

BIG BAND MUSIC: The dominating factors

This essay will focus on mainstream musical changes, between 1945-1955, while considering music's relationship to the rest of the entertainment industry. The main focus will be on big band music whose twilight era occurred between 1936-1945. In essence this essay will attempt to reveal the mechanistic (internal) forces, to explain musical changes during and after the big band era's height, 1936-1955. 21 pages long.

THE MUSICAL DOMINANCE OF BIG BAND MUSIC

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Introduction

In addition to providing a central uniting role in various levels of the entertainment industry such as, nightclubs, street performances, Broadway musical theatre, film musicals, and the recording industry, music has experienced more radical shifts in style than any other era in musical history. This essay will argue that radical changes in musical styles occurred within the music industry's mechanics. This essay will focus on mainstream musical changes, between 1945-1955, while considering music's relationship to the rest of the entertainment industry. However there will also be a significant discussion on the big band music whose twilight era occurred between 1936-1945. Although some mention of sociological and political issues will be made, this is not a sociological or political study of music. This essay will not attempt to interpret music through sociological or political issues or events. In essence this essay will attempt to reveal the mechanistic (internal) forces, to explain musical changes during and after the big band era's height, 1936-1955.

This essay will be problematic at times because it aims to illustrate visual and performing arts, through written form. Some arguments will rely on experiences of both backstage and onstage performances, as well as a host of video and audio recordings. This is problematic because there are no quotable sources for such experiences or recordings, which will constitute a sizable amount of this essay. Therefore this essay will rely on its readership's prior experiences in order to relate to some of the arguments that will be made. This essay may also seem problematic because music in the post war era was composed of many different topics, which may make the essay look disjointed at times. The topics will be discussed separately to simplify the task of assessing music changes and developments during the big band era. The music industry of the late thirties to early fifties was the backbone of the entertainment industry and was composed of five different levels of performance; street entertainment, theatre (Broadway Musicals), the recording industry (including radio), nightclubs, and film (the Hollywood musical).

The various levels of the industry related to each other because the music, which they employed, was composed of one genre, jazz music. In essence jazz with a capital J included sub genres like big band, hot jazz, Broadway music etc... Therefore the music that the various levels of entertainment industry utilized was essentially the same. This meant that the musicians, their lyrics, and compositions were easily exchangeable and therefore transcended the entertainment industry vertically, meaning it could easily be re-arranged to suite any jazz form for any level's purpose. For example, several musical Broadway stars

moved into the film industry, such as Ray Bolger, Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, and Judy Garland. Furthermore in the process of recording their film soundtracks, Broadway personalities also became radio-stars. Similarly big bands starred in many films in the early thirties and forties, not to mention that many musicians performed in between features in various silent movie theatres. In addition most of big band hit songs came from film musicals which popularized hit titles on a wide scale.

The interaction and exchange of talent between various levels of the entertainment industry multiplied each level's talent resources. In addition to providing film with its talent, many Broadway performers acquired musicianship, which meant that the star could play at least one instrument, usually the piano. Big bandleaders saw their chance to increase their popularity through film and filmmakers increasingly capitalized on big bandleader's popularity by including them in their films. The creation of dance stars, exchange of musical compositions and musicians, and the partnership between film and music, multiplied the available talent pool for all levels of the industry. This snowball effect was sometimes called the "Golden Era" of the entertainment industry.

However when the entertainment industry's music began to change, when jazz's dominant role began to be challenged from within, the entertainment industry's bond weakened. The various changes, which began during the big band era and continued into the post war years, essentially weakened music's central role. This culminated in broken links among various industry levels, which caused each of the five levels to evolve into their separate directions. When music lost its central role, as each level drifted off into their separate directions, a multitude of musical sub genres began to rise.

