The 12 Bars That Were Shaped by St. Louis: Community Growth and Blues Music; 1940-1965

by Cara Moore, Bachelor of Science

A Thesis Research Project Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts
in the field of History

Advisory Committee:

Bryan Jack Chair

Laura Fowler

Jessica Harris

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
December 2014

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper will be to show how St. Louis fits into the conversation of blues music with other historically accepted blues cities and how the community growth of St. Louis can be seen to affect the development of blues music in St. Louis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my thesis chair and committee, without whom this would not have been as organized or coherent, Dr. Bryan Jack, Dr. Laura Fowler and Dr. Jessica Harris. In my research I have been lucky that St. Louis hosts a Missouri Historical Society Research Library with an overly competent staff. In the St. Louis community I was tremendously fortunate to have met Dave Beardsley, cofound of the National Blues Museum, who readily directed me to John May and from there was a domino effect to have the opportunity and pleasure to interview both David Dee and Rudy Coleman. Their insight was invaluable. The patience of my close friends and family knows no bounds, though I am sure they are as ready for this to be completed as I am.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

W. C. Handy wrote 'St. Louis Blues,' inspired by his time traveling to St. Louis as a young and desperate musician. He had left his hometown and came to St. Louis as part of a larger black migration in search of opportunity. What he found in St. Louis was not quite fame and fortune but it was inspiration and some camaraderie. He, then, did find success as 'St. Louis Blues' skyrocketed, thus becoming the first nationally popular blues song. St. Louis is largely known as sports city. The city invests a lot in its sports atmosphere and community. The St. Louis NHL hockey team is the St. Louis Blues. Founded in 1967, the name is said to credit the fact that the first blues song, 'St. Louis Blues' by W. C. Handy was inspired by the city, however the city seems largely unaware and unsupportive, even negligent, of its blues history by academics today. [1]

It was St. Louis' northwestern area known as Gaslight Square, a blues and jazz district, which hosted 18-year-old Barbara Streisand before her skyrocket to fame. [2] It also hosted a shy new comic named Woody Allen. Besides these note worthy white celebrities, St. Louis and its' Gaslight Square hosted Louis Armstrong, Chuck Berry, Miles Davis and Dick Gregory. These artists all have such fond memories of St. Louis that, though not all native, they all have claimed some kind of root here. With an undeniable history like that, I was led to wonder why St. Louis is not celebrated as one of the nation's blues cities in secondary sources and what led such artists here only to eventually leave, marking St. Louis as a pass-through town.

---

[1] "Blues History." The Ofiicial Website of the St. Louis Blues. http://blues.nhl.com/club/page.htm?id=39484

[2] St. Louis, as a geographic city, has grown since most of my source work was written and I use the street names and landmarks as they are named in the sources. Therefore some of the local areas named may not be currently accurate.

St Louis, Missouri was a cultural hot spot, much like the rest of the country, from the 1940s to 1965. It nurtured the talent of musical legends like Louis Armstrong, W. C. Handy, Fontella Bass, Singleton Palmer, Jeanne Trevor and was home to one of the first citizen managed jazz clubs.[3] This means that a local citizen was in charge of the venue and how it was ran; including controlling whether or not to enforce the segregation laws. Despite the prestige that these names now carry, they faced extreme racism as blues and jazz musicians in St Louis at a time when segregation was enforced without question across the nation. This is my era of significance because in the 1940s radio and labels become large factors in musician's livelihoods. Post 1960s there are cultural shifts that change music largely away from the blues including Civil Rights, the British Invasion and 1960s youth culture.

How did the charge of being 'too black' from the white listeners, music managers and masses, which typically made up the paying audience for entertainment, affect the music or musician? How did black musicians, who were not allowed to perform in the majority of the city because of their race and the existing segregation laws, still play successfully in St. Louis? To what lengths did they have to go to sell their music despite the rules? These questions are important to the history of jazz and blues in St. Louis, because race is an issue that affected native St. Louisians as well as those traveling to the city to perform. It is important to look at musician's lives, their failures and their successes relevant to the context of the time and how it resulted from the specific environment St. Louis harbored. This paper attempts to determine if St. Louis created a unique and important sphere of influence on the blues world, thereby holding a place in conversation with other cities that are considered traditional blues cities such as Chicago, New Orleans, Memphis or Kansas City who already have volumes attributed to their hold on blues history.

---

[3] Thomas Crone. *Gaslight Square: An Oral History*. (St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004) 38.

To quote Louis Armstrong, “Swing, ragtime, blues, jazz, my white folks get messed up with a lot of names.” Despite Armstrong’s feelings on the white application of terms, blues and jazz are very different.[4] “…As a musical style, the blues is characterized by expressive “microtonal” pitch inflections (blue notes), a three-line textual stanza of the form AAB, and a 12-measure form…,”. is the definition given by the Encyclopedia Britannica for blues music stylistically.[5] Additionally, blues music is developed prior to jazz. John May of the St. Louis Blues Society concurs with this description, adding that St. Louis created it’s own interpretation of these 12 bar blues.[6] This sound is explored later as being a defining contribution to St. Louis being able to hold a claim as a blues city. I am not focusing on the musical structure, but the experience that the musicians shared. That being said I recognize that musicians have the ability, and do, play both styles and the experiences of these blues musicians can be mirrored in other genres.

An in depth look at St. Louis, Missouri from the early 1940s through the era of Gaslight Square (1960s) and its development surrounding blues culture and history is void from studies in St. Louis and blues history. Writings on the history of blues music oft do not discuss St. Louis at any length. It is mentioned as a town that so-and-so passed through, or included in an intro for it’s successful riverboat time and then it ceases to be recognized. St Louis created a specific blues and that sound came from the artists who were living the blues, struggling to survive off of their music and performances in St. Louis through and continuing past the times of the steamers. Approaching this time span through the lens of the city’s development may make this study relevant in several areas, social history of the city, history of blues and jazz, and racial history for example. The purpose of this paper will be to show

[4] Many of my sources, I have determined, have used more or less interchangeably. I refrain from doing so because I recognize them as being different styles of music regardless of sharing a similar history and parent style of music.
[5] "Blues (music)." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.) Web. 13 Dec. 2014.
[6] John May. Personal interview. 18 Sept 2014.

how St. Louis fits into the conversation of blues music with other accepted blues cities and how the community growth of St. Louis can be seen in the development of blues music in St. Louis.

Many scholars also explore jazz culture as a unique feature of twentieth-century American social life. Lewis Erenberg's *Swinging the Dream* scrutinizes the rise of jazz and jazz culture between 1920s and 1950s and explored how jazz intersected with racial paradigms and the music industry in the modern age.[7] *Jazz and the Disconnected* takes a different approach in his exploration of the jazz culture emerging in the early twentieth century.[8] Phillips uses sociology, instead of cultural history, as a lens to explore jazz and its rise in popularity. He studied the psychological connection between musicians and society, the audience and the musician and the music production members and the musicians. Erenberg's study is a large-scale look at jazz culture

Blues and jazz have heavily influenced what made St. Louis the music hub that it is. The famous Jellyroll Morton came to St Louis to study. W.C. Handy wrote "St Louis Blues" to capture the distinct music sound and style that St Louis created. These truths have led travelers to seek out blues shows while visiting St. Louis still today. St Louis is unique in its treatment of jazz and blues musicians for many reasons. The location on the Mississippi River, for example, is important because it opened up the opportunity for performances on steamboats. Steamboats were one of very few areas on which blacks could live and work. It was steamboats that first allowed Louie Armstrong to perform, and for white audiences in a more upscale environment than a honky tonk bar or generally classified bad area like where early 'black music,' such as ragtime, was commonly associated.

---

[7] Lewis Erenberg. *Swinging the Dream: Big band jazz and the rebirth of American culture.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998)

[8] Damon Phillips. Jazz and the Disconnected: City Structural Disconnectedness and the Emergence of a Jazz Canon. (*American Journal of Sociology.* October 2008. University of Chicago)

However, the city was also host to the same racist sentiment found nationwide in the early twentieth century. The first large scale St. Louis jazz performance is credited to Duke Ellington's concert at Keil Auditorium Convention Hall on April 7, 1946. The concert drew a crowd of 4,000. A review of the concert claimed that it "received the treatment for which they were written-by his own men."[9] Drawing attention to the fact that good treatment to black jazz musicians was given by a black audience as well as a white audience illustrates that despite white men performing big band jazz popularly in 1946, jazz was seen as music by black artists, for black audiences, by and large. It seems like an unnecessary notation, reading it today, but that is why it is important to understand the context of the 1940s-1965 and the context of the blues.

[9] "Duke Ellington Conducts First Jazz Concert Here." *St Louis Globe Democrat.* April 8, 1946.

A VIEW AT OTHER CITIES AND THE NATION

There are many books written on the influence of blues music on many cities and the influence of many cities on blues music. These studies tend to discuss the black performers lives and experiences in each city.[10] These separate conversations all bring a little pride to each city but the stories center more around the artist's biographies at the time that they were in each city rather than their experiences because of the city or the music culture. This gives a city a false sense of validation and takes away from what the city is able to offer the artists and culture as a whole.

In blues histories cities such as New Orleans, Memphis, Chicago and Kansas City are put in conversation with each other to show what made each city appealing to blues artists. These are the major blues cities in the same region as St. Louis that are most often discussed. I aim to find if there was something wholly different that these cities had or did that St. Louis did not. In doing this it is necessary to explain, as briefly as possible, some of the key factors that usually are indicated as why these cities are blues cities. It is odd that histories of these cities oft name musicians from St. Louis or musicians passing through St. Louis but St. Louis, itself, is often not from being named as a big blues city by the very same historians. St. Louis' pass-through reputation has roots in the migration of blacks out of the south.[11] Most of these travellers had other places in mind as their final destinations.[12] Kansas and Chicago were very common end destinations for these migrators. It would seem that,

---

[10] Scott Yanow. *Jazz: A Regional Exploration. (*Westport: Greenwood Press. 2005)
Samuel Charters. *A Trumpet Around the Corner: The Story of New Orleans Jazz.* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 2008)
Pete Welding, Toby Byron. (eds.) *Bluesland: Portraits of Twelve Major American Blues Masters.* (New York, N.Y.: Dutton, 1991) Albertson, Chris. Pg 50-67. Ritz, David. Pg 224-237.
David Whiteis, *Chicago Blues: Portraits And Stories*. (Urbana: University Of Illinois Press, 2006)

[11] This is commonly called the Great Migration in black history and I will refer to it as such from here on out.

