

How Poverty Traps and Urban Theory Affected the Birth of Bebop in New York and San Francisco

What is Bebop?

What is Jazz?

The Eras of Jazz

1896-1917 Ragtime

1: Dr.Hill W.L. Jr., Dunscomb R.J. (2002) *Jazz Pedagogy: The Jazz Educator's Handbook and Resource Guide* Retrieved from:
<https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=7pjNgehSSDIC&oi=fnd&pg=PA19&dq=Dexter+Gordon:+1923-1990.&ots=6gcxTGjoz5&sig=KktlekEIZEo1w nDJgkB9g-DLg0#v=onepage&q=Dexter%20Gordon%3A%201923-1990.&f=false>

The Eras of Jazz

Harlem Renaissance

The Eras of Jazz

1917-1929 Early Swing

1930-1945 Swing Era

Transitional period : Swing to Bebop

Issued in 1944, the Cabaret Tax imposed a tax of 30% of all goods bought if there was dance music being played for people to dance to.¹

Was seen as a way to get more money, failed entirely and heavily devastated big band swing.

Black musicians started making combos to keep playing music.²

Combos gained popularity, were not recorded because of WWII.

1:Felten, E. (2013). How the Taxman Cleared the Dance Floor. *IJRC Journal*, 46(2), 28.

How the Taxman Cleared the Dance Floor

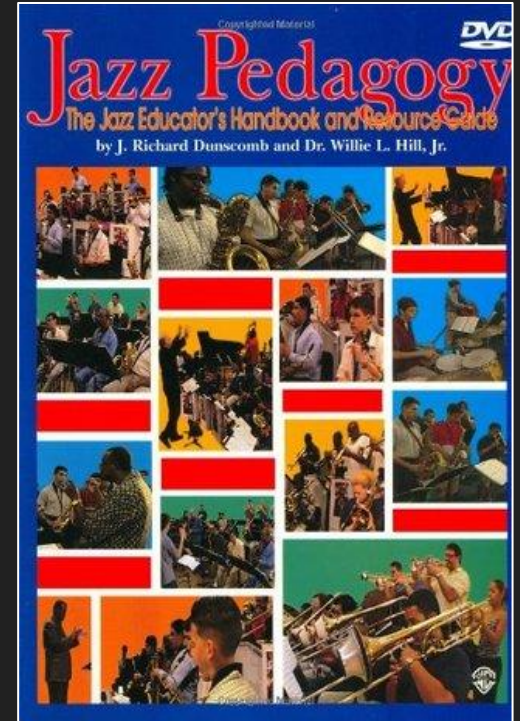
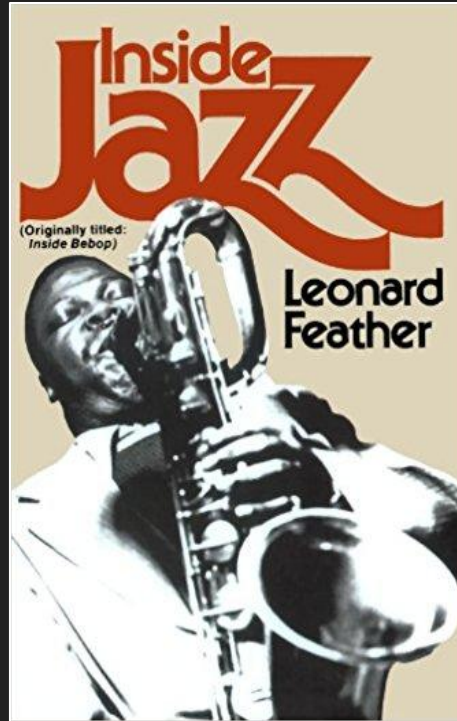
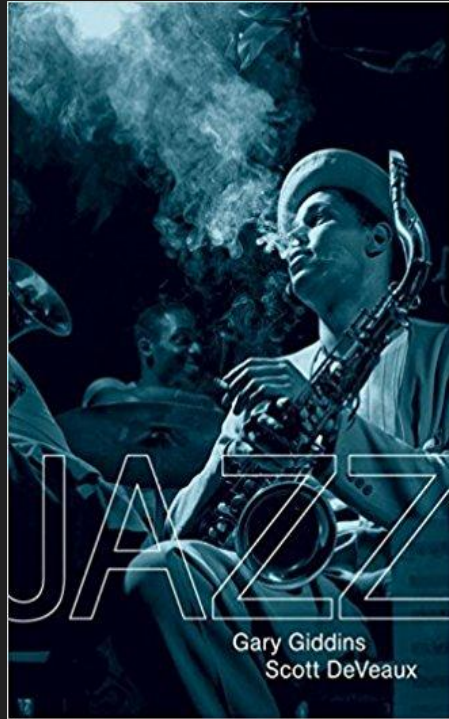
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2:DeVeaux, S., Giddins G. (2009) "Jazz." *Chapter 11: Bebop | Jazz: W. W. Norton StudySpace*. W.W. & Norton

