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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Douglas Larue Reside

The Graduate School
University of Kentucky

2006

THE ELECTRONIC EDITION
AND TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences at the
University of Kentucky

By
Douglas Larue Reside

Lexington, Kentucky

Co-Directors: Dr. Walter Foreman, Associate Professor of English
and Dr. Geraldine Maschio, Professor of Theatre

Lexington, Kentucky

2006

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

THE ELECTRONIC EDITION AND TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE

For many, contemporary theatre is represented by the musical. The form remains, however, virtually unstudied by literary scholars. In part, this may be a result of the difficulty of accessing the texts. Reading a musical from a traditional codex is no easy matter. The integration of text and music in a musical make it inappropriate to separate the two. One can try to follow along with a cast recording. In most cases, though, this is awkward. Many cast albums record a significantly modified version of the score and lyrics and few include the entire work. Further, musical theatre texts often exist in many different versions. This work begins with a summary of the problems one encounters when editing a multi-authored text (musicals often have a lyricist, librettist, and composer) which may be revised for practical (rather than aesthetic) reasons. The merits of restoring the material changed during the production process are debated. In this discussion some attempt is made to identify who should be considered the dominating collaborator (or auteur) of a musical. Ultimately, this dissertation argues that the notion of trying to restore an "authorial Ur-Text" makes little sense given the multitude of collaborators involved in the process of making musicals. Instead, an electronic variorum edition is presented as an alternative means of studying and teaching musical theatre texts. The study concludes with a narrative of the author's own work on an electronic edition of the 1998 Broadway musical *Parade* and ends with a critical introduction to this text.

KEYWORDS: Musical Theatre, Textual Criticism, Electronic Editions, Humanities Computing,
Jason Robert Brown

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31 July 2006

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AND TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE

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To My Marilyn

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I am deeply indebted to my co-chairs Dr. Walter Foreman and Dr. Geraldine Maschio. Both provided exceptionally prompt and insightful feedback on the many drafts of this dissertation. I greatly admire both of these scholars and hope one day to rise to the high level of teaching and scholarship they exemplify. I also wish to thank my original committee members, Dr. Jennifer Lewin and Dr. Michael Trask. Dr. Lewin's encyclopedic knowledge of literary criticism better grounded this work in the existing scholarship. Dr. Trask's thoughtful questions at outset of this project significantly redirected the course of my research. This is, by consequence, a much better work. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond anyone's control, Dr. Trask was unable to sit on my final defense. I am therefore also grateful to Dr. Jonathan Allison for agreeing to fill Dr. Trask's place at the last minute. Dr. Allison's Bibliographic Methods course inspired this project and so it seemed appropriate that he be present at its fruition. I also greatly appreciate the willingness of my outside examiner, Dr. James C. Norton, for heroically stepping in to serve on my defense at the last moment when the previously assigned examiner was unable to attend.

I would like to thank Jason Robert Brown and Stephen Schwartz both for their contributions to the art of musical theatre and for their generous assistance on this project. The included selections from personal interviews and emails are testimony to the depth of their insight and intelligence and of their uncommon willingness to freely offer time and assistance to a stranger. I would especially like to thank Mr. Brown and Alfred Uhry for their permission to construct my electronic edition of *Parade*.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Textual Problems in Musical Theatre	7
Chapter 3: Questions of Auteurship	12
Chapter 4: Received Texts	18
Chapter 5: A History of Electronic Editions	23
Chapter 6: Designing an Electronic Edition of <i>Parade</i>	30
Chapter 7: Critical Introduction to <i>Parade</i>	38
Genesis of the Project	38
Creative Development	42
Sources and Background	42
Reception	44
Analysis	48
Act 1: Scene 1	48
Act 1: Scene 2	49
Act 1: Scene 3	50
Act 1: Scene 4	51
Act 1: Scenes 5-6	51
Act 1: Scene 7	52
Act 1: Scenes 8-10	52
Act 1: Scene 11	53
Act 1: Scene 12	54
Act 1: Scenes 13-14	55
Act 1: Scene 15	55
Act 2: Scene 1	57
Act 2: Scene 2	57
Act 2: Scene 3	57
Act 2: Scene 4	58
Act 2: Scene 5	58
Act 2: Scenes 6-7	58
Act 2: Scene 8	58
Act 2: Scene 9	59
Act 2: Scene 10	59
Act 2: Scene 11	59
The Text	60
Appendix A:	62
Interview with Jason Robert Brown: March 26, 2005.	62
Appendix B: Email Interview with Stephen Schwartz	79
REFERENCES	83
Vita	90

List of Files

Reside-Dissertation.pdf

Chapter 1: Introduction

For many, contemporary American theatre is represented by the musical. Outside of theatre circles and those living in New York City, few Americans have even heard of the most successful plays of the last decade. New musicals, on the other hand, regularly draw capacity crowds and season subscribers to the touring productions that grace the local “Broadway series” throughout the United States. Even though musicals are far more expensive and technically difficult than straight plays to produce, a 2003 survey by the Educational Theater Association reveals that even in high schools, where budgets and talent pools are traditionally small, musicals represent 5 out of the 11 shows most often produced (Marshall *Play Survey*).

The form remains, however, virtually unstudied by literary scholars. Anthologies of American literature often include plays, but I am unaware of any widely used text that includes even an excerpt from an American musical. The current edition of the *Bedford Introduction to Drama* (one of the largest and most popular textbook anthologies of drama) does not include the libretto of a single musical among its fifty-one texts. While English departments regularly offer courses in drama and in traditionally popular forms such as film, there are very few literature departments that seriously study musical theatre.

In general, though, academic interest in the form seems to be slightly on the rise. Over the past twenty years several literary studies have been written on composer-lyricist Stephen Sondheim and a panel on his work was proposed for the 2005 Modern Language Association conference (though it was later canceled due to lack of interest). In the last five years there have been over fifty dissertations written on the genre (mostly in music and theatre departments). Multi-disciplinary conferences such as The Popular Culture Association of America Conference regularly include panels on musical theatre. Theatre scholar Stacy Wolf and literary scholar D.A. Miller have written monographs on the form from Queer critical perspectives. In 2004, Andrea Most’s *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical* examined the close and long-standing relationship between musical theatre and American Judaism. While this scholarship is promising, literary scholars seemingly remain relatively uninterested in the genre. The cancellation of the Sondheim panel at MLA is just one example of the tendency of mainstream literary scholars to neglect the musical. In part, this may be a reaction to the preponderance of mostly formulaic works in the genre.

From vaudeville to the British mega-musicals of the 1980s, the form has often been characterized by spectacle rather than thought. The few exceptions, such as the work of Stephen Sondheim, have rarely found commercial success.¹ While Sondheim’s shows eventually gained critical acclaim, his longest running musical since the farcical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* was *Into The Woods*, which closed after only 764 performances (“Into the Woods”). By contrast, Andrew Lloyd Webber’s spectacle-heavy *Phantom of the Opera*, which opened the same season (1987-1988), has now played over 7,600 performances and is the longest running Broadway musical of all time. Today, aside from revivals and the occasional limited run at Lincoln Center, artistic (as opposed to purely commercially driven) musicals can rarely generate enough investor interest to go on Broadway.

¹ To be sure, thoughtful musicals like *South Pacific* and *West Side Story* were hits in their own right, but they are by far the exception (especially in recent years).

The creators of artistic musical theatre bemoan the fact there is no longer a venue for their work. In a recent article for *Opera News*,² musical theatre composer Michael John LaChiusa (composer-lyricist of many recent artistic musicals),³ writes of recent Broadway hits *The Producers* and *Hairspray*:

In no way do these two shows aspire to be the next *West Side Story* or *Sunday in the Park with George*. There's not even an attempt to deliver an old fashioned, knock 'em dead, lodge-like-bullet-hook number à la Jerry Herman. All sense of invention and craft is abandoned in favor of delivering what the artist thinks a musical should deliver. ("The Great Gray Way")

Composer-lyricist Jason Robert Brown⁴ echoes this complaint in an interview with the author:

Only in [today's Broadway] musicals do things exist with the sole purpose of entertaining their people and not hoping to make them think about the world [...] Movies don't do that for the most part (but the ones that do are very successful) [...] Plays certainly don't do that. [...] No other art form does that.

It could be that these are nothing but the complaints of artists unable to achieve widespread commercial success, yet the fact remains that the Broadway musical has, in the last fifteen years, almost completely consisted of light comedy and pastiche.

There have been brief, shining moments in which the outlook for the serious musical was not quite so bleak. From the 1940s to the mid 1970s (before literary departments had wholeheartedly begun to look outside traditional texts for objects of study), there were a small but important number of Broadway musicals that aspired to the level of serious art. Serious musicals like those of Hal Prince and Stephen Sondheim might close quickly, but they could, at least, find producers and theatres and occasionally recoup their investment. In the last few decades, however, changes in the demographic of Broadway audiences and rising production costs have made producers less willing to take risks on musicals that may not be a "sure fire hit." In Steven Adlers's book *On Broadway: Art and Commerce on the Great White Way*, producer Roy Somlyo is quoted as saying, "In the fifties and sixties you could run a show at 50 percent capacity and keep a show alive. But you can't do that any longer because you're geared to 75 percent or more of capacity" (18). Producers must therefore appeal to the widest possible Broadway audience. Since the gentrification of Times Square in the late 1990s, tourists (especially families) have become a major source of ticket sales. In 1980, 41% of the Broadway audience was from outside of New York City and its suburbs and only 4% were under 18. In the 2004-2005 season, tourists accounted for more than 60% and 10.4% were under 18 (Hauser 8, 18). Adler quotes an executive at Dodger Theatricals saying of today's Broadway audiences,

² The relatively strange venue for such a tirade was noted by David Yazbek, the composer-lyricist of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and *The Full Monty*, in an August 11, 2005 *New York Times* article. Yazbek called the magazine "pretentious" and implied it was therefore an appropriate "vehicle" for LaChiusa's lament.

³ LaChiusa's work includes *Marie Christine*, *Hello Again*, and this season's *See What I Wanna See*.

⁴ Brown's work thus far includes Off-Broadway's *Songs for A New World* and *The Last Five Years* and Broadway's *Parade*.

“It’s much more a middle-of-the-road audience, much less elite [than it was in the eighties] [...] And you see on Broadway many more shows that are overtly for family audiences” (11).