[12] Bryan Jack. *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters.* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007) 7.

according to existing histories, in the times when steamboats reigned as primary transportation for blacks, St. Louis had a voice in the conversation of blues. Then as trains began to dominate the transportation means, St. Louis gets dropped with the steamboats. The racial and class divisions that St. Louis entertained will add to the context of the story of the history of blues both nationwide and in St. Louis, specifically.

There is a large standing rivalry between St. Louis and Chicago. Outside of baseball, Chicago and St. Louis also have battled for industry and railway placement. Chicago won the railway placement and because of it St. Louis begins to see a decline when steamboats fall by the wayside to trains as a means of transport of goods and people.[13] In reading about Chicago's blues history it sounds like there is a blues joint on every corner. [14] There is a clear separation between those in South Side Chicago, black Chicago, and the rest of the city. A club in the South Side did not necessarily indicate that it was a black owned club; in fact that was commonly not the case. This mixing of authority in a dominantly black neighbourhood would seem to lend to a discussion of racial tensions however it does not. [15] It is actually pieces of information like this that stand out as part of Chicago's legacy as a blues city, integration. Thus, a relatively welcoming environment for blacks was created. I believe this aided in Chicago being an end destination for the Great Migration because it leant to the belief that there was available work to be found for blacks in Chicago. [16]

---

[13] Eric Sandweiss. *St. Louis in the Century of Henry Shaw: A View beyond the Garden Wall*. (Columbia: U of Missouri, 2003) 49.

[14]William Howland Kenney. *Chicago Jazz: A Cultural History 1904-1930.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), xxii.

[15] Kenney, xxii. It was reported by the *Chicago Tribune* in 1906, "… the Negro has a future in music… there is no prejudice against the Negro in music… He need not fear that race prejudice will antagonize him. Music is the universal art and language and begins where speech ends."

[16] John May. Personal interview. 18 Sept 2014, Recalls that where St. Louis was absolutely a stopping point in the Great Migration of blacks to the north, Chicago was the end goal and end point for many musicians.

Another piece of what makes Chicago significant to the rest of the country is that, in Chicago, race records like Chess were recording successfully. [17] Record companies were huge draw for musicians and there were prominent labels, accepting black artists, in Chicago, Memphis and New Orleans. The author of *Chicago Blues*, Rowe, includes several pieces of data in charts or statistics that show the migration of musicians to Chicago to play the blues.[18] New Orleans hosted numerous recording labels and studios that these bands would record in during their stays at home in order to practice in their off times. Much of the story of New Orleans as a blues city is about the success of the traveling musicians and the attention that the 'New Orleans style' brought them. It is as though New Orleans was an incubator for musicians and then they were sent off into the world to spread the sound and make a career of it. They had been recording and they had a nationally sought after sound because of so many years of the traveling bands promoting the style.[19] St. Louis shares it's blues history of being rich in a more traditional style with New Orleans. St. Louis is mentioned as a river city where some artists would pass through and then move on from. St. Louis is commonly thought of as that of a pass-through town, which was more of a shipping post for talent than a home.

Louis Armstrong had originally played on steamboats in New Orleans with little success. He became one of the traveling musicians to bring the sound of New Orleans to the nation and find success. He followed the steamboats up to St. Louis where he found much more success and spent a majority of his career, often referring to it as home. Armstrong was

---

[17] Race records recorded exclusively for blacks and were typically child companies to bigger labels. St. Louis had a Chess Records branch for producing and a pressing plant for records but no other big names set up a side post in the river city creating an interesting paradigm that Chicago needed St. Louis to create the physical product but that St. Louis artist would need to go to Chicago for the studio time to create the music for the pressing.
Mike Rowe. *Chicago Blues, The City and the Music.* (New York: DeCapo Pressing, 1975) 14.

[18] Rowe, 32.

[19] John Broven. *Walking to New Orleans; The Story of New Orleans Rhythm & Blues.* (England: Blues Unlimited. 1974)

among the working musicians of New Orleans and typically played during the day, 10- 5:30, as entertainment. Then he would clean the boat and returned to the stage for the late night entertainment, about a ninety minute set plus encore.[20] Memphis faced racism like other Southern cities, but had a railroad and offered some common labourer jobs to blacks, much in the same way that Chicago and New Orleans did. Beale Street, as a black locale, helped blacks get into politics in a similar way to Chicago's South Side and favour like happened in Kansas City.[21] Memphis was able to embrace all of its musical history in a way that St. Louis could and seemingly cannot. Beale Street became symbolic for black culture. Memphis had such a laid back approach to their music and life styles that it was a haven for musicians to go jam and expand creatively. Memphis' less structured lifestyle with more party than structure and that pushed artists like W. C. Handy to St. Louis. It still was able to foster a unique sound like St. Louis did and this sound helped to cement Memphis as a blues city.

Kansas City had an ability to run late into the night because of lax city officials. [22] The city officials were influences by territory holders who were similar to mob bosses in that they were recognized individuals who could sway legal officials to their whim in their geographic areas. Kansas City closely mirrored Memphis and St. Louis in that there was a community feel amongst the players and this sense of a separate blues community is something that defines Kansas City as a blues city. While players were on break, standing around at venues, their friends would often come by and pick up the idle instrument and put something out just to pass the time.[23] This open policy helped to create the Kansas City style. The sound style that the city embodied is a focus of all of the works on Kansas City as a

---

[20]Shirley Althoff. "Satchmo Comes Home." *Globe Democrat*. June 23, 1963.

[21] Margaret McKee and Fred Chisenhall. *Beale Black & Blue: Life and Music on Black America's Main Street.* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. 1981) 65.

[22] To indicate Missouri or Kansas makes things too complicated for the sake of this study. If there is a law enacted by one particular state I will indicate it as so.

[23] Nathan W. Pearson Jr. *Goin' to Kansas City.* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987) 117.

blues city.[24] It took a large black migration to the city in the late 19th century to really open it up beyond white show business.[25] This migration is the same that brought so many to St. Louis thinking that they were merely making a stop on their way onto Kansas.

There are little one-line connections in each of these cities histories that tie them to St. Louis in one way or another. St. Louis' blues industry thrived because it offered open collaboration among artists as long as it was concentrated in one geographic locale because of racial policy. Their homes, venues, and clubs were restrictive. St. Louis did not make it easy for African Americans to become part of music history. The white population of St. Louis' treatment of black citizens is the reason for the limitations placed on black musicians. Unfortunately, this narrative from St. Louis is difficult to document because it was more so common knowledge than documented offenses. There is a great lack of evidence from the forties through fifties of the recordings, the artists, and the artists' reflections on their experiences. This is credited commonly to the depression times taking focus away from journalistic aspirations. This is a nation wide decry and sentiment, though. What is seen in publications anytime blues were featured was all in regard to a white musician. For St. Louis, this dates back to ragtime music with Bob Darch being mentioned much more than Scott Joplin, the so-called King of Ragtime and who has a Historic Site registered with the Missouri Parks.[26] Any mentions of African Americans making money or finding success were those who were opera performers, a traditionally white style of entertainment. In meticulously combing through three volumes of scrapbooks of music articles from St. Louis

---

[24] The unique sound was not one created by mere geography but by the organization of the band too. The horns would play alongside the rhythm section usually and this change up created a different dispersion of sound power coming from the band according to the literature.

[25] Bryan Jack. *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters.* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007)

[26] As found by comparison to articles found in a scrapbook of musical mentions in local St. Louis newspapers Volumes 1-3 of Music in St Louis City and St Louis County assembled by the Missouri Historical Society Research Library.

that are approximately two hundred pages each, with dates ranging from 1946 to the late 1970s, there are less than thirty articles featuring African American blues or jazz musicians. That could be a part of why historians have largely overlooked St. Louis in their blues histories, once the material gets hard to find they gave up or assumed that there was nothing to find.

Out of necessity, I have utilized mapping sources such as the Guidian's Guides and other city registries to help form a more concrete image of places and events in St. Louis from the 1940s to 1965. Wildly void from primary sources are articles featuring black musician successes. There were not even advertisements for black dominated music events, all advertisements focused on white music, such as opera. One might assume, given the invisibility of black artists in these scrapbooks, that white musicians were the only musicians in the city; yet in 1963, a Japanese tourist walked into the *Globe Democrat* to tell a different story. He talked about his decision to visit the city based on seeing the film *St. Louis Blues*, a film featuring black musicians singing the blues.[27] His editorial was published in the *Globe Democrat* after his return to Japan and there are no more mentions of him or his trip. St. Louis not only holds the first blues song but there was a film adaptation made from the song! What does this mean for St. Louis? Did St. Louis really fade out from the blues scene with the use of steamboats? It would appear that the great number of ads featuring the symphony or opera and rare to none for blues would mean that there were none.

Scholarly works talk about the spread of the blues with the steamboat era, beginning in the thirties and continuing into the fifties. During this time the Streckfus Steamers operated

[27] Charles Menees. "'St Louis Blues' Attracts Visitor." unknown newpaper. February 21, 1964.

out of St. Louis.[28] These grandiose steamers traveled up and down the Mississippi and with them brought blues musicians who doubled as employees and late night entertainment. The nation at this time offered little employment to black citizens and the steamers were one of the few places that blacks could find work. Louis Armstrong was one of many who worked this way and brought his music to others by way of the steamers. When the steamers became more entertainment than cargo shipping there was, understandably, a decline in labor jobs needed and thus many blacks' jobs would move off of the boats. Trains became the new major mode of transportation across the nation and they also employed blacks. However, St. Louis was not the depot that Chicago was and often those who came to St. Louis were merely on their way somewhere else as a part of the Great Migration away from the Jim Crow racist law system of the south.

This is typically where blues history begins to pass St. Louis by and continue on to Kansas City or Memphis or Chicago from New Orleans. What was happening in these cities by the fifties did not rely on the influx of steamboats to bring the music in because the Great Migration was already telling the tale of employment and opportunity available in these cities. What is overlooked is the continuation of the development of blues music in St. Louis. It did not die with the steamers, even if the city did work against it diligently. In the fifties local reporters began to speak of Gaslight Square and its culture hub. The reporters talked about the live music acts and lively bar atmosphere. The fifties was the last decade before the Civil Rights Movement would sweep in and make an impact on the nation's protection and acceptance of its black citizens. It was a time of high tension between whites and blacks and St. Louis, in particular, rated highly on segregation efforts and clashes. These mixed signals

---

[28] Annie Amantea Blum. *The Steamer Admiral and Streckfus Steamers: A Personal View : A Short History of Streckfus Steamers, Incorporated 1906 Albatross to 1978 Admiral*. (St. Louis, Mo.: St. Louis Mercantile Library at the U of Missouri St. Louis, 2012)

make it difficult to understand, initially, if St. Louis fits into the conversation of blues music with other cities that seemingly invited musicians in and recorded their music and their visits alike.