In the first half of the 20th century the variety of music was far less complex than the period after 1960 where the music industry dissected it self into several sub-genres which, steadily increased in the 70s, 80s, and devastatingly so in the 90s. A limited amount of music genres, in the first half of 20th century, made it possible for a single genre of music to dominate the music charts, as was the case for jazz music. The chart consistency of a single style of music often made it possible for music to be vertically integrated, which simply meant attaining success at several levels at once. For example, Fred Astaire could have had a hit song like *Begin to Beguine* in a film called *Broadway Melody* of 1940, while Artie Shaw also had a hit both in record sales and in his nightclub appearances simultaneously. Therefore *Begin to Beguine* was a hit song at many different levels of the industry therefore providing a prime example of how big band music was successful at various levels at the same time. Today for example, the soundtrack of the hit Broadway show like *Kiss of the Spider Woman* is very different from the genre of music you would hear in nightclubs, radio stations, or motion pictures but in the thirties *Kiss of the Spider Woman* would have been vertically integrated. The vertical success of a single dominant genre of music succeeded in establishing a common language, which, many levels of the performing arts identified with and used to solidify the industry's foundation.

The rise and structure of Big Band music

The post war era between 1945-1955 was musically composed of; big band, blues, bebop, and crooning, of which could all individually be broken up into sub-genres. However the most important of these genres was big band music, which played a central role in linking the five levels of the performing arts. Big band music's importance is manifested through the Billboard Hot 100 charts; the world's most important music indicator, by leading the charts between 1930-1955. The only other styles of music to accomplish this task were rock & roll and disco, which dominated the charts between 1956-1959 and 1976-1979 respectively.

Big band music evolved out of the jazz band era of the twenties, which was mainly composed of Dixieland, jazz, and blues. The 20's experienced a talent boom, which produced musicians like Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Jelly Roll Morton, Fats Waller, and King Oliver, amongst others, which grew out of the Harlem Renaissance. The overwhelming amount of musicians gave the average five-member jazz or dixie bands the opportunity to grow into larger bands. In fact the origins of big band comes from bands like Duke Ellington's enlarged band at the Cotton Club in Harlem, Earl Hines big band in Chicago, and Louis Armstrong and the Hot Fives at the Savoy in Harlem. Ellington believes that the Harlem Renaissance was

in fact a ghettoization of talent, which produced a condensation of both texture and ideas, which could be found nowhere else. Ellington himself used sights and sounds of Harlem and turned them into music.

The Harlem Renaissance in the 20s was originally thought of to produce concert music. However the flowering of dances such as the Susie Q, the Lindy, the Black Bottom, and the Charleston evolving out of places like Barron's, and Rockland Palace, in addition to Ellington and Henderson's concerts at dance halls and floor shows, produced a jazz industry instead of concert music. Originally the New Orleans jazz was collectively improvised and was played for the outdoors at parades, picnics, concert riverboat excursions, and dances. However New York's large dance halls required larger bands than honky-tonks, night-clubs, and smaller halls that employed small jazz and society units. So Fletcher Henderson initially found a way to accommodate eleven piece orchestras in order to handle the expanding requirements of this genre in its new settings and remained the standard for Big Band Jazz. In fact the term "big" in big band music musically meant anything with two cornets, a trombone, and three saxophones. However, when the Harlem Renaissance came to an end, its contributions to the development of big band music were irreversibly set in motion.

Even an event as important to music as the Harlem Renaissance came to an end mostly because forces within the music industry. The first reason for the renaissance's fall was due to the expatriation of artists like Roland Hayes, Henry Crowder, Josephine Baker, Noble Sissle and Ada 'brick' Smith who left the continent and found employment in France. In addition, the arrival of radio and moving pictures reduced night-club and concert attendance, which consequently reduced the amount of venues. Politically, regulations prohibiting jazz from public dance halls destroyed much of the renaissance's force and ambience. Finally the great depression which dried up patronage of the arts reduced the financial support making dance bands too expensive to pay. The Harlem Renaissance left its musical mark by establishing the founding elements, which would culminate into the most popular music in all of history.

Following in the Renaissance's footsteps, the arrival of a new generation of musicians changed big band music's sounds and arranged them according to the bandleader's instrument. Big band music's sounds and styles were built around their leaders and their instruments, for example Benny Goodman's clarinet, Tommy Dorsey's trombone, Harry James' trumpet, and Gene Krupa's drums. The musical director which often involved the leaders themselves established how a musical style would be presented, what kind of sound the band would have, and who would play the role of sideman in the band. As for big band's middle name "Swing Music", it came from Duke Ellington's 1932 title song "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing" which provided swing music with its anthem as well as a new name for jazz music.

