and stuffiness of some [unspecified] settings”, “a rather uneventful score”, and “a dulliness in the early part of the second act in the play”, although, *The Billboard* added that it had “the makings of a very satisfactory…show”. *Variety* also claimed that, *Sun* and *Evening World*, considered the story of the play as “painfully dull” and the production of it “as clumsy”.[1061] For the most part, the reviews, however, were positive.

Hot Chocolates in 1929, was the best revue since Lew Leslie started his *”Blackbirds”* saga, as Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* put it. He especially praised ”Jazzlips” Richardson and Baby Cox for their dancing, and also mentioned positively the tap dancing octet ”Bon Bon Buddies” and Louise Cook.[1062] Similarly, Morton P. Gudebrod from *The Billboard* praised both Richardson and Cox. He wrote that ””Jazzlips” Richardson walks away with the show by doing impossible things with his feet and is undoubtedly the most talented strutter seen on Broadway in many seasons.” Gudebrod added that Baby Cox’s ”hoofing is almost unexcelled… She leads the ensemble numbers with a rhythmic frenzy that brings down the house time after time.” Also, ”Bon Bon Buddies” and the chorus were credited for their dancing. The former did ”practically perfect” dancing towards the end of the show and the chorus was ”amazingly well trained”.[1063]

[1056] ’New Plays Produced Within Week On B’Way – Lucky Sambo’, *Variety*, June 10, 1925, p. 25.

[1057] Don Carle Gillette, ’The New Plays On Broadway – ”Lucky Sambo” ’, *The Billboard*, June 13, 1925, p. 170.

[1058] ’ ”Lucky Sambo,” Negro Comedy, at Colonial’, *The New York Herald*, June 8, 1925, p. 10.

[1059] ’ ”Lucky Sambo” Amusing.’, *The New York Times*, June 8, 1925, p. 19.

[1060] ’ ”Lucky Sambo” ’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 15, 1925, p. 9.

[1061] ’New Plays Produced Within Week On B’Way – Lucky Sambo’, *Variety*, June 10, 1925, p. 25; Don Carle Gillette, ’The New Plays On Broadway – ”Lucky Sambo” ’, *The Billboard*, June 13, 1925, pp. 9 and 170; ’5 Out – 5 More May Go’, *Variety*, June 17, 1925, p. 20.

[1062] Howard Barnes, ’Best Negro Revue Since ’Blackbirds’, Is ’Hot Chocolates’ ”, *New York Herald Tribune*, June 21, 1929, p. 14.

[1063] Morton P. Grudebrod, ’The New Plays On Broadway – Connie’s Hot Chocolates’, *The Billboard*, June 29, 1929, p. 6.

Stirling Bowen from *The Wall Street Journal* acknowledged ”Bon Bon Buddies” which was considered as the most notable of all the acts. According to the paper, the act was ”superbly trained and exuberantly amiable”, and to the members of the act also were given ”a rousing welcome” after their first appearance, whenever they came forward again. Also, ”Jazzlips” Richardson was praised as ”an entertainer with an almost unlimited variety of rhythm and mood”. It was reported that the audience objected strenuously to his departure from the stage, after staying there longer than in the average performance. In addition to them, Baby Cox offered some memorable performances and Louise Cook was mentioned as the ”sensationally sinuous goddess”.[1064]

Variety magazine had more toned down comments about the show, compared to the overwhelming praise of other newspapers and magazines. *Variety* thought that the show was ”in total… a good colored show”. ”Jazzlips” Richardson was mentioned as ”the individual dance hit of the evening” which called for encore bits. Louise Cook attracted ”plenty of attention”. Also Baby Cox, Bon Bon Buddies, and Three Midnight Steppers were mentioned positively.[1065]

It seems that in particular, ”Jazzlips” Richardson raised more interest in his dancing and even in his personality in the mainstream newspapers with the help of *Hot Chocolates*. He was briefly interviewed in *The New York Times* in July 1929[1066]:

> Perhaps because he is innately a gentleman, ”Jazzlips” Richardson does not, in spite of his name, play a saxophone; instead, to the vast benefit of ”Hot Chocolates,” he dances the hopping split. The hopping split is a simple gesture of the feet calling first for a split, and then for a hop of fifteen feet. And better men than you have tried it and broken their necks.

The article otherwise went through his life and dance career positively for almost 28 more lines. Although the article did not present him profoundly, it brought out his importance in the show business, particularly because the article was published in the “Who’s Who On The Stage’ column.

Hot Chocolates was criticized to some degree when *New York Herald Tribune* and *The Billboard* criticized the show for its music which was not outstanding and it lacked in tunes.[1067]

1064 Stirling Bowen, ’The Theatre’, *The Wall Street Journal*, June 22, 1929, p. 3.

1065 ’Plays on Broadway – Hot Chocolates’, *Variety*, June 26, 1929, p. 55.

1066 *The Chicago Defender* quoted reviews from *the Telegram,* [*the New York*] *World*, *Variety*, and *Evening Graphic* which all praised Richardson’s dancing. See: ‘Jazzlips Is Praised by N. Y. Critics’, *The Chicago Defender*, August 24, 1929, p. 6. Otherwise this and the next two paragraphs are based on the articles as follows: ’Who’s Who On The Stage – The Master of the Hopping Split.’, *The New York Times*, July 7, 1929, p. 94. Jazzlips Richardson still was mentioned in an article of the mainstream newspaper concerning Connie’s Inn Revue in July 1932. See: ’Connie’s Inn Revue at the Central’, *The New York Times*, July 11, 1932, p. 11.

Where the shows which received mostly bad reviews are concerned, the *Pansy* show in 1929 included the blues singer Bessie Smith, but the show flopped after three performances.[1068] The critics seemed to generally dislike it. J. Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* called it "the worst show of all time".[1069] Wilfred J. Riley from *The Billboard* stated, "Terrible! Pansy undoubtedly is the crudest, most amateurish and entirely uncalled for production in the history of the New York theater. That is all that need be said about it."[1070] Percy Hammond from *New York Herald Tribune* thought that "They could not sing, they could not act, they could not dance." [1071] *The Wall Street Journal*, however, mentioned "hard-working tap dancers" in the show, although otherwise it was about "noisy dancing".[1072]

Hummin' Sam in 1933 was a total flop with its one Broadway performance.[1073] *Variety* magazine blamed whole line-up of the show for lacking all "the elements expected from an aggregation of colored musical entertainers…No speed, tempo or verve"[1074]. Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* blamed it for trying to "ape Broadway and always in its worst aspects", indeed without clarifying the aspects. Only Baby Cox from the cast was mentioned positively in the latter review.[1075]

Where the clearly good or bad African-American plays on Broadway are concerned, it is remarkable that the reviewers clearly acknowledged some of the acts for being trained well, and, on the other hand, considered some acts as unable to dance, sing, and act. They did not consider that the acts, for example, danced "naturally" without rehearsals. Thus, the reviewers did not share the stereotype about African-Americans as naturally gifted dancers.[1076] Dancing and other skills were evaluated in the reviews. It is crucial that African-American dancing was preferred to "white dancing". In spite of the success, it is striking that only "Jazzlips" Richardson was interviewed in the mainstream press. Many other dancers, who were acknowledged in the reviews, stayed otherwise unknown personalities to the readers. The importance of racial values, and especially dancing skills, and reasons for

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[1067] Howard Barnes, 'Best Negro Revue Since 'Blackbirds', Is 'Hot Chocolates' ", *New York Herald Tribune*, June 21, 1929, p. 14; Morton P. Grudebrod, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Connie's Hot Chocolates', *The Billboard*, June 29, 1929, p. 6.

[1068] 'Pansy', *The Billboard*, September 7, 1929, p. 98. See also: Stearns 1994, p. 153.

[1069] J. Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, May 15, 1929, p. 28.

[1070] Wilfred J. Riley, 'The New Plays On Broadway', *The Billboard*, May 25, 1929, p. 42.

[1071] Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 15, 1929, p. 20.

[1072] 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, May 17, 1929, p. 4.

[1073] Stearns 1994, p. 158. 'The Play', *The New York Times*, April 10, 1933, p. 8; 'Theatrical' Notes', *The New York Times*, April 17, 1933, p. 16. The last mentioned article claims that *Hummin' Sam* would have been re-opened at the New Yorker Theatre on April 17, 1933. However, there is no other evidence for that.

[1074] 'Plays on Broadway – Hummin' Sam', *Variety*, April 11, 1933, p. 42.

[1075] Eugene Burr, 'Hummin' Sam', *The Billboard*, April 22, 1933, p. 19.

[1076] Terry Monaghan connects the stereotype of African-Americans as naturally gifted dancers to out-of-town white visitors at the Savoy Ballroom and to modern dancers who shared the viewpoint. See: Monaghan 2005, pp. 39-40 and 66.

preferring African-American dancing to "white dancing" are more analyzed next, where mixed reviews area concerned.

5.3.3 Dancing Gets Mixed Reviews

The Broadway plays, which received both good and bad reviews, can be divided roughly into two categories. In the first category, those plays which were evaluated mostly by dancing and dancers included in the plays. In the second category, there were other factors which were considered in the reviews. Especially another factor, in addition to dancing, was the connection to racial values. Some of the reviews referred either directly or indirectly to the racial values, usually to the lack of them in the plays, where dancing is concerned.

Where the plays from the first category are concerned, the reviews sometimes evaluated the shows very contradictory. The shows like *Change Your Luck* in 1930 and *Fast and Furious* in 1931 were considered mostly as poor shows which had mostly good dancing.[1077] *Messing Around* in 1929 and *Blackberries of '32'* were considered mostly as poor shows which had both good and bad dancing.[1078] *Africana* in 1927, *Deep Harlem* in 1929, and *Yeah Man* in 1932 were acknowledged for both good and bad dancing.[1079] *Singin' the Blues* in 1931 was acknowledged for good

[1077] See for *Change Your Luck*: Rives Matthews, 'Change Your Luck', *The Billboard*, June 14, 1930, p. 7; 'Plays on Broadway – Change Your Luck', *Variety*, June 11, 1930, p. 54; Howard Barnes, ' 'Change Your Luck' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 7, 1930, p. 6; "Change Your Luck" Has Nimble Dancers', *The New York Times*, June 7, 1930, p. 10. See for *Fast and Furious*: J. Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, September 16, 1931, p. 15; 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, September 17, 1931, p. 4; 'Fast And Furious', *Variety*, September 22, 1931, p. 55; Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 16, 1931, p. 16; Eugene Burr, 'The Plays On Broadway – Fast And Furious', *The Billboard*, September 26, 1931, p. 15 and 59.

[1078] See for *Blackberries of '32*: J. Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, April 5, 1932, p. 27; Howard Barnes, ' 'Blackberries of '32' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, April 5, 1932, p. 14; Kelcey Allen, ' "Blackberries of '32 Fast and Furious and At Times Even Funny", *Woman's Wear Daily*, April 5, 1932, p. 37; Jack Mehler, 'Blackberries Of 1932', *The Billboard*, April 16, 1932, p. 21; 'Blackberries of 1932', *Variety*, April 12, 1932, p. 54. See for *Messing Around*: 'Messin' Around', *Variety*, April 24, 1929, p. 52 and 'Messin' 'Round', *The Billboard*, May 4, 1929, p. 35.

[1079] See for *Africana*: Richard Watts Jr., 'Ethel Waters a Hit In New Negro Revue, 'Africana,' at Daly's', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 12, 1927, p. 16; ' 'Africana' A Swift Negro Musical Revue', *The New York Times*, July 12, 1927, p. 27; Kelcey Allen, ' "Africana" Arrives In Town', *Women's Wear Daily*, July 12, 1927, p. 5; 'Plays On Broadway – Africana', *Variety*, July 13, 1927, p. 46; Gordon M. Leland, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Africana', *The Billboard*, July 23, 1927, p. 4. See for *Deep Harlem*: Wilfred J. Riley, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Deep Harlem', *The Billboard*, January 19, 1929, p. 46; 'Plays on Broadway – Deep Harlem', *Variety*, January 9, 1929, p. 62; J. Brooks Atkinson, ' 'Deep Harlem' Has Some Good Dancing', *The New York Times*, January 8, 1929, p. 39. See for *Yeah Man*: 'The Play', *The New York Times*, May 27, 1932, p. 27; Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Yeah Man', *The Billboard*, June 11, 1932, p. 16; Arthur Ruhl, ' 'Yeah-Man' ', *New York*

dancing, but as a show it was considered as good and bad.[1080] *Shuffle Along of 1933* was considered as both a poor and good show, which had both bad and good dancing. The show clearly seemed to divide the critics.[1081]

The reviewers usually acknowledged different dances in the plays. For example, Cakewalk, Black Bottom and "Africana Stomp" were found from *Africana.*[1082] Tap dancing was noticed in *Change Your Luck*, and *Fast and Furious*. Hoofing was reviewed from the shows *Deep Harlem*, *Change Your Luck*, *Blackberries of '32'*, *Shuffle Along of 1933,* and *Fast and Furious*. The last two were also credited for soft-shoe dancing.[1083] Similarly, chorus dancing was noticed in *Change Your Luck*,

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Herald Tribune, May 27, 1932, p. 18; 'Plays on Broadway – Yeah Man', *Variety*, May 31, 1932, p. 52.

[1080] *New Journal and Guide* published an article which included comments from the mainstream newspapers: *the World-Telegram*, *N.Y. Daily Mirror*, *New York Herald Tribune* and *Daily News*, especially, concerning criticism about the play. See: 'Critics Vary In Opinions On Two New Shows', *New Journal and Guide*, September 26, 1931, p. 13. Otherwise concerning the comments of the mainstream press see: Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Singin' The Blues', *The Billboard*, September 26, 1931, p. 15; J. Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, September 17, 1931, p. 21; 'Singin' The Blues', *Variety*, September 22, 1931, p. 55; Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 17, 1931, p. 16; Stearns 1994, p. 158 and 385. Stearns seems to have wrongly paraphrased John Mason Brown from *New York Evening Post,* as he claims that Mason called the show: "an honest attempt to do something different". There is not that kind of mention in the review. Mason even stated, that "[w]ith no great show of originality on his part, Mr. McGowan has retold...that good old story". He referred to the director of the show and to the fact that the storyline was based on the old story. Mason also added: "Mr. McGowan's Fable can hardly be called a new one." See: John Mason Brown, 'The Play', *New York Evening Post*, September 17, 1931, p. 14.

[1081] 'The Play', *The New York Times*, December 27, 1932, p. 11; Arthur Ruhl, 'Shuffle Along of 1933', *New York Herald Tribune,* December 27, 1932, p. 8; Thomas R. Dash, 'More Frenzy Than Wit in Ebony Frolic', *Women's Wear Daily*, December 27, 1932, p. 25; 'Plays on Broadway – Shuffle Along 1933', *Variety*, January 3, 1933, p. 88 and 92; Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Shuffle Along Of 1933', *The Billboard*, January 7, 1933, p. 17; Charles Collins, 'Two Stars of Old Negro Hit in New Show', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 1, 1933, p. 17.

[1082] Richard Watts Jr., 'Ethel Waters a Hit In New Negro Revue, 'Africana,' at Daly's', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 12, 1927, p. 16. 'Plays On Broadway – Africana', *Variety*, July 13, 1927, p. 46.

[1083] See for *Deep Harlem*: Wilfred J. Riley, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Deep Harlem', *The Billboard*, January 19, 1929, p. 46; J. Brooks Atkinson, ' 'Deep Harlem' Has Some Good Dancing', *The New York Times*, January 8, 1929, p. 39. See for *Change Your Luck*: Rives Matthews, 'Change Your Luck', *The Billboard*, June 14, 1930, p. 7; 'Plays on Broadway – Change Your Luck', *Variety*, June 11, 1930, p. 54; Howard Barnes, ' 'Change Your Luck' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 7, 1930, p. 6; "Change Your Luck" Has Nimble Dancers', *The New York Times*, June 7, 1930, p. 10. See for *Blackberries of '32'*: 'Blackberries of 1932', *Variety*, April 12, 1932, p. 54; See for *Shuffle Along of 1933*: 'Plays on Broadway – Shuffle Along 1933', *Variety*, January 3, 1933, p. 88 and 92; Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Shuffle Along Of 1933', *The Billboard*, January 7, 1933, p. 17; Charles Collins, 'Two Stars of Old Negro Hit in New Show', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 1, 1933, p. 17. See for *Fast and Furious*: 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, September 17, 1931, p. 4. Also *Variety* appreciated "hoofing boy foursome", which caught attention. See: 'Fast And Furious', *Variety*, September 22, 1931, p. 55.

Blackberries of '32' and *Shuffle Along of 1933*.[1084] The Lindy Hop and tap dance were highlighted from *Yeah Man*, and hoofing and the Lindy Hop from *Singin' the Blues*.[1085] In *Harlem*, which is discussed later in the second category, *Variety* noticed one of the newest Harlem inventions, "The Belly Rub" dance.[1086]

The dances, and also the dancers, were acknowledged both positively and negatively. For example, Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* credited Ethel Waters for her Cakewalk and "Africana Stomp" in *Africana*.[1087] *Variety* criticized the dancing, as the Cakewalk number led by Pickaninny Hill in the beginning of the show "could be dropped, for the dance belongs to the long ago".[1088] According to *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fast and Furious* was carried, particularly, for its soft-shoe and tap-dancing.[1089] Jack Mehler from *The Billboard* stated that concerning *Blackberries of '32'*, that the revue is "a collection of dancing and prancing…" which was "anything but borrowed" and thus lacked originality.[1090] Similarly, *Variety* criticized the dance routines to be too long for revue purposes and "a number of big dance scenes" were staged "in third-rate vaude fashion".[1091]

Concerning *Messing Around, Variety* criticized the girls of the chorus for "going into the same stomp in nearly every ensemble".[1092] Similarly, *Variety* commented on *Shuffle Along of 1933* that the show had "some snappy hoofing in spots, but it was of the same formula stomping".[1093] *Shuffle Along of 1933* is an example about how dancing divided critics concerning its chorus line and hoofing. *The New York Times* stated sarcastically, "the cast and chorus flung themselves onto the stage; danced, shouted and sang, then disappeared into the wings exhausted. Enough of that sort of thing is infectious. This department had had enough by 11 P. M."[1094]

[1084] See for *Change Your Luck*: Rives Matthews, 'Change Your Luck', The Billboard, June 14, 1930, p. 7. See for *Blackberries of '32'*: Howard Barnes, ' 'Blackberries of '32' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, April 5, 1932, p. 14. See for *Shuffle Along of 1933*: 'The Play', *The New York Times*, December 27, 1932, p. 11; Charles Collins, 'Two Stars of Old Negro Hit in New Show', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 1, 1933, p. 17.

[1085] See for *Yeah Man*: 'The Play', *The New York Times*, May 27, 1932, p. 27; 'Another Theatrical Season Goes Into The Files', *The New York Times*, June 5, 1932, p. X1; Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Yeah Man', *The Billboard*, June 11, 1932, p. 16. See for *Singin' the Blues*: Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Singin' The Blues', *The Billboard*, September 26, 1931, p. 15; J. Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, September 17, 1931, p. 21; 'Singin' The Blues', *Variety*, September 22, 1931, p. 55; Stearns 1994, p. 158.

[1086] 'Harlem', *Variety*, February 27, 1929, p. 117. See also: ' "Belly Rub" Dance Newest in Harlem', *Variety*, November 21, 1928, p. 1.

[1087] Richard Watts Jr., 'Ethel Waters a Hit In New Negro Revue, 'Africana,' at Daly's', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 12, 1927, p. 16.

[1088] 'Plays On Broadway – Africana', *Variety*, July 13, 1927, p. 46.

[1089] 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, September 17, 1931, p. 4. Also *Variety* appreciated "hoofing boy foursome", which caught attention. See: 'Fast And Furious', *Variety*, September 22, 1931, p. 55.

[1090] Jack Mehler, 'Blackberries Of 1932', *The Billboard*, April 16, 1932, p. 21.

[1091] 'Blackberries of 1932', *Variety*, April 12, 1932, p. 54.

[1092] 'Plays on Broadway – Messin' Around', *Variety*, April 24, 1929, p. 52.

[1093] 'Plays on Broadway – Shuffle Along 1933', *Variety*, January 3, 1933, p. 88 and 92.

[1094] 'The Play', *The New York Times*, December 27, 1932, p. 11.

In total contrast to that, Eugine Burr from *The Billboard,* reported that the show contained ”superlative hoofing” and the evening was ”[thoroughly] enjoyable”. Especially the Four Flash Devils performed ”body-breaking routines” and George McClennon did an ”extremely amusing comedy dance”. Burr acknowledged the chorus as Taps Miller, Peggy Wharton, and Nannine Joyce danced their solos excellently.[1095] Charles Collins from *The Chicago Daily Tribune* also stated that ”the dancing girls” were “admirably trained” and ”the soft shoe tapping boys” were ”, as usual, amazingly agile”.[1096]

The training of dancers was brought out in other reviews, which also concerns later discussed plays. Rives Matthews from *The Billboard* considered the chorus of *Change Your Luck* as ”well-trained”.[1097] Morton P. Gudebrod from *The Billboard* even stated that *Bomboola* had dancers who were ”well trained in some apparently difficult dance numbers”.[1098] The lack of training was also acknowledged as Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* criticized the chorus of *Hot Rhythm* for being ”scarcely trained at all in its routines”.[1099] Similarly, Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* dismissed the chorus of *Yeah Man* for having ”no huge amount ability”.[1100] It seems that at least some critics understood the need for rehearsing. The stereotype of African-Americans as naturally gifted dancers was not shared by all critics.

Overall, there did not seem to exist a consensus of opinions concerning what is good dancing and what are favorite dances, and who are favorite/good dancers. The reviewers could be in total contrast, even when evaluating the same play. However, there seemed to be plays where the dances clearly carried the show. Especially, the Lindy Hop was in comparison with tap dance influenced hoofing, when *Yeah Man* and *Singin' the Blues* shows were reviewed.

The New York Times wrote about *Yeah Man*, “Roy and Rastus tap out a lazy rhythm, and Eddie Rector is a footloose aristocrat who loves his work. With that dutiful inventory and a stray Lindy Hopper or two, the credit side of “Yeah-Man” stops short…”[1101] Especially, Eddie Rector seemed to be generally appreciated as *The Billboard*, *Variety,* and *New York Herald Tribune* commented positively for

[1095] Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Shuffle Along Of 1933', *The Billboard*, January 7, 1933, p. 17.

[1096] Charles Collins, 'Two Stars of Old Negro Hit in New Show', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 1, 1933, p. 17.

[1097] Rives Matthews, 'Change Your Luck', *The Billboard*, June 14, 1930, p. 7.

[1098] Morton P. Gudebrod, ' The New Plays On Broadway – Bomboola', *The Billboard*, July 6, 1929, p. 7.

[1099] Howard Barnes, ' ”Hot Rhythm” ', *New York Herald Tribune*, August 22, 1930, p. 10.

[1100] Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Yeah Man', *The Billboard*, June 11, 1932, p. 16.

[1101] 'The Play', *The New York Times*, May 27, 1932, p. 27.

him[1102]. Eugine Burr from *The Billboard* commented positively for the Lindy Hoppers, who ”can certainly hop”, but were buried mostly in ”the blackouts”, meaning probably the occasional, unpredicted breaks in the play. He also stated that Roy and Rastus rose above others, as they contributed to ”extremely amusing specialties”.

There were also dismissing comments. The chorus of *Yeah Man* was criticized for ”poor routines” with the exception of its member, Bernice Gray, who worked diligently throughout her routines.[1103] Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* stated that ”there was very little…to entertain the audience.” The show continued with ”typically rousing Harlem hoofing, but that was all”.[1104] Similarly, Arthur Ruhl from *New York Herald Tribune,* condemned the show ”for the most part” as ”third-rate vaudeville”, which ”made some effort to be genuinely Negro and more often were crude imitations of the revue patterns of Broadway.” However, there was ”a lot of energetic dancing”.[1105]

Singin' the Blues included the chorus, The Four Flash Devils and a group of Lindy Hoppers. Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* stressed the significance of the Four Flash Devils, who were ”nothing short of sensational, smashing thru with a third-act routine that had the crowd practically on its feet.”[1106] *Variety* also mentioned in its review George, Esaline, Jordan and Jordan, George and Betty, who showed ”The genuine thing in Lindy Hop”.[1107] George was likely George Snowden and Esaline was his partner at the time, Esaline Hinton.[1108]

Ballet was brought out as a refreshing exception among the other dances. Percy Hammond from *New York Herald Tribune* found refreshing ”the influence of scores of tawny and diligent chorus-maids”, who were ”engaged in the nervous fidgets of the Negro ballet”[1109], and who were likely ignoring jazz dance, because of their ballet.

The Lindy Hop seemed to be acknowledged deeper, when the *New York Herald Tribune* published an article about the Lindy Hop and the music in *Singin' the Blues*. The article handles different aspects of the Lindy Hop and the music of the play,

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[1102] Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Yeah Man', *The Billboard*, June 11, 1932, p. 16. Arthur Ruhl, ' 'Yeah-Man' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 27, 1932, p. 18. 'Plays on Broadway – Yeah Man', *Variety*, May 31, 1932, p. 52.

[1103] Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Yeah Man', *The Billboard*, June 11, 1932, p. 16. Arthur Ruhl, ' 'Yeah-Man' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 27, 1932, p. 18. 'Plays on Broadway – Yeah Man', *Variety*, May 31, 1932, p. 52.

[1104] Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Yeah Man', *The Billboard*, June 11, 1932, p. 16.

[1105] Arthur Ruhl, ' 'Yeah-Man' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 27, 1932, p. 18.

[1106] Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Singin' The Blues', *The Billboard*, September 26, 1931, p. 15. See also J. Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, September 17, 1931, p. 21 and Stearns 1994, p. 158.

[1107] 'Singin' The Blues', *Variety*, September 22, 1931, p. 55.

[1108] 'Dance Exhibition at Corona', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 7, 1930, p. 18.

[1109] Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 17, 1931, p. 16.

mentioning only Eubine Blake from the musicians, and Mantan Moreland and Fredi Washington, from the actors. The article claims incorrectly that, "the Lindy Hop [was] shown for the first time on a white stage". According to *The Pittsburgh Courier,* the Lindy Hop was already performed in *Harlem* play on Broadway.[1110] However, there might have been another side to the *New York Herald Tribune* comment, as concerning the earlier Atlantic City version of *Singin' The Blues*, there were engaged whites in "the lesser roles" in the play, like *Variety* put it. Thus, the play was racially mixed at the time. It is unclear if the same racial mixing continued in the Broadway version.[1111] The publishing of the article refers to the importance of the Lindy Hop; the Lindy Hop in the play likely triggered the article.[1112]

As far as the plays from the second category are concerned, it seems that dividing the shows among good and bad shows, according to their dancing and general nature of shows, is as contradictory as it is in the first category. *My Magnolia,* in 1926, was considered overall as a poor show which had good dancing.[1113] *Bottomland,* in 1927, was similarly considered a poor show, but it had both good and bad dancing.[1114] *Keep Shufflin'*, in 1928, was basically considered a good show which had good dancing, but the show was blamed for copying white plays.[1115] *Rang Tang* in 1927, *Bomboola* and *Harlem* in 1929, *Hot Rhythm* in 1930, and *Rhapsody in Black* in 1931, were considered as both good and bad shows which had both good and bad dancing.[1116] Especially, *Rang Tang* divided the critics. *The Wall Street Journal*

[1110] 'Kazoo Complements Washboard Music For Lindy Hoppers', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 18, 1931, p. G5. See also for the Lindy Hop on Broadway: 'Ethel Will have Her 'Othello' ', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, September 6, 1930, p. A6.

[1111] 'Plays Out of Town – Singin' The Blues', *Variety*, April 8, 1931, p. 62. The author of the study has not found any mention the racial mixing in the Broadway version.

[1112] The headline of the article and the main text of the article refer to the fact that the Lindy Hop was the reason for the article. It is logical that the Lindy Hop affected making the article. The dance still had the novelty value, when considering the fact that it was created in 1928.

[1113] See for *My Magnolia*: ' 'My Magnolia' Lacks Comedy and Needs Plot', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1926, p. 14; ' 'My Magnolia' Aided By Swift Dancers', *The New York Times*, July 13, 1926, p. 19; 'Plays On Broadway – My Magnolia', *Variety*, July 14, 1926, p. 41; Gordon M. Leland, 'The New Plays On Broadway – My Magnolia', *The Billboard*, July 24, 1926, p. 11.

[1114] See for *Bottomland*: ' 'Bottomland' Baffles As A Negro Revue', *The New York Times*, June 28, 1927, p. 29; George Goldsmith, ' 'Bottomland' Fails To Enhance Fame Of Pianist Author', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 28, 1927, p. 16; 'Bottomland', *Variety*, June 29, 1927, p. 46; Wilfred J. Riley, 'Bottomland', *The Billboard*, July 9, 1927, p. 9.

[1115] J. Brooks Atkinson, ' "Keep Shufflin' " Given At Break-Neck Pace', *The New York Times*, February 28, 1928, p. 18; Arthur Ruhl, ' 'Give Me Sunshine' Joys Song Hit Of 'Keep Shufflin' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, February 28, 1928, p. 14; Kelcey Allen, 'Lively Fun Provided In "Keep Shufflin' " At Daly's Theatre, *Women's Wear Daily*, February 28, 1928, p. 7; Gordon M. Leland, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Keep Shufflin' ', *The Billboard*, March 10, 1928, p. 10; 'Plays On Broadway – Keep Shufflin' ', *Variety*, March 7, 1928, p. 52.

[1116] See for *Rang Tang*: ' 'Rang Tang' Opens At Royale Theatre', *The New York Times*, July 13, 1927, p. 20; 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, July 14, 1927, p. 4; Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1927, p. 14; Gordon M. Leland, 'Rang Tang', *The Billboard*, July 23, 1927, p. 4; ' "Rang Tang" ', *The Stage*, July 28, 1927, p. 21; 'Rang Tang', *Variety*, August 17, 1927, p. 51. See for *Bomboola*: ' 'Bomboola' A Swift Negro Musical Show', *The New York Times*, June 27, 1929, p. 24; Howard Barnes, '

considered the show "the best negro musical show we ever saw". At the same time, Percy Hammond from *New York Herald Tribune* dismissed the show in his review as "Another Child-Like Imitation of Dull, White Extravaganza".[1117]

In spite of the criticism, *New York Herald Tribune* interviewed one of the dancers in the show on July 31, 1927. May [Mae] Barnes' dancing background in connection with her dancing in the show was reported in the almost 53 lines long article.[1118] Thus, Barnes was interviewed in the mainstream press earlier than Bill Robinson who was interviewed one year later by *New York Herald Tribune* and *The New Yorker* also mostly concerning dance-related issues[1119].

The African-American values of the plays, which were considered in the reviews, were usually compared to white plays. An exception seemed to be *My Magnolia,* as *New York Herald Tribune* stated regarding the play that "The men of the chorus dance with the spirit and rhythm common to the colored race" without making a clear comparison to white plays in that sense, although otherwise the paper referred to how the show emulated the white Broadway show formula .[1120]

When *Rang Tang*, *Hot Rhythm*, *Keep Shufflin'*, *Bottomland, Bomboola,* and *Rhapsody in Black* were reviewed, the critics blamed the shows for copying white shows usually without explaining more precisely what they meant by copying.[1121]

'Bomboola,' Negro Musical at Royale, Lacks Spontaneity', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 27, 1929, p. 14; Stirling Bowen, 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, July 1, 1929, p. 4; 'Bomboola', *Variety*, July 3, 1929, p. 95; Morton P. Gudebrod, 'Bomboola', *The Billboard*, July 6, 1929, p. 7. See for *Harlem*: 'Plays on Broadway – Harlem', *Variety*, February 27, 1929, p. 117; Wilfred J. Riley, 'Harlem', *The Billboard*, March 2, 1929, p. 5; Arthur Ruhl, ' 'Harlem', Negro Melodrama of Racketeer Sort', *New York Herald Tribune*, February 21, 1929, p. 19. See for *Hot Rhythm*: ' "Hot Rhythm" Shown By Will Morrissey', *The New York Times*, August 22, 1930, p. 18; ' "Hot Rhythm" ', *New York Herald Tribune*, August 22, 1930, p. 10; 'Plays on Broadway – Hot Rhythm', *Variety*, August 27, 1930, p. 70; Rives Matthews, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Hot Rhythm', *The Billboard*, August 30, 1930, p. 31; ' "Hot Rhythm" Rattling Good Colored Show', *Women's Wear Daily*, August 22, 1930, pp. 11 and 20; 'Stearns 1994, p. 155. See for *Rhapsody in Black*: Howard Barnes, ' 'Rhapsody in Black' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 5, 1931, p. 18; Eugene Burr, 'Rhapsody in Black', *The Billboard*, May 16, 1931, p. 16; Charles Collins, 'The Stage', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 29, 1931, p. 13; 'Lew Leslie Does His Bit.', *The New York Times*, May 5, 1931, p. 33; Kelcey Allen, ' "Rhapsody in Black" Is Rich Entertainment, *Women's Wear Daily*, May 5, 1931, p. 20; Stirling Bowen, 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, May 6, 1931, p. 4; 'Plays on Broadway – Rhapsody In Black', *Variety*, May 13, 1931, p. 86.

[1117] 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, July 14, 1927, p. 4 and Percy Hammond,'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1927, p. 14.

[1118] 'Bringing Down the House Is Easy for This Harlem Dancer', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 31, 1927, p. D17.

[1119] See the chapter: 'Robinson Interviewed in the Mainstream Press'.

[1120] ' 'My Magnolia' Lacks Comedy and Needs Plot', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1926, p. 14.

[1121] Concerning *Rang Tang* see: Percy Hammond, 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1927, p. 14; Gordon M. Leland, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Royale – Rang Tang', *The Billboard*, July 23, 1927, p. 4. Concerning *Hot Rhythm* see: Stearns 1994, p. 155. Stearns seems to refer to *New York Evening World* in his statement. See: Stearns 1994, p. 384; Concerning *Keep Shufflin'* see: J. Brooks Atkinson, ' "Keep Shufflin' " Given At

Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* gave a more informative explanation, when he stated concerning *Rhapsody in Black*, how African-Americans usually surpassed "the best of possible white-cast" in sense of rhythm and "all the rest". The reviewer blamed show producer Lew Leslie for turning his back on African-American material, and for presenting everything from "a Cuban dance to a Jewish religious chant". Burr, like Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune,* also did not like sophistication, which was used in the show numbers. Burr would like to have seen more "raw stuff" in the show material, and Barnes would have liked to have "lusty, carefree, exciting" color in the show.[1122]

Burr and Barnes' views seemed to be defined more exacting, when *Bomboola* was reviewed. Barnes himself stressed its "exceeding mediocrity" as the show had "too much a product of white showmen and white methods".[1123] Morton P. Gudebrod from *The Billboard* thought that the show overall was "very thin-blooded"[1124]. The reviewer explained his reasons for that:

> [I]t lacks the spontaneity and natural rhythm that white audiences expect, when they go to see colored shows. They go to them expecting to be entertained by negroes who are dancing and singing to negro music in the careless manner of their race, but in this case the producer offers only a troupe of dark-skinned performers decorously enacting a none-too-brilliant Caucasian [white] musical comedy.

Thus, the reviewer expressed the same kind of thoughts in 1929, as Burr and Barnes did later in their *Rhapsody in Black* reviews in 1931. At least, Gudebrod also supported a stereotype about African-Americans as naturally careless persons.

There seemed to be deeper interest in African-American values, when *Harlem* was reviewed. Arthur Ruhl from *New York Herald Tribune* explained how "white or Broadway element overlaid the black" in the play, but he was mostly interested in the "Negro theme which comes to the surface from time to time". He explained how "authentic Harlem color" was attempted in the "rent party" scene, where "the stage was packed with Negro couples engaged in more or less Congoese varieties of jazz". However, the scene was spoiled by "largely semi-amateurs", who lacked "the

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Break-Neck Pace', *The New York Times*, February 28, 1928, p. 18 and Arthur Ruhl: " 'Give Me Sunshine' Joyous Song Hit Of 'Keep Shufflin' ', New York Herald Tribune, February 28, 1928, p. 14. Concerning *Bottomland* see: ' 'Bottomland' Baffles As A Negro Revue', *The New York Times*, June 28, 1927, p. 29. Concerning *Bomboola* see: Howard Barnes, ' 'Bomboola,' Negro Musical at Royale, Lacks Spontaneity', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 27, 1929, p. 14.

[1122] Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Rhapsody In Black', *The Billboard*, May 16, 1931, p. 15 and Howard Barnes, ' 'Rhapsody in Black' ', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 5, 1931, p. 18.

[1123] Howard Barnes, ' 'Bomboola,' Negro Musical at Royale, Lacks Spontaneity", *New York Herald Tribune*, June 27, 1929, p. 14.

[1124] This sentence and the next paragraphs until the phrase 'Caucasian [white] musical comedy' are based on Morton P. Gudebrod, ' The New Plays On Broadway – Bomboola', *The Billboard*, July 6, 1929, p. 7.

technique and theatrical imagination".[1125] In other words, they had not rehearsed enough. Accordingly, *Variety* stated that concerning the racial values in *Harlem* and in one of its scenes that "the dancers are still going in that amazing rhythm and style only seen in Harlem."[1126] Thus, while the reviewers expressed generally their appreciation for the rhythm African-Americans usually had, they did not explain this precisely.

Overall, the reviewers commented on the plays varyingly, and sometimes they commented on the same play in contrast to other reviewers. There was no clear delineation on how the plays were acknowledged. There was a not clear criterion on how the plays were evaluated, except possibly in a few cases. The critics clearly preferred the plays which had African-American values to the plays which were somehow "whitened". There seemed to be a few more exact explanations of the African-American values which the plays should contain. Good rhythm was one of those. It was sometimes referred to as the natural rhythm which African-Americans had. Similarly, it was referred to African-Americans' overwhelmingness compared to whites, where rhythm is concerned.

However, there were critics who understood the importance of training, where dancing was concerned: to them African-American dancers were not naturally gifted dancers. Some of the critics seemed to be seriously interested in African-American culture. The critics' interest in African-American dancing refers also the fact that the reviewers were able to recognize different dances. It was not all the same to them. Especially the Lindy Hop and tap dance influenced hoofing seemed to stand out in a few cases. Concerning African-American jazz dance, it is also remarkable that dancer Mae Barnes was interviewed in the mainstream press already in 1927 before Bill Robinson and Jazzlips Richardson were acknowledged in the mainstream press interviews. The success in jazz dancing, as far as the African-American Broadway plays are concerned, seemed to have led to the interviews in the end of the 1920s. This speaks for the fact that some of the Harlem dancers were increasingly distinguished from others in the mainstream press. This recognition concerned mostly dance-related issues. The dancers' private life was not profoundly discussed.

While there were dances which were distinguished from the mass of jazz dances, also certain dance acts were clearly distinguished from others in the long run. These dance acts are discussed next.

5.3.4 John W. Sublett and Buck Washington – Buck and Bubbles

Another tap dancer and piano player duo, which seemed to raise above others, and which had longevity in the show business, was John W. Sublett (Bubbles) and

[1125] Arthur Ruhl, ' 'Harlem', Negro Melodrama of Racketeer Sort', *New York Herald Tribune*, February 21, 1929, p. 19.

[1126] 'Plays on Broadway – Harlem', *Variety*, February 27, 1929, p. 117.

Buck Washington. They appeared in the *Weather Clear – Track Fast* Broadway show in 1927. The show received pleasant reviews, but it did not succeed longer than eight weeks and 63 performances, which ranked it in the middle level as to how shows succeeded on Broadway.[1127] Where dancing is concerned, *Variety* magazine credited Buck and Bubbles for their Toronto performance of the show as the highlights in the show.[1128] *Variety* stated in its later issue concerning the Broadway performance that "it is good entertainment in any kind of weather". The magazine again credited Buck and Bubbles for their dancing and piano playing, but also for handling well their richly-colored dialect with stating how they nearly stopped the show with their performance. *Variety* also predicted a successful future to them and other similar acts.[1129]

The opinion of the magazine was supported by *The Billboard* and the *New York Herald Tribune*. Gordon M. Leland from *The Billboard* also credited two chorus girls, Gertrude Walker and Walda Mansfield, for portraying their part in the play well.[1130] *The Christian Science Monitor* only credited them for good performances among other dancers and performers.[1131]

The reviews of the *Blackbirds of 1930* highlighted Buck and Bubbles among a few other dancers.[1132] Bubbles was also mentioned occasionally and briefly, but still mostly positively, with his partner Buck Washington, in the reviews of the mainstream press concerning the play *Ziegfeld Follies of 1931*. Despite otherwise positive reviews, *Variety* found part of their routine in the play slightly weak and criticized their dress code as from the lower class than other principals of the play.[1133] If the reason for that dress code was dictated by the need of having them look different from white principals of the play, stays unclear. The subject is discussed in details, in the chapter, 'How African-American Dancers Were

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1127 ' 'Weather Clear' Is Lively.', *The New York Times*, October 19, 1927, p. 24. 'The Final Reckoning', *The New York Times*, June 3, 1928, p. X1. *The Billboard* stated that the show ran for 63 performances: 'Plays With Length Of Runs', *The Billboard*, September 8, 1928, p. 93. The show ran for about eight weeks between October 18 and December 10, 1927: 'Long Run Play Records', *The Billboard*, December 17, 1927, p. 47. See for the opening and the closing of the show: 'B'way Openings', *The Billboard*, October 22, 1927, p. 11 and 'No Broadway Openings This Week; 17 or More in Christmas Week Quota', *The Billboard*, December 17, 1927, p. 11.

1128 'Plays Out Of Town – Weather Clear, Track Fast', *Variety*, October 19, 1927, p. 56.

1129 'Plays On Broadway – Weather Clear, Track Fast', *Variety*, October 26, 1927, p. 50.

1130 Gordon M. Leland, 'Weather Clear, Track Fast', *The Billboard*, October 29, 1927, p. 10-11; Richard Watts Jr., 'Racing Play Turns Conventional Plot Into Clever Comedy', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 19, 1927, p. 21.

1131 ' "Weather Clear – Track Fast" ', *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 25, 1927, p. 10.

1132 Stearns 1994, p. 157. Kelcey Allen, 'Blackbirds, 2d Edition, A Great Treat', *Women's Wear Daily*, October 23, 1930, p. 4; 'Blackbirds (1930)', *Variety*, October 29, 1930, p. 71; Stirling Bowen,'The Theatre – More Blackbirds', *The Wall Street Journal*, October 25, 1930, p. 4; Rives Matthews, 'Lew Leslie's Blackbirds', *The Billboard*, November 1, 1930, p. 33.

1133 'Plays On Broadway – Follies", *Variety*, July 7, 1931, p. 54. Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Ziegfeld Follies Of 1931', *The Billboard*, July 11, 1931, pp. 15 and 61. 'Out-Of-Town Reviews – Follies', *Variety*, June 23, 1931, p. 54.

Described in the Movies'.[1134] Anyway, *Variety* in its review treated them equally with the otherwise white cast at least as far as their dress code was concerned.

Later, John W. Sublett became famous as the Sportin' Life character in *Porgy and Bess* in 1935, where Sublett was commented on positively about his character in the mainstream press.[1135] Concerning the *Porgy and Bess* play, *Variety* mentioned Bubbles as one of the hard-working cast, who was outstanding among others, and who succeeded in comedy.[1136] It was stated in the later *Variety* issue that he was "of course…among the tops on taps."[1137] *The Billboard* reported on the Boston performance of the show that Bubbles' dancing "stopped the show on several occasions".[1138] Lawrence Gilman from *New York Herald Tribune* credited Sublett for the Sportin' Life character in the show, with "That dancing reprobate...as embodied by the ineffable Mr. Bubbles, makes praise impertinent."[1139] It seems that his success in the show also helped him to get into the mainstream press. The *New York Herald Tribune* interviewed him in the fifth of a page long article, in 1935. He told them about his professional career as a dancer and about his part in the shows with a few details about the beginning of his career.[1140]

He still was remembered for his role in the show, later in 1937, when he was part of the *Virginia* play. Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* stated concerning *Virginia*, that "the marvelous John W. Bubbles, the immortal Sportin' Life of "Porgy and Bess", who…is incomparable when he goes into his soft shoe dance."[1141] *Variety* magazine also reported positively on Bubbles' dancing.[1142] Bubbles and his partner Buck's performance in *Virginia* was criticized, as Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* stated that Buck and Bubbles were "scurvily served with humor that you would never suspect them of being prize pantaloons of the music hall stages."[1143] Similarly, Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* commented on the play, that they were "saddled with impossible material".[1144] Thus, even Bubbles

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[1134] According to the cast lists of the play, there were no other African-American principals. Also the play was not mentioned as 'colored'. See: 'Plays On Broadway – Follies', *Variety*, July 7, 1931, p. 54. Eugene Burr, 'The New Plays On Broadway – Ziegfeld Follies Of 1931', *The Billboard*, July 11, 1931, pp. 15 and 61. 'Out-Of-Town Reviews – Follies', *Variety*, June 23, 1931, p. 54.

[1135] George Gerswin, 'Rhapsody in Catfish Row', *The New York Times*, October 20, 1935, p. X1; Edward H. Lawson, 'Talent Enough in 'Porgy' To Send It Round World', *The Washington Post*, October 20, 1935, p. SS4.

[1136] 'Plays Out of Town – Porgy And Bess', *Variety*, October 2, 1935, p. 54.

[1137] 'Plays on Broadway – Porgy And Bess', *Variety*, October 16, 1935, p. 60.

[1138] ' "Porgy and Bess" (Boston) ', *The Billboard*, October 12, 1935, p. 18. Indeed, *The Billboard* claimed misleadingly that Buck (Washington) was the Sportin' Life character.

[1139] Lawrence Gilman, 'Music', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 11, 1935, p. 23.

[1140] Russel Crouse, 'Vaudeville's Contribution to Opera: A Singer Who Doesn't Read Music', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 27, 1935, p. D4.

[1141] Richard Watts Jr., 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 3, 1937, p. 12.

[1142] 'Virginia', *Variety*, September 8, 1937, pp. 58 and 60.

[1143] Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, September 3, 1937, p. 13.

[1144] Eugene Burr, 'New Play on Broadway – Virginia', *The Billboard*, September 11, 1937, p. 24.

with his dancing could not rise above the mediocre script. Overall, he seemed to be mostly remembered for his dancing. Thus, his image in public was firmly connected to his dancing skills without sufficiently bringing out his private life.

5.3.5 The Real Progress in Acknowledging African-American Star Dancers: From Blackbirds to Bill Robinson

The first edition of *Blackbirds,* in 1926, went to Europe and was reviewed with mixed feelings. Both *The New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* claimed similarly that ”English critics discovered little that was beautiful in the syncopated music”. As the papers seemed to be wrong with the claim, they seemed to be correct with their claim that ”they found the dancing wonderful in its vigor and occasionally very funny.”[1145]

The British based *Observer* stated concerning *Blackbirds*, that ”what a song! – a whole hemisphere away from that of our native merle. It is a curious song…with attractive harmonics, a primitive rhythm, and occasional mocking notes acquired, from less exotic birds.” Also the ”coloured jazz band” of the show was praised for rendering ”the rhythm that has many variations and humours, and communicates galvanic high spirits to the performers.” Otherwise the show was evaluated as including ”whitewashed features…which seemed to me less interesting than those which were frankly colored”.[1146]

Accordingly, British-based *The Manchester Guardian* stated that ”Everything in this show by the ”Blackbirds” is smart, up-to-date, crisp, dashing, expensive-and arrogant” adding later in the article: ”In the beginning was rhythm, and not less so with the art of the music-hall artist than with that of the serious musicians.” Concerning the dancing, the paper stated, ”Some few of the dances are of the tempestuous kind, but it is the strongly rhythmical dancing that captures the house every time.”[1147] About individual dancers and dance acts, specifically, Florence Mills and Johnny Hudgins stood out. The dancing otherwise was criticized as there were unnamed ”lesser ranks of dancers and singers” in the show.[1148]

1145 Concerning the claims see: ‘Many See “Blackbirds.”, *The New York Times*, September 25, 1926, p. 21 and ’London Marvels at Dancing In American Negro Revue’, *New York Herald Tribune*, September 25, 1926, p. 11. Both papers claimed the same, which refers to the same correspondent who had written the original article. That is because the texts of the articles are basically similar with exceptions of the headlines which differ.

1146 ‘ “ Blackbirds.” ‘, *The Observer*, September 12, 1926, p. 16.

1147 ‘Palace Theatre. ”The Black-Birds.” ‘, *The Manchester Guardian*, July 19, 1927, p. 14.

1148 ‘ “ Blackbirds.” ‘, *The Observer*, September 12, 1926, p. 16. Also *The Manchester Guardian* appreciated Florence Mills and her company. See: ‘Palace Theatre. ”The Black-Birds.” ‘, *The Manchester Guardian*, July 19, 1927, p. 14.

The real progress came in 1928, when *Blackbirds of 1928* opened at the Liberty Theatre and it ran successfully for 519 performances on Broadway.[1149] According to Marshall Stearns, the Harlem tap dance star Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson was discovered in this show with his Stair Dance. Stearns claims that the show helped Robinson to become the first African-American dancing star on Broadway, when he was in his 50s. He had already danced professionally from the 1890s and had a reputation in the Vaudeville circuits before his Broadway breakthrough. It seems that without Robinson and eccentric dance star, Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker, the show would not have gathered much interest in tap dancing, and overall, in jazz dance. Stearns argues that it was especially because of Robinson's appearance that critics started "to show some understanding of tap"[1150].

In spite of Robinson and Tucker's success, *Blackbirds of 1928*, which opened in May 1928, received inferior reviews as a "third-rate Broadway musical show"[1151] with the clear exceptions of *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. The former stated, "[it] seems to be the best combination of smartness in appearance and cleverness in material that has yet appeared". *The Wall Street Journal* also stated, concerning Robinson's Stair Dance, that it "has been so generally borrowed by other dancers." [1152] Thus, revealing the fact that the dance was already widely acknowledged among other dancers. In other words, the Stair Dance did not become a novelty dance at the time, as far as tap dancers are concerned.[1153] Otherwise, the critics concentrated in particular on the racial aspect of the play. J. Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* wrote, that ""Blackbirds of 1928" is not lavishly equipped with either material or performers. But it has the racial knack of finding the stuff of entertainment in simplicities." He also mentioned Bill Robinson's dancing positively in the review.[1154]

On the contrary, Wilfred J. Riley from *The Billboard* criticized the show for lacking the production values of African-American revues, as the show was "produced, written and composed by whites". He stated that "Blackbirds of 1928 falls flatter than a pancake" for lacking race aspect. However, where the dancing and singing were concerned, the show was "good entertainment". The reviewer stated that "Bill Robinson…stopped the show with his tap work. Without him Blackbirds would be pretty mild fare." Earl Tucker, Blue McAllister, and Lloyd Mitchell were

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[1149] According to *The Billboard, Blackbirds of 1928* ran for 519 performances on Broadway. See: 'B'way Openings and Closings', *The Billboard*, June 22, 1929, p. 7 and 'Two Record Shows Close', *The Billboard*, June 22, 1929, p. 5.

[1150] Stearns 1994, pp. 151-152.

[1151] According to *The Afro-American,* the critic Alexander Woolchott stated as mentioned in his review of the show in *the New York World*. See: ' "Blackbirds" Comedy Hit By Critics, "Bojangles" Praised', *The Afro-American*, May 19, 1928, p. 9.

[1152] 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, May 11, 1928, p. 4.

[1153] Stearns 1994, p. 151. Stearns states clearly that "Stair Dance was now acclaimed". He refers to Robinson's success in *Blackbirds of 1928*. There are references to "Stair Dance" in the reviews before *Blackbirds of 1928*. See for example: 'Film House Reviews – Stanley (Pittsburgh)', *Variety*, March 28, 1928, p. 37 and 'Vaudeville Review – Moore and Lewis (2)', *Variety*, February 1, 1928, p. 38. The latter article claims that "the stair dance was commonly credited to Bill Robinson".

[1154] J. Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, May 10, 1928, p. 31.

”riots” and offered ”more than enough fine stepping for the most ravishing appetite”.[1155] Percy Hammond from the *New York Herald Tribune* argued to the contrary, that the show is ”a duplicate of Times Square’s usages”, although ”several times they succeeded” to be themselves in their ”own [African-American] vernacular”. He stated concerning the dancing that Bill Robinson excelled in ”deft and rhythmic patterns”.[1156]

Variety magazine acknowledged Robinson’s dancing in the show by stating how “There probably isn’t a hard shoe tapper in the world to compare with him and certainly none his peer in the precision of dance rhythm.” The magazine also reported “The first nighters raved over him, his buckwheat smile and marvelous hoofing.” The chorus was credited to have been a hit with Adelaide Hall in another number of the show: ’Diga Diga Do’ which stood out as ”the best sight number” of the show. In addition to Robinson, Earl Tucker was stated to be ”a caution” as *Variety* commented, “Has he got snake hips-and how! Tucker is a marvel in his way, for no such weaving of the hips has yet been shown. That boy certainly smacked ’em hard.” In addition to Robinson and Tucker, *Variety* briefly credited Blue McAllister, Crawford Jackson, and Lloyd Mitchell for their dancing.[1157]

The formation of two other *Blackbirds* companies in fall 1928, support the fact that the show succeeded. At the very least, the No. 2 company still worked during spring 1929.[1158] *Blackbirds of 1928* also went to Europe during the summer of 1929, although Bill Robinson did not travel with the company. Instead of him, Eddie Rector performed Robinson’s Stair Dance. In Europe, Rector claimed that he succeeded in Paris.[1159]

A new *Blackbirds* was released in 1930. The critics appreciated the dancing of *Blackbirds of 1930*, but otherwise the show got mostly mediocre reviews. The show was not a big success, as it closed after three weeks on Broadway.[1160] However, the

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1155 Wilfred J. Riley, ’Blackbirds Of 1928’, *The Billboard*, May 19, 1928, p. 13.