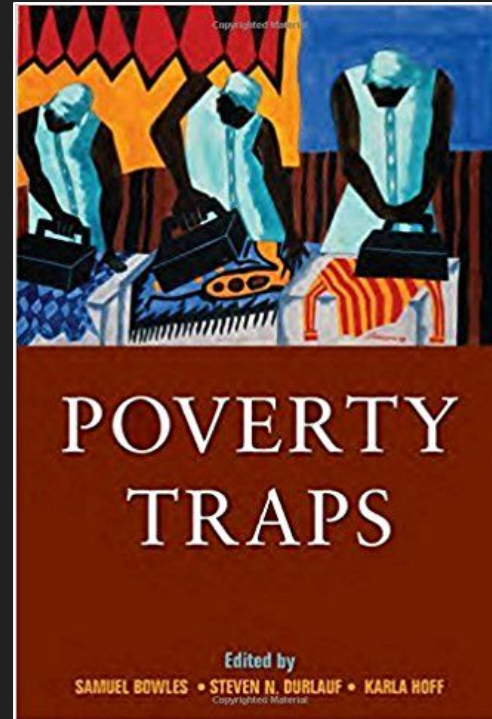
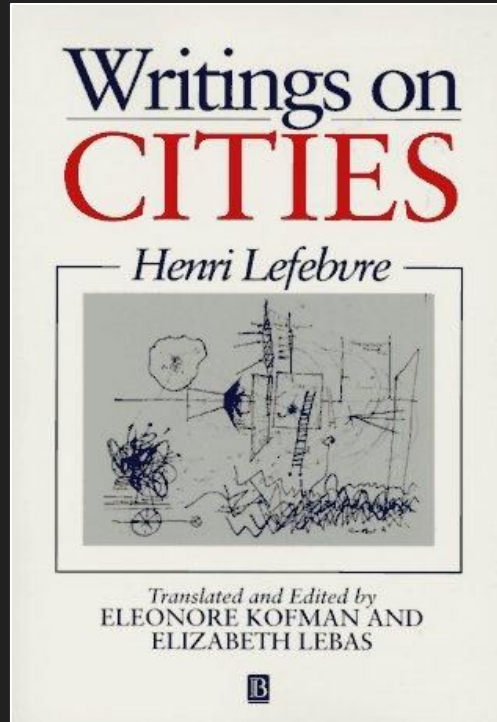
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Previous Scholarship



Previous Scholarship



Questions

1. Why after the Harlem Renaissance was there still an increasing amount or majority of black population in Harlem?
2. Why wasn't San Francisco the birthplace of bebop; did Harlem's problems—which San Francisco lacked—help the birth of bebop?

