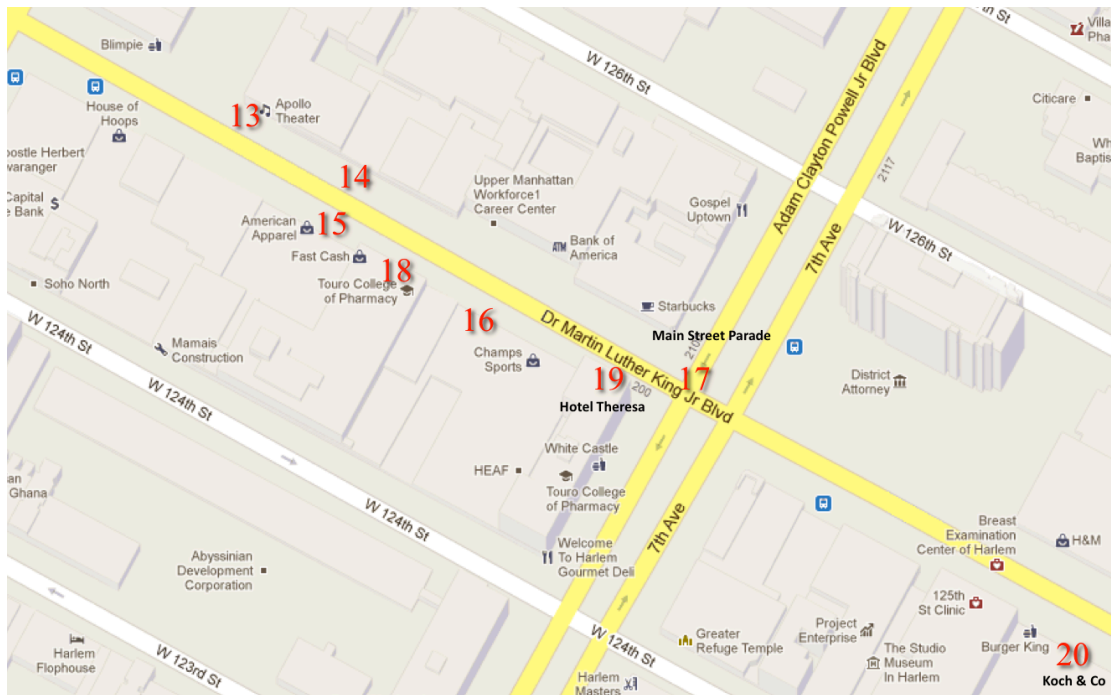# Main Street Parade
(Frederick Douglass Blvd to Adam Clayton Powell Jr Blvd)

As the iconic Apollo Theater comes into view, Harlem springs into life, in a Disneyland-ish sort of way. This used to be theater land, after all; Harlem's equivalent of Broadway. The Apollo Theater is still a functioning venue, and still famous for its Amateur Nights, where young and aspiring rap and rock talents take to the stage; and where historically many a major music star's career has been launched – Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Diana Ross, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, James Brown, Aretha Franklin… the list goes on.

At 7th Ave, or Adam Clayton Powell Jr Boulevard, I stumble onto a literal Main Street Parade of whirling batons and leaping cheerleaders, from the many high schools in the neighborhood. Thousands throng the streets to catch the show. The atmosphere is festive, reminiscent of the days when 125th Street was indeed a bustling, commercial thoroughfare.

Around ADBJB are scattered remnants of this more glorious past – the ornate former Theresa Hotel and former Koch & Co Buildings, now office blocks; and the historic former Blumstein Department store building that today houses the Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine. MLK Jr was stabbed here in 1958 (he survived).

Fig. 13 – The Apollo Theater, the beating heart of Harlem.

Fig. 14 – Jimmy Jazz.

Fig. 15 – American Apparel

Fig. 16 – She's smiling.

Fig. 17 – Main Street Parade along Adam Clayton Powell Jr Boulevard.

Fig. 18 - The Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine Building. This was formerly the Blumstein Department Store, where Martin Luther King Jr was stabbed in 1958 by a deranged black woman while signing copies of his book *Stride Toward Freedom*.

Fig. 19 – The former Hotel Theresa, now an office block. In its time, it was known as the "Waldorf-Astoria of Harlem." Guests included Louis Armstrong, Jimi Hendrix, Ray Charles and even Fidel Castro.

Fig. 20 – The Koch & Co. Department Store building, now an office block.