1156 Percy Hammond, ’The Theaters’, *New York Herald Tribune*, May 10, 1928, p. 18.

1157 ’Plays on Broadway – Blackbirds Of 1928’, *Variety*, May 16, 1928, p. 48.

1158 ’No. 2 ”Blackbirds” ’, *Variety*, October 10, 1928, p. 45. It is unclear if the No. 3 *Blackbirds* company really worked in the theaters. It still was rehearsing in February 1929. See: ’NO. 3 ”Blackbirds” ’, *Variety*, December 5, 1928, p. 47 and ’Shows In Rehearsal’, *Variety*, February 6, 1929, p. 61. The No. 2 company still was working in May 1929. See for example: ’One Year on Broadway Record of ’Blackbirds’ ’, *New York Herald Tribune*, May 5, 1929, p. F5. The latter article, which discusses in general the history of ’Blackbirds of 1928’, does not mention the No. 3 company at all, which refers to that it was not working at the time.

1159 ’ ”Bojangles” Furious When Leslie Steals His Dance’, *The Afro-American*, July 13, 1929, p. 9. Robinson was announced to have stayed in the U.S. already earlier: ’ ”Blackbirds” To Hold Moulin Rouge Stage In Paris’, *The Afro-American*, June 1, 1929, p. 10. Rector denied the claims that he was not a success in Paris, and claimed that he had “the Paris notices” which proved for his success. See: ‘Two Letters’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 28, 1929, p. 14.

1160 ’Blackbirds Of 1930’, *The Billboard*, September 5, 1931, p. 63; J. Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, October 23, 1930, p. 40; Percy Hammond, ‘The Theaters’, *New York Herald Tribune*, October 23, 1930, p. 20; Kelcey Allen, ‘Blackbirds, 2d Edition, A Great Treat’, *Women’s Wear Daily*, October 23, 1930, p. 4; ’Blackbirds (1930)’, *Variety,*

Berry Brothers, Buck and Bubbles, and Jazzlips Richardson, were all mentioned positively in the reviews.[1161] In addition to them, Stirling Bowen from *The Wall Street Journal* listed Roy Atkins, Crawford Jackson, Neeka Shaw, Miss Marquise, and even Mantan Moreland[1162], who was comedian and dancer.[1163]

Bill Robinson, who participated in *Brown Buddies* in 1930, was commonly praised by the critics. J. Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times*, who generally stated positively for *Brown Buddies*, wrote that Bill Robinson, the ”master of the tap-dance serenade, is their hero.” Dancers ’Red and Struggy’, and the chorus were commonly highlighted in the reviews.[1164] Adelaine Hall was regularly mentioned in the reviews, but with a tone of slight disappointment[1165]. There were some exceptions, as J. Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* and Stirling Bowen from *The Wall Street Journal* commented positively on her performance in the show.[1166] The whole show was not always appreciated as Percy Hammond in *New York Herald Tribune* stated, ”Talented Afro-Americans Wasted in a Dull Show”. However, he acknowledged Bill Robinson and the dancing in the show, with one exception, as he claims that ”the colored ladies of the chorus were white and many of them were homely.”[1167] If this was so, there does not seem to exist any evidence for their ”whiteness” and at least two of them were likely African-Americans.[1168]

October 29, 1930, p. 71; Rives Matthews, ’Lew Leslie’s Blackbirds’, *The Billboard*, November 1, 1930, p. 33. Stearns 1994, p. 157.

[1161] Stearns 1994, p. 157. J. Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, October 23, 1930, p. 40; Kelcey Allen, ‘Blackbirds, 2d Edition, A Great Treat’, *Women’s Wear Daily*, October 23, 1930, p. 4; ’Blackbirds (1930)’, *Variety,* October 29, 1930, p. 71; Rives Matthews, ’Lew Leslie’s Blackbirds’, *The Billboard*, November 1, 1930, p. 33.

[1162] Stirling Bowen,’The Theatre – More Blackbirds’, *The Wall Street Journal*, October 25, 1930, p. 4.

[1163] Mantan Moreland was also known as a dancer at least from 1922. See: ’Minstrelsy’, *The Billboard*, February 25, 1922, p. 45.

[1164] J. Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, October 8, 1930, p. 29. See also: Rives Matthews, ’The New Plays On Broadway – Brown Buddies’, *The Billboard*, October 18, 1930, p. 31; ’Out-Of-Town – Brown Buddies’, *Variety*, September 17, 1930, p. 62; ’Plays on Broadway – Brown Buddies’, *Variety*, October 15, 1930, p. 62.

[1165] Rives Matthews, ’The New Plays On Broadway – Brown Buddies’, *The Billboard*, October 18, 1930, p. 31; ’Out-Of-Town – Brown Buddies’, *Variety*, September 17, 1930, p. 62; ’Plays on Broadway – Brown Buddies’, *Variety*, October 15, 1930, p. 62; Percy Hammond, ’The Theaters’, *New York Herald Tribune*, October 8, 1930, p. 18.

[1166] J. Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, October 8, 1930, p. 29 and Stirling Bowen, ’The Theatre’, *The Wall Street Journal*, October 9, 1930, p. 4.

[1167] Percy Hammond, ’The Theaters’, *New York Herald Tribune*, October 8, 1930, p. 18.

[1168] The author of the study has not found any other similar mentions concerning the chorus. In fact, there is a proof for contrary as *The Pittsburgh Courier* published pictures concerning the chorus of the show, where there are pictured Lela Brogdon and Hazel Coles, who were claimed to have been part of the chorus. The pictures are headlined: ”Brown Beauties Who Are Helping To Make ”Brown Buddies” Go Over The Top”. They both look like African-Americans in the pictures. As it is doubtful, if there were whites, it is possible that there were light-skinned African-Americans in the chorus. See: ”Brown Beauties Who Are Helping To Make ”Brown Buddies” Go Over The Top”, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 4, 1930, p. A1.

Robinson especially, was reviewed in a positive light. Marshall Stearns states, ”Brown Buddies was a personal triumph for Bill Robinson”.[1169] The show also seemed to have created some extra interest in Bill Robinson in the mainstream press, as Robinson was quoted in the *New York Herald Tribune* article on how his non-dancing profession in Chicago in the beginning of the twentieth century helped him to create the “truck dance” for *Brown Buddies*.[1170]

It seemed that Bill Robinson was able to carry the whole musical in 1933. Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* praised Bill Robinson in *Blackbirds of 1933,* as ”the one master of style”, who ”devotes himself to tap dancing, which is a form of physical exercise he has translated into magic.” Atkinson’s review was written mostly praising Robinson’s performance. Otherwise, he stated that the show was “third-rate Broadway stuff” and other performers were ”fairly dull and undistinguished”, and ”the Negroes of Harlem cannot make entertainment out of rag-bag material”.[1171] Similarly, Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Tribune* thought that the show was, ”on the whole, lively mediocrity”. However, Watts Jr. stated for Bill Robinson in a way which placed Robinson above the level of the masters from modern dance and ballet world:

> [T]his veteran tap dancer, with or without his famous staircase routine, is one of the great artists of the modern stage and is worth in his unostentatious way several dozen of the Mary Wigmans, Charles Weldmans, Martha Grahams and Mordkins, who are more pompous in their determination to be Artists…there is humor and magnificent rhythm and infinite grace in his unpretentious stepping…he provides more plastic brilliance than all the earnest ballets from Jooss to Diaghilov…[1172]

Variety and *The Billboard* were milder with their reviews. *Variety* explained that the play, which was the best effort from Lew Leslie, had enough good material for the show, which needed only modifications to be better. Robinson was stated to be ”still the best colored tapper on the stage”. At this time he, however, was criticized for being one of the reasons for too long a show and he should have rearranged his routine to shorten the show. Otherwise, the magazine credited Martha Thomas, ”a colored counterpart of Ann Pennington”, and in addition also named Slappy Wallace, Eddie Thompson, and Johnny Worthy. Louise Madison was mentioned as ”a clever girl tapper”.[1173]

Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* blamed the show for a lack of ”racial heritage”, pointing to the performers of the show who were African-Americans. According to

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[1169] Stearns 1994, p. 155.

[1170] Charles Washburn, ’Bill Robinson Won Stockyards Boost In ’ Balancing Act’ ’, *New York Herald Tribune*, November 16, 1930, p. H4.

[1171] Stearns 1994, p. 158. Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, December 4, 1933, p. 22.

[1172] Richard Watts Jr., ’ ’Blackbirds’ ‘, *New York Herald Tribune*, December 4, 1933, p. 12.

[1173] ’Plays on Broadway – Blackbirds’, *Variety*, December 5, 1933, p. 54.

the review, they were encased to ”the hard and stereotyped shell of the routine white musical” and that was why they were ”at a loss”. However, he credited Brady Jackson for ”the most amazing contortion routine that this reviewer has seen”. Bill Robinson was praised to be ”as good as ever”. Burr also thought that more Robinson and less *Blackbirds* might have made the show better.[1174] The show lasted for a month on Broadway.[1175]

Blackbirds continued outside Broadway. Regarding a New York performance, *Variety* reported in January 1934, that the show contained ”some specialty dancing”, which was fair, but the show still needed to be modified.[1176] Charles Collins from *The Chicago Daily Tribune* considered the show as ”high standard” in March 1934, and wrote that ”the dancers, as usual in Afro-American theatricals, are surprising.” Carol Chilton and Maceo Thomas were named as ”a team of brilliant young dancers”. Also, the finale of the show was mentioned as ”a spectacular treatment”, which had ”a furious outbreak of jungle dancing”.[1177]

Blackbirds of 1934 went to Europe, where it opened at the Coliseum in London in the end of August.[1178] It was reported to have had strong business in London in September 1934.[1179] Concerning the Coliseum performance in London, Harold Hobson from *the Christian Science Monitor* described the show as ”essentially savage, wild and undisciplined”, which, however, ”suited many people’s taste in entertainment”. He found “the dancing of Mr. Bates” (Peg Leg Bates) as ”clever” and which was exceeded by its ”courage”. Also, Walter Batie gave ”a clever parody of modern tap dancing” and Valaida Snow, who lacked the ”personality of star”, danced, sang, acted, and conducted the orchestra with ”workmanlike competence”. In addition to them, Jig Saw (Brady Jackson) was mentioned as ”a contortionist of the first order” and Nyas Berry was considered worth the claim as ”World’s Greatest Negro Dancer”.[1180]

Variety stated that the show had ”a very healthy run” in the beginning of February 1935.[1181] *Blackbirds of 1934* stayed in Europe until at least spring 1936, when Lew Leslie began to organize a new *Blackbirds* for London.[1182] According to *Atlanta Daily World* in March, 1936, critics especially acclaimed Peg Leg Bates ”as the most extraordinary artist to visit London in years”.[1183]

1174 Eugene Burr, ’Blackbirds’, *The Billboard*, December 16, 1933, p. 17.

1175 ’ Tabbing ’Blackbirds’ ’, *Variety*, January 16, 1934, p. 42.

1176 ’Blackbirds Of 1934’, *Variety*, January 23, 1934, p. 42.

1177 Charles Collins, ’Leslie Offers Negro Show of High Standard’, *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 31, 1934, p. 17.

1178 ’ ’Blackbirds’ 4 Weeks At London Coliseum’, *Variety*, August 14, 1934, p. 46.

1179 ’ ’Blackbirds’ Big in London; Venuti Clicks’, *Variety*, September 4, 1934, p. 13.

1180 Harold Hobson, ’Blackbirds – English View’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 15, 1934, p. 5. For Jigsaw Jackson see: Stearns 1994, p. 231.

1181 ’ ’Blackbirds’ To Paris After 26 London Wks.’, *Variety*, February 20, 1935, p. 57.

1182 ’Leslie Returning to Org. New London ’Blackbirds’ ’, *Variety*, March 18, 1936, p. 14.

1183 Rudolph Dunbar For ANP, ’Lew Leslie Tells His Stars Of ’Blackbirds’ Not To Go White While In London’, *Atlanta Daily World*, March 2, 1936, p. 2.

Although Peg Leg Bates in *Blackbirds* was emerging as a dance star by 1936, and there were several other names, in addition to his, who were connected to the play during the years, it seemed to be Bill Robinson who was acknowledged as a star dancer, at least from 1928. He clearly stood out in the reviews. The reviewers seemed to stress the racial values of the play in their reviews, which was criticized occasionally for its lack of African-American dance standards and ”whitening”. The continued success of the *Blackbirds* plays probably cumulated in the positive publicity of the African-American jazz dance. However, the saga was not over. It continued successfully when the Nicholas Brothers participated in the English version of the play, in the summer 1936, which is also explained in the next chapter.

5.3.6 The Nicholas Brothers from 1936 Onwards

The Harlem-connected tap dancing continued on Broadway in January 1936, when *The Ziegfeld Follies* of the 1936 edition was presented in Winter Garden theatre. Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* criticized the famous Josephine Baker, who danced and sang in the play, for offering only her ”presence instead of her talent.” Her singing voice was ”only a squeak in the dark and her dancing is only the pain of an artist.”[1184] Also, *Variety* reported concerning a Boston performance of the show that ”her singing [was] completely lost”.[1185] Atkinson praised the Nicholas Brothers for their ”excellent Harlem hoofing out of the Bill Robinson curriculum” in the way that restored ”your faith in dusky revelry.”[1186] Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* praised both the Nicholas Brothers, who ”scored a full and complete show-stop” and Josephine Baker, whose ”soft brown loveliness” graced three numbers in the show.[1187] *Variety* magazine credited the Nicholas Brothers, the Preisser sisters: Cherry and June Preisser, and Duke McHale as ”sock spots” of the show, all for their ”acrobatic dancing routine”, and the latter three dancers also for ”exceptional tap dancing” in the show.[1188].

However, it was Josephine Baker whose name was among the stars in the advertisements of the mainstream newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Baker seemed to have been regularly mentioned after white stars in those advertisements in February and in March 1936, so that in the advertisements of *The Wall Street Journal* in February and in March, they only mentioned Fannie

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1184 Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, January 31, 1936, p. 17.

1185 ’Plays Out of Town – 1936 Ziegfeld Follies’, *Variety*, January 8, 1936, p. 60.

1186 Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, January 31, 1936, p. 17.

1187 Eugene Burr, ’The New Plays On Broadway – Ziegfeld Follies (1936 Edition), *Variety*, February 8, 1936, p. 19.

1188 ’Plays Out of Town – 1936 Ziegfeld Follies’, *Variety*, January 8, 1936, p. 60 and ’Plays on Broadway – Ziegfeld Follies’, *Variety*, February 5, 1936, p. 56. The two “colored lads” were mentioned in the list of the dancers who were credited for their “exceptional tap dancing”. They were likely the Nicholas Brothers, but they were not named in the review. That is why they are not mentioned in the main text of the dissertation as ones who did exceptional tap dancing.

Brice and Josephine Baker (in this order) as the stars of the play.[1189] *The Ziegfeld Follies* of the 1936 edition seemed to have succeeded, because it was mentioned as the second-best grossing Broadway play of the fourteen shows on Lincoln's Birthday on February 12, 1936.[1190] The play was closed in May 1936 after 115 performances. The play was ranked as third among the eight of the Broadway plays of the season, where revues are concerned.[1191]

As far as the Nicholas Brothers are concerned, they also performed in *Blackbirds of 1936* in England. The show had eighty African-American actors who were mostly singers and dancers. *Blackbirds of 1936* started in Manchester on June 20, 1936 and lasted there for two weeks.[1192] After that, it continued to London, where it opened on July 9.[1193] *Blackbirds of 1936* probably stayed in London for the rest of year and possibly until the beginning of the next year.[1194]

Overall, the show was reviewed positively in the English newspapers. According to an advertisement in *The Manchester Guardian*, various Manchester newspapers reviewed the show positively with comments like "A Whirlwind of Colour and Movement" in *The Manchester Guardian* and "Fascinating mixture of primitive African jungle music and Harlem's Black Sophistication" in the *Daily Express*, and "A Monument to the best in Negro Art" in the *Daily Herald*.[1195] *The Manchester Guardian* also stated, "The quickest and neatest feet of all are those of the Nicholas Brothers, and the little one of these two, Harold, is the darling of the show…He is "the world's youngest and greatest coloured artist"; we do not know how young, but he might have been perfecting that, precise, subtle tap-dancing for a hundred years."

[1189] See for example: 'Stage Plays.', *The New York Times*, February 3, 1936, p. 21; 'Stage Plays.', *The New York Times*, February 6, 1936, p. 22; 'Stage Plays.', *The New York Times*, March 21, 1936, p. 13;'Ziegfeld Follies', *The New York Times*, March 18, 1936, p. 26; 'Ziegfeld Follies', *The New York Times*, March 20, 1936, p. 28. 'Amusements', *The Wall Street Journal*, February 8, 1936, p. 9; 'Amusements', *The Wall Street Journal*, February 15, 1936, p. 12; 'Amusements', *The Wall Street Journal*, February 22, 1936, p. 7; 'Amusements', *The Wall Street Journal*, March 7, 1936, p. 11; 'Amusements', *The Wall Street Journal*, March 14, 1936, p. 9.

[1190] 'News Of The Stage', *The New York Times*, February 13, 1936, p. 24.

[1191] 'News Of The Stage', *The New York Times*, May 11, 1936, p. 16 and The Season Of 1935-36 Goes Into The Books', *The New York Times*, May 31, 1936, p. 2. See also: Constance Valis Hill, *Brotherhood Rhythm – The Jazz Tap Dancing of the Nicholas Brothers* (New York, New York: Cooper Square Press, 2002), p. 110.

[1192] 'Drama, And Films', *The Manchester Guardian*, June 20, 1936, p. 15; Originally *Blackbirds of 1936* was to open on June 16. It was postponed to June 18. See: 'Manchester Opera House – "Blackbirds" Postponed', *The Manchester Guardian*, June 17, 1936, p. 14. And after that, it was postponed to June 20. See: ' "Blackbirds of 1936" ', *The Manchester Guardian*, June 18, 1936, p. 13.

[1193] 'Leslie Revue In London', *The New York Times*, July 10, 1936, p. 15.

[1194] Hill 2002, pp. 112-121. Although Hill has examined the London period of Blackbirds of 1936, she has totally forgotten the Manchester period of the show. This study has tried to examine both periods.

[1195] 'For One More Week Only at the Opera House Manchester', *The Manchester Guardian*, June 27, 1936, p. 14.

Also the Four Bobs was praised for their ”wonderfully energetic tap-dancing in perfect unison”.[1196]

According to Constance Valis Hill[1197], who has examined the show for the British newspapers, the London performances of *Blackbirds of 1936* received mixed reviews in the papers, where dancing is concerned. The positive comments about the dancing came from *London Times*, *Saturday Review,* and *The Tatler*. *The Era* thought that the opening was ”the gayest, liveliest, cleverest show in town”. *Sketch* stated, ”an amazing show of breathless virtuosity, bewildering range, and bountiful measure”. *Sketch* also seemed to understand the rehearsing needed for the show as it stated, ”To this natural endowment must be added the disciplined control and technique acquired by training. The speed, precision, and accuracy of their dancing are something to marvel at.”

New Statesman and Nation stated less enthusiastically, ”the revue lacked cohesion and arrangement”. *Saturday Review* and *The Dancing Times* criticized the show for the noisiness. *The London Times* even stated, ”when the chorus, the principals, and the brass are in high competition, one remembers with longing, gunnery exercises of which were mitigated by cotton-wool. Here there is no cotton-wool.”

Hill claims that the Nicholas Brothers and the dancing of the Blackbirds Beauty Chorus got the most favorable critical notes from the newspapers. Concerning the Nicholas Brothers, the *Saturday Review* thought that they were ”outstanding”, and *Sketch* pointed out their ”sense of rhythm”, so that ”it seems impossible for these dancers to go wrong”. *The London Times* complimented both of the brothers, although Harold was praised more by other papers like *New Statesman and Nation*, *the Sunday Times,* and *The Tatler*.

The Observer criticized Harold Nicholas about his ”terrible juvenile archness of Master”, which was ”done much better-by Vesta Tilley and others forty years ago.” The comment was connected to the lack of ”attention given to the springs of native art, African folk-songs and plantation ballads”, which refers more to his singing than his dancing.[1198]

The Nicholas Brothers were mentioned briefly in the reviews of *Baby In Arms* in April 1937. The Broadway show was basically George Balanchine’s ballet with singing and some tap dancing added to it. *New York Herald Tribune, Variety,* and *The New York Times* acknowledged them favorably for their dancing.[1199] Paul Dennis from *The Billboard* lauded them both for their “stunning dancing and for

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[1196] ’ ’Blackbirds of 1936’ – Negro Revue at Opera House’, *the Manchester Guardian*, June 22, 1936, p. 11.

[1197] The next three paragraphs are based on Hill 2002, pp. 114-118.

[1198] ’ The Week’s Theatres. ”Blackbirds Of 1936.” ’, *The Observer*, July 12, 1936, p. 17.

[1199] Richard Watts Jr., ’The Theaters’, *New York Herald Tribune*, April 15, 1937, p. 16; ’Plays on Broadway – Babes In Arms’, *Variety*, April 21, 1937, p. 58; Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, April 15, 1937, p. 18.

"odd singing" which "make them easy show-stoppers"[1200]. In addition to the Nicholas Brothers, *Variety* also credited African-American LeRoy James for having "plenty on the ball".[1201] Similarly, *The Billboard* reported that he and his partner Kenneth Wilkins "win over the audience with their tappings and vocaling of *All Dark People*."[1202] The Nicholas Brothers were compared to their white colleagues when Mark Barron from *The Washington Post* briefly mentioned "the fast-tapping, copper-skinned Nicholas Brothers" as the second best, after a white Mitzi Green, in the list of the recommendations as far as the performers of *Baby In Arms* are concerned.[1203] Accordingly, Stirling Bowen from *The Wall Street Journal* stated:

> And it is good to see a little real old time Harlem dancing again. Thus brand of entertainment was sadly overdone in Broadway shows for a few seasons, often being distorted by ill-advised directors until it was only a noisy imitation of itself. But Mr. Balanchine has not made this error here[.] And the youthful Nicholas brothers, Harold and Fayard…are the McCoy. At the close of their first number…smart audience gave them a fine ovation. There had not been such a wave of tumult and shouting since a youthful and unknown Hal LeRoy caused the capitulation of the crowd at his first Broadway premiere several years ago.[1204]

Hal LeRoy was a white tap dancer[1205], so the article clearly set "Harlem dancing", which the Nicholas Brothers represented, to an equal position with "white dancing", at least in this case. Bowen, in his article, also interestingly referred to the fact that the African-American shows had copied each other. The critics seemed to demand more fresh ideas.

5.3.7 Whitey's Lindy Hoppers Step In

Fresh ideas seemed to come in the form of the Broadway show called *Hellzapoppin'*. According to Norma Miller, one of the dancers in the show, it first did three weeks in Boston, and then returned to New York in 1939. Miller claims that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' part was cut out from the show after the first three weeks in Boston, because of bad reviews about the show. Miller may remember wrong the time period and the cutoff date, because it seems that "Whitey's Dancers",

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[1200] Paul Dennis, 'New Plays on Broadway – Babes In Arms', *The Billboard*, May 1, 1937, p. 23.

[1201] 'Plays Out of Town – Babes In Arms', *Variety*, March 31, 1937, p. 64.

[1202] ' "Babes in Arms" ', *The Billboard*, April 17, 1937, p. 77.

[1203] Mark Barron, 'A New Musical Intrigues Our Broadway Scout', *The Washington Post*, April 18, 1937, p. TR1.

[1204] Stirling Bowen, 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, April 16, 1937, p. 13.

[1205] 'Hal Le Roy, Dancer In Clubs, Musicals And Several Movies', *The New York Times*, May 4, 1985, p. 33.

"Whitey's Hoppers" and "Whitey's Steppers" were mentioned as part of the show in the mainstream press articles, concerning both the Boston and the New York performances between September and October 1938. Like Miller claims, and also according to the articles, the show went from Boston to New York.[1206] However, the dancers were not cut out from the show after the Boston performances, as they were mentioned to be part of the New York performances. It also is possible that the Lindy Hoppers were engaged again in the theater version of the show in 1939, but there is no other reference to that. Anyway, there does not seem to exist any comments about the performances of the Lindy Hoppers in the mainstream press.[1207]

Eight male members of the Herbert White's Lindy Hop group were performing on a touring product called *Knickerbocker's Holiday*, which went to Hartford, Boston, and Washington D.C. and then ended on Broadway, in October 1938. Willie Jones, who was one of the Lindy Hoppers, and who performed "a frenzied Lindy routine with numerous air steps", claims that "they broke up the show" and their number was cut down shorter, because they "were getting too much attention"[1208]. If so, the mainstream newspapers mostly kept quiet about that.[1209] As *Variety* magazine called them "an incongruous group of Indians"[1210], it seems that only *The Hartford Courant* admired the scene as "a wonderful one", where "Indians from Haarlem truck on down in war dance".[1211]

Harlem tap dancing was brought back to Broadway in *Blackbirds of 1939* in February 1939. The show was described, with its 100 persons, as a "Harlem Rhapsody".[1212] However, it did not succeed and was closed after eight

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[1206] Norma Miller remembers that *Hellzapoppin'* show followed *Swingin' The Dream* in 1939. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 146-147. She seems to be wrong as the groups prefixed with "Whitey's" were mentioned to be part of the theater show already in 1938. Concerning the New York performances see: 'New Plays on Broadway – 46th Street-Beginning Thursday Evening Sept. 22, 1938 -Hellzapoppin', *The Billboard*, October 1, 1938, p. 15. Also *The Afro-American* mentions "Whyte's Lindy Hoppers" as part of the production in the end of October 1938. See: 'Doing the Big Apple' With Buster Vodery, *The Afro-American*, October 29, 1938, p. 11. Concerning the Boston version of the show see: 'Hellzapoppin – Boston, Sept. 13', *Variety*, September 14, 1938, p. 53; 'Cast of "Hellzapoppin' " Will Arrive Here Today', *The Boston Daily Globe*, September 8, 1938, p. 23; ' "Hellzapoppin' " Opens Sept. 10 At Shubert', *The Boston Daily Globe*, August 27, 1938, p. 9.

[1207] The author of the study has not found any comments from the mainstream press, where the Lindy Hoppers were mentioned concerning their performance in the theatre show.

[1208] Robert Crease, 'Willie Jones', Footnotes: Spring 1990. Vol 5, No 1, published by The New York Swing Dance Society.

[1209] The author of the study has not found any other references to the claim about cutting shorter the Lindy number.

[1210] 'Plays on Broadway – Knickerbocker Holiday', *Variety*, October 26, 1938, p. 48.

[1211] 'Anderson's Play Opens At Bushnell', *The Hartford Co*urant, September 25, 1938, p. C8.

[1212] Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, February 13, 1939, p. 12. The show had 100 performers. See: 'Revue Closes Suddenly', *The New York Times*, February 19, 1939, p. 38.

performances.[1213] Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* criticized the show for its music, which was mostly ”cacophony” and for the sketches, which he said were ”routine and heavy-handed”. Although, according to his review, the hoofers were ”tap-dancing fools” who performed ”at perilous speed”, and one of them was able to ”dance with rapture while seated in a chair”, even mentioning tap dancer Ralph Brown, who was able to ”dance a navy under the waves”, ”these showshop merchantables” were ”staged without taste and mixed with a lot of shoddy stuff”.[1214]

On the contrary, *The Wall Street Journal* stated, ”After all, the Blackbirds of 1939 present one dance act after another. The performers are good, too. They can dance from almost any position and they, giving evidence of quite a bit of personal pleasure in the process.” However, the paper did not personalize any of those dancers.[1215]

Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune*, however, enjoyed the revue and stated that the show was ”at its best” when it danced. In spite of that, he found much of it ”routine and undistinguished”. He acknowledged ”a beautiful dancing girl” Joyce Beasley and Lena Horne as ones who ”should go far” in their career.[1216] *Variety* doubted the longevity of the show as there was ”too little that is new or diverting”. However, the magazine found Whitey’s Lindy Hoppers as the most animated act of the hoofers in the show. In addition to them, there were mentioned ”one of the better tapsters” Ralph Brown, and Norman and Blake.[1217]

The Billboard commented generally on the show, ”If you like hot Harlem hoofing you’ll have a good time for a while; otherwise you’ll just have a headache from the constant noise”[1218]. The magazine found the tap team of Norman and Blake, and Lena Horne from the credit side of the show. Especially, the latter danced excellently. In addition to them, there was ”a Negro swing ballet”, which was performed in ”exciting style”. However, the highlight of the show seemed to be Whitey’s Lindy Hoppers as they were commented on as follows:

> Almost everyone in the cast manages to dance, and when a group of fantastically active Lindy Hoppers comes out for the first-act finale and the orchestra blares and everyone seems to go crazy it’s pretty hard to avoid having a good time. At least, if you’re not having a good time, you’re too dazed to know it.

[1213] ’Revue Closes Suddenly’, *The New York Times*, February 19, 1939, p. 38 and ’Departure Into History’, *The New York Times*, June 4, 1939, p. 2.

[1214] Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, February 13, 1939, p. 12.

[1215] ’The Theatre’*, The Wall Street Journal*, February 14, 1939, p. 11.

[1216] Richard Watts Jr., ’The Theaters’, *New York Herald Tribune*, February 13, 1939, p. 10.

[1217] ’Plays on Broadway – Blackbirds Of 1939’, *Variety*, February 15, 1939, p. 50.

[1218] This sentence and the next paragraphs until the phrase “ “dispiritingly lightweight” “ are based on ’New Plays on Broadway – Blackbirds Of 1939’, *The Billboard*, February 25, 1939, p. 17.

Indeed, the magazine added later in the review that "even dancing – even Harlem dancing – even superlative Harlem dancing – can't carry an entire evening" referring to the opinion that the show was otherwise "dispiritingly lightweight".

The comment seemed to be the longest description about the Lindy Hoppers on Broadway at the time, as far as the mainstream press is concerned. However, it did not personalize any of them. They were acknowledged positively as a group without highlighting any individuals from the group.[1219]

Swingin' The Dream was a flop with only thirteen performances between the end of November and the beginning of December in 1939.[1220] Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times*, however, appreciated African-American tap dancing in the play as he stated in the review:

> For dancers he has some extraordinary folks-Bill Bailey, who can dance his way in and out of almost any score, the indestructible Rhythmettes, who will not live much longer if they keep prancing at that speed, and a large assembly of dark-skinned steppers who take to rhythm as though it were created for them and who aroused the audience last evening whenever they got going.[1221]

Also, *The Wall Street Journal* stated, "Aside from the playing of Mr. Goodman's sextet, Miss Sullivan's singing, Louis Armstrong's trumpeting and Bill Bailey's dancing, the jitterbugs and the Dandridge sisters steal the show in their torrid rendition of "Swingin' a Dream""[1222] Thus, the paper noticed also the Lindy Hoppers in the play, although they were acknowledged only as 'Jitterbugs' in the review.

Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* called the show a "vast jitterbug carnival", where "jitterbugs and Lindy-hoppers dart around". The show turned out to be "just a series of good night-club turns, tossed rather carelessly together and brought to no good end."[1223] *Variety* stated concerning the dancing in general that "dances…are 100% performed by the Negro talent, all of it peppery and arresting, notably as regards the Agnes de Mille dance staging."[1224] The comment exaggerates de Mille's role in the dance staging as, at least, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' dances were staged by Herbert White. Herbert White's main role in the arranging of the Jitterbug numbers was confirmed, for example, by the other articles

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[1219] Indeed, the dancers from Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, who participated in the play, were clearly mentioned in the cast list of *The Billboard*. None of them was named in the main text of the review. See: 'New Plays on Broadway – Blackbirds Of 1939', *The Billboard*, February 25, 1939, p. 17.

[1220] ' 'Swingin' Dream' Closes', *The New York Times*, December 10, 1939, p. 66.

[1221] Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play', *The New York Times*, November 30, 1939, p. 24.

[1222] 'Shakespeare Swings', *The Wall Street Journal*, December 1, 1939, p. 11.

[1223] Richard Watts Jr., 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, November 30, 1939, p. 16.

[1224] 'Plays on Broadway – Swingin' The Dream', *Variety*, December 6, 1939, p. 50.

of *New York Herald Tribune* and *The New York Times*.[1225] Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* credited the show as ”an orgy of wasted talent” and stated that ”the dances, which are bound to play an important part, are unimaginative and seldom effective.” It seems that according to Burr, only Bill Bailey did ”some nice tapping”.[1226] The Lindy Hoppers stayed nameless in the reviews as usual[1227].

5.3.8 Bill Robinson's Comeback to Broadway in 1939

Bill Robinson made a comeback to Broadway in 1939, where he had not performed since the beginning of the 1930s. He concentrated on his Hollywood movie career in the middle of the 1930s, which is discussed in the 'The Harlem Jazz Dance in Movies and the Mainstream Press Between 1929 and 1943' chapter.

Richard Watts Jr. from *The Washington Post* reported on April 2, 1939, on three different versions of ”The Mikado”, W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan's classic operetta. The latest one of these versions was *the Hot Mikado*, where Bill Robinson had the main role. *The Hot Mikado* opened on Broadway at the end of March 1939. Watts Jr. reported on “the incomparable tap dancing of the mighty Bill Robinson”, “the immortal Bojangles”, who was:

> […] one of the great men of the theater-a magnificent dancer, a delightfully humorous performer and the possessor of the warmest, sunniest, most modest stage personality that ever brightened a playhouse. There is nothing ostentatious about Bill Robinson, nothing pushing, fresh or forward. But somehow the inner sweetness that seems to well up out of him proceeds to fill the theater as soon as he reaches the stage, and he has conquered his audience before he takes a step. Then, when he goes into his dance, the most eloquent, rhythmical, exciting tap dance known to man or woman, he becomes transfigured, and there is no more exciting experience in all of modern entertainment.[1228]

[1225] Herbert White was mentioned in other newspapers. For example, *New York Herald Tribune* reported in an article, that ”...Agnes de Mille...staged the dances, and Herbert White, who arranged the jitterbug numbers.” See: 'News of the Theater', *New York Herald Tribune*, November 29, 1939, p. 16. *The New York Times* reported similarly in its article. See: 'News Of The Stage', *The New York Times*, November 29, 1939, p. 19.

[1226] Eugene Burr, 'New Plays on Broadway – Swingin' The Dream', *The Billboard*, December 9, 1939, pp. 15-16.

[1227] For example, Eugene Burr had listed the ”Jitterbugs” with their names on the cast list of the review like he had listed ”Dancers”, ”Ensemble”, ”Specialties” etc., but there was no word about the ”Jitterbugs” in the main text of the review. See: Eugene Burr, 'New Plays on Broadway – Swingin' The Dream', *The Billboard*, December 9, 1939, pp. 15-16.

[1228] 'Richard Watts, Jr. – Rhapsodizes Further on Syncopated 'Mikado' ', *The Washington Post*, April 2, 1939, p. T3. According to Jim Haskins and N. R. Mitgang 'The Hot Mikado' opened on Broadway on March 23, 1939. See: Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 250.

If Watts Jr.'s description reminded the reader of a "superhuman" kind of an entertainer, Robinson was praised with slightly milder tones in another *Washington Post* article, in the same *Washington Post* issue, where Leonard Lyons Jr. explained Robinson's professional whereabouts:

> Rarely in this history of New York has a Broadway star been acclaimed in two separate productions on successive nights. Those of us who saw Bill Robinson give luster to "The Hot Mikado" Thursday night and then grace the Cotton Club's floor show last night were witnesses to a true rarity.[1229]

Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* praised Robinson, who took "a large audience into his personal confidence" in *the Hot Mikado*, in an even earlier March 1939 review. According to Atkinson:

> For the Master of Tap and the Good-Will Ambassador from Harlem to the Western World puts an undercurrent of rhythm through this second Negro travesty on a Victorian classic and pulls it crisply together…Bojangles takes full charge of an evening of hi-jinks like a king of stage performers.[1230]

The Wall Street Journal criticized slightly "the incomparable Bill Robinson" about acting "according to the book" in the beginning, but then things got hotter and Robinson made "an ingratiating Mikado". The paper summarized it at the end of the review as follows:

> But without disparaging the work of others in the cast, the night was a triumphal return for Bill Robinson, away from the theatre since 1930.[1231]

It really seems that Bill Robinson made a triumphal return to the Broadway and theatre world, and he likely was the most overwhelming African-American dancer, at least among the critics at the time. *The New York Times* reported that Robinson was to celebrate his 61st birthday on May 25. He was planning to tap dance his way from the Broadhurst Theatre to Fiftieth Street, accompanied by forty policemen, who were not dancing. Secondly, he was planning to entertain for the blind at The Lighthouse, and additionally, *the Hot Mikado* people were planning to give him a party.[1232] The events actualized as the *New York Herald Tribune* reported on those events briefly in its articles.[1233] At the latest, in October 1939, Bill Robinson danced

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[1229] Leonard Lyons, 'Broadway Chaff', *The Washington Post*, April 2, 1939, p. T3.

[1230] Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play – Bill Robinson Tapping Out the Title Role in 'The Hot Mikado' at the Broadhurst Theatre', *The New York Times*, March 24, 1939, p. 26.

[1231] 'The Theatre – Bill Robinson Stars', *The Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 1939, p. 9.

[1232] 'Miss Leontovich Is Returning Here', *The New York Times*, May 12, 1939, p. 27.

[1233] See: ' 'Bojangles,' 61, Dances, 20 Blocks to Celebrate', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 26, 1939, p. 19; 'News of the Theater', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 24, 1939, p. 18;

in the street as a promotional stunt for the Paramount News short film, *It's Swing Ho-Come to the Fair!*[1234] As the Broadway run of *the Hot Mikado* ended at the beginning of June 1939,[1235] the play went on to the World's Fair in Flushing, New York in the end of June 1939. This phase is discussed in the 'World's Fair 1939 - 1940 in Queens' chapter.

Bill Robinson came back in *All in Fun* in 1940. Regarding outside New York performances, both Robinson and the play were well-regarded by *The Hartford Courant* and *The Boston Daily Globe*.[1236] Edwin F. Melvin from *The Christian Science Monitor* stated that the play had its "best moments in the dancing, with Bill Robinson to lead the way with his tapping"[1237]. Mike Kaplan from *The Billboard* gave credit to the dancing in the show only as far as Bill Robinson's routines and Imogene Coca's satirical ballet were concerned. Otherwise, he rated the show as inferior.[1238] *Variety* considered both the show and Robinson' part in it as disappointing, where the New Haven performance was concerned. Indeed, dancing in the show was credited for being in "the best shape of any department" and Robinson still was "tops", when he led the ensemble or danced on his own.[1239]

Later, concerning the Broadway version, *Variety* commented on the dancing, in that the play was supported by "an agile and versatile dancing chorus that moves as if inspired by the inimitable Robinson". The review also reported that Robinson was the "only colored player in a cast". Otherwise, *Variety* stated that the play was too much "of an old-school genre in the main" to stay on Broadway.[1240]

Eugene Burr from *The Billboard* criticized the play as "sprawling, messy, and poorly coordinated a musical as has ever stumbled across a Broadway stage". In spite of that, he reported that Bill Robinson as one of those who "scored personal hits" in the play.[1241] Similarly, Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* stated how "the great Mr. Robinson is a comfort to all of us every time he appears." Otherwise, he had "very little" good to say about *All in Fun*.[1242]

'Bill Robinson Entertains Blind at Theater Party', *New York Herald Tribune*, April 20, 1939, p. 14.

[1234] Stearns 1994, p. 414.

[1235] 'The 'Hot Mikado' Closes Tonight', *The New York* Times, June 3, 1939, p. 17.

[1236] T. H. Parker, ' 'All In Fun' Is Amusing, Lively Revue', *The Hartford Courant*, November 22, 1940, p. 5. 'Amusements – The Stage', *The Boston Daily Globe*, November 26, 1940, p. 8.

[1237] Edwin F. Melvin, ' 'All in Fun' Arrives With Robinson and Baker', *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 26, 1940, p. 13.

[1238] Mike Kaplan, 'Out-Of-Town Openings – "All in Fun" ', *The Billboard*, December 14, 1940, p. 15.

[1239] 'Plays Out of Town – All in Fun', *Variety*, November 27, 1940, p. 50.

[1240] 'Plays on Broadway – All In Fun', *Variety*, January 1, 1941, p. 44.

[1241] Eugene Burr, 'New Plays on Broadway', *The Billboard*, January 11, 1941, p. 15.

[1242] Richard Watts Jr., 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, December 28, 1940, p. 8.

Brooks Atkinson from *The New York Times* stated bluntly, ”like most revues assembled from many hands, ”All in Fun” is scattered and mediocre.” However, Bill Robinson was praised:

> Every one knows Bojangles Bill and is devoted to him…this department never ceases admiring the genius of this magnetic master of the taps who treats his feet kindly and has preserved all these years the springy step, the impeccable taste of the instinctive artist and the gusto of an honest showman. The rhythm has become so much a part of him that even when he is standing still you feel that he is dancing.[1243]

In spite of Bill Robinson, the show did not succeed. *The New York Times* reported the closing of the show a couple of days later. Because the investment of the show was $125,000 and the total receipts $6,900, the show was heavily unprofitable.[1244]

Robinson also was part of the *Born Happy* revue, which traveled mostly on the West Coast, but also elsewhere in the United States in 1943. According to Sam Abbott from *The Billboard*, the show, when performed in a Los Angeles theater in August, was not the best for Robinson as:

> In presenting *Born Happy*, Robinson is the main attraction, but he’s going to have to keep plugging to keep the spotlight on himself against good competition from the other acts on the bill.[1245]

Another review from *Variety,* concerning the San Francisco performance in April, stressed how Bill Robinson “won over the opening-night audience with his tap routines” and how ”Whitey’s jitterbugs are about as slap-happy a group of jive-crazed youths as were ever let loose on a stage here”.[1246] Similarly, the *Los Angeles Times* reported in May that the audiences demanded ”many encores” and Whitey’s jitterbugs’ routine was ”in the riotous class at times”.[1247]

The *Born Happy* show, however, was not a long run success as it seemed to be in trouble by July 1943. There were changes in the cast of the show at the very beginning of July 1943. Bill Robinson and Whitey’s Jitterbugs, with some other acts, still continued.[1248] The show was advertised to have been “taken off” in Los Angeles after running six weeks in “two engagements” in the middle of July 1943. Before that the show was running in San Francisco for six weeks. As mentioned earlier, the

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[1243] Brooks Atkinson, ’The Play’, *The New York Times*, December 28, 1940, p. L11.

[1244] ’News Of The Stage’, *The New York Times*, December 31, 1940, p. 19.

[1245] Sam Abbott, ’Reviews Of Units – Born Happy’, *The Billboard*, August 28, 1943, p. 23. Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 283.

[1246] ’Unit Reviews – Born Happy (Alcazar, San Francisco)’, *Variety*, April 14, 1943, p. 49.

[1247] Edwin Schallert, ’Bill Robinson Tops Lively Sepia Show, ’Born Happy’ ’, *Los Angeles Times*, May 28, 1943, p. 15.

[1248] Lawrence F. LaMar, ’Mabel Scott, Babe Wallace Out Of Bill Robinson Hit’, *The Chicago Defender*, July 3, 1943, p. 18.

show continued in Los Angeles in August 1943, when it was "boiled down" to one hour, but it seems that Whitey's Jitterbugs were not engaged anymore in the show.[1249] The Kansas City review from *Variety* in October did not mention Whitey's Jitterbugs, but Robinson was "the same 'Bojangles´of old, working without apparent effort and with perfect rhythm and timing."[1250]

After the *Born Happy* tour, Robinson came back in *Memphis Bound* in 1945. Robinson was reported to have signed on for two years of the show.[1251] However, the show was closed in a month, although it received quite good reviews. First, from *The Wall Street Journal*, which, in addition to Robinson, praised another African-American actor and dancer, Avon Long[1252], and from *Variety,* which considered the show as "pretty good". The magazine also reported that Bill Robinson's "hoofing clicks, as always", even so that he got "the evening's strongest aude demonstration" and "without the champ tapper they'd have to wrap the whole thing up, but fast".[1253] Bill Robinson and Avon Long also were praised by *The New York Times*, *The Billboard,* and concerning the Boston performance in *Variety*.[1254] With the exception of *Women's Wear Daily*, which praised also the play in general, the reviews otherwise criticized the play variedly, but Robinson was applauded.[1255]

It seems that Bill Robinson became almost iconized in the theatrical plays. He seemed to carry almost any kind of musical successfully. When comparing him to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, the latter could not compete with Robinson in popularity. Based on the reports from the mainstream newspapers and magazines, they did not raise any individuals above others in Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, when they performed in the theaters. There were glimpses of their popularity among critics, and also among audiences especially in the 1940s, but these acknowledgements seemed to

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1249 'Hy Pollack Plans A Swing Operetta', *The New York Times*, July 17, 1943, p. 16. Sam Abbott, 'The Reviews of Units – Born Happy', *The Billboard*, August 28, 1943, p. 23. In the *Billboard* review of the show there is no mention about Whitey's Jitterbugs. See also: 'Sepia "Born Happy" Hefty 27G in L. A.', *The Billboard*, August 28, 1943, p. 17. This article lists the acts in the play. There also is no mention Whitey's Jitterbugs.

1250 'Unit Reviews – Born Happy (Tower, K. C.)', *Variety*, October 26, 1943, p. 48.

1251 Sam Zolotow, 'Star Of Hepcat Show-Bill Robinson Due In Wildberg Show', *The New York Times*, March 9, 1945, p. 15.

1252 Richard P. Cooke, 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, May 28, 1945, p. 6. See for the closing: Sam Zolotow, ' 'Memphis' Decides To Quit Tomorrow', *The New York Times*, June 22, 1945, p. 22 and Sam Zolotow, 'Second 'Pinafore' Fails To Hold Up', *The New York Times*, July 9, 1945, p. 14.

1253 'Plays on Broadway – Memphis Bound', *Variety*, May 30, 1945, p. 52.

1254 Lewis Nichols, 'The Play', *The New York Times,* May 25, 1945, p. 23; Bob Francis, 'Broadway Opening – Memphis Bound', *The Billboard*, June 2, 1945, p. 34 and 59; Barbara Pearson, 'Out-of-Town Opening – Memphis Bound', *Variety*, May 12, 1945, p. 33; 'Play Out of Town – Memphis Bound', *Variety*, May 9, 1945, p. 46.

1255 Howard Barnes, 'The Theaters', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 25, 1945, p. 12A; Kelcey Allen, 'The New Musical (Broadway Theatre)', *Women's Wear Daily*, May 25, 1945, p. 22; John Chapman, 'Two Versions of 'Pinafore' Hit Broadway', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 10, 1945, p. E6; L. A. Sloper, 'Bill Robinson Starred In New Negro 'Pinafore' ', *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 4, 1945, p. 4; Bob Francis, 'Broadway Opening – Memphis Bound', *The Billboard*, June 2, 1945, p. 34 and 59.

become mostly overshadowed by Robinson, whose popularity seemed to be all time highest at the end of the 1930s, judging from the reviews.

Indeed, there still were many potential future dance stars among African-American jazz dancers, when considering the large amount of names of the dancers mentioned in the reviews. However, they did not enjoy a similar kind of fame as Robinson did. That is why they seemed to be covered, like the Lindy Hoppers, under Robinson's superior success. One of these names, which clearly succeeded concerning their dancing in the Broadway theaters, were the Nicholas Brothers, who were working in more films at the time of Robinson's prime in the theater world. This becomes clear in the chapter where the Harlem-based jazz dance in the films is discussed. The Nicholas Brothers, and Buck and Bubbles were known mostly for their dancing. As personalities, they did not succeed in the way that Robinson did in the mainstream press. Bill Robinson was recognized in his prime in dancing as an almost superhuman kind of personality. In spite of Robinson's overwhelmingness, all the acts probably created a positive picture for Harlem jazz dance, as the critics usually acknowledged them positively.

5.3.9 Connection Between the Reviews of the Shows and the Success on Broadway

How the mainstream press recognized the Harlem-based jazz dance has been a crucial basis for this study. That is why economic factors such as how much profit or financial loss the plays made or how long run they had on Broadway are not systematically examined. However, there are references to these factors in the study, especially in the cases where those factors are connected to the comments of the reviews, and when certain cases like *the Hot Mikado* at the World's Fair are examined.

When sampling from the African-American Broadway plays, it seems that there is a connection between extremities, the best succeeded plays on Broadway and the worst succeeded plays on Broadway, and their reviews. When two examples of the plays which received good reviews, *Lucky Sambo* in 1926, and *Hot Chocolates* in 1929, are examined, both had over 200 performances on Broadway.[1256] Similarly, *Blackbirds of 1928* and *the Hot Mikado*, where Bill Robinson performed, were both well-received as far as dancing is concerned. The former had at least 519 performances on Broadway, and the latter had over 500 performances by the end of the World's Fair in 1939, when outside Broadway performances are counted in the figure.[1257] The plays which were ill-received by both the critics and the audience

[1256] See for Lucky Sambo: 'Coming Theater Attractions', *The Washington Post*, January 9, 1927, p. F4. See for *Hot Chocolates*: 'Closings', *The Billboard*, December 21, 1929, p. 7.

[1257] See for Blackbirds of 1928: 'B'way Openings and Closings', *The Billboard*, June 22, 1929, p. 7 and 'Two Record Shows Close', *The Billboard*, June 22, 1929, p. 5. See for Hot

were *Pansy* in 1929, with its three Broadway performances, and *Hummin' Sam* in 1933, with its one Broadway performance.[1258]

The plays which stayed between the extremities were *Hot Rhythm* in 1930, which had at least 73 performances for two months on Broadway, *Weather Clear –Track Fast* in 1927, which survived for eight weeks and 63 performances, and *Keep Shufflin'* in 1928, with its 104 performances on Broadway. Almost all of them were well-received as far as dancing is concerned. *Hot Rhythm* was an exception, because it contained both good and bad dancing.[1259] *Yeah Man* in 1932 had only four performances on Broadway, but dancing in the play was, similarly, both well and ill-received according to the reviews.[1260] *Shuffle Along of 1933* had a three week run and 25 performances long run on Broadway, and it received mixed reviews, as well.[1261]

It looks like there was a connection between good reviews concerning dancing and the success among the audiences for the Broadway plays where dancing was well-received. That suggests the reviewers and the audiences appreciated the same plays. The plays which received both bad and good reviews did not seem to succeed similarly than those which were mainly well-received. However, the result is directional. To be sure, there is still needed a more comprehensive analysis in the future research which concentrates more on financial factors of the plays.

5.4 The Harlem Jazz Dance in Movies and the Mainstream Press Between 1929 and 1943

This chapter examines, in particular, three different jazz dance acts in the movies: Bill Robinson, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, and the Nicholas Brothers. They are used as the primary examples of how the African-American and the Harlem-

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Mikado: 'Will Present Robinson In 'Hot Mikado', *The Hartford Courant*, October 22, 1939, p. A1.

[1258] See the chapter 'The Middle of the 1920s - The Turning Point of the African-American Broadway Plays?'

[1259] See for Hot Rhythm: 'Hot Rhythm', *The Billboard*, September 5, 1931, p. 62. See for Keep Shufflin' in 1928: 'Plays With Length Of Runs – Keep Shufflin' ', *The Billboard*, September 8, 1928, p. 93. See also the chapter 'Dancing Gets Mixed Reviews'. See for *Weather Clear – Track Fast* the chapter 'John W. Sublett and Buck Washington - Buck and Bubbles'.

[1260] 'Another Theatrical Season Goes Into The Files', *The New York Times*, June 5, 1932, p. X1. 'Yeah-Man' was withdrawn from Broadway after a few days run. See for this: 'Fear Movie Shutdown.', *The New York Times*, May 31, 1932, p. 15. See also the chapter 'Dancing Gets Mixed Reviews'.

[1261] See the chapter 'Dancing Gets Mixed Reviews'. See also: 'Broadway Runs', *The Billboard*, January 21, 1933, p. 17 and 'B'way Hits Hold Up, So-So's Weak, '20th Century's' $14,000; Scales Cut', *Variety*, January 17, 1933, p. 51.

based jazz dance were recognized. The reviews of their movies are analyzed, and they are compared to each other to find out how effective they were in the movies. Similarly, they are compared to other jazz dancers in some cases, when these dancers clearly paralleled them in the movies.