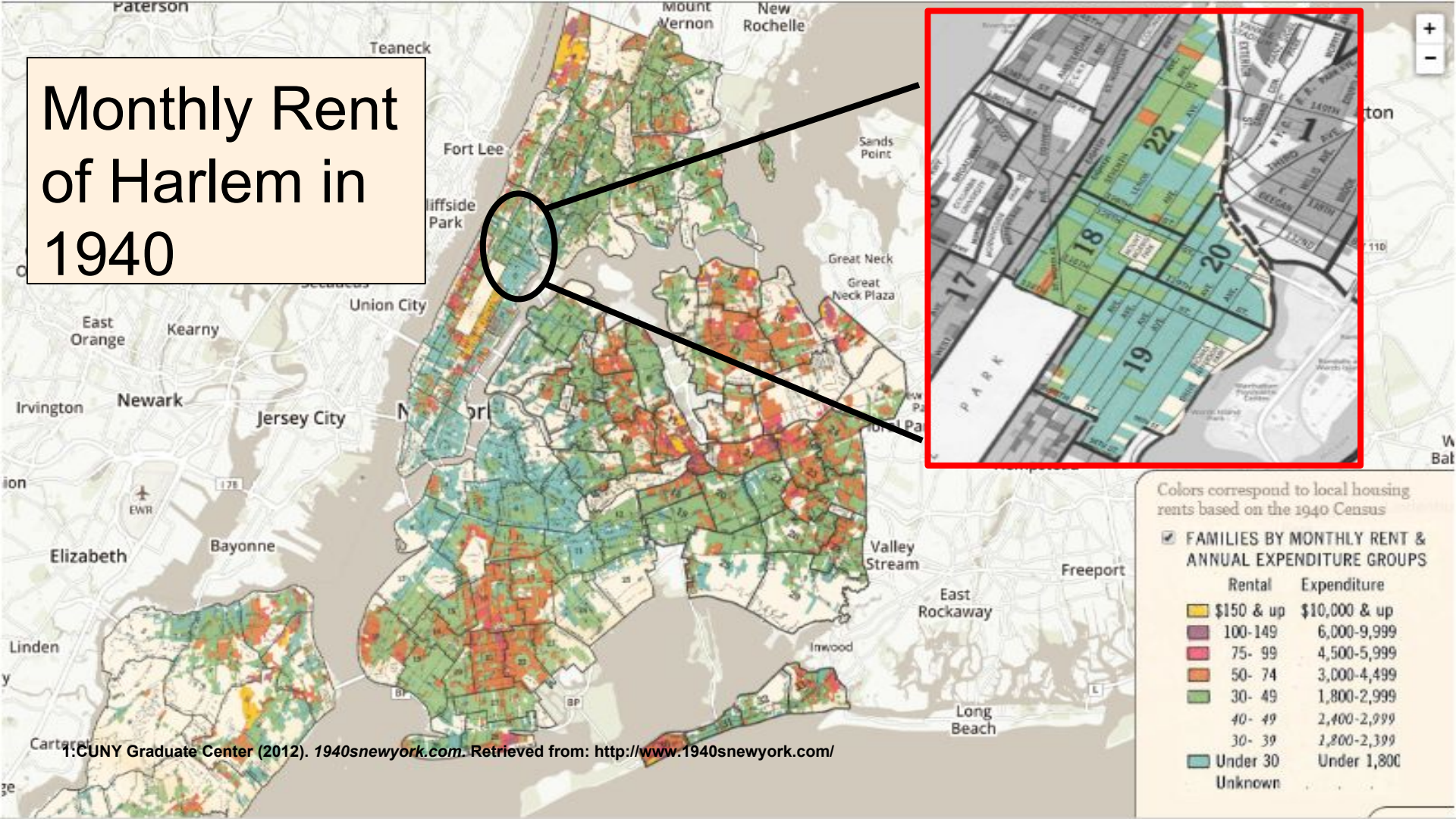
Poverty Traps in Harlem

Racial integration is vital to preventing a poverty trap, Harlem at the time was almost 70% black.

Monthly rents in Harlem: 30 dollars or less a month.