There is a sour smell of economic snobbery about this statement, but at the cost of Broadway tickets (usually around \$100), it is reasonable that those less economically fortunate are less willing to risk money on shows they are not already relatively certain they will like. Jason Robert Brown describes the situation:

A really popular musical reassures the entire audience the whole time it’s there. They paid their \$100 and they get their \$100 worth. They know what \$100 looks like and they get it. And there’s not a playwright in the world who wants to do that. There’s not a playwright in the world who wants to write something that’s going to reassure their audience. [...] But if you come to something that’s cotton candy--and you make the enormous investment that you have to in the cotton candy--that had better be the best piece of cotton candy you ever had. (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

The environment Brown describes is certainly not one that naturally encourages risky or experimental musical theatre.

Significantly, although non-musical plays suffer many of the same pressures, a few serious plays regularly open and close on Broadway every season. Jason Robert Brown observes:

No one asks Tony Kushner that [he] also be able to accomplish what Neil Simon does. No one needs that to happen. No one asks August Wilson to also be Neil Simon. No one asks him to be Paul Rudnick. He’s just who he is. And yet, if a Broadway show is not a financial success then it’s a failure. There hasn’t really been a successful straight play (with the exception of *Proof*) in the last ten years that was financially successful on those terms, but they aren’t considered failures, they aren’t considered flops, they’re considered plays. You know, they are what they are. And yet the definition of a musical has a lot to do with its popular success. (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

According to Brown, then, a play can afford to fail, not only because production costs for plays are usually lower than for musicals, but because it is viewed as “high art.” Producers may be more willing to lose money on plays because they are contributing to works of “cultural importance.”

In spite of all this, the serious musical theatre is not dead. It doesn’t often open on Broadway, though. In the last ten years an impressive set of serious musicals have premiered in Off-broadway and Off-off-broadway houses. Some, such as Jonathan Larson’s *Rent* and Greg Kotis and Mark Holman’s *Urinetown*, eventually made successful transfers to Broadway. Others, such as Jason Robert Brown’s *The Last Five Years* and Tina Landau and Adam Guettel’s *Floyd Collins*, have become favorites of regional and University theatre. This approach places certain limitations on the art. Jason Robert Brown says of the current situation, “There are certain topics that I will stay away from if I want to write a *Broadway* musical. [...] I have to think about it financially--how much it’s going to cost to put the show up” (personal interview / 26 March 2005). These economic pressures are clearly evident in the work. Brown’s *The Last Five Years*, a story about the disintegration of a marriage told in non-linear time, has only two characters and can be played on a virtually bare stage. Adam Guettel’s *Floyd Collins*, about a man who slowly dies while trapped in a cave was written, in the author’s words, “to be performed in a spare and fluid space, leaving the physical details of the cave and its surrounds up to the audience’s imagination” (5).

Economics have always impacted art, of course. Certainly Shakespeare made artistic choices because of the limitations (and perhaps advantages) of his theatres and the audiences which were likely to attend his plays. It may even be that these economic limitations are a sort of backhanded boon. Limited budgets mean writers are forced to write musicals that rely more on thought, language, and interesting music. Limited production costs mean amateur and academic groups can more easily stage their own productions and give these musicals a sort of regional second-life. These musicals can then be seen by scholars living outside of New York. Such post-Broadway life is, however, contingent upon the availability of the text.

Stephen Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along* ran for only 16 performances on Broadway and lost its entire investment. Yet, largely due to the advocacy of Thomas Shepard (then Vice-President of RCA Records), a cast album of the show was recorded. There have since been seven major productions of the show and two more recordings, and the show is now regularly produced by universities and regional theatres. Sondheim's two early musicals *Saturday Night* and *The Frogs* (two shows that would seem particularly well suited to University theatre groups) enjoyed relatively few productions until they were recorded in 1997 and 2000 respectively. Cast recordings also account in part for the recent university and regional popularity of musicals which never made it to Broadway (e.g. *Songs for a New World* and *Bat Boy*).

Similarly, when a libretto is published, it occasionally wins the attention of literary critics. Hirsch notes, "The first musical to be published in book form [*Of Thee I Sing*] was also the first to win the Pulitzer Prize" (11). Unfortunately, the full text of a musical is often available only to theatre practitioners who rent the performance texts from theatre licensing companies for a production. Despite Sondheim's reputation, there is, at the time of this writing, no commercially published libretto of his *Merrily We Roll Along* or *Saturday Night*. If Arthur Miller's or Tom Stoppard's work were available only under such conditions one wonders if the literary community would have been so willing to embrace them.

Still, most of the best musicals have eventually found their way to print so that one cannot entirely blame scholarly disinterest in the form purely on unavailability of the texts. Another part of the problem for literary scholars is that, as in opera, the meaning of a musical theatre piece is shared between words and music. "There's a bright, golden haze on the meadow, / There's a bright golden haze on the meadow" is a fairly banal opening to a verse drama (Rodgers and Hammerstein 7). However, when coupled with Richard Rodgers's music, the lines feel as appropriate as the songs sung in Shakespeare's Forest of Arden. In other cases music subverts what is being sung. In an unpublished doctoral dissertation, Lee Orchard notes that, in *Sweeney Todd*, when Mrs. Lovett sings "No one's gonna harm you, not while I'm around," "the orchestra [...] indicates the venality of the subtext through the unsettling intonations of several unresolved strings" (453). The meaning of a musical is not located only in its linguistic text.

This does not mean, however, that musicals should only be studied by musicologists. The literary scholar who forgets that Shakespeare was written to be performed may misread the texts, but it is not necessary to have a great deal of training in Renaissance theatrical performance practice to write a useful literary analysis of *Hamlet*. Similarly, the literary scholar of musical theatre must not ignore the score, but neither is it necessary to have a great deal of musical training to appreciate how the music complements the text. Indeed, much of the musical theatre scholarship published by theatre scholars today differs very little from the work of literary scholars interested in non-musical dramatic literature.

A model of this scholarship may be Purdue University English Professor Sandor Goodhart's collection of essays on Stephen Sondheim in *Reading Stephen Sondheim*. The book

is one of the few instances in which literary scholars have written about the musical. The authors of these essays read Sondheim's works as literature without ignoring their musical and theatrical components. Goodhart argues that in the process of reading, the reader always selects, privileges, and marginalizes parts of the text (broadly defined). It is impossible, for example, that every scholar of *Hamlet* attend every performance of *Hamlet* from 1601 on (and further from every possible audience situation and perspective). Still a great many essays have been written and anthologized on *Hamlet* which, so far from taking into account the entirety of the text, use a conflated and modernized edition of only the verbal text.

Nonetheless, the best scholars of any work are usually familiar with as much of "the text itself" as possible. At a very basic level this means familiarizing oneself with both the libretto and the score. But which libretto? Which score? Just as there are three early versions of the text of *Hamlet* (and many modernized versions), there are two published editions of Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures* and three English audio recordings of the show (all differing from one another). Only the most recent cast recording reflects that musical as it was most recently presented on Broadway. Musicals that underwent several major revivals with revised texts both within and after the lifetime of their creators (e.g. *Show Boat* and *Anything Goes*) cannot really be said to have a "standard" libretto. The scholar must decide whether (against contemporary textual theory) it is best to create a conflated text that has never been performed or select from one of the versions which may omit a well-loved moment. The decisions the contemporary textual critic must make in editing poetry or prose are made many times more complex by the extremely collaborative process which generates musicals. If authorial intention is difficult to determine when there is but one author, it becomes nearly meaningless when authorship, in the most limited sense, includes a book-writer, lyricist, and composer.

Even supposing a standardized edition of the text, reading the musical is no easy matter. The integration of text and music in a musical make it inappropriate to separate the two (even if one focuses primarily on one or the other), yet, outside of a full performance (or a recording of one), it is difficult for the reader to link them. One can try to follow along with a cast recording. In most cases, though, this is awkward. Many cast albums record a significantly modified version of the score and lyrics. Craig Zadan quotes Thomas P. Shepard, a former executive at RCA Records, as saying of cast recordings: "There are many cases where you must completely overhaul a number. In 'The Little Things You Do Together' in *Company*, for the record we created a piece that is continuous, the music never stops [...] So we actually redid this number for the record" (Zadan 174-175). With such changes, it can be very difficult to follow along in the libretto. Complete recordings are rare due to the expense of producing what usually amounts to at least a three disc set for what is likely a limited commercial audience.

If musical theatre is to find a place in the academy, a way must be found to provide better access to the texts. Recent editorial work in other genres, particularly in medieval and Renaissance texts, has proven that similar problems can be solved, and solved elegantly, through the creation of an electronic edition. Kevin Kiernan's *Electronic Beowulf* allows students and researchers access to a manuscript previously available in only one location. Peter Robinson's *Electronic Canterbury Tales* project has grappled with (and in many cases offered useful solutions to) the problem of publishing a text that exists in many differing manuscript versions. Michael Best's *Internet Shakespeare Editions* and David Saltz's *Virtual Vaudeville* offer interesting models for presenting dramatic texts on the web. Eaves, Essick, and Viscomi's *Blake Archive* shows how electronic technology can be used to affordably reproduce texts in which much of the meaning is located outside of the printed word. The "Web Operas" on Paul

Howarth and Jim Farron's *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive* most specifically show how dramatic text and music can be presented together in an electronic edition. The stage has been set. It is my purpose in this work to step like Thespis from the chorus of electronic scholarship and begin what I hope will be a productive dialogue on the creation of critical electronic editions of musical theatre.

I begin with a discussion of some of the textual problems editors of musical theatre face. I will attempt to develop a textual theory for commercial musical theatre using the 2003 Broadway hit *Wicked*. In my third chapter I will discuss the problem of identifying the collaborator whose intentions should be most carefully considered in editing a musical. I will then examine the problem of texts that are revised in later productions without consulting this collaborator. In my fifth chapter I will outline the state of electronic editions today and discuss how these lessons might be applied in the development of electronic editions of musical theatre. I will then detail the creation of an electronic edition of Jason Robert Brown and Alfred Urhy's musical *Parade*, which is included in the electronic version of this dissertation. I will conclude with a critical introduction to this edition.