Jazz dance in the form of buck dancing (flat-footed dancing), was presented in movies, at the earliest, in 1894, when Thomas Edison made a film called *The Pickaninnies,* which presented three African-American dancers: Joe Rastus, Denny Tolliver, and Walter Wilkins.[1262] When it comes to the Harlem-based jazz dance, it seems to have been started to be shown in the movies in the forms of tap dance, the Lindy Hop, and eccentric dance at the end of the 1920s, and in the very beginning of the 1930s. There were short movies like *Black and Tan Fantasy* (1929), *The St. Louis Blues* (1929), *After Seben* (1929), *Crazy House* (1930), and *Rufus Jones for the President* (1933), and there were regular movies like *Love in the Rough* (1930), *Dixiana* (1930), and *Harlem is Heaven* (1932).[1263]

Black and Tan Fantasy, *St. Louis Blues*, *Harlem is Heaven,* and *Rufus Jones for the President* were so-called "all black cast" movies containing only African-American performers. *Crazy House*, *Love in the Rough* and *Dixiana* contained mainly white actors and one African-American dancer. An exception was *After Seben*, which contained one white blackface actor/dancer in the main role and African-American dancers.

All the mentioned films were reviewed somehow in the mainstream press. Dancing in the films was usually commented on only briefly in the reviews. Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* reviewed *Black and Tan Fantasy* as "The most interesting feature of the program" during the night and "a striking and rather exciting cinema arrangement"[1264]. Concerning dancing in *Rufus Jones for President, The Christian Science Monitor* briefly mentioned that the cast "dance with pep".[1265] *Variety* praised in general the dancing in *St. Louis Blues*, where could be seen "local color" in the Harlem context and in the form of "the easy-rider, snake-hips, belly-rub and shooting-from-the-hips type of sensuous [African-American] strutting",[1266] thus, bringing out the variety of the dances in the film.

[1262] Hill 2010, pp. 22-23.

[1263] *Black And Tan Fantasy*, RKO Productions Inc., 1929; *After Seben*, Paramount, 1929; *St. Louis Blues*, Radio Pictures, 1929; *Crazy House*, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios, 1930; *Love in the Rough*, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios, 1930; *Rufus Jones For President*, The Vitaphone Corporation/Warner Bros. Pictures, 1933; *Dixiana*, RKO Radio Pictures, 1930; *Harlem Is Heaven*, Herald Pictures/Lincoln Motion Picture Company/Sack Amusement Enterprises, 1932. It seems that the first movie, which contains the Lindy Hop, is *After Seben* from 1929. Tap dancing was already seen earlier at the end of the 19th century in the form of Buck and Wing. In Harlem-related movies, tap was seen, at the latest, first time in 1929, when *Black and Tan Fantasy* was published, in December 1929 and *St. Louis Blues,* in September 1929, both containing tap dancing. See: Stearns 1994, pp. 405-406. African American eccentric dancing in the Harlem context can be seen, in the movies*: Crazy House* and *Love in the Rough*, where Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker performed.

[1264] Richard Watts Jr., 'The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 30, 1929, p. 17.

[1265] 'Moving Pictures', *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 3, 1933, p. 4.

[1266] 'Talking Shorts – "St. Louis Blues" ', *Variety*, September 4, 1929, p. 13.

Variety reviewed *After Seben*, concentrating mostly on comments about its white comic hoofer James Barton's role in the short movie. The magazine stated that "It's a weak sister in every way and will do Barton more harm than good…" The review mentioned only briefly "a whirlwind pivot dance contest in which colored couples do their stuff" leaving the names and dance characteristics of the couples unknown. It criticized the dances as "tapless" which leaves them all "visual and punchless".[1267] *Love in the Rough* was widely reviewed in the mainstream press, but there does not seem to exist any mention in those reviews about African-American Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker, who did his Snakehips routine and tap danced in a dance scene of the movie.[1268] Accordingly, Tucker was referenced only briefly, when *Variety* reviewed *Crazy House*, and commented that the "crazy short" movie includes "a negro tapper" without naming him.[1269]

Bill Robinson seemed to have been clearly more commented on in the mainstream press than other African-American dancers in the movies at the time, when Robinson's performance in *Dixiana* was widely well-received in the movie reviews. Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* stated that concerning the general level of the movie, "the film rambles to an aimless conclusion, slightly assisted by the assorted talents of such players as Ralf Harolde, Dorothy Lee and Bill Robinson", thus respecting Robinson equally with white co-actors, although also criticizing their acting in the film. Watts Jr. added, "the most interesting episode of the film is contributed by the incomparable Bill Robinson, in his equally incomparable staircase dance."[1270] Nelson B. Bell from *The Washington Post* stated similarly, " "Bill" Robinson, greatest of all the tap dancers, is an added starter for his own sake."[1271] *The Wall Street Journal* explained, how "Bill Robinson, the negro tap-dancer, is provided with an opportunity to do his stair dance. This number is one of the best things in the film" [1272]. The *Hartford Courant* expressed its disappointment by stating, that "Bill Robinson…has an all too brief specialty dance."[1273]

[1267] 'James Barton "After Seven" (Comedy)', *Variety*, May 29, 1929, p. 14.

[1268] Mordaunt Hall, 'The Screen. Golf and Song. Love In The Rough', *The New York Times*, September 27, 1930, p. 24; ' "Love In The Rough." ', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 20, 1930, p. 13; Marguerite Tazelaar, ' "Love in the Rough" ', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 29, 1930, p. 12; 'Love In The Rough', *Variety*, October 1, 1930, p. 34; Sidney Harris, ' "Love in the Rough" ', *The Billboard*, October 4, 1930, p. 10; 'Regal Film Is Tuneful And Funny', *The Hartford Courant*, October 17, 1930, p. 22; 'Golf Comedy With Music Regal Film', *The Hartford Courant*, October 19, 1930, p. D4; Muriel Babcock, 'Music And Golf Mixed Agreeably', *Los Angeles Times*, October 25, 1930, p. A9; 'Film Comedy And Peppery Stage Stars', *The Washington Post*, November 9, 1930, p. A2. See also: 'Love In The Rough', Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1930.

[1269] ' "Crazy House" ', *Variety*, April 15, 1931, p. 20.

[1270] Richard Watts Jr., 'On the Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 5, 1930, p. 14.

[1271] Nelson B. Bell, 'New Bills At Capital Theaters', *The Washington Post*, August 17, 1930, p. M21.

[1272] 'The Theatre – Dixiana', *The Wall Street Journal*, September 8, 1930, p. 4.

[1273] 'Bebe Daniels In 'Dixiana' Is Star At Regal', *The Hartford Courant*, September 19, 1930, p. 8.

Robinson was reported to have received the approval of the audiences. According to Mordaunt Hall from *The New York Times*, "In one of the scenes Bill Robinson, a Negro, gives an excellent exhibition of tap dancing, which won a genuine round of applause."[1274] Similarly, H. David Strauss from *The Billboard* reported, "Another interesting spot is when Bill Robinson, champion tap dancer, appears for a few moments to do his famous staircase dance that proves the real applause getter of the film."[1275] And *The Stage* stated, "A feature that drew well deserved applause was the brilliant step dancing of a giant negro, Bill Robinson."[1276]

Indeed, the *Manchester Guardian* disagreed as ""*Dixiana*"…decided itself to be a Cinderella melodrama about gamblers and circuses. At intervals the producer was to repent. A Negro would do a step-dance, or the orchestra releases a variation on "The Swanee River…"" referring to the idea that the reviewer may have expected more like a "cotton field medley" kind of expression with singing and dancing.[1277] In addition, *Variety* mentioned Robinson briefly in its review of the movie as the movie "takes in Bill Robinson for the R-K-O houses" meaning the movie company, but otherwise the review did not comment on Robinson's dancing.[1278]

Later, Bill Robinson participated in *Harlem is Heaven* which *The Hartford Courant* praised as "a really meritorious picture"[1279]. *Variety* recognized powerfully Robinson's performance in the movie as his "very definite personality tops the other members of the cast a mile". Although he was more "actor…than a dancer" in the film, his "hoofing", which included "the stair routine", was "appeal".[1280] When comparing the reviews of Robinson's movie performances to the reviews of his theatrical performances at the time, there are striking similarities. Similarly than in the theatrical play reviews like *Brown Buddies* in 1930 and *Blackbirds of 1933*, he was acknowledged as 'greatest of the tap dancers' or his performance was 'one of the best things in the film', especially, when he was compared to his white co-actors. Thus, he was acknowledged as a great performer as far as both his performances in theatrical plays and movies in the beginning of the 1930s are concerned.[1281] He seemed to win fame fast after his break on Broadway in 1928.

[1274] Mordaunt Hall, 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, September 5, 1930, p. 21.

[1275] H. David Strauss, 'Motion Picture Reviews – "Dixiana" ', *The Billboard*, September 13, 1930, p. 12.

[1276] 'Film News. "Dixiana.", *The Stage*, September 4, 1930, p. 18.

[1277] ' "Dixiana." New Musical Comedy Film.', *The Manchester Guardian*, August 28, 1930, p. 4.

[1278] 'Film Reviews – Dixiana", *Variety*, September 10, 1930, p. 17.

[1279] David Avon, 'Musical Pictures Gained Popularity During Past Year', *The Hartford Courant*, December 25, 1932, p. A3.

[1280] 'Harlem is Heaven', *Variety*, June 7, 1932, p. 20.

[1281] Robinson's theatrical plays are discussed in the chapter ' The Harlem Jazz Dance on Broadway Theaters and the Mainstream Press Between 1921 and 1943'.

5.4.1 How African-American Dancers Were Described in the Movies

Concerning the dress code of the movies, Terry Monaghan analyzed Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and their movie performances between the end of the 1930s and the 1940s, and he states that they dressed usually as menial workers in those movies. He claims that the dress code was connected to the African-American stereotypes at the time.[1282]

The same dress code can be found in *Love in the Rough*, where the eccentric dancer Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker was dressed like a servant, and in the Bill Robinson movies like *Dixiana* and in his movies with Shirley Temple like *Little Colonel*, *The Littlest Rebel*, and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, where Robinson also was dressed like a servant. He was dressed like a porter or a soldier in an old ceremony costume in *Just Around the Corner*, where he dances with Temple. The white chorus line in the movie was dressed similarly. Robinson was dressed in a suit in *Hooray For Love*, where he dances with African-American Jeni LeGon, who was dressed casually. He also was costumed in a suit in *The Big Broadcast* of 1936, when dancing in the all African-American scene. In *Stormy Weather* he was dressed varyingly: sometimes in casual wear, or in suit, or as a servant in different scenes.[1283]

It seems that when comparing purely African-American movies like *Black and Tan Fantasy* (1929), *The St. Louis Blues* (1929), *After Seben* (1929), *Rufus Jones for the President* (1933) and *Harlem is Heaven* (1932)[1284], to the films which also had whites as actors, as was usually case in the Bill Robinson and the Whitey's Lindy Hoppers movies, African-American dancers in the all African -American cast movies were dressed in suits or smart casual. As most of these films were directed to the African-American audience, it is clear in these cases that African -American actors could be presented as ordinary citizens, without interfering with white audience's racist stereotypes about African-Americans at the time. It is exceptional to note that in the otherwise all-white cast film *Crazy House*, the African -American

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[1282] In addition to the dress code, Monaghan brings out the Lindy Hop sequences from the movies *Day at the Races* and *Hellzapoppin'* where the sequences were introduced by "stereotypical" beating of tom-toms, and thus giving a jungle-esque feeling. However, these sequences seemed to be an exception in as far as the African-American Lindy Hop sequences in the American movies overall are concerned. See: Monaghan 2005, pp. 40-41 and 67.

[1283] *The Big Broadcast of 1936*, Paramount Pictures, 1935; *Hooray For Love*, RKO Pictures Inc., 1935; *Love in the Rough*, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios, 1930; *Dixiana*, RKO Radio Pictures, 1930; *The Little Colonel*, Fox Film Corporation, 1935; *The Littlest Rebel*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1935; *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1938; *Just Around The Corner*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1938; *Stormy Weather*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1943.

[1284] *Black And Tan Fantasy*, RKO Productions Inc., 1929; *After Seben*, Paramount, 1929; *St. Louis Blues*, RKO Radio Pictures, 1929; *Rufus Jones For President*, The Vitaphone Corporation/Warner Bros. Pictures, 1933; *Harlem Is Heaven*, Herald Pictures/Lincoln Motion Picture Company/Sack Amusement Enterprises, 1932. It could be argued if *After Seben* was "purely" African-American movie because the main actor James Barton was white. He performed in blackface in the movie, which refers to that the movie was intended to be "African-American".

eccentric dancer Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker was dressed in smart casual.[1285] Perhaps the subject of the film, which refers to the mental hospital, had something to do with the Tucker's dress code? Due to the stereotypes of the time of African-Americans as inferior to whites, it could mean that Tucker's dress code would not be possible in everyday life, but was possible in a mental house.

The explanation also can be that when needed, the dance scene was easily cut off from the movie, as the scenes were not tied to the movie plots. That is claimed to have been the case with the African-American Nicholas Brothers.[1286] It is unclear how often, if at all, their scenes were cut out. There exists evidence for both arguments. According to Constance Valis Hill, who has examined The Nicholas Brothers, their *Down Argentine Way* movie was shown uncut in the South. This is supported by Leonard Reed, who was in the theater and reported that when their 'Chattanooga Choo Choo' scene in *Sun Valley Serenade* was shown as part of the film in Birmingham, Alabama for all-white audience, the audience screamed and "you couldn't hear the rest of the picture when they finished their dance."[1287]

The Nicholas Brothers danced in various "white" movies, usually dressed in suits or in tuxedos, like in *The Big Broadcast* of 1936, *Calling All Stars* in 1937*, Down Argentine Way* in 1940, *Sun Valley Serenade* in 1941, and *Orchestra Wives* in 1942. They also dressed like menial workers; for example, like cooks in *Pie Pie Blackbird* in 1932, or like eunuchs/servants in a harem in *Tin Pan Alley* in 1940, or like redcaps in *The Great American Broadcast* in 1941.[1288] If Bill Robinson had to dance dressed like a menial worker with a white Shirley Temple, there seemed to have been an exception for thirteen-year-old Harold Nicholas, who, dressed in tuxedo, danced in the front of all-white chorus line in *Kid Millions* in 1934.[1289]

Constance Valis Hill takes a stance in her Nicholas Brothers study on the reasons why it was possible that The Nicholas Brothers' scenes were not cut out and why they were able to dance in the front of white chorus lines. She suggests that while the minstrelsy had a tradition of presenting African-Americans only as "an irresponsible, happy-go-lucky, wide-grinning, loud-laughing, shuffling, banjo-playing, singing, dancing sort of being", The Nicholas Brothers were presented as "bright –faced innocents, who were devoid of any sexuality". That is why they were not any kind of threat to the authority. Fayard Nicholas remembered the William Morris Agency to

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1285 *Crazy House*, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1930.

1286 This is discussed in *We Sing, We Dance* documentary which is about the Nicholas Brothers' career. See: *We Sing, We Dance*, Arts and Entertainer, 1992. The documentary claims that the Nicholas Brothers' routines in all the Twentieth Century Fox film company movies were staged in the way that they could easily be cut out from the movie, when shown in the racially tense areas like in the Southern United States.

1287 Hill 2002, pp. 155 and 169.

1288 *The Big Broadcast* of 1936, Paramount Pictures, 1935; *Calling All Stars*, London: British Lion Films, 1937; *Down Argentine Way*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1940; *Sun Valley Serenade*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1941; *Orchestra Wives*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1942; *Pie Pie Blackbird*, Vitaphone/Warner Brothers, 1932; *Tin Pan Alley*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1940; *The Great American Broadcast*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1941.

1289 Kid Millions, Samuel Goldwyn, 1934.

told him that the reason why they were not cut out from *Down Argentine Way*, when presented in the Southern United States, was because "the brothers had no verbal or physical contact" with the white star of the film, Betty Grable. There was proof for that: when a white Carmen Miranda was in a tour with the Nicholas Brothers, and she grabbed and tickled them on the stage, white Southerners in the audience expressed their displeasure at seeing a white woman touching African-Americans.[1290]

5.4.2 Bill Robinson

After *Harlem is Heaven* in 1932, Bill Robinson's movie career seemed to reach a peak by January 1935. Sidney Skolsky from *The Washington Post* hailed "Bill Robinson, Harlem's hero" in the preview of *The Little Colonel* movie. He described in detail of how Robinson taught Shirley Temple to successfully start her dialogue at the correct time.[1291] The article, in fact, stressed that African-Americans were able to teach whites other things apart from singing and dancing. It clearly broke the racist Mungo character stereotype.[1292]

Nelson B. Bell from *The Washington Post* reviewed the movie in March 1935. According to his review, "there are even moments when it borders on downright dullness…" Shirley Temple was praised for her sense of humor and "Her tap-dance scenes with Bill Robinson are gems…" As Temple was criticized for the signs of "overacting and self-consciousness", Robinson was credited for being "the best

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[1290] Hill 2002, pp. 213-214**.** Susie Trenka, who has researched vernacular jazz dance and race in Hollywood cinema, states erroneously that Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were the only ones who were dressed in "modern urban outfits" in the soundie, *The Outline of Jitterbug History*, where they danced as the last act in the humoristic soundie, which tries to describe the development of jitterbug dance starting from the Stone Age, and continues to the modern times. The white couple before them was dressed basically in a similar way. Thus, Trenka's conclusion about "white primitive precursors demonstrated by white dancers" before Whitey's Lindy Hoppers is not correct, but the soundies fit well to Hill's theory about non-physical contact between whites and African-Americans, as a reason why they could be well-dressed in the same film clip. It also fits to the earlier-mentioned Snakehips Tucker case where he danced in "Crazy House" as the soundie also gives a humoristic impression. See for Susie Trenka's statement: Susie Trenka, 'Vernacular Jazz Dance and Race in Hollywood Cinema' in Jazz Dance 2014, p. 244. See for the soundie: *The Outline of Jitterbug History*, The Cinegraphic Studios, unknown release year. *The Billboard* commented briefly the soundie in its "Movie Machine Reviews" and it mentions, "Whitey's Lindy Hoppers contribute the 1942 version" without evaluating their performance. See: 'OUTLINE OF JITTERBUG HISTORY', *The Billboard*, April 18, 1942, p. 78. The reviewer probably had got the name of the group from the beginning of the soundie where it mentioned Whitey's Lindy Hoppers as part of the cast.

[1291] Sidney Skolsky, 'Hollywood', *The Washington Post*, January 9, 1935, p. 16.

[1292] The Mungo character is discussed in the chapter 'From the Racist Characterizations to the Swing Integration – Views of African-American Presentation'.

darned tap-dancer in the country and a mighty good actor besides. The colored singing and the colored baptizing are some of the best scenes in the picture".[1293]

The Wall Street Journal also favorably acknowledged Robinson in its movie review in March 1935, but gave Robinson a shorter commentary than *The Washington Post* saying only, "Bill Robinson, Negro dancer of just fame, performing as Walker, the butler, enlivens the otherwise cute haze with agile foot flingings".[1294]

Andre Sennwald, from *The New York Times,* in his review gave credit to "Bill Robinson, the heel-and-toe wizard", who was tossed "into the brew", in addition to Shirley Temple and Lionel Barrymore, to "insure a million dollar gross". Otherwise the review stated, "The Little Colonel…is so ruthless in its exploitation of Miss Temple's great talent for infant charm that it seldom succeeds in being properly lively and gay." Robinson was again acknowledged for his tap dancing in the review as Sennwald briefly described Temple and Robinson's tap dance duet, where "Mr. Robinson…struts through one of his agile staircase routines" with "the pint-size Duse" Temple, who had "talent for tap-dancing".[1295]

Richard Watts Jr. from the *New York Herald Tribune* credited Robinson for being "one of the great artists of the contemporary theater." He also explained how Robinson taught Temple to dance in the movie and the result was "entrancing".[1296] *The Billboard* stated that "there's the famous stairway dance of Bill Robinson, which many will find worth the price of admission alone."[1297] *Variety* magazine overall credited him for grabbing "standout attention" for his acting and dancing.[1298] Robinson was also criticized as Mae Tinée from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* commented on Robinson's role as "an old family retainer" in the film for being "a bit too snappy…But they needed him to do a tap dance with Shirley-so we'll let it pass."[1299]

Similarly, Robinson was praised in his and Temple's next movie *The Littlest Rebel* in December 1935, when Andre Sennwald from *The New York Times* stated, "Bill Robinson is on hand to tap out some excellent numbers with the little girl…" and "Bill Robinson is excellent, and some of the best moments in "The Littlest

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[1293] Nelson B. Bell, 'Loew's Fox – "The Little Colonel." ', *The Washington Post*, March 17, 1935, p. 6.

[1294] 'The Theatre – Temple and Escudero', *The Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 1935, p. 11.

[1295] Andre Sennwald, 'The Screen – Shirley Temple and Lionel Barrymore in 'The Little Colonel,' the New Film at the Music Hall', *The New York Times*, March 22, 1935, p. 26.

[1296] Richard Watts Jr., 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, March 22, 1935, p. 14.

[1297] 'From The Box-Office Point Of View', *The Billboard*, February 23, 1935, p. 22.

[1298] 'The Little Colonel', *Variety*, March 27, 1935, p. 15.

[1299] Mae Tinée, 'Here's Shirley as Captivating 'Little Colonel' ', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 10, 1935, p. E4.

Rebel" are those in which he breaks into song and dance with Mistress Temple."[1300] Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* wrote about Robinson as "the star and the superb".[1301]

Variety named Robinson as one of those to whom belongs the acting honors of the film. In addition to Robinson, African-American comedian Willie Best was mentioned in the list. The magazine also stressed that Robinson and Temple's dancing is "surefire and it bespeaks plenty of hoofing rehearsal."[1302] *The Washington Post* only mentioned in its review at this time that Bill Robinson, who is the faithful servitor in the movie, "dances like a barn afire". The statement was done seemingly in the positive sense.[1303] *The Billboard* credited Robinson for "a grand performance" in the film.[1304] *The Wall Street Journal* also acknowledged Robinson for his actor skills, "Bill Robinson, who is here given his first real change to do a dramatic part, proves he is much more than the talented tap-dancer which has been his claim to fame heretofore."[1305]

Although it seems that the synergy between Robinson and Temple in the films partly created Robinson's fame at the time, he also performed without Temple in the film *Hooray for Love* during the summer of 1935. *The Washington Post* states in its June 1935 review of how it found Robinson's "tap-dancing and personality just about the tops in irrepressible joy and [white] Marie Gambarelli's terpsichorean art just about as perfect a thing of grace as the human body can achieve…" These were the bright spots of the play which saved it from mediocrity making the play "mildly amusing entertainment".[1306]

On the contrary, *The New York Times* blamed, *Hooray for Love* for a lack of "joyousness" and reported in its July 1935 review that the five revue numbers, which included music, were "passable performed by such entertainers as Bill Robinson, Jeni LeGon, Miss [Ann] Sothern, Maria Gambarelli and Pert Kelton".[1307] Bill Robinson and Jeni LeGon were the only African-Americans named in the review.[1308]

[1300] Andre Sennwald, 'The Screen – Shirley Temple and Bill Robinson in 'The Littlest Rebel,' the Christmas Film at the Music Hall.', *The New York Times*, December 20, 1935, p. 30.

[1301] Richard Watts Jr., 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, December 20, 1935, p. 22.

[1302] 'Film Reviews – The Littlest Rebel', *Variety*, December 25, 1935, p. 15. Willie Best was African American. See: 'Willie Best Hollywood's Latest Find", *The Chicago Defender*, October 12, 1935, p. 9.

[1303] 'Palace – "The Littlest Rebel." ', *The Washington Post*, January 4, 1936, p. 16.

[1304] ' "The Littlest Rebel" ', *The Billboard*, December 28, 1935, p. 62.

[1305] 'The Theatre – Music Hall Holiday', *The Wall Street Journal*, December 23, 1935, p. 7.

[1306] 'RKO-Keith's – "Hooray For Love.", *The Washington Post*, June 15, 1935, p. 16. Maria Gambarelli was white. See: *Hooray For Love*, RKO Pictures Inc., 1935. Re-published by Turner Entertainment Co. and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc., 2012.

[1307] 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, July 13, 1935, p. 16.

[1308] Both Robinson and LeGon are mentioned in the 'Players' list with other actors in the beginning of the movie, which was nothing new. African-American performers were mentioned with white performers in the mainstream press, but naming them equally with

Thus, *The New York Times* acknowledged the African-American entertainers Robinson and LeGon beside white entertainers even so that they were mentioned in the list before their white colleagues.

Variety magazine, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Hartford Courant* and *The Billboard* praised both Robinson and LeGon. *Variety* even stated that Robinson was at his best in the film. In addition to Robinson and LeGon, Maria Gambarelli with her ballet-influenced performance was usually mentioned positively in the reviews.[1309] Mae Tinée from *The Chicago Daily Tribune* commented that in the film, ”Bill Robinson’s dancing is, of course, one perfectly good reason for buying a ticket” to the movie.[1310]

Bill Robinson also participated in *The Big Broadcast of 1936* movie, but with less success as he got mixed reviews from his role. According to *Variety*, in September 1935, Robinson was “practically lost in a combination barber shop and street dancing scene, but he manages to get in some hot licks with the feet.” The magazine stated that Robinson’s dancing would have looked better without the crowding, thus blaming the setup of the scene.[1311] *The Hartford Courant* credited Robinson as “king of hoofers” in its review.[1312]

Robinson also performed in another movie entitled *In Old Kentucky*. Robinson’s part was generally commented on positively in newspapers and magazines like *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, and *The Billboard*.[1313] According to the review by *The New York Times*, which was published in the end of November 1935, the movie used ”Bill Robinson to tap away the duller moments”, although the movie could be listed as a first-rate comedy.[1314] Richard Watts Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* called Robinson as the ”most soul-satisfying of dancers” who

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white actors in the main review was an acknowledgement. See: *Hooray For Love*, RKO Pictures Inc., 1935. Re-published by Turner Entertainment Co. and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc., 2012. For example, John Bubbles and Buck Washington, the African-American tap dancer and musician duo was mentioned in the cast list of *the Ziegfeld Follies* in *The New York Times* article with other white performers already in 1931, but they were mentioned in the end of the list only as Buck and Bubbles. See: ’ ”Follies” to Open in Fortnight’, *The New York Times*, May 27, 1931, p. 33.

1309 ’Film Reviews – Hooray For Love’, *Variety*, July 17, 1935, p. 27. ’ ”Hooray for Love” ’, *The Billboard*, June 1, 1935, p. 22. Marguerite Tazelaar, ’On The Screen’, *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1935, p. 4. ’Ann Sothern Is Cast In Strand Film’, *The Hartford Courant*, June 28, 1935, p. 8. ’New Films Reviewed – ”Hooray for Love” ’, *The Boston Daily Globe*, June 15, 1935, p. 12. Mae Tinée, ’Song and Dance Devotees Will Like This Film – ”Hooray For Love.” ’, *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 10, 1935, p. 19.

1310 Mae Tinée, ’Song and Dance Devotees Will Like This Film – ”Hooray For Love.” ’, *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 10, 1935, p. 19.

1311 ’Film Reviews – Big Broadcast of 1936’, *Variety*, September 18, 1935, p. 15.

1312 ’Allyn Film Has Cast Of Big Names’, *The Hartford Courant*, September 21, 1935, p. 18.

1313 ’Paramount-Fenway – ”In Old Kentucky” ’, *The Boston Daily Globe*, November 15, 1935, p. 33. ’ Mae Tinée, ’Old Kentucky’ Is Final Movie by Will Rogers’, *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 25, 1935, p. 17. ’Motion Pictures – ”In Old Kentucky” ‘, *The Billboard*, December 7, 1935, p. 20.

1314 ’The Screen – At the Roxy’, *The New York Times*, November 29, 1935, p. 24.

appeared importantly in the movie.[1315] *The Hartford Courant* stated, that ”Bill Robinson, Harlem’s beloved Bojangles, who is not only valuable as an actor but indispensable as a tap dancer in this picture.”[1316] *The Washington Post* stated accordingly in December 1935, ””Bill” Robinson, greatest of the theater’s tap dancers, has a fair share of glory in the proceedings”.[1317] *Variety* magazine, in its movie review, even compared Robinson to Fred Astaire and thought, that ”excellent on his own”, Bill Robinson ”hoofs his way to importance. Despite not being a ‘picture’ dancer, such as Fred Astaire…Robinson nevertheless commands attention by the artistry of his footwork.”[1318]

The Washington Post published two different, short reviews about the movie later in January 1936. Both of those reviews focused mainly on Will Rogers’ acting in the movie. The fact that Rogers had passed away before the movie was released, might have been the reason to stress Rogers’ acting in these reviews. Robinson was listed only in the players list and was generally referred to with others, as when mentioned in one of the reviews, ”The supporting cast, a portion of which is listed in the above italicized paragraph, has been well chosen.”[1319]

Robinson once again got mixed reviews when he participated in *One Mile from Heaven* in 1937. *The Washington Post* said in its review, that he ”taps out several numbers for the movie amusement of Claire Trevor”, the main star in the movie, and for ”scores of children”. The article also stated, ”[when] he’s trying to drive to his Hollywood home, he is beseeched by scores who want him to teach them how to tap dance. Too good natured to refuse, he always outlines a few steps, and then ”sneaks away while they’re trying them out.””[1320] *The Boston Daily Globe* praised Robinson in the film as it stated, ”to Bill Robinson a whole bouquet of orchids for some able acting to supplement his always fascinating tap dancing.” [1321] *Monthly Film Bulletin* mentioned both Robinson’s tap dancing skills and also praised his acting skills in the movie.[1322]

The Billboard stated less enthusiastically that ”Bill Robinson does some notable hoofing…but Robinson would have probably been played to better advantage in a

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1315 Richard Watts Jr., ’On The Screen’, *New York Herald Tribune*, November 30, 1935, p. 10.

1316 ’Poli’s Shows Will Rogers Last Film’, *The Hartford Courant*, December 7, 1935, p. 5.

1317 ’ ”In Old Kentucky” Causes a Feeling of Regret That Rogers Was Not Better Served’, *The Washington Post*, December 19, 1935, p. 18.

1318 ’Film Reviews – In Old Kentucky’, *Variety*, December 4, 1935, p. 15.

1319 ’Columbia – ”In Old Kentucky.”, *The Washington Post*, January 2, 1936, p. 10. In the second review, it was similarly mentioned, ”The italicized paragraph above lists most of the creditable supporting cast, a collection of thespians capable and personable, who are, in the light of the tribute directly attributable to the star...”, *The Washington Post*, January 11, 1936, p. 22. The last mentioned review is thus of a similar kind to the one mentioned in the text.

1320 ’Tap Wizard Gives 5,000 Free Lessons’, *The Washington Post*, April 11, 1937, p. R11.

1321 ’New Films’, *The Boston Daily Globe*, August 21, 1937, p. 11.

1322 ’One Mile From Heaven’, *Montly Film Bulletin*, January 1, 1937, p. 174.

short rather than this excuse."[1323] Accordingly, *Variety* wrote with a slightly bored tone, that "Bill Robinson, as a colored policeman in the Harlem district has very little do with the social problems touched upon in the film, but he does his tap specialty no less than four times."[1324] Also *The New York Times* reviewed the movie in August 1937. The paper described the movie as "the hodgepodge of Class C celluloid" without mentioning Robinson in its short review.[1325]

Bill Robinson performed again with Shirley Temple in 1938, when Robinson performed in at least four different movies. Robinson and Temple performed together in two of these four movies. The first of these, *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* was reviewed in *The New York Times* as follows:

> We are quite serious about this: any actress who can dominate a Zanuck musical…with Jack Haley, Gloria Stuart, Phyllis Brooks, Helen Westley, Slim Summerville, Bill Robinson, et cetera, can dominate the world.

This was a reference to Shirley Temple, who was predicted to have a great future in the entertainment industry.[1326] Bill Robinson was already a respected entertainer alongside his white colleagues at the time.[1327]

Otherwise, Robinson was mentioned only briefly, but positively in the papers. *The Washington Post* mentions in its review of the movie that, "The one and only Bill Robinson tap dances with Shirley."[1328] *The Wall Street Journal* laments in its review, that "A good supporting cast is wasted because of the poor script…Unfortunately, the part assigned to Bill Robinson is relatively small, but his dancing remains top rank."[1329] Similarly, Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* would have liked to see "the great Negro tap dancer" Bill Robinson, and Shirley Temple to collaborate "a great deal more of this sort of thing. They make a magnificent team" in the film.[1330] *The Boston Daily Globe* stated how fortunate Shirley Temple was to have "her beloved "Bojangles" Robinson – world's champion tap dancer – heading the stage show which accompanies her film…and appearing in the picture cast as well." The paper also reported that Temple and Robinson did "a most effective rhythmic tap dance…" in the film. Robinson, who headed the stage show and thus also performed live in the movie theater in Boston, was reported to

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[1323] Benn Hall, 'Motion Pictures – "One Mile From Heaven" ', *The Billboard*, September 18, 1937, p. 24.

[1324] 'Film Reviews – One Mile From Heaven', *Variety*, July 21, 1937, p. 18.

[1325] 'The Screen – At the Palace', *The New York Times*, August 19, 1937, p. 23.

[1326] 'The Screen- At the Roxy', *The New York Times*, March 26, 1938, p. 12.

[1327] All the other persons in the list were whites. See: *Rebecca Of Sunnybrook Farm*, Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, 1938.

[1328] 'Shirley Temple Is Sure-Fire As 'Rebecca', *The Washington Post*, March 26, 1938, p. X14.

[1329] 'The Theatre – Tap-Dancing Shirley', *The Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 1938, p. 13.

[1330] Howard Barnes, 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm', *New York Herald Tribune*, March 26, 1938, p. 8.

have received an ovation every time he came on the stage.[1331] *The Hartford Courant* called Robinson as "the high spot of the film", who "furnishes the finale".[1332]

Next, Bill Robinson participated with Shirley Temple in *Just Around the Corner*, which was again reviewed with mixed feelings. Howard Barnes from the *New York Herald Tribune* thought that the movie was at its best when Shirley Temple and Bill Robinson were "tapping around in its lavish settings".[1333] *Variety* explained Robinson's part in the movie quite generally and stated, that "Bill Robinson, as doorman, is in mainly for his specialties". He was described to go into "some of the fancy tap dancing" in the movie.[1334] The movie review in *The Washington Post* only lists him with others who danced "energetically".[1335]

Frank S. Nugent from *The New York Times*, in his review in December 1938, only mentioned Robinson in the cast list and stated that the movie is "unadulterated [whimsy]".[1336] *The Wall Street Journal* stated how "Shirley's dancing with Bill Robinson, which in former pictures always helped to liven things up, is so abbreviated this time that it is over just as one settles back to enjoy it."[1337]

When *The New York Times* listed the ten worst pictures of 1938, in January 1939, both *Just Around the Corner* and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* were included. The paper stated that concerning *Just Around the Corner*, Shirley Temple's acting "pursued a course of such sweetness and light that she pulled the country right out of depression. Needless to say, the usual tap-dance with Bill Robinson contributed to that consummation."[1338]

Robinson's other 1938 films without Temple; *Up the Riv*er and *Road Demon* seemed to gain even less success among critics. *The New York Times* reviewed *Up the River* without mentioning Robinson otherwise but in the players list.[1339] Indeed, the pre-release review in *The Washington Post* about the upcoming *Up the River* movie reported in December 1938 only how Robinson would lead the way with other actors.[1340] *The Washington Post* movie review stated only briefly about

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1331 ' "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" ', *The Boston Daily Globe*, March 18, 1938, p. 30.

1332 ' 'Rebecca' Good Film But It Isn't Wiggins Version', *The Hartford Courant*, March 26, 1938, p. 8.

1333 Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, December 3, 1938, p. 8.

1334 'Film Reviews – Just Around the Corner', *Variety*, November 2, 1938, p. 15.

1335 Nelson B. Bell, 'Shirley Temple Finds Prosperity, at Capitol; Earle Presents Aviation in Technicolor', *The Washington Post*, November 5, 1938, p. 6.

1336 Frank S. Nugent, 'The Screen – Shirley Temple Routs the Depression in the Roxy's 'Just Around the Corner'-'Up the River' Opens', *The New York Times*, December 3, 1938, p. L11.

1337 'The Theatre – Little Miss Fix-It', *The Wall Street Journal*, December 6, 1938, p. 11.

1338 Bosley Crowther, 'A Minority Report', *The New York Times*, January 1, 1939, p. 99.

1339 'The Screen – Shirley Temple Routs the Depression in the Roxy's 'Just Around the Corner'-'Up the River' Opens', *The New York Times*, December 3, 1938, p. L11.

1340 'Nelson B. Bell About the Showstops', *The Washington Post*, December 16, 1938, p. 20.

Robinson, "Bill Robinson is a tap-dancing "Memphis" who shows how to go down a spiral staircase."[1341] Similarly, *Variety* commented on "Bill Robinson for a tap dance which clicks".[1342] Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* mentioned only summarily "the expert Bill Robinson with his tap dancing…" as part of the picture.[1343] Concerning *Road Demon*, it seems, that Robinson's part in the film was rarely, if not at all reviewed in the mainstream press. For example, *Variety* mentioned Robinson only in the cast list of the review[1344] and *The Boston Daily Globe* only mentioned him in the list of the actors who "take the leading roles" in the picture.[1345]

Robinson's last movie was the all African-American cast *Stormy Weather*, which was released in 1943. It seems that Robinson's movie career was again going in a better direction according to the reviews. *The Christian Science Monitor* reported analytically in its review of the film about Robinson, who went through "his whole repertory of stepping…manifesting always that amazing ease and apparent improvisation that has come from years of performance, backed up by immense practice."[1346] *The Hartford Courant* stated that concerning Robinson's personality in the movie, that "You see Bill Robinson with " "no ambition but three square meals a day up and down the Mississippi." But you see him as a great tap dancer, too."[1347] Similarly, *The Boston Daily Globe* wrote that "There is Bill Robinson, more than 65 years young, who can still tap out a dance with a perfection and clarity equaled by no younger man."[1348] Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* also stated that Robinson "dances like sixty…" and credited him for being one of those members of the movie, who make the movie "exuberant entertainment".[1349]

The New York Times also predicted that the movie was going to be a box office success. The paper stated in its review that ""Stormy Weather" is a first-rate show, just the kind of spirited divertissement that will make you forget all about your own momentary weather troubles." and added, "It looks like Twentieth Century-Fox has hit the musical and box-office jackpot again."[1350] The movie apparently did well at the box office and overall reviews of the film were positive.[1351] *Variety* even stressed

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[1341] 'Prison Comedy At Keith's Is Hilarious Item', *The Washington Post*, December 31, 1938, p. 8.

[1342] 'Film Reviews – Up The River', *Variety*, November 9, 1938, p. 16.

[1343] Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, December 3, 1938, p. 8.

[1344] 'Film Reviews – Road Demon', *Variety*, December 14, 1938, p. 15.

[1345] 'New Films', *The Boston Daily Globe*, October 27, 1938, p. 24.

[1346] ' 'Stormy Weather,' 'Destroyer,' And 'Appointment in Berlin' ', *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 27, 1943, p. 4.

[1347] ' "Stormy Weather." ', *The Hartford Courant*, August 19, 1943, p. 7.

[1348] 'New Films – Paramount-Fenway – "Stormy Weather" ', *The Boston Daily Globe*, August 27, 1943, p. 7.

[1349] Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 22, 1943, p. 12.

[1350] 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, July 22, 1943, p. 15.

[1351] In addition to the other reviews see also: Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 22, 1943, p. 12; Mae Tinée, 'Negro Musical Film Brimful of Entertainment', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 21, 1943, p. 13; ' "Stormy Weather." ', *The Hartford Courant*, August 19, 1943, p. 7. See also: Haskins and Mitgang 1988, p. 286.

the lack of stereotypes in the movie as it stated that "the all-colored cast is not permitted to engage in any grotesque or theatrically 'typed' concepts of Negro behaviorism."[1352] The biggest criticism seemed to be, that Robinson "doesn't dance nearly enough" in the movie.[1353]

Robinson's *Stormy Weather* can be compared to *Cabin In the Sky*, which was reviewed in the mainstream press, also in 1943. The latter movie included tap dancers Buck and Bubbles, and Bill Bailey. The movie was advertised in the African-American newspapers in February 1943, as a movie on which was spent "million and a half dollars".[1354] However, according to the reporting in the newspapers, the movie was not such a hit.[1355] In spite of that, the mainstream press was already advertising in their articles about the pair, but especially Bubbles, as part of the movie starting as early as July and September 1942,[1356] although the hype did not transmit to the mainstream press movie reviews with a few exceptions. Bubbles, Buck, and Bill Bailey were mentioned in *The Boston Daily Globe* and *The Chicago Daily Tribune* only in the cast lists.[1357] An exception was Edwin Schallert from *Los Angeles Times*, who briefly stated in his review, that "John W. Sublett, known as Bubbles" as one of the persons who were in "essential roles" in the movie.[1358]

1352 'Film Reviews – Stormy Weather', *Variety*, June 2, 1943, p. 8.

1353 John L. Scott, ' 'Stormy Weather' Joyous Gathering of Sepia Stars', *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 1943, p. 11. Also *The Sun* stressed the same fact. See: 'At Movie Houses', *The Baltimore Sun*, July 24, 1943, p. 8.

1354 All the articles seem to be based on the same article from Leo Roa. See: 'Success Of "Cabin in The Sky" Will Help Negroes In Films', *Atlanta Daily World,* February 10, 1943, p. 2. 'Success Of " Cabin in The Sky" Seen As A Boon To Colored Stars In Films', *The Afro-American*, February 13, 1943, p. 8. 'Success Of "Cabin In The Sky" Will Help Negroes In Films', *The New York Amsterdam Star-News*, February 13, 1943, p. 16.

1355 *The Pittsburgh Courier* claimed in its article already in August 1943, that the movie was "a box-office success". See: 'Simpkins, Two Others Are Signed By MGM', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, August 21, 1943, p. 20. There, however, is no evidence for the claim in the article. Occasional reports quoted in *New Journal and Guide* newspaper in December 1943 claimed that *Stormy Weather* succeeded better than *Cabin In The Sky*. See: 'Find 'Stormy Weather' Outdraws 'Cabin In Sky' At Negro Theatres', *New Journal and Guide*, December 11, 1943, p. 14. There does not seem to exist any clear data about the total profits of *Cabin In The Sky* and also the mainstream press stayed quiet about its success, which, at least, refers to the fact that it was not a huge success. The author of the study has not found any statements from the mainstream press concerning success or failure of the movie, which refers possibly to the fact that movie was not a huge success, but also not a total flop.

1356 Leonard Lyons, '"Broadway Gazette', *The Washington Post*, July 8, 1942, p. 10. 'Hollywood News and New York Screen Notes', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 3, 1942, p. 14. Thomas F. Brady, 'The Owi Criticizes Hollywood's War Films', *The New York Times*, September 13, 1942, p. X3.

1357 See for example: 'State and Orpheum', *The Boston Daily Globe*, June 11, 1943, p. 16. Mae Tinée, 'Cabin in Sky' Is Delightful Film Fantasy', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 15, 1943, p. 19.

1358 Edwin Schallert, ' 'Cabin in the Sky' Rich in Melody, Humanness', *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 1943, p. A15.

The New York Times acknowledged John (Bubbles) Sublett and a few other principals in the movie as "excellent".[1359] Similarly, *The Christian Science Monitor* mentioned Sublett as a good performer among a few others[1360]. However, *Variety* considered him only as "acceptable" in a supporting part with his partner Ford (Buck) Washington, and with a few others.[1361] Otis L. Guernsey Jr. from *New York Herald Tribune* stated that the picture had "only one production number worth mentioning, a jitterbug sequence in the night-club scene toward the end". He, however, did not specify any of the dancers or actors in the scene. He also thought that "Most of the musical numbers fail to come to life, and as a result they form pockets of delay in the movement of the amusing comedy story." Thus, it would seem, stressing the plot more than dancing in the movie.[1362] When *Cabin In the Sky* and Sublett are compared to *Stormy Wheather* and Robinson, the former movie and Sublett got more varied reviews than the latter and Robinson who was still acknowledged positively in 1943 where his movie performances are concerned.

When considering Bill Robinson's movie career from 1935 onwards, he still succeeded in 1935, according to the movie reviews. That goes for both his dancing and acting. He was acknowledged positively even when he was reported to have taught white Shirley Temple to start her dialogue at the correct time, which clearly broke racist stereotypes. There, however, were mixed reviews between 1935 and 1938. It seems that he did not succeed anymore similarly than in the beginning of the 1930s. Anyway, he was acknowledged for both his dancing and acting, although it seems that his dancing skills were preferred over his acting skills. That becomes clear from the *Stormy Weather* movie reviews in 1943 as well, although the movie succeeded otherwise. In that sense, he only partially broke racist stereotypes as far as he is compared to the racist Mungo character which described African-Americans mainly as people who sang and danced.

5.4.3 Whitey's Lindy Hoppers

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers also performed, especially, in Hollywood movies. In their 1937 Hollywood movie debut, *A Day at the Races*, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers danced the Lindy Hop in the scene, where also Herbert 'Whitey' White participated as an extra performer without participating in dancing. The scene also contained Harpo Marx, a few other white actors, and African-American singer Ivie Anderson and African-American children.[1363]

1359 'The Screen In Review', *The New York Times*, May 28, 1943, p. 19.

1360 'Ethel Waters Decorates Film Fantasy From Play', *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 11, 1943, p. 4.

1361 'Film Reviews – Cabin In The Sky', *Variety*, February 10, 1943,p. 8

1362 Otis L. Guernsey Jr., 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 28, 1943, p. 14.

1363 Robert P. Crease, 'Divine Frivolity: Hollywood Representations of the Lindy Hop, 1937-1942' in Gabbard 1995, pp. 213-214.

In the fall of 1937, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were filmed for a Hollywood movie called *Everybody Sing* in Los Angeles. Because of arguments between Herbert White and the movie director about rest periods for White's dancers, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers scene was cut from the movie.[1364] However, before that, they were mentioned in *The Washington Post* article as "The famous Apple Dancers…" who "have been signed to appear in "Everybody Sing.""[1365]

Somewhere during this period, *Manhattan Merry-Go-Round* with Whitey's Lindy Hoppers was filmed in the Bronx, New York. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers also went back to Hollywood for filming *Radio City Revels,* which was produced in very early 1938.[1366]

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers performed in the whole African-American cast *Keep Punchin'* movie in 1939.[1367] It seems that the movie was not an essential work to White's dancers; at least Frankie Manning, who performed in the dance scenes of the movie, could not remember doing the movie.[1368]

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers went once more to Hollywood, when they were recruited for the Hollywood movie version of *Hellzapoppin'* in 1941. The result was possibly the best performance of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers in movies, at least according to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers Norma Miller and Frankie Manning, who both danced in the performance.[1369] The dance director Nick Castle stated that concerning *Hellzapoppin*' in *The Washington Post* in July 1941, that "you won't be seeing jitterbugging. The popular dance will be a combination of rug cutting and the primitive jungle dances, the kind you do to tom-toms". He seemed to reveal the racist logic behind his *Hellzapoppin'* dance ideas.[1370] It is possible that Castle thought differently later, because according to Norma Miller and Frankie Manning

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[1364] Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 149-150. Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 158.

[1365] 'Dancers Signed.', *The Washington Post*, November 23, 1937, p. 12.

[1366] According to the International Movie Database Manhattan Merry-Go-Round was filmed in the Bronx, New York. See: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0029209/locations?ref_=tt_ql_dt_6 . See for Radio City Revels: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0030651/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1 . The sites were accessed on February 28, 2015. See also: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 152.

[1367] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0135501/fullcredits?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm . The site was accessed on February 28, 2015. According to the site, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were billed as 'Arthur White's Lindy Hoppers and Jitterbugs'. *The New York Amsterdam News* claimed the same. See: ' "Keep Punching" at Apollo', *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 9, 1939, p. 21. See also: Crease 1995, p. 218.

[1368] Manning and Millman 2007, p. 161.

[1369] Both Norma Miller and Frankie Manning have stressed their opinion that the 'Hellzapoppin' Lindy Hop scene' was the best movie performance of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. See Norma Miller's comment: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19_OT3aXELU and Frankie Manning's: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 179. The film clip was accessed on February 28, 2015.

[1370] 'Forget Your Inhibitions-and Jump Around', *The Washington Post*, July 24, 1941, p. 7.

they had no problems working with Nick Castle.[1371] If Castle changed his mind, it stays unclear and that did not transmit to newspapers.[1372]

Before that, Whitey's group participated in a soundie called *Outline of Jitterbug History* sometime in 1940. The *Hellzapoppin'* filming session also took Whitey's Lindy Hoppers to a soundie called *Cottontail* with the Duke Ellington Orchestra in 1941. Frankie Manning claims that they had a deal for a second movie with Universal, as well, but Universal agreed to release them after performing in the *Cottontail* soundie. The reason for the release demand was that Herbert White had got a contract from the William Morris agency for his group to go to a tour in South America.[1373]

The difference is clear, when comparing Bill Robinson's success in the movie reviews to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' success in the reviews, about the movies in which they participated. The Lindy Hop was not even mentioned when *A Day at the Races* was reviewed in *New York Herald Tribune*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* in June-July 1937, or when *Manhattan Merry-Go-Round* was reviewed in the last two papers in December 1937.[1374] It seems, where the mainstream newspapers and magazines were concerned; only *Variety* mentioned that as a musical highlight "a Harlemania sequence" All God's Children Got Rhythm, where "Negroes are more or less dragged in by their bojangles…" The scene culminated in the "fast and furious Lindyhopping finale". The dancers, however, stayed nameless in the review.[1375] Also, *The Billboard* called the musical number as "honey", but did not proceed to describe deeper the number in the review.[1376]

The same goes to *Hellzapoppin'*, which was reviewed in *The New York Times* at the end of December 1941, without mentioning the Lindy Hop scene. Another dance scene of the movie was not mentioned in the review; in addition to the Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' dance scene, there was another dance scene, where white Lindy dancer Dean Collins danced with one of the main stars of the movie, Martha

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[1371] Both Miller and Manning appreciated Nick Castle and his work in *Hellzapoppin'*. See: Miller and Jensen 1996, pp. 160-161 and 166; Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 176-177 and 179.

[1372] In addition to the articles, the author of the study could not find any articles where Nick Castle discusses his work and dance scenes in the *Hellzapoppin'* movie.

[1373] Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 161 and 176-181.

[1374] See for *A Day At Races*: ' "A Day at the Races" – Capitol', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 18, 1937, p. 16; 'State And Orpheum – "A Day at the Races" – "Racketeers in Exile', *The Boston Daily Globe*, June 18, 1937, p. 33; 'Marx Brothers Are Riot of Inspired Lunacy in Latest Comedy.', *The Washington Post*, July 10, 1937, p. 12; 'The Screen In Review – At the Capitol – A Day At The Races', *The New York Times*, June 18, 1937, p. 25. See for *Manhattan Merry-Go-Round*: 'Stars' Talents Excel Material In Filmusical', *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1937, p. 22; 'The Screen In Review – At the Criterion – Manhattan Merry-Go-Round', *The New York Times*, December 31 1937, p. 9.

[1375] 'Film Reviews – A Day At The Races', *Variety*, June 23, 1937, p. 12.

[1376] Eugene Burr, 'Motion Pictures – "A Day at the Races" ', *The Billboard*, June 26, 1937, p. 25.

Raye.[1377] In that sense, African-American and white dancers were snubbed equally in the review.

In the same way, *The New York Times* passed on the *Hellzapoppin'* dance scenes in its brief comment about the movie in its later issue. The paper also neglected to mention the dance scenes of *Pot O' Gold* in the same article as the *Hellzapoppin'* review, and in which white dancers were performing the Lindy Hop and other dances. Indeed, concerning the last article, it might have been good to have not been mentioned in the article, as it also handled the ten worst films in 1941, as according to *The New York Times*.[1378] It also is striking that *The Boston Daily Globe*, *New York Herald Tribune*, and *The Christian Science Monitor* did not mention the dancers and the scene at all in their reviews.[1379]

It seems that only *Variety* mentioned *Hellzapoppin'*, which included "…the plentitude of slapstick hokum, which even drags in a colored lindy-hopping troupe." The magazine, however, did not describe the troupe or the scene deeper in its review.[1380]

A kind of an exception seemed to have been *Radio City Revels* in 1938. *New York Herald Tribune* only mentioned in passing the "Negro Big Apple dancers" as part of the film.[1381] *The Billboard* also mentioned that white dancers "Buster West and Melissa Mason show plenty in their hoofing during the corn festival number, which blends into a wild rendition of the Big Apple" without describing the other dancers in the scene.[1382] *Variety* magazine even stated that "Buster West and Melissa Mason are also held down but in the barbecue scene for 'Swingin' in the Corn,' a highlight is developed through the shagging routines of four colored couples in character. They stand out strongly." Thus the magazine credited the dancers in general, but did not name them.[1383] It is also remarkable that white dancers were worth naming. Thus, the white dancers were preferred to the African-American dancers in that sense.

1377 'At the Rivoli – Hellzapoppin', *The New York Times*, December 26, 1941, p. 21. See also: *Hellzapoppin'*, Mayfair Productions Inc. for Universal Pictures, 1941. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers are named in the beginning of the film as Harlem Congeroo Dancers and in the end of the film as The Congeroo Dancers. Dean Collins is not mentioned at all in the film credits.