There were numerous successful musicians in St. Louis. If they had national success it was typically attained by following tours out of the city like Ike Turner did. St. Louis Slim would play with several musicians or musicians would travel to St. Louis to play or they would play St. Louis tunes in their own home cities. It is odd that despite this St. Louis is often void from being named a big blues city by the very same musicians. St. Louis is also missing from histories of blues music or is restricted to being included with Sedalia as a ragtime spot.[29] Ragtime is commonly included in pre-histories of blues and jazz as a beginning spot, recognized as the first popular black influenced music. St. Louis gets recognition as a place where Scott Joplin stayed for a period of time while writing. It also had a strong red light district that was killed with prohibition, around the decline of steamboats, and there, typically, ends St. Louis in blues histories.[30]

When recalling St. Louis, artists refer to where they had to go to become successful after St. Louis helped them create their sound and ability. Before Ike Turner there were Singleton Palmer and Louis Armstrong. Palmer was a St. Louis native who met up with Armstrong on the riverboat steamers. Both Palmer and Armstrong speak affectionately of their times in St. Louis even though they both held other jobs while performing here to support themselves. Josephine Baker, perhaps one of the more famous acts, was very vocal about her decision to leave the city early on in her career because of the state of racism. Following the segregation repeal there was talk of her return to St Louis, her hometown, because things had gotten

---

[29] Scott Yanow. *Jazz, A Regional Exploration.* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2005) 5.
[30] Yanow, 5.

better from the times of her previous tours twelve years earlier.[31] Almost all of these traits found in St. Louis are also found in other blues cities. St. Louis appears as a melting pot of these defining characteristics to the way that the other blues cities have nurtured and/or demonized the blues at one point or another. Regarding all of this information St. Louis is still written out of blues history.

St. Louis combines some of the positives, like open space for musicians to collaborate, and some of the negative, racial segregation in performance and in day to day life, in this, affectionately called, little big city. Learning more about the city and the context of the nation reveals how the city forced the company that blues musicians had. The result of this forced company in the allowed spaces for black congregation wasn't failure but opportunity to grow and learn from greats. It created a society of the best teaching the best. This shows how St. Louis has just as loud of a voice as other Midwestern cities when it comes to blues and jazz and show how the development of the city relates to the development of blues and jazz music specifically in black artists who started and performed in their careers in St. Louis. St. Louis can be seen as the epitome of the blues by surviving despite the struggle.

[31] William Glover. "La Baker Returns for Concert Tour." *Globe Democrat.* March 13-14, 1964

LEGAL AND GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES

Gaslight Square was located in northwestern St. Louis city. In this district were the newspapers headquarters, such as the *Globe-Democrat*, and progressive bars whose owners saw the benefit from hosting both white and black crowds even if these crowds came through at two different times, early and late evening, respectively. There are works on Gaslight Square that showcase the artists who performed and ask the question; 'Who did you perform with?' There are works that document oral histories of those best remembered for their times in Gaslight Square or the creation and atrophy of the few blocks. There are also works that strive to answer why St. Louis is as segregated as it is. These histories can all relate. Black blues musicians were able to create a community that prospered and created their own blues in St. Louis out of their forced occupancies. This is key to St. Louis as blues city because it is where the St. Louis blues sound lived and grew as well as being where the blues continued to be performed even though larger blues histories are ignoring St. Louis at this point.

Until Gaslight Square became Gaslight Square most local musicians could be found playing DeBaliviere Strip or in Gino's.[32] Of course these areas were segregated audiences with white only audiences. Before being called Gaslight Square the area was called Greenwich Corners. The Gaslight Bar and the Golden Eagle were part of the locale already, originally being amongst a vast "Bohemian outlook" full of antique, book and resale stores.[33]

The Gaslight Bar was converted from the Musical Arts Building that had a previous clientele from the environment. The blues and jazz support in St. Louis was so poor that in 1951 Ernie Wilkins, a popular local musician, was approached by the (Count) Basie Band to

---

[32] Dennis Owsley, *City of Gabriels: The History of Jazz in St. Louis, 1895-1973*. (St. Louis : Reedy Press, 2006) 129.
[33] Owsley, 129.

join by asking, "…or do you want to stay there in St. Louis?"[34] February 10, 1959 brought a tornado that ripped through St. Louis badly damaging the majority of Olive and Boyle. It was after the tornado that the area got the name Gaslight Square from the surviving establishment, the Gaslight Bar.[35] The Gaslight Bar has been restored into The Gaslight Theatre in the Central West End as a part of their revitalization project.[36] The Central West End is a community encompassing Euclid, Olive and Boyle that is home to restaurants and venues much in the same way that Gaslight Square was.

At the same time that some musicians were finding success in Gaslight Square, Fontella Bass was singing in clubs that blacks were not even allowed to enter. These were clubs that over looked the Mississippi river from St. Louis.[37] Furry Lewis recalled the frequency of shootings in Memphis with nonchalance. It was such a regular happening that he bragged about his ability to outrun bullets almost as a part of his repertoire.[38]

St. Louis' own Fontella Bass is best known for her 1965 hit song, "Rescue Me." She started performing here in St. Louis before being signed to Chess Records and touring nationally with "Rescue Me." Bass talks about her performances on the road as being very hard and segregated. She had to sleep in homes of friends in town because she was not allowed in hotels. Pieces of information like this show that segregated audiences at venues were not the only race laws that affected musicians in St. Louis. Moving from house to house made it hard to keep track of any documentation to prove that she had a hand in writing her songs. At one point on the road Bass had to stay in a Howard Johnson and was so scared to be in a hotel that she knew she was not supposed to be in, that she did not sleep at all despite

---

[34] Owsley, 119.
[35] Thomas Crone, *Gaslight Square an Oral History*. 37. St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004.
[36] Figure 2, Geographic relation of the Central West End to Gaslight Square
[37]Bill Greensmith. "The Fontella Bass Interview." *Blues Unlimitied*. Spring 1968.
[38] Fred J. Hay. *Goin' Back to Sweet Memphis, Conversations with the Blues.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001) 107.

performances that night and upcoming. When she played in the clubs like this it was the drummer's job to keep watch over the audience to warn the rest of the band of a potential shooting.

St Louis was a segregated city in a nation of segregated cities. St. Louis had been a border city, hinging between slave and non-slave holding states, meaning that there was a mix of free and enslaved blacks present. There was even a hierarchy within free blacks; however, they were, as a whole, still far more restricted than any white counterpart.[39] This consistent presence of blacks in the community did not change the way business was done. St. Louis knew of the end to segregation de jure (by law) but continued it de facto in all public establishments from schools to entertainment.[40] In 1943 Missouri actually stopped a bill that would allow blacks equal access to public places. It was not until 1946 that hearings were even heard in Missouri Courts about lifting the "restrictive covenants" that banned blacks from buying homes in certain areas.[41] This conversation is important because it gives the context of the city of St. Louis where black blues musicians were struggling to survive and create careers. Which school a child attended was based on housing thereby making the city wholly segregated. CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) did not successfully help to push desegregation in public food counters until well into the 60s.[42] There was not a court ordered and enforced desegregation of schools in St. Louis until 1980, but that gets outside of my era of significance. Blacks performing in St. Louis were at best allowed to perform in music/dance halls but were not allowed entry into the white halls. Commonly, black artists

---

[39] Oliver C. Cox. *Race: A Study in Social Dynamics*. (New York: Monthly Review, 2000) 47.
[40] Richard S Fuegner and David Roth. *Gaslight Square Illuminated: The Rise & Fall of St. Louis' Premier 'Hot Spot"*. (St. Louis, MO: Virginia Pub. 2010)
[41] "Bar on Negros Living in White Areas Appealed" *St. Louis Post Dispatch.* 4 October 1946.
[42] State of Missouri. St. Louis City. *Part I: The African-American Experience*. St. Louis. 2011. Print. <http://stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/planning/cultural-resources/preservation-plan/Part-I-African-American-Experience.cfm>.

would perform late at night outside the heart of the city. We have seen this in Kansas City as well.

Still, in 1960 St. Louis was ranked the 18th most segregated Metropolitan Area out of 237.[43] This is commonly referred to as 'white flight,' and is the reality of white families moving away from where black families settle. In St. Louis' case, white flight occurred out of the city and into the western and southern counties. This gave north city and North St. Louis County to black residents. The idea of white flight can be seen supported by which areas blacks could perform after the end of segregation. How did musicians who were not allowed to access or limited access in the city, due to race, still get their names out in St. Louis? St. Louis continued to be a conservative town with regard to race, despite the number of talented black musicians coming out of the town.

In an article from 1947, St. Louis Mayor Aloys P. Kaufmann, who served until 1949, met with W.C. Handy to celebrate the anniversary of the success of "St Louis Blues." In the article, Handy is labeled a 'meticulously dressed Negro' and is given a key to the city.[44] It is suggested in another article that, "No city in the world has been the beneficiary of publicity comparable to that received by St. Louis through the world famous "St Louis Blues."[45] "St. Louis Blues" was not written to glorify the city; it is a sad story of a man struggling to survive in a cold world. Handy came to St. Louis well before the times of Gaslight Square and lived under a bridge during at least part of his time here. Had he come during the time of Gaslight he might have been able to find a community. Though a small one, limited geographically, still a community. It is amazing to see how much popularity was brought to the area by the extreme hardships put on a young, blind struggling African American

---

[43]Gordon, Colin. *Mapping Decline*. (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)
[44] "St Louis Blues Not So Blue; Author Gets $25,000 a Year." *Globe Democrat*. May 24, 1947.
[45] "St Louis Blues' Memorial Urged For Riverfront." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* September 17, 1947.

musician. Even though the city was reaping the benefits of the popularity of a blues song it made no geographic changes to welcome black blues music, continuing to limit where and when they could perform. The language of this article is intensely common for newspapers during the struggle for Civil Rights across the nation. In this I mean that it was a noteworthy point if a black person showed any kind of outward respectability in a white's eye, in Handy's case his dress is noteworthy.