It is my hope that this dissertation will serve as an overture, visiting themes which may be developed by later performances. If scholarly editions of musical theatre are eventually produced, it may be that musical theatre will finally find a place in literary studies. The first printed libretto of a musical won a Pulitzer Prize. It seems possible electronic editions will increase the respectability of an art form that is even now slowly finding its deserved place in literary scholarship. Perhaps scholarly interest will generate more funding for serious musicals. Optimistic thoughts, to be sure—perhaps better suited for a Rodgers and Hammerstein song than scholarly analysis. Still, at the very least, electronic editions of musical theatre provide a new way of studying and experiencing this important art form. It is my goal in this work to build a theoretical foundation for this new approach.

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Chapter 2: Textual Problems in Musical Theatre⁵

Music Theatre International, one of the foremost licensing agencies for Broadway musicals, prints the following notice at the beginning of each of their rental scripts:

You are not permitted to make any changes to the music, lyrics or dialogue of the Play, including the interpolation of new material and/or the exclusion of existing material. Any changes shall constitute willful infringement of said copyright and will subject you to all the criminal penalties and civil liabilities under the United States Copyright law. (front matter of *Godspell* script)

Of course, hardly any performance follows these rules exactly. Even if a director makes no changes of her own, actors, particularly the amateur actors who perform the majority of MTI's licensed shows, are likely to forget or even intentionally change the text in performance. Licensing companies understand this, of course, and are not likely to sue over a few missed lines. However, more substantial changes occasionally incur legal action. In 2002 *Playbill Online* reported that another licensing company, the Rodgers and Hammerstein theatre library, threatened a lawsuit against a Philadelphia theater company production of *The Sound of Music* which "had interpolated scenes from the film into the stage libretto" (Jones). The company quickly returned to the licensed script and the suit was never filed.

Clearly, fidelity to the "authorized" text is important to today's creators and distributors of musical theater. It not entirely clear, though, what this "authorized" text actually represents. It is dangerous to assume (as licensing agencies might claim) that the text printed in the MTI script represents the current desires of the writer or writers of the text. Contemporary textual critic Jerome McGann observes, "alterations in the texts of plays are the consequence of the collective efforts of the theatrical company. Texts change under the pressure of immediate events" (*Textual Condition* 74). "The collective efforts of the theatrical company" may produce a text that varies in significant ways from the intentions of the billed author of the text.

Consider for instance, this case from the musical *Wicked* as described by composer-lyricist Stephen Schwartz:

The biggest regret I have about the final version of WICKED is that we were forced, for pacing reasons, to cut the original ending. In this ending, Elphaba is discovered living a scruffy subsistence in the Badlands, trying with her limited remaining power to help damaged Animals who have fled there to regain their powers of speech [...] During our development process, it became clear that we had too many endings to the show and that the emotional climax had passed, and so we had to eliminate this scene [...] But I will always miss our original ending. (personal email / 19 October 2004).

If the writer's intentions are used as the guiding force for editorial selection, it might make sense to restore scenes such as this one in a printed edition. Stephen Sondheim, for instance, insisted that a monologue cut from *Sunday in the Park with George* due to performance constraints be restored in the published "reader's" version⁶ (Sondheim *Sunday* DVD Commentary). It should

⁵ Portions of this text will also appear in an upcoming issue of *The Journal of Popular Culture*.

⁶ The published 1986 edition of the libretto relegated the monologue to an appendix. In the anthology, *Four By Sondheim*, published by Applause Books in 2000, this monologue is restored to the main text (although additional scenes are included in appendices).

be noted though that such cut scenes were not performed before a paying Broadway audience and the authors have (if reluctantly) agreed that they did not work well in performance. The editors of licensed and “authorized” scripts usually do not include these scenes. They are, however, producing texts which will serve as a basis for performance. It is not clear that a critical edition, written for reading rather than performance, should reflect the changes made due to the necessities of the first production.

Given the current interest in the social processes involved in the production of texts, surprisingly little work has been done on the textual criticism of the musical, or indeed contemporary drama at all. Philip Gaskell’s work in the 1970s on the development of Tom Stoppard’s plays is among a very limited set of pieces that address textual criticism of any sort of contemporary drama. After examining variations among the pre-rehearsal text, the performance text, and the published text of Stoppard’s *Travesties*, Gaskell ultimately argues that the published (or reading) version should serve as the “base text” for critical editors. Gaskell writes:

Since the reading text is what the author wanted people to read and interpret, it may well be the best version to edit, although an acting version might be preferred as offering a closer approach to the realization of the work in the theatre. But in any case the editor should be very clear about what the evidence represents; and he should be prepared, when it includes what may be performance features, to raise his eyes from the play text and have another look at the play. (262)

Gaskell’s theory of editing may generally work for non-musical plays. However, the close artistic collaboration involved in the very *writing* of a musical (before any performers ever see the script) makes this an unsuitable approach for musical theatre.

It may be possible to argue that the script handed out in the first rehearsal represents the original intentions of the author of a non-musical play. The same cannot be so easily said of musicals. Jason Robert Brown says of the process of developing musical theatre:

Unlike when Terrence McNally is developing a play, a big musical like *Parade* is developed by an enormous number of people, there’s just a whole lot of folks wandering around, and that the creative work is not limited to Terrence sitting alone in a room with a typewriter and maybe Dan Sullivan yelling at him afterwards. It was Hal, and Alfred, and myself, *and* the producer and the choreographer all of whom are in someway entrusted with and responsible for the content of the show. (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

The process of collaboration (and therefore potentially compromised intentions) begins long before the rehearsal process.

The extremely collaborative nature of this process is perhaps best understood by examining a test case. Consider, then, the 2003 Broadway hit *Wicked*. According to lyricist and composer Stephen Schwartz (in an interview posted on fan site www.musicalschwartz.com), he conceived the idea of musicalizing Maguire’s novel in the summer of 1996 (“John Buchino and the origins of *Wicked* the Broadway musical”). The musical went through seven readings (informal performances by the cast before backers and other interested parties). Schwartz writes there were:

five [readings] of the entire show, and two of just the first act -- between the beginning of 2000 and the start of rehearsals for the out-of-town tryout in 2003. Winnie and I, first working with producer Marc Platt and later adding director Joe

Mantello to the mix, would revise, reshape, and rewrite between these readings, based on what we had learned from each. (personal email / 13 June 2005)

The musical had a pre-Broadway tryout in San Francisco in May of 2003 and opened on Broadway in October of the same year. A cast recording (including a lyric booklet) was released in November, 2003, and sheet music was published in May, 2004. In 2005 a promotional “making of” book was published which contained an abridged version of the libretto. A complete version of the libretto, however, has not yet been published.

When asked in a personal email by this author about his collaboration with Winnie Holzman (book writer for *Wicked*), Stephen Schwartz wrote:

Winnie and I worked extremely closely together throughout the process. I always wait for book material to exist before I begin writing lyrics, and, of course, I make changes throughout the process as the book continues to develop. (personal email / 19 October 2004)

This description seems very much in line with what other lyricists have said of their process. Sheldon Harnick, lyricist for *Fiddler on the Roof*, writes that he and his composing partner Jerry Bock:

prefer to have a draft of the libretto [book] first, so that we can write the type of song that (in addition to being entertaining) attempts to continue the flow of the story, to provide insight into character, to heighten climatic moments, or to enrich the feeling of time and place. This means working very closely with the librettist, and working out problems together. (38)

He writes that the librettist, after completing the draft, will often make suggestions for song placement and song titles (which are often, but not always, ignored by the lyricist) (38-39). He later cites two examples from *Fiddler*: one in which a scene the librettist wrote as dialogue was turned into a song using many of the same lines, and one in which a song was cut and some of its lines used for dialogue (41). Harnick writes that in the lyricist/librettist collaboration:

absolute control (if there is such a thing) gives way to compromise. At best, a musical can seem “seamless,” with no jarring reminders that librettist and lyricist are two separate persons, but such homogeneity is achieved only after long, thoughtful discussions (not to mention argument) and endless rewriting. (41-42)

Some future textual critic may argue that a critical edition of musical theatre scripts should track these compromises and perhaps restore the original intentions of both book writer and librettist. This is likely not practically possible (nor very useful). For most musicals it seems collaboration at this level is so intimate and so early in the creative process that it is difficult to say that the full intentions of either artist have really fully taken shape.

The writing process is not limited to lyricist and book writer, however. Between the San Francisco and New York performances of *Wicked*, one song (“Which Way’s the Party”) was dropped and a new song added in its place (“Dancing Through Life”). Schwartz explains that this change was made both because he felt the need to “more clearly [state] Fiyero’s philosophy of life” (that is, to better execute Schwartz’s own artistic intentions), *and* because he wanted a song “that would fit better on the actor playing Fiyero, Norbert Leo Butz, both in its musical style and its lyric content” (personal email / 19 October 2004). Even after the New York opening small changes have been incorporated in the show. In a letter to his fans in the summer of 2004, after some cast replacements, Stephen Schwartz wrote, “I have slightly rewritten the Wizard’s song, ‘Wonderful,’ so that it fits better with our superb new Wizard, George Hearn, who has taken over for Joel Grey. It’s always satisfying to me to make those small adjustments

so that a role works better for an individual performer[...].” Schwartz explains that the lyric adjustments include the restoration of “a couplet which had been cut as we were structuring the song for Joel Grey and which I decided was thematically important and that I missed” and a change to the ending of the song to accommodate George Hearn, who, unlike Joel Grey, is a stronger singer than dancer (personal email / 11 November 2004).

Even current events can cause changes in a performance text. Between the pre-rehearsal script for the San Francisco performance and the final New York script a line was added in which Glinda describes the death of the Witch of the East as “a regime change.” The phrase had become a part of the national conversation during the controversial U.S. invasion of Iraq. When asked about this and other references in the play to terrorism and to an increasingly panicked national government, Schwartz admits that though “The themes were always there pre-9/11 [...] lines such as referring to the cyclone as a ‘regime change’ were directly influenced by current events” (personal email / 11 November 2004).

Reviews also have the potential to alter the text of a musical. In 1996 the text of the London production of *Martin Guerre* underwent many (and arguably unnecessary) changes as the writers constantly rewrote the text to conform to the opinions of critics. The creative team of *Wicked* seems to have been more or less able to resist such pressures. While most reviewers’ complaints centered on the songs, the lyrics changed very little from San Francisco to New York. Indeed, the one song that was changed (“Which Way’s the Party?”) was not often the target of negative reviews and was called “a rousing production number” by one reviewer (Bass <http://www.northbay.com/archives/onstage/01wickedq.html>). The team seemed to fix the problems the critics mentioned (such as length and pacing) without following their advice as to the solutions.