1378 'Here With The Year's Ten Worst', *The New York Times*, December 28, 1941, p. X5. See also: 'Pot o' Gold', James Roosevelt Productions, United Artists, 1941.

1379 'New Films Reviewed', *The Boston Daily Globe*, April 3, 1942, p. 14. Barnes Howard, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, December 26, 1941, p. 9. 'Hellzapoppin' Now on Screen At Memorial', *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 2, 1942, p. 14. When it comes to *The Billboard*, which also reviewed films, the magazine did not seem to publish any review of *Hellzapoppin'* movie.

1380 'Film Reviews – Hellzapoppin' ', *Variety*, December 24, 1941, p. 8.

1381 ' "Radio City Revels" – Globe', *New York Herald Tribune*, March 21, 1938, p. 8.

1382 Dean Owen, 'Motion Pictures – "Radio City Revels" ', *The Billboard*, February 19, 1938, p. 14.

1383 'Film Reviews – Radio City Revels', *Variety*, February 2, 1938, p. 15. Buster West and Melissa Mason were whites. See: 'Radio City Revels', RKO Radio Pictures, 1938.

The Washington Post stated in a more informative way about the upcoming movie in December 1937:

> The Lindy Hoppers, a group of nine colored dancers, five men and four women have been signed for a whirlwind specialty number in "Radio City Revels"… Brought out from New York, where their "Big Apple" dance was a nightclub sensation, the Hoppers made their film debut in "Everybody Sing."[1384]

In spite of that, the movie reviews of *The Washington Post* and also *The New York Times* in February-March 1938, did not make any mention about the Lindy Hop scene.[1385] Overall, it seems that the Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were mentioned only occasionally where the reviews of their movies are concerned.

5.4.4 The Nicholas Brothers

Comparing similarly the Nicholas Brothers, Fayard and Harold Nicholas, who tap danced and did eccentric dancing in both all African-American and white movies, starting with *Pie Pie Blackbird* in 1932, to Robinson and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, it seems that the Nicholas Brothers were also mentioned frequently in the mainstream press.[1386] When compared to Robinson, they were mentioned only briefly and mostly reviewed concerning their dancing. The Nicholas Brothers, however, were mentioned many times more in the movie reviews than Whitey's Lindy Hoppers.

The Nicholas Brothers were possibly mentioned for the first time in a movie review, when the short movie *Pie Pie Blackbird* was reviewed in *Variety* in 1932. Overall the movie was criticized heavily starting with the "noisy jazz band" in the film. The Nicholas Brothers, who performed in the movie, were mentioned without names and only as "The two boys" who did "terrifically noisy wooden shoe clog" which contained "hot steps, but out of place here". The singer, Nina Mae McKinney, was acknowledged positively for her performance in the review.[1387]

They were mentioned next time, but only briefly, as part of the stage show, when *The New York Times* both reviewed and advertised the horror movie *Double Door* in 1934. The stage show was only an addition to the movie presentation, and thus, their

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1384 'Lindy Hoppers in 'Radio City Revels' ', *The Washington Post*, December 17, 1937, p. 18.

1385 'RKO-Keith's – "Radio City Revels" ', *The Washington Post*, February 5, 1938, p. X14; 'The Screen – At the Globe – Radio City Revels', *The New York Times*, March 21, 1938, p. 18.

1386 See for the background of *Pie Pie Blackbird* short movie: Hill 2002, pp. 55 and 314. Otherwise, this is based on the conclusion from the details presented in this chapter.

1387 "Talking Shorts", *Variety*, May 31, 1932, p. 14.

stage performance was not reviewed.[1388] In spite of that, *The Billboard* also reviewed the stage show when they performed in Paramount in New York. Paul Denis, the reviewer, stated concerning the show that the Nicholas Brothers, "the colored kids from the Cotton Club" were "great hoofers". Denis especially seemed to appreciate the younger one of them, Harold Nicholas.[1389]

When the plan for *The Big Broadcast* of 1936 was advertised in a short article of *The Washington Post* in June 1935, Harold Nicholas was mentioned as one of the cast and presented as a child with "the amazing skill" from "New York's Cotton Club", who was taught by Cab Calloway for singing and by Bill Robinson for dancing.[1390] The Nicholas Brothers were also mentioned in the end of the cast list in *The New York Times* advertisement of the movie on September 15, 1936.[1391] *Variety* magazine applauded them as the magazine stated that "they click" in their roles as the radio station helpers and in their own specialties (dances) in the movie.[1392] Concerning the Nicholas Brothers' participation in the movie, *The Billboard* reported briefly in the article, before mentioning their participation, that their father passed away.[1393] The article refers to the fact that their status in the movie world had increased during years. *The Hartford Courant,* in its review of the movie, called them as "the clever Nicholas Brothers…small carbon copies of Bill Robinson himself".[1394]

Both *The New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* reviewed the movie and mentioned them as part of the cast with their real names and role names. They were not otherwise mentioned in the reviews.[1395] *The Washington Post*, which also reviewed the movie, did not mention them in its movie review or in the cast list.[1396]

As far as movies are concerned, the Nicholas Brothers were next mentioned in *The New York Times* article, where Douglas Churchill discussed the movie world in New York and Hollywood in June 1940. The article only briefly mentions "the Nicholas Brothers, Negro eccentric dancers" as part of the *Down Argentine Way* film.[1397] The movie was reviewed in various mainstream newspapers in October 1940. When Hedda Hopper from *The Washington Post* reported on the movie, she stated, "A couple of colored dancers called the Nicholas Brothers would stop any

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1388 'Tomorrow At Both Paramounts', *The New York Times*, May 3, 1934, p. 15; 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, May 5, 1934, p. 22

1389 Paul Denis, 'Paramount, New York', *The Billboard*, May 12, 1934, p. 10.

1390 'Teachers.', *The Washington Post*, June 23, 1935, p. SS3.

1391 'The Big Round-Up Stars! The Big Broadcast Of 1936', *The New York Times*, September 15, 1935, p. X4.

1392 'Film Reviews – Big Broadcast of 1936', *Variety*, September 18, 1935, p. 15.

1393 'Nicholas Bros.' Father Dies', *The Billboard*, April 27, 1935, p. 14.

1394 'Allyn Film Has Cast Of Big Names', *The Hartford Courant*, September 21, 1935, p. 18.

1395 Andre Sennwald, 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, September 16, 1935, p. 15 and Richard Watts Jr., 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 16, 1935, p. 10.

1396 'Columbia', *The Washington Post*, November 13, 1936, p. 15.

1397 Douglas Churchill, 'Screen News Here And In Hollywood', *The New York Times*, June 19, 1940, p. 27.

show, with the Dowling Dancers a close second."[1398] The Dowling dancers were probably Thomas and Catherine Dowling, a white dance couple.[1399]

Both the Nicholas Brothers, and Thomas and Catherine Dowling, were mentioned in the cast list of the film as connected to "Specialties", when Bosley Crowther from *The New York Times* reviewed the film. They were not otherwise mentioned in the review.[1400] *The Wall Street Journal* mentioned both acts in its review of the film as it stated, the "Nicholas brothers turn in several acrobatic tap dance routines which are tops and should go far toward bringing them back in other pictures." Thomas and Catherine Dowling were not compared to the Nicholas Brothers this time, but they were otherwise acknowledged in the review.[1401] Nelson B. Bell from *The Washington Post,* in his movie review, praised both the Nicholas Brothers and the Dowlings as he stated, "The specialties-neatly woven into the action, by the way-by the Nicholas Brothers, Thomas and Catherine Dowling…"[1402] *The Boston Daily Globe* mentioned only the Nicholas Brothers, who had been in Boston many times and thus "their acrobatic dances brought about spontaneous applause from the audience…as they did their specialty number in one of the café sequences" in the film.[1403] *Variety* magazine credited them as "showstoppers", who provided "a routine of acrobatic taps that shines as one of the best specialties in the picture."[1404] Thus, African-American dancers were compared positively and even preferred to white dancers as far as dancing was concerned.

An exception among the critics seemed to be Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune*, who criticized the dancing and singing of *Down Argentine Way* as "The Nicholas Brothers, Thomas and Catherine Dowling and Six Hits and a Miss performed ably enough, but they are dragged into the proceedings and their acts are badly timed."[1405] Barnes equally criticized both African-American and white dancers in his review.

The mainstream newspapers reviewed *Tin Pan Alley* in November-December 1940, where the Nicholas Brothers did "Dance Specialty" as *The New York Times* mentioned in its cast list of the movie review. They were not elsewhere mentioned in

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[1398] Hedda Hopper, 'In Hollywood', *The Washington Post*, October 9, 1940, p. 18.

[1399] See: *Down Argentine Way*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1940. Thomas and Catherine Dowling were mentioned in the endnotes of the film. According to the review of *The Wall Street Journal,* they were "as the boy and girl from Syracuse", who "put on a rumba" in the movie. That refers clearly to the white couple which is performing in the middle of the movie. See: 'Vaudeville Comes Back', *The Wall Street Journal*, October 19, 1940, p. 11.

[1400] Bosley Crowther, 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, October 18, 1940, p. 25.

[1401] 'The Theatre – Vaudeville Comes Back', *The Wall Street Journal*, October 19, 1940, p. 11.

[1402] 'Nelson B. Bell About the Showstops – "Down Argentine Way" Overlooked Castanets', *The Washington Post*, October 31, 1940, p. 20.

[1403] 'Reviews Of New Films – Metropolitan – "Down Argentine Way" ', *The Boston Daily Globe*, October 11, 1940, p. 30.

[1404] 'Film Reviews – Down Argentine Way', *Variety*, October 9, 1940, p. 16.

[1405] Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 18, 1940, p. 20.

the review.[1406] *Variety* credited them for scoring a hit with their "fast-routined dance specialties" in "the 'Sheik of Araby' " number.[1407] *Los Angeles Times* stated only briefly that they "were terrific", and *The Christian Science Monitor* listed them among a few others who made it "an entertaining film musical"[1408].

The Washington Post credited the Nicholas Brothers in its three different movie reviews for their participation in *Tin Pan Alley*. In the first one, it stated, "Topping the list are those unique, sepia, acrobatic hoofers, the Nicholas Brothers, tossed back into the era of the mid-1900s from the present-day Technicolor glories of "Down Argentine Way." These lads break out a new routine in the "Araby" number that just simply can't be done!"[1409] In the second article it is mentioned how the film "introduces several specialties that add to the variety of its content. Foremost among these is the amazing dance routine contributed by the Nicholas Brothers to the "Araby" scene"[1410]. The third of them rates the brothers to the top of the dancers as, "Supporting the principals are a long list of expert players and a notable coterie of specialists, led by the amazing Nicholas Brothers, dancers with few peers among contemporary acrobatic "hoofers." "[1411]

The Nicholas Brothers stayed in the reviews when *The Great American Broadcast* was reviewed largely in the mainstream magazines and newspapers between April and May 1941. This time they were mentioned with other specialty acts, as *The New York Times* listed them in the cast list as "Specialties" with The Four Ink Spots and Wiere Brothers. The review otherwise stated, "But the picture is neither Miss [Alice] Faye's, nor the Nicholas Brothers, nor the Four Ink Spots, nor the Wiere Brothers, though all are in superb form. For this corner's money Jack Oakie is "The Great American Broadcast"…" referring to one of the stars of the film.[1412]

The Wall Street Journal stated more appreciatively, "the Wiere Brothers, the Four Ink Spots and the Nicholas Brothers furnish just enough expert variety to make the film diverting and, therefore, entertaining as well as historical."[1413] Similarly, Nelson B. Bell from *The Washington Post* thought, "Cast and Specialists Are A-1…Those dancing demons, the Nicholas Brothers; the Wiere Brothers, eccentric funsters, and the "Four Ink Spots,"…contribute specialties from time to time that may slow down the plot movement but pep up the customers."[1414]

[1406] 'The Screen In Review – Tin Pan Alley', *The New York Times*, November 22, 1940, p. 30.

[1407] 'Film Reviews – Tin Pan Alley', *Variety*, November 27, 1940, p. 16.

[1408] 'Hedda Hoppers's Hollywood', *Los Angeles Times*, November 22, 1940, p. A14 and ' 'Tin Pan Alley' ', *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 13, 1940, p. 14.

[1409] 'Nelson B. Bell About the Showstops – Time Turns Back to Old Hit Tunes In 'Tin Pan Alley,' at the Palace', *The Washington Post*, December 13, 1940, p. 28.

[1410] 'Palace', *The Washington Post*, December 19, 1940, p. 22.

[1411] 'Columbia', *The Washington Post*, December 31, 1940, p. 9.

[1412] 'The Screen In Review', *The New York Times*, May 2, 1941, p. 25.

[1413] 'Good Entertainment', *The Wall Street Journal*, May 3, 1941, p. 11.

[1414] 'Nelson B. Bell About the Showstops – From the 'Whisker Sets' To the National Networks', *The Washington Post*, May 30, 1941, p. 8.

Accordingly, *The Boston Daily Globe* and *New York Herald Tribune* credited the Nicholas Brothers among James Newill, the Four Ink Spots, and the Wiere Brothers for enlivening the movie.[1415] *The Christian Science Monitor* and *The Hartford Courant* commented on the brothers' dancing with approval.[1416]

Mae Tinée from *The Chicago Daily Tribune* mentioned the Nicholas Brothers in a similar brief manner in her review, but without commenting on their performance.[1417] Also *Variety* described their dancing only as "The Nicholas Bros. again appear in the 20th-Fox film musical with a variation of their acrobatic dancing…" without evaluating the quality of the performance.[1418]

Sun Valley Serenade followed in September 1941, but generally with less appreciative comments than before. Bosley Crowther from *The New York Times* mentioned the Nicholas Brothers again as "Specialty" in the cast list, but did not mention them otherwise. He mentioned in the review only "ice ballet" by Sonja Henie and "a glistering chorus" performing "enraptured dances", where dancing is concerned.[1419]

The Nicholas Brothers, however, were mentioned as stars of the movie in another *New York Times* article, which told about the movie.[1420] They also were listed with the other stars in the movie advertisements in *The New York Times* in September 1941 and in *The Washington Post* in October 1941.[1421] Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* stated that the Nicholas Brothers, among others, gave the show "vaudeville overtones". Barnes, however, credited with more praise The Five Crackerjacks, "Negro acrobats" for tumbling "in every conceivable manner for ten breathless minutes", when the stage show of the movie presentation was reviewed.[1422] Similarly, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Hartford Courant*, and *Variety* commented only briefly the Nicholas Brothers: how the brothers performed various "lively specialties" and did "marvelous dancing", but they talked mostly about Sonja Henie and her performances in the film.[1423]

[1415] 'Keith Memorial – "The Great American Broadcast" ', *The Boston Daily Globe*, May 23, 1941, p. 23. Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 3, 1941, p. 6A.

[1416] 'Alice Faye at Keith's; Milland at Metropolitan', *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 23, 1941, p. 10; 'Musical and War Films Vie For Popularity With Hartford Theatergoers', *The Hartford Courant*, May 25, 1941, p. A9.

[1417] Mae Tinée, ' 'Great American Broadcast Trifle Too Reminiscent', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 17, 1941, p. 13.

[1418] 'Film Reviews – Great American Broadcast', *Variety*, April 30, 1941, p. 16.

[1419] Bosley Crowther, 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, September 6, 1941, p. 20.

[1420] 'Of Local Origin', *The New York Times*, September 5, 1941, p. 19.

[1421] 'Photoplays – Sun Valley Serenade', *The New York Times*, September 5, 1941, p. 19 and 'Sun Valley Serenade', *The Washington Post*, October 2, 1941, p. 12.

[1422] Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 6, 1941, p. 6.

[1423] 'New Films – Keith Memorial – "Sun Valley Serenade" ', *The Boston Daily Globe*, September 18, 1941, p. 25; 'Sonja Henie Visiting In Sun Valley', *The Christian Science*

In addition, there were a few slightly more positive reviews of the brothers. *The Wall Street Journal* in its movie review in September 1941, applauded the Nicholas Brothers as they "give another demonstration of their expert dancing technique."[1424] Similarly, Mary Harris from *The Washington Post* reported in October, "the dancing of the Nicholas Brothers, a pair of sepias so packed with rhythm that it practically runs out of their ears."[1425] In spite of the positive remarks, white Sonja Henie was clearly preferred to the Nicholas Brothers in the reviews.[1426]

When *Orchestra Wives* was released in September 1942, it seemed to have been a turn for the better, where reviews about the Nicholas Brothers are concerned. However, while Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* stressed that there were good performers in the movie, but he did not mention the Nicholas Brothers at all in the review.[1427]

The Nicholas Brothers, however, were again mentioned in the cast list of the movie advertisements in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.[1428] According to Bosley Crowther from *The New York Times*, the movie was a "limp and faded fable" outside of Glenn Miller's swingters and the Nicholas Brothers in one spectacular dance. Crowther, however, also states, "Best of the numbers is, of course, "I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo," which threatens to become the [assertion] of practically every jitterbug in the land." He, however, stays quiet about the dancers of the scene, the Nicholas Brothers.[1429]

The Wall Street Journal praised the Nicholas Brothers in its movie review, where it stated, "the picture has several nice tunes played by Glenn Miller and his orchestra, an excellent dance routine by the Nicholas Brothers and a completely boring story."[1430] *The Washington Post* reported in its October 1942 review, "To top it all off there is an excellent specialty number by the Nicholas Brothers, whose

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Monitor, September 18, 1941, p. 11; 'Looking Over The New Films', *The Hartford Courant*, September 5, 1941, p. 8; 'Tradeshow Reviews – Sun Valley Serenade', *Variety*, July 23, 1941, p. 8.

[1424] 'The Theatre', *The Wall Street Journal*, September 8, 1941, p. 10.

[1425] Mary Harris, ' "Sun Valley Serenade," Palace, Reveals New Henie Abilities', *The Washington Post*, October 3, 1941, p. 12.

[1426] Sonja Henie was white. See: 'Sonja Henie Placed Last in 1924 Olympic Ice-Skating Debut', *Boston Globe*, October 13, 1969, p. 63.

[1427] Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, September 24, 1942, p. 18.

[1428] 'Photoplays – Orchestra Wives', *The New York Times*, September 22, 1942, p. 25; 'Photoplays – Orchestra Wives', *The New York Times*, September 23, 1942, p. 29; 'Photoplays – Orchestra Wives', *The New York Times*, September 25, 1942, p. 25; 'Orchestra Wives', *The Washington Post*, October 1, 1942, p. B9.

[1429] Bosley Crowther, 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, September 24, 1942, p. 23. See also: 'Orchestra Wives', Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1942.

[1430] 'The Theatre – Glenn Miller & Co.', *The Wall Street Journal*, September 25, 1942, p. 10.

dancing brings the house down."[1431] *Variety* stated, that "[the] Nicholas Bros. come on for the finale to wow the audience with an exceptional display for dance and song which serves as a show-stopper."[1432]

The reviews seemed to have been positive for the Nicholas Brothers. *The Christian Science Monitor* credited them for "a marvelously finished dance sequence…in "I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo"".[1433] *The Boston Daily Globe* credited them as, "favorite steppers of the younger generation", and for weaving "modern dance tempos with their nimble, fast stepping feet".[1434] According to Mae Tinée from *The Chicago Daily Tribune,* the best entertaining in the film was provided by a singer, Marion Hutton, and the Nicholas Brothers.[1435] *The Hartford Courant* even commented, that the "brilliant" Nicholas Brothers' dance "will have you sitting on the edge of your seat".[1436]

The Nicholas Brothers performed in *Stormy Weather* in 1943. This time, Howard Barnes from *New York Herald Tribune* listed them among those who made the film "an exuberant entertainment". He also reported them doing "an extraordinary dance duet" in the film.[1437] *Variety* magazine called them "the legmaniacal [sic] Nicholas Bros."[1438] They were mentioned briefly in *The New York Times* movie review in July 1943, as "the rubber-legged Nicholas Brothers and their incredible acrobatic dance number, leap-frogging down a flight of stairs spread-eagle fashion"[1439]. Also *Metronome*, a music magazine, which had largely reflected a preference for "white swing bands" until 1943, stated in its review in its July 1943 review, that the movie presented "[the] Nicholas Brothers at their brilliant best in a tap and acrobatic dancing solo."[1440] Similarly, John L. Scott from *Los Angeles Times* praised them for proving to be "real show-stoppers" and "almost incredible" with their prodigious leaps and splits. He also reported that the Nicholas Brothers' performance brought "a wave of applause from an opening-day crowd."[1441]

Overall, it seems that the Nicholas Brothers were frequently praised for their dancing in the movie reviews. That is clearly similar to Bill Robinson and to the

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[1431] Ernest L. Schier, 'Screen Feature and Stage Bill Score Equally at Loew's Capitol', *The Washington Post*, October 2, 1942, p. B12.

[1432] 'Film Reviews – Orchestra Wives', *Variety*, August 12, 1942, p. 8.

[1433] ' 'Orchestra Wives' on Screen', *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 5, 1942, p. 17.

[1434] 'Paramount And Fenway –"Orchestra Wives" ', *The Boston Daily Globe*, November 5, 1942, p. 21.

[1435] Mae Tinée, 'Critic Expects This Movie to Be Best Seller', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 19, 1942, p. 16.

[1436] 'Looking Over The New Films', *The Hartford Courant*, October 30, 1942, p. 8.

[1437] Howard Barnes, 'On The Screen', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 22, 1943, p. 12.

[1438] 'Film Reviews – Stormy Weather', *Variety*, June 2, 1943, p. 8.

[1439] 'The Screen', *The New York Times*, July 22, 1943, p. 15.

[1440] Hill 2002, p. 184. See concerning Metronome history: John Gennari, *Blowin' hot and cool: jazz and its critics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 95.

[1441] John L. Scott, ' 'Stormy Weather' Joyous Gathering of Sepia Stars', *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 1943, p. 11.

appreciation of his tap dancing in the movie reviews. The Nicholas Brothers were both preferred and rejected over their white colleagues in the reviews as far as dancing is concerned. In that sense, they succeeded only partly when they are compared to Bill Robinson who was usually considered to be equal or even superior to his white colleagues in as far as dancing is concerned. Outside of the movies, the Nicholas Brothers stayed mostly unknown personalities, with an exception of Harold Nicholas, whose background was based on being taught by Cab Calloway and Bill Robinson, and this had been reported to some degree in the mainstream press. Their dance performances, however, seemed to be the most remarkable thing in these reviews. As personalities, they did not raise above their dancing unlike Robinson did, whose personality was brought out more clearly in the reviews.

Chapter Conclusion

The African-American Broadway plays had a crucial role when the Harlem-based jazz dance broke out from Harlem. Since the very beginning of the 1920s, the plays succeeded remarkably in the Broadway theaters. *Shuffle Along* and *Runnin' Wild* were among the important plays which the success of paved the way for later shows. The Harlem-based jazz dance had a crucial role in the process. Numerous dancers performed in the plays, and were acknowledged in the reviews of the mainstream press. The reviewers usually credited the dancers for their dancing. From the dances during the decades, the reviewers especially recognized tap dance and the Lindy Hop. Sometimes the dancers were credited in the reviews for their other skills, like acting. Thus, they were not always considered only as dancers. In fact, in the mainstream press, they were already connected to the larger concept of 'entertainer' at the latest from the beginning of the 1920s.

The critics appreciated, in particular, African-American dance forms which are known in this dissertation as jazz dance. There were cases where the critics blamed show producers and the cast for whitening the play, and thus neglecting the racial values. Where dancing was concerned, rhythm seemed to be the most crucial factor in the racial values. There were critics who understood the importance of the rehearsals. They also commented if the dancers and acts were not practiced enough. There also were critics who considered African-Americans as naturally gifted dancers.

However, there was no linear method in the appreciation of the critics during the years. The African-American plays, which contained the Harlem-based jazz dance, were appreciated and criticized variously from the beginning of the 1920s. The appreciation and criticism continued through the years, varyingly from the play to the play, without clear criteria. From the end of the 1920s especially, there began to rise certain dancers and dance acts above others, which survived in the reviews in the long run. Bill Robinson, Buck and Bubbles, the Nicholas Brothers, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were the most crucial examples of these dancers. They performed on Broadway, in the movies, and various places of entertainment around the United States, and in various countries. In particular, Robinson became a certain kind of African-American superstar who broke racial barriers, and who was presented

frequently in the mainstream press. In spite of that Robinson was recognized also as an actor, but his dancing skills were preferred to his acting skills. He could not break all the racist stereotypes when he is compared to the racist Mungo character which described African-Americans especially as ones who loved to sing and dance. In other words, he was not recognized unanimously as a versatile performer who was able to do various things, in addition to dancing.

Compared to Robinson, the other acts and dancers like Buck and Bubbles, the Nicholas Brothers, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, stayed more in the background, where both the reviews of the movies and the Broadway-connected plays in the mainstream press are concerned. They were recognized, among the audiences, but the critics did not perceive them in the same, almost inhuman way that Robinson was occasionally discussed in the mainstream press. The audiences recognized Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, but the critics of the plays and the movies mostly forgot them. The critics recognized Buck and Bubbles more prominently, and the Nicholas Brothers, who were reviewed more frequently, than the Lindy Hoppers in the reviews. However, all the acts succeeded remarkably when they were appreciated similarly, or even preferred to, white dancers in the reviews of the movies and the plays. When the acts are compared to each other in this sense, Robinson seemed to succeed best. He was usually considered to be at least equal to his white colleagues as far as his dancing is concerned. The recognition was mostly connected to dancing, and as persons they stayed unknown, unlike Robinson, whose private life also was discussed occasionally in the mainstream press.

When comparing the reviews of the movies and the Broadway-connected plays, Robinson's movie career seemed to be more varied. He did not get similar, almost universal acceptance, from the critics, as he seemed to get in the reviews of the Broadway-connected plays. It also seems that Robinson and other African-American dancers mostly had to dress like menial workers, where their movie performances in so-called white cast movies are concerned. An exception was Harold Nicholas, who was able to dance dressed in tuxedo in the front of a white chorus, probably because he had no physical contact with white actors. Thus, African-American jazz dance could not break all the racial barriers, although it otherwise seemingly broke African-American stereotypes, both in the Broadway-connected plays and the movies.

6 The Harlem-Based Jazz Dance and Political Movements

The early Civil Rights Movement between the 1920s and the 1940s, consisted of various organizations which operated in Harlem at the time. These organizations and the history of the early Civil Rights Movement are presented in the beginning of the chapter. The NAACP and the Communists were the primary political organizations which organized various activities in Harlem. Because of their activity in Harlem society, it is reasonable to find out how they were connected to Harlem entertainment. How they recognized the Harlem jazz dance especially by using jazz and jazz dance for their purposes in the Harlem context is discussed in their own sub-chapters.

6.1 Civil Rights Movement Between 1921 and 1943

African-American political movements in the United States, which were working for African-American civil rights in the 1920s and later, were based on the "long tradition of resistance to white supremacy" especially in the South, but also in the Northern United States.[1442] Theoretically, the Civil War between 1861-1865, ended slavery in the United States, but during the postwar period known as Reconstruction (1865-1877), there was a struggle between different ideas of freedom, as former slaves wanted the resources to develop their own communities and former free African-Americans tried to get "full rights of citizenship". Former slave masters for their part tried to return to a slavery kind of system.[1443]

When Republican Rutherford B. Hayes got the presidency as a result of the Compromise of 1877 and federal troops were removed from the South, that led to the new historical conjuncture culminating in the system which became to known as Jim Crow. From the 1880s and the 1890s, southern towns and cities adopted racial segregation codes and laws which led to African-Americans' exclusion from the political and legal system. Thousands of African-Americans were lynched, and racist whites widely destroyed African-Americans' property. African-Americans answered

[1442] Tuck 2010, pp. 14-16.
[1443] Ibid., p. 39.

to the attacks by establishing new social organizations that led to group solidarity and the growth of an African-American middle class.[1444]

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (the NAACP), which was established in 1909, became a remarkable organization in the Civil Rights Movement during next several decades. W.E.B. Du Bois, a scholar-activist and the first African-American who gained a doctorate from Harvard, had an important part in this. He started with the NAACP to shape African-American protest in the 1910s. Du Bois stayed a crucial figure in the African-American protest for a half-century. The early record of the NAACP did show only a little success. The NAACP achieved a couple of victories in cases against peonage and the grandfather voting clause, but the achievements "were more symbolic than substantive".[1445] The NAACP organized the Silent Protest Parade with ten thousand marchers in 1917 "in response to a race massacre in East St. Louis, Illinois", which was possibly the largest African-American public protest march since the end of Reconstruction.[1446] Later, Du Bois was connected to international issues in the form of five significant Pan-African Congresses between 1919 and 1945, which laid the basis for revolutionary Pan-Africanism and the rise of independent African states.[1447]

The NAACP got competition when Marxist Cyril V. Briggs and Claude McKay organized The African Blood Brotherhood. McKay charged the NAACP and Du Bois that the Association "cannot function as a revolutionary working-class organization", because it focused narrowly on the racial status of African-Americans. McKay argued that "the main source of exploitation of African Americans" came from the fact that "the Negro "is the lowest type of worker"". Class oppression was most decisive factor. Other radicals were Asa Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen, who established the Independent Political Council in Harlem, for promoting socialism among African-Americans. Their radical socialist magazine, the Messenger, resisted the United States entry into World War I.[1448]

When African-American soldiers succeeded in World War I, there were also expectations on the home front. There were only six NAACP branches in the South in 1916, by the end of the World War I, there were about 165 branches, and more than forty thousand members in the United States. It seems that the increased awareness about freedom, escaping violence, changes in the business cycle (for example, the price of cotton collapsed in the middle of the 1910s), and the promise of a better salary in the city, led to African-Americans moving from the countryside to the city.[1449]

[1444] Marable 2011, pp. 2-3.

[1445] Tuck 2010, pp. 121-126.

[1446] Ibid., pp. 136-137.

[1447] Marable 2011, p. 4.

[1448] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[1449] Tuck 2010, pp. 144-145. Stephen Tuck is contradictory in his economic analysis as he states that, "Overall the wartime gains for southern African-American workers were impressive. Wages doubled in the Alabama coal fields and tripled on some southern plantations. In the Arkansas delta, black sharecroppers forced a switch from annual to weekly pay. Many rural workers were able to pay off debts..." See: Tuck 2010, p. 146. He

The Great Migration meant that about 1.5 million African-Americans left the rural South and moved mostly to southern cities. In the very beginning of the 1920s, one-third of African-Americans lived in cities. Nearly half a million left the South totally. Surprisingly, more whites than African-American left the South because of the promise for better wages. According to Stephen Tuck, the Great Migration led to a fifty years long African-American migration from the rural South, which had a strong effect on U.S. race relations. The NAACP's James Weldon Johnson argued that it became "the most effective protest against Southern lynching, lawlessness, and general devilry."[1450]

Also, the exceptional freedom and equality that African-American soldiers experienced in World War I had an influence on them. As about 40,000 African-American soldiers were placed under the French command in fighting against Germans, French soldiers treated African-Americans like equals. This obviously changed the attitudes of those troops, as Du Bois, who traveled to France to meet those African-American troops, stated, "Before the war there was but one radical in a thousand negroes…Now there are at least 25 in every hundred".[1451]

When African-American soldiers returned to the United States in February 1919, there were consequences. It first looked like a step for the better, when the African-American 369th Infantry Regiment marched along Fifth Avenue in New York with people celebrating around them. As an answer to African-American war veterans' aspirations on more freedom, at least 25 anti-African-American race riots broke out around the United States between May and October 1919. Hundreds were killed during the period called Red Summer. The NAACP and other African-American political leaders answered with protests. The democracy seemed to be illusory.[1452]

It was a time for new African-American political leaders.[1453] Marcus Garvey, who originally was from Jamaica, used Harlem as a base for his political agenda. He succeeded around the United States and around the world, starting from the middle of the 1910s, when he founded the United Negro Improvement Association (the UNIA) in Jamaica. After that, he traveled to the United States, where his example caused 800 UNIA divisions to be organized in the United States by the mid-1920s. His political agenda was based on a new race consciousness about a black world in which black people controlled by uniting four hundred million black people of the world. The idea resonated strongly, especially in Harlem.

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states later vice versa, " In economic terms black Americans generally were little better off than they had been before the war. In the South they were worse off. Before the war, black and white workers got the same wages for the same job...After the war, black workers began to get lower wages for the same job for the first time...". See: Tuck 2010, p. 168. That is why his economic analysis stays partly contradictory. The facts presented in the main text of my dissertation, however, can be concluded from Tuck's analysis.

1450 Tuck 2010, pp. 144-146.

1451 Ibid., pp. 143-144.

1452 Ibid., pp. 150-152 and 158-159.

1453 This and the next paragraph are based on Tuck 2010, pp. 159-164.

However, Garvey got into trouble with his inability to manage the UNIA and was convicted for a mail fraud in 1923. Even if there were still some supporters at the time, many deserted him. Garvey recognized his loss in 1924, when he wrote that now "the world has practically returned to the normal attitude". Garvey's ideas did not, however, disappear; his influence has lasted after his death in 1940. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., recognized Garvey's importance in 1965, and the idea about a black people-controlled black world returned in the Black Power era in the 1960s.

The Harlem Renaissance movement, which also was called the New Negro, was born in 1924 by a meeting of one hundred African-American writers and white publishers. The Harlem Renaissance was influenced by "American's emerging literary modernism". It was a literary movement, which was geographically located also outside Harlem: it had outposts in Washington, Philadelphia, Atlanta and even in Europe.[1454] The movement concentrated mostly on the "higher stratum of the society" arts, literature, and music. Dances like the Charleston and the Lindy Hop were not an essential part of it, as the movement distanced itself from the "lower stratum of the society" dancing. That kind of dancing reminded them of Minstrelsy and its clowning aspect.[1455]

In fact, few of central figures of the Harlem Renaissance, like W.E.B. Du Bois and James Weldon Johnson, discussed dancing during the decades. Du Bois, who also was one of the NAACP's central figures, argued at the turn of the twentieth century, that "Submerged tenth of professional gamblers and sharpers had migrated to the city under the cover of popular amusements including gambling, excursions, balls and cakewalks". Interestingly, he supported race-record companies.[1456] James Weldon Johnson, who also worked as the NAACP secretary, acknowledged in the beginning of the 1930s, such dances like the Charleston and tap, and dancers like Bohee Brothers, Bill Robinson, Johnny Hudgins, and Josephine Baker, who were clearly connected to jazz dance. However, even he considered the Cakewalk from earlier in the 1910s as "lower forms of art", which indeed had potential to become part of "higher forms of art".[1457] In other words, Johnson preferred concert (performance) forms of jazz dance. Johnson's jazz dance-connected analysis seemed to be an exception, as far as the Harlem Renaissance's leading figures are concerned[1458].

1454 Tuck 2010, pp. 171-175.

1455 Monaghan 2005, pp. 39 and 66. See also: Perron 2001, pp. 24-27 and 35-37.

1456 Davarian L. Baldwin, 'Our Newcomers to the City' in W. Fitzhugh Brundage (editor), *Beyond Blackface – African-Americans and the Creation of American Popular Culture, 1890-1930* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), pp. 171-172. W.E.B. Du Bois also stated that dancing was part of "the beauty of the Negro life character". See: Woodley 2014, p. 68. Indeed, he probably did not refer to popular dances.

1457 Johnson 1991, pp. 89-90, 189-190, 213-215 and 224-226. Johnson's book was originally published in 1930. According to Wendy Perron, only James Weldon Johnson of the Renaissance scholars at the time gave dance an equal place with other arts. She seems to be basically correct, where concert forms of the dance are concerned. Johnson did not seem to take stance on social dance forms. See: Perron 2001, pp. 35-36.

1458 Although the general attitude towards the popular dances seemed to be dismissive, as far as the leaders of the Harlem Renaissance Movement are concerned, there were also other Harlem Renaissance writers than James Weldon Johnson, who mentioned

Terry Monaghan states that the Savoy Ballroom management originally described the Lindy Hop dismissively as "fad" and "novelty", and not as "an objective aesthetic reflex of the evolving African-American consciousness in Harlem" which the dance had deserved. This dismissive attitude of the management might have been a reason for why Harlem Renaissance Movement leaders, who represented "African-American intelligentsia" in Harlem, and who were interested in "higher stratum of the society" dances, were not willing to include popular dance forms like the Lindy Hop into this category.[1459]

This exclusive attitude is the reason why the Harlem Renaissance movement is not discussed in this study as part of the Civil Rights Movement which had jazz dance in their activities. Concerning the success of the movement, Stephen Tuck thinks that, "[i]f the Renaissance did not improve wages, it didn't improve race relations either." The Renaissance was soon over as Langston Hughes, one of the remarkable Harlem Renaissance writers, stated, that "We were no longer in vogue" in 1931.[1460]

When the Great Depression started in 1929, as a consequence, about fifty percent of all African-American workers became unemployed. Possibly thousands of African-Americans joined the U.S. Communist party and in addition, Social Democratic or smaller marxist parties. The Great Depression period gave rise to new African-American political leaders like Cyril Lionel Robert James, George Padmore, Oliver Cromwell Cox, and Bayard Rustin. Rustin later became Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s chief lieutenant. They all first were communists, but some of them, like Padmore and Rustin, later receded from communism. Their real success was in literature, as they published theoretical works about African-American marxism. An

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occasionally jazz dances like the Charleston, Black Bottom and the Lindy Hop in their writings. When researching mentions of jazz dance-connected dances like Charleston, Black Bottom, and the Lindy Hop from *Voices From The Harlem Renaissance* study which samples tens of writings from various Harlem Renaissance writers, these dances were occasionally mentioned in those writings. For example, the Lindy Hop was referred only twice: when Langston Hughes described Savoy Lindy Hoppers dismissively as dancers who did "absurd things" for entertaining whites, and when Nancy Cunard described the Lindy Hop as 'astounding', 'violent', and 'beautiful'. See: Rudolph Fisher, 'The Caucasian Storms Harlem' (p. 81), Nancy Cunard, 'Harlem Reviewed' (p. 125), Claude McKay, 'Banjo' (pp. 166-167), Zora Neale Hurston, 'Characteristics Of Negro Expression' (p. 228) and Langston Hughes, 'from *The Big Sea*' (pp. 371 and 373) in Huggins 1995. Similarly, J. A. Rogers discussed jazz and jazz dance in his article which was originally published in *Graphic Survey* in 1925. Rogers' article is one of the most in-depth analysis of jazz dance as far as the Harlem Renaissance writers are concerned. Although he analyzed comprehensively jazz music and jazz dances like the Charleston, even he dismissed the "jazz spirit" as primitive, and stated that jazz should have been lifted and diverted into "nobler channels". See: J. A. Rogers, 'Jazz At Home' in Locke 1997, p. 219. Rogers' article was published originally in *Survey Graphic* in March 1925. See: *Survey Graphic* March, 1925. It seems that Harlem Renaissance writers were interested in jazz dance to some degree, although this interest did not catalyze an active support for presenting the jazz dances as remarkable African-American achievements, as it becomes clear in this dissertation.

[1459] Monaghan 2005, p. 39.

[1460] Tuck 2010, pp. 174 and 176.

exception was Rustin, who successfully organized the march in Washington D.C, attracting 250,000 civil rights protestors in 1963.[1461]

As to their position in Harlem, the Communists represented only a marginal phenomenon in the Harlem politics in the 1920.[1462] However, they became an important operator in Harlem in the 1930s, when they had numerous campaigns for improving economic conditions, and they had various political events, like the support events of the Scottsboro case, where they had a crucial role in defending nine African-American youngsters who had been condemned by vague rape charges in Alabama. With the help of the United Front, especially, from the middle of the 1930s, the Communists connected deeply to different Harlem groups like fraternal organizations, social clubs, and even churches.[1463]

The NAACP was part of Harlem via its remarkable leaders from Harlem. Similar to the Communists, the NAACP also participated in the Scottsboro case in Harlem.[1464] Both organizations had frequent dance-related events in Harlem. The Communists had the events mainly starting from the 1930s and the NAACP starting from the 1920s. As they both were essential operators in the Harlem's life, they also had connections to jazz dance via various dance events which are discussed in the chapters concerning their dance activities in Harlem.

6.2 The NAACP and Their Dance Activities in Harlem

The National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People, the NAACP, was founded in 1909. It was established to advance all people's civil rights in the United States.[1465] However, the name of the association clearly refers to the emphasis on African-Americans.[1466] The association probably started to organize its annual ball soon after that, at the latest from 1910.[1467] The NAACP began to

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[1461] Marable 2011, pp. 7-10.

[1462] Naison 1984, pp. 3 and 25.

[1463] Ibid., pp. 57-63, 126-127, 148 and 193. See also: Monaghan 2005, p. 40 and 67.

[1464] Naison 1984., pp. 59, 61-63.

[1465] 'NAACP: 100 Years of History', http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-history . The site was accessed on April 30, 2015.

[1466] 'Colored' seemed to be a common term which was used to describe the race of African-Americans at the time. There was, for example, "The Colored American Magazine" at the time of the beginning of the NAACP in 1909. See: *Colored American Magazine*, Volumes 15-17, 199, Negro Universities Press, New York, 1969.

[1467] There is no exact information available as to when the first ball was organized. It is known that the NAACP organized its 33rd annual ball in 1942. It means that the association started to organize those annual balls at the latest in 1910. It is possible that the NAACP already organized the first annual ball in 1909. However, the 33rd annual ball refers clearly to the fact that it has to have happened at the latest in 1910. See: '3000 Dance At New York NAACP Ball', *The Chicago Defender* (National edition), February 28, 1942, p. 13.

organize dances in Harlem at the latest from 1923.[1468] The association had dances in Harlem every year between 1923 and 1943 under various themes with a possible exception in 1924, when there might not have been any major NAACP-organized dances in Harlem. The usual themes of the dances were as follows, the annual Spring Dance possibly between 1923 and 1924, and definitely during the years 1925, 1926, and 1931. They had the annual dance between 1932 and 1934. The NAACP also organized their birthday ball. The birthday ball was organized in Harlem at least between 1939 and 1943 with a possible exception in 1941, when it is unclear where the ball was organized. Overall, they had dances one to four times per year for various purposes in Harlem. See Table 11.[1469]

Table 11. The NAACP-Connected Dances in Harlem Between 1923 and 1943.

When:	What:	Where:	Music:
	The NAACP Spring Dance		
1923	Possibly 1st Spring Dance	in Harlem.	Unknown.[1470]
1924	Possibly 2nd Spring Dance	in Harlem.	Unknown.[1471]
March 27, 1925	3rd Annual Spring Dance by Women's Auxiliary to NAACP with Fletcher Henderson's Original Roseland Orchestra and his Rainbow Orchestra	at the New Manhattan Casino, Harlem.	Jazz music.[1472]

[1468] 'Items of Social Interest', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 15, 1923, p. 8.

[1469] I have examined following newspapers between 1923 and 1943, *The Afro-American*, *The New York Amsterdam News*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Hartford Courant*, *The Chicago Defender*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *Atlanta Daily World*, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. The search was executed in New York Public Library newspaper database on July 26, 2014. It is possible that some occasions have been left outside of this search, because of the indexing of the keywords in the database. Basically, this search is directional on how frequently those events were organized.

[1470] This is based on the fact that 3rd Annual Spring Dance was organized in 1925 in Harlem. So, it is possible that the 1st and 2nd Annual Spring Dance also were organized in Harlem. However, I have not found any articles or other information concerning these dances.

[1471] Concerning the 1st Annual Spring Dance see the footnote 1471.

[1472] 'Women's Auxiliary to N.A.A.C.P. Launches 3d Annual Spring Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 18, 1925, p. 4. Although the article mentions, that "Women's Auxiliary to N.A.A.C.P. will offer to the public its third annual spring dance for the benefit of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People", another article claims, that "It should be most gratifying to Mrs. James Weldon Johnson and those other ladies who sponsored the big dance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People". See: "N.A.A.C.P. Dance at Manhattan Casino One of the Season's Biggest Successes", *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 1, 1925, p. 5. The latter article clearly connects the event to the NAACP. In addition to that, James Weldon Johnson was the executive secretary of the NAACP at the time. See: http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-history-James-Weldon-Johnson . The site was accessed on April 30, 2015. Thus, it is clear that the dance was basically organized by the NAACP.

March 19, 1926	4th Annual Spring Dance with John C. Smith Orchestra. The event was organized by the Committee of One Hundred Women Auxiliary to the NAACP.	At Manhattan Casino, Harlem.	Possibly jazz music.[1473]
March 16, 1931	The Annual Spring Dance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People with the National Lindy Hoppers contest. The guests of the event included at least two whites, a celebrated English dramatist and actor Noel Coward, and Carl Van Vechten.	At the Savoy Ballroom.	Jazz music.[1474]
	The NAACP Annual Dance		
January 29, 1932	The Annual Dance with Cecil Scott's Renaissance Orchestra by the Entertainment Committee of the New York Branch NAACP	at the Renaissance Casino, Harlem.	Jazz music.[1475]

[1473] Mrs. H. Binga Dismond, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 13, 1926, p. 7; Mrs. H. Binga Dismond, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 27, 1926, p. 7; Mrs. H. Binga Dismond, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 27, 1926, p. 7.

[1474] 'N.A.A.C.P. Plans Dance for March 16', *The Chicago Defender* (National edition), February 28, 1931, p. 11. *The Chicago Defender* stated, "A number of special features have been planned for the affair. At midnight there will be held the National Lindy Hoppers contest, with the best exponents of their art in final exhibition and well-known New Yorkers and theatrical people acting as judges." *The Pittsburgh Courier* claimed that white Lawrence Langner of the Theater Guild participated in the event. In addition to him there were approximately 1,200 persons in the dance. See: 'N.A.A.C.P. Dance Attracts Many', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 28, 1931, p. A9. Because Langner's name was not mentioned in the list of *The Afro-American*, his participation is not sure. *The Afro-American* reported that Sam Wooding's Grand Central Red Caps' Orchestra played in the event. Thus, music was jazz. See: 'New York – The Social Whirl – By Gerry – N.A.A.C.P. Dance', *The Afro-American*, March 28, 1931, p. 7.

[1475] 'N.A.A.C.P. DANCE JANUARY 29th', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, January 23, 1932, p. 8.

February 24, 1933	The Second Annual Dance by the Entertainment Committee of the New York branch of the NAACP	at the Renaissance Casino, Harlem.	Unknown.[1476]
March 9, 1934	The Third Annual Dance and Entertainment by the NAACP New York branch celebrating their 25th Anniversary. Bonelli's Orchestra played for the dancing.	At Rockland Palace, Harlem.	Music style of Bonelli's Orchestra is unknown.[1477]
	The NAACP Anniversary/Birthday dance		
February 11, 1939	The 30th NAACP Anniversary dance with Duke Ellington Orchestra. It was announced that dancers like Bill Robinson, Fredi Washington, Alberta Hunter and Willie Bryant participated in the event.[1478]CBS was advertised to broadcast for half an hour the playing of Duke Ellington Orchestra in the event.[1479]	At 369th Regiment Armory at 5th Avenue at 142nd St.	Jazz and swing music.
February 9, 1940	The 31st NAACP Anniversary with Count Basie. It was announced that CBS broadcast for half an hour Count Basie's music in the event. The chief aim of the event was	At the Golden Gate Ballroom, Harlem.	Swing music.

[1476] 'To Give Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 22, 1933, p. 5 and 'Harlem Night By Night By Maurice Dancer', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 4, 1933, p. A6.

[1477] Gloria Harding, 'Cocktails and Caviar – News and Notions In and Around Old New York', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 17, 1934, p. 9 and 'To Aid NAACP With Proceeds', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 10, 1934, p. 4 and 'NAACP Benefit Well Attended', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 17, 1934, p. 5. According to the article "Nearly a thousand persons" went to the event.

[1478] 'Stars Set For Affair', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 11, 1939, p. 20 and 'Dance with Duke Ellington celebrating 30th N.A.A.C.P. Anniversary', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 28, 1939, p. 16 and 'N.A.A.C.P. Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 28, 1939, p. 6.

[1479] 'Bill Robinson Heads Cast Of NAACP's Birthday Ball', *Atlanta Daily World*, February 9, 1939, p. 3.

	announced to be raising funds to push the fight to pass the anti-lynching bill in the Senate.[1480]		
February 11, 1942	The 33rd NAACP Birthday Ball with Lucky Millinder Orchestra and the Savoy Sultans. Obviously 3,000 people attended.[1481] The Ball was advertised to include African-American and white artists like Teddy Wilson and Danny Kaye.[1482]	At the Savoy Ballroom, Harlem.	Swing music.
February 26, 1943	The NAACP Birthday Ball 34th Anniversary. At least Count Basie provided music at the event. The event included white and African-American celebrities from Mr.'s Walter M. Scott, Harry Goodman, John Hammond to Mrs.'s Walter M. Scott, John Hammond, Bill Robinson and Bessie Buchanan.[1483]	At the Golden Gate Ballroom, Harlem.	Swing music.
	Other NAACP dances		
August 18, 1923	The whist party and dance of the NAACP	at the Alpha Physical Culture Club, 126 West 131st Street.	Unknown.[1484]

[1480] 'N.A.A.C.P. Dance Will Be Given In N.Y. Feb. 9', *The Chicago Defender*, February 3, 1940, p.9 and 'Count Basie To Broadcast 31st NAACP Dance', *Atlanta Daily World*, January 30, 1940, p. 3 and 'Joe Louis To Attend Dance After Battle', *Atlanta Daily World*, January 24, 1940, p. 3.

[1481] '3,000 Dance At New York NAACP Ball', *The Chicago Defender*, February 28, 1942, p. 13.

[1482] 'Artists To Appear For NAACP Ball', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 7, 1942, p. 19.

[1483] 'Hazel Scott And Count Basie To Be At NAACP's Ball', *Atlanta Daily World*, February 17, 1943, p. 3; 'Count Basie Aids NAACP In Annual Dance In Harlem', *The Chicago Defender*, February 20, 1943, p. 19; ''Dan Butley's Back Door Stuff', *The New York Amsterdam Star-News*, February 27, 1943, p. 11; Bill Chase, 'All Ears', *The New York Amsterdam Star-News*, March 6, 1943, p. 8.

[1484] 'Items of Social Interest', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 15, 1923, p. 8.

1924	The Women's Auxiliary of the N.A.A.C.P. possibly hosted a dance.	At Happy Rhone's, Harlem.	It is unclear, however, if music and dancing were involved in the event.[1485]
1925	The NAACP's Oriental Cabaret party during Christmas holidays.	At Bamboo Inn, Harlem.	It is unclear, however, if music and dancing were involved in the event.[1486]
February 28, 1927	The Card Tournament and a dance with Ford Dabney Orchestra by the Women's Auxiliary to the NAACP	at Manhattan Casino, Harlem.	Possibly jazz music.[1487]
June 10, 1927	The Summer Cabaret Dance by the Women's Auxiliary to the NAACP	at the Vodeo Club, Harlem.	Unknown.[1488]
October 26, 1927	The NAACP Benefit	at the Club Ebony at 65 West 129th Street.	Unknown.[1489]
February 10, 1928	The Annual Mid-Season Dance with Ford Dabney Orchestra. The event was given by an auxiliary of the NAACP[1490]known as	At Manhattan Casino, Harlem.	Possibly jazz music.

[1485] Mrs. H. Binga Dismond, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 6, 1926, p. 7. It is possible that the NAACP had this benefit dance in Harlem in November, 1924, but it is not sure. See: Janken 2003, p. 117. See also: Emily Bernard (edited by), *Remember Me to Harlem – The Letters Of Langston Hughes and Carl Van Vechten* (New York: Vintage Books, 2002), p. xiii. It is also possible that these were two different events.

[1486] Mrs. H. Binga Dismond, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, March 6, 1926, p. 7.

[1487] '$50 in Prizes at Card Tournament', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 16, 1927, p. 6 and Geraldyn Dismond, 'Fifty Dollars In Gold Two First Awards – Ford Dabney will play with his orchestra – In the N.A.A.C.P. Card Tournament Feb. 28th', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 19, 1927, p. 6.

[1488] Viola Woodlyn James, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, June 4, 1927, p. 6.

[1489] Floyd J. Calvin, 'Carolynne Snowden, Hollywood Movie Star, Dazzles New York When She "Steps Out" ', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 29, 1927, p. A3 and Viola Woodlyn James, 'New York Society', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 15, 1927, p. 6.

[1490] 'Club Chats', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 25, 1928, p. 6 and Bessye J. Bearden, 'Tid-Bits of New York Society', *The Chicago Defender*, February 18, 1928, p. 11.