Local artists who were not picked up by labels as Fontella Bass was, in the early to mid-20th century, frequently could be found in Gaslight Square. Gaslight Square occupied the 4200 block of Olive and Boyle in St. Louis city.[46] This is close to the area of modern day Central West End and, during the time of Gaslight Square, was considered the more northern section of the city in a time when white flight was beginning to push further west.[47] Gaslight Square was home to many jazz clubs in its prime.[48] Its peak was in the 50s and many jazz musicians were able to find work in the bars and night clubs that populated the square so named for The Gaslight Bar. The most resources on jazz and blues performed in St. Louis are in reference to Gaslight Square. It is through reports of Gaslight Square that white reporters would shift their focus to an area that allowed black musicians to play their music. The square operated late into the night so it made a great place for African American blues and jazz musicians to perform and make money while doing it. This holds true because African American musicians were allowed to perform late at night in St. Louis where the prime time spots were white only. Audiences were attracted to the square because the alternative for late

---

[46] Dennis Owsley, *City of Gabriels: The History of Jazz in St. Louis, 1895-1973*. (St. Louis : Reedy Press, 2006) 129.
I think that it is important to cite this particular location given to Gaslight Square because, to some, Gaslight Square can go further than one block and to others there is just one main strip of what they thought was Gaslight Square. While it is not necessarily a debated difference it is enough of a difference to understand. In my research I included all places that were associated by the author/interviewer/interviewee as being in Gaslight Square.

[47] Colin Gordon. *Mapping Decline*. (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.)

[48] See Figure 1 Map of Gaslight Square from *Gaslight Square Illuminated.*

night entertainment was to cross the river.[49] The locale of Gaslight Square was important in helping popularize the artist. St. Louis is unique in hosting this niche of Olive and Boyle because they have areas that allowed for young black musicians to go to and learn.

In the fifties, reporters began to speak of Gaslight Square and lively atmosphere featuring an abundance of bars, live music, comedy and coffeehouses. This shift could be caused by the location of Gaslight Square, being in south St. Louis, combined with the number of late night businesses that occupied the Square providing dinner, drink and entertainment for late working journalists. Gaslight Square was where you stopped by after work for a drink after midnight during the week. It was "nothing like the country club crowd…(not) very straight" according to Ken Gouldthorpe of the *Post Dispatch.*[50]As the Crystal Palace moved into the area the environment began to shift. Crystal Palace hosted an area where the audience could me racially mixed though how mixed it actually was varied. When Crystal Palace hosted black acts like Dick Gregory (comedian) the audience was not white only but he still only drew about a ten percent black crowd.[51] The various crowds pulled by different acts created class within the social structure in the St. Louis music scene. The venue owners of Gaslight both provided and enabled this by having different acts play during different times of the evening. The acts that pulled more white dominated audiences played during dinner time in the early evenings. Different acts were booked later in the evening as the crowds became more and more mixed. The use of both well known and little known artists throughout this research and study also speaks to the class separation in music. More popular artists tended to be supported by white majority audiences. Privilege was given due to class from fame and privilege was given lesser to ability. Gaslight Square had

---

[49] Thomas Crone. *Gaslight Square: An Oral History.* (St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004) 38.
[50] Crone, 16.
[51] "The Integrated Comic" *Globe Democrat.* 26 November 1961.

successfully created an area for black musicians to gather, play and develop their sound together.

There were several bars within walking distance of each other, unfortunately the easy proximity created an added volume. More bodies made mugging easier according to Ray Mutrux's, owner of The Gaslight Bar.[52] The local newspaper writers, among many others, were regulars attending both the bars and the shows for artists like Jeanne Trevor, who sang jazz at the Black Horse.[53] The Dark Side presented progressive jazz, the Laughing Buddha hosted folk music, and there were coffeehouses for the late nighters who were not quite ready to drift home yet. The Opera House saw artists who were called 'riverboat musicians' like Singleton Palmer and Louis Armstrong. Palmer was an active part of Gaslight Square's nighttime entertainment. Gaslight Square had many other venues through the years including Three Fountains, the Musical Arts Building, Golden Eagle, Crystal Palace, and Smokey Joe's. "Smokey" Joe Cunningham, a black player of the St. Louis baseball team, the Cardinals, compared this cultural center to Old Town Chicago. Cunningham even adopted his nickname "Smokey" to help advertise for Smokey Joe's in the Square after living above the restaurant for a discount on rent. It was common for blacks to live here because they experienced a more accepting atmosphere and it was free of racially restrictive land agreements.[54] Owners of the bars in the early times of Gaslight Square, around 1954, called the area "friendly and comfortable" and said that if there were drugs in the area it was "just weed, … LSD was a new drug and was rare."

It becomes evident just how much publication can make or break an area and livelihood based on newspaper reports. Gaslight Square was seen as a high crime area

---

[52] Thomas Crone, *Gaslight Square an Oral History*. (St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004) 22.
[53] Crone.
[54] These contracts disallowed a white family to sell or rent their home to a black family.

following a report of a freak murder and the hype that followed. After the first report, the Square became the scapegoat for any murders within blocks of the two streets that made up Gaslight Square. Eventually places like the Crystal Palace closed due to mob crime and a severe decrease in customers, out of fear. Marty Bronson said the "Gaslight era was defeated by crime and rock n roll."[55] The Square was an easy mark for high crime reports for multiple journalists because of the associated black population whom lived nearby and frequented the area. This was just another strike against black musicians in the hyper segregated St. Louis. The blues community had found a way to make a positive out of their herd-like geographic restrictions and newspapers were finding a way to push them out further.

St. Louis's religious affiliations caused Saturday's liquor flow to stop at midnight causing coffeehouses to be very successful. Another component that pushed coffeehouses was the inability of some to obtain liquor licenses at all, regardless of what day of the week it was. Jorge Martinez was one of these who were out politicked for a license. He felt as though he fell to racism, citing that he tried to bring The Twist dance and a dance hall to Gaslight Square. He was struck out by Crystal Palace.[56]

The variety of entertainment that was found in Gaslight Square made it the "jewel of the city" as Jeter Thompson, a prolific African American pianist and member of Trio Tres Bien, would say. Every bar had a different theme and the themes were worldwide making it almost like a walk through vaudeville show. The area was lined with gaslights, which endorsed the riverboat and gaslight era and with that came the music. It was on Gaslight Square that the first interracial jazz combo was found, headed by Ben Thigpen.[57] Gaslight Square prominently featured locally trained professional musicians such as Sammy Gardner

---

[55] Crone, Thomas. *Gaslight Square: An Oral History*. (St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004)
[56] Crone, 38.
[57] Dennis Owsley, *City of Gabriels: The History of Jazz in St. Louis, 1895-1973*. (St. Louis : Reedy Press, 2006) 126.

as long standing regular performers amongst their spotlight visitors. Gaslight Square enabled Gardner to work with and train many St. Louis jazz musicians, outside of his day job of teaching music in St. Louis county schools.[58] Gaslight Square had a professional school for music as well as an accepted community of musicians on the streets. Kruger School of Music had a studio on Boyle and Olive right up the road from Crystal Palace that made it possible for some formal training to those that would have otherwise been denied the opportunity. Those who could not attend Kruger could find learning opportunities by just being around during and after performances. These operations fueled the attraction of Gaslight Square as a land of opportunity. It also offered a mixed audience. Whites who were comfortable in mixed crowds could stay late and would fill the audiences and make a point to come and see the musicians, regardless of race. It created an environment where blacks could be sought out by whites wanting to recreate the sound. It is a remarkable occurrence in such a segregated city that black musicians were considered part of the regular crowd. In a city whose harsh segregation laws marginalized blacks in every possible aspect of their lives, it created both a unique and different struggle. The unexpected result of this struggle was the sound of the blues and the creation of a community where they could learn and develop their skills before moving onto a city that would embrace and support their talents outside of two city blocks.

Gaslight Square operated as a grassroots organization because they were denied the ability to form an association by the city. The association would have allowed Gaslight Square to have parking and shops available instead they continued to operate through personal funding and friendships.[59] Following the demise of Gaslight Square these people

[58] Owsley, 138.
[59] Thomas Crone, *Gaslight Square an Oral History*. (St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004) 29.

that helped to power music education and create a community drifted away, Gardner moved to Florida for example.[60]

Gaslight Square was where budding musicians looked to learn traditional (see:black) Dixieland, which was more laid back than what the whites were playing. Jeanne Trevor, a name practically synonymous with Gaslight Square, moved from New Jersey attracted by the opportunity to work on Gaslight Square. She worked every night and was one of the artists who pulled a regular crowd. It was this consistency that allowed for the grassroots feel, those who worked together stayed together. Not only did Gaslight Square promote a sense of unity to their regulars but also to the city. There were establishments like The Dark Side and Le Hot Jazz that had dominate crowds of one race but it was said that, "...with the city polarized the way it was, it (Gaslight Square) brought everybody together."[61]

In the more nationwide view of Gaslight Square, more than individual artists were flocking in. VGM recording studios recorded several series' of live recordings from Jorge's Hip Intertainment, one of those who were denied liquor licenses, on behalf of VGM and the artist's current labels. This may indicate that these recordings were done outside of contract or that there was a clause for recording in the kind of venues Gaslight Square boasted. The Opera House housed multiple recording opportunities for Singleton Palmer, a Gaslight Square regular as a musician and union representative, including his first ever recording, Dixie by Gaslight, in 1961. It was common for recordings to be made featuring the same personnel, again an ‘if they play together, they stay together’ situation, which routinely performed in Gaslight Square, allowing the band to get plenty of practice without needing to

[60] Dennis Owsley, *City of Gabriels: The History of Jazz in St. Louis, 1895-1973*. (St. Louis : Reedy Press, 2006) 129.
[61] Dennis Owsley, 139.

pay for additional studio time. In cases such as the St. Louis Ragtimers labels would come to St. Louis just to record the Gaslight Square stars with styles dating back to the 1890s.