Changes made during the development of a musical, although not conceived by the composer, lyricist, or bookwriter, may still be considered part of their intentions. In his discussion of *Porgy and Bess* for his 1997 book, *Enchanted Evenings*, musicologist Geoffrey Block questions whether cuts that were made in the score prior to the original production should be restored in productions today. Block discusses, in particular, a song known as the “Buzzard Song,” which was cut in the original production for length reasons (69). This song is often restored in current productions and recordings. Block argues, however, that the cuts were likely made with the permission (or even at the suggestion) of the composer. Block writes:

Since the late 1970s the prevailing view holds that an uncut version of Gershwin’s rehearsal vocal score best represents the composer’s final intentions for the work. The more complete, the more authentic. [...] The merits of the cuts can and should of course be argued on aesthetic and as well as historical grounds, and perhaps they should be disregarded, especially on recordings, which are less beholden to the time constraints of a Broadway production. But any careful consideration must also acknowledge that the published score does not represent what Theatre Guild audiences heard during the initial run and may be alien to Gershwin’s considered thoughts on the work. (71)

The performance text, in Block’s view, should not always be seen as a corruption of the writer’s vision. It should be noted, though, that while Block questions the prevailing assumptions about authorial intent in *Porgy and Bess*, he nevertheless assumes that the author whose intentions matter is George Gershwin (rather than Ira Gershwin or DuBose Heyward).

This is essentially the approach taken by the few critical editors who worked with musical theatre texts. In 1992, Edward Harsh and Jürgen Selk embarked on the first real critical

edition of musical theatre texts with their critical editions of the work of Kurt Weill. These editors argue along with Block (but in contrast to Gaskell) that the pre-rehearsal text of a musical should not be automatically privileged above the “performance text.” In the introduction to the series, the editors write:

For Weill, the borders between the processes of creation, production, and reception are especially indistinct since every one of his surviving theatre works was staged during his lifetime, usually with his active involvement. Writings and correspondence throughout the composer’s career confirm his deep understanding and (to various extents) acceptance of these facts of theatrical life. This suggests a somewhat unconventional definition of authorial intent. By this definition, it is not the composer’s intent simply to write a score and have that score performed, but to write a score that will serve as the basis from which a piece will develop in rehearsal and performance. (3)

The editors acknowledge in their editorial axioms that “1: Musical works are not fixed and unchanging but dynamic, to a greater or lesser degree” and “2: The history of a dynamic musical work and the text of that work are not distinct but interrelated” (4). Still, the editors distinguish between what they call the “Text” [the material as written] and the “Script” [the material as performed]:

The KWE [Kurt Weill Edition] employs a distinction between Script and Text (note capitalization), less as a firm rule than as a heuristic device to aid editorial decision making. In the case of a Script, performance materials (music, dialogue, stage directions, etc.) served to guide specific realizations of a given work. A Text, on the other hand, transmits a representation of the work transcending any specific realization in performance. The KWE, as a collected edition, publishes Texts. (3)

The editors of the Kurt Weill Edition, in summary, separate the particularities of a single performance from the “work itself,” but acknowledge that changes from Weill’s original manuscripts do not represent corruption but development of intention.

This approach makes sense for editors dedicated to a project sponsored by the Kurt Weill Foundation. However, it does, at least in theory, privilege the intentions of the composer in a way that may not make sense for a project focused on the genre of musical theatre rather than an individual. If, for instance, a letter was found in which Weill wrote that he only cut a piece of music because the musical’s director hated it, but that he himself wished it would be restored, under the principles of the Kurt Weill Edition the piece would likely be included in the main text of the edition. To borrow a term from film studies, the editors of the Kurt Weill Editions seem to consider Weill the “auteur”: the collaborator whose artistic vision directs the overall vision and tone of the musical. It is not clear that editors should always allow composers this role, as I will discuss in the next chapter.

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Chapter 3: Questions of Auteurship

Although Stephen Schwartz often acknowledges the importance of collaboration in writing musicals, it is clear he ultimately considers himself, as composer and lyricist, the auteur of *Wicked*. In an email interview soon after *Wicked* opened, Schwartz expressed his fear that his original vision for a work may be lost during development:

If there is one chief lesson I have learned through experience working in the commercial theatre, it is how easy it is for a writer to become deflected from his or her original goals for a project. The act of collaboration and the pressures brought to bear in bringing a project to fruition necessitate constant adjustments and compromises; plus of course, the writer himself is always striving to improve the work. So what I have learned is that it is vital to articulate for oneself the goals of the project at the very beginning and to check in periodically with that to be sure that they are being maintained. I had several discussions on WICKED in which I would say about a specific suggestion that, while it sounded good, it actually changed the intention of the show too greatly and that therefore a different solution had to be found. (personal email / 20 October 2004).

These fears reveal that Schwartz (and probably many other composer/lyricists) ultimately considers himself and the bookwriter the authors of the text. Schwartz may respond artistically to what is happening in rehearsals, but it is he (and perhaps Winnie Holzman) who ultimately approve or reject artistic choices. The process of production can contaminate vision.

Not all composer-lyricists take this view, however. In a lecture given in May of 1971, and reprinted as an article titled “On Theatre Lyrics” for the 1974 book *Playwrights, Lyricists, Composers on Theatre*, composer-lyricist Stephen Sondheim at first seems to similarly privilege the bookwriter’s contribution. He writes:

Books are what musical theatre is about, it’s not about songs, and I’m not being modest [...] A book is not only dialogue, it’s the scheme of the show, the way the songs and dialogue work together, the style of the show. Very few directors will impose a style. For example, Hal Prince was struck when he read the book of *Follies*: something flashed in his imagination, and he saw that picture of Gloria Swanson standing in the rubble of the Roxy Theatre. It gave him an entire approach to the show as director. He’d seen that picture many times—why did it strike him?

Because the book suggested it, suggested the style. (91)

These comments must be understood in their historical context. It is possible Sondheim’s comments about the importance of bookwriters may have been an attempt to defend the book of *Follies* against those who perceived it as the one weak spot in the show. A week before Sondheim gave the theatre lyrics lecture, theatre critic Martin Gottfried had written an article in *The New York Times* which was, on the whole, a defense of the musical (which had been panned by the paper’s reviewers). However, Gottfried also wrote:

The book is weak. Admitted. James Goldman’s device of a reunion of old *Follies* girls in a theatre being torn down is a clumsy instigation for the action, and his comparative study of two soured marriages is awkward and trite. But Mr. Prince, who is heading toward the inevitable elimination of musical theatre books, has stripped this story down making the production itself the main event. (“Flipping Over Follies”)

Even some on the creative team disliked the book. In *Sondheim and Company*, Craig Zadan quotes Michael Bennett as saying “It’s really no secret that I did not like the book to *Follies*” (150). Interestingly, Bennett further states:

Hal and I began fighting about it back when we were rehearsing the show in the Bronx before we even left for Boston. But that’s where co-directing is a mistake. Someone has to be the boss, and in the case of *Follies*, with Hal being the producer and co-director, he was the boss. (148)

Later in Zadan’s book, Prince mentions that Bennett “wanted to call Neil Simon to fix the book” (150). Bennett, it seems, thought of the book writer as a commissioned employee whose work could be revised by others if the director so chose. Hal was “the boss.” Even Sondheim eventually says much the same thing in the *Theatre Lyrics* article. He writes, “We now have what is commonly called director’s theatre, usually a pejorative term, but not when you’re working with people like [directors] Jerry Robbins, Hal Prince and Michael Bennett” (92).

In discussing his work on *Parade*, Jason Robert Brown also seems to believe that director Hal Prince was the auteur:

Musicals are still very much a director’s medium these days (and especially when you’re working with Hal Prince). So that there were changes in the process of writing *Parade* that Hal very much wanted to make that I did not agree with [...]. But Hal is and was as much an author of that piece (if not more so) than I was and it was my job to do what he wanted to do [...] when Hal was happy with the way things ended up then that’s what we were all supposed to be doing. (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

The creative influence of a director on the text (and not just an individual production) of a musical clearly must be considered. According to critics and colleagues, Prince as director means Prince as auteur. Martin Gottfried writes in *Broadway Musicals*, “Prince’s name has never appeared on a program as an author. Yet he has been the dominating collaborator on every musical he has directed” (29). Brown, Bennett, and Sondheim, then, all recognize (at least to some degree) that working with Hal Prince means working in a “director’s theatre” where the director is ultimately the auteur.

This does not mean, however, that the editor of musical theatre texts should always privilege Prince’s intentions when editing a show on which he was the original director. In “Theatre Lyrics,” Sondheim writes that one of the advantages of working with Prince is the “abrasion” that makes him question his work. As an example of this abrasion, Sondheim offers the oft-told story of the revision of the end of *Company*:

Out of town with *Company* we had a lot of trouble with the ending, and there was a song called “Happily Ever After” that Robert (Dean Jones) sang. It was the character’s climatic self-discovery. It struck a number of people as being too bitter, and Hal Prince kept using the word “negative” to me all the time. It was through the abrasion with Hal that I came to write “Being Alive” rather against my will. (“Theatre Lyrics” 92)

Prince explains Sondheim intended “Happily Ever After” as “an affirmative song” but “put *everything* in it and that *everything* overrode the affirmation” (Zadan 124). Eventually, Prince asked Sondheim to replace it. In Sondheim’s words, Prince felt it was, “too much of a downer, too much a scream of pain” (Orchard 634). Yet, in his autobiography, *Contradictions*, Prince writes of the new song “I am afraid it imposed a happy ending on a play which should have remained ambiguous” (156). In his biography of Hal Prince, Foster Hirsch writes, “In an

interview in 1976 Prince said that “the audience wanted a hopeful song” though he “didn’t believe in it for a second” (87). Prince was producer, as well as director, and the show needed to make money. His choice, then, does not necessarily represent what any of the collaborators thought was best artistically, but rather what was most marketable. In this case it makes sense to restore the ending Sondheim wanted and which both (eventually) felt was better.