	'Committee of One Hundred Women'.[1491]		
March 15, 1929	The Gala Spring Dance for the benefit of the NAACP given by 'the Women's Committee of One Hundreds'. Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson worked as the Master of Ceremonies.	At the Renaissance Casino.	Because Fletcher Henderson was mentioned as a participant in the event, that refers to jazz music, but that is not sure.[1492]
May 2, 1930	The Spring Cabaret Party with Louis Russell's Orchestra. The event was organized by the Women's Committee of the NAACP	at the Saratoga Club at 575 Lenox Avenue.	Jazz music.[1493]
August 15, 1931	The Scottsboro Defense Fund Benefit by the NAACP. The beach, swimming and dancing with Charlie Johnson and his Original Victor Recording Paradise Orchestra	at the mammoth Paradise Swimming Pool and the ballroom, Harlem.	Possibly jazz music.[1494]
February 5, 1932	The New York Branch of the NAACP dance	at the Renaissance Casino.	Jazz music.[1495]
April 21, 1932	The NAACP Benefit Dance with Ralph Cooper and his	At Rockland Palace, Harlem.	Jazz music.[1496]

[1491] 'Yes, Indeed, I'm Going! Wouldn't Miss Ford Dabney's Band', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 8, 1928, p. 8.

[1492] 'Tid-Bits of New York Society', *The Chicago Defender*, March 23, 1929, p. 11 and 'Women's Committee Fetes Walter White', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 15, 1929, p. 5; 'N.A.A.C.P. Benefit Dance is Harlem's Biggest Society Event', *The Afro-American*, March 23, 1929, p. 5.

[1493] 'Clubs', *The Chicago Defender*, April 19, 1930, p. 11 and 'Tid-Bits of New York Society', *The Chicago Defender*, May 10, 1930, p. 11.

[1494] 'Crowds Witness Aquatic Car Nival At Paradise Pool', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 19, 1931, p. 12.

[1495] 'New York Society', *The Afro-American*, February 6, 1932, p. 10.

[1496] 'Theatrical Heads May Face Suits', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 27, 1932, p. 1 and ' "Fast Play" Hinted As Duke Refuses To Play At Benefit', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, April 30, 1932, p. A8.

	Kongo Knights and John C. Smith and his Harlem Syncopators. The dance and contest were under white George W. Johnson's supervision.		
December 27, 1932	A Formal Dance by the junior division of the New York branch of the NAACP	at the Lido Pool, Harlem.	Unknown.[1497]
May 26, 1934	The Mammoth Midnite Benefit by the NAACP and *The Pittsburgh Courier*. The event contained many jazz orchestras like Jimmie Lunceford, Louis Russell, Tiny Bradshaw, Fletcher Henderson and Willie Bryant. And a lot of dancers like Bill Robinson, Derby Wilson, Rubberlegs Williams, Buck and Bubbles and Four Flash Devils were advertised to perform in the event.[1498]The event was planned for raising funds for the NAACP.[1499]	At the Apollo Theatre, Harlem.	Jazz music.[1500]
March 15, 1935	The NAACP dance by the women's committee of the New York branch	at Rockland Palace.	Unknown.[1501]
February 14, 1936	The Junior Debs of the NAACP dance	at the Savoy Ballroom.	Music in the event is unknown, but, because the

[1497] 'To Give Formal', *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 21, 1932, p. 4.

[1498] 'Mammoth Benefit Show For the N.A.A.C.P. National Defense Fund – Sponsored by The Pittsburgh Courier', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, May 26, 1934, p. A1.

[1499] 'New York Set For Huge Defense Fund Benefit', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, May 19, 1934, p. 11.

[1500] 'Mammoth Benefit Show For the N.A.A.C.P. National Defense Fund – Sponsored by The Pittsburgh Courier', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, May 26, 1934, p. A1; 'New York Plans For Huge Defense Fund Benefit', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, May 12, 1934, A1.

[1501] 'Local NAACP Branch to Hold Dance March 15', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 23, 1935, p. 7.

			event was held at the Savoy Ballroom, it might have been swing.[1502]
March 6, 1936	A benefit dance for the Scottsboro Boys aided by the NAACP and a few other organizations	at the Savoy Ballroom.	Music was swing, which was played by Fletcher Henderson and Ray Noble Orchestras.[1503]
April 30, 1936	A Charity Ball sponsored by the New York branch of the NAACP	at the Park Palace Ballroom on 110th Street and Fifth Avenue.	Unknown.[1504]
November, 1936	The NAACP's Annual Subscription Fund	at the Savoy Ballroom, Harlem.	Music in the event is unknown, but, because the event was held at the Savoy Ballroom, it might have been swing.[1505]
April 30, 1937	A "spring frolic" benefit by the New York branch of the NAACP	at the Renaissance Casino, Harlem.	Unknown.[1506]
November, 1937	A social gathering by the Youth Council of the NAACP	at the Savoy Ballroom, Harlem.	Music in the event was possibly swing, because the event happened at

[1502] J. Wayne Burrell, 'Harlem Social Survey', *The Afro-American*, February 15, 1936, p. 18.

[1503] J. Wayne Burrell, 'Harlem Clubs Social Society Whirl', *The Afro-American*, March 7, 1936, p. 18.

[1504] 'Two Get Prizes For Lace Gowns', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 2, 1936, p. 6. The article mentions that it was a dance, even if there also was a dress competition.

[1505] 'What's Happening In New York By Frank Byrd', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, November 21, 1936, p. A8.

[1506] 'Ready For Its Frolic', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 24, 1937, p. 8.

			the Savoy Ballroom.[1507]
May 27, 1938	The Maypole Dance sponsored by the Entertainment Committee of the New York Branch of the NAACP. The program also included entertainers from the Apollo Theatre, Small's Paradise and Plantation Club. The dance included the 1938 swing version of Maypole dancing, so jazz dance seems to have been included in the event.	At the Renaissance Casino.	Music was jazz/swing, which was played by Vernon Andrade Orchestra.[1508]
April 2, 1941	Freedom From Want Rally by The Congress of Clubs of Greater New York. Walter White of the NAACP as a member on the advisory board. Other members of the board, a civic worker, a justice, and people from the Harlem Labor Center, from the I.L.G.W.U, and from St. Martin Church.[1509]	At the Savoy Ballroom, Harlem.	Music in the event is unknown, but, because the event was advertised to happen at the Savoy Ballroom, it might have been swing.
October 16, 1943	The NAACP Youth Guidance Series Opening Matinee Dance-Rally. Count Basie was advertised to play in the event. In addition to that Lena Horne, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Hazel Scott, Cab Calloway, Teddy	At the Savoy Ballroom, Harlem.	Swing music.

[1507] 'Around Harlem With Archie Seale', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 20, 1937, p. 18.

[1508] 'Maypole Dance To Be Happy Affair May 27', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 28, 1938, p. 8; '- Attend Maypole Dance –', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 4, 1938, p. 8; 'Local Branch NAACP Entertains Friends With Maypole Dance', *The New York Age*, June 4, 1938, p. 4.

[1509] 'Advisory Unit Holds Session' ,*The New York Amsterdam Star-News*, March 8, 1941, p. 7.

	Wilson and Charlie Barnet were advertised to participate in the event.[1510]		
October 30, 1943	'Better Neighbors Teen Age Hallowe'en Dance' with Lena Horne, Maxine Sullivan, Billy Strayhowe [likely Billy Strayhorn] and The Deep River Boys. It was announced that the NAACP Youth Councils sponsor the event.[1511]	At the Savoy Ballroom, Harlem.	Swing music.
November 19, 1943	The Hostesses Supervisory Committee's Winter Dance. The event was connected to the NAACP.[1512]	At the Savoy Ballroom, Harlem.	Music in the event is unknown, but, because the event was held at the Savoy Ballroom, it might have been swing.

It seems that jazz and swing music was used systemically in the NAACP-connected dance events. When the jazz and swing music events are summed from Table 11, it can be roughly estimated that the NAACP used jazz in between 39.5 percent and 65.8 percent of the events. However, this analysis includes some uncertainty, because music is not clear in all the cases.[1513] The use of jazz and swing in the NAACP-connected events is supported by the fact that the association organized its dances in 65,8 percent of the cases in popular Harlem ballrooms, like the Savoy Ballroom and the Renaissance Ballroom, Manhattan Casino/Rockland

[1510] 'Youth Guidance Series Opens At Savoy October 16', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 9, 1943, p. 21 and 'Swing Starts To Support NAACP Youth Program', *Atlanta Daily World*, October 11, 1943, p. 2.

[1511] 'Better Neighbors Teen Age Hallowe'en Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News,* October 23, 1943, p. 22 and 'Better Neighbors Teen Age Hallowe'en Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News,* October 30, 1943, p. B9.

[1512] 'Anything for Fighting Men, Says Lena', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 20, 1943, p. 23. The article contains a picture with a text, where it is stated, "Lena Horne, first lady of the screen...to receive first two tickets to the Hostesses Supervisory Committee's winter dance from NAACP's Roy Wilkins." Thus, the dance was connected to the NAACP.

[1513] This is based on Table 11. All the fifteen cases, where jazz and swing was surely used, make 39,5 % from the total 38 cases. If the 10 cases, where jazz and swing possible was used, are added to the figure, it makes 65.8 % from the total, 38 cases.

Palace and the Golden Gate Ballroom. The strategy seemed to work as people packed those events[1514].

In addition to the NAACP-organized events in Harlem, there also were various organizations like the Utility Club, The Hotel Bellmen Beneficial Association, The Social Rounders and *The Line* newspaper, which occasionally organized those events for the benefit of the NAACP.[1515] Also, theatre groups like the "Liza" company organized "a benefit all-star midnight revue at the Lafayette Theatre for the NAACP" in March 1923, and "Runnin' Wild" company organized another benefit for the association in April 1924, at New Star Casino.[1516] Both African-American companies had successful theater runs as discussed in the chapter 'The Harlem Jazz Dance on Broadway Theaters and the Mainstream Press Between 1921 and 1943'. Thus it is clear that the NAACP was strongly connected in Harlemites' minds.

That is why it is interesting that the NAACP did not take a firm stand on jazz dance, and especially on the Lindy Hop, which was very popular at the time in Harlem. It seems to have happened only once that the NAACP was supporting the Lindy Hop, when there was the National Lindy Hoppers Contest at the same time as the NAACP's annual spring dance at the Savoy Ballroom in 1931. Possibly the NAACP's assistant secretary Roy Wilkins' comment about what he remembered most about the "radical" decade, the 1930s, when he was in charge, is illuminating. He mentioned Jesse Owens' performance during the 1936 Olympics, Joe Louis' 1938 defeat of Max Schmeling and the day when the Pullman Company accepted the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters' demands after over ten years of contract battle.[1517] For example, Wilkins did not refer to Harlemites' exceptional winning streak in the Lindy Hop as far as the Harvest Moon Ball was concerned.

[1514] See Table 11. At least, 25 events of the 38 events were organized in the big ballrooms. That means 65,8 % of the cases. See for example for audience records: '3,000 Dance At New York NAACP Ball', *The Chicago Defender*, February 28, 1942, p. 13 and 'Crowds Witness Aquatic Carnival At Paradise Pool', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 19, 1931, p. 12. According to the latter article, over 2,000 people participated in the NAACP event.

[1515] See for example these: 'Utility Club' in 'Club Chats', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 19, 1927, p. 6; "Mesdames Sarl Price Patton and Evelyn Laney are giving a cabaret party at Bamboo Inn tomorrow night for the benefit of the N.A.A.CP. campaign" in 'Side Lights on Society', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 6, 1928, p. 4; The Social Rounders, Inc. in 'Club Chats', *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 12, 1928, p. 4 and "The Line, a young people's newspaper" in 'Newspaper To Give Benefit At Y.W.C.A.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 28, 1934, p. 2; "The Hotel Bellmen Beneficial Association, Inc." in 'Bellmen Will Fete Friends', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 20, 1940, p. 5.

[1516] The letter to 'Dear Friend' from 'National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People' signed by Executive Secretary of the Harlem Office, dated March 15, 1923, 'NAACP Branch Files – New York City, Harlem Jan-Apr 1923' folder, NAACP papers, Library of Congress. 'Tuesday, March 27 – Lafayette Theatre – 7th Avenue At 131st Street – All Star Midnight Revue By The "Liza" Company', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 21, 1923, p. 4. 'Miller & Lyles and 'Runnin' Wild Company', *The Chicago Defender*, March 29, 1924, p. 12.

[1517] Caponi-Tabery 2008, p. 18.

According to Gena Caponi-Tabery, who has examined jazz and basketball and their contribution to the 1930's African-American culture, "for African-American intellectuals and political leaders such as Walter White and Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, jazz, blues and the dancing that went with them did not seem to register as important cultural contributions."[1518]

Caponi-Tabery is supported by the illuminating contradictory of how the Lindy Hop was becoming an important dance in and outside Harlem from the end of the 1920s, and how the NAACP-connected Harlem Renaissance characters like W.E.B. Du Bois and also James Weldon Johnson, were not supporting "lower forms" dances like the Cakewalk, which the Lindy Hop obviously belonged to, as well.[1519]

Anyway, the NAACP had jazz and jazz dance in its events. They occasionally also had dancers like Bill Robinson performing at their events, although most of the events likely had social dance. See Table 11.[1520] It seems that the NAACP members and its supporters preferred jazz and jazz dance, but the NAACP leaders usually did not. It is illuminating when the Urban League leader and a leading figure in the Harlem Renaissance Movement, Charles S. Johnson, and W.E.B. Du Bois, who was the other leading figure of the movement, and the one of the central figures of the NAACP, decided to promote "anything that calls attention to our development along the higher lines" between 1925 and 1926. Their assistants, in addition to James Weldon Johnson and Walter White's offices, were asked to comb the newspapers and college literary magazines and to find "any mention of aspiring writers, poets, musicians, and artists". It is remarkable that dancers were not mentioned in the list.[1521]

However, later in 1943, when the Savoy Ballroom was closed for half a year for vice charges, the NAACP seemed to have a crucial role in the Savoy Ballroom's re-opening as the NAACP's Walter White was a negotiator between officials and the Savoy Ballroom, and the NAACP's legal counsel, Thurgood Marshall, was obviously the one who impressed on mayor Fiorella LaGuardia that the Savoy should be re-opened.[1522]

The NAACP seemed to have a bipolar attitude for jazz dancing in Harlem. They had jazz and swing music, and jazz dancing in their events and raised their voices,

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[1518] Ibid., p. 139. Roy Wilkins' autobiography *Standing Fast* occasionally takes a stance on dancing, which refers to that the subject, however, was somehow important to him. See: Wilkins and Matthews 1982, pp. 32, 64, 65, 73, 76, 84 and 86.

[1519] Although Du Bois and Johnson obviously never openly expressed their possibly negative opinion about the Lindy Hop, they, however, never seemed to talk about it in public. Thus they were not at least supporting it.

[1520] It is possible that there were more dance performances in the NAACP events in Harlem than it is mentioned in Table 11. Information concerning possible dance performances in the events is scarce which becomes clear from the sources like newspaper articles and advertisements which are used for the Table 11. Because many of the events were organized in the big Harlem ballrooms like the Savoy Ballroom, it is likely that they had social dance in those events.

[1521] Lewis 2000, pp. 157, 159 and 166-167.

[1522] Monaghan 2005, p. 37.

when an obvious communal institute in Harlem, the Savoy Ballroom, was closed by officials. At the same time, they did not promote jazz dancing and its various divisions as remarkable African-American achievements, at least in the Harlem context.[1523] It seems that jazz and swing music were only a vehicle to get the masses into those dance events. The NAACP raised funds in the events for different purposes like pushing the anti-lynching bill in the senate in 1940, but indeed unsuccessfully.[1524] Because the NAACP had dances in Harlem, which were connected to jazz and swing music, only one to four times per year, it seems that jazz dancing was not a remarkable vehicle to try to affect to the position of African-Americans. However, it seems that as the association used jazz and swing in those events for raising funds for its purposes, jazz dance was used at least indirectly as a vehicle to try to affect the position of African-Americans.

The indirect uses of jazz dance in the NAACP activities probably had an effect on the African-Americans' position. Jazz and swing had its part in the support events of the Scottsboro case as to getting the masses to participate in those events, and thus jazz dance at least indirectly raised interest in the case. Jazz and swing, and jazz dance, probably helped the NAACP to raise more funds than the association could have raised with those events without dancing and music.[1525]

1523 Jenny Woodley whose study discusses the NAACP's cultural campaign for Civil Rights between the 1910s and the 1970s agrees that the NAACP leaders had "an uneasy relationship" with African-American music which reminded them of minstrelsy aspects. They recognized the importance of popular African-American music to some degree, but it seems that dancing was not recognized similarly. Although Walter White and James Weldon Johnson "guided tours" for whites in Harlem in the 1920s, and dancing seemed to play a part in their tours and parties, they did not seem to be determined to defend popular African-American dances as remarkable African-American achievements. See: Woodley 2014, pp. 40-42, 55-56, 59. Indeed, Walter White did not mention dancing in his autobiography when he discussed his and James Weldon Johnson's parties in the beginning of the 1920s. See: White 1969, p. 43. Otherwise, he seemed to discuss dancing quite little. See for example: Janken 2003, pp. 92-95, 113-114 and 117; Sondra Kathryn Wilson (Edited by), *In Search of Democracy – The NAACP Writings of James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins (1920-1977)* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1999), p. 250. It seems that the Harlem jazz dance was not a remarkable achievement to White. The dismissive attitude of the NAACP leaders becomes otherwise clear in this dissertation as well.

1524 As Robert L. Zangrando points out in his study that as the NAACP's attempts in getting the anti-lynch bill accepted were not successful between 1934 and 1940, the campaign of the association for the anti-lynch bill likely had some influence on lynchings as those were decreased in some places in the U.S. during the time period. Robert L. Zangrando, 'The NAACP and a Federal Antilynching Bill, 1934-1940', *The Journal of Negro History Vol. 50*, No. 2, April, 1965, Association for the Study of African-American Life and History, Inc, pp. 106 and 114-116. The NAACP's fund raising in 1940, however, seemed to have had only a minor part in that as lynchings had already decreased markedly in the second half of the 1930s.

1525 It seems that the Anti-lynching bill and the Scottsboro case were the biggest NAACP cases in the 1930s.

6.3 The Communists and Their Dance Activities in Harlem

The American Communist Party (the ACP) was a marginal phenomenon in Harlem's political life for the most of the 1920s. The number of African-American Communists in Harlem remained small. When the Depression began in 1929, there were only fifteen African-Americans in the American Communist Party cadre in Harlem.[1526] The African Blood Brotherhood, which had no connection to the ACP in the very beginning, was absorbed by the Communists in 1923, and that helped later in recruiting African-Americans behind the politics of the ACP.[1527] When the ACP decided, in October 1928, that African-Americans had the right for "self-determination" as a nation, that led to the emphasis on the African-American question. The ACP chose the biggest African-American community in the United States, Harlem, as the target where the ACP tried to get African-Americans to have confidence in the party. The ACP considered Harlem as a crucial step for its success among all African-Americans. During the 1930s, the party activities spread around the Harlem with the help of different organizations, like WPA workers groups, tenants unions, and cultural groups. At their height, in 1938, the party had almost one thousand members in Harlem, but it activated thousands of Harlemites through its activities. According to Mark Naison, there has not been any other socialist organization which has had such a deep impact on an African-American community.[1528] The Communists' activities also spread into jazz and swing, and jazz dance.

In the wake of the Great Depression in 1929, the ACP-connected organization, the American Negro Labor Congress, and the Negro Champion were able to organize the Harlem Revels Solidarity dance for the first time, at the Renaissance Casino on Tuesday, January 22, 1929. The Vernon Andrade Renaissance Orchestra played in the event and about a thousand workers of all races attended. Other artists in the event were the Hall Johnson Choir, Paul and Thelma Meeros of Connie's Inn Revue, Doris Rheubottom of the Alhambra, and Elisabeth Welsh from the cast of *the Blackbirds* show.[1529] The mention of the Vernon Andrade Renaissance Orchestra and Connie's Inn Revue refers to jazz music and jazz dance, which supposedly were a part of the event.

1526 Naison 1984, pp. 3 and 25.

1527 Zumoff 2014, p. 301.

1528 Naison 1984, pp. xvii and 18-20.

1529 'Labor Congress in "Classic Night" ', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 2, 1929, p. 7; 'Harlem to Have ' Solidarity Dance' ', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, January 12, 1929, p. B2; 'Many Attend 'Harlem Revels' ',*The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 2, 1929, p. 2. The American Negro Labor Congress was founded by the Communists. See: Naison 1984, p. 14. Indeed, Herman Newton, national organizer in the American Negro Labor Congress, denied that the congress was a Communist organization, although he and several of its members were Communists at the time. See: 'Question of Negro Enters Red Probe', *The New York Amsterdam News*, July 23, 1930, p. 19. However, it is reasonable to say that the congress was connected to the ACP via its members.

After the Depression had struck[1530], the ACP had organized an Upper Harlem Council of the Unemployed, which arranged the International Day of Unemployment demonstration on March 6, 1930 at Union Square in Manhattan. The demonstration attracted a sizable number of African-Americans. According to African-American Communist leader Cyril Briggs, African-American and white workers ”stood shoulder to shoulder against the brutal attacks of the police”.

The demonstration was followed with the Communist interracial dance called Harlem Revels at the Rockland Palace located on 155th Street in Harlem on March 22, 1930. The dance was designed to show that the Party's commitment to black-white unity extended to the sphere of personal relations. The program included theatre, politics, and music by Duke Ellington. Allison Burroughs and Edith Segal also had a ”black and white” interpretive dance in the program.

Duke Ellington's music at the dance refers to jazz, but the interpretive dance refers more to modern dance than jazz dance, as both dancers were known from the modern dance world[1531]. According to *The African-American,* the act of the event where African-American and white women and men danced together “in utter abandon of race lines”, “was too much for the leaders of both races”. The act caused complaints from whites and African-Americans.[1532]

The ACP also helped to organize the Scottsboro benefit at the Rockland Palace on May 15, 1932. In addition to speeches from James Ford, Eugene Gordon, Louise Thompson, and Waldo Frank, the program contained presentations from Rose McLendon, the cast of *Porgy and Bess*, Martha Graham and her dancers, and the Hall Johnson choir. Cab Calloway provided music. Over two thousand mostly white people participated in the meeting. It is unknown if social dancing was involved in the program. Similarly, like the 1930 event, this seemed to have been divided between modern dance and jazz music.[1533] At the very least, Martha Graham and her dancers represented the former and Cab Calloway the latter. The cast of *Porgy and Bess* possibly represented both as tap dancer John W. Sublett known as Bubbles was part of *Porgy and Bess*, but it is unclear if he participated in the Rockland Palace event.[1534]

1530 The next two paragraphs are based on as follows: Naison 1984, pp. 35-37. Mark Naison does not clarify when the dance event was organized. It seems that it was organized on March 22, 1930, by The Liberator and the Labor Unity. See: 'Militant Journals Combine For Revel', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 19, 1930, p. 7 and 'Duke Ellington to Play For the "Harlem Revels" ', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 12, 1930, p. 9. Ellen Graff, who has examined the relationship between the modern dance movement and leftist political activism in New York City between 1928 and 1942, confirms the March 22 dance in her study. See: Graff 1997, p. 179.

1531 Julia L. Folkes, *Modern Bodies – Dance and American Modernism, 'Martha Graham to Alvin Ailey'* (Chapell Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), p. 57.

1532 Rienzi B. Lemus, 'General News and Society', *The Afro-American*, November 21, 1931, p. 10.

1533 Naison 1984, pp. 70-71.

1534 Sublett was part of Porgy and Bess. See: 'Porgy and Bess', *The New York Times*, October 11, 1935, p. 30 and 'Talent Enough in 'Porgy' To Send It Round World', *The*

When advertising their jazz music-based social events in Harlem, the ACP and its various affiliates seemed to rarely use the New York-connected newspapers, such as: *The Afro-American*, *The New York Amsterdam News*, *Atlanta Daily World* (*Atlanta World* 1931-1932), *The Chicago Defender*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Hartford Courant*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*.[1535] Between 1929 and 1936, Communists' advertisements of these kinds of events, or their events in particular, were mentioned in the articles of the newspapers, on average, only one to three times per year, as can be seen in the next table. An exception was year 1932 when even five events were mentioned in the articles. Music was surely jazz at least in five cases during the years, which is almost one third of the seventeen dances. In addition to that, it seems that dances were clearly racially mixed in at least seven dances out of seventeen different dances (almost half of the dances). This seems to indicate that the Communists and their affiliates organized frequently interracial dances in Harlem where jazz music was used at least occasionally. See Table 12.

Table 12. The Events of the ACP and the ACP-Connected Organizations in the New York-Connected Newspapers Between 1929 and 1936.

1929	The Harlem Revels Solidarity dance at the Renaissance Casino. Music was jazz, and it was provided by the Vernon Andrade Renaissance Orchestra. The American Negro Labor Congress and the Negro Champion organized the dance.[1536]
1930	The Harlem Revels dance at the Rockland Palace. Duke Ellington provided jazz music, but the dance performances were connected to modern dance. The ACP probably organized the dance.[1537]
1930	A Christmas Eve dance at the New Harlem Casino at West 116th Street and Lenox Avenue. The Young Workers of

Washington Post, October 20, 1935, p. SS4. There is no proof of John W. Sublett's participation in the Rockland Palace event.

[1535] I have executed a search of following newspapers between 1929 and 1943, *The Afro-American*, *The New York Amsterdam News*, *Atlanta Daily World* (*Atlanta World* 1931-1932), *The Chicago Defender*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Hartford Courant*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*. The search was executed in the New York Public Library newspaper database. The keywords used for the search were: harlem, communist, dance, dancing, "young workers", "league of struggle", "harlem international", "negro workers' club", "friends of harlem", "upper harlem council", "negro labor congress" and "negro champion". It is clear that the search is not 100 % effective, there could have been more of those events, however, this is a significant number. This search is called 'the Communist search 1929 – 1943' later in this study.

[1536] See footnote 1530.

[1537] See footnote 1531.

	New York, a junior branch of the ACP organized the event. Music in the event is unknown.[1538]
1931	The League of Struggle for Negro Rights (Communist organization) advertised to have a dance at the Harlem Casino at 100 West 116th Street and Lenox Avenue in December. Both African-American and white workers were invited to attend. Music in the event is unknown.[1539]
1932	A racially mixed dance in Harlem, which obviously was organized by "The Nat Turner Branch of the League of Struggle of Negro Rights". The music is unknown.[1540]
1932	The Scottsboro benefit at the Rockland Palace. Cab Calloway provided jazz music, but the dance performances were likely connected to modern dance. The ACP helped to organize the benefit.[1541]
1932	The Harlem International of the Friends of the Soviet Union had a "dancing party" at 2370 Seventh Avenue in May. The name of the place is unknown. The music entertainment was listed as: Race Group Singers, Race singer Rose Berkowitz, pianist Josephine Vernon, folk songs and music by Tin Pan Serenaders.[1542] It is unknown if jazz music was included.
1932	The "bi-racial" bon voyage dance party for about a dozen of 25 African-

[1538] 'Boy Reds Now Plan To Knock Out Santa', *The New York Times*, December 24, 1930, p. 1; 'Young Reds Plan Anti-Religious Day', *The Hartford Courant*, December 25, 1930, p. 15; 'Anti-Religious' Dance Held By Young Reds', *The New York Times*, December 25, 1930, p. 30.

[1539] 'Radicals to Dance', *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 16, 1931, p. 16.

[1540] Ferol Vincent-Smoot, 'Diary of A Harlemite', *Atlanta World*, January 31, 1932, p. 8.

[1541] See footnote 1534. The benefit was advertised at least in *The New York Amsterdam News*, but the Communists were not mentioned in the articles. See: 'Actors To Aid Southern Boys', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 4, 1932, p. 7 and 'Stars Enlisting To Help Youths', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 11, 1932, p. 3. The National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, which announced the event in the article of *The New York Amsterdam News* on May 4, 1932, was connected to the Communists. See: Alan M. Wald, *The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987), pp. 56 and 57.

[1542] 'Harlem Reds Give Gay Dancing Party', *The Chicago Defender*, May 28, 1932, p. 11.

	American actors at Unique Colony Circle at 254 West 135th Street in June, who were leaving for Russia to make a movie about "Negro life in America". The music in the party is unknown.[1543]
1932	Harlem Negro Workers' Club advertised that it offers Proletarian Cabaret, Dance and Entertainment at the Checker Club at 2493 Seventh Avenue on August 27, 1932. The event was planned to include Bon Bon Buddies, tap dancer Clarence Powell, singer Mabel Taylor and Noel Marsh Orchestra.[1544]
1933	An election rally, concert, and dance at the Rockland Palace in September was announced to be sponsored by the Harlem section of the Communist Party. The Yalaba Dancers with Assadata Dafora Horton were advertised to perform in the event, which refers to African dancing. Music was announced to be provided by The Liberator Dance Orchestra, directed by Jazzy Johnson.[1545]
1934	The director of the Harlem section of the ACP, James W. Ford's birthday party at Estonia Hall, at 27 West 115th Street in March. The program also included dancing.[1546] Music of the event is unknown.
1934	15th Anniversary of the Communist Party. Celebration of the Development of the Communism Among the Negro People and Grand Opening of the New Harlem Workers' Center at 415 Lenox Avenue. Dancing was advertised to be included every night during three nights in October.[1547] Music of the event is unknown.
1935	"Where Is the Negro Going?", a

[1543] 'Actors To Sail For Russia On June 14', *The Afro-American*, June 11, 1932, p. 3.

[1544] 'Don't Miss This! Harlem Negro Workers' Club Offering Proletarian Cabaret, Dance and Entertainment', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 24, 1932, p. 8.

[1545] 'Yalaba Dancers Will Perform At Concert', *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 27, 1933, p. 3

[1546] 'Comrades Hail Ford At Birthday Dinner', *The New York Amsterdam News*, March 10, 1934, p. 2.

[1547] '15th Anniversary of the Communist Party', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 13, 1934, p. 15.

	debate between Oscar De Priest and James W. Ford, a Communist leader, and Frank R. Crosswaith, a Socialist leader at Rockland Palace on January 18. Dancing was announced to be included.[1548] Music of the event is unknown.
1935	The Friends of Harlem and the Negro People's Theatre organized the Modern Dance performance "Waiting for Lefty" at Rockland Palace on June 1, which was followed by jazz dancing, including the Lindy Hop, Truckin', and foxtrot. Teddy Hill's Roseland Orchestra furnished music for jazz dancing. *The New York Amsterdam News* called it "a spectacular social affair" with 5,000 participants and "plenty of inter-racial dancing".[1549] According to Stretch Johnson, who was part of the cast, there were 66 % whites in the audience.[1550]
1935	The Friends of Harlem, the ACP-connected organization, arranged the New Year's Eve dance at 139 West 125th Street. The name of the place and music of the event are unknown.[1551]
1936	The debate between the Equity Congress and the Communist Party at Renaissance Casino on February 4, "Shall Communism become the political faith of the Negro for his best interest." The event included a dance with unknown music. It was organized by the Household Guild.[1552]
1936	A program about "the colored man's political outlook" at the Lido Ballroom on April 19. The speakers included Frank Crosswaith of the Socialist party, James

[1548] 'Where Is the Negro Going?', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 12, 1935, p. 3 and 'Ex-Solon Set To Face Foes', *The New York Amsterdam News*, January 19, 1935, p. 1.

[1549] Marvel Cooke, 'Rockland Is Packed But Show's Just So', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 8, 1935, p. 6.

[1550] Johnson and Johnson 2014, pp. 44-45. The pages numbers are based on the table of contents. This is based on so-called Kindle version of the book. The chapter is '3 Moving Up'.

[1551] S. S. Muse, 'Voice Of Harlem', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, January 11, 1936, p. A8. The dance was called New Year's Eve dance. That is why it was likely organized in the end of 1935.

[1552] 'Groups Will Debate Communism Question', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 1, 1936, p. 5.

	W. Ford of the Communist party, Lester B. Hill of the National Urban League and Congressman Vito Marcantonio. Bonelli's Lido Orchestra provided music, which refers to dancing. The style of music is unknown.[1553]

According to the *Daily Worker* newspaper, the official arm of the ACP, there were a lot more social dance events in Harlem. Sampling from two months, January 1934 and January 1935, showed there seemed to be events during every weekend and sometimes even two or more at the same time.

Those events advertised in the *Daily Worker* in January 1934 can be seen in Table 13.

Table 13. The Social Dances in Harlem in January 1934, According to the *Daily Worker*.

When:	What:	Where:	Music:
January 6 (Saturday)	The Balloon Dance with Negro Jazz Band organized by Harlem Progressive Youth Club	at the 104th Street and Madison Avenue.	The jazz band refers to jazz dancing, but no other information exists.[1554]
January 7 (Sunday)	Prog. Youth Club with "a radio dance"	at 1538 Madison Avenue.	Unknown.[1555]
January 13 (Saturday)	Dance given by Mutualists Obrera Mexicans	at the East 116th Street.	"Musica Tipica Mexicans".
January 13 (Saturday)	International Party given by 'Unit 417, Sect. 4'	at East 117th Street.	Latin American music.[1556]
January 14 (Sunday)	Dance held by The Lower Harlem Unemployment Council	at East 104th Street.	Unknown.[1557]
January 20 (Saturday)	Dance given by the Mutualists Obrera	at 66 E. 116th Street.	Music was likely rhumba.[1558]

[1553] J. Wayne Burrell, 'Harlem Clubs – Social – Society Whirl', *The Afro-American*, April 25, 1936, p. 12.

[1554] 'Tonight – Jan. 6 –Tonight – Balloon Dance', *Daily Worker*, January 6, 1934, p. 9.

[1555] 'What Workers' Groups Are Doing This Week-End', *Daily Worker*, January 6, 1934, p. 7.

[1556] 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 13, 1934, p. 9.

[1557] 'What's On' column (Sunday), *Daily Worker*, January 13, 1934, p. 9.

	Mexicano		
January 21 (Sunday)	The Colorlite Dance given by Harlem Progressive Youth Club	at 1538 Madison Avenue.	Music was by "Negro jazz band".[1559]
January 21 (Sunday)	"An affair for the benefit of the Daily Worker and the Harlem Liberator" which included dancing. Unit 408, Section 4, organized the event	at the Harlem I.W.O. headquarters at 1539 Madison Avenue.	Unknown.[1560]
January 27 (Saturday)	First National Convention - Friends of the Soviet Union organized "Concert and Dance" with Vernon Andrade's Orchestra	at New Star Casino at 107th Street.	The mentioned orchestra was advertised as "Best Negro band in Harlem".[1561] Music was jazz.
January 27 (Saturday)	House party given by the Joe Hill Br. I.L.D.	at 1855 Seventh Avenue.	It is unknown if jazz music or jazz dancing was involved.[1562]
January 28 (Sunday)	The Lower Harlem Unemployed Council dance event	at 63 East 104th Street.	No other information exists about the event.[1563]

It can be concluded that in January 1934, there were, according to the *Daily Worker*, at least three dance events from the eleven dance events in Harlem, which were strictly connected to jazz music and thus likely to include jazz dancing. Three of the events (the events on January 13 and 20 of 1934) were connected to Latin music. Thus, it seems that the Communists organized dance events frequently, two or three times a week, but jazz dance was not used as frequently in those events. That possibly means that jazz music and jazz dance were not planned for a frequent use for the purposes of the Communists in Harlem.

1558 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 20, 1934, p. 9. The only comment about music from the event is: "it is good music", but it is mentioned later in the beginning of February that they are "good rhumba-orchestra". Thus it is likely that they played rhumba also two weeks earlier. See: 'What's On' column, *Daily Worker*, February 3, 1934, p. 3.

1559 'What's On' column (Sunday), *Daily Worker*, January 20, 1934, p. 9.

1560 'Daily Worker Affair', *Daily Worker*, January 20, 1934, p. 3.

1561 'First National Convention – Friends of the Soviet Union', *Daily Worker*, January 18, 1934, p. 3 and '1st Nat'L Convention – Friends Of The Soviet Union', Daily Worker, January 27, 1934, p. 3.

1562 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 27, 1934, p. 7.

1563 'What's On' column (Sunday), *Daily Worker*, January 27, 1934, p. 7.

During January 1935, there were dance events during every weekend in Harlem. Those events can be seen in Table 14.

Table 14. The Social Dances in Harlem in January 1935, According to the *Daily Worker*.

When:	What:	Where:	Music:
January 5 (Saturday)	The "Dance, Entertainment [with] Good Jazz Band" event. Organized by Domestic Workers Union, I.W.O. Youth Section, American League Against War and Fascism, and Harlem Section Young Liberators	at 262 Lenox Avenue.	Jazz music.
January 5 (Saturday)	"Unity Dance of Negro and White Professionals, Intellectuals and Students [with] Entertainment, songs, greetings from professional organizations, colleges and universities"	at Dunbar Palace, 7th Avenue and 139th Street.	Unknown.[1564]
January 12 (Saturday)	"A benefit party to raise funds" to the Scottsboro case defending organizations. Cards, music and dancing were involved in the party	at Sunset Studio at Nicholas Avenue and 150th Street.	Unknown.[1565]
January 12 (Saturday)	"IRISH Dance and Social". Organized by Irish Workers Club	at Liam Mellowes Hall at 256 West 116th Street.	Irish and American Music.
January 12 (Saturday)	The "Young Liberators of Harlem. Dance.	at 415 Lenox Avenue.	Jazz music.

[1564] 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 4, 1935, p. 4.
[1565] 'Benefit for Scottsboro To Be Held Tomorrow', *Daily Worker*, January 11, 1935, p. 4.

	Entertainment" with "Snappy Jazz Band"		
January 12 (Saturday)	"Welcome Home Party for Washington Delegates". Organized by Harlem Needle Trades Workers Club	at 230 W. 124th St.	Unknown.[1566]
January 13 (Sunday)	"Lenin-Liebknecht-Luxemburg Memorial Mass Rally" by Young Communist League, District 2. The event included Red Dancers, Young Liberators' Chorus, Pioneer Graduation and Workers Laboratory Theatre.	At New Star Casino at 107th Street and Park Avenue.	Music is unknown. Dance program refers to modern dance.[1567]
January 18 (Friday)	"GALA-AFFAIR" to aid Marine Workers' Committees and League of Struggle for Negro Rights	at the Savoy Ballroom, Lenox Avenue and 140th Street.	The music was jazz by Willie Bryant and Chick Webb orchestras.
January 18 (Friday)	The "Debate of the Year". Communist James W. Ford debated against non-communists Oscar De Priest and Frank R. Crosswaith. Dancing was included into the event.	At Rockland Palace, 8th Avenue and 155th Street.	Unknown.[1568]
January 18 (Friday)	"Entertainment and Dance". Lower	at Scandinavian Educational Club at	Unknown.

[1566] 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 12, 1935, p. 4.

[1567] 'Lenin-Liebknecht-Luxemburg – Memorial Meeting', *Daily Worker*, January 12, 1935, p. 4; 'Youth Memorial Rally For Workers' Leaders To Be Held Tomorrow', *Daily Worker*, January 12, 1935, p. 1.

[1568] 'What's On' (Friday), *Daily Worker*, January 18, 1935, p. 4; 'Tonight! – Dance Until 3 At The Savoy Ball Room', *Daily Worker*, January 18, 1935, p. 4; 'TONITE! – Don't Miss This Extraordinary Event! – Debate of the Year', *Daily Worker*, January 18, 1935, p. 4. See also: 'Debate of the Year! James W. Ford meets Oscar De Priest and Frank R. Crosswaith – "Whither The Negro?" – Communism, Socialism or Democracy?', *Daily Worker*, January 17, 1935, p. 4; 'Gala Entertainment and Dance – Heywood Broun – Master of Ceremonies – Savoy Ballroom', *Daily Worker*, January 17, 1935, p. 4.

	Bronx Unemployment Council organized the event	125th Street.	
January 18 (Friday)	"PARTY at Irish American Club". Organized by Medical Center Branch American League Against War and Fascism. Entertainment and Harlem jazz band	at 463 West 162nd Street.	Jazz music.[1569]
January 19 (Saturday)	"Camp Unity Reunion" with a concert including "Red Vaudeville" with Workers' Laboratory Theatre, Camp Unity String Trio, Dancers, Jane Dudley – Outstanding Revolutionary Dancer. A dancer Jane Dudley refers to modern dance activities. Proceeds went to *Daily Worker* and Communist Party, District 2.	At Star Casino at 107th Street and Park Avenue.	Unknown.[1570]
January 19 (Saturday)	"The Harlem Jamboree. Get together night"	at Workers Center at 415 Lenox Avenue.	Roy Washington's orchestra provided music. The music style of the

[1569] 'What's On' column (Friday), *Daily Worker*, January 18, 1935, p. 4.

[1570] 'Tonight! Meet your old friends! Camp Unity – Reunion and Dance', *Daily Worker*, January 19, 1935, p. 6; 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 19, p. 12. See also for Jane Dudley and her training as modern dancer: Susan Manning, *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion*, (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2004), p. 62. *Daily Worker* claimed in its advertisement on January 7, that "Excellent Negro Jazz Band" is included in the mentioned Star Casino event. However, it is unclear if "Camp Unity String Trio" was that "African-American Jazz-Band". There is not a similar kind of mention anymore in the January 19 advertisements of *Daily Worker*. See: 'Camp Unity Reunion', *Daily Worker*, January 7, 1935, p. 4. See also: 'Tonight! Meet your old friends! Camp Unity – Reunion and Dance', *Daily Worker*, January 19, 1935, p. 6; 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 19, 1935, p. 12.

			orchestra is unknown.[1571]
January 20 (Sunday)	"DOMESTIC WORKERS UNION, Entertainment and Dance". "Good music"	at Finnish Hall at 15 West 126th Street.	Unknown.[1572]
January 25 (Friday)	"Gala Entertainment and Dance with two orchestras". Communist Party Unit 419 organized the event.	At 2061 Lexington Avenue near 125th Street.	Unknown.[1573]
January 26 (Saturday)	"Inaugural Dance of the opening of Harlem Youth Center"	at 1492 Madison Avenue, near 102nd Street.	Percey Dodd's Negro jazz band.
January 26 (Saturday)	The "Dance and Entertainment"	at 2744 Broadway, between 105th and 106th Streets.	Unknown.
January 26 (Saturday)	"[The Vanguard's] Housewarming Party" with "Refreshments-entertainment-dancing" by unknown organizer	at West 141st Street.	Unknown.
January 26 (Saturday)	"Irish Social and dance"	at Liam Mellowes Hall at West 116th Street and 8th Avenue.	Irish and American dance music.[1574]It is unknown if jazz music was included.
January 27 (Sunday)	House party by Young Communist League Unit 441 with a mention: "Good time. Interesting entertainment"	at West 128th Street.	It is unknown if jazz dancing or jazz music was included.
January 27	"Young Liberators-	at 262 Lenox	Unknown.[1575]

1571 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 19, 1935, p. 13.

1572 'What's On' column (Sunday), *Daily Worker*, January 19, 1935, p. 13.

1573 'Tonight – Entertainment and Dance' and 'What's On' column (Friday), *Daily Worker*, January 25, 1935, p. 4.

1574 'What's On' column (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 26, 1935, p. 6.

1575 'What's On' column (Sunday), *Daily Worker*, January 26, 1935, p. 6.

(Sunday)	Open Forum" with a mention: "Dancing will follow"	Avenue.	

In January 1935, jazz music and likely jazz dancing, was included in more than every fifth event in Harlem (five out of twenty-one events). That is a relatively lesser amount than the year before, in January 1934. Otherwise, the Communists' activities in Harlem seemed to be increasing in January 1935, because there were at least ten more events than in January 1934. Accordingly, as in January 1934, it seems that the Communists organized dance events frequently in January 1935, from two times to seven times a week, and although jazz music and dancing seemed to have been used, on average, once every week, jazz dance was not used as frequently than the increased activity of the Communists would have allowed. As in January 1934, that possibly suggests that jazz music and jazz dance were not planned for frequent use for the purposes of the Communists in Harlem.

The next time dance events organized by the ACP and its affiliates are found is in 1943, when using information from the earlier mentioned New York-connected newspapers: *The Afro-American*, *The New York Amsterdam News*, *Atlanta Daily World*, *The Chicago Defender*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Boston Daily Globe*, *The Hartford Courant*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*.[1576] The first of those events was announced to happen at the Golden Gate Ballroom in Harlem on October 24, 1943, when the Citizens' Non-Partisan Committee was mentioned to sponsor the Victory Show to support Communist Ben Davis' election to the City Council. The committee included people from "differing political affiliations and religious faiths". The show was advertised to include jazz greats like Coleman Hawkins, Ella Fitzgerald, "Billy Holliday" (likely Billie Holiday), and Mary Lou Williams. The show was also announced to include theater and modern dancing. It possibly included the Berry Brothers, who represented jazz dance.[1577]

[1576] This is based on the Communist search 1929 – 1943. See footnote 1536. Harvey Klehr, who has researched American Communism in the 1930s, argues that after 1935 the Communists were found in various American organizations as the ACP penetrated American society during the Popular Front years. The Communists became hard to differentiate because they tried to "look and sound like liberals". They became influential in numerous organizations. According to Klehr, this all has complicated remarkably how to identify the Communist organizations. See: Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism – The Depression Decade* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1984), p. xi. Communists' mentioned actions might be a reason for why the New York-connected newspapers did not advertise "Communist" events as far as Harlem after the middle of the 1930s is concerned. Klehr claims that the Communists succeeded especially in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (the C.I.O. or CIO), the American Youth Congress, the American Labor party, and the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party at the time. See: Klehr 1984, p. xi. When searching these organizations from the newspapers which were used in the Communist search 1929 – 1943, no dance event which was connected to the organizations can be found in Harlem between 1929 and 1943. The search was performed with the keywords, Harlem, 'congress of industrial organizations', 'C.I.O', 'American Youth Congress', 'American Labor party', 'Farmer-Labor party' in the New York Public Library database on November 3, 2015.

[1577] 'Showlife's Top Artists In Million Dollar Show For Ben Davis, Jr., At Golden Gate Ballroom', *The New York Amsterdam News,* October 16, 1943, p. 7B. Paul Robeson

The second event, and the last of its kind to be advertised in those papers by the end of 1943, seemed to be when Ben Davis was elected to the City Council and Judge Francis Rivers elected to the City Court. There was a celebration organized for them in Harlem's Golden Gate Ballroom in December 1943. Swing and jazz musicians Cootie Williams, Teddy Williams [Wilson?], Lionel Hampton, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, and Lewis [Luis?] Russell provided music in the event. Dancing was included in the event.[1578]

According to Mark Naison, who has researched Communism in the Harlem context, swing and hot jazz became popular among "a group of young American-born Communists", who argued that African-American music "represented the keystone of an American musical culture that was "democratic" in spirit and form and embodied the best elements of the national character." They were interested in African-American, commercially successful, music idioms. That was contradictory to the earlier Communist critics who appreciated "protest songs or rural black music undiluted by 'commercialism'." As the Popular Front emerged at the same time as the increasing popularity of the big band dance music, there were some Communists who considered it relevant to use the music for dramatizing "the Afro-American contribution to American culture and the cultural benefits of interracial cooperation." The first favorable article on swing seemed to have been published in the September 12, 1937, issue of the *Daily Worker*. The article emphasized, "Negro musicians…have been the decisive element behind its history, development and course."[1579]

Between the last half of 1938 and the first half of 1939, the Communists participated in the contemporary African-American music programs, which were sponsored by "three different "united front" organizations". Swing and other African-American origin-based music forms were presented. One of these events was arranged at Carnegie Hall[1580]. The places for two other events are unknown. One of the events included African music and dancing as an opening presentation. It is unknown if social dancing was involved in any of these events.

Promoting African-American music as "a prototypical American art" did not get unanimous acceptance in the ACP. Basically, young "hipsters" preferred jazz and blues in the ACP. Young Communists argued that the growing popularity of African-American music represented a key manifestation of "a broad democratic

represented theater and Pearl Primus represented modern dancing. See: 'Robeson To Play Shakespearean Role At Rally For Ben Davis, Jr.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 23, 1943, p. 22. It was mentioned in the program, which is included in the latter article, that it "will include many musicians, singers and performers of international reputation". For example, it mentioned Pearl Primus, Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald and Coleman Hawkins, but not Berry Brothers. Instead of them there is a mention of Ismay Andrews and her Swa-Hili dancers. It looks like there were changes and Berry Brothers were not in the program, but that is not sure because they were included in the earlier program.

[1578] 'Pay Tribute To Victors In N.Y. Elections', *The Chicago Defender*, December 18, 1943, p. 2.

[1579] Naison 1984, p. 211.

[1580] This and the next paragraph are based on Naison 1984, pp. 211-213.

tendency in American life". There were others in the ACP, like foreign-born comrades, who could not accept this viewpoint.

According to Mark Naison, the Harlem section of the ACP also founded an interracial "swing club". However, it stays unclear when this club started and how long it operated.[1581] The club was likely located at 41 West 124th Street.[1582] The building still existed in October 2014, when the author of this study passed the building the last time. When considering the small size of the building, only about fourth of a block long, it seems that the club was no way comparable to remarkable Harlem ballrooms like the Savoy Ballroom, which was a block long.[1583]

It also seems, when sampling advertisements from October 1937 in the *Daily Worker*, that the club was active only on Sundays. That supports a picture that the club was not meant to compete with the Savoy Ballroom or with other ballrooms which worked on daily basis. The swing club used known musicians like Fess Williams, and probably Teddy Hill, and Claude Hopkins. Although the club was not able to compete with the Savoy Ballroom or other similar popular Harlem ballrooms by gathering similar crowds like these bigger ballrooms, the "swing club" likely help the Communists to reach people.[1584] Mark Naison also states that the Harlem section of the ACP also supported "jitterbugging" at its social events.

In the end of the 1930s, the *Daily Worker* began to frequently print reviews of jazz albums and the Young Communist League (the YCL) sponsored a "Swing America" event at Madison Square Garden in 1939. Mura Dehn and Annette Wolfe choreographed the Jitterbugs part of the event. The presentation used swing music and the apposite dance vocabulary. Indeed, there was a hint about modernism as it insisted, "[t]here'll be no Tango, no Charleston, no Black Bottom or Lindy Hop, Quadrille, Castle Walk, or Rumba. There'll be no Ragtime or Jazz. Just SWING

[1581] Naison 1984, p. 213. Naison does not explain when this club was opened and closed.

[1582] 'What's On – Sunday': 'Harlem Swing Club swings again!!!', *Daily Worker*, October 2, 1937, p. 8 and 'What's On – Sunday': 'Harlem Swing Club!', Daily Worker, October 30, 1937, p. 7. The address is mentioned in the advertisements.

[1583] The building at 41 West 124th Street in Harlem, New York is about fourth block long, four story high with a possible basement. The Savoy Ballroom was a block long, although its dance floor likely was smaller. See: Monaghan 2005, p. 65.

[1584] *Daily Worker* advertised 'Harlem Swing Club' on its 'What's On' column during October 1937. See: 'What's On', *Daily Worker*, October 2, 1937, p. 8; 'What's On', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 7. *Daily Worker* advertised 'Harlem Swing Band' on its 'What's On' column, which was announced to perform at the same address as 'Harlem Swing Club', although the name of the place was not in the advertisement. See: 'What's On', *Daily Worker*, October 9, 1937, p. 5. One of the advertisements also stated, "Swing cats from Hopkins, Fess Williams, Haymes, Hill, Turner, Blaime" were to be in "its jam session!!!!". See: 'What's On', *Daily Worker* October 30, 1937, p. 7. Probably 'Hopkins' is Claude Hopkins and 'Hill' is Teddy Hill. 'Haymes', 'Turner' and 'Blaim' are unknown. 'Harlem Swing Club' could not compete alone with Harlem's Savoy Ballroom, which engaged possibly even 25 million people with its seven days per week operation between 1926 and 1958. See: Hubbard and Monaghan 2009, p. 128.

AMERICA!" Thus, the presentation seemed to be basically jazz dance mixed with modern influences.[1585]

"Swing America", however, referred to the ACP dualism, where jazz was concerned. Although younger Communists supported jazz in its different forms, starting from the end of the 1920s, and especially after 1937, there still were many of those in the party who supported modern dance activities over jazz dance as it comes out in this chapter.

Ellen Graff has listed the ACP and its affiliates, the Workers Dance League, the New Dance League, and the American Dance Association, as having supported dance events between 1928 and 1940, and that most of these events were modern dance-connected.[1586] For example, Graff states that during 1930, there were sixteen different Communist-supported dance events from which only four happened in Harlem (in the Rockland Palace and in the New Harlem Casino). It is certain that jazz was included in only one of those events; it was included in the event of March 22, where Duke Ellington played. Otherwise, those events in Harlem were connected to modern dance, folk dances, wrestling, Creole and Negro work songs.

However, it can be pointed out that Ellen Graff has not taken into account all dance events in Harlem. As already shown earlier, when sampling the January 1934 and the January 1935 *Daily Worker*, there can be found more dance events in Harlem than she indicates in her list. As she has examined the *Daily Worker* between 1928 and 1940, she has not included all those events in her study. Graff even named her list as a "Partial Chronology of Dance Events…", which refers to the incompleteness of the list. Even if Graff has not noticed all social dance events in

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1585 Naison 1984, pp. 211-213 and Monaghan 2005, p. 60. See also: 'They'll Swing in 'Swing America' ', *Daily Worker*, May 3, 1939, p. 9.

