

Jazz and world war ii: reciprocal effects and relationships assignment

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Jazz and World War II: Reciprocal Effects and Relationships Both Jazz music and World War II had a significant impact on each other. Jazz music boosted the morale of soldiers fighting abroad and also lifted the spirits of their loved ones back at home. Many jazz musicians were soldiers, and several others traveled overseas or across the country to entertain U. S. Troops. Among these performers were Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Benny Carter. Jazz music was not only evident in American culture, but also in European countries, particularly in Nazi-occupied areas where it was a sign of rebellion.

I want to further explore how the war affected the accessibility of jazz during the time, as well as how the war helped shape the musical direction of the genre. During the war jazz had numerous effects on the people of many countries: the soldiers who fought, citizens of each country involved in the war efforts, musicians, politicians, and many others. World War II affected many aspects of wartime life as well, as the economy and social structure of the United States were both heavily impacted by the war effort. Jazz served as an incredible tool for motivating and entertaining the citizens and soldiers of World War II.

During the war, jazz was a highly effective rallying cry for U. S. Servicemen abroad. As soldiers fought in foreign countries, it was very powerful to have music that carried such a patriotic message and reminded soldiers of what they were fighting for. Jazz has the stereotypical pomp and circumstance characteristics that many marches had (i. e. “ Stars and Stripes Forever and Grand Old One Flag”) but rather an exciting and different feel that energized and captivated much of that generation. The United Service <https://assignbuster.com/jazz-and-world-war-ii-reciprocal-effects-and-relationships-assignment/>

Organizations Inc. US) was pivotal in bringing celebrities, artists, and performers from Hollywood to Europe in order to provide entertainment and fun for the troops abroad. Jazz also added a cultural war aspect to World War II. As Jazz was deeply rooted in Afro-American music, the Nazi empire declared jazz as “ Inhuman music”, and banned jazz in all of occupied Europe (Brigadier). Rebellious German teens would listen to allied music stations in private, with disregard to the wishes of the empire. The popularity of jazz was seen as a tribute all of those who suffered from Hitler’s ban on Jazz in Germany.

Many music halls and bars were shut down, and much anti-Jazz propaganda was spread throughout occupied Europe. It can be argued that Jazz acted as a resistance to the Nazi and their ideals in Germany; jazz was an export to American Culture, at a time when occupied Europe was ready to accept and embrace new cultures. On the home front, World War II had an incredible effect on the American jazz scene. 1 OFF the war. Musicians struggled to travel around the country to perform, as the rationing of rubber and gasoline limited the mobility of many swing bands.

In addition, there were fewer buses and trains available for bands, as the majority were often occupied with servicemen on War business. Between the Great Depression and World War II, America needed money, and the multimillion dollar business of ballroom dancing and big bands was targeted with an incredibly-high 30% “ Cabaret Tax. ” This tax led to the closing of numerous clubs all around the United States, cause ballrooms and clubs could no longer afford to pay big bands to come play.

The tax started the economic cycle that closed many of these recreational establishments. Another devastating blow to Jazz included the hindrance on the production of instruments and records. With the majority of raw materials and brass allocated towards making items necessary to the war effort, instrument production slowed, and record production came to a halt. A shortage of shellac (the material used to make records) definitely contributed to the problem. Additionally, the record ban of 1942 ensured that musicians stopped recording new music.

An exception to this ban included the production of “ V-discs”- special recordings made by the record companies for “ distribution to the armed forces fighting World War II”, as V-Discs were not available to the general public (Townsend). World War II was paramount in shaping the way Jazz would evolve throughout the sass. It is important to recognize that both Jazz and World War II had reciprocal effects on one another. Jazz helped keep morale and spirits high during the war, while the war slowly led to the end of the swing era.