Prince’s decisions were not always made for such pecuniary reasons, however. In the case of *Sweeney Todd*, for instance, Prince was far more interested in making an important piece of art than Sondheim was. Sondheim’s original vision for the show was, in his words, “a grand guignol”—a horrific farce (Zadan 243). Sondheim describes encountering some difficulty in interesting Prince in the show. “Hal is not the fan of melodrama and farce that I am,” says Sondheim (Zadan 245). Prince explains

It was only when I realized that the show was about revenge [...] that I knew how to do it. And then came the factory, and the class struggle—the terrible struggle to move out of the class in which you’re born, and suddenly it became about the Industrial Age and the incursions of machinery on the spirit. (Zadan 245)

In the interview with Orchard, Sondheim says:

[*Sweeney* is] not supposed to be a social tract [...] Hal has to root himself in socio-political context. That’s what interests him: society and societal pressures and saying things about society. It doesn’t particularly interest me [...]. What got me was that it was a horror story. Hal picked on that one thing. He grabbed on to it and made it into a social tract. (643)

It seems Sondheim ultimately has a surprisingly low opinion of the permanence of the musical theatre form. Foster Hirsch quotes Sondheim as saying that *Porgy and Bess* is “the only musical that will—that will seem great—one hundred years from now” (13). At first, statements like these might seem to be little more than a pretense of modesty. Still, even Prince affirms that Sondheim seems to believe them. “[George] Abbot doesn’t care about posterity,” says Prince in Hirsch’s biography, “and neither for that matter does Steve Sondheim. *I do*...I want to leave a mark, to do something of artistic value” (27). Prince, though obviously interested in the commercial success of his work, is also intensely interested in designing lasting and significant pieces of art. This passion, it seems, often drives Prince to try to take control of the artistic vision of the shows on which he works.

The influence of Prince as director-auteur can be most easily observed in the story of his most recent musical: *Bounce*. As in *Follies* and *Sweeney Todd*, Sondheim’s original idea was lighter than the musicals that were eventually seen in Chicago and Washington, D.C. Hirsch reports, “Sondheim’s original concept had been a light-hearted vaudeville show” (230). Then, under the direction of Sam Mendes (whose work, like Prince’s, tends to be rather dark), the show took, to quote Hirsch, “a sterner direction” (230). After the show was poorly received at a New York workshop in 1999 Sondheim and bookwriter John Weidman asked Prince to collaborate on the show.

Interestingly, although Prince joined the project very late in the creative process, he seems to have immediately become auteur. Hirsch describes Prince as Sondheim and Weidman’s “new boss,” a description that seems to fit reports of the show’s development (231). Hirsch writes, “Prince took charge in his customary fashion—and encountered no resistance from his battle weary colleagues” (230). Once Prince took over, he became the one who directed tone and content. In an interview with *Playbill Online* Prince described the show after his involvement: “It’s a different show completely now. They’re doing a very courageous thing.

They're willing to tear it up and start again" (<http://www.playbill.com/news/article/77711.html>). As Hirsch narrates the rest of the story, one can see Prince's authority shaping and reshaping the musical. At first Prince seems to have tried to stay within Sondheim and Weidman's vision of "musical comedy." Hirsch writes, "to secure the musical comedy tone, Prince asked the writers to turn the show into two love stories" (231). In 1999, Prince is quoted as saying, "I'm waiting eagerly for a section the boys are working on that's joyful and irreverent, and then, suddenly, the scene turns business" (Hirsch 232). Before the Chicago try-out in 2003, Prince describes a "crucial" song in which Wilson Mizner manages to con the others into joining his scheme "through sheer power of persuasiveness and optimism" (Hirsch 234). The show about optimism has become a show about the seduction of optimism. From *Pajama Game* to *Cabaret*, this is one of Prince's favorite themes. It is clear Prince quickly became the auteur of *Bounce*. The musical is indeed a director's medium "especially when you're working with Hal Prince," and one supposes, especially if one's show is floundering without him.

Prince may, however, be an exception on Broadway today. More often, it seems, it is the producer who controls both the money and (as a result) the musical. When I asked Jason Robert Brown about who usually has the final say in deciding the official text of a musical, he ultimately argued that, with a few exceptions, authority usually falls to the producer:

I think it's the producer who has to say, "This is my vision of the show and I'm going to realize it with all of you people." And it's only the producer who would then be able to say, "Yes, we achieved it." or "No, we didn't." It's hard to [analyze the musical] in the same way you would analyze Edward Albee who has a real sense of control over his piece from one end to the other. In the musical that control is dissipated very early on in the process and *should* to a certain extent if you want a commercially successful piece. A commercially successful piece is something that is entertaining to a broad group of people. (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

Brown's qualification that he is talking here about "commercially successful" musical theatre suggests he may feel differently about a more artistically driven piece (he did, after all, argue that Prince was the auteur of *Parade*).

A producer need not always be completely financially driven, however. In June of 2005 the *New York Times* reported that Hal Prince, a former producer himself, "has now teamed with Columbia University to establish a fellowship program devoted to developing [...] 'creative producers'" ("An Extinct Species"). In the article, Prince describes his own producing method, which does indeed sound like the work of an auteur:

All of the shows I produced started in this office [...] You come up with an idea, you get the book or play or script [that is, the rights to the source material in the case of an adaptation], and you get the right author for it. Then you get the right composer, the right lyricist. And then, you put it all together. ("An Extinct Species")

This approach, it seems, is now unusual. Prince continues, "I think people [today] come to producers and say, 'We have this thing, here it is, want it?' And then they do a reading – and let's do a workshop or whatever" ("An Extinct Species").

In the new approach, producers are, Prince is quoted as saying, just "'conglomerations of very wealthy people' looking to be 'one of 15 names over the title'" ("An Extinct Species"). Often this means that musicals that are unlikely to attract large audiences (and profits) will not be produced. Prince laments in the *New York Times* article, "So many of the shows that I was able to do would never have been done under the current system [...] Because we weren't taking the pulse of the audience, and we weren't checking the box-office demographics" ("An Extinct

Species”). On the other hand, if artistically-minded musicals can find a producer, the creators of these works are allowed more freedom than they would likely have been under Hal Prince’s old system. Few histories of Prince’s musical *Parade* mention producer Bernard Gersten as requiring many changes, for instance. When discussing his own off-Broadway show *The Last Five Years* (directed by Harold Prince’s daughter, Daisy Prince), Brown said that because it “was not as big a show as [*Parade*] [...] I didn’t have to listen to what anybody told me” (personal interview / 26 March 2005).

Auteurship of musical theatre obviously differs from show to show and is determined by several factors. Certainly the context in which the show is to be produced is important. In large Broadway shows, commercial interests may trump creative interests in a way that does not happen in the case of a small off-Broadway show like *The Last Five Years*. Seniority also comes into play. Hal Prince, whose career began with the successful production of the *Pajama Game* in 1954, was often the most respected member of the team. By *Wicked*, Schwartz was also a well known Broadway and film composer. *Wicked’s* director Joe Mantello was certainly no amateur (having just won the Tony award for his play *Take Me Out*), but he did not have the name recognition of Hal Prince.

It also seems that the one who originally conceives the idea for a musical often becomes the auteur. Schwartz claims responsibility for the original concept of *Wicked*. He writes of a snorkeling trip on which one of his friends told him she was reading the book (<http://www.musicalschwartz.com/recordings/bucchino.htm>). On the other hand, *Parade* was Hal Prince’s idea. Although Prince claims it was librettist Alfred Uhry’s idea, Uhry gives a fuller account of the conception. He says he told Prince about the Leo Frank case, “And he [Prince] jumped up out of his chair, literally, with his glasses on top of his head, and he said, ‘This is the musical I have been looking for. This is the musical I want to do’” (“A Conversation with Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown”). Brown says of *Parade*, “Hal had determined the shape of the show to begin with [...] he’s the one who commissioned the piece for me so it was his prerogative to make [...] changes” (personal interview / 26 March 2005).

Finally, it seems, as in most conflicts, decisions are ultimately made by the one with the strongest will. Sondheim has been quoted as saying, in reference to such conflicts, “The rules are that whoever is the most passionate about something, wins” (Zadan 290). Perhaps the best approach, then, is to look at the production history of a musical and identify whose opinions are most often incorporated into the majority of performed and published versions. This person will likely be the auteur.

In the case of the Prince-Sondheim shows, Prince and Sondheim both had equal seniority. The original concept for the show sometimes belonged to Sondheim and sometimes to Prince. Prince, however, was usually producer and, as such, controlled the finances of the show. He also seems to have been more interested in his artistic legacy than Sondheim. In the Orchard interview, Sondheim says of their relationship “we’re sort of yang and ying [sic]” (641). It may be reading too much into Sondheim’s reply to note the inversion of the usual order of “yin and yang,” but it is at least interesting to note that the “yang” is active and the yin is passive, and that in usual grammatical ordering in English one places the names of others before oneself (e.g. “Hal and I”). Prince certainly seems to be the active extroverted yang in many of his relationships. Prince, understandably, often won contests of will and so should be considered the auteur.

Identification of the auteur is only the beginning for the critical editor, however. It may be that there is no text that exactly represents the auteur’s intentions. For example, Jason Robert Brown affirms the importance of punctuation in his lyrics, saying “I’m usually pretty specific

about it. Especially [in cases] where I know that your ear could take them in two different ways I try and make sure your ear goes to where I want it to.” Yet, the first word of Jason Robert Brown’s musical *Parade* in the libretto published in Wiley Hausman’s anthology is “Farewell.” In the script licensed by MTI, the line reads “Fare well.” Difference in spacing may slightly affect the meaning and rhythm of the lyrics. When asked about the difference Jason Robert Brown echoes the thoughts of many authors:

I care about intention. I certainly intend for things to be meant a certain way. But the process of getting anything printed [in a form] where people buy it is so drawn out. [...] There are also editorial decisions that I don’t know that I noticed go by. I tend not to check the red lines too closely unless it’s clear they’ve made some dastardly emendation. But if what we sent them was “fare well” and the editor said “Well that’s not a word, we want to do ‘farewell’ because that’s clearly what they’re saying” and they did it, and I never noticed, then it went by me and I can read it on the page and think it’s right. What I actually typed at a certain point is a long way away [...] (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

This is obviously a relatively inconsequential example, but it is evidence that, as has been observed in other genres, even “authorized” editions may not accurately reflect the auteur’s wishes.

It may also be that the auteur’s intention is not the most useful guideline for the editor to follow. It is often instructive for scholars to study the artistic process rather than the product. For this reason, especially in cases in which the auteur did very little actual writing himself (as in the case of Prince), editors may want to make available texts written before changes were imposed by the auteur. In an interview with Mark Horowitz for the *Sondheim Review*, Sondheim says of *Bounce*, “I’ve never written this many shows to get to one show. We’ve had four distinct scripts and scores for this show” (6). Studying these drafts, and drafts of earlier shows, may reveal pictures of both Sondheim and Prince that have not yet been considered.