1586 This and the next paragraph are based on as follows: Graff 1997, pp. 179-187. Graff has collected those events from *Daily Worker*, *New Theatre*, *Theatre Arts Committee*, *Dance Observer* and *The New York Times*, and from programs and clippings in the Dance Collection of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. According to Graff, during the years between 1931 and 1940 there were even fewer ACP dance events. According to her study, in 1931, there were only two events with a clear modern dance connection in Harlem. In 1932, there did not seem to be any dance events in Harlem, and in 1933, there were only two events with modern dance in Harlem. According to her list, after those years, the ACP and its organs did not organize any dance events in Harlem. Because Ellen Graff has not noticed all the dance events in Harlem, which can be found in *Daily Worker*, and has not examined newspapers like *The Afro-American*, *The New York Amsterdam News*, *The Hartford Courant* and *The Chicago Defender*, she has not found the earlier mentioned articles about dance and jazz in Harlem. Even if she researched *The New York Times*, she did not find the Christmas Eve 'anti-religious' dance which was organized by the Young Communist League at the New Harlem Casino on Christmas Eve in 1930. See: 'Boy Reds Now Plan To Knock Out Santa', *The New York Times*, December 24, 1930, p.1; 'Young Reds Plan Anti-Religious Day', *The Hartford Courant*, December 25, 1930, p. 15; ' 'Anti-Religious' Dance Held By Young Reds', *The New York Times*, December 25, 1930, p. 30. Ellen Graff's statistics are only directional as far as the ACP and its affiliates' support for modern dance between 1928 and 1940 is concerned. It does not take into account the social dance events which also proved Harlem Communists' support for jazz. It can be argued how remarkable the ACP's 'jazz support' really was. The ACP's dualism between modern dance and jazz dance is discussed later in the chapter.

Harlem during the time period, it seems, however, that she gives a directional picture about the support of the ACP and its affiliates for modern dance during the years.

It also should be noted that the ACP-connected parties tried to guide Harlemites on how to dance correctly. According to Ellen Graff, the Workers Dance League tried to include African-American dancers by sponsoring a forum called "What Direction Shall the Negro Dance Take?". In spite of that, African-Americans did not participate much in those projects. Mura Dehn, who was more identified with jazz dancing, especially in its Harlem context, than with the modern dance of the Workers Dance League, recalled that she felt like an outsider in those projects, because of the non-jazz orientation of the ACP-connected dance organizations.[1587]

For example, the Workers Dance League's 'Leaders and Teachers' Course' at the New Dance Group in downtown New York, between February 2 and April 8 in 1934 contained "Practical Training in the Dance-fundamentals in the following schools: 1) Ballet, 2) Duncan, 3) Dalcroze, 4) Humprey, 5) Graham, 6) Wigman…"[1588] All the names were connected to the modern dance world.[1589] There was no mention about jazz dances.

As an example of the ACP's and its affiliates' dualism in dancing, there were also social dancing classes, and ballet classes hosted by the Workers' Dance League during 1935. Social dancing classes included the waltz, foxtrot, and tango. Those classes were also held outside Harlem, in Manhattan.[1590] Additionally, there was the Lindy Hop competition organized by the New Youth Group in the Bronx in January 1935.[1591] It seems that the ACP was using the Lindy Hop for its purposes at the time in New York, as the *New York Amsterdam News* stated in its half-humoristic article 'Lenin and the Lindy' in February 1935:

> Can it be that the style commissars in the Soviet Union have come to the aid of the Harlem domestics who once made Maid's Night such a howling success at the Savoy Ballroom? The recent Russian ukase urging the Soviet workers to buy tuxedoes and long-tailed coats for gala occasions may have widespread repercussions in Harlem. You see it's like this. Until the Communists invaded Harlem (and the Savoy) the local hip-swingers had almost secured a copyright on that intricate social achievement-the Lindy Hop. Any dusky damsel who could

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[1587] Graff 1997, p. 96. 'What's On' and there "HARLEM FORUM on 'How Can the Negro Dancer Best Develop' at Harlem Y.W.C.A.", *Daily Worker*, January 13, 1934, p. 9. Workers Dance League organized the event.

[1588] 'Workers Dance League Opens Week-End Courses Feb. 2nd', *Daily Worker*, January 31, 1934, p. 7.

[1589] Margaret Lloyd, *The Borzoi Book Of Modern Dance* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1974 - originally published in 1949), pp. 3, 7-8, 11, 35 and 76.

[1590] See for example: 'What's On' (Registration Notices), *Daily Worker*, January 3, 1935, p. 4; 'What's On' (Registration Notices), *Daily Worker*, January 5, 1935, p. 4; 'What's On' (Monday Registration Notices), *Daily Worker*, January 21, 1935, p. 4; 'What's On' (Registration Notices), *Daily Worker*, January 23, 1935, p. 4.

[1591] 'What's On' (Saturday), *Daily Worker*, January 25, 1935, p. 4.

> execute the Lindy was always assured of a dancing partner, no matter what her color or social background…The Reds have put a proletarian blessing on the Lindy Hop and now the Union Square blondes and brunettes are stealing most of the devoted Harlem swains from their one-time dance partners. But the Moscow adoption of formal attire may yet save the situation. For, if evening clothes are regarded as proper in the Soviet Union, it is only a matter of time before it will become compulsory for the American Comrades to don their tails and slinking gowns. And when that moment arrives, the invaders will have to forego the Savoy's pet dance, for who can Lindy Hop with trailing skirts and flying tails? Self-determination in the Black Belt may be all right, but it is our opinion that the Harlem damsels would rather regain possession of the Lindy Hop.[1592]

It seems impossible that the Communists invaded the Savoy Ballroom in the way that they were the ones who were respected as the number one Lindy Hoppers there. There is no evidence to support this. It is a fact that the Savoy Lindy Hoppers took all first prizes in the Lindy Hop division of the Harvest Moon Ball contests between 1935 and 1942. Also the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, in this case, Herbert White and his dancers, had not any direct connections to the ACP during the time period.[1593] There were signs, however, that the ACP used the Lindy Hop for its purposes inside and outside the Savoy Ballroom. As mentioned earlier, there was the Lindy Hop competition in Bronx in 1935, which was organized by the Lower Bronx Unemployment Council[1594]. Also, the ACP and the ACP-connected organizations used the Savoy Ballroom for their events during the 1930s.[1595]

Secondly, there were probably the ACP-connected organizations which used the Lindy Hop and Big Apple dances in their Savoy Ballroom events. The ACP-connected event seems to have been a Hallowe'en Eve event on October 30, 1937,

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[1592] 'Lenin and the Lindy', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 9, 1935, p. 8. The "iron party discipline" and "the authority of the Comintern over the U.S. Party" were reaffirmed during December 1936. Naison 1984, p. 171. Thus, during February 1935 it probably was "impossible" not to obey exactly or, at least, regularly the instructions of the Comintern, and thus not to have certain dress code for certain events in the ACP-connected events, if the Comintern really gave the ukase concerning dress code at the gala occasions as claimed in the article.

[1593] The author of the study has examined a lot of other studies, interviews and articles concerning the Savoy Lindy Hoppers. There is no direct mention of the Communists and their appreciation. However, there were indirect connections as presented later in this chapter.

[1594] Lower Bronx Unemployment Council was likely the ACP-connected organization. See: Pamela A. Brunfelt, 'Karl Emil Nygard – Minnesota's Communist Mayor', Minnesota Historical Society, 2002, published in the Internet: http://collections.mnhs.org/MNHistoryMagazine/articles/58/v58i03p168-186.pdf , pp. 183 and 186. The site was accessed on April 30, 2015.

[1595] See for example: 'Scottsboro Ball, Savoy, Harlem, tonight' from 'What's On' (Friday), *Daily Worker*, March 1, 1935, p. 3; 'Grand Dances Tonight For 'Daily' Campaign', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 5; 'Labor Party to Hold Harlem Dance at Savoy Ballroom Saturday', *Daily Worker*, September 24, 1937, p. 6.

which the Social Workers Educational League organized at the Savoy Ballroom. The program was advertised as a "Regular Savoy Jamboree – Big Apple and Lindy Contests". Chick Webb and Orchestra, and the Savoy Sultans were announced to provide music for the event. The proceedings of the event were advertised as a "Party Building Drive".[1596] The *Daily Worker* advertised the event as the dance for " 'Daily' Campaign" as "...what you're doin' with your dough is to make the Daily Worker go."[1597]

A day before that, on October 29, 1937, there was announced to be the Celebrity Night at the Savoy Ballroom. George Tobias, Paula Trueman, Margot Stevenson, and Ralph Bates, with fourteen other "celebrities", were advertised to participate in the event. Ralph Bates was advertised as "British Novelist" and "Captain [of] "International Brigade"". Chick Webb and Orchestra, Ted[dy] Hill and his Orchestra, and The Savoy Sultans were announced to provide music for the event. The program also included "The Original Big Apple Dancers", who were likely Herbert White's dancers. The event was organized by "Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade". However, it is unclear if the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were directly connected to the Communists.[1598]

[1596] 'This Saturday Nite – October 30th – All the Spirits' will be celebrating on Hallowe'en Eve. Savoy Ballroom – 140th St. and Lenox Avenue', *Daily Worker*, October 27, 1937, p. 8. It is possible that the Big Apple contest was not for public as Frankie Manning has stated, "Even though the Savoy advertised it [the Big Apple] as a contest, the big apple was closed to the public." See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 151. There is not a mention of any contest participants or group names. According to Lewis A. Erenberg, Social Workers Educational League was connected to the leftists. Erenberg 1998, p. 134. Mark Naison states that the Communists developed "close working relationships" with many leading Harlem ministers, social workers and politicians at the latest after the end of 1936. Naison 1984, p. 172. He also claims that the mentioned organization was likely connected to the Communists.

[1597] 'Grand Dances Tonight For 'Daily' Campaign', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 5.

[1598] 'Only 3 Days Left! – Celebrity Night – All the Stars will be in it', *Daily Worker*, October 27, 1937, p. 8. As stated later, Herbert White's dancers did the Big Apple already in the beginning of October. Thus, it is likely that the advertised 'Original Big Apple Dancers' were nothing else but Herbert White's dancers who were part of the Savoy Ballroom entertainers at the time. There also existed another group called "the original Big Apple dancers" who were white teenagers from North and South Carolina, and Georgia. See: 'Big Apple Dancers at RKO-Boston Strut at Food Show's Apple Exhibit', *The Boston Daily Globe*, December 3, 1937, p. 7. They had a show already earlier in Boston in September 1937. See: 'New RKO-Boston Show To Star "Fats" Waller", *The Boston Daily Globe*, September 28, 1937, p. 14. There does not exist any other reference to them, but the name of the group as far as the Savoy Ballroom event is concerned. Considering Herbert White's dancers' connection to the Savoy Ballroom and their background in the dance, it is unlikely that the white Big Apple group participated in the Savoy event. It is unclear if Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade was directly connected to the Communists. There seems to have been an indirect connection between the Communists and Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade later in 1939 as there were spread flyers from the Communists and from Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade at the same time in February 1939. See: '12000 In Protest Paralyze 5th Ave.', *The New York Times*, February 2, 1939, p. 9. Because the advertisement was published in *Daily Worker*, it suggests, at least, indirect connections between the Communists and the mentioned organization.

In the beginning of October 1937, there was advertised to be an event at the Royal Windsor on 66th Street and Columbus Avenue in midtown New York, where the "Harvest Moon Ball Winners and Lindy Hoppers from Marx Brothers Picture "A Day At The Races" will do the Big Apple". The event was also announced to include "continuous dancing" which likely referred to social dancing. Claude Hopkins and His Band, featuring Beverly White and Russ Morgan in person, were planned to provide music for the event, which was organized by the Committee to Aid Community Youth Centers.[1599] However, it is not clear if the committee was directly connected to the Communists. As far as the entertainers of the event are concerned, at least, the Lindy Hoppers were surely Herbert White's dancers as known as Whitey's Lindy Hoppers[1600]. In addition to that, the ACP seemed to have occasionally used tap dancing in its events. For example, tap dancing was advertised to be included in the Mid-Winter Dance of Young Liberators at 262 Lenox Avenue in February 1935, where Royal Savannahans Dance Orchestra was planned to provide music, and the event also was announced to include tap dancers and the Blue Singers Quartet.[1601]

Terry Monaghan states that the ACP played, in some ways, a heroic role in the Scottsboro boys battle. The party booked the Harlem ballrooms, the Savoy Ballroom, the Golden Gate Ballroom, and the Renaissance Ballroom for supporting the Scottsboro case and for other purposes.[1602] According to historian Mark Solomon, the Communists enlisted African-American dancers like Bill Robinson, and Buck and Bubbles, musicians Benny Carter and Fletcher Henderson, and white actors like Groucho Marx to their popular Scottsboro benefit dances in 1934[1603]. Thus, the party was willing to combat "racial" divisions determined by political and social practices. When it came to cultural issues, the ACP, however, was not prepared to do the same. Monaghan claims that the ACP "retained the "white body" values of Modern Dance and was distinctly skeptical of African-American tastes in music and dance, especially when it came to swing."[1604]

[1599] 'Continuous Dancing – Two Bands – Claude Hopkins and His Band Featuring Beverly White, Russ Morgan - in person - added attraction Harvest Moon Ball Winners and Lindy Hoppers from Marx Brothers Picture "A Day At The Races" ', *Daily Worker*, October 6, 1937, p. 8. The same advertisement was also published in the October 7, 8 and 9 *Daily Worker* issues on page 8.

[1600] Miller 1996, pp. 128-130. Norma Miller refers to these dancers as Lindy Hoppers. The picture on page 129 refers to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, although it has been narrowed from its original size. Another picture from the same tour can be found from Frankie Manning's autobiography pictures between pages 64 and 65. The picture shows the Whitey's Lindy Hoppers group in the front of Cotton Club in Hollywood, Los Angeles. See: Manning and Millman 2007.

[1601] 'Mid-Winter Dance', *Daily Worker*, February 15, 1935, p. 3.

[1602] Monaghan 2005, p. 67. For an example of hiring Renaissance Ballroom for the Scottsboro case support see: 'Tonight! - United Scottsboro Benefit – Basketball Game and Dance – Thurs., Dec. 13 – 8 P.M. Sharp – Renaissance Casino', *Daily Worker*, December 13, 1934, p. 4.

[1603] Solomon 1998, the subchapter 'Changing of the Guard'. This is based on so-called Kindle version of the book. That is why the exact page numbers are not known.

[1604] Monaghan 2005, p. 67.

Despite the ACP and its affiliates organized interracial dances in Harlem, some Communists in Harlem had retained ”white values” in their racism. August Yokinen, a janitor at the Finnish Workers Club in Harlem, was announced to have had a hostile reaction against African-Americans who tried to participate in the Harlem Casino dance. The Yokinen case was handled in a public trial with a large crowd. Yokinen admitted his guilt and willingly agreed to perform duties he was assigned by the judgement. After that, federal authorities, however, arrested him as an undesirable alien and he was held for deportation.[1605] The reason for the deportation was the U.S. Court which ruled that ”holding membership in Communist party subjects man to exclusion”.[1606]

Mark Naison suggests that ”most Communists regarded the event as an affirmation of correct policy”, although these “events aroused some resentment in sections of Harlem’s Finnish community, which felt that Yokinen had been used as a sacrificial lamb, but also that the ACP was undermining their cultural institutions.”[1607] The last statement especially indicates larger racist sentiments among Finnish Communists in Harlem. This is supported by *The New York Amsterdam News* article which stated that Yokinen ”had assisted several members in ejecting three Negroes from a dance given by organization” referring to the Harlem Casino dance. Thus, Yokinen was not the only one in the case, although no one else was charged.[1608]

There were also other cases around the United States in which African-Americans were discriminated against in the Communist events. For example, in Detroit, African-Americans were excluded from “a left-wing” dance, where participating Communist party leaders “did nothing about it”. Mark Solomon found that in most cases, the Communist discriminators were punished.[1609] In this sense, the Yokinen case followed the procedure of the ACP: the discrimination ran deeper in the ACP members than the Yokinen case indicates. The ACP tried to reinforce its politics of integration by punishing the discriminators. In the aftermath of the Harlem case, Finnish Communists started to passionately support the positive position of the ACP on African-Americans[1610].

Even if it seems that the ACP and its affiliates mainly supported modern dance, it would be incorrect to claim that jazz music and jazz dance have not been significant

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[1605] Naison 1984, p. 48.

[1606] ’Finnish Janitor Who Discriminated at Club Dance in Harlem to Be Deported’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 30, 1931, p. 1.

[1607] Naison 1984, p. 49.

[1608] ’Finnish Janitor Who Discriminated at Club Dance in Harlem to Be Deported’, *The New York Amsterdam News*, September 30, 1931, p. 1.

[1609] According to Mark Solomon, there were several cases around the U.S., where African-American were discriminated by the Communists. These cases happened in addition to Detroit, for example, in Linden, New Jersey; Washington D.C., Chicago; Youngstown, Ohio and Buffalo. See: Solomon 1998 and there ’Chapter 7 The Communist Party in the Deep South’. This is based on so-called Kindle version of the book. That is why the exact page numbers are not known.

[1610] Naison 1984, p. 49.

in the Harlem activities of the ACP. As noted earlier, the Communists were able to organize many dance events for different purposes, even multiple events at the same time, during every weekend in January 1934 and in January 1935. Jazz music and jazz dance were included in at least one-fifth to one-third of these events. Supposedly, the same also happened during other years, at least between the end of the 1920s and World War II, when dancing was commonly part of the entertainment business.[1611] The ACP and its affiliates also occasionally hired the Savoy Ballroom, the Golden Gate Ballroom, the Renaissance Ballroom, and the Rockland Palace for different purposes[1612]. The ACP and its affiliates likely connected to jazz music and jazz dances via these ballrooms[1613].

However, it is noteworthy that the Communists mostly advertised their events in the *Daily Worker* and not in ordinary New York-connected newspapers. So only those who read the *Daily Worker* read those advertisements. That meant readers were mainly the ACP members. Even if the Harlem ACP members' amount doubled from 300 to 700 between January and August 1935, that still was not much, when the whole African-American population in Harlem, 204,000 residents, is considered.[1614] It also is possible that information about those dance events spread by "word of mouth" procedure. However, it seems evident that at the time, when Harlem was full of ballrooms, the popularity of the Communist dance events, when especially advertised only in the *Daily Worker*, was not so big outside the ACP and its organization members. Especially true when considering the facts that the ACP's

[1611] It is quite clear that during the 1930s, especially during the latter half of the 1930s, from 1935 onwards, the Communists continued their practices to organize dance events for different purposes in Harlem. At the time, almost everything was swinging (the Swing Era is usually defined as the time between 1935 and 1945) and dancing was one of the most important leisure activities. See for Swing Era definitions the chapter: 'Jazz Music in Harlem from the Jazz Age to the Swing Era'.

[1612] The Committee for the Support of the Marine Workers Industrial Union and the Committee for the Support of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights hired the Savoy Ballroom for their Ball on January 18, 1935 to aid the Marine Workers Union, the Negro Liberator and the League of Struggle for Negro Rights. See: 'Ball at Savoy To Aid Work Of 2 Groups', *Daily Worker*, December 13, 1934, p. 3. See for hiring the Savoy Ballroom for the Scottsboro case: 'Friday Eve, March 1 – Scottsboro Ball', *Daily Worker*, February 23, 1935, p. 4. Also Claude McKay states that the Communists hired the Savoy Ballroom for their purposes. He does not clarify, however, when and for what purposes. See: Claude McKay: *Harlem Negro Metropolis* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1940), p. 118. In addition to that, Monaghan states that the Communists hired the Savoy Ballroom many times for different purposes. He only expresses the Scottsboro case as an example. See: Monaghan 2005, pp. 67 and 40.

[1613] The ballrooms were connected to jazz as it has become clear during this study. Thus, it is likely that jazz was part of many events mentioned in this chapter, although it was not always mentioned what kind of music was played at those events.

[1614] Naison 1984, p. 158. There were over 204,000 African-Americans in Harlem in 1934. See: Robert M. Fogelson and Richard E. Rubenstein (advisory editors), *Mass Violence in America – The Complete Report of Mayor LaGuardia's Commission On The Harlem Riot of March 19, 1935* (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1969), p. 28. In addition, there were at least 45,000 Puerto Ricans by 1930. See the chapter 'Harlem Background: Infrastructure and Its Population from the 1870s Until 1943'.

vote total in Harlem was less than one thousand at that time, and "those ideologically committed to socialism" represented a very small minority of Harlemites.[1615]

So, it seems probable that the dance events advertised only in the *Daily Worker* were principally meant for the ACP and its organizations' members, and the dance events advertised in other regular New York-connected newspapers were meant also for the ordinary public. Although the Communists changed their course more for jazz and swing music at the latest in 1937, it seems evident that the ACP and its affiliates had no specific plan to use jazz dance as a frequent tool to affect the masses in Harlem. When sampling the *Daily Worker* for October 1937, which was three weeks after the first favorable article about swing in the *Daily Worker*, it seems, that the *Daily Worker* advertised nineteen dance-connected events in Harlem during October 1937. Out of these nineteen events, ten events were surely connected to swing music. In the case of nine events, it is not certain if jazz or swing music was included.[1616]

[1615] Naison 1984, p. 131.

[1616] The advertisements from *Daily Worker* with references to dancing in Harlem in October 1937 are mentioned below. Please note that if there is no information about the kind of music at the event the words '**no information'** have been added after the advertisement. If there is information, **information** is added. The advertisements are as follows: 'What's On (Tonight) – 'House party!! Good dance music – 40 West 128th St. Ausp. Unit 420.', *Daily Worker*, October 2, 1937, p. 8 – **no information**; 'What's On (Sunday) – Harlem Swing Club swings again!!! – 41 West 124th St.', *Daily Worker*, October 2, 1937, p. 8 - **information**; 'What's On (Sunday) Harlem Swing Band in session!', *Daily Worker*, October 9, 1937, p. 5 - **information**; 'What's On (Tomorrow) – Remember! Dance and Entertainment – 41 W. 124th St.', *Daily Worker*, October 21, 1937, unknown page number – **no information**; 'What's On (Saturday Night) – Gala Affair! Dance, entertainment, two orchestras Spanish, American at Julio Mella Club, 1413 Fifth Avenue', *Daily Worker*, October 22, 1937, p. 10 – **no information**; 'What's On (Saturday night, Manhattan) – World Premiere "Three Men on a Bosc." Dancing, Harlem Youth Center Br. YCL, Madison Ave. Near 102nd St.', *Daily Worker*, October 23, 1937, p. 8. – **no information**; 'What's On (Saturday night, Manhattan) – Gala Affair! Dance, entertainment, two orchestras, Spanish, American at Julio Mella Club – 1413 Fifth Ave.', *Daily Worker*, October 23, 1937, p. 8 – **no information**; 'What's On (Sunday) – Cocktail Party, benefit of Party Building Drive – 742 of Nicholas Ave.', *Daily Worker*, October 23, 1937, p. 8. – **no information**; 'What's On (Sunday) – Harlem Swing Club has its jam session for the C. P. drive – 41 West 124th St.', *Daily Worker*, October 23, 1937, p. 8 - **information**; 'What's On (Friday) - Gosh!!! Harlem WPA Teachers forget dignity with Maurice Hubbard's swing tunes. Bronze Studio 237 Lenox Avenue (near 131st)', *Daily Worker*, October 29, 1937, p. 10 - **information**; 'Tonight! Celebrity Night. All the Stars will be in it – Dance to the music of Chick Webb and Orchestra, Ted Hill and His Orchestra, The Savoy Sultans – The Original Big Apple Dancers – Friday Oct. 29 – Savoy Ballroom', *Daily Worker*, October 29, 1937, p. 10 - **information**; 'What's On (Saturday) – Halloween Dance at Social Hall, 145 E. 103rd St.', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 5 – **no information**; 'What's On (Saturday) – Swing With Hunter!!! A.S.U. Intercollegiate Hallowe'en Party at Community Church 550 W. 110th St.', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 5 - **information**; 'What's On (Saturday) Halloween Dance featuring Harlem Syncopators and irrational skits! Harlem Youth Center 1493 Madison Ave. Near 102nd St.', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 5 - **information**; 'Tonight! October 30th – All the Spirits will be celebrating on Hallowe'en Eve. – Savoy Ballroom', *Daily Worker*, October 30, p. 5 - **information**; 'What's On (Sunday) – Fall Dance and Farewell to Comrade MacGregor – at Club Obrero Espanol, 1490 Madison Ave. (102d St.) – Raymond Olivero and his Casino de Borinquen Orchestra', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 5 – **no**

When comparing the earlier *Daily Worker* samples from January 1934 and January 1935, to the sample of October 1937, it seems that jazz or swing was used more in the events, which were advertised in the *Daily Worker* in October 1937. Only about every fourth event during January 1934 and January 1935 was connected to jazz music.[1617] When looking at October 1937, it seems that at least 52,6 percent (ten of nineteen) of the events were connected to jazz and swing music at the time. That refers to the clear increase in the cases. However, it should be noted that there still were advertised only nineteen events in the *Daily Worker* in October 1937. That is slightly less amount than during January 1935. It seems that the Communists were using more jazz and swing music in their events in 1937 than before, but the quantity of the events did not increase, when compared to the earlier years.

Although it seems that the Communists began to extensively use more jazz and swing in Harlem at the latest in 1937, when the so-called Swing Era was in full effect, they mostly seemed to have changed music in their monthly dance events to the music in fashion, swing. That change likely happened because they were then able to get the masses better involved in their events. In spite of that, they did not seem to use jazz dancing systematically to affect the position of African-Americans[1618]. For example, when they used Herbert White's dancers regularly for the Big Apple performances in the beginning of October 1937, the use of the dancers was limited only to those dance performances. That means that they did not use the dancers in their articles or events, for instance, as examples about ill-treated Harlemites. The Scottsboro case seemed to be the biggest case of the ACP, where jazz dance was used directly for engaging masses into their events with the help of African-American dancers like Bill Robinson, and Buck and Bubbles, and with jazz or swing music. It could be said that they seemed to recognize jazz and swing music, but also jazz dancing to some degree, as vehicles to engage the masses in the events which were bettering the position of African-Americans. Similarly, like the NAACP, they did not support the Harlem-based jazz dances properly as cultural achievements. The reason for that might have been their bias toward modern dance. Similarly, like the NAACP, the Communists also used jazz music for their operations, but the Communists seemed to recognize the significance of African-American jazz and swing music in their articles.

Chapter Conclusion

The NAACP and the Communists seemed to take a similar kind of attitude towards Harlem jazz dance. Both used jazz and swing music variedly in their activities, but those seemed to be for getting the masses to their events. Especially, in

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information; 'Harlem Swing Club! Presents swing cats from Hopkins, Fess Williams, Haymes Hill, Turner, Blaine in its Jam Session!!!! 41 West 124th St.', *Daily Worker*, October 30, 1937, p. 5 - **information**.

[1617] This is discussed earlier in this chapter.

[1618] Since there were various dance events taking place at the same time in Harlem, we may conclude that there was no specific plan to organize and coordinate those dance events.

the case of the Communists, the Harlem Lindy Hop was recognized to some degree, such as when they used Whitey's Lindy Hoppers in their events in October 1937, and the Communists enlisted tap dancers like Bill Robinson, and Buck and Bubbles in the Scottsboro benefit dances in 1934, which speaks for recognizing tap dance as even a more important dance than the Lindy Hop when considering the significance of the Scottsboro case. In spite of that, they did not try to use jazz dance actively and directly for bettering the position of African-Americans, such as recognizing the Harlem jazz dances as important cultural achievements. Where the NAACP is concerned, jazz dance seemed to be only a vehicle to raise funds for its purposes. The younger Communists recognized jazz and swing music as important African-American inventions, but they did not recognize jazz dancing in the same way. One reason for this might have been a bias toward modern dance which was preferred among the Communists. Another reason might have been racist behavior. Although the ACP organized interracial dances in Harlem, some of its members had retained racist, "white", attitudes which came out as racist bursts around the United States, in addition to Harlem. As far as the NAACP was concerned, a reason for this might have been that the leading figures of the Harlem Renaissance Movement, who also were leaders in the NAACP, mostly acknowledged jazz dances as "lower art forms". The support events in Harlem of the Scottsboro case from both parties suggest that jazz dance was used, at least indirectly as a vehicle to try to affect the position of African-Americans. Thus, the Harlem-based jazz dance played at least a small role in the Scottsboro case to affect the position of African-Americans.

7 The Harlem Riots and Aftermath

Harlem was an economically and socially conflicted society from the 1920s to the 1940s and beyond. Everyday struggle was obvious in the crime and poverty ridden environment. It has come out through the course of this study how criminal activities were part of the Lindy Hop operations. Similarly, the social and economic downfall surrounded the Harlem dancers. Marshall Stearns even argues that the Lindy Hop was a certain kind of antidote to the crumbling circumstances in Harlem as it became part of the social equilibrium in Harlem.[1619] Also, 1935 and 1943 riots happened in those social and economic circumstances. That is why the study examines how the riots affected the Harlem entertainment business concerning jazz dancing, and what kind of connections the riots had to jazz dancing. Harlem entertainment had an emerging rival from the 1930s: the Swing-Street, West 52nd Street in Manhattan. How this entertainment affected Harlem entertainment is also discussed, in addition to World War II, which led to drafting the leading Harlem dancers, and thus probably also had effects on Harlem entertainment.

7.1 The Harlem Riot in March 1935

According to the report of Mayor LaGuardia's Commission[1620], the Harlem riot started on March 19, 1935, when 16-year-old African-American Lino Rivera stole a knife in a local store on 125th Street in Harlem. When the store manager and his assistant saw the stealing, the assistant and another employee caught Rivera before he escaped. Rivera bit the hands of his captors during the incident, which dramatized the scene with blood. They called a police patrolman to the front of the store. The patrolman took the boy back into the store and asked if they wanted him to arrest Rivera. The store manager instructed the patrolman to let Rivera to go free. To avoid curious spectators, the patrolman took Rivera down the stairs of the store to get him out through the rear entrance on 124th Street. Unfortunately, there was a misunderstanding as an African-American woman saw the incident and thought that the patrolman took Rivera downstairs to beat him up. The story spread fast with new

[1619] Stearns 1994, pp. 317-318. Also the Harlem dancers referred to the Harlem conditions which were part of their everyday life. See for example: Miller and Jensen 1996, p. 53.

[1620] If not stated otherwise, the next two paragraphs are based on Fogelson and Rubenstein 1969, pp. 7-10.

versions, where Rivera was even claimed to be dead and the store staff were claimed to be his killers.

As these stories spread around Harlem, the riot crowd started gather together and the riot was ready to burst. Depending on the different sources, there were from a few thousand to 3,000 rioters in the area. The crowd mostly attacked stores. At least one hundred persons were injured, including four persons from police. One or two persons were killed during the riot. The riot was mainly over during the night between March 19 and 20.[1621]

7.1.1 The 1935 Riot Background

As Harlem was emerging from the 1920s as a slum, and it continued like that through the 1930s to the 1940s, it is reasonable to explain the social and economic conditions of Harlem, immediately before the 1935 riot, to understand the obvious reasons for the riot, which also are discussed in this chapter.

Mayor LaGuardia's Commission stated in the report that the reasons for the rioting of several thousand of Harlem can be found in "injustices of discrimination in employment", "the aggressions of the police", and "the racial segregation". The riot was against these "intolerable conditions".[1622] It only looked like Lino Rivera and his case triggered the riot.

According to the report there were over 204,000 African-Americans in Harlem in 1934. There are no statistics about Harlemites' occupations at the time.[1623] The report stressed the fact that 50,167 African-American families in Harlem annually spent around two million dollars to gas and electric companies and three-fourths of a million dollars went to the telephone company. None of these utilities employed more than a few hundred African-Americans who had to work in low income jobs. Insurance companies did not employ African-Americans, even in Harlem. Only a few unions accepted African-Americans. In 1934, there were 24,293 African-American families on relief, 43.2 percent of all residents.[1624]

[1621] 'Police Shoot Into Rioters; Kill Negro in Harlem Mob', *The New York Times*, March 20, 1935, pp. 1 and 15. See also: Fogelson and Rubenstein 1969, pp. 8-9, 11-12 and 15. *The New York Times* mentioned in its article that African-American Lyman Quarterman died by a bullet wound. 'The Complete Report of Mayor LaGuardia's Commission On The Harlem Riot of March 19, 1935' claims that a high school boy Lloyd Hobbs was shot in the hand and he passed away couple of days after the riot. It is possible that *The New York Times* got the name wrong. Also *The Washington Post* claimed that there were two dead people as the aftermath of the riot. *The Washington Post* claimed that "Miller 57" was one of them. See: 'Second Man Dies of Race Riot Hurts', *The Washington Post*, March 23, 1935, p. 2. That is why there are mentioned 1-2 killed in the main text of this study.

[1622] Fogelson and Rubenstein 1969, p. 122.

[1623] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[1624] Ibid., pp. 35, 39-43 and 45.

The report also states that the work relief system was based on racial discrimination as African-Americans were chiefly assigned to menial jobs and were given an inferior status when, by training and experience, they would have merited different types of appointments. The Works Progress Administration also was claimed to have adopted racial discrimination. For example only 41 African-American bricklayers and carpenters were employed in twelve building projects.[1625]

The Harlem housing situation continued to be problematic. One block in Harlem, between 138th and 139th and Seventh and Lenox Avenue, had a density of 620 persons per acre, making it the highest density area in the entire city. African-Americans had no choice but live in the area, because there were no other places to rent outside of Harlem. Also, African-American tenants in Harlem paid relatively higher rents than tenants in other sections in the city, as landlords were able to ask higher rents from African-Americans, who had no choice compared to whites, who could move freely elsewhere. The way African-American tenants met the higher rentals was by taking in lodgers, who paid part of the rent.[1626]

Discrimination also was part of the schools and Harlem hospitals. Wadleigh High School at West 114th Street was especially known for this, as Southern-born teachers in the school objected to the mingling of white and African-American students in purely social affairs. Similar kinds of discrimination were also in the public health nursing service, which was under the Civil Service of the city government. There were common factors between schools and hospitals in Harlem, like the shameful physical condition of the buildings and the absence of morale in their administration, and continuous overcrowding with discipline problems, especially in schools. Poverty among children and their families, and its consequences, like lack of food and clothing, caused children's absence from the schools.[1627]

In addition, police brutality had created atmosphere of mistrust against police. Before the riot there had been at least a couple of illegal home searches without warrants, and one brutal beating by police. In addition to that, juvenile crime was on the increase during the past fifteen years. Also, adult delinquency was a large problem, as during first six months of 1936, there were 6,348 African-American men and 1,336 women arrested. The numbers racket was the most important reason why they arrested men and immoral sex behavior was the most important reason why they arrested women.[1628]

Concerning Harlem and its obvious problems before the 1935 riot, the explosion could have happened even earlier. Harlem had been overcrowded since the 1920s, when the Great Migration from the Southern states and the migration from downtown New York were happening, and which had already started from the

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[1625] Ibid., pp. 57 and 61-62.

[1626] Ibid., pp. 63 and 70-71.

[1627] Ibid., pp. 78-80 and 83, 85, 88, 94, and 98-102. The Mayor's Commission Report claims that Wedleigh High School was located at 111th Street, but that is not true. It still is located at West 114th Street.

[1628] Ibid., pp. 107, 110-111 and 114-117.

beginning of the twentieth century. Poverty, overcrowded apartments, various malpractices such as police brutality, mistreatment of Harlemites in working life, unemployment, and crime were the obvious factors which could have caused the riot much earlier. The dissatisfaction was brought out before the riot by "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" boycott of white-owned stores and their policies of not employing African-American workers, and rent strikes against white slumlords and their high rents in 1935.[1629]

It is interesting that the Mayor's Commission report does not take a stance on that at all. The report discusses those problems in the Harlem community before the March 1935, but it does not go deeper into the reasons. The report does not properly explain how Harlem's problematic social and economic environment, which was combined with various malpractices, probably led to the hostile atmosphere where Lino Rivera's case triggered the riot.

However, it can be stated that jazz dance in its various forms, and all the interaction between different races on the dance floor at the Savoy Ballroom and elsewhere in Harlem, could not prevent the explosion. The problems of the Harlem community were so structural that they evidently affected the situation, when the riot broke out.

7.1.2 The 1935 Riot Consequences in Harlem Entertainment

Constance Valis Hill, who has studied Harlem entertainment in the form of the Nicholas Brothers and their biography, claims that the Harlem riot of 1935 affected Harlem entertainment as the closing of Harlem's Cotton Club in February 1936 was connected to the 1935 riot and its aftermath, which, with a repeal of Prohibition a few years earlier, made it economically impossible to stay in Harlem. At the same time, she forgets that when the Cotton Club closed in Harlem, there still were at least the Ubangi Club and the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem, which also had white "carriage trade".[1630] Thus Harlem entertainment still continued and attracted people from outside of Harlem.

Burton W. Peretti, who has researched "Politics And Amusement in Manhattan", thinks that Harlem entertainment boomed before the riot, when Harlem was making a comeback to the nightclub scene after the Great Depression and its economic downfall. He claims that the Savoy Ballroom, Dickie Wells' Shim Sham Club, the Ubangi Club, Pod's and Jerry's, the Cotton Club, and Small's Paradise were the popular Harlem sites before the riot in 1935. He states that "[w]ithin weeks after the riot of March 1935, the district's night life renaissance came to a halt", although the

[1629] Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Race, Space, and Riots in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 18.

[1630] Hill 2002, p. 122 and 283. See for the Ubangi Club and the Savoy Ballroom the chapter: 'The Beginning of the Harlem Jazz Dance Entertainment'.

Cotton Club closed almost a year later in February 1936. Otherwise, Peretti's Harlem analysis, similarly like Hill's, stays insufficient. Peretti mostly passes over the continuation of Harlem nightlife after the riot. He only states briefly that "a new successful cabaret, the Plantation Club" was opened at the location where the Cotton Club had been located earlier in Harlem, and he refers to how African-Americans "graced the Savoy Ballroom and other venues in Harlem with spectacular dance steps" without going any deeper into the subject.[1631]

Concerning the immediate consequences of the 1935 riot to Harlem entertainment, there does not seem to be such consequences. For example, the Apollo Theatre and Harlem Opera House kept advertising in April like they did before the riot in February, in *The New York Amsterdam News*.[1632]

White people still kept visiting in Harlem and it should be noticed that swing was becoming massively popular in the end of 1935. The Savoy Ballroom-based Lindy Hop group Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were acknowledged after the 1935 Harvest Moon Ball contest wins in Madison Square Garden. Also, the Savoy Ballroom stayed in newspapers articles, both in and outside Harlem. It is discussed in the chapter 'The Savoy Ballroom Between 1926 and 1943', how the mainstream press initiated a scare campaign about the unsafeness of Harlem, when African-American businesses had tried to attract the 1939 World's Fair visitors to visit in Harlem. It is quite difficult to connect that scare campaign to the 1935 riot which happened four years earlier. According to Terry Monaghan, the decrease of the "white carriage trade" to Harlem in the end of the 1930s was connected to the inception of World War II, which drastically changed the social and cultural climate of the preceding period, when the Savoy had succeeded extremely well in encouraging downtown dancers to visit in Harlem on equal terms. Monaghan argues that there was a "crisis of Swing" because of increasing racist practices, especially against African-American musicians.[1633]

[1631] Peretti 2007, pp. 103-104 and 183-184. Also Chad Heap, who stresses how Harlem lost its entertainment spark already in the beginning of the Great Depression, states, contradictory to his own claim, that there were still four major nightclubs left in the end of the 1930s when compared to the situation of the end of the 1920s. He, however, does not specify what these four nightclubs were. Anyway, the Harlem places of entertainment did not completely disappear by the end of the 1930s. See: Heap 2009, p. 82.

[1632] See for example: 'Apollo Theatre' and 'Harlem Opera House', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 9, 1935, p. 10; 'Apollo Theatre' and 'Harlem Opera House', *The New York Amsterdam News*, February 16, 1935, p. 10; 'Apollo Theatre' and 'Harlem Opera House', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 6, 1935, p. 10; 'Apollo Theatre' and 'Harlem Opera House', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 20, 1935, p. 10; 'Apollo Theatre' and 'Harlem Opera House', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 27, 1935, p. 10.

[1633] Monaghan 2005, pp. 41-42. Also Chad Heap states that whites still visited Harlem at the end of the 1930s, although in lesser amounts than at the end of the 1920s. See: Heap 2009, p. 82.

7.2 The Harlem Riot in August 1943

Harlem was again in the middle of a riot on Sunday night, August 1, 1943, when an incident at the Hotel Braddock on the West 126th street escalated into a riot after some misunderstandings.[1634] The incident started when a hotel customer allegedly tried to tip the elevator operator with a dollar, after checking out from the hotel, because of insufficient hotel services. When the employee refused to take the dollar, the hotel customer began to argue. The situation escalated when a patrolman asked the customer to leave. When she refused and verbally abused the officer, the officer arrested her. One of the other hotel customers began to demand the arrested customer's release. A military policeman, who was in the hotel at the same time, also got involved in the incident when he started to dispute with the patrolman because of the arrest. The situation escalated into the fight when the hotel customer and her son attacked the patrolman. The military policeman hit the patrolman and ran. When the military policeman refused to halt, the patrolman shot the military policeman, who was wounded after the shooting, but the wound, was superficial. The rumor, which began to spread around in Harlem, stated, "a white policeman had killed a black soldier, who…had been protecting his mother".

When the rumor was spread enough, large crowds started to gather in Harlem. At 10:30pm, a riot was going on. It continued until the next morning and at 9am on Monday morning, Harlem was relatively quiet. Six persons killed in the riot, all African-Americans, and at least 185 persons injured, most of whom were African-Americans. The claim is based on police reports. It is possible that there were more casualties as newspapers estimated the amount of killed between five and twenty-six. The papers estimated that there were between 400 and 1,000 injured people. More than 550 African-American were arrested, generally for burglary or receiving stolen goods. Estimates of damages and losses ranged from $225,000 to $5,000,000.

As Mayor LaGuardia took the lead of persuading the rioters to stop during Sunday night, he made radio broadcasts where the details of the incident in the hotel were corrected and the rioters were asked to go home. He also tried to calm down the rioters with the NAACP's Walter White and a policeman, as they cruised in Harlem. White suggested municipal soundtrucks, which carried African American leaders for calming down the rioters. White and three other leaders cruised around Harlem with soundtrucks.[1635]

The riot area was secured during the next day with the help of 1,500 volunteers, most of them African-Americans, along with 6,000 city and military police, air raid wardens, and City Patrol. At the same time, 8,000 New York State guardsmen, including an African-American regiment, were waiting in several metropolitan armories. In the same night, a partial curfew was imposed from 5th Avenue to St. Nicholas Avenue between 110th and 155th Streets. African-American community

[1634] This and the next paragraph are based on Dominic J. Capeci, Jr., *The Harlem Riot of 1943* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1977), pp. 99-102.

[1635] Capeci, Jr. 1977, pp. 102-104. See also: White 1969, pp. 236-237

leaders continued to tour the community urging Harlemites to maintain order. Before midnight, the district was quiet and the streets almost deserted. Later in the week, the curfew was pushed back an hour to 11:30pm, traffic bans eased, the stores reopened, the liquor ban lifted, and the police force reduced, until on August 14, the police force was returned to normal size.[1636]

7.2.1 The 1943 Riot Background

Domenic J. Capeci, Jr. has researched the 1943 Harlem Riot. He states that before the Harlem riot, New York's African-American population was embittered by three events: the renting of the Bronx-based Hunter College to the United States Navy, the closing of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom, and the city-approved plans to build a segregated quasi-public housing unit: Stuyvesant Town.[1637]

Hunter College was rented to the Women's Reserve of the United States Naval Reserve (WAVES) in January 1943. The WAVES were known for their refusal to admit African-American women for service or training. The renting caused pressure in the City Council, which unanimously approved the resolution which requested Navy officials to end discrimination, especially at Hunter College. The City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem, claimed that the Stuyvesant Town case had caused bitterness among African-Americans, although the formal contract for Stuyvesant Town was finally signed on August 4, after the riot. According to Capeci, the WAVES case protest was relatively small and it happened months before the August riot.[1638] However, it was in the background when the reasons for the August riot are considered. Also, the Stuyvesant Town case connection to the 1943 riot is arguable, because the contract was signed after the riot.

It was also claimed that throughout the spring of 1943, the interracial clashes and muggings of whites, occurred periodically in several interracial neighborhoods.[1639] There were two different shootings in Harlem in March 1943, where police killed two people. In both cases, police tried to arrest suspects. *The New York Age* reported at the end of March, that Harlem took "on appearance of armed camp", as extra police were ordered in to Harlem, probably because of the outbreak of muggings and violence.[1640] Those incidents probably increased pressure between different races. Also, a series of race riots had swept through the nation's largest cities, including

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[1636] Capeci, Jr. 1977, pp. 104 -105.

[1637] Ibid., p. 136.

[1638] Ibid., pp. 136-138 and 140-141.

[1639] Ibid., p. 136.

[1640] 'Harlemite Resisting Arrest Fatally Shot By Rookie Policeman', *The New York Age*, March 6, 1943, p. 1. 'Harlem Takes On Appearance Of Armed Camp As Extra Police Are Ordered In Community', *The New York Age*, March 27, 1943, p. 1. In the latter article, Police denied the claim that the recent muggings and violence in Harlem constituted a crime wave. Also *The New York Age* denied the crime wave in Harlem, although it reported the shootings and muggings in Harlem. See: ' "Muggings" ', *The New York Age*, March 27, 1943, p. 6.

Mobile, Beaumont, Los Angeles, Newark, and Detroit. Especially in Detroit, where a race riot happened at the end of June 1943, and Newark, where a race riot happened in the beginning of June, probably had their part of raising pressure between races and possibly had a part in creating a riot atmosphere in Harlem. At the very least, the Detroit riot was largely noticed in the New York and African-American press.[1641]

In addition, economic hardship caused by discrimination still continued in Harlem, although the New Deal had probably brought improvement with the help of Harlem-connected relief programs, which improved the community services and infrastructure. Poor housing, health, and social conditions still remained in the area, which could have been classified as a ghetto. The continued poor economic and infrastructural conditions probably had their part in the beginning of the 1943 riot.[1642]

7.2.2 The Savoy's Temporary Closing

The closing of the Savoy Ballroom as a reason for the riot needs observation, because it was clearly connected to the Harlem community, and the ballroom had gathered people from around New York and outside. The role of the ballroom was clearly connected to jazz dancing and how African-Americans were seen as part of the society. Also, later, in 1946, *Ebony* magazine published an article where it was claimed that many social workers and welfare agents had publicly stressed the closing of the Savoy Ballroom as a crucial reason for the 1943 Harlem riot, because youngsters had no other place to go but to roam the streets at the time of the riot.[1643]

The Savoy Ballroom had likely become the most important community center in Harlem between 1926 and 1943, where numerous dance-connected events were arranged on a regular basis, and various associations organized their meetings. Interracial dancing was real at the Savoy.

The New York Police Department padlocked the doors of the Savoy Ballroom on April 22, 1943.[1644] Assistant Police Commissioner Cornelius O'Leary had revoked

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[1641] Capeci, Jr. 1977, pp. 68-70. See also for example: '23 Killed; U.S. Army Rules Detroit', *The Boston Daily Globe*, June 22, 1943, p. 1; 'Kelly Acts To Ease Detroit Riot Curb', *The New York Times*, June 24, 1943, pp. 1 and 12; T. John Wood, 'Detroit Riot Toll 25', *The Afro-American*, June 26, 1943, pp. 1 and 24; 'League Blames Detroit Riot On Overcrowding', *The Chicago Daily* Tribune, July 3, 1943, p. 6; J. A. Rogers, 'Rogers Says:', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, July 10, 1943, p. 7. See for the Newark riot: 'Boy, 16, Seized as Slayer in Newark Race Riot', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 13, 1943, p. 17 and 'Boy Slain In Ten-Alarm Race Riot', *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 12, 1943, p. 1.

[1642] Greenberg 1991, pp. 207, 210, 214, 216, and 223.

[1643] 'The Home of Happy Feet', *Ebony*, October 1, 1946, p. 33.

[1644] If not otherwise noted, this and the next four paragraphs are based on Russell Gold, 'Guilty of Syncopation, Joy, and Animation: The Closing of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom',

the license of the Savoy Ballroom on March 24, 1943. There have been different reasons presented for the closing of the Savoy Ballroom. First of them is from the end of January 1943, when sergeant second class James Taylor sent a letter to New York Mayor Fiorella LaGuardia, where he explained how he had met two girls and a pimp at the Savoy Ballroom and how he had been infected by one of those prostitutes, although Taylor gave an unsure impression concerning the details. The letter started a police operation where the New York police department tried to find proof of prostitution at the Savoy Ballroom. No evidence for that could be found until a policeman, who inspected the case at the Savoy, was introduced by one of the Savoy Ballroom employees to a pimp and his prostitutes in the place, at the very beginning of March 1943. According to the policeman's testimony, the pimp sold a couple of prostitutes to him at the Savoy.

After the Savoy closing, the Harlem newspapers began to speculate about the real reasons behind the closing. The main assumption was that "the fear of interracial socializing" closed the Savoy, as the Savoy Ballroom was known as the place where African-Americans and whites mingled. Also, *The People's Voice* newspaper, which was known as the Savoy Ballroom manager's Charles Buchanan and Adam Clayton Powell Jr.'s mutual effort, took a stance on the prostitution charges and stated that prostitution was also real in the downtown ballrooms without any authorities attempt to prevent that activity.

It seems that the Savoy prostitution charges were only a pretext for the closing of the Savoy Ballroom and the real reason was something else, because even Police Commissioner Lewis J. Valentine informed the Savoy's lawyer, that "the most essential condition for reopening the Savoy was not insuring that it would stay free of prostitution…a new corporation needed to be formed to run the Savoy without involvement of either [Moe] Gale or [Charles] Buchanan". Similarly, during the summer, LaGuardia suggested that Walter White and Bill Robinson take out the Savoy's license. Thus, tap dancer Robinson was drawn into the middle of the drama. It is unclear if he knew about this.

Russell Gold, who has examined the closing of the Savoy Ballroom, argues that possibly Valentine and LaGuardia wanted Gale and Buchanan out, because they were involved with Harlem's independent representative on the city council, Adam Clayton Powell Jr.. Terry Monaghan also claims that the closing was the result of LaGuardia's anti-Moe Gale scheming.

The padlocking of the Savoy was preceded by the campaign of the mainstream newspapers like the *Times*, *Sun*, *Journal-American*, *Daily Mirror*, *Post* and *World-Telegram* in March 1943, where it warned of an alleged crime wave that was sweeping Harlem. The article writer of *The People's Voice* stated in his article that the campaign was doing its best to scare whites from venturing uptown. *The People's Voice* reported in August 1942, the mainstream press smear campaign

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Studies in Dance History v.5, no.1, Spring 1994, pp. 50, 53-55 and 57-60. See also: Monaghan 2005, p. 55.

against Harlem, where Harlem was defined as "a vice area"[1645], so there had been over half a year of smear tactics against Harlem.

Whether the reason for the closing of the Savoy Ballroom was its interracial dancing, or mayor LaGuardia's personal anti-Moe Gale agenda, or something else, the case proves for the importance of the ballroom. It had become an important institute in Harlem, which was worth political fights. The license of the Savoy Ballroom was renewed on October 15, 1943 and the grand reopening of the Savoy followed on October 22. The consequences of the Savoy closing are discussed in the next chapter as part of whole Harlem's recovery after the riot.

7.2.3 Did the 1943 Harlem Riot Change the Popularity of Harlem Entertainment?

According to Terry Monaghan, World War II had caused a considerable fall in white customer rates in Harlem entertainment before the closing of the Savoy Ballroom. Also, the Savoy Ballroom manager, Charles Buchanan, claimed in his statement to Supreme Court in the case of closing the ballroom, that there had been at least thirty percent white customers at the Savoy Ballroom, but that amount had dropped to two to three percent. He added that they had tried to "discourage as much as possible we can white sight seers [not to attending at the ballroom], because they are our headache…"[1646] It is likely that "white carriage trade" to the Savoy and to Harlem was on the decline when World War II began.

However, it was reported still during summer 1941, that there were expectations for "large number of prominent whites and negros" visiting the Soronity Fraternity Record and Recording Club of America at the Savoy Ballroom in September

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[1645] John Louis Clarke, ' 'Daily News' Under Fire For Smearing' and S. W. Garlington, 'Survey of New York Papers Reveals News' Lie Widespread', *The People's Voice*, August 15, 1942, p. 2.

[1646] Monaghan 2005, pp. 37 and 65. Terry Monaghan's claim seems to be based on 'Supreme Court Appellate Division – First Department. In the matter of the Application of Savoy Associates Inc. Record On Proceedings To Review a Determination March 1943' document. Monaghan claims, "both sides remarked in passing on the considerable fall in white custom in Harlem caused by the war". According to the document, it seems that only Charles Buchanan stressed the fact that white customer trade at the Savoy Ballroom had cut down from 30 % to 2-3 % by 1943, in other words during World War II. See: 'Supreme Court Appellate Division – First Department – In the Matter of the Application of Savoy Associates Inc.', 'NAACP 1940-55 –General Office File – Savoy Ballroom Closing Record 1943' file, NAACP papers, Library of Congress, p. 47. In addition to that, there is mentioned briefly, "[the Savoy Ballroom] caters...mainly those of the Negro race". See: 'Supreme Court Of The State Of New York Appellate Division – First Department – In the Matter of the Application of Savoy Associates Inc. - To be argued by Louis B. Stillman', 'NAACP 1940-55 –General Office File – Savoy Ballroom Closing Record 1943' file, NAACP papers, Library of Congress, p. 13. There is no other statement in the documents, where the white customer rate in Harlem is mentioned.