Mechanically, therefore big band music originated from the availability of talented musicians stemming, in part, from the Harlem Renaissance, with individual band's sounds created and based on the bandleader's instrument. However big band music's appeal came from its simple and easily understood dance rhythms. Big Band's appeal was in part due to two developments which occurred in the 20th century, first the emergence of dance as a leading factor in music's acceptance and secondly, the accessibility of large orchestras to the masses.

The first explanation, for big band music's success, was the mass's accessibility to large orchestrations, which culminated in a new experience. Prior to the 20th century musical concerts, originating from 18th century England and France, were held in large and expensive halls and therefore, the attendance to most of these concerts was inaccessible to the lower classes. This fact essentially made big band music, in the early 20th century, very appealing to classes, which had never had the opportunity to attend such concerts. Blues music, the father of American music, was rural based and composed of smaller bands and did not constitute the appeal of hearing many musicians at once. Therefore big band music's large orchestras attracted crowds in large numbers because it was a new experience. One could only understand the appeal of big band music once it is heard live.

The second explanation for big band music's success, over other styles, was the addition of dance as a leading force in the performing arts in the 20th century. Music's success became dependent on how danceable and how easily people could understand its rhythm. Dance's success, in the early 20th century, was synonymous with film and relied heavily on film to capture the motion of its movement. Prior to film

dance performances could not be saved and were essentially lost after they were viewed live. However film's arrival sparked a new interest in dance because archival footage of past performances could now be stored. In addition dance performance also constituted a new experience, prior to the 20th century, because performances were expensive and were not accessible to lower classes. Dance also experienced a considerable boom by the additions of popular styles such as ballroom, jazz, and tap dancing. In producing dance stars the "Hollywood Musical" film intensified the interest in entertainers, who were trained in vaudeville, and constituted a continuation of a booming Broadway tradition in the first half of the century. The emphasis on dance stirred the demand for music, emphasising on a dance beat, which was big band music's trademark.

The importance of film and Broadway

Film musicals used Broadway as a breeding ground for finding new entertainers to supply stars, which made the development of the Hollywood Musical possible. In light of this, the duet between film and Broadway, in addition to big band music's danceable rhythm, added dance as a central force in the performing arts industry. In turn, film created its first dance team, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, who were responsible for popularising dance and turning it into a major trend. Astaire and Rogers's style was labelled "Romantic Love", which emphasised expressing one's love through dance. As most of the film stars came from the traditions of Vaudeville and Broadway, Broadway musicals and film became highly dependent on each other. Film producers purchased compositions and scripts from musical plays like *The Gay Divorcee*, *The Bandwagon*, *Crazy for You*, and *Pal Joey*, to name a few. This meant that Hollywood indirectly invested in Broadway productions. Once again an important link has been made between the tools of music and dance to the industries of film and Broadway. Therefore the need to accentuate a danceable rhythm led to a talent scramble to produce dance stars whose end result culminated in the creation of a new film genre, the Hollywood Musical. In addition to dance, singers also linked film, Broadway, and the music industries, as, many singers came from the big bands of the thirties made the jump to the Hollywood Musical in the forties and fifties. Some of these lead vocalists included, Frank Sinatra, Doris Day, Rosemary Clooney, Lena Horne etc... This further encouraged the various levels of the entertainment industry to merge together by isolating a commonality amongst themselves which, they found to be music.

The three-way triangle, which was developing between music, at the top edge and film and dance, at the bottom of the three edged triangle, is important to understand because it provides a perfect example of how various levels of the performing arts industry became incredibly dependent on one another. The presence of a dominant genre of music like big band increased the dependency of the various levels because they all depended on an audience, as the Billboard magazine charts indicate, which had a style of music in common.

The Importance of Radio

In addition to the contributions of the film and Broadway levels, radio also contributed to big band music's rise doing to music, what film did visually. Film created pop stars, which included musicians, dancers, singers, etc, while radio did its share, by creating radio stars. Radio had an added incentive because it defeated the racial discrimination forces by hiding the sight and sound aspect of racial injustice. In fact radio led Benny Goodman to record an album in 1934 with a new comer called Billie Holiday. Radio, in essence, permitted racial boundaries to be crossed by offering a place where black Americans could play their music in addition to offering a place where whites and blacks could play together without being discriminated. This being said the racial barrier did not discourage some black and white musicians from playing together on stages, as Louis Armstrong often said "oh look the little white boys are hear to get their music lessons". In fact Armstrong mocked musicians of all races as he invited them to a challenge him as he proceeded to play one hundred high Cs consecutively, as challenged musicians watched, packed their instruments and walked out of the club one by one.