Artists like David Edward Hines started in Gaslight Square only to suddenly be discovered and to tour with Ike and Tina Turner, Albert King and Ray Charles. Another big name that brought success out from Gaslight Square is Dick Gregory. Sonny Hamp played in Crystal Palace, where he otherwise would not have been allowed to perform due to his race, doing shows for Dick Gregory and remembered, in an interview with Jimmy Jones, Gaslight Square as being a place with "…so many people.(Jimmy Jones) In that one spot, you know what I mean? (Sonny Hamp's response)"[62] Dick Gregory also influenced the likes of Tres Bien, a band headed by a black man, that was so successful that they recorded fourteen to fifteen times and performed at the Apollo in New York six times. Percy E James Jr. remembers being part of smaller black bands that could outclass the white big bands in Gaslight Square because they could get paid less being, first, black and, second, a smaller band with just as big of a sound working without a budget. James was so fond of Gaslight Square that he claimed it as a "…drummers town. This is where I was most accepted and I was never a jungle player, I'm a jazz musician. This is a musical town."[63] While there was so much success steaming through Gaslight Square, they were still strict on who they hosted despite the bad rap they were receiving in media as being an area where just any riffraff could hang out. Gaslight Square was so tight on their performers that singer Ann LaRue remembers playing just on gig on Gaslight Square in 1965, just one because after the

[62] Lyn Cunningham and Jimmy Jones, *Sweet, Hot and Blue: St. Louis' Musical Heritage. (*St. Louis: McFarland & Co Inc, 1989) 68.
[63] Cunningham and Jones, 91.

performance the owner of the joint, Pepsi-A-Go-Go, told them not to come back since the female group had girls as young as fifteen singing.[64]

In the same breath as Ann LaRue being told she was far too young to perform in a venue at night there were other publications slamming Gaslight Square as being seedy and dangerous with no concern for the city or its people. It becomes evident just how much publication can make or break an area and livelihood based on newspaper reports. Gaslight Square was seen as a high crime area following a report of a freak murder and the hype that followed. After the first report any murders within blocks of the two streets that made up Gaslight Square were credited to the area. Eventually places like the Crystal Palace closed due to mob crime and a severe decrease in customers out of fear. Marty Bronson said the "Gaslight era was defeated by crime and rock n roll."[65] This is partially to blame for the actual proximity to crime but was admittedly associated by name to the nearby Square by multiple journalists. The Square itself became the scapegoat for high crime and the blame was associated with the black population that lived and frequented the area. This was just another strike against black musicians.

Another place for blame lies with Mayor Alfonso J. Cervantes according to the occupants of Gaslight Square. Mayor Cervantes was in power in St. Louis 1965 and remained until 1973 and followed two after Kaufmann who gave W. C. Handy the key to city. During this time there were riots across the nation and his focus was to avoid any race riots at all. In an attempt to do so he was lax on enforcing laws, like curfew, which targeted keeping those with mal intent off of the street.[66] The result from this was crime, such as mugging that Mutrux was cited as seeing previously in this paper. Mayor Cervantes

---

[64] Cunningham and Jones, 48.
[65] Cunningham and Jones, 27.
[66] Thomas Crone, *Gaslight Square an Oral History*. (St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004) 32.

continued to shift his focus away from things like protection in Gaslight Square. As Gaslight Square began its downslope because of the media coverage claiming crime, he focused attention to streets Laclede and Euclid. Both areas were the new up-and-comers in St. Louis, even owners from Gaslight Square were opening in Laclede. Mayor Cervantes pulled back the police protection that once flanked the nightlife on Gaslight Square.[67] Similarly, parking in the area suffered. The lack of parking on the street caused people to park approximately three blocks away. The proximity, or lack thereof, could only encourage crime to continue and flourish.

[67] Thomas Crone, 34.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In most music cities you can find a prominent infrastructure built to support local musicians. This infrastructure can consist of multiple levels of venues to hold different volumes of crowds for the different stages of a musician's career. Ample staging for events is also important to a city's encouraging of success. Music festivals often create an environment of sharing the listening experience and exploring and discovering new artists.[68] Hosting recording areas of large-scale labels with the ability to provide start up money for a musician's career is another way that cities can support their musical talents. The city can support these areas by providing promotion and publicity focused around the shows and sale of music as a non-physical means of support. Encouraging of non-profit fundraising is vital to the encouragement of musicians to continue the reciprocal relationship that musicians have with their cities. Historically St. Louis has had some to all of these components operating for its blues musicians. In fact, St. Louis is where Nikola Tesla demonstrated the first true broadcast in March 1893.[69] Without a consistent and simultaneous occurrence, blues musicians have had to turn to other cities to get their careers up and running.

Hometown support in the way of promotion can involve a lot of things. It can be musical exposure on radio shows at discounted rates or even for free. Exposure includes playing artist's records, announcing their shows or building attention around upcoming releases or events. Repeated radio play commonly builds community interest and results in larger crowds, therefore increased revenue, from shows. Community interest can lead to regular demand for shows and creates income stability. With this kind of stability during the 1920s-1950s, theoretically, an artist would not need to regularly leave town to support his/her

---

[68] Joel Sprenger of Ambit Studios. Personal Interview. 13 November 2014.
[69] Frank Absher. *Images of America: St. Louis Radio and Television.* (Mt. Pleasant SC: Arcadia P., 2012)

livelihood. This is certainly how Rudy Coleman was able to make his living in St. Louis, but it seems that his experience was an unique one. Local support through show attendance also helps to fund the artist's traveling shows to grow their audience.

The 1920s were the beginning of regularly scheduled music on the radio. This spurred the recording industry into marketable being. As has been presented, some cities, like Chicago, supported their blues musicians by having a far less segregated environment. St. Louis's black population did not have this luxury but were able to make a blues community out of the segregation as seen in areas like Gaslight Square and several artists refer to the desegregation as a crowd killer for their St. Louis shows. It can be inferred that when segregation was practiced that blacks could play at white establishments and play to an all white audience at a white-only venue. The white audience could afford to attend more often and at a higher cost than the typical black audience. This, coupled with the racist desires to not mix with a lesser black crowd, made white audiences more desirable to venue owners and musicians alike. Segregation was a state practiced by the local musicians unions as well. New Orleans, like St. Louis, had a very unique layout with specific neighborhoods that would have both fostered and hindered musicians. This dynamic was found outside of St. Louis but the extreme segregation of St. Louis deepened the issue, making the repeal of segregation much more detrimental to the music scene than in other cities. When segregation was repealed in other cities, their audiences were already used to a more mingled crowd. It came to St. Louis as a shock and caused many protests and riots.

St. Louis was like other cities in the existence of societies and unions who operated to keep musicians employed. Unions and societies were certainly not unique to St. Louis and this allowed for a mutually beneficial system to operate between most cities. Unions were a force that ensured a minimum pay for every show to its members. It also had a control over

who played in certain venues in the city. This corporate-like atmosphere provided some security to musicians but was not always run in the best interest of the musicians and often tended to benefits venues more.

David Dee, stage name for Mr. David Eckford, remembers his times playing in segregated St. Louis. As someone who had been burned by venue owners in the past, Dee began to self-contract in the 1960s for a partial payment upfront, before the show at the booking with the second half of the pay to come at the actual show. We see other black male artists signed to record labels, like Chuck Berry, doing this in the 1950s. He operated as an independent, self-booking, artist for local shows. This way he was only relying on managers for his initial out-of-town shows. Dee was born in East St. Louis, and spent some time in Chicago before serving in the armed forces and then returned to the St. Louis area, where he remains a citizen and working in the entertainment industry. I had a personal interview with Dee about his time playing in St. Louis and his time playing in Chicago.[70] Dee sang throughout his childhood in St. Louis with some gospel groups. He recalls Gaslight Square with a sense of admiration as being the area where the big names went.[71] Dee's experience gave insight to how the music industry and memberships in the city operated.

Local unions and societies existed at their core to try and ease some of these stresses on musicians. St. Louis had local 717, not all cities had locals but many of them did. St. Louis' union was segregated with a separate union for the races and as history as taught us, separate cannot be equal.[72] Both Dee and Coleman, remember the unions operating segregated and they worked on behalf of the venues that would call. The rules of the union were such that if you did not belong to the union of the area that you were playing in then

[70] David Dee. Personal interview. 18 Sept. 2014.
[71] Dee.
[72] This is referring to the repeal of the 1890 segregation laws under the 1965 judicial decision that separate cannot be equal as had been attempted.

you would have to pay to that area's union before you could play there.[73] After dues were paid then the union would have your name on a list of musicians. The list was separated by race and type of music played. This can work well for laborers who are all of relatively equal skill whose style does not vary much, an important factor for structural soundness and the nature of this type of work. This does not bode quite as well for a job that requires uniqueness in each individual. Successful musicians, except for professional impersonators, are commonly praised for their unique sound or their fresh style. Essentially, their differences make them successful. The union's style of selection does not work to promote artists, but merely acknowledges their existence and availability. This does little to encourage artists to join the union even with their wage guarantee per show. This is especially true if the artists have a following in their own respects and could make more than the union minimum, which was a very real possibility for some of the hometown favorites. The unions controlled these wage guarantees and the unions set the cap on them. This cap was maintained rather than the unions fighting for better wages on behalf of the musicians or pushing for higher rates for certain artists that were sure to provide a better show for venues. This is debilitating to musicians because they have the potential to make much more if there is a packed show or tips are given. Without a union the venue will set the wage that the artist gets from each show and then the venue profits from the ticket, food and/or drink sales. The wage paid will vary based on whether or not that artist is expect to draw a large crowd and can be increased if a show sells more than expected.[74] The wages do set a secure minimum that they could make in a time of need or little attendance.

[73] David Dee. Personal interview. 18 Sept. 2014.
[74] Joel Sprenger of Ambit Studios. 13 November 2014.

Unions also controlled who played where and with whom.[75] Silver Cloud, stage name for Rudy Coleman, noted that he could not build a band with any union musicians as he, himself, did not belong to the union. This made his job harder and, once he had a name for himself, it was detrimental to union musicians because they could not play with an already successful act. The penalizing of members for promoting themselves through other means is practiced by all kinds of unions but is certainly discouraging in a promotion based art. Coleman never joined the union because he had steady enough jobs and a regular enough income that it would have actually cost him more money to pay dues and additional lost income from their regulatory pay and job placement. He continued to play and played in venues that were union regulated, because of his demand, so often that in 1957 he became an 'honorary' union member.[76] Until that point, Coleman caused a lot of conflict for the union by playing wherever he was invited and making money over and above the amount dictated by the union. He shared his profit with his band, if it was a band gig rather than a solo performance, and this exceeded their rates still. This seems to create a partial monopoly over the St. Louis venues in the unions benefit. Instances like this lead one to wonder if the unions really operated with the musician's, their reason for being, best interest at heart.

John May, current chairperson and serving on the Board of Directors of the St. Louis Blues Society, recalls the unions as operating more like a corporation.[77] They had a list of musicians and referred to that list when a venue called and needed musicians, as previously stated. May concurs with this description and goes on to say that they were only a call list. The unions tried to fill their rosters with popular musicians to draw other in. Singleton Palmer and Ike Turner were two who became further involved in St. Louis' music scene by

[75] Rudy Coleman. Personal interview. 19 Sept. 2014.
[76] Coleman.
[77] John May. Personal interview. 18 Sept. 2014.

being members and representatives of the musician's union. The unions may have believed that having big names on their lists and honorary members would pull the rest of the St. Louis musical community into their doors. May's position in the Blues Society learns from the mistakes of the unions and makes a valiant effort to function more on the behalf of the artists. May also noted that the union provided artists with a benefits structure of sorts, including death benefits to family. It was not a solid or dependable structure for artists because it operated in an you-get-out-of-it-what-you-put-in manner and most artists were not able to put in enough.[78] The natures of the way unions operate make it very difficult to execute to this career type. This is not to say that it was not successful or did not help many musicians in many cities; however it is not a structure remembered fondly by musicians in St. Louis.