Understanding the artistic visions of individual collaborators can be useful for future artists as has recently been evidenced by the 2005 revival of *Sweeney Todd*. The new production, directed by John Doyle, returns the musical to the small, horror story Sondheim first envisioned. In a *New York Times* interview, Sondheim said of the new production, “‘When I first wrote this thing all I wanted to do was write a horror story, a Grand Guignol piece,’ he recalled recently, settling in the Eugene O’Neill auditorium with Mr. Doyle. ‘Of all the productions I’ve seen, this is the one that comes closest to Grand Guignol, closest to what I originally wanted to do’” (Isherwood, October 30, 2005). According to most reports, the new *Sweeney* is an exciting piece of theatre. Perhaps, paradoxically, future innovations may occur through a return to older artistic visions of other musicals.

The idea of “future innovations” raises an important question for critical editors. If the director may in fact be the auteur of a musical, how should editors treat later productions which do not involve the auteur. If Hal Prince was, in fact, the auteur of *Sweeney Todd*, then should an editor treat the current Broadway production, directed by John Doyle, as a completely different text? Further, if Sam Mendes was, at one point, the auteur of the musical that eventually became *Bounce*, should the libretto and score produced under his direction be preserved as another musical, or only footnoted as an earlier draft of Prince’s musical? I will address these questions in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Received Texts

Stephen Schwartz's personal assistant, Michael Cole, recently wrote in a fan newsletter: One of my favorite assignments of recent years was to create the director's script of *Godspell*, a new script with notes about staging transitions, directorial intentions and the like. Because Stephen had seen many productions where he felt the director missed the point of *Godspell*, he wanted to create a script that would allow directors access to a record of John-Michael Tebelek's original intentions of the show. ("Michael Cole: Assistant to Stephen Schwartz")

Schwartz obviously believes it is important to preserve the intentions of the original creative team. The critical editor must consider, however, the authority of the "received" text of a musical. Schwartz's belief that many productions "missed the point" of *Godspell* betrays a sense that the interpretation of the original artists is, in some way, the only interpretation. Clearly, for Schwartz, there is an authorized text even of very improvisational musicals like *Godspell*.

In the early days of the form, placing such importance of the consistency of musical theatre texts would likely have seemed ridiculous. Musical theatre historian Ethan Mordden writes of the 1866 show, *The Black Crook* (considered by many to be the first work to resemble musical theatre as we now know it), "*The Black Crook* was never the same show twice. Numbers were replaced, new scenic 'transformations' and dances added, new roles interpolated for available talent" (*One More Kiss* 2). As late as the 1930s textual consistency from production to production was rare. Mordden writes in his discussion of the London production of *Anything Goes*:

The history of the transatlantic production of musicals falls into three periods. In the first, from the 1800s to 1920 or so, the original work serves as a matrix for a new piece. From 1920 to exactly April 29, 1947, there is much less rewriting and even the occasional souvenir of the original[...] I feel we can map the start of the third (and present) period of Broadway and West End show back to the precise day because that is when *Oklahoma!* opened at the Drury Lane. (*Sing for Your Supper* 74)

Although one may quibble with Mordden's chronology, relative consistency in text and score from production to production is expected of musical theatre, at least since *Oklahoma*.

However, identifying the text the audience expects is no easy matter. The seminal musical *Show Boat*, for instance, exists in many versions, all (and, paradoxically, none) of which could be said to represent the received show. Jason Robert Brown notes of the musical:

Show Boat's a complicated issue because there's so many versions of *Show Boat* that it's hard to know what the authors intended. I don't know that they even did. At a certain point they'd put it up on stage because it was time to open the show. And then they'd revisit it. There was a movie, and there was another movie, and then there was the Houston Grand Opera, and then there was Hal's production. All of which are successful in degrees. There's so much great material in *Show Boat* that I think you just have to take it as a whole. Just *Show Boat* (as opposed to being the specific *Show Boat* that might have happened at any one time). (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

Brown's loose definition of the text is interesting, but hard for an editor to execute.

Even today the creators of musical theatre often revisit previous work and change it. These changes are often, though not always, reflected in the authorized scripts. Stephen Schwartz's *Children of Eden*, for instance, was originally staged in London in 1991 in a version

very different than the version now licensed by MTI. The current version reflects the changes that were made for the commercially successful 1998 New Jersey production at the Papermill Playhouse. Schwartz writes of these changes:

I often continue to work on a show after its initial commercial presentation, particularly in a case such as CHILDREN OF EDEN, where the first major production has not been successful. When I have a collaborator, such as John Caird in the above case, he or she and I continue to work as we did when originally writing the show, and we see subsequent productions of the show until we are satisfied that it is as good as we can make it. We felt we had finally "completed" CHILDREN OF EDEN for the Paper Mill production, and so that became the definitive version. It is Joe Stein's and my hope that the upcoming Paper Mill production of THE BAKER'S WIFE (coincidentally) will be the final version of that show.⁷ And I have no doubt that Winnie and I will make some minor changes to WICKED, despite its enormous commercial success, before finally declaring a version to be "official". (personal email / October 19, 2004)

Although Schwartz may call the Papermill Production of *The Baker's Wife* the official version, and while it may be the only version that can be legally performed, it is not clear that scholars and historians of musical theatre must accept the text as definitive. There have been, after all, two cast recordings and many productions of earlier versions of the show between the original production in 1976 and the 2005 Papermill Production. It may be that Schwartz's current enthusiasm about the most recent script will fade and he will come to consider an earlier (or later) version "official."

To further complicate matters, there are often alternate versions of a text--even within a single production. Variants introduced for cast changes on Broadway may be removed and then reinserted as a new performers move in and out of a role. Stephen Schwartz writes of the new lyrics he wrote for George Hearn's Wizard in *Wicked*: "[...]we now have two endings, one for a Wizard whose strength is movement and one for a Wizard whose strength is singing, and I'm sure we will go back and forth, depending on who's playing the role throughout our run" (personal email / 11 November 2004). Licensing companies sometimes offer performing groups a choice of texts. Stephen Schwartz's song "Beautiful City," written for the movie version of *Godspell* but not in the original stage production, may be inserted into any licensed production wherever the director sees fit.

Of course, critical editors may follow suit and print alternate versions of a text. This could become distracting, however, if every variation was noted in the text itself. One might print the alternative text in footnotes or an appendix (as Sondheim did with the monologue in *Sunday in the Park With George*). The text not relegated to a note will, however, come to be the text more often studied. Further, printing variants of each difference in every major version will create a large and costly text if produced in a traditional ink and paper format. An electronic edition, as I will show, will help solve this problem, but, it is still difficult not to privilege one version of the text over another.

⁷ Although a recent promotional CD from Music Theatre International indicates that the Papermill Production of the Baker's Wife may indeed soon become the officially licensed version of the musical, the MTI website still advertises the licensed version as the "1993 revision" of the musical.

Matters become even more complicated in the case of revivals of musicals for which the original authors are dead. Those responsible for major revivals of classic musicals will often make changes to the original texts (most often to make the material more accessible and to conform to changing sensitivities to the treatment of issues of race and gender). Sometimes these changes are relatively minor. For instance, recent revivals of *Peter Pan* usually cut the racially offensive song, “Ugh-a-wug” (sung by the “Indians” of Neverland). In other cases, as in the 2002 revival of *Flower Drum Song*, the libretto is entirely rewritten (both the revival and the original version are now licensed by the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization).

In other cases, changes are made based on contemporary tastes, expectations, and the basic cultural vocabulary one can expect an audience to understand. These are, of course, questions familiar to scholarly editors and translators. Should a translation of *The Divine Comedy* be as literal as possible, or as beautiful as possible? Should one standardize spelling in the texts of Shakespeare and Spenser? Is Chaucer’s Middle English obscure enough that modern students require a translation? To what degree is the poetry of these texts lost or changed by changing the language? To what degree is the potential loss worth the greater accessibility offered by modernized texts?

In his 1997 book, *Enchanted Evenings*, Geoffrey Block addresses this tension between “accessible” and “authentic” presentations of musical theatre texts. Block writes:

The degree to which stage works we love should be performed in authentic versions has been a source of debate in America for more than two centuries. Writing about nineteenth-century American approaches to European opera, Richard Crawford defines accessibility as “the tailoring of the music to suit particular audiences and circumstances” and authenticity “as an ideal countering the marketplace’s devotion to accessibility.” (7)

In his book, Block examines this tension in the performance history of fourteen of the most popular musicals of the 20th century. Although Block recognizes the complexity of the issue, it seems he favors authenticity over accessibility. In his chapter on *Anything Goes* Block poses the following series of questions:

Are the books of the 1930s musicals as weak as later critics make them out to be? If the books of 1930s musicals are weak, why are they weak, and can they be salvaged by revisions and interpolations? Is it really a good idea to strip the original books down to their underwear and then dress them up again with as many songs as possible from other shows? Or can reasonable men and women provide an acceptable modern alternative? (48-49)

Block ends his discussion by quoting theatre historian Gerald Bordman’s argument for authenticity: “some older musicals seem old-fashioned [but] so are gingerbread houses, Charles Dickens, and Mozart symphonies” (53). Although he clearly recognizes the complexity of the issue, Block seems to favor “authentic” productions (that is, productions as close as possible to what was conceived by the original creators).

Composer-lyricist Jason Robert Brown appears to agree with Block. In March of 2005 he said of the 1999 revival of *Kiss Me Kate*:

The Porter estate because they knew they would make a lot of money if the production went well, allowed [...] certain changes to the show. Those changes are not published; they are not printed; you cannot do them. [...] An amateur performing group [cannot] do the version of *Kiss Me Kate* that was on Broadway three years ago. And I thought that was a wise, and smart, and brave thing to say. And by the same

token if they then saw it, if the trustees of that estate then thought “We think this represents a viable version of the show that is equal to in some respects or has some things that are more valuable than the other version,” that’s their prerogative. I just think that given that all the authors were dead, that would be a sort of presumptuous thing to say. (Personal interview / 26 March 2005)⁸

Whether or not it is, as Brown suggests, presumptuous to make the libretto of such a revival available for performance, widespread dissemination of the new text can affect what the title *Kiss Me Kate* is understood to represent. Unlike many of the revised revivals, the Broadway production of the revival text of *Kiss Me Kate* did not credit the changes to the playwright who made them (John Guare). The publicity for amateur and stock productions of the new production may not even indicate which version of the text is being used. Most audiences are unlikely to notice even if the version is identified. Eventually, what is generally understood to be “the musical *Kiss Me Kate*” may include the libretto revised by John Guare (although credited solely to Sam and Bella Spewack). An editor of a musical theatre anthology must then decide which version of the text to use: the original, or the one most often associated with the title. The desire to meet the audience’s idea of a text was almost certainly the impulse behind the ill-fated production of *The Sound of Music* that interpolated songs and changes from the film version. Editors of critical editions face the same sorts of expectations.