1941.[1647] Although there exists no information on how many whites visited during the event, the reported expectations refer to the fact that whites still visited the Savoy.[1648] Whites kept visiting in Harlem before World War II, as it was reported between 1937 and 1939. There were busloads of white World's Fair tourists in September 1939, who visited the Savoy in Harlem. It also was stated that 20,000 whites had visited in the ballroom during the summer 1939.[1649]

Whites still kept entering Harlem in 1943 as *The New York Age* stated in its article concerning the aftermath of the riot, that "a number of white persons found it necessary to pass through Harlem at various times during the disorder". According to the paper, there were "very few reports" about any harm to them.[1650] Also, according to Domenic Capeci, Jr., who has researched the riot, it was "largely free of physical violence between blacks and whites". In spite of that, the rioters looted predominantly white stores in Harlem, which refers to a race riot against racism.[1651] In other words, there were tensions against white predominance in Harlem, which might have had its part in the decreasing trend of whites visiting in Harlem.

Three years later, in 1946, when *Ebony* magazine wrote about the Harlem night club boom, the magazine claimed that African-Americans, who previously went to the 52nd Street clubs and other clubs in Manhattan, outside Harlem, had recently stayed in Harlem and had started to go to Harlem nightclubs. The magazine article also emphasized that whites had begun to come back to the Harlem places of entertainment, although "[p]olice and cabbies have tried to embarrass whites who go to Harlem", but "with little effect to date". However, it seems that the Harlem entertainment business had shifted more to weekends at the time, as it was stated in the article, Harlem entertainment "is largely of the weekend variety." And "They [the clubs] need steady attendance all week to pay off high priced acts".[1652]

The Savoy Ballroom seemed to be going better by 1946, and *Ebony* magazine also had an article about it. It was stated in the article that the white customer rate was around fifteen percent at the time and it had been thirty-five percent during the time before the World War II.[1653] It is possible that the Savoy Ballroom manager Charles Buchanan intentionally underestimated the white customer rate in his Supreme Court statement during the Savoy closing process. In the long run, the

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[1647] 'Georgetown Father Features Children In British Broadcast', *Atlanta Daily World*, July 21, 1941, p. 1.

[1648] The author of the study has not found any information about how many whites practically participated in the event.

[1649] There are a few articles concerning whites who visited the Savoy Ballroom at the time: Albert Scharper, Jr., 'A Dude From Dixie Sees 'Em Stompin' At the Savoy 'n' Is Jes' Dumb-Struck', *Variety*, February 24, 1937, p. 69; Jack Gould, 'News And Gossip Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, February 20, 1938, p. 2 X; Edgar T. Rouzeau, 'Star Dust', *New Journal and Guide*, September 16, 1939, p. 16.

[1650] 'Hoodlums Wreck Community; Six Dead, Hundreds Injured', *The New York Age*, August 7, 1943, p. 1.

[1651] Capeci, Jr. 1977, pp. 119-121.

[1652] 'Harlem Night Club Boom', *Ebony*, November 1, 1946, pp. 28-30.

[1653] 'The Home of Happy Feet', *Ebony*, October 1, 1946, p. 33.

white customer rate of the Harlem nightclubs, however, was mostly on the decline from the end of the 1930s, to the end of the 1940s[1654].

According to the advertisements in two of the most important newspapers in Harlem in 1943, *The People's Voice* and *The New York Age*, Harlem's dance-related places of entertainment, which were advertised in those papers in the beginning of March 1943, were, according to *The People's Voice*, the Apollo Theatre, the Renaissance Ballroom, the Savoy Ballroom, Small's Paradise, Elk's Rendezvous, and The Heat Wave and, according to *The New York Age*, the Apollo Theatre, the Renaissance Casino, Small's Paradise, Murrain's and Elk's Rendezvous[1655].

When comparing the advertisements in *The People's Voice* and *The New York Age* in the beginning of October 1943, to the advertisements in March 1943, almost the same Harlem places of entertainment still advertised in those papers. Even so, that Murrain's advertised also in *The People's Voice*, in addition to its advertisement in *The New York Age*. Only the Savoy Ballroom was missing as it was not yet opened after its closing.[1656] According to Terry Monaghan, because of the secret deal between the Savoy Associates Inc. and Mayor LaGuardia, the Savoy "hardly ever" advertised again "in either uptown or downtown newspapers"[1657]. Even so, the Savoy still occasionally advertised after its reopening in the African-American newspapers like *The New York Amsterdam News* and *The People's Voice*[1658].

According to those advertisements, the Harlem dance-related places of entertainment did not disappear in the short run after the closing of the Savoy Ballroom in April, and after the Harlem riot in August. In other words, there were not any remarkable short terms changes in the Harlem dance-related places of entertainment because of those incidents. So, basically the Harlem entertainment structure continued unchanged at the time of the Savoy reopening.

[1654] This statement is based on the articles which are discussed in this chapter. In addition to those, see: 'Oldest Negro – Smalls Paradise has catered to world celebrities', *Ebony*, October 1, 1949, p. 44. It is stated in the article, "White visitors are seen at the club almost nightly, though not in such large numbers as before the war". White visitors were seen at the club during four nights a week as Smalls had only four-day weekend program between Friday and Monday at the time. The club had reduced the open nights during April 1949, which also refers to the reduced customer rate.

[1655] *The People's Voice*, March 6, 1943, pp. 7, 27 and 28. The Savoy Ballroom had an advertisement in the April 24 issue of *The People's Voice*, when the ballroom was already closed. See: *The People's Voice*, April 24, 1943, p. 28; *The New York Age*, March 6, 1943, pp. 5 and 10-11.

[1656] *The New York Age*, October 9, 1943, pp. 4, 10 and 11. *The People's Voice*, October 9, 1943, pp. 25-27.

[1657] Monaghan 2005, p. 37.

[1658] For example, the Savoy Ballroom advertised its opening on October 23, 1943 (Just after its reopening) and advertised its 'Christmas Greetings' in December 1943. Both advertisements can be found in *The People's Voice*. See: *The People's Voice*, October 23, 1943, p. 10 and *The People's Voice*, December 25, 1943, p. 17. Also 'New York State American Youth For Democracy' advertised its event at the Savoy Ballroom in the June 1944 issue of *The New York Amsterdam News*. See: *The New York Amsterdam News*, June 17, 1944, p. 9B.

The functions of the Savoy Ballroom during the temporary closing period could have been replaced by the Golden Gate Ballroom, which was located two blocks away from the Savoy. The Golden Gate Ballroom was opened on Lenox Avenue and 142nd Street at the end of October and the beginning of November in 1939. Jay Faggen, who was one of the original owners of the Savoy Ballroom, was also the original owner of the Golden Gate Ballroom.[1659] He had to sell the Golden Gate to the Savoy Ballroom owners, Sigmund Gale and Moe Gale, and possibly to Charles Buchanan in April 1940, because of weak business at the Golden Gate.[1660] The management of the Savoy Ballroom essentially controlled the Golden Gate Ballroom at the time of the Savoy closing in April 1943. There exists clear evidence that the Golden Gate Ballroom continued its dances during the Savoy Ballroom closing.[1661] A reason why Harlem did not suffer a decreased customer rate for the Savoy closing could be because the Golden Gate Ballroom probably took the Savoy crowd for the closing period.[1662]

1659 'Golden Gate Opening Tops: Eight Thousand Jam Into New Ballroom', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 4, 1939, p. 12. According to the article, the ballroom was opened on "last Thursday", which could have happened on Thursday, November 2, but it could have happened earlier as there is an article, where it is stated "The ballroom opens Thursday, Oct. 19 with many big time attractions". See: 'Classiest Ballroom Due Soon', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 21, 1939, p. 21.

1660 The selling of the Golden Gate Ballroom was reported variedly in the newspapers. *The New York Amsterdam News* and *New Journal and Guide* stated, "Moe Gale and Sigmund Gale, owners, and Charles Buchanan, managing director of the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem acquired operating and managerial control of...Golden Gate Ballroom..." Buchanan was described as the one who had management and administrative duties of the Golden Gate. See: 'Savoy Corp. Buys out Golden Gate Ballroom', *The New York Amsterdam News*, April 6, 1940, p. 20 and 'Savoy Takes Over Golden Gate Ballroom', *New Journal and Guide*, April 6, 1940, p. 18. Also *The Pittsburgh Courier* reported that Buchanan was going to be "the managing director for the Golden Gate". The paper did not state that he owned the ballroom. See: 'Savoy Corp. Takes Over Golden Gate Ballroom', *The Pittsburgh Courier*, April 6, 1940, p. 21. There also are articles, where there were stated, "Moe Gale and Charlie Buchanan, owners and managers of the Savoy ballroom...have bought out the interests controlling the Golden Gate ballroom..." See: 'Savoy Managers Take Over The Golden Gate', *The Chicago Defender*, April 13, 1940, p. 20 and 'Gale-Buchanan Buy Golden Gate Opposish To Savoy Ballroom', *Variety*, April 3, 1940, p. 37. *The Afro-American* stated, " Owners Moe Gale and Charles Buchanan, managing director of the world famous Savoy Ballroom in Harlem, in a foreclosure action...acquired operating and managerial control of...Golden Gate Ballroom". The statement was reported in the similar fashion than in the first mentioned articles about the selling of the ballroom. Similarly, it was described that Buchanan had "management and administration duties at the Golden Gate." See: 'Ballroom Cost Over Quarter Million Dollars", *The Afro-American*, April 6, 1940, p. 14. It is possible that he was one of the new owners of the Golden Gate Ballroom.

1661 'Riverdale Orphans Benefit Dance Friday Night at Golden Gate: Riverdale Ball Expected 'Tops' ', *The New York Amsterdam News*, May 1, 1943, p. 8. 'Fight Racial Prejudice: 3,000 at Rally Held in Harlem Adopt Pledge', *The New York Times*, July 12, 1943, p. 31. It is unclear if there was a dance at the same time with the rally. Anyway the ballroom was working at the time. See: 'Juvenile Gangs Terrorize Harlem: Juvenile Gangs In Control In Harlem', *The New York Amsterdam News*, October 16, 1943, p. 1A. Also the latter article referred to the dance event which happened in the Golden Gate just before the Savoy reopening.

1662 In fact, *The New York Age* referred to the idea in its article about the Riverdale Colored Orphan Asylum Benefit in the Golden Gate Ballroom as follows, "the crowd which

Harlem entertainment also did not end outside of Harlem because of the Savoy's temporary closing and the 1943 Harlem riot. Although the post-World War II development of Broadway musical tradition probably began to put "authentic" jazz dancers out of job[1663] and, at least some in cases, replacing them with "modern dancers"[1664], there still were tap dancers like Bill Robinson, who danced almost until his death in 1949, and jazz dancers like Mura Dehn who had jazz dance lectures and demonstrations, with the help of the Savoy Ballroom dancers starting from the 1940s and all the way through until the 1980s.[1665]

Where the Lindy Hop is concerned, there were groups which kept the Savoy flag flying in the 1940s. A less known group is the Four Lindy Hoppers, which was part of the Havana in Harlem show in 1948. The group's origin is unknown. Although the group consisted of at least one former Herbert White's dancer, Jerome Williams, the group's connection to White's operations is unclear.[1666] Similarly, other former Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, Frankie Manning and Norma Miller formed their own, independent (not connected to Herbert White) dance groups. Frankie Manning formed the Congaroos dance group after his return from the U.S. Army in 1946. The group kept performing until Manning's retirement from professional dancing in the middle of the 1950s.[1667] Norma Miller had her first group of dancers at the very end of the 1940s, and the group performed until the end of the 1960s.[1668] Also, Herbert White's activities concerning the Harvest Moon Ball Contest continued almost until his death, and the Third Generation Savoy Lindy Hoppers began to emerge at the very end of the 1940s. The Third Generation Savoy Lindy Hoppers continued the Savoy Lindy Hopping traditions through the 1950s, and taught new enthusiasts

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frequent the closed Savoy Ballroom were present…" in the event. See: 'Riverdale's Benefit Dance Attracts 5,000 At The Golden Gate', *The New York Age*, May 8, 1943, p. 4.

[1663] Monaghan 2005, p. 60.

[1664] Stearns 1959, pp. 40-44. According to Stearns, Agnes De Mille's choreography for Oklahoma!' in 1943 was one of the principal innovators in this case.

[1665] See for Dehn: Monaghan 1997, pp. 300-302, 307 and 309. See also: Dehn 1985. See for Robinson: Haskins and Mitgang 1988, pp. 300-301.

[1666] 'Royal American Personnel – Show Personnel- "Havana in Harlem" ', *The Billboard*, May 29, 1948, p. 54.

[1667] Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 216 and 243-244.

[1668] Terry Monaghan claims that Norma Miller had only a Girl's Chorus Line at the time of Herbert White's death in 1950. Monaghan also states that Norma Miller formed 'Norma Miller Jazz Dancers' in 1952. Monaghan 2005, pp. 68-69. However, it seems that Norma Miller had her dancers in the Apollo Theatre show in August 1949. Her show with the dancers was under the name of 'Inside Harlem', and it was staged by Norma Miller. It becomes clear that she had both men and women as dancers in the show. See: 'House Reviews – Apollo, N.Y.', *Variety*, August 31, 1949, p. 55. Monaghan seems to be correct with his statement that it was a chorus line, but it was a show with "guys and girls". Norma Miller's dancers kept performing until the end of the 1960s, when Norma Miller started her career as a comedienne. The exact end date of the group is unknown. Norma Miller started as comedienne by November 1968. See: Jesse H. Walker, 'Theatrical', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 2, 1968, p. 25. The last article about her dancers seems to be from November 1966. See: Les Matthews, ' Mr. 125 Street', *The New York Amsterdam News*, November 5, 1966, p. 40.

during the next decades[1669]. In other words, the Harlem-based jazz dance tradition never disappeared.

Another case is jazz dancers in World War II. Overall, the U.S. war politics accepted the segregated military and segregation especially in the Southern United States. Similarly, at the time, the Communists were neglecting the African-American Civil Rights issues for supporting the war efforts. As the African-American press reported largely on the racial injustices, the issue of African-Americans was recognized by the FBI, when it launched a surveillance operation concerning the African-American press, the NAACP leaders, and even the Communists, despite of their support for the war efforts. With the operation, the FBI tried to estimate how loyal African-Americans really were and to observe racial unrest.[1670]

The well-known African-American tap and Lindy Hop dancers, who were drafted, were Frankie Manning, Honi Coles, Cholly Atkins, Fayard Nicholas, and Albert 'Al' Minns.[1671] Terry Monaghan, who has examined the treatment of African-Americans in the war, claims that the "new black Swing "stars" were sidelined", because of the Southern-originated officers in the U.S. military, who "acquired influential positions in the North" and had racist practices. He also brings out as the examples in the U.S. military the "shameful treatment" of musician Lester Young and tap dancer Honi Coles.[1672] As Monaghan seems to be correct with his claim about common racist practices of the U.S military during World War II, there seemed to be more variety of African-American dancers' treatment in the war.[1673]

The Savoy Lindy Hopper Frankie Manning described how he was part of the troops which fought in the front line. He recalls various racist occasions during his service. He was not regularly part of the USO shows, although he occasionally performed in the shows, especially at the end of the war.[1674] Similarly, tap dancers Honi Coles and Fayard Nicholas were part of the regular troops. The former was sent to the U.S. troops in India after arguing with his racist commander.[1675] The latter was put in the quartermaster unit after the boot camp. However, Nicholas succeeded in getting a transfer into the USO unit in Arizona, where he was stationed

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[1669] Monaghan 2005, pp. 44-45 and 68.

[1670] Ira Katznelson, *The New Deal and The Origins of Our Time* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013), pp. 340-341.

[1671] All the dancers have already been presented in this study. They all were drafted between 1943 and 1944. See for the enlistment records: 'Minns Albert D.' His date of enlistment year was 1943; 'Atkinson Charles S'. His date of enlistment year was 1943; "Coles Charles T'. His date of enlistment year was 1944; 'Manning Frank B'. His date of enlistment year was 1943. All the enlistment records can be found: the U.S. National Archives & Records Administration. See: http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=WR26 . Fayard Nicholas' enlistment record could not be found. The search date was January 13, 2015. According to Constance Valis Hill, Fayard Nicholas was drafted in July 1943. See: Hill 2002, pp. 214-215.

[1672] Monaghan 2005, pp. 36 and 64.

[1673] See for the U.S. military racist practices in World War II especially the chapter 'The Experience of War' in Brandt 1996, pp. 100-112.

[1674] Manning and Millman 2007, pp. 195-202.

[1675] Atkins and Malone 2001, pp. 72-73.

for the rest of his army career.[1676] The USO means the United Service Organization, which was a private organization for entertaining the U.S. troops. The USO had various movie stars, comedians and other entertainers in its shows.[1677]

The Afro-American reported in 1944 that Private First Class [and the Lindy Hopper] Albert Minns and Technician Fifth Grade Sidney "Jazz" Richardson were part of a *GI Revels* show. Richardson was the noted "Jazzlips" Richardson's son. The show was organized by the staff of the engineer aviation regiment in England. The article discussed in general about the shows, which African-American troops arranged on their own outside the white USO shows in England.[1678] That means that Minns and Richardson were also part of the regular U.S. troops.

An exception seemed to be tap dancer Charles 'Cholly' Atkins, who was assigned after the basic training, to the U.S. Army band, which consisted of African-Americans, and where he became a drum major. After that, he was assigned to a dance consulting job in a dance studio, which was maintained by the Army department. Atkins claimed that his assignment for the Army band happened because the Army officials were aware of his background as a musician which contained trombone studies.[1679]

When looking at the enlistment records, it seems that Atkins' civilian occupation was registered as "actors and actresses". Thus, it stays unclear if Atkins really was correct with his claim. It is possible that they found out his musical background, but not necessarily from his enlistment details. Similarly, Frankie Manning's civilian occupation was "actors and actresses" and he ended up in the regular troops. Honi Coles' (= Charles T. Coles') civilian occupation was surprisingly, "Musicians and teachers of music". Thus, Coles should have been in the Army band or in something similar, but he was not. Only Albert Minns' civilian occupation was "showmen", which may have affected his position as part of the entertainment activities in his troops. Fayard Nicholas' and Sidney Richardson's enlistment records cannot be found.[1680]

[1676] Hill 2002, p. 215-217.

[1677] See for a description of the USO for example: California Center for Military History (George J. Albert, Charles R. Cresap, Mark J. Denger, John R. Justice, Brett A. Landis, Brett A. MacDonald, Roger D. McGrath, Donald L. Urquidez, Daniel M. Sebby), *Images of America - Camp Roberts* (Charleston, SC, Chicago IL, Portsmouth, NH, San Francisco, CA: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), pp. 81-82.

[1678] 'Harlemites Sparkle ETO Bands', *The Afro-American*, August 5, 1944, p. 8.

[1679] Atkins and Malone 2001, pp. 59-70.

[1680] See enlistment records: 'Atkinson Charles S'. 'Manning Frank B', 'Coles Charles T' and 'Minns Albert D.', the U.S. National Archives & Records Administration. See: http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=WR26 . Fayard Nicholas' enlistment record could not be found by searching with his name. He might have had different name in the record or the record is lost. When searching with the name "Richardson Sidney" and with the race, "negro", there comes out five records. In none of the records is New York as "residence state" or as "residence county" or any other state, close to the state of New York. Also as "place of enlistment" there does not come out New York or any other state, close to the state of New York. The search date was January 13, 2015.

The conclusion found from the examples of the discussed dancers, of how African-American dancers were recognized by their profession in the U.S. military during World War II, it seems that, although they usually were assigned to the regular troops, they also were assigned to the tasks where they were able to use their dance skills. Thus, their treatment in the military varied, although the racist practices obviously affected most of them. How much it was about well-considered decisions and how much it was about the occasional factors to assign African-Americans dancers to the better suited tasks will be the task of the future research which examines more extensively the subject.[1681]

7.3 West 52nd Street and Other Manhattan Clubs – Competitors to Harlem Entertainment?

West 52nd Street, particularly between 7th and 5th Avenue in Manhattan, New York started to emerge as the place of entertainment after the beginning of 1930s. The jazz scene of the street began in between the very end of the 1920s and the very beginning of the 1930s, when the first jazz club on the street, the Onyx Club, was founded. The club contained mostly white male patrons and musicians who tried to emulate African-American music styles. According to Patrick Burke, who has examined the 52nd Street jazz history, and its musical and racial tensions, the 52nd Street was arguably the jazz capital of the world between the middle of the 1930s and the late of the 1940s.[1682]

Similarly, *Ebony* magazine claimed in its November 1946 issue, on how thousands of Harlemites had previously visited on 52nd Street, at midtown Manhattan clubs like the Club Zanzibar (or Café Zanzibar) (at 1614 Broadway), the Uptown Café Society (at East 58th Street in Manhattan), Downtown Café Society (at Sheridan Square in Manhattan), and Village Vanguard (at 178 7th Avenue).[1683] New Yorkers'

1681 There does not seem to exist any basic studies about African-American dancers in World War II. This study takes only a directional stand on the subject as the Harlem dancers were only part of the whole picture, which needs to be examined more extensively in its own research entity.

1682 Patrick Burke, *Come In and Hear the Truth – Jazz and Race on 52nd Street* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 3, 9, 14-15, 17-19 and 25. The Street continued across 7th Avenue, where there were located Famous Door at 201 West 52nd Street in the end of 1943, Hickory House at 144 West 52nd Street starting from 1933, Two O'Clock Club (Performers and Musicians Guild) at 201 West 52nd Street between 1942 and 1943, and Yacht Club (Hawaiian Yacht Club) at 150 West 52nd Street between 1937 and 1943. The most of the places were between 5th and 7th Avenues. See: Burke 2008, pp. 208-213.

1683 'Harlem Night Club Boom', *Ebony*, November 1, 1946, p. 28. See for the location Cafe Society, Cafe Society (Uptown), and Village Vanguard: 'The Hotels And Night Clubs During May', *The New York Times*, May 3, 1941, p. 21. The two Cafe Societies were called with 'downtown' and 'uptown' prefixes. See: 'Edward Tyler Gives Debut Song Recital', *The New York Times*, October 28, 1946, p. 18. See for the location of Club Zanzibar: Louis Calta,

enthusiasm for the midtown and downtown clubs began, at the earliest, in the middle of the 1930s, when Village Vanguard was opened at 1 Charlie Street in 1934 and reopened at 178 7th Avenue in 1935.[1684] The first Café Society opened in the end of December 1938, and the second Uptown Café Society likely opened in between the very end of September and the very beginning of October 1940.[1685] Café Zanzibar was opened in July 1943.[1686]

These clubs probably were for shows, as social dancing did not seem to be the primary purpose for the most of the clubs. Thus, they were not real competitors to the Harlem ballrooms like the Savoy Ballroom, where social dancing is concerned. Village Vanguard seemed to be mostly for folk music performers in the 1930s, and still in the 1940s.[1687] Jazz musicians played there at the time, starting at least from November 1939.[1688] Café Zanzibar seemed to have performers such as singers and dancers, when it opened in July 1943.[1689] It is unknown if there was a dance floor for social dancing. Village Vanguard was only a small basement room and it seemed to have had only a small dance floor.[1690]

'News Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, June 27, 1943, p. X2. The place also was known as 'Café Zanzibar'. See: Louis Calta, 'News of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, July 4, 1943, p. X2.

[1684] 'Music Notes.', *The New York Times*, November 1, 1934, p. 24; 'Village Bohemian Now Its Laureate', *The New York Times*, July 11, 1935, p. 23. See also: Martin Williams, *Jazz Heritage* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 136.

[1685] According to *The Billboard*, the Uptown Café Society opened "either September 27 or October 3". See: Daniel Richman, 'Orchestra Notes', *The Billboard*, September 14, 1940, p. 11. See also: Theodore Strauss, 'Night Club Notes', *The New York Times*, December 18, 1938, p. 4; 'Obituary – Barney Josephson, Owner of Cafe Society Jazz Club, Is Dead at 86', *The New York Times*, September 30, 1988, p. B9.

[1686] Louis Calta, 'News Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, July 4, 1943, p. X2.

[1687] Ronald D. Cohen, *Folk music: the basics* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC, 2006), p. 116.

[1688] Williams 1985, p. 137. It seems that the first article connecting jazz and Café Society is from November 1939. See: 'Famous Colored Entertainers in White Spots', *The Afro-American*, November 25, 1939, p. 14. Clarence Profit Trio, which performed at the Village Vanguard, was very "boogie woogie". Thus, it was connected to jazz music. See: 'Disc Reviews', *Variety*, May 17, 1939, p. 34. Clarence Profit's Trio continued at the Village Vanguard in 1940. Thus, it referred to how jazz music had become part of music repertoire at the Village Vanguard. See: 'Profit Trio In Times Sq.', *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 3, 1940, p. 21. Also swing music was played in the place. See: 'The Town', *Vogue*, February 1, 1941, p. 147. There were reviews from the place, where the jazz connection was stated. See for example: Elliot Grennard, 'Village Vanguard, New York', *The Billboard*, October 3, 1942, p. 41.

[1689] Louis Calta, 'New Of Night Clubs', *The New York Times*, July 4, 1943, p. X2.

[1690] Williams 1985, pp. 134-135. There also are other references to the cellar location. See: Elliot Grennard, 'Village Vanguard, New York', *The Billboard*, October 3, 1942, p. 41. Gordon Allison, 'Dining And Dancing – Anniversary in the Village', *New York Herald Tribune*, April 20, 1949, p. 19. The latter article claims that the dance floor of the place was "only large enough to accommodate about one-half of a couple at a time". In other words, it was tiny. It is possible that the floor was reduced during the years, but the cellar location refers to the fact that the dance floor was originally small.

Uptown and Downtown Café Society also were for performers and, at least, the Uptown Café Society also had a dance floor, where mixed social dancing was allowed.[1691] The size of the floor is unknown. The Downtown Café Society had a small floor for performances, but it is unknown if there was social dancing.[1692]

The Swing-Street, West 52nd Street, contained a lot of small, noisy and crowded jazz clubs on both sides of the street. The real boom on the Swing-Street started when servicemen found the area during World War II, in the beginning of the 1940s.[1693] However, the street was mostly segregated as throughout the 1930s to the middle of the 1940s, because the majority of 52nd Street clubs catered exclusively for white patrons. Obviously some of the clubs, which used a lot of African-American musicians, relaxed their rules for a few other African-Americans, who could go in and sit in the band room, in the kitchen or in the cloakroom.[1694]

The change for the practice began in the middle of the 1940s, when African-Americans started to go to the 52nd Street clubs in increased numbers. A reason for non-African-American patrons possibly was that whites owned the clubs on 52nd Street. The two African-American owned clubs, Tondelayos and the Spotlite, were established in 1944. That means at the time when African-Americans really started to go to the 52nd Street clubs. Also clubs on 52nd Street, like Through The Looking Glass in 1936, the Onyx in July 1937, The Troc from 1938 to 1940, and the Famous Door, despite their small size, began to create spaces for dancing.[1695] Indeed, the size of the dance floor in the Famous Door was reported between 1940 and 1943 as "pocket size"[1696], which refers to the fact that social dancing was not the first priority in the place. That seemed to happen during the height of the Swing Era, when dancing generally was in great fashion.

It seems that where dancing is concerned, Swing-Street was not a real challenger to Harlem until the mid 1940s, especially because there were no big ballrooms on 52nd Street. The closest were Roseland Ballroom on 51st Street, and Arcadia on 53rd Street and Broadway, but both of them were segregated at the time, at least, until the beginning of the 1940s[1697]. The dance floors in those small clubs on 52nd Street were not big enough compared the Harlem ballrooms to persuade big dancing crowds.

[1691] Barney Josephson with Terry Trilling-Josephson, *Cafe Society: the wrong place for the right people* (Champaign, IL: University Of Illinois Press, 2009), p. 144.

[1692] See: Josephson and Trilling-Josephson 2009, p. 173.

[1693] Charters and Kunstadt 1981, pp. 320-321. Also Patrick Burke states, that on the 52nd Street there was a "shifting series of small clubs..." See: Burke 2008, p. 3.

[1694] Shipton 2001, p. 406.

[1695] Burke 2008, pp. 119, 172-173 and 211-212. See for Through The Looking Glass: ' "Go" Places', *Life*, April, 1936, p. 47 and 'Nite Club Reviews – Looking Glass', *Variety*, October 16, 1935, p. 56.

[1696] 'Band Reviews – Teddy Powell Orchestra (13) With Ruth Gaylord, Jimmy Blair – Famous Door, N. Y.', *Variety*, October 2, 1940, p. 50 and 'Famous Door. N. Y.', *Variety*, November 3, 1943, p. 36.

[1697] Erenberg 1998, pp. 172-173. The Roseland Ballroom organized racially mixed Lindy Hop competitions in the beginning of the 1930s. In 1933, there competed 20 white and 20 African-American couples against each other. See: Bill Sachs, 'Ballrooms', *The Billboard*, March 25, 1933, p. 15. Roseland's integration politics seemed to concern only occasional

However, outside West 52nd Street, there were ballrooms which worked more on a temporary basis during different time periods. A main example was the Madison Square Garden in Manhattan, which was modified as a "ballroom" for the summer 1941. *The New York Times* reported at the end of May 1941, that there were 5,000 persons on the dance floor. It was claimed that the place drew 12,000 people during the opening night. Benny Goodman, Larry Clinton, and Charlie Barnet worked as the swing bands for the first twelve days. After that all the bands worked there otherwise, but Ben Bernie replaced Goodman. In addition, jitterbug dancers were reported to be on the dance floor. It seems that the place also drew African-American dancers, although it is unclear how many African-Americans entered the place. The event was planned to continue 100 days, but it is unclear if that really happened. It continued, at least, between the end of May and the middle of June.[1698]

Another ballroom outside the area was Cafe Rouge in the Pennsylvania Hotel on West 34th Street. Cafe Rouge was open from November 1939 at least to July 1942. The place was advertised to be "huge" and the dance floor, accordingly, "large enough to accommodate a vast assortment of jitterbugs". Swing bands that worked there were Artie Shaw, Jimmy Dorsey, Charlie Spivak, Glen Gray, and possibly others. The place also drew jitterbugs during its operation.[1699]

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competitions and the place otherwise stayed segregated at the time. African-American Frankie Manning remembered to have tried to enter the Roseland Ballroom with his friends in the middle of the 1930s, but they were not allowed to enter the ballroom because of their race. See: Manning and Millman 2007, p. 89. Also Larry Schulz, who worked with Savoy Lindy Hopper Albert 'Al' Minns, claims that Minns had never been in Roseland Ballroom before Minns visited there in the 1980s, because "they were not welcomed" to enter the ballroom in the past. In other words, it was segregated. See: Larry Schulz interview in Swing Shift July 19, 2010. The author of the dissertation has the tape. Savoy Lindy Hopper Sugar Sullivan and her partner, both African-Americans, entered Roseland Ballroom for the Harvest Moon Ball preliminary in the end of the 1940s, because she and her partner missed the Savoy Ballroom preliminary. Her name was Ruth Guillory at the time. Discussions with Sugar Sullivan by Harri Heinilä, Miami, August 2013, Heinilä has the notes of the discussions. Sullivan and her partner were among the preliminary winners of Roseland Ballroom in 1948. She was listed as Ruth Guillroy. See: 'Roselanders Spellbound By Final Jive Prelims', *Daily News*, September 2, 1948, p. 67. The participation indicates the end of segregation in Roseland which happened at the latest in the end of the 1940s.

[1698] 'Garden Opens Season Of Summer Dancing', *The New York Times*, May 31, 1941, p. 14. The paper claimed that there was going to be "ninety-nine more nights of this". Similarly, *New York Herald Tribune* claimed that it was "100-night run" in the place. See: Robert W. Dana, 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 28, 1941, p. 19. It is unclear if there really were 100 nights for dancing. See also: 'Dancing In The Garden', *The New York Times*, June 15, 1941, p. X2 and 'Proser's Dance Carnival Really Colossal; Biggest Dance Floor, 3 Swing Orks, Pop Prices, Color', *The Billboard*, June 7, 1941, p. 3.

[1699] 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, November 4, 1939, p. 9; Robert W. Dana, 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, May 6, 1942, p. 19; Robert W. Dana, 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 15, 1942, p. 12. Concerning the location of Pennsylvania Hotel see: ' "... I got it at my terminal barber shop" ', *New York Herald Tribune*, February 24, 1939, p. 21A. 'The Guest In 1001', *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 23, 1939, p. 2.

Otherwise, countless numbers of restaurants and other places of entertainment located in Manhattan had a dance floor. Such places were the Rainbow Room, Roosevelt Grill, Terrace Restaurant, Jimmy Kelly's, La Conga, El Chico, Iceland Restaurant, Cafe Bruno, Tavern On The Green, Ricciardi's, the Starlight Roof of the Waldorf Astoria, and Biltmore Roof, only to mention a few of them.[1700] It is likely that they all drew dancers onto their dance floors, and thus they actually were competitors to the Harlem places. It is possible that the loss of the white carriage trade to Harlem, between the 1930s and the 1940s, was partly caused by these places. Considering the amount of places, it would be an enormous task to find out estimates of the amount of dancers frequenting these places. That is why it stays as a case for the future research to find that out.

Chapter Conclusion

The Harlem Riots in March 1935 and in August 1943 resulted from the poor economic and social conditions, and from racial prejudice which had occurred in Harlem, although the riots were probably triggered by unlucky events. The Savoy Ballroom's temporary closing in April 1943, because of the prostitute charges, probably was one of the reasons behind the Harlem unrest at the time. The African-American press had speculated on a possibility that interracial dancing closed the Savoy. There also were later claims that the closing increased the unrest in the area because young people had no other place to go. It seems that the ballroom had became a target for the political game in which Mayor LaGuardia tried to get rid of the Savoy Ballroom management, Moe Gale and Charles Buchanan. However, the ballroom was re-opened in October 1943 with the same management.

As both riots led to rebuilding the community, they did not seem to lead to the decrease of Harlem entertainment. Harlem entertainment, in the short run, seemed to stay intact after the riots. As the Cotton Club left Harlem almost one year after the 1935 riot, there still were places of entertainment like the Ubangi Club and the

[1700] The author of the study has found the references to the places from advertisements and newspaper articles. There does not exist any basic research on dancing and dancers in the places with the exception of occasional references to the places in earlier studies. One of the most important works in this sense is Peretti 2007. Peretti's study examines Manhattan nightlife politics, but mostly passes dancing. Thus, it is not a basic research on the places of entertainment, where dancing is concerned. Otherwise see concerning the places and their dance floors: 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, November 12, 1938, p. 10. 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 3, 1937, p. 6; ' "Go" Places', *Life*, April, 1936, p. 47; 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 3, 1939, p. 9; 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 28, 1939, p. 9; 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 30, 1937, p. 11; 'Night Club Reviews – Iceland, N. Y.', *Variety*, September 23, 1942, p. 47; 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 12, 1940, p. 11; Robert W. Dana, 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 4, 1941, p. 18; Robert W. Dana, 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, October 15, 1942, p. 18; 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, July 9, 1938, p. 4; Robert W. Dana, 'Dining and Dancing', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 7, 1941, p. 8; 'Biltmore Roof Opening', *New York Herald Tribune*, June 8, 1939, p. 25.

Savoy Ballroom, which also attracted white "carriage trade". Also, swing was becoming massively popular at the end of 1935, which probably supported the "carriage trade" to Harlem, and although there are signs that the white "carriage trade" was on the decline at the end of the 1930s and in the beginning of the 1940s, this trend is difficult to connect to directly to the aftermath of the 1935 riot. There were other factors, such as the weakening economic situation, and possible scare campaign of the mainstream press for preventing white World's Fair visitors from visiting in Harlem. Similarly, the aftermath of the 1943 riot did not seem to have any effects on Harlem entertainment in the short run. Basically, the Harlem entertainers kept going on after the riot, both in and outside Harlem.

Also the Swing-Street, West 52nd Street, and other midtown area New York entertainment did not seem to be real rivals to Harlem entertainment, until in the middle of the 1940s, when the first African-American clubs were established on the Swing-Street. That was because Swing-Street and midtown area ballrooms were mostly segregated. There was no real alternative to the Savoy Ballroom and other Harlem ballrooms, and nightclubs, as far as African-Americans are concerned. However, it is possible that the decreasing trend in the white "carriage trade" in the end of the 1930s partly resulted from the emerging midtown entertainment. Also, World War II had effects on the situation because the leading Harlem tap dancers and Savoy Lindy Hoppers were drafted. Contrary to the claims that African-American dancers encountered mistreatment in the U.S. military mainly because of their race, there are signs that the dancers were treated variedly, and even so that their specialties were occasionally considered, when they were assigned to different tasks in the U.S. military. A threat seemed to be the tendency of Broadway entertainment to prefer white dancers to African-American dancers, which probably led to the decrease of African-American jazz dancers on Broadway in the 1940s.

8 Conclusion

The main questions of the study have been how the Harlem-based jazz dance was recognized in the mainstream press between 1921 and 1943, and did African-Americans' image change in the mainstream press. If the image changed, how it affected African-Americans' position was explored. The questions have been answered by examining the Harlem jazz dance inside and outside Harlem, and how the Harlem jazz dance was seen in the mainstream press.

In the beginning of the 20th century, Harlem was changing from a practically all-white community to an African-American community, with large social and economic problems, which continued through the decades. In the beginning of this development, Harlem became the place for nightlife tourism, where white visitors frequented its places of entertainment. The tourism was probably connected to the breakout of African-American jazz dance in the Broadway theaters at the same time, where the African-American Broadway shows like *Shuffle Along* and *Running Wild* had successful runs. The white tourism to Harlem led to interaction between whites and African-Americans in the Harlem places of entertainment from the beginning of the 1920s.

The Harlem-based jazz dance had part in this interaction. The term 'jazz dance', with the connection to jazz music, came in to use at the end of the 1910s. Since then it was increasingly connected to various jazz music-connected dances and steps in the mainstream press. Critics like John Martin from the mainstream newspaper, *The New York Times,* and W. Adolphe Roberts from *The American Dancer,* connected jazz dance to the Harlem dancers in the end of the 1920s. Both critics recognized jazz dance as a remarkable art form, but jazz dance as part of American culture and its racial mixing divided the critics. Roberts stressed racially mixed white and African-American aspects of jazz dance, and jazz music in the American context. John Martin stressed its white and non-American aspects. Later, in the 1930s, white jazz dancers and critics like Mura Dehn and Roger Pryor Dodge, recognized jazz dance as a racially-mixed American art form, which was originated by African-Americans. The term did not disappear during the decades, although it was challenged by the term 'swing dance' from the middle of the 1930s. The 'jazz dance' term came to a new meaning in the form of modern jazz dance from the 1950s, which had an emphasis on modern dance and non-jazz music.

Part of jazz dance and Harlem entertainment was the Charleston dance, which had an infinite number of versions. The Manhattan Casino had at least two Charleston contests in 1925, where both African-Americans and whites were involved. It seems that in addition to the African-American press, the only

mainstream magazine to have reported on them was *The Billboard* which briefly reported on one of the contests. The Harlem Charleston activities, like the Charleston dancing on the street corners, and the Charleston classes for whites, were reported in the mainstream press only occasionally in the middle of the 1920s. Overall, Harlem's Charleston activities were larger than the terse mainstream press reporting indicated, as both African-Americans and whites also danced the dance socially in the Harlem ballrooms.

The social dance in Harlem concentrated especially on the Savoy Ballroom, which was opened in March 1926. The opening happened at the time when the Harlem hype reached another peak among white tourists, who began to visit Harlem more and more. The strength of the Savoy was, in addition to its integration, in its seven days per week operation, which likely was one of the main reasons for its popularity. The African-American *New York Age* reported in 1927, that the Savoy Ballroom had become the most famous institution in Harlem.

The Savoy's success was probably connected to the Lindy Hop. After its beginning in 1928, the Lindy Hop soon became part of the dances at the Savoy. It was the place for the Lindy Hoppers, who came to be known as the Savoy Lindy Hoppers. They danced in the Corner and Circle, and participated in the 400 Club events. The ordinary patrons of the ballroom were integrated to the Corner and Circle phenomenon as the audience, but they also participated in Circles, when those happened outside the Corner. Accordingly, the Savoy organized the Lindy Hop competitions at the ballroom, which probably increased interest in the Lindy Hop, in addition to the Corner and Circle phenomena. Overall, the ballroom functions varied during the decades from regular dance events to special events, which were organized by various communities and organizations.

Basically, the Savoy Ballroom became the place for various social classes from the metropolitan New York area. At the largest, there were fifty percent African-Americans and fifty percent whites at the end of the 1920s and in the beginning of the 1930s. The proportion of whites decreased during the years, in a way that there were no more than fifteen percent whites in the middle of the 1940s. As the ballroom had millions of customers during its operations, the racial mixing was real in the ballroom. The mainstream press also recognized the Savoy as an intergrated ballroom in its articles.

When comparing the Savoy to other Harlem places of entertainment, the Savoy Ballroom was likely the most advertised Harlem ballroom in the mainstream newspapers before World War II as far as dance-related activities are concerned. The image of dancing at the Savoy Ballroom seemed to fare better in the mainstream press during the decades. In the very beginning, in 1926, the Savoy's African-American dancers were described by *Variety* magazine as serious dancers who were not particularly good dancers. By the middle of the 1930s, the picture was better when *LIFE* magazine described the ballroom as the best-liked dance hall in Harlem. Its pictures showed well-dressed African-Americans, who were also described positively when dancing. Similarly, in 1938, *"PIC"* magazine, in its article and pictures, showed well-dressed African-Americans who were dancing, and in other

situations at the Savoy. An otherwise positive message of the article was contradicted by humorous, but arguably dismissive, comments about the dancing.

Contradictory reporting continued when *The New York Times* reported in 1938 positively about the Savoy dancing and the audience, which included white celebrities. When the article analyzed the dancing and its connection to music, it stated how the natural and unpretentious behavior of the dancers came from inherited factors, thus providing a racist stereotype of naturally-gifted African-Americans. Later, in 1939, *The New York Times* stated how Harlem had problems because of its slum status and discrimination, but the Savoyites seemed leave the cares behind when dancing. In this way, the paper pictured Harlem negatively as a problematic area where dancing was a positive way to escape the worries.

The positive side of the reports seemed to culminate in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* articles between 1941 and 1943. Particularly, John Martin from *The New York Times,* argued in his articles on how the Savoy Lindy Hoppers were skillful dancers who purposefully controlled their dancing, in effect, being technically superior dancers. According to Martin, the dance was "unquestionably the finest" he had ever seen. Similarly, Katharine Brush from *The Washington Post,* stated how the "fantastic dance", the Lindy Hop at the Savoy, was "nothing ever seen on earth before". By the beginning of the 1940s, the Savoy Lindy Hop was recognized positively in the mainstream press.

The Harlem-based jazz dance broke out from Harlem via different lines: the Broadway-connected plays, the competitions, especially the Hollywood movies, and other performances outside Harlem. The Lindy Hop was one of the dances which helped the breakthrough. The Savoy Lindy Hoppers were the key dancers who affected the process. The Lindy Hop, which obviously caused a revolution in the U.S. popular dance, by re-ordering the African-American social dance, with the help of its defining swing patterns, was created in the Rockland Palace dance marathon, between June and July 1928, probably by accident. George Snowden and Mattie Purnell basically re-invented the existing breakaway pattern, which allowed partners to improvise when separated. However, their invention, which became a freely variable dance, grew bigger than it initially suggested.

The Harlem dance became identifiable by its name when the Lindy Hop was named in the African-American press by the middle of September 1928, and in the mainstream press later by 1930. The Lindy came to be connected to competitions, performances, and social dance very soon. The first competitions of the dance in Harlem were organized in fall 1928. The Savoy Ballroom danced it in general within a year. The dance reached Broadway plays by 1930. George Snowden and his dancers had a remarkable role in this process, as they traveled around the United States with different touring productions during the 1930s, and also participated outside Harlem in the contests like the national Lindy Hop contest in the Roseland Ballroom, in midtown, New York in the beginning of the 1930s. Some of the contests had both African-American and white participants, which indicated how the dance had become interracial.

The significance of the invention is highlighted by the fact that Snowden and his partner Purnell were basically raised from obscurity to fame in the Rockland Palace dance marathon, which was for African-Americans. They were practically unknown in Harlem before the contest. As they began to win most of the prizes for their dancing, they became overwhelmingly the most popular couple among the audience, which probably consisted mostly of whites.

The mainstream newspapers like the *Daily News*, *The New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* reported on the dance competition. Snowden and Purnell were mentioned occasionally in the articles, but especially when they won prizes. *The New York Times* reported frequently on the dance marathon in its short articles. The paper reported, for example, the sub-competitions, couples that had quit, and other exceptional events, such as the couple who got married during the dance marathon. When compared to the *Daily News*, which also frequently reported on the dance marathon, *The New York Times* reports were more in-depth. Although the *Daily News* published both pictures and comments on the Harlem dance marathon, the comments were usually buried in the middle of the larger articles from the rival, all-white Madison Square Garden dance marathon that happened at the same time.

As the pictures and the comments basically described the couples from both dance marathons positively, the *Daily News* published a lot more pictures from the Madison Square Garden dance marathon, even on the front pages and back covers of its issues, unlike from the Harlem dance marathon which did not make those pages. A reason for the terse reporting on the Rockland Palace dance marathon was possibly a rivalry between the dance marathons. The African-American press advertised the Harlem dance marathon as an endurance competition between African-Americans and whites, with a reference to the ongoing Madison Square Garden dance marathon. Possibly, this rivalry affected the mainstream press, which reported only briefly on the Harlem dance marathon. Another reason might have been poor attendance at the Rockland Palace dance marathon, especially from the end of June, which decreased interest in the dance marathon. Also a racist reason: an African-American dance marathon was not generally considered as interesting as a white dance marathon, could have been in the background.

However, it was exceptional that the *Daily News* also published the interracial pictures about the Harlem dance marathon where African-Americans and whites were shown interacting in discussions with each other, and there was even a picture where African-American George Snowden shook hands with a white Madison Square Garden dance marathoner. The *Daily News* also published pictures from both dance marathons in the same pages where there were pictured either the Harlem or the Madison Square Garden dance marathoners in typical situations, where a dance marathon is concerned. The pictures were published in the way that they gave equal impression from the dance marathoners.

George Snowden, who represented the first generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, paved a way for a new, second generation of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers, who came to be known as Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, according to their manager Herbert 'Whitey' White. White, the former Savoy Ballroom bouncer and floor

manager, began to collect dancers to his dance group at the Savoy around 1934. Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were integrated into the ballroom program soon after. They were performers, inside and outside Harlem. They masqueraded as social dancers in front of the Savoy Ballroom audiences, participated in the Lindy Hop competitions at the Savoy and in the Apollo Theatre, and also performed in the gigs outside New York, almost from the beginning.

Their first big break was the Harvest Moon Ball in 1935, where they succeeded in the Lindy Hop division. Their success in the Harvest Moon Ball contest led to the European tour, with two Harvest Moon Ball couples. Gradually, as their fame increased, they were employed in the Hollywood movies and Broadway shows. They were able to win all Harvest Moon Ball contests between 1935 and 1942, even winning all three top prizes between 1937 and 1942. Their continued success led them to the tours and performances, both in the United States and abroad, the Hollywood movies, and the Broadway-connected plays. They became a remarkable group in the global entertainment world.

It seems that the audiences and the mainstream press-connected critics usually liked them, as far as their performances in the nightclubs and ballrooms in the United States and around the world were concerned. A Whitey's Lindy Hopper, Tiny Bunch, became one of the rare Lindy Hoppers who was acknowledged by his name for over half a year in the *Variety* magazine advertisements, concerning the show in the midtown New York nightclub. Otherwise, it seems that the critics referred to them overall positively, but the references in the reviews described them usually only in general without a serious analysis or names of the dancers. Another clear exception were the reviews of the Loew's Theatre Harvest Moon Ball performances where the performing Lindy Hop couples were named.

The *Daily News*-sponsored Harvest Moon Ball contest was the metropolitan New York-wide contest where the Lindy Hop was one of the essential dances, in addition to the foxtrot, waltz, rhumba, and tango. It sold out every year between 1935 and 1943. Although the contest had white judges and mostly white participants, the Savoy Ballroom became part of it from the beginning, and thus the contest was interracial. However, the interracial Lindy Hop contests were nothing new in the Harlem or New York context. The Roseland Ballroom organized an interracial Lindy Hop contest at the beginning of the 1930s. Similarly, the Apollo Theatre organized interracial Lindy Hop competitions between 1934 and 1935. Thus, the Harvest Moon Ball became, in a way, part of this continuum. The Savoy Ballroom became to be known in the Harvest Moon Ball, especially for its Lindy Hop, but the ballroom also sent couples to other Harvest Moon Ball dance divisions between 1935 and 1938. Indeed, the other division couples did not succeed in the finals.

The Harlem and the midtown interracial Lindy Hop contests were probably not reported in the mainstream press, the exceptions being when *The Billboard* once reported on the Roseland Ballroom contest in 1933, and *Variety* once reported on the Apollo Theatre Lindy Hop contest in 1935. Accordingly, the mainstream press reported on the Harvest Moon Ball contest, usually only occasionally, with an exception of *The American Dancer* (*Dance* from 1942), *The Billboard, Variety,* and

Daily News. The three first mentioned reported in the articles almost yearly, especially the Loew's State Theatre performances, where the Champions of the different dance divisions performed. The *Daily News* reported yearly in its articles and pictures, in addition to the finals, also preliminaries and the Loew's State Theatre performances.

The mainstream press reports on the Harvest Moon Ball contest and the Loew's State Theatre performances, in the form of the articles in *Variety*, *The Billboard*, and *The American Dancer*, seemed to report mostly positively on the contests between 1935 and 1937. From the end of the 1930s, the articles had critical tones, which concerned the general level of the dancers who, according to the articles, fell below the acceptable level. However, the reports on the general level of the Lindy Hop seemed to stay varied, mostly critical, and even contradictory. Sometimes the articles praised the Lindy Hoppers as, at the same time, other articles condemned them or other contestants, or other articles condemned them and praised others. The criticism seemed to culminate in the *American Dancer* article in 1941. The magazine suggested that the Harvest Moon Ball contest should have been divided into the two different sections: the section for the Lindy Hoppers and the section for the "exhibition ballroom dancing".

Similarly, the *Daily News* had clearly critical tones about the Savoy Lindy Hoppers from, at the latest, 1938, when the paper began to predict their loss annually in the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive division (the latter from 1942 onwards). Although the *Daily News* otherwise mostly pictured the Lindy Hoppers positively during the years, it clearly underplayed them, when the amount of pictures and articles are examined. The paper clearly published less pictures and information about them than other competitors. That was striking when considering the popularity of the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive. The dance was the favorite of the contest and the Loew's State Theatre audiences every year. The other divisions of the contest obviously could not compete with the popularity of the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive.

Overall, the Harvest Moon Ball contest articles and pictures did not picture the Savoy Lindy Hoppers interacting with whites in a similar manner as the Rockland Palace dance marathon pictures did. There were no pictures of them in discussions with whites, or shaking hands with whites. It seems that the *Daily News* tried to make them as a distinct, unimportant feature in the contest. A reason for that could have been their overwhelming success in the contest. Possibly, the *Daily News* underplayed them because it did not want to lose other ballrooms which sent their dancers into the contest. In other words, they were afraid that the other ballrooms would lose their interest in the Harvest Moon Ball, because of the overwhelming success of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers.

A reason also could have been racist. There were signs that the Savoy Lindy Hoppers were described less in the pictures of the Harvest Moon Ball finals than whites in those pictures. There also were textual differences; Harlemites were less discussed in the *Daily News* articles than whites as to the Harvest Moon Ball reporting. However, the *Daily News* recognized the dancing of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom as remarkable, when the paper added the ballroom to the contest in 1935.

Thus, in the beginning, the *Daily News* recognized the Savoy Ballroom and the Savoy Lindy Hoppers positively.

The overwhelming success of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers in the Harvest Moon Ball seemed to lead to the name change of the Lindy Hop division, when the name was changed into Jitterbug Jive in 1942. The reason for the name change was explained in the *Daily News* as the way to reduce the possibilities of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers to express themselves in the contest. With the help of the name change, the *Daily News* tried to make it possible for other ballrooms to compete realistically against Harlemites. This resulted when a Roseland Ballroom couple won Jitterbug Jive in 1943. When considering the fact that the *Daily News* did not rave in its articles about the Roseland couple which won Jitterbug Jive as the first white couple, it seems that the name change resulted from the overwhelming presence of the Savoy Lindy Hoppers: not from disliking them. In spite of the loss, the Savoy Lindy Hoppers continued and came back winningly the next year.