There were other societies that existed before the St. Louis Blues Society that were primarily based on location. Gaslight Square had a membership that was a rally of venue owners who worked together to protect their streets and musicians. This membership was an exclusive one, as noted earlier with Jorge Martinez who suffered the exclusion because of his race and interest in promoting a black dance, the twist. Coleman remembers Laclede's Landing having a similar membership. As Coleman was beginning a show, unseen behind the piano, he overheard members of the Landing Business Committee in a meeting talking about how '…the blacks had destroyed the Landing before ….and they would not host them now.'[79] It was funny, to Coleman, to hear these whites talking about blacks' destructive nature while employing a black musician. Coleman was so well known that he was commonly accepted and in demand by both black and white audiences.

[78] John May. Personal interview. 18 Sept. 2014.
[79] Rudy Coleman. Personal interview. 19 Sept. 2014.

It was out of the voids created by unions and venue-owner-only groups that groups like the Black Artists Groups (BAG) was formed. BAG operated at its peak in St. Louis from the mid 60s into the early 70s and therefore falls out of this paper's realm of interest but it would be remiss to not mention them in a chapter about the importance of St. Louis's musical societies. They were formed as an alliance for all types of black artists ranging from musicians to theater and pulled all in between together. Following the desegregation laws the city reacted by not inviting blacks to play at all, as Coleman has testified to. The areas where blacks could still get gigs were in areas that whites were not interested in going anyway. This forced many artists underground or out of the city. Thus, the creation of BAG and they were a very successful operation despite extreme push back. They aggressively put the reality of racism in the faces of the community.[80]

David Dee recalls that it was difficult to get a show with no record out. It was understandably difficult to book a show when no one had heard you before, so Dee left the city to record. He recorded in Detroit.[81] He noted that a successful artist would have a deal with a label and that would give the artist start up money and would promote their music. The label acts as a support to the artist after they sign and then as the artist gets shows and record sales the label takes a cut of those profits as payment for the start up money, studio time and pressing of the record.[82] For unsigned artists with little money it was hard to justify traveling back and forth to out-of-town studios, then paying for the studio time and pressings. Coleman notes that he never had much trouble finding a job in St. Louis but acknowledges that his appeal was particular to him and not common.[83] This begs the question of what made Coleman so different. That is a subjective question that is difficult to approach but the

---

[80] Benjamin Looker. 2004. B*AG: Point from which creation begins: the Black Artists' Group of St. Louis*.
[81] David Dee. Personal interview. 18 Sept. 2014.
[82] Joel Sprenger,of Ambit Studios. Personal interview. 13 November 2014.
[83] Rudy Coleman. Personal interview. 19 Sept. 2014.

answer may lie in the monopolizing effect that unions had. For lesser known, or newer, artists it may have simply been easier to avoid the local unions altogether and pursue a career made on the road. It is typically easier to avoid the unions in a town where you are not easily found in your home. A career playing shows on the road could help artists to cross paths with labels and recording studios as well. Often times this is what led to musicians leaving St. Louis to pursue their careers.

Radio play was needed to drive the demand to perform in city. In order for radio play to happen a recording was needed. The lack of labels in St. Louis meant that artists were forced to leave the city to record with major or minor label, this has been showcased through Dee's experiences. Dee recalls that there were some independent recorders who existed in town. These independent records had no label association therefore zero promotion was coming from the act of recording itself. Nor was there any upfront cash given to the artists by the recorders as a signing bonus or deal with the anticipation of a pay back when the record did well. An existance of labels would have drawn, and still would draw, artists to St. Louis as well as supporting those who are local to begin with. This is an appeal that Chicago and Memphis boast proudly. Artists, like Dee, needed to be recorded and were so plentiful that labels rarely event send scouts to the city because they knew that the artists would come to them.[84]

African American artists who were writing and performing in the early twentieth century were hard pressed to find anyone to publish their original works. Usually if a score was taken it was recomposed and rewritten before being given to someone the label or producer saw fit to perform it in his or her style. At this point all the rights to the original composer and composition were lost. W. C. Handy, composer of 'St. Louis Blues' claims

[84] David Dee. Personal interview. 18 Sept. 2014.

"many composers of our race had thus been defrauded at the time when Booker T. Washington had organized the Negro Business League representing all forms of business but music." As a result, Handy partnered with another black man to create Handy Brothers Music Co., Inc. Eventually the company issued Handy and his partner, Pace's, music on their label as well as other race artists that were rejected by white labels.[85]

W. C. Handy is an artist whose life was changed by his time in St. Louis. He wrote "St. Louis Blues" in 1914 following extremely hard times living under a bridge playing for tips in St. Louis. He now makes approximately $25,000 a year off of his rights to the song. He has been able to hold onto his rights because he started his own label as previously mentioned. In an article from 1947, St. Louis Mayor Aloys P. Kaufmann met with Handy to celebrate the anniversary of the success of "St Louis Blues." In the article, Handy is labeled a 'meticulously dressed Negro' and is given a key to the city.[86] It is suggested in another article that, "No city in the world has been the beneficiary of publicity comparable to that received by St. Louis through the world famous 'St Louis Blues.'[87] 'St. Louis Blues' was not written to glorify the city; it is a sad story of a man struggling to survive in a cold world. It is amazing to see how much popularity was brought to the area by the extreme hardships put on a young, blind struggling African American musician.

Singleton Palmer was born in St. Louis and played both locally and with a traveling band on steamboats, working as a porter by day, and across the country. As previously stated, he worked as a porter by day and this was because he did not make enough money as a musician, despite his popularity in Gaslight Square. Due to this Palmer frequently left

---

[85] Reprint from *The New York Age* December 31, 1949. Missouri Historical Society Research Library Music Scrapbook.
[86] "St Louis Blues Not So Blue; Author Gets $25,000 a Year." *Globe Democrat*. May 24, 1947.
[87] "St Louis Blues' Memorial Urged For Riverfront." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* September 17, 1947.

straight from performing night gigs to work.[88] Palmer is important in this discussion because he played and was in demand across the nation for 11 years before he was recorded. Palmer was in demand in Gaslight Square after performing with Louis Armstrong, whom he had met performing on steamboats. He began recording and playing in St. Louis in 1950 though he did not record until 1961. His first record was titled "Dixie on Gaslight" and was made in collaboration with an attempt to preserve the music of the failing Gaslight Square where Palmer could be found playing late into the nights.[89] The white interest in preserving the area more than likely aided in finally putting Palmer on record as he previously had not sought out being recorded because he did not have the means or ability to travel to do so.

Armstrong had originally played on steamboats in New Orleans with little success. He then followed the steamboats up to St. Louis where he found much more success and spent a majority of his career, often referring to it as home. This might be attributed to the deep-seated segregation of the city of St. Louis allowing for separate crowds. Therefore, whites could see black performances at white establishments without fear of having a mixed audience. Armstrong was among the working musicians and typically played during the day, 10- 5:30, as entertainment. Then he would clean the boat and returned to the stage for the late night entertainment, about a ninety minute set plus encore.[90] There is an impressive list of even others who started their careers similarly on the steamboats, often all from the same company Streckfus Steamers, including Fate Marable, Charlie Creath and Dewey Jackson. St. Louis undeniably got its start in the blues scene as a river city and despite how history has been written, blues continued to live in St. Louis through segregation, possibly because of it.

---

[88] "Dixieland Never Dies." *Globe Democrat.* February 7, 1960.
[89] Charles Menees. "Singlton Palmer on Record." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* October 15, 1961.
[90] Shirley Althoff. "Satchmo Comes Home." *Globe Democrat*. June 23, 1963.

The early twentieth was the start of record label companies gaining momentum, popularity and therefore profitability. There were both independent labels and major labels. Leonard Chess and Phil Chess were the founders of Chess Records.[91] They boasted such St. Louis acts as Chuck Berry but had only a pressing plant for records based in St. Louis. The level of the relationships between label and artist were varied and expressed by social standards, among many other things. Leonard, being a white male, could help and provide for white artists, male or female, more so than he could with male black artists. Chess came onto the scene at a time when radio was the preferred way to listen in home; this meant that exposure that might lead to the purchase of records was through label promotion on late night television or radio. This exposure could, in turn, lead to domestic touring for further profit. Only the big names, in demand artists, pushed exposure to touring and made their money that way in the 40s and 50s. It was otherwise not cost effective to travel constantly to play.[92] There were artists like St. Louis' Chuck Berry who would demand a down payment before he would perform on stage or in the studio; he caught on to the fact that performances on stage made him little money and being a popular male artist he had at least that much leverage.[93] This luxury was not afforded to almost any other black recording artist of the time. When artists stopped selling records or were unable to make hits, Chess had and built a reputation for getting rid of those artists quickly. This reputation was shared with major labels. Though Chess was a predominantly black label, the black artists still recorded under a separate label heading than other artists, a common practice amongst all labels regardless of independent or major status, a clear sign of racism. Race labels, found in other cities, reflect St. Louis' severe segregation through restrictions on where their musicians could perform.

---

[91] John Broven. Record Makers and Breakers: Voices of the Independent Rock 'N' Roll Pioneers. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009) 16.
[92] Joel Sprenger of Ambit Studios. Personal interview. 13 November 2014.
[93] Broven, 128.

Artists came to major labels by means of discovery by artist managers rather than someone who worked in production. Dee recalls that in the 1950s there was an oversaturation of musicians and managers rarely scouted out artists because they had so many pouring in to try and record.[94] In the mid-50s Art Rupe clamped down on recording operations and song contracts by mapping out a guideline and a breakdown of where money went following recording.[95] That did little to fix the years of mistreatment that artists endured, or to prevent mistreatment from continuing against artists whose social status was lackluster because they were "too black" despite attempts to resemble a more white moniker, like Etta James' iconic blonde hair.