For critical editors, it probably makes the most sense to present several versions of the text in their entirety, noting variants in critical apparatus. There are precedents for publishing several variants of a musical theatre text. As I have mentioned, the licensing companies often make several versions of a text available. Different productions of a musical often get their own cast recording. In an electronic edition it would even be possible to provide many different versions on one CD. A table of contents which lists each performance by date might minimize editorial privileging of a particular text.⁹ Such a text, while a useful resource, creates problems for use. With such a multitude of options, which version should be taught in surveys of musical theatre? Which version should be used in scholarly discussions of the text? Which version, once copyright issues no longer apply, should be performed?

These questions might legitimately be asked of any text, in or out of the genre of musical theatre. The answer ultimately depends on the intended use for the material. Instructors of Shakespeare regularly decided to teach one edition over another. Scholars regularly identify the edition of a text they are citing. Even creators of musical theatre who see themselves as auteur (and conceive of an “official” version of a text) recognize that different uses sometimes call for alternate versions. Stephen Schwartz writes in his notes for the published vocal music of *Wicked*:

⁸ Interestingly, the Porter estate has apparently had such a change of heart. The 1999 revival is now listed as available for amateur license on the Tams-Witmark website. It is apparently a recent addition. When I asked about the 1999 production on April 12, 2006, The operator at Tams-Witmark at first denied it was available. She eventually found the materials and acknowledged they were available, but was unaware of when they had become available.

⁹ Of course, such a system might imply a sort of Darwinian evolution of a text in which later versions are more official than earlier ones, but such assumptions, if they exist, would likely be brought to the text regardless of the arrangement of the contents of the edition.

Several decisions always have to be made in translating the score from a show into a book of vocal selections. [...] In the end I chose to try to make the songs work for this medium, and thus to make changes in certain cases from the way they appear in the stage show and on the cast album. This entailed writing new lyrics in some instances [...], providing new endings for some of the songs [...], and eliminating interior chorus sections, intros, or other show-oriented material from several of the selections. (9)

Similarly, when asked about differences between the published vocal score of *Parade* and the published libretti (concerning the absence of some of the representation of dialect in the *Show Music* version), Jason Robert Brown responded,

To the degree that it really matters the score generally wins and then whatever the last version of the script is. It's probably the last one that passed through our hands, though there's no guarantee. In the case of *Parade*, it is. I proofed [the *Show Music* version of the libretto] line by line and it was what I wanted it to be, and there are some things that are there to make it easier to read. And you know when the music director is teaching it to the actor he's going to teach it off the score and therefore it's going to be pretty close to what I want. (personal interview / 26 March 2005)

Brown is quick to note, however, that there is some limit on this freedom of selection. When asked about the alternative versions of a script sometimes offered by licensing agencies, he responded, "Well, if I choose to make both versions available then it's the director's responsibility to choose the version they feel closest to. And then do only that version" (personal interview / 26 March 2005). In the case of performances, then, Brown and others are very clear that the licensed version of the work should be the only one used. One may disagree, of course, and, if the texts outlast the copyright, the author's (or auteur's) wishes cease to matter legally. But it is important to be clear that the creators of musical theatre, even those very familiar with the difficulties of accurately reproducing intentionality in publication and performance, do see definite limits on the variability of their texts.

When I first approached Mr. Brown about the possibility of an electronic critical edition of his work, he responded, "I think, in the case of *Parade*, we all are very satisfied with the show in its final form (the published one), so I don't think it's in my interests (or Alfred's or Hal's) to have a critical edition which would suggest the possibility of alternate versions of the show." He later agreed that the potential for linking music, text, and critical notes was an interesting one to explore and granted permission to use the published version of the text for demonstration purposes. Out of respect for his wishes, I will therefore present only one version of the text in my electronic edition (though I will note several important differences from the Broadway version of the libretto). A single text edition will serve nicely to demonstrate of the power of the electronic tools.

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Chapter 5: A History of Electronic Editions

In the late 1990s it became popular to affix the prefix “e-“ to various nouns to indicate that what was being described was “electronic” (and therefore thoroughly modern). Thus, e-mail (actually a lexicological invention of the 1980s), e-commerce, and e-Bay are all now recognized by most spell-checkers (a kind of program devised before the “e” fad). In some cases, the addition of an “e-“ to the signifier represented a fundamental change in the signified. E-mail is, in many ways, like postal mail, but it is sufficiently different that its widespread popularity represents a real revolution in written communication. On the other hand, the e-tickets sold by many airlines are functionally the same as traditional boarding passes with the exception that they are purchased online rather than at a desk or over the phone.

Even before the advent of personal computers, however, literature enthusiasts were producing electronic editions (the repeated vowel made “e-editions” an unpopular designation) of their favorite texts. As with other “e-” products, the gap between electronic editions of literary texts and their traditional counterparts can vary greatly. In its broadest sense, an electronic edition is a text (or version of a text) which is meant to be experienced on a computer rather than in a codex. Collections of scanned images from traditional books (such as John Velz’s *Shakespeare and the Classical Tradition* available at the *Internet Shakespeare Editions* website) provide easy access to rare texts which might otherwise be unavailable to scholars, but offer little functionality not offered by the more traditional format.¹⁰ The World Wide Web, on the other hand, offers a sort of non-linear text which would be nearly impossible to accurately reproduce on paper. The current version of Kevin Kiernan’s *Electronic Beowulf* provides advanced search functions, manuscript images, glossary help, and other tools not easily duplicated in traditional critical editions. All of these, from a scanned book to the *Electronic Beowulf*, might be described as electronic editions, yet the difference between them is almost as great as the difference between e-mail and e-tickets.

A thorough history of electronic editing is a story that deserves to be told, but it is outside of the scope of this piece. However, it is important, before beginning a new electronic editing project, to survey what has been done thus far in order to learn from the mistakes and successes of previous work. In this chapter I will survey the history of electronic editing as a sort of “back story” which has led to the creation of electronic editions of musical theatre. Susan Hockey, in her essay “The History of Humanities Computing,” locates the beginning of the field in 1949 with Father Roberto Busa’s proposal for a computer-generated concordance of the works of St. Thomas Aquinas. While this may indeed be a good place to start a history of “humanities computing,” Busa was not constructing an electronic edition as here defined. While

¹⁰ Michael Best, in an article describing the archive for *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, references this text as an example of the works available at the *Internet Shakespeare Editions* website. He notes that the choice to “provide the original as graphic images” was made because the work “was never recorded in digital format” and “re-typing [...] would involve painstaking proofreading all over again.” He suggests, in defense of the choice, that “while images take longer to download than text, they are an accurate representation of the original” (“Texts and Contexts: *The Internet Shakespeare Editions*” 74). It should be noted, though, that at the time of this writing the links to the scanned images on the *Internet Shakespeare Editions* website were not active.

the Aquinas texts were stored on magnetic tape and so allowed for some electronic textual processing, all Busa's results were published, at least at first, in a traditional codex. Indeed, until the wide-spread use of cathode ray tube displays (computer monitors) in the 1970s and 80s, electronic editions as they are here defined could not exist. As personal computers became commercially available in the 1980s, more and more texts were converted to electronic format. Hockey reports that many of these texts were collected and maintained by the Oxford Text Archive, yet, aside from the conversion to a medium on which text processing programs could work, these texts remained mostly identical to the paper forms from whence they came (8).

More interesting were the text adventure games written at this time. In 1972 a spelunker turned computer programmer named Will Crowther designed a game for his daughters to share with them his love for caving (Montfort 87). The game, called *Advent* (short for Adventure), presented the player with text descriptions of areas of an underground world. The player could interact with the environment by issuing typed English commands to the character in the story. Commands consisted of two words, a verb and a noun (e.g., GO NORTH. TAKE SWORD. KILL TROLL). The vocabulary of the game commands was limited, but *Advent*, nonetheless, became very popular.

Six years later a group of MIT programmers wrote their own version of *Advent* that included a more advanced vocabulary and parser. The group eventually formed a company they called Infocom and marketed the game under the name *Zork*. The game enjoyed great commercial success in the early 1980s and spawned a series of similar games which came to be known as text adventures or interactive fiction. In order to compete with fast-paced, graphical, arcade-style games, the authors created evocative and concise descriptions that were widely praised by both gaming and literary critics. In a 1995 essay for the *New York Times Book Review*, the poet Robert Pinsky wrote retrospectively of the Infocom games:

I believe that the poetics of *Zork* and its modern descendants tells us more about the literary potential of the computer than we could learn from any amount of ambitious literary theorizing. At the beginning of *Zork*, the player-reader faces a small empty house, on a barren plain: a visible territory that can be walked over by entering a handful of keyboard commands. But ah! – after looking under the carpet, and opening the trapdoor, and descending and entering the tunnel: *then* one sees the world of *Zork* unfold outward into an immense network of concentric chambers, looping passageways, branching and terraced corridors. The map of this voluminous (if monotonous) universe was itself gigantic. Primitive though this world was, it would become absorbing, even transporting. (Pinsky 3,26)

The structures of the games were, perhaps, no less interesting than their aesthetics. While the reader was required to read certain sections before others, it was unlikely any two players would read exactly the same text while playing the game. For example, in the second of the *Zork* series, the user could obtain the golden key from around the neck of the unicorn before or after retrieving the package of candy from the bottom of the pool of tears. However, both had to be accomplished before passing through the door with the biting lizard head over the keyhole. A player might even wander back and forth between two rooms for a while before doing either, and so read the description of the room on each entrance.