Radio's biggest success however, was its ability to reach out to people when the only other immediate option to bands was intensive touring. Film helped many big bands when they were pop stars but film did not help bands when they were rising stars. Radio was more versatile because it helped introduce rising stars including two of the most notable musicians in the history of jazz; the Broadcasting of Benny Goodman's Let's Dance live from New York to West coast audiences, and Duke Ellington's broadcasts from the Cotton Club. In addition radio broadcasts were also important for generating publicity which produced the necessary dollars to keep the big bands together. Radio helped defeat important racial lines in addition to promoting rising big bands and continued doing until the advent of rock & roll. Radio continued promoting music during the rock & roll era but the structure and relationship changed and did not resemble the radio industry during the big band era.

World War II and its effect on Big Band Music

While Big band music was living its golden era, World War II erupted and caused numerous ruptures and changes in the industry's traditional structure, which had both short and long term effects. The war affected the music industry by making significant manpower demands, which disrupted the industry's continuity and, in the long run, changed the relationship amongst musicians.

World War II's demand of man power began in 1941 when 186 theatres were built on army and navy bases, along with "The Flying Showboat" which transported entertainers to tour the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, and British Guiana. In 1942 many big bandleaders, such as Artie Shaw, Eddy Duchin, Glenn Miller, and Bob Crosby, entered the armed forces, not to mention the individual musicians who were enlisted. Another wave of artists, of whom the first to go over seas was Al Jolson, were busy selling war bonds, such as Tommy Dorsey, Cab Calloway, and a host of other Hollywood stars. Last but not least Bob Hope decided to offer a travelling show for soldiers on the home front by broadcasting a radio show from a different camp every week. This led the most prominent big bandleaders like Dorsey, Miller, and Calloway to volunteer in the army's musical tours principally to keep their bands together. These manpower demands were significant because many musicians were diverted from a home market, which had to be maintained, to entertain troops both on the home front and abroad. In essence the loss of manpower, restricted Big Band music of its most appealing characteristics, that is, 20-30 of the top musicians travelling by day while they played by night, playing for live audiences. Even though there were 200 different big bands in the forties, wartime demands deprived the Big Bands industry of some of their major bandleaders.

Other than manpower losses, wartime material demands also had their consequences. For example gas and transportation shortages reduced Big Band tours. These shortages made it very difficult for big Bands to travel which bands depended on to promote their records. In addition Big Bands depended on their mass appeal of seen live, which forced them to continue touring regardless of their radio and film contracts.

The record production industry was also hit hard as military demands rationed the amount of Shellac, which was needed to make records. That's not to mention that Juke Boxes, which numbered 350 000 and accounted for half of all record sales, were banned during the war years.

In essence World War II contributed to distancing Big Bands from their public in every conceivable way. As musicians entertained troops, on bases at home and on the front, their distance audience caused them to lose touch with their home audience.

The rise of Bebop

The post war era also played its role in big band music's fall by the introduction of a new form of jazz called bebop. Growing out of improvisations and after hour jam sessions, which gave younger musicians a chance to improvise, bebop artists arrived on the music scene demanding the freedom to express themselves individually with no set boundaries. Musically, bebop was composed of long phrases,

unexpected pauses; melody accentuated by drums and its band size was smaller compared to big band orchestras. The smaller band trends began during World War II when travelling was difficult and salaries began to rise, bandleaders opted for creating trios, quartets, quintets, of which Louis Armstrong and The Hot Fives is a classic example. However bebop's incubator was the Earl Hines band of 1942-1944, including Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker. Then Gillespie and Parker left Earl Hines and joined Billy Eckstine whose band included Miles Davis, Tadd Dameron, Dexter Gordon, Art Blakey, Fats Navarro, and Gene Ammons. The Earl Hines band, along with Billy Eckstine's group represented all of the all-stars of bebop. Bebop offered a community of closed musicians, most of who work out of 52nd street in New York, who wanted to create a style of music, which was meant to please an intellectual audience of listeners. Bebop was a manifestation of musicians who wanted more solo space and avoiding big band's dance beat. Bebop developed when musicians got tired of repetition during the swing era and essentially grew out of the after hour jam sessions that also developed during World War II.