The Harlem-based jazz dance spread outside Harlem from the beginning of the 1920s with the help the African-American Broadway plays like *Shuffle Along* and *Runnin' Wild.* Especially *Shuffle Along,* in 1921, seemed to be the beginning of the trend of African-American Broadway plays. During the first half of the 1920s, the mainstream press, in its reviews, acknowledged a countless number of dancers from the African-American Broadway plays, who usually were acknowledged with general phrases like "excellent" without explaining more exact reasons for the appreciation. Similarly, the critics of the mainstream press credited the shows with general phrases like "wonderful". The plays were compared to *Shuffle Along*, especially, in 1923, when *Runnin' Wild* was appreciated by *Variety*, and *How Come* by *The Washington Post,* as better shows than *Shuffle Along*.

Exceptions were when the reviewers recognized the various dance forms which the dancers did in the plays. The dancers were indirectly or directly compared to each other, when the critics credited dancers for their performances. Thus, the critics found some acts in the plays better than others. In spite of that, there did not seem to be any particular dancer or dance act that was continuously credited for their performances. The mainstream newspapers and magazines positively recognized various dancers from play to play. However, the critics also found other positive factors, in addition to dancing, as far as the dancers are concerned. The mainstream press recognized dancers' acting skills, and African-American dancing (that means jazz dancing) was recognized as part of a wider concept, entertainment from at least the beginning of the 1920s. Florence Mills was even billed as "world's greatest colored entertainer" in 1922, as *Variety* and *Women's Wear Daily* reported.

The shows also were criticized for various reasons from the beginning of the 1920s. It seems that the critics of the mainstream press appreciated African-American racial values in dancing, and the lack of racial values was an important reason to criticize the plays. Reasons for the lack of racial values in the mainstream press were connected to slowness and the lack of wild and perpetual motion, in the beginning of the 1920s. In spite of the criticism, it seems that overall, the

mainstream press critics recognized positively the African-American Broadway plays in the first half of the 1920s.

Unlike Marshall Stearns claims, there was not any delineation on the popularity of the African-American Broadway plays. There were African-American Broadway plays every year on Broadway from the middle of the 1920s to 1933. After that, there still were African-American Broadway plays, which were especially carried by tap dance. It seems that the Broadway plays can roughly be divided into three categories: the plays, which were acknowledged almost totally positively. Secondly, the plays which received mixed reviews, both good and bad. And thirdly, the plays which received almost only bad reviews. There was no time period when the plays received only good or bad reviews.

It seems that only two African-American Broadway plays between 1925 and 1929, *Lucky Sambo* in 1925 and *Hot Chocolates* in 1929, got almost only good reviews from the mainstream press, and accordingly two African-American shows between 1929 and 1933, *Pansy* in 1929 and *Hummin' Sam* in 1933, received almost only bad reviews. More than seventeen African-American shows, between 1926 and 1933, received mixed reviews, both good and bad.

As far as the shows which got exceptional good reviews are concerned, the critics from the mainstream press acknowledged individual dancers in similarly positive general phrases in the first half of the 1920s. In addition to that, they acknowledged the well-trained dancers, thus understanding the meaning of training. Also, racial values were noticed by preferring African-American dancers to white dancers. Similarly, where the exceptionally poor shows were concerned, the critics condemned them with phrases like ”they could not sing, they could not act, they could not dance” and ”the worst show of all time”. Thus, not considering African-Americans stereotypically as naturally gifted entertainers.

The plays which were received with mixed reviews, were evaluated sometimes very contradictory. The shows and their dances and dancers were considered variedly both good and bad. There was no delineation on the reviews. Similarly, than in the first half of the 1920s, the critics noticed various dance forms like tap dance, soft-shoe dancing, chorus dancing, Cakewalk, and the Lindy Hop, which implies that they had interest in the dance forms. Tap dance and the Lindy Hop seemed to especially carry two shows: *Singin' the Blues* in 1930 and *Yeah Man* in 1932. The Lindy Hop in *Singin' the Blues* probably triggered an article in *New York Herald Tribune*, where it was discussed the Lindy Hop and the music of the play.

The critics, who reviewed the plays in the mainstream press, brought out the African-American race values, similar to before. When the racial values were discussed, the plays were usually somehow compared to white plays. Typically, the African-American Broadway plays were blamed for copying white plays without explaining more precisely what the copying meant. However, there were explanations where the critics usually referred to rhythm. The African-American dancers' rhythm seemed to be appreciated without explaining this more exactly. Also, a stereotype of African-Americans as careless personalities was brought out

occasionally, when the reasons for the lack of the racial values were explained. However, the critics seemed to understand the significance of rehearsals. Both the training of the dancers and the lack of training were occasionally noticed.

From the end of the 1920s, certain African-American dancers and the dance acts seemed to be distinguished from other African-American dancers in the mainstream press reviews of the Broadway plays, and in some case also in the mainstream press interviews. In addition to dancers Mae Barnes and 'Jazzlips' Richardson, the pianist/tap dancer duo Buck Washington and John 'Bubbles' Sublett, as known as Buck and Bubbles, tap dancer Bill Robinson, the Nicholas Brothers, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, seemed to have risen above other Harlem jazz dance stars in the reviews. When Mae Barnes and 'Jazzlips' Richardson's names started to fade in the mainstream press after the beginning of the 1930s, the other acts had a continuation in the Broadway plays and Hollywood movies, which carried them through the decade.

The Broadway-connected *Blackbirds* saga between 1926 and 1939 brought out various dancers from which especially the Nicholas Brothers and Bill Robinson, in addition to Buck and Bubbles, seemed to have a continuation: they were mentioned frequently in the reviews of the mainstream press. Bill Robinson's stardom on Broadway began in *Blackbirds of 1928*. The Nicholas Brothers, who had their Broadway beginning in the *Ziegfeld Follies* of the 1936 edition, in the middle of the 1930s, performed also in the *Blackbirds of 1936*, when the show was in London between 1936 and 1937. As Robinson's Broadway career in various Broadway plays carried into the 1940s, the Nicholas Brothers seemed to perform on Broadway in only two plays between 1936 and 1937.

When comparing Buck and Bubbles, whose Broadway career already began in 1927, and carried to at least the end of the 1930s, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, who were active on Broadway between 1938 and 1939, to the Nicholas Brothers and Bill Robinson, it seems that Bill Robinson can be distinguished clearly from others. In 1933, Robinson was evaluated superior to the masters from the modern dance and ballet world, when he was reviewed in the mainstream press for the *Blackbirds of 1933* performance. In 1939, he was associated positively to "superhuman" kind of aspects, when his performances in *the Hot Mikado* were reviewed in the mainstream press.

His overwhelming presence in the mainstream press reviews compared to the other acts was clear. When Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and Robinson performed in *the Hot Mikado* in 1939, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were mostly not noticed in the reviews. Robinson was the star of the reviews. Robinson became the favorite of the reviewers in the way that he seemed to carry almost any kind of theater play.

When comparing the other acts' reviews of the mainstream press to the reviews of Bill Robinson, it seems that he was perceived more personally than other dancers and dance acts. Usually, the reviews of Buck and Bubbles, the Nicholas Brothers, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers concentrated only on dancing. As personalities they mostly stayed unknown. Accordingly, when comparing the reviews of the

Broadway-connected plays of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers to the reviews of Buck and Bubbles, and the Nicholas Brothers, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were not usually mentioned at all in the reviews or they were mentioned only briefly and in general, without exact details of the performances, unlike the other acts whose dancing was analyzed more deeply in the reviews.

Concerning the movie reviews of the mainstream press, where the Harlem jazz dance was reviewed, three dance acts especially: Bill Robinson, the Nicholas Brothers, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, which participated several times in the Hollywood movies, seemed to be distinguished from each other for different reasons. Bill Robinson was recognized positively from the beginning of his movie career, when *Dixiana* in 1930 and *Harlem is Heaven* in 1932, were published. At the time, when he concentrated on Hollywood movies in the middle of the 1930s, he began an interracial acting partnership with Shirley Temple. Robinson's dancing and also his acting skills were mostly recognized positively for the movies with Temple. Robinson was also recognized positively without Temple, when he performed with African-American tap dancer Jeni LeGon in *Hooray for Love* in 1935.

When comparing Robinson's movie career to his Broadway theater career, it seems that the movie career was perceived more variedly by the mainstream press critics. Overall, Robinson did not get a similar, unanimous appreciation as he had in the Broadway play reviews. However, when he is compared to the Nicholas Brothers, whose Hollywood movie career began in *Pie Pie Blackbird* short film in 1932, and to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers whose Hollywood movie career began in *A Day at the Races* in 1937, it seems that Robinson was more profoundly received than the other acts, which were evaluated mostly for their dancing.

Accordingly, comparing the Nicholas Brothers to Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, the Nicholas Brothers were reviewed many times more than Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, who mostly were not mentioned at all, or only referred to briefly without naming them, as far as the reviews of their movies are concerned. Also, the Nicholas Brothers were reported with their forenames, which personalized them, compared to the nameless Lindy Hoppers. However, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were recognized as a remarkable act, indeed even without naming them, when *The Washington Post*, reported twice briefly how "the Lindy Hoppers" or "Apple Dancers" were part of the Hollywood movies *Everybody Sing* and *Radio City Revels*.

The recognition of African-American jazz dancing was also connected to the dress code of the dancers, especially where movies are concerned. It seems that African-American dancers usually had to dress like menial workers or in an undignified manner, if they were interacting with their white colleagues in the movies. When they acted in all-African-American movies, they were able to dress with suits and smart casual. Probably this was connected to the racist stereotype of African-Americans as persons who were not equal with whites. Thus, they were presented in that way where the interracial movies are concerned. When they participated in all-African-American movies, they were equals, and they did not have to dress in an undignified manner.

However, there were exceptions, such as when Harold Nicholas, dressed in a tuxedo, danced in front of the white chorus dancers in *Kid Millions* in 1934, and when Earl Tucker, dressed in smart casual, danced on his own, in *Crazy House* in 1930. According to dance historian Constance Valis Hill, reasons for exceptions could have been that the African-American dancers had no verbal or physical contact with their white colleagues, and, on the other hand, the scenes were able to cut out easily if the movie was to be presented to an audience which disliked the dance scenes.

As far as rehearsals and the dance acts, Bill Robinson, the Nicholas Brothers, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, in the movies and in the Broadway-connected plays are concerned; at least, Bill Robinson and the Nicholas Brothers were connected to the "practice" of dancing occasionally in the mainstream press reviews. Thus, it seems that at least some critics understood that they were rehearsed dancers.

Civil Rights-connected political organizations also had jazz dance in their activities. Two of the most important of the organizations that organized jazz-connected events in Harlem between 1921 and 1943, were probably the NAACP and the American Communist Party (the ACP) with its affiliates. The latter organized events between the end of the 1920s and the 1940s.

Both the NAACP and the ACP, with its affiliates, organized major jazz-connected dance events in Harlem only a few times a year. They did not seem to use jazz dance as a remarkable vehicle to affect the position of African-Americans with the help of the events. As far as the NAACP is concerned, a reason for this could have been that the leaders of the NAACP were connected to the Harlem Renaissance Movement, which usually recognized jazz dances as "lower art forms". As far as the ACP is concerned, a reason for such little use of jazz music and jazz dance could have been the ACP's preference for modern dance at the time. Both parties were not promoting jazz dance actively as a remarkable cultural achievement. An exception seemed to be when the NAACP leading figures participated in negotiations for re-opening the Savoy Ballroom after its temporary closing in 1943. Whether the reason for the help in this case was jazz dance, or the fact that the Savoy was an important community center, stays unclear.

Similarly, when younger Communists began to be interested in the swing phenomenon from 1937, there were more swing (jazz)-connected events in Harlem. According to the *Daily Worker*, over fifty percent of the dances were surely connected to swing and jazz in October 1937. Because the event amount stayed almost the same in October 1937, than in January 1935, that suggests that the ACP and its affiliates only changed the music in the events to swing. In other words, they followed the mainstream at the time. The ACP and its affiliates also organized the dance events at the Savoy Ballroom, and outside Harlem in October 1937, where Whitey's Lindy Hoppers performed. Thus, they recognized, at least indirectly, the Lindy Hop as an important dance in the case. In spite of the fact that younger Communists especially recognized the value of swing and also the Harlem jazz dance, to some degree, the ACP seemed to retain "white values", when considering the racist bursts which happened in their meetings around the United States. Also,

the support of the ACP in Harlem seemed to be bigger than the amount of the members in Harlem suggested: the ACP had only about 700 members in Harlem at the time. Those who were ideologically committed to communism were in the minority in Harlem.

In spite of the lack of the active support for the Harlem jazz dance, both the NAACP and the ACP with its affiliates, used jazz music and jazz dance for gathering funds, and especially in the Scottsboro case, for gathering people to the support events. Tap dance seemed to be an important dance in those events. Thus, jazz and also jazz dance, affected in the case, at least, indirectly to the image of African-Americans. They also occasionally hired other Harlem ballrooms, in addition to the Savoy Ballroom, which speaks for the significance of jazz among both the NAACP and the ACP activities in Harlem.

Harlem, which stayed as a crime-ridden and poor neighborhood through the 1930s, rioted in March 1935. As Harlem had deep social and economic structural problems for a long time, the riot probably was an act against "intolerable" conditions, as Mayor LaGuardia's Commission stated in its report. The immediate riot consequences concerning the Harlem nightlife entertainment seemed to have been minimal. The Harlem entertainment scene seemed to stay quite intact after the riot.

When Harlem next had a riot in August 1943, the situation was changed overall in Harlem and New York since 1941, because of World War II, when the United States began to participate in it. Harlem still was an economically and socially problematic area. Also, the Savoy Ballroom's temporary closing for the prostitution charges between April 1943 and October 1943, for six months, possibly affected the outburst of the riot, as the ballroom was acknowledged as an important community center. The ballroom became part of the political game, where Mayor LaGuardia probably tried to get rid of the Savoy Ballroom management, Moe Gale and Charles Buchanan.

The Savoy Ballroom's temporary closing probably did not decrease the popularity of Harlem entertainment, because the Golden Gate Ballroom, a few blocks from the Savoy, was able to handle the Savoy crowd. On the other hand, it seems that the white carriage trade was on the way downhill already, before World War II, when relatively less and less white customers visited the Savoy Ballroom. There had been a campaign for scaring potential downtown customers not to visit in Harlem before the temporary closing of the Savoy. In the end of the 1930s, economic problems in the United States also affected the Harlem places of entertainment, which were claimed by the African-American press to struggle to survive. Whites still visited in Harlem through the first half of the 1940s.

A potential rival to the Harlem entertainment scene began to emerge from the middle of the 1930s, when West 52nd Street became the place for the midtown New York entertainment. When West 52nd Street and the other Manhattan places of entertainment are considered as the challengers to Harlem entertainment, it seems that they were not real challengers, as far as interracial social dancing is concerned.

This is supported by the observation that West 52nd Street and the other Manhattan places of entertainment usually had only small dance floors, with a few exceptions like the Roseland Ballroom and Arcadia. The places seemed to be mostly segregated at the time and thus they could not challenge Harlem, as far as racially mixed dancing was concerned. They likely began to challenge the Harlem entertainment from the middle of the 1940s, when the first African-American clubs opened in the midtown area. Indeed, the cumulative effect of gathering white dancers on the dance floors outside Harlem dance places, may have had a part in lessening white trade in the Harlem dance places in the end of the 1930s and later.

In the short run, the Harlem places of entertainment did not disappear after the 1943 riot. Basically, there were the same places of entertainment in Harlem in March 1943, than there were in October 1943. Also, various Harlem-based dance acts kept working after the riot, although "modern dancers" were claimed to have replaced "authentic" jazz dancers to some degree, as far as dance-connected performances are concerned. A reason for that was World War II, which led to draft the competent jazz dancers. The dancers who were drafted seemed to be assigned variedly to the tasks where they also were able to use their dancing skills. Thus, the U.S. military, in spite of its racist practices, also acknowledged the dancers, at least in some cases.

It seems that Bill Robinson and the Lindy Hop dance, with the help of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, and George Snowden, were especially recognized in an exceptional way outside the movie and theater reviews, but partly for different reasons. The Savoy Ballroom and its dancers, who were practically Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, were recognized positively as part of American culture, when the World's Fair organization included the ballroom in the World's Fair in the end of the 1930s. Also, the Savoy was recognized as a remarkable entity, when compared to other ballrooms like Roseland Ballroom which did not participate in the Fair.

However, a bigger recognition in the form of *LIFE* magazine seemed to occur in the first half of the 1940s. When *LIFE* reported positively on the Savoy Ballroom and its dancers in 1936, the Savoy Lindy Hoppers couple, George Greenidge and Ella Gibson, who demonstrated the Lindy Hop in the picture series, were not named in the article. In 1941, when *LIFE* magazine reported on the Savoy Ballroom and its dancing, the dancers and their manager Herbert White, were named in the article. White also was recognized as the "Negro originator of the Lindy Hop and Suzy-Q" in the *LIFE* article. In 1943, *LIFE* called the Lindy Hop a "True National Folk Dance" and demonstrated the claim by both white and African-American dancers. The latter were Whitey's Lindy Hoppers' Willa Mae Ricker and Leon James, who were named with the white couple in the article. The article also mentioned George Snowden in connection to the Lindy Hop, although he was erroneously obscured from his role as the creator of the dance. In spite of that, the article admitted that African-Americans were the creators of the Lindy Hop. Although the 1943 *LIFE* article was seemingly connected to the war politics of the U.S. at the time, which boasted for national unity, but at the same time practically accepted racism in the United States, the article seemed to frankly picture the Lindy Hop as all of America's national dance. Thus, it seems that the Lindy Hop, in the connection to African-Americans, was recognized powerfully in 1943 by *LIFE* magazine.

Bill Robinson became a certain kind of "freedom fighter" during the 1930s and 1940s. His private life was full of confrontations with racism, where he fought for equality between races, sometimes by force. He also helped African-Americans monetarily in Harlem, when needed, and he contributed in general to welfare funds. He made friends with various politicians and officials. His actions on and off the stage seemed to get him in to the articles of the mainstream press, in such a powerful way, that there obviously is no other African-American dancer and possibly no other African-American person from the time period, who succeeded similarly in the mainstream press. In addition to the reviews, Robinson was interviewed frequently in the mainstream press from the end of the 1920s, where his status was of the superhuman kind at the end of the 1930s.

In addition to the reviews and interviews, he was cited in the mainstream press as an advocate for the U.S. foreign politics in the end of the 1930s. When he tap-danced on "Adolf Hitler's coffin" in the Madison Square Garden event in October 1941, he became part of the U.S. war efforts, already before the U.S. participation in World War II. His dance in the front of 17,000 persons meant that tap dance was recognized as an important part of American culture. He definitely broke race barriers in a big way. The claim is supported by the observation from his funeral in 1949, where 1,500,000 people participated as onlookers.

In spite of that, Robinson succeeded remarkably at breaking racial barriers, but he could not break all of them. He was recognized mostly as a dancer in the mainstream press, although he also acted in the movies. Thus, despite clearly deviating from the stereotype, he was not able to indubitably and unequivocally distinguish himself from the racist and stereotypical Mungo character, one who was used to portray African-Americans as people who merely sang and danced.

Another question that arises is why George Snowden and Herbert White, who were Robinson's counterparts in the Lindy Hop, were not recognized similarly as Robinson in the mainstream press, at least, as far as dancing is concerned. George Snowden, as the creator of the Lindy Hop, and Herbert White, as the promoter of the Savoy Lindy Hop, should have been recognized better for their roles, when considering how big the Lindy Hop became through the years. Snowden seemed to be cited mainly in the African-American press. He was never cited in the same way in the mainstream press. Possibly, the changing story of how the Lindy Hop was created played a part in the case. If Snowden had promoted an unvaried story about his role in the Lindy Hop, his significance would have come up more firmly, and that could have led the mainstream press to the recognition of his status as the creator of the dance.

Herbert White seemed to succeed powerfully as a promoter and a trainer, when his dancers had a winning streak in the Harvest Moon Ball, and his dancers were chosen to perform in Hollywood movies, and in various events around the world. The critics did not seem to acknowledge White properly, where the reviews of the Broadway plays and Hollywood movies were concerned. However, White was a contradictory character during his career. While he supported his dancers and had

confrontations with racism like Bill Robinson had, he also exploited his dancers and had criminal methods to maintain discipline. As the African-American press occasionally reported on his criminal activities, that possibly affected his fame, and that is why he never succeeded as powerfully in the mainstream press, with an exception of *LIFE* magazine in 1941.

Overall, the mainstream press recognized the Harlem-based jazz dance variedly between 1921 and 1943. When compared to the 1769 racist Mungo character, which the white playwrights established for picturing "lazy" and "simple minded" African-Americans, in addition to describing them as dancing and singing types of persons, it seems that the mainstream press in general, recognized African-Americans more positively as multifaceted dancers, as far as jazz dancing is concerned. Thus, it could be argued that the Harlem-based jazz dance, in fact, affected the position of African-Americans by diversifying the image of African-Americans. Possibly, the diversified picture of African-Americans as dancers, helped to see them also diversified as persons. Especially Bill Robinson's success and the *LIFE* article from 1943, refer to the fact that the Harlem-based jazz dance, in effect, affected positively the position of African-Americans. Probably that helped the decades long struggle for Civil Rights, which culminated in the pivotal moment in Civil Rights of the United States in 1954, when racial segregation in public schools was made illegal, and after that the decrease of the legal segregation was possible.

When compared to the team-based sport forms like baseball, basketball and professional football, which were originally white, and which were also remarkable entertainment forms, the jazz dances like the Charleston, the Lindy Hop and tap dance were integrated years before these sport forms were fully integrated. This also suggests that the Harlem-based jazz dance played an important part in the racial integration process in the U.S.

Possibly the varied recognition process affected the later development of "jazz dance" in the 1950s, when so-called modern jazz dance emerged with non-jazz dance movements and music, like Hindu movements and music, lacking the clear connection to jazz music and to "authentic" jazz dance. "Authentic" jazz dance had already survived the challenges from the 1920s, when it was scrutinized by the critics and challenged by a new jazz ballet, which was practically the beginning of new non-jazz "jazz dance". "Authentic" jazz dance still continued in the 1950s and later, when new "modern jazz dance" with non-jazz dance movements and music was strongly taking over the term. Perhaps this continuation proves that jazz dance in the form of the Harlem-based jazz dance was recognized firmly enough for surviving. However, it stays as a task for a new study to find out, how the recognition between 1921 and 1943, is connected to the later recognition process.

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Index

Abbott, Sam, 296
Ackerman, Paul, 207
Adams, Frank S., 252
Adler, Mitchel G., 33
Albee, Edward F., 232
Anderson, Garland, 103
Anderson, Ivie, 314
Anderson, Jervis, 30, 114
Andrade, Vernon, 341, 346, 348, 353
Andrews, Pal, 243, 247
Andrews, Pinkey, 206
Anthony, Ray, 77
Armstrong, Louis, 71-72, 292
Astaire, Fred, 50, 52, 202, 309
Atkins, Charles "Cholly", 58, 63, 65, 385-386
Atkins, Roy, 283
Atkinson, Brooks, 252, 268, 279, 281, 283-284, 286, 291-292, 294, 296
Backstein, Karen, 37
Bailey, Bill, 292-293, 313
Bailey, Mildred, 125
Baker, Josephine, 246, 259-260, 286, 330
Balanchine, George, 58, 135, 288
Barnes, Howard, 266, 272, 276, 310-312, 320, 322-324
Barnes, Mae, 265, 275, 277, 401
Barnet, Charlie, 341, 390
Barron, Mark, 289
Barrymore, Lionel, 306
Barthé, Richmond, 127
Barton, James, 301
Basie, Count, 73, 77, 105, 176, 335-336, 341
Bassoe, Thorbjorn, Jr., 194
Bates, "Peg Leg", 109, 285-286
Bates, Ralph, 364
Batie, Walter, 285
Batiuchok, Margaret, 143
Battle, Samuel J., 147
Bearden, Bessye, 147
Beasley, Joyce, 291
Beasley, "Snookie", 179, 204, 211
Belford, Joseph H., 194
Bel Geddes, Norman, 247
Bell, Don T., 163
Bell, John T., 148
Bell, Nelson B., 301, 305, 320-321
Berkeley, Busby, 50
Berkowitz, Rose, 349
Berle, Milton, 216-217, 240
Berlin, Irving, 240
Bernie, Ben, 390
Berry Brothers, The, 109, 173-174, 283, 358
Berry, Nyas, 285
Best, Willie, 307
Bethel, Alfred "Pepsi", 63, 65, 206
Bickerstaff, Isaac, 15
Bindas, Kenneth J., 76
Blake, Eubine, 104, 274
Bolger, Ray, 202
Bolton, Whitney, 235
Bowen, Stirling, 267, 283, 289
Bradshaw, Tiny, 339
Brecker, Louis J., 194
Briggs, Cyril V., 328, 347
Brooks, Phyllis, 310

Broomfield, Leroy, 106
Brown, Clyde, 179-180
Brown, James, 206
Brown, King Rastus, 108
Brown, Ralph, 291
Brown, Ray C. B., 60
Brown, Russell "Brownie", 105
Bruce, Roscoe Conkling, 83
Brush, Katharine, 129, 395
Bryant, Willie, 190, 335, 339, 355
Bryson, Ralph, 259
Buchanan, Bessie, 336
Buchanan, Charles, 119, 121, 130, 137, 141, 190, 223, 244, 379-381, 383, 391, 404
Buck and Bubbles, 41, 108-109, 184, 229, 257, 277-279, 283, 298, 313, 325-326, 339, 365, 369-370, 401-402
Bunch, Tiny, 175, 185, 397
Burke, Patrick, 387
Burr, Eugene, 268, 272-273, 276, 279, 284, 286, 293, 295
Burroughs, Allison, 347
Butler, Albert, 195
Calloway, Cab, 71, 109, 174, 176-177, 319, 325, 341, 347, 349
Campbell, Elmer Simms, 91
Capeci, Domenic J., Jr., 377, 381
Caponi-Tabery, Gena, 17-18, 26, 344
Carnegie, Andrew, 38
Carperter, John Alden, 59
Carter, Benny, 245, 365
Cassidy, John, 104
Castle, Irene, 15, 202
Castle, Nick, 315-316
Castle, Vernon, 15
Catron, Stanley, 186-187
Chadwell, Paul, 206, 214, 217, 221
Chalif, Frances L., 195
Chandler, Owen, 110, 328
Charters, Samuel B., 115
Chesterfield, Henry, 232
Chilton, Carol, 285
Churchill, Douglas, 319
Clark, Helen, 180
Clarke, Richard, 189
Clinton, Larry, 390
Cole, Jack, 45, 57, 61, 134-135
Cole, Nat King, 76
Coles, Charles T. "Honi", 58, 108, 184, 385-386
Coles, Marion, 108, 132
Collins, Charles, 272, 285
Collins, Dean, 316
Colson, George, 175
Connelly, Marc, 127
Cook, Louise, 266-267
Cooper, Ralph, 338
Covan, Willie, 260
Cox, Oliver Cromwell, 331
Craighead, Jean, 56-57, 78
Crandall, Milton D., 162
Crawford, Wilda, 204-205, 213-214, 243, 248, 250
Crease, Robert P., 19, 39
Crisler, B. R., 236
Cromwell, Jimmy, 126
Crosswaith, Frank R., 350-351, 355
Crowder, Gladys, 204, 212, 218
Crowther, Bosley, 320, 322-323
Dafora Horton, Assadata, 350
Dakin, Roger, 221-222
Daniels, Joe, 204, 212, 215-216
Dash, Tom "Pussyfoot", 148-149
Davis, Ben, 358-359
Davis, Eddie, 204, 212, 218
DeFrantz, Thomas F., 66
Dehn, Mura, 37, 53-56, 60, 63-65, 78, 119, 123, 360, 362, 384, 393
De Lucia, Luciano, 213
De Mille, Agnes, 58, 292
De Moska, Jerry, 206
Denis (Dennis), Paul, 175, 207, 288, 319
Denors, Julie, 206
De Priest, Oscar, 350, 355
Dewey, Thomas E., 240

Diaghileff (Diaghilov), Serge de, 284
Diamond, Geraldine, 127
DiMaggio, Joe, 240
Dinerstein, Joel, 16, 18-19, 25, 206, 218, 245, 247, 249, 251
Dixon, Harland, 50, 52
Dodd, Percey, 357
Dodge, Roger Pryor, 16, 53, 55-56, 59, 61, 78, 393
Donohue, Jack, 52
Dorsey, Edna, 148
Dorsey, Jimmy, 390
Dotson, Bill, 206
Dowling, Thomas and Catherine, 320
Downes, William, 170, 183, 213, 215-216
Draper, Paul, 60, 125
Du Bois, W. E. B., 23, 29, 328-330, 344
Dudley, Jane, 356
Duke, Doris, 126
Dunbar, Dixie, 237
Duncan, Isadora, 52, 78, 134-135
Durante, Jimmy, 240
Dyson, Elnora, 180, 183
Dzhermolinska, Helen, 208, 224
Eddy, Marion, 252
Elam, Beatrice "Little Bea", 192
Ellington, Duke, 71-72, 75, 77, 108, 125, 316, 335, 341, 347-348, 361
Emery, Lynne Fauley, 110
Erenberg, Lewis A., 13, 17, 111
Europe, James Reese, 16, 75
Faggen, Jay I., 115, 124, 383
Fagley, N. S., 33
Faye, Alice, 321
Feather, Leonard G., 172
Ferber, Richard, 72
Ferguson, Vivian, 155
Fields, Donald, 260
Fields, W. C., 130
Fisher, Rudolf, 94
Fitzgerald, Ella, 341, 358
Ford, James W., 347, 350-351, 355
Forkins, Marty, 231
Foster, Allan K., 104
Frank, Waldo, 347
Freedley, Vinton, 127
Frisco, Joe, 46
Fritzinger, William F., 189
Gale, Moe, 115, 125, 242, 247-249, 379-380, 383, 391, 404
Gale, Sigmund, 383
Galeski, Charles, 124
Gambarelli, Maria, 307-308
Ganaway, George "Twist Mouth", 121, 137, 142, 167
Garbo, Greta, 127
Garland, Judy, 202
Garvey, Amy Ashwood, 147
Garvey, Marcus, 329-330
Gay, Beatrice "Big Bea", 167
Gerswin, George, 51
Gest, Morris, 245
Gibson, Ella, 185, 204, 211-212, 216, 405
Gibson Sandra, *see* Mildred Pollard
Gilbert, W. S., 293
Gillette, Don Carle, 261, 266
Gilman, Lawrence, 279
Giordano, Ralph G., 110-112
Gold, Russell, 379
Goodman, Benny, 70-71, 73, 292, 359, 390
Goodman, Harry, 336
Gordon, Eugene, 347
Gottschild, Brenda Dixon, 24, 26-27, 184
Grable, Betty, 305
Graff, Ellen, 28, 361-362
Graham, Martha, 45, 284, 347
Granlund, Nils T., 246
Grant, Jane, 16, 112
Gray, Bernice, 273
Gray, Gilda, 49
Gray, Glen, 245, 390

Green, Mitzi, 289
Grey, Edgar M., 147
Greenberg, Cheryl Lynn, 30, 83-84, 86-87
Greenich, George, *see* Greenidge, George
Greenidge, George, 181, 185, 204, 211-212, 216, 405
Greer, Sonny, 109
Gren, George, 205
Griffin, Leroy, 123
Grosz, Wilhelm, 60
Guarino, Lindsay, 45, 66-67
Gudebrod, Morton P., 266, 272, 276
Guernsey, Otis L., Jr., 314
Haakon, Paul, 129
Haley, Jack, 310
Hall, Adelaide, 282-283
Hall, Mordaunt, 302
Hallback, Aurelia, 150, 157, 160
Hammond, John, 336
Hammond, Percy, 268, 273, 275, 282-283
Hampton, Lionel, 359
Harolde, Ralf, 301
Harris, Arthur, 80
Harris, Estella, 47
Harris, Louis I., 161
Harris, Mary, 323
Harris, Sidney, 206
Harris[ton], Ernest, 204
Haskins, Jim, 230-234
Hayes, Rutherford B., 327
Hawkins, Coleman, 72, 358
Hawkins, Erskine, 186, 244
Heap, Chad, 28
Heilich, Elsa, 195
Henderson, Fletcher, 71-75, 108, 220, 333, 338-340, 365
Henderson, Horace, 73
Henie, Sonja, 322-323
Herman, Woody, 77
Herskovits, Melville J., 24
Hill, Bill "Bailey", 172, 220
Hill, Constance Valis, 19, 109, 258, 288, 304, 374, 403
Hill, Cornelia "Connie", 205
Hill, Lester B., 351
Hill, Teddy, 173, 351, 360, 364
Hinton, Esaline, 166, 273
Hitler, Adolf, 235, 406
Hobson, Harold, 285
Hoefer, George, 27
Holiday, Billie, 358
Holiday, Clarence, 73
Hollywood, Nazimova, 150
Holtz, Lou, 126
Honigberg, Sam, 207
Hope, Bob, 240
Hopkins, Claude, 360, 365
Hopper, Hedda, 319
Horne, Lena, 109, 291, 341-342
Hudgins, John, 260, 266, 280, 330
Hughes, Langston, 87, 94, 115, 331
Humphrey, Doris, 45
Hunter, Alberta, 106, 335
Hurst, Fannie, 127
Inniss, John, 179
Jackson, Brady, 285
Jackson, Crawford, 282-283
Jackson, J. A., 262
Jackson, Laurence "Baby Lawrence", 108
James, Cyril Lionel Robert, 331
James, Irma, 218
James, Joyce, 204, 212, 215-216
James, Leon, 60, 62, 64-65, 122, 170, 172, 186, 203, 211, 215, 217-218, 221, 405
James, Leroy, 289
Janese, Mae, 259
Jefferson, Josephine, 148-149
Johnson, Ann[e] "Popeye", 186
Johnson, George W., 338
Johnson, Charles S., 84, 344
Johnson, Charlie, 338
Johnson, Howard "Stretch", 178, 351

Johnson, Jack, 20
Johnson, James, P., 71
Johnson, James Weldon, 29, 329-330, 344
Johnson, Jazzy, 350
Johnson, Walter, 205-206, 214-215
Jolson, Al, 103, 236
Jones, Byron, 260
Jones, Robert Edmond, 59
Jones, Willie, 170, 290
Jooss, Kurt, 284
Joyce, Nannine, 272
Kaplan, Mike, 295
Karson, Nat, 127
Kay, John, 204
Kaye, Danny, 240, 336
Keene, Lew, 260
Keene, Louis, 265-266
Kelton, Pert, 307
Kenton, Stan, 77
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 330-331
King, Mary, 189
Kirby, John, 73, 75
Kirstein, Lincoln, 60-61
Krupa, Gene, 359
Kunstadt, Leonard, 115
LaGuardia, Fiorella, 127, 202, 232, 344, 371-372, 376, 379, 382, 391, 404
La Quorne, Fred, 195
Lazaro, John, 146
Leagins, Alfred "Al", 141, 170
Lee, Dorothy, 301
Lee, Sammy, 59
Lee, Thomas, 205, 213-214
LeGon, Jeni, 303, 307, 402
Leland, Gordon M., 278
Lemponen, Seppo, 72
Leonard, Eddie, 153-154
Leonidoff, Leon, 195
Lerner, Michael A., 28, 92, 110-111
LeRoy, Hal, 289
Leslie, Lew, 266, 276, 284-285
Lewis, Ted, 49, 51
Lewis, Theophilus, 110
Lindbergh, Charles, 140, 142
Lloyd, George, 143
Long, Avon, 297
Louis, Joe, 20, 343
Lunceford, Jimmie, 71, 176, 339
Lyles, Aubrey, 103
Lyons, Leonard, 129, 245, 294
Madison, Louise, 284
Magee, Jeffrey, 73
Manning, Frank (Frankie) "Musclehead", 30, 33, 74, 109, 114, 121, 123, 135, 138, 143, 170-174, 176, 178-180, 183-184, 186, 204-205, 220, 251, 315-316, 384-386
Manning, Sam, 147
Mansfield, Walda, 278
Mantle, Burns, 222, 224
Marable, Manning, 30
Marcantonio, Vito, 352
Markert, Russell E., 195
Markova, Alicia, 129
Marmey, Maurice, 242
Marsalona, Vic, 206
Marsh, Noel, 350
Marshall, Thurgood, 344
Mason, Melissa, 317
Mason, Theresa, 206, 215, 217, 221
Martin, John, 50-52, 61, 78, 129-131, 133, 393, 395
Marx, Groucho, 365
Marx, Harpo, 314
Matthews, Edith, 172, 203, 211, 215, 217-218, 221
Matthews, Rives, 272
Mayer, L. B., 240
McAllister, Blue, 281-282
McClennon, George, 272
McHale, Duke, 286
McKay, Claude, 328
McKinney, Nina Mae, 318
McLendon, Rose, 347

McMillan, Maggie (Margie), 204, 220
Meade, Charlie, 143
Meeros, Paul and Thelma, 346
Mehler, Jack, 271
Meli, Melachi, 148
Melvin, Edwin F., 295
Middleton, Lucille, 205
Miller, Flournoy, 103
Miller, Glenn, 323
Miller, Irvin, 259
Miller, Laura, 106
Miller, Mae, 205-206, 214-215
Miller, Marilyn, 237
Miller, Norma "Bunny", 12, 30, 135, 170, 172, 177-178, 182, 184, 190, 198, 204-205, 213, 220, 242-243, 246-247, 250-251, 289, 315, 384
Miller, Taps, 272
Millinder, Lucky, 108, 223, 336
Mills, Florence, 236, 259, 260-261, 280, 399
Milne, Ann, 214
Minns (Mimms), Albert "Al", 62, 64-65, 67, 122, 143, 177, 204, 213, 216, 222, 385-386
Miranda, Carmen, 305
Mitchell, Lloyd, 281-282
Mitgang, N. R., 230-232, 234
Monaghan, Terry, 15, 18, 25, 37, 53, 55, 62, 66-67, 74, 76-77, 110, 114, 116-117, 119-121, 124, 131, 134, 137, 139, 142-144, 166, 181, 185-186, 231, 256, 303, 331, 365, 375, 379-380, 382, 385
Moore, Alderman Fred R., 147
Mordkin, Mikhail, 59, 284
Moreland, Mantan, 274, 283
Morgan, Alma, 195
Morgan, Russ, 365
Morse, Pauline, 141, 165
Morton, Jelly Roll, 72
Moses, Alvin, 147
Moss, Paul, 127
Moten, Bennie "Benny", 73, 75
Mulholland, James. V., 190
Mullen, Rita, 204
Mulrooney, Edward P., 230
Murray, Albert, 418
Murray, Arthur, 195
Murtha, William, 222-224
Muse, Clarence E., 107
Naison, Mark, 28, 346, 359-360, 366
Nicholas Brothers, The, 41, 108-109, 184, 229, 257, 264, 286-289, 298-299, 304-305, 318-326, 374, 401-403
Nicholas, Fayard, 289, 304, 318, 385-386
Nicholas, Harold, 288-289, 304, 318-319, 325-326, 403
Nit, Johnny, 260
Noble, Ray, 340
Norman Cropper, Dorothy, 195
Norton, Harold, 26
Nugent, Frank S., 311
Nugent, Pete, 178
Oakie, Jack, 321
O'Day, Caroline, 127
O'Dwyer, William, 240
O'Leary, Cornelius, 378
Oliver, Wendy, 45, 66-67
Osofsky, Gilbert, 13, 30, 79, 81-83
Ott, George, 247
Outlaw, James, 206
Overstreet, W. Benton, 47
Owens, Jesse, 20, 343
Padmore, George, 331
Page, Walter, 73
Parks, Clyde, 103
Parks Duncanson, Louise "Mama Lou", 64
Paul, Bernard, 150, 157, 160
Payton, Phil, 82
Pearson, Alyce, 206
Pennington, Ann, 49, 252, 284
Pennison, Marleen, 67
Peretti, Burton W., 28, 97, 374

Perkinson, Edgar, 155
Perron, Wendy, 29
Peterson, Joe, 105
Peynado, Edna, 148, 163
Piro, Frank, 214
Pollard, Mildred, 177, 204, 213, 216, 222, 250
Pomerance, Alan, 234
Popp, Kaye, 186-187
Porter, Cole, 240
Powell, Adam Clayton, Jr., 379
Powell, Bonney, 138
Powell, Clarence, 350
Powell, Eleanor, 234, 237
Preisser, Cherry and June, 286
Priest, Alan, 127
Purnell, Mattie, 74, 117, 134-141, 143, 145, 148-150, 153-155, 157-158, 161, 163-166, 226, 395-396
Randall, Carl, 50
Randolph, Asa Philip, 328
Rastus, Joe, 300
Raye, Martha, 317
Rector, Eddie, 108, 260, 272, 282
Redman, Don, 71, 108
Reed, Leonard, 108, 141, 190, 304
Rheingold, Ruthie, 171
Rheubottom, Doris, 346
Riccardi, James, 206, 217, 225
Rice, Theodore, 179
Richardson, "Jazzlips", 266-268, 277, 283, 386, 401
Richardson, Sidney "Jazz", 386
Richman, Daniel, 207
Ricker, Billy, 183-184, 204-205
Ricker, George, 204, 213
Ricker, Willa Mae, 184, 186, 204, 212, 405
Riddick, Joe, 153, 155
Riley, Thomas A., 195
Riley, Wilfred J., 268, 281
Rivera, Lino, 371-372, 374
Roberts, W. Adolphe, 51, 78, 393
Robinson, Bill "Bojangles", 30, 32, 41, 51-52, 108-109, 134-135, 147, 150, 165, 167-168, 174, 176, 178, 183-184, 202, 218, 229-241, 245, 248-257, 264, 275, 277, 280-286, 293-314, 316, 318-319, 324-326, 330, 335-336, 338-339, 344, 365, 369-370, 379, 384, 401-403, 405-407
Robinson, Clarence, 174, 259, 266
Robinson, Fannie, 231, 233
Robinson, Jackie, 20
Rockerfeller, John, Jr., 38
Rogers, Ginger, 202
Rogers, J. A., 112
Rogers, Will, 309
Romona, Rose, 206, 217, 225
Rooney, Mickey, 202
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 85-86, 231, 239
Rosenberg, Harry, 171, 204
Ross, Leonard Q., 129
Rouzeau, Edgar T., 137
Rowe, Harry, *see* Rosenberg, Harry
Ruhl, Arthur, 273, 276
Russell, Lewis [Luis?], 359
Russell, Louis [Luis], 338-339
Rustin, Bayard, 331
Rydell, Robert W., 241
Sager, Bernie, 195
Samuels, Rae, 231-232
Sandberg, Will, 64
Sawyer, Donald, 195
Schallert, Edwin, 313
Schiffman, Frank, 108
Schmeling, Max, 20, 343
Schuller, Gunther, 28, 71, 73, 75-76
Schuyler, George S., 84
Scott, Cecil, 71, 334
Scott, Hazel, 341
Scott, John L., 324
Scott, Walter M., 336
Segal, Edith, 347
Sennwald, Andre, 306
Shalett, Sidney, 253

Shapiro, Lynn Colburn, 419
Shaw, Artie, 390
Shaw, Neeka, 283
Shawn, Ted, 52, 78
Shepard, David, 138
Shipton, Alyn, 71
Simms, Margaret, 260
Sims, Howard “Sandman”, 108
Skolsky, Sidney, 305
Small, Edwin, 105
Smith, Ada “Bricktop”, 94
Smith, Alnia, 156
Smith, Joe, 260
Smith, John C., 113, 334, 338
Snow, Valaida, 285
Snowden, George “Shorty”, 40, 74, 117, 121-122, 124, 134-141, 143-145, 148-150, 153-155, 157-158, 161, 163-168, 188, 190, 192, 198, 226, 273, 395-396, 405-406
Solomon, Mark, 29, 365-366
Sommer, Sally, 16
Sothern, Ann, 307
Spivak, Charlie, 390
Spring, Howard, 74
Stamper, George, 259
Stearns, Marshall, 14, 17, 24, 28, 37, 43-45, 47, 49-50, 53, 57-58, 61-62, 64-65, 67, 71, 73-74, 77-78, 135, 137-138, 143-144, 257-258, 264, 281, 284, 371, 400
Steinberg, Rose, 204
Stevenson, Margot, 364
Stowe, David W., 17
Strauss, David, H., 302
Strayhorn, Billy, 342
Stuart, Gloria, 310
Stuart, Muriel, 60
Sublett, John W. “Bubbles”, 108, 265, 277, 279, 313-314, 347, 401
Sullivan, Arthur, 293
Sullivan, George, 122
Sullivan, Maxine, 342
Sullivan, Ruth Sugar, 67, 122
Summerville, Slim, 310
Taylor, Charles, 33
Taylor, James, 379
Taylor, Mabel, 350
Taylor, Robert “Rabbit”, 170
Temple, Shirley, 233, 237, 256, 303-307, 310-311, 314, 402
Thomas, Maceo, 285
Thomas, Martha, 284
Thompson, Eddie, 284
Thompson, Louise, 347
Thompson, Robert Farris, 24
Thompson, U. S., 260
Tilley, Vesta, 288
Tinée, Mae, 306, 308, 322, 324
Tobias, George, 364
Todd, Michael, 254
Tolliver, Denny, 300
Trevor, Claire, 309
Tribble, Andrew, 107
Trueman, Paula, 364
Truex, Ernest, 103
Tuck, Stephen, 29-30, 329, 331
Tucker, Earl “Snakehips”, 10, 281-282, 301, 303-304, 403
Turcott, Jack, 220
Ulric, Lenore, 115
Valentine, Lewis J., 379
Van Vechten, Carl, 92, 114-115, 136, 141, 334
Vernon, Josephine, 349
Walcott, Jacqueline, 64
Walker, Gertrude, 278
Wallace, Slappy, 284
Walrond, Eric, 112
Walton, James, 206
Ward, Sarah, 213, 215-216
Warga, Lilian, 213
Warren Davis, Sadie, 147
Washington, Esther, 205
Washington, Ford “Buck”, 265, 277-278, 313-314, 401
Washington, Fredi, 274, 335
Washington, Roy, 356
Waters, Ethel, 94, 175-176, 271
Watkins, Lila, 206

Watson, Eleanor “Stumpy”, 181
Watts, Richard, Jr., 271, 279, 284, 291-293, 295, 300-301, 306-308
Webb, Chick, 71, 75, 108, 244, 355, 364
Webb, Clifton, 51
Webb, Margot, 26
Weidman, Charles, 45, 51-52, 284
Welles, Orson, 127
Wells, Billy, 50
Welsh, Elisabeth, 259-260, 346
Wendler, George, 17
West, Buster, 50, 52, 317
West, Dorothy, 153, 155
West, Theresa, 259
Westley, Helen, 310
Whalen, Grover, 244
Wharton, Peggy, 272
Whipper, Leight, 231
White, Beverly, 365
White, Ernie, 155
White, George, 103
White (Whyte), Herbert “Whitey”, 114, 121, 124, 168-174, 176, 179-186, 190, 216, 226, 242-243, 250, 290, 292, 314-316, 363-365, 369, 384, 396, 405-406
White, Walter, 29, 341, 344, 376, 379
Whiteman, Paul, 51, 59, 75, 104, 167, 168
Whitey’s Congaroo Dancers, 168
Whitey’s Dancers, 168, 289
Whitey’s Hoppers, 168, 290
Whitey’s Jitterbugs, 168, 178, 254, 296
Whitey’s Lindy Hoppers, 30, 40-41, 128, 134, 168, 171-174, 176-179, 183-184, 188, 226, 229, 241, 244-245, 248-250, 252-253, 256-257, 289, 291-292, 297, 299, 303, 314-316, 318, 325-326, 365, 370, 375, 384, 396, 401-403, 405
Whitey’s Steppers, 168, 290
Whitman, Howard, 225
Whyte, Gordon, 262
Whyte’s (Hopping) Maniacs, 168, 173-174
Wigman, Mary, 284
Wilkins, Kenneth, 289
Wilkins, Roy, 343-344
Wilkins, Walter, 300
Williams, Cootie, 359
Williams, Fess, 360
Williams, Jerome, 384
Williams, Mary Lou, 358
Williams, “Rubberlegs”, 339
Williams, Russell, 205
Wilson, Derby, 339
Wilson, Teddy, 336, 341, 359
Winsten, Archer, 136
Winters, Cora, 155, 165
Winters, Percy, 151, 155, 165
Wolf, Lillian Alpert, 234
Wolfe, Annette, 360
Woodley, Jenny, 29
Woods, Tommy, 259
Worthy, Johnny, 284
Yokinen, August, 366
Young, Wilbur, 136-137
Younger, Edna, 155-156
Zanuck, Darryl, 240
Zumoff, Jacob A., 29

ABSTRACT

The dissertation discusses how Harlem-based jazz dance was recognized in the mainstream press, meaning, non-African-American newspapers and magazines, between 1921 and 1943. The topic was examined by exploring how Harlem jazz dance was perceived in and outside Harlem. Harlem-based jazz dance refers to jazz and swing music dances like the Lindy Hop, the Charleston, and Tap dance, which were danced and promoted by Harlemites in and outside Harlem. In addition to the mainstream press, African-American newspapers, dancers' interviews, articles about dancers, their memoirs, various studies and different materials in archives, were used for building up the picture of Harlem entertainment both in and outside Harlem.

The study mainly analyzes dancers and dance groups like Bill Robinson, the Nicholas Brothers, John W. Sublett and Buck Washington, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and George Snowden. How they were seen in the mainstream press was examined by analyzing reviews and articles of the Broadway-connected plays, movies, the Harvest Moon Ball contest, other contests, and other performances.

Harlem dancers were reported on in a variety of ways in the mainstream press. As far as the reviews of the Broadway-connected plays are concerned, they mostly received mixed reviews. Bill Robinson, in particular, was recognized mostly positively when compared to other Harlem dancers. Where movie reviews are concerned, Bill Robinson and others got mixed reviews. The dancers were recognized mostly for their dancing, with the exception of Bill Robinson whose acting skills were occasionally praised in the movie reviews. Overall, the critics seemed to appreciate African-American, dance-related values like good rhythm which differed positively from white dancers' rhythm, and they occasionally recognized the Harlem dancers as rehearsed dancers. In other words, they were not considered stereotypically to be natural dancers. The mainstream press coverage differed among dancers. Bill Robinson was reported on to a great extent in the mainstream press when compared to other Harlem dancers. In addition to the discussion of his private life, he was even quoted as a 'political advocate', and he was sometimes described even as a "superhuman" person, where his dancing was concerned. He broke racial barriers in that sense. Although Robinson was distinguished from racial stereotypes, even he could not be fully distinguished from a stereotype of African-Americans as people who merely dance.

Although the mainstream press reported on Harlem dancers positively and even sometimes stressed equality between races when publishing pictures of dancers, especially the Rockland Palace dance marathon in Harlem in 1928, the dancers were also occasionally dismissed. As far as the amount of pictures and articles, and sometimes dismissing tone of the articles are concerned, the mainstream press coverage of

the Harvest Moon Ball underplayed Whitey's Lindy Hoppers who participated successfully in the contest. A reason for that was possibly their success in the contest: They won the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive division every year until 1942. The sponsor of the contest, *Daily News*, wanted to give other dancers an equal chance to win the Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive division in the Harvest Moon Ball. The Lindy Hop/Jitterbug Jive, which was the crucial dance in the Harvest Moon Ball because audiences acknowledged it as the number one dance in the contest, was recognized in a powerful way in the LIFE magazine article in 1943 where it was stated that the Lindy Hop was a national dance of the United States. Thus, Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and George Snowden's hard work to promote the Lindy Hop culminated in the article. George Snowden with his partner, Mattie Purnell, also created the Lindy Hop, one of the most successful dances in the 20th century, in the Rockland Palace dance marathon.

This thesis also explores how political movements like the Civil Rights Movement used jazz music and jazz dance in their events. In particular, the American Communist Party with its affiliates and the NAACP were notable for this activity. This happened mostly to gather people to events like the Scottsboro case fundraisers and raising funds for different purposes. They did not promote actively Harlem jazz dance as a remarkable cultural achievement. The leaders of the NAACP were also active in the Harlem Renaissance Movement which neglected the Harlem jazz dances because it considered them mostly as 'lower art forms'. As far as the Communists are concerned, they mainly preferred modern dance to the jazz dance.

The study also examined how the Harlem riots in 1935 and in 1943 were connected to Harlem entertainment. It seems that the riots did not directly decrease the number of Harlem places of entertainment which mostly stayed intact after the riots. In addition, it explores how rising midtown, Manhattan entertainment venues competed with Harlem entertainment. It is possible that the rise in midtown and other Manhattan entertainment led to the decreased number of white people visiting Harlem places of entertainment, starting at the end of the 1930s. Thus, Harlem entertainment was challenged by this external entertainment.

African-American jazz dance was also compared to other entertainment forms like American football and basketball. African-American jazz dance was fully integrated before these other remarkable entertainment forms. It is presumable that Harlem jazz dance played a significant part in the racial integration process in the United States. Recognition of Harlem-based jazz dance diversified the image of African-American dancers as multifaceted dancers.