Monthly rents near Harlem: 100+ dollars a month. ¹

Monthly Rent of Harlem in 1940



Colors correspond to local housing rents based on the 1940 Census

FAMILIES BY MONTHLY RENT & ANNUAL EXPENDITURE GROUPS

Rental	Expenditure
Yellow	\$150 & up / \$10,000 & up
Purple	100-149 / 6,000-9,999
Red	75- 99 / 4,500-5,999
Orange	50- 74 / 3,000-4,499
Green	30- 49 / 1,800-2,999
Light Green	40- 49 / 2,400-2,999
Light Blue	30- 39 / 1,200-2,399
Dark Blue	Under 30 / Under 1,800
White	Unknown

New York

Poverty traps were most likely started by racial exclusion and contrasting housing costs.

Poverty traps did seem to play an effect on the culture.

Without the trap, bebop may have never formed.

Why Not San Francisco?

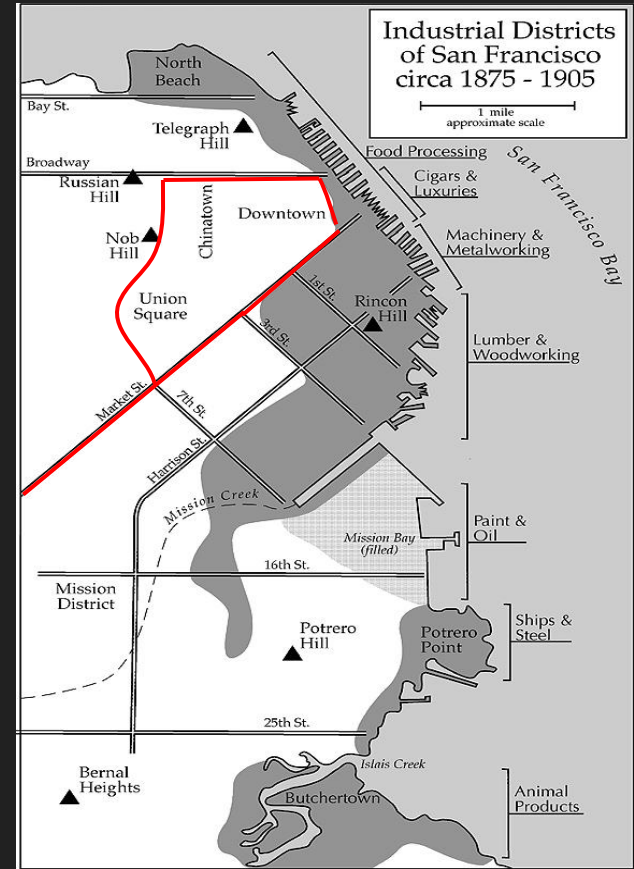
The Space of San Francisco

Urban space is crucial

to the development

of culture.¹

Where is that space? ²



1: Benabou, R. (1996) Equity and Efficiency in Human Capital Investment: The Local Connection. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 63.2.

2: Bowden, M. (1967). The Dynamics Of City Growth: An Historical Geography Of The San Francisco Central District, 1850-1931. *University of Berkeley*.

The Space of San Francisco and Racism

In 1937 the Housing Act brought on new housing projects. These projects became home in San Francisco to a majority of the black population.¹

These projects were multi-racial housing units.¹

Pubs and Jazz Bars in San Francisco were also heavily against discrimination of musicians or customers such as Jimbo's Bop City.²

1: Alperin, J. (?) Public Housing. *foundsf.org*. Retrieved from: http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=PUBLIC_HOUSING

2: Chamberland, C. (1997) Jimbos Bop City. *foundsf.org*. Retrieved from: http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Jimbo%27s_Bop_City

Conclusion

New York was a perfect spot for a poverty trap to start because of the racial exclusivity Harlem had in the 30's and 40's.

The poverty trap however proved important in allowing the culture to thrive within itself, giving them a place without discrimination or segregation.

San Francisco would have been unable to produce bebop as a cultural change because of low housing costs, it's lack of racial discrimination, and heavy traditional scene.

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