This being said, an alternative theory as to where bebop originated from exists, which states that bebop may have come from dances, most particularly tap dance. Essentially bebop arose out of the thirties and had to be influenced by something or someone else. The key to understanding this theory is in asking where did bebop musicians get their ideas? Music begins with a pulse, which can be understood as the beat of the music. Bebop musicians played their brass instruments like drums. They hit the note with sharp and abrupt changes, which essentially simulated a drummer. Bo Diddley did the same with his guitar playing in the forties and fifties. The sounds of bebop brass players copied the way drummers played their instruments. However where did drummers take their ideas? To answer that question one must ask, what area amongst percussionist players changed the way drums were played in the thirties? The only group of percussionists who were radical in the thirties were the tap dancers. In turn they got their ideas from standing on street corners and simulating city sounds. The argument states that once tap dancers refrained from the simple full note beats and begun to drop their heels counter-time counts were created, which is essentially what bebop counts are all about. In essence the heels in tap dancers began to act like bass drums which ran counter time to the standard 4/4 counts. No other music styles, blues, jazz, and big band were using counter time in the thirties. Even the possible count culture movements composed of boogie-woogie and rhythm & blues were also using standard 4/4. The tap dancers who first began to drop the heels and are credited as being the inventors of bebop, in this theory, are Honi Coles, and John "bubbles".

Bebop musicians wanted to play, as long they wanted while avoiding the dance beat altogether. This was problematic because the entertainment industry thus far in the 20th century was centred on music that could be danced to, standard 4/4. Bebop lost the appeal of the large masses of people who were clinging to this dance beat. The length of the music also created problems for radio norms, which required short musical compositions. Long musical pieces were problematic because they were difficult to fit into time blocks of fifteen minutes or so, to satisfy sponsors. Broadway and film for the most part were still producing musicals, which featured dancing and could not use a Bebop score. Therefore in losing the influences of Broadway, film and radio, bebop failed to change the audience into a crowd of listeners. Bebop failed because no effort was made to establish an audience, which would support the new style of music.

Bebop was jazz music in an intellectualised sense, in that very few people could understand it let alone dance to the music. Bebop, was in fact, so complicated to perform, that many musicians formed a reaction against it and created the jazz style known as cool jazz which was bebop in a simplified manner. Cool jazz was a highly structured highly calculated low intensity music in direct response to the aggressiveness of bebop. In essence nobody could understand the music, let alone dance to it, so many audiences turned their backs on jazz music, as bebop came to signify jazz music, and cleared the road for rock & roll music's entrance into main stream pop music. In essence, in rejecting film, Broadway, and dance, bebop thought it could survive without show business when in fact it was bebop, which could not survive without show business.

Although, Bebop filtered down through all facets of the entertainment & advertisement industry, the music was never fully accepted by the public. In fact bebop never made it into Billboard's Hit Parade. Big band music was the first and last genre of jazz music to dominate the Billboard magazine and make it into mainstream pop music. Bebop paved the way for jazz music's exit from the mainstream charts and many wonder whether jazz music could ever make it to the top again.

The war within the music industry

In addition to bebop attempted coup, the big band music industry was also assaulted from severe arguments within its walls. Arguments amongst ASCAP (the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Song writers), music publishers, radio networks, and recording companies, over rights, lead to a recording ban from 1942-1944 leaving record production at a stand still. Without the rights to music, which the entire industry fought over, commercial success was impossible for big band music. The ASCAP owned 90% of these rights and began demanding contracts of 9 million dollars for broadcasting the music. Furthermore unions also began prohibiting jam sessions, which were instrumental in spreading and sharing ideas, and fined musicians up to five hundred dollars. Booking agencies argued that they had rights to the musician's appearances in those jam sessions. The fights among the various union organisations, which were responsible for big band's commercial success, increased costs and therefore caused big band salaries to rise.

The higher salaries made big bands too expensive to maintain. Radio stations turned their attention to platter spinners and no longer relied on big bands to perform their music live from the stations. Furthermore club owners were unable to guarantee earnings of as much as two thousand dollars a night for big bands. Higher salaries and the opportunities which began to close themselves, are important to consider when big bands made the bulk of their salaries from record sales, one night engagements, theatre shows, hotel location jobs, radio, and Hollywood musicals. When salaries rose, many venues in night-clubs were dropped as owners often opted for smaller less known bands. The snow ball effect of rising salaries caused the bands of Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey, Les Brown, Harry James, Jack Teagarden, and Benny Carter to dissolve in 1946-47.