African American performing blues artists of the early twentieth century faced a unique struggle. However, black women performers faced even more prejudice; these working class African American women often expressed their woes on the way to becoming idolized blues women. Blues woman was the title given to African American working class women who sang and gave voice to the struggles of working class African Americans, particularly women. Women's blues provides complex insight to how women and men dealt with and experienced each other. Blues music was a liberation of expression for working class African Americans, coming out of an era when they were judged negatively by the black upper class who were trying to gain acceptance by whites and by the whites looking down on them because of their race. Blues women helped their race by representing the majority working class and their struggles. They helped their gender by expressing their sexuality for the first time since African Americans were given freedom. The struggles they faced were unique to women, and created a sense of worth in women. Fontella Bass,

---

[94] David Dee. Personal interview. 18 Sept. 2014.
[95] John Broven. Record Makers and Breakers: Voices of the Independent Rock 'N' Roll Pioneers. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009) 447.

Josephine Baker and Jeanne Trevor are some of the only women that St. Louis saw to become successful. It was just not a welcoming environment for blues women.

Record labels were just beginning to put music on shellac and realized there was a market for recording artists in the 1950s.[96] The record labels play an important part of this story because they simultaneously ignored, enforced, and fought against the stereotypes. The white run labels and producers in the industry were smart, conniving and knew who they could take advantage of. African Americans faced being considered 'too black' in either appearance or sound for the white audience, the buying and paying audience. Alternatively where a black person could not making money playing to an audience because of his/her color, if their music sounded white enough there was an income potential through a recording. A recording meant that whites did not have to bear the burden of actually seeing a black person perform. When black artists did make a name for themselves, they were treated unfairly, paid inadequately and used as marketing tools. There were record labels that promoted themselves as setting new standards for the artist to draw in these artists. Unfortunately blacks were considered less than artists. The background of the early record labels is therefore important in linking and understanding the treatment of these artists to society and why they remained important despite this.

Bessie Smith was one of the most important recording ladies of blues music. She faced a magnitude of hardships on her rise, peak and fall in the industry. She knew nothing of royalties and copyrights; though being hardly literate she signed a contract that meant little to nothing for her, enabling her manager from the label to take full advantage.[97] By the mid to late twenties she was moving away from the popular blues themes of love or rejection, of being kicked when down, to migration and constant change, sickness and death—giving the

---

[96] Broven, 119.

[97] Paul Oliver. *Kings of Jazz;* Bessie Smith. (New York: Barnes, 1961) 17.

audience a sense of real life camaraderie. This can be seen as a reflection of Smith's own change. By 1936 the public was changing their tastes and Smith began to alter her look to a more elegant and slick image to meet white demands.[98] She had to give up who she was in an attempt to continue to make a living. This is what motivated her to take the role in *St. Louis Blues* despite its obvious racism. Smith was among the first blues women to experience the transition from local performances with local limitations and small town fame to dealing with nationwide and recording prejudices.

Fontella Bass is best known for her 1965 hit song, "Rescue Me," as previously mentioned, but the reality is that that sentence should be structured, '"Rescue Me" is a hit song that was sang by Fontella Bass.' Bass co-wrote "Rescue Me" with one of Chess studios producers to the tune of a verbal agreement. Bass felt like she was treated like she was unintelligent the entire time she was with Chess. She tells that verbal agreements were just how everything happened in those days, yet they were also an easy way to get taken advantage of.[99] Bass never received royalties on the song. She was told continually by Billy Davis, one of the 'higher ups' and an over seer to the productions, that she would surely be added to the song rights and acknowledgments, constantly in a condescending and nonchalant manner. Bass continues her claim to the credit for her hit single using the takes of the recording of proof. The song was recorded in only three takes, an unfeasible task for any artist singing a song that they did not write. At one point on the road Bass had to stay in a Howard Johnson and was afraid to be in the hotel, that she knew she was not supposed to be in. This being a known fact, her label appointed tour manager booked the hotel anyway with little regard for Bass' safety. At the same time that some musicians were finding success in

---

[98] Pete Welding, Byron, Toby. (eds.) *Bluesland: Portraits of Twelve Major American Blues Masters*. (New York, N.Y.: Dutton, 1991) 12. Albertson, Chris. Pg 50-67. Ritz, David. Pg 224-237.

[99] "Song Went Gold but Singer Wasn't Arethra." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* Missouri Historical Society Research Library Music Scrapbook. unknown date.

her hometown Gaslight Square, Bass was singing in clubs that blacks were not even allowed to enter. These were clubs that over looked the Mississippi river from St. Louis, in modern day West St. Louis County, Missouri.[100] When she played in the clubs like this, typically it was the drummer's job to keep watch over the audience to warn the rest of the band of a potential shooting or disturbance.

Bass continued to be slighted even after the single was off the charts. When Pizza Hut did a rendition of the song and called it "Deliver Me," they asked Aretha Franklin to sing it, thinking that if it was a popular song sang by a black woman it would have had to of been Franklin's song.[101] Bass is vital to my research as she was the most vocal about her experience and her abuse.

St. Louis remains unremitting as a conservative town with regard to race, despite the number of talented black musicians coming out of the town and even after the lift of the segregation law. Had St. Louis decided to embrace it's role in the blues and made it easier for black musicians to perform in a welcoming and supportive community early on, maybe the questions about where St. Louis fits in blues history would not have to be asked. It might have also allowed for the development of even smaller independent labels in the city so that artists could stay local and then be in demand nationwide rather than being forced to leave the city to find work and create their own demand.

---

[100]Bill Greensmith. "The Fontella Bass Interview." *Blues Unlimitied*. Spring 1968.
[101] Greensmith.

CONCLUSION

Despite debilitating hard times, we are able to listen to and hear the influence of many of the artists that came out of and came through St. Louis. Though segregation is not specifically talked about in many publications, it was an enforced reality.[102] This concentrated segregation is largely what separates St. Louis from many of the accepted historical blues cities. St. Louis differs from each of the cities Kansas City, Chicago, Memphis and New Orleans in other individual ways but the similarities it shares are a melting pot of internal communities, a unique sound specific to the city and ease of access to the city by the Mississippi which would seemingly make St. Louis the ultimate blues city. The structure of the city as a physical and geographic form of segregation forced communities to be formed amongst black blues musicians where they were allowed to congregate and perform. Luckily these places, such as Gaslight Square, ended up greatly benefiting the blues community by allowing for citizens to learn from their fellows instead of being left completely neglected of any musical education due to their race and segregation laws in schools. This created community further developed St. Louis' unique blues sound and was a positive created out of a negative societal norm. The segregation was also the largest factor that pushed musicians away from St. Louis. Musicians who lived here and those who traveled here alike had such a limited area to play in, because of the segregation laws and the union and societal control, that it was more inconvenient to try to play in St. Louis as the racial rift of the nation was being tried with the Civil Rights Movement. Societal control goes past segregation and also is found in the lack of community support through media promotion and fostering a welcoming musical society where a recording label or strong

[102]Jo Ann Taylor. Personal Interview. 03 04 2012.

public venues could thrive. It was truly the disinterest of the city that keeps it from being known as a blues city.

Jazz and blues and its history continue to be ignored in St. Louis well past the 1960s. Following the city's bicentennial edition of the *Globe Democrat* in 1964 an editorial was written in outrage at the lack of any St. Louis blues heritage mentioned. The author of the editorial cites that the first published blues song in the city was in 1912, "Baby Seals Blues." The author also points out that two of Duke Ellington's hand-picked band members are of St. Louis origin. It is clear from editorials like these that the jazz and blues history of St. Louis is important to its citizens. Still today blues are glossed over in exhibits like STL250 at the Missouri History Museum.

The language I came across repeatedly in my research is evidence that African Americans were separate from the white community. Frequently I came across titles such as "Blind Missouri Negro Gained International Fame as Pianist," it was necessary to label what race was being written about when noting within popular white music. There is a strong correlation between the successes of musicians and their music and the light in which the newspapers chose to talk about them. This is most strongly evident in the downfall of Gaslight Square, where the blues was surviving past the 1950s. St. Louis has such a strong, rich and undeniable root in the blues that many still enjoy today, making it hard to understand the lack of writings on the topic.

The control of the mainstream through the media can also be seen through the lens of the record companies. Those in charge had their own agendas and social constructs that they had to work within. These barriers placed on artists, though not necessarily unique to St. Louis, were enforced to a different degree in St. Louis. St. Louis had a particular image separating white and blacks between the 1930s and the 1950s and this image was enforced by

race labels through restrictions on where their musicians could perform, as seen with Fontella Bass, or through the content as Bessie Smith sang in 'St. Louis Blues.' This image created an additional barrier for artist in St. Louis to overcome. There are many musicians that have not only survived the tribulations bestowed on them by a harsh and inflexible city, but became both famous and infamous because of their start in St. Louis or their time spent there. The reality is that St. Louis is part of the story of the blues because the blues is the story of a struggle and St. Louis had no lack of that. Musicians were still active in St. Louis when history forgot about them. Some may have left out of the necessity of their careers but they grew in St. Louis and others came to St. Louis to grow, too.

St. Louis' continued focus on other forms of entertainment besides music is felt in the community today. The city recently moved its celebration of Bluesweek out of the city itself and into a neighboring county. Bluesweek traditionally showcases St. Louis artists with a few out of town artists. The move from the city out to the county makes the city generate less money from the festival. It also is discouraging for those who would normally have the opportunity to attend a close-by, in-city performance as well as those who travel from Illinois in the metropolitan area and further.

Societies and other memberships also existed in St. Louis as alternative modes to inner-city promotion for artists. The modern day St. Louis Blues Society has been in operation for 30 years and has learned from the mistakes and experiences of past societies. They have striven to work more on behalf of the musician. They match jobs needed to best fitting musician proving to be mutually beneficial to musician and venue because the right musician brings a better crowd. The Blues Society provides a comprehensive "help wanted" list of venues that were and are in search of work and if that work will be regular or one-time events. This is a great aid to musicians and makes it clear that the society is working for the

musicians rather than vice versa. They started much later than unions and therefore I will not spend much time on them but their communication existed across states and that helped with the resurgence found in blues music.

St. Louis' unique location as a river city with a metropolitan area in an adjacent state makes it a desired place to play because it attracts a more diverse crowd.[103] If St. Louis would grow its musical support it could benefit. The building of the National Blues Museum will hopefully open up the community to the realization that there is not only an immense history but also a community still struggling to survive today. The Blues Society is working hard to keep venues like BBs Jazz and Blues and Beale on Broadway drawing in local and out of town musicians to a city that was among the first to take gospel music and turn it into an All American blues progression. As Rudy Coleman told me[104], "It's not going anywhere. Blues is a life and people live it."

[103] Joel Sprenger of Ambit Studios. Personal interview. 13 November 2014.
[104] Rudy Coleman. Personal interview 19 September 2014.