In addition to battles fought over the ownership of rights, a host of jazz sub-genres rose such as jazz revivalists, bebop, dixieland revivalists, when a general sentiment gripped the air suggesting that big band was on its way out. Big band was actually sidelined and watched as many genres of jazz music were revived in protest of bebop's uneasy sounds. Jazz and dixieland revivalists experienced a return, which did not make the Billboard Charts but gave generations of the forties a chance to hear the fathers of jazz music. Many musicians recorded albums, which provided jazz historians with recordings that had not been recorded in the artist's era during the 20s, 30s. The quarrelling which occurred did not help these various jazz music styles because the crooning age began giving an altered big band style another ten years until 1955.

The age of the crooners

In the post war years between 1945-1955, big band music continued to rule the charts. However the emphasis in the music focused on singers as opposed to bandleaders. The Big band music era was therefore replaced by the age of the crooners as singers were the headlines while big bands stood in the background. Nonetheless the style of music that was leading in the Billboard Hot Hundred charts, between 1945-1955, was still predominantly big band with the only difference being that the star attractions were singers. The singers, for the most part, all began their careers in big band orchestras between 1930-1945 and achieved stardom when in the post-war era in an age when crooners, as a derivative of big band music, made their appearances for the first time in music history. Singers had always been presented as part of a band and usually never as independent artists so crooning was once again a new experience or musical genre in the post war years. In light of this, big band music lasted for 25 years from 1930-1955.

The age of the crooners was composed of people like, Perry Como, Bing Crosby, Al Jolson, Frank Sinatra, Doris Day, Rosemary Clooney, Peggy Lee, June Allyson, Mario Lanza, Tony Bennett, etc.... The father of crooning was Al Jolson, probably one of the most forgotten, but it was Bing Crosby who popularised crooning in the thirties. During the war when a sentimental mood gripped the air, singers found a voice in music where popular feelings could be expressed. In addition many big bandleaders were producing less music, quit or retired altogether, leaving an open position for masters of ceremonies. In light of these developments crooners became the potential personalities, which could fill the void left by the fall of pop

star big bandleader's orchestras. In essence the post war era was in search of entertainers who could be masters of ceremonies, musically inclined, and could make a crowd laugh at the same time. The rising Bebop musicians were musically inclined but did not have any training as entertainers, the Crooners, on the other hand, did as they were brought up in Vaudeville tradition. Essentially Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Billy Eckstine, Art Blakey, and the rest of the Bebop musicians wanted to attract a crowd of listeners in an era where people still wanted to be entertained. The dimensions, as mentioned above, of the music industry in the post war era gave singers a new voice and appeal transforming them into the new attractions in the post war night life scene.

In addition to replacing big band orchestras' pop status, many of these singers made film appearances, most notably Doris Day, Bing Crosby, and Frank Sinatra. Therefore the important link between various levels in the industry, despite an important shift in the music industry, was maintained through to the mid-fifties. This emphasis away from the Big Bands and closer to the singers, enabled Big Band music to remain vertically integrated for another ten years between 1945-1955. The age of the crooners is another example, which illustrates a change in the music industry, which was decided, by changes within as opposed to changes without. Even though society decides which style of music will be the norm, the musical styles have to be developed before they are tested and approved by society. The age of the crooners is one instance where a compromise between two styles of music, big band and crooning, was reached which allowed the music industry to enjoy another ten years of stability.

In conclusion this essay has attempted to provide a chronological survey of musical developments during the Big Band era extending into the post war period. By providing such a panoramic view of five levels of the entertainment industry, this essay has presented a point of view which argues that changes in music have occurred as a direct result of power struggles and shifting allegiances within the industry. In addition this essay has also argued that music, most particularly big band music, was the focal point in the entertainment industry. Therefore music, film, and dance have been reunited to shed light on a different perspective on the role of music. In focusing on mainstream musical and implied mechanical changes, interpretation, sociological, and political issues have been avoided as much as possible. Finally this essay attempted to reveal the mechanistic (internal) forces, to explain musical changes during and after the big band music's era, 1936-1955.

by Pierre Hobson