FIGURES REFERENCED

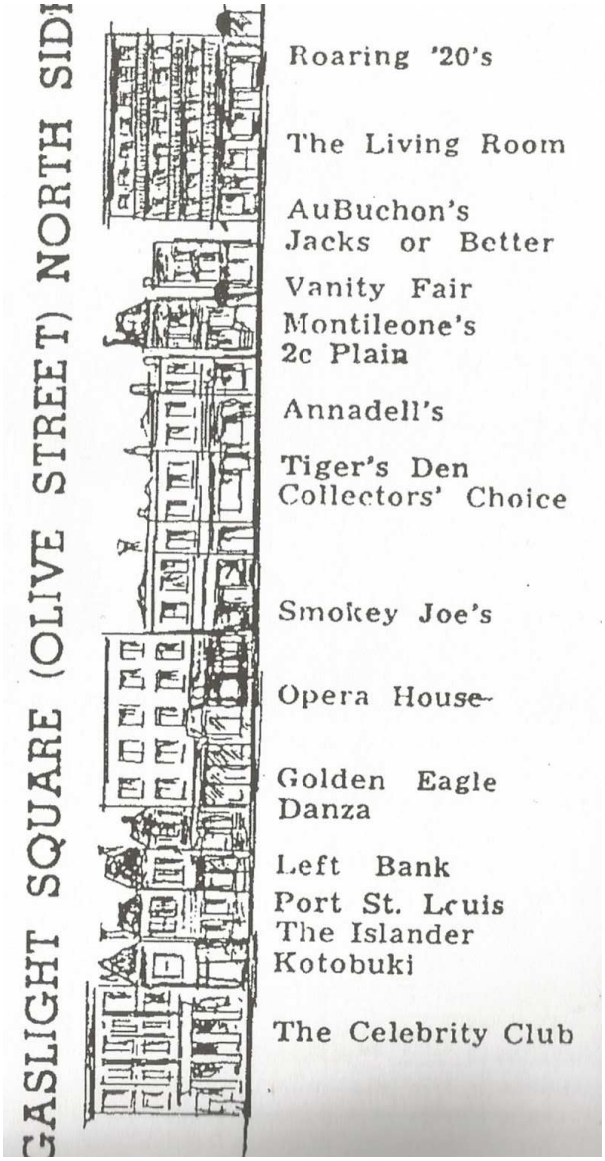

Figure 1-1 From *Gaslight Square Illuminated* pg 52

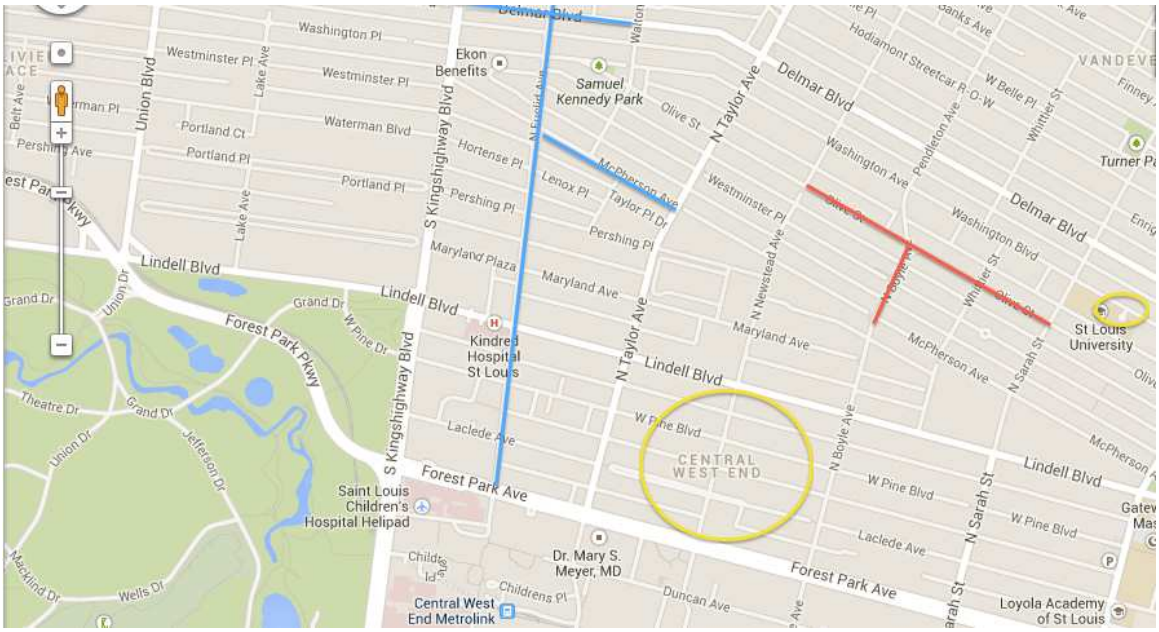

Figure 1-2 2014 Map of Gaslight Square (red) in relation to the Central West End (yellow) and Euclid Ave at Delmar (blue)

WORKS REFERENCED

Althoff, Shirley. “Satchmo Comes Home.” *Globe Democrat*. June 23, 1963.

“Bar on Negros Living in White Areas Appealed” *St. Louis Post Dispatch.* 4 October 1946.

“Blind Missouri Negro Gained International Fame as Pianist.” *Globe Democrat.* 1961.

Blum, Annie Amantea. *The Steamer Admiral and Streckfus Steamers: A Personal View : A Short History of Streckfus Steamers, Incorporated 1906 Albatross to 1978 Admiral*. St. Louis, Mo.: St. Louis Mercantile Library at the U of Missouri St. Louis, 2012. Print.

"Blues (music)." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d. Web. 13 Dec. 2014.

Broven, John. *Record Makers and Breaks: Voices of the Independent Rock ‘N’ Roll Pioneers.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Broven, John. *Walking to New Orleans; The Story of New Orleans Rhythm & Blues.* England: Blues Unlimited. 1974

Carney, Court. *Cuttin’ Up: How Early Jazz Got America’s Ear.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas. 2009.

Charters, Samuel. *A Trumpet Around the Corner: The Story of New Orleans Jazz.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 2008.

Cox, Oliver C. *Race: A Study in Social Dynamics*. New York: Monthly Review, 2000.

Crone, Thomas. *Gaslight Square: An Oral History*. St Louis: William and Joseph Press, 2004.

“Dixieland Never Dies.” *Globe Democrat.* February 7, 1960.

Driggs, Frank and Chuck Haddix. *Kansas City Jazz: From Ragtime to Bebop-A History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005.

“Duke Ellington Conducts First Jazz Concert Here.” *St Louis Globe Democrat.* April 8, 1946.

Emory, Lewis. “Father of Blues” *Cue.* January 7, 1950.

Erenberg, Lewis. *Swinging the Dream: Big band jazz and the rebirth of American culture.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Fuegner, Richard S., and David Roth. *Gaslight Square Illuminated: The Rise & Fall of St. Louis' Premier "hot Spot"* St. Louis, MO: Virginia Pub., 2010.

Glover, William. “La Baker Returns for Concert Tour.” *Globe Democrat.* March 13-14, 1964

Greensmith, Bill. “The Fontella Bass Interview.” *Blues Unlimitied*. Spring 1968.

Haimes, Ted. “The History of Rock ‘N’ Roll.” Vol. 9. Timelife Video. 1995. DVD

“Hardworking Man.” featured article of unknown source, unknown date.

Harrison, Daphne Duval. *Black Pearls: Blues queens of the 1920s*. New Brunswick [N.J.]: Rutgers University Press, 1988.

Hay, Fred J. *Goin’ Back to Sweet Memphis, Conversations with the Blues.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001

Hayes, Eileen M. Williams, Linda F. (Eds.) *Black Women and Music: More Than the Blues.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007.

Jack, Bryan. *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters.* Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007.

“Jazz on Wheels.” *Globe Democrat.* November 19, 1961.

Jones, Hettie. *Big Star Fallin’Mama; Five Women in Black Music.* New York: Viking Press, 1972.

Kenney, William Howland. *Chicago Jazz: A Cultural History 1904-1930.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1993.

"Logo History." *St Louis Blues*. Web. 13 Dec. 2014.
<http://blues.nhl.com/club/page.htm?id=39484>
Martin, Darnell. 'Cadillac Records.' Sony Picture. 2008. DVD
McKee, Margaret and Fred Chisenhall. *Beale Black & Blue: Life and Music on Black America's Main Street.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. 1981.
Menees, Charles. "'St Louis Blues' Attracts Visitor." unknown newpaper. February 21, 1964.
Menees, Charles. "Singlton Palmer on Record." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* October 15, 1961.
"Negros Consider Legal Action on School Polcy" *Globe Democrat.* July 27-28, 1963.
Newman, Oscar. Creating Defensible Space. U.S. Office of Housing and Urban Development.April 1973
Oliver, Paul. *Kings of Jazz; Bessie Smith*. New York: Barnes, 1961.
Pearson, Nathan W. Jr. *Goin' to Kansas City.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1987.
Phillips, Damon. Jazz and the Disconnected: City Structural Disconnectedness and the Emergence of a Jazz Canon. *American Journal of Sociology.* October 2008. University of Chicago.
Reprint from *The New York Age* December 31, 1949.
Rowe, Mike. *Chicago Blues, The City and the Music.* New York: DeCapo Pressing. 1975.
Russell, Ross. *Jazz Style in Kansas City and the Southwest.* Berkeley: University of California Press. 1971.
Sandweiss, Eric. *St. Louis in the Century of Henry Shaw: A View beyond the Garden Wall*. Columbia: U of Missouri, 2003.
Schulman, Bob. "Shucks' Pruett Offers Piano Rolls As Proof." *Star Times*. December 26, 1950.
"Song Went Gold but Singer Wasn't Arethra." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* unknown author, unknown date.
Sprenger, Joel of Ambit Studios. Personal interview. 13 November 2014.
"St Louis Blues Not So Blue; Author Gets $25,000 a Year." *Globe Democrat*. May 24, 1947.
"St Louis Blues' Memorial Urged For Riverfront." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* September 17, 1947.
"St Louis Jazz Heritage." *St Louis Post Dispatch.* February 1976
Taylor, Jo Ann. Personal Interview. 3 April 2012.
"The Integrated Comic." *Globe Democrat.* 26 November 1961.
Welding, Pete. Byron, Toby. (eds.) *Bluesland: Portraits of Twelve Major American Blues Masters*. Albertson, Chris. Pg 50-67. Ritz, David. Pg 224-237. New York, N.Y.: Dutton, 1991.
Whiteis, David. *Chicago Blues: Portraits And Stories*. (Urbana:University Of Illinois Press, 2006)
Yanow, Scott. *Jazz: A Regional Exploration.* Westport: Greenwood Press. 2005.