Players of Infocom's game might also encounter other characters with whom they might interact but who might also act independently of the players. The first *Zork* game included an archetypal "thief" who wandered around the world stealing and dropping objects, following the directions of his own algorithm independent of the player's movements. In a murder mystery

game, *Deadline*, the player might interview such characters by instructing the computer to tell or ask a character about a particular object or event (“Ask Mrs. Dunbar about the gun”). In one of the company’s final games, *Border Zone*, computerized characters were allowed to move in real time without waiting for the player to type a command. All this would of course be impossible in a traditional text. It was possible in these games to dump all the text to a printer, but the text of this output represented a transcript of an individual reader’s experience with the text rather than anything like the “text itself.”

The closest paper and ink approximation to these texts might be the *Choose Your Own Adventure* series of children’s books published around the same time. These books offered a choice at a particular point in the narrative and instructed the reader to turn to a particular page to read the results of this choice. A comparison of these texts to the Infocom electronic text adventures clearly delineates the limitation of the traditional codex in the presentation of non-linear texts. Unless the publisher was willing to print a very long book (and the reader willing to read through the descriptions of many possible paths) the *Choose Your Own Adventure* books could only present a very limited set of possible options at each juncture (usually two to three). The user interface also forced the writer to suggest the possible outcomes to the reader (e.g., “Do you go down the broad, well-traveled road (turn to page 96) or the straight and narrow path (turn to page 87)?”). The reader of *Zork*, on the other hand, must figure out that the large basket, canvas sack, and a torch may be combined to form a hot air balloon which can carry one up the side of a mountain to a treasure filled cave (“Do you want to use the basket, the torch, and the sack as a hot air balloon (turn to page 182)?” doesn’t exactly require the same level of problem solving skills of the reader).

Non-linear electronic texts began to move out of the world of gaming in the early 1990s. During this period the World Wide Web became popular and provided a sort of choose-your-own-adventure system of links to other pages all over the globe. The Web allowed for reading that was truly inter-textual, for writers could link their readers to texts at distant sites without the knowledge or permission of the target. The unmoderated nature of web textuality led some scholars to question its usefulness. In a 2000 article for *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, Michael Best (the general editor of *Internet Shakespeare Editions* and so no stranger to electronic texts) observed, “Perhaps the most daunting quality of the Internet is its sheer size, and the seeming impossibility of separating the valuable from the worthless” (“A Better Mousetrap” 199). Some hypertext authors attempted to capitalize on the benefits of hypertext’s non-linear structure while maintaining control over content. Electronic journals, which rarely linked away from a familiar address, became more and more accepted. Sites like Michael Best’s *Internet Shakespeare Editions* served not only as a repository for scholarly material but also as a sort of screening service which linked only to sites approved by the scholarly editors. In an article for the *Shakespeare Newsletter* Best writes of such gateways, “this is precisely what happens when you walk into a university library—you do not expect to find the same reading materials there as you will find at the Safeway checkout, because acquisitions are carefully selected for the academic audience” (“A Better Mousetrap” 112). Best’s confidence in the acquisition standards of university libraries may be dubious, but his argument demonstrates the discomfort with which many scholars accepted the internet as a legitimate research tool.

Hypertexts were not limited to the internet, however. Beginning with “Afternoon: A Story” in 1995, Vassar College’s Michael Joyce wrote several critically praised fictional hypertexts in which readers proceeded from one page to the next by selecting and clicking words. The entire text was contained on a floppy disk and readers could not navigate outside of

the texts Joyce constructed. Hockey reports that in 1991 Patrick Conner used a program called HyperCard (a sort of early local HTML viewer for the Macintosh) to create the “Beowulf Workstation” which “presents a text to the user with links to a modern English version and linguistic and contextual annotations of various kinds” (11). In 2000, the University of Kentucky’s Kevin Kiernan produced a new electronic edition of the Beowulf text which provided a word-by-word translation tool and high-quality images of the original manuscript under various light conditions. The program ran in standard web-browsers but was contained entirely on CD-ROM.

By the late 1990s high speed internet access had become ubiquitous in faculty offices and student dorm rooms in the United States. Scholars conducted research, read news, communicated with students, and performed library searches using the internet. Familiarity seems to have alleviated some of the earlier contempt. Many electronic editions are now published online. Gregory Crane’s *Perseus Project* allows internet users to search an extensive collection of ancient, medieval, and renaissance texts in both English and their original languages. The program was originally published in 1987 on disk, though it began to move to the web as early as 1995 (though Yale University Press still sells a CD-ROM version).

Still, copyright restrictions or the publisher’s economic interests sometimes make unrestricted access undesirable or impossible. The text of *Beowulf* is public domain. The images of the manuscript, however, are controlled by the British Library. Michael Best explains: “Libraries, less handsomely supported by public funding than they used to be, are keen to acquire the fees that come from printing reproductions on various media, so they are reluctant to make materials freely available” (“*The Sonnets on CD ROM*” 119). Access to websites can be limited via password protection, of course, but one risks user discontent if the site for which they paid becomes temporarily unavailable due to technical problems. Thus, for editions containing very large or copyrighted media, distribution via CD or DVD is often preferred.

It should be noted that even those electronic editions which charge for access usually provide the material at a fraction of the cost of printed versions. The quality of the images in the *Electronic Beowulf* (especially when coupled with the images taken under ultraviolet light) would be very costly to reproduce on paper. The *monochromatic* facsimile edition of the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* is currently sold by the Huntington Library for \$275. The full color *Electronic Beowulf*, by contrast, originally sold for \$150 and a student edition will likely soon be sold for less than \$100. Few libraries could afford printed color facsimiles of all of the material in the *Electronic Beowulf*. The electronic edition, even at \$150, might be made to fit into the personal budget of most interested scholars.

Both *Perseus* and *The Electronic Beowulf* also provide language tools which would be far more difficult to use in a traditional book. Students of *Beowulf* often have only a rudimentary grasp of Old English. Traditional glossaries require that students know the head-word form of the word they wish to look up (which can be difficult in a highly inflected language like Old English). Both *The Electronic Beowulf* and *Perseus* allow readers to see the glossary entry for almost every word in their texts simply by clicking on (or, in the case of *Beowulf*, by moving the mouse pointer over) the word in question. *Perseus*, as a repository of many ancient texts, further provides statistical information about the use of the word in corpora.

The original *Electronic Beowulf* allows users to search for patterns of alliteration and links search results to the manuscript image. *Perseus* allows users to search for English words within particular collections. These sorts of searches are possible because the editors included in the edition descriptive information (called meta-data) external to, but associated with, the texts

themselves. This process is familiar to HTML developers. If a web designer wants a phrase to appear in italics, he or she might begin the phrase with the HTML code “<i>” and end it with “</i>” (for example “<i>This would be in italics</i>”). Electronic editors began to use the same sorts of systems to encode descriptive information about page numbers, word types, even editorial notes that related to the text they were editing (for instance “<speaker>Prospero</speaker>”). Unfortunately, literary scholars tended to develop their own individual systems rather than conforming to any set of standards and so, according to Hockey, the situation “was described as ‘chaos’ by one of the participants” at a 1987 conference on humanities computing (12). It was at this conference that a general set of encoding principles was agreed upon using the International Standards Organization’s new encoding scheme, SGML (Hockey 12). The eventual result was the 1994 organization of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) and its associated standards. These standards originally used the now obsolete language SGML to encode texts, but have since adapted to the now more popular language XML. TEI freely publishes their standards on their website and problems and new adaptations are discussed through the use of an e-mail listserv and regular conferences. TEI is therefore very adaptable to the changing needs of editors and technology (the guidelines are now on their fifth revision) (The TEI FAQ).

Because the TEI encoding scheme is standardized, programmers can instruct programs how to interpret and present the information in all TEI-compliant texts, confident that the program will find the information it is told to look for in exactly the place the program expects to find it. The use of the TEI standards also allows multiple editors (such as a professor and several research assistants) to encode consistently. Further, since TEI is now used by most electronic editing projects, it is now possible to advertise for assistants familiar with TEI who will therefore need considerably less training in the general editor’s encoding scheme. With more organization and better technology, more advanced electronic editions continue to be published.

As impressive as it is, Kiernan’s *Electronic Beowulf* was made rather easier by the fact that the original text is extant in only one medieval manuscript. Literary scholars are often faced with texts that exist in several or even many early versions. About half of Shakespeare’s plays exist in two or three early versions. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* exists in whole or in part in around 80 manuscripts copied between Chaucer’s death in 1400 and Caxton’s first printing of the text in 1476. New Testament scholar Bruce Metzger estimates that there are around 5735 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament (Metzger 50). In these cases the editor of an electronic edition is confronted with the questions that have plagued textual critics for centuries.

It is now often considered bad form to conflate divergent texts and so create, in the common phrase, “a text that never existed.” As a result, the *Norton Shakespeare* now prints three versions of *King Lear* in its *Complete Works*. Critical editions often print a single version in its entirety and relegate variations to footnotes. The large amount of memory and storage space available on contemporary computers makes it possible, however, for the editor to allow the reader to choose which early text to view in any particular instance. The Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image maintains a webpage which allows users to freely view images of several early editions of Shakespeare’s works and, if desired, set the image of one version alongside the corresponding text in another. The Institute for Learning Technologies’ *Digital Dante* allows users to compare electronic transcripts of Longfellow’s and Mandelbaum’s translations of *The Divine Comedy* to each other or to a version of the original Italian text. Peter Robinson’s *Canterbury Tales Project* provides a more sophisticated (though expensive) approach in their multi-text editions of “The Miller’s Tale” and “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue,”

which allow the user to quickly move between or compare different versions of the tales and link to high quality images of the manuscripts in question. Of course, the fact that there is not yet a complete version of the *Canterbury Tales* done in this manner is some indication of the expense and time required to obtain copyright permissions for the manuscript images and to encode the information into TEI form. Further, even the gigabytes provided by DVD-ROMs are quickly filled when one includes high quality images of every page in several manuscripts. As removable storage becomes more efficient, it may eventually be possible for a single unit to store high quality images of all the extant manuscripts of a text even so widely preserved as the New Testament.

For now, though, an editor must consider whether including these images is worth the time, space, and expense. In the case of *The Canterbury Tales* and *Beowulf*, it might be argued that the texts can meaningfully exist apart from their earliest transcriptions (especially if one supposes the texts were as often performed and heard as read privately). It is more difficult to make this argument in the case of poet-artists like Blake and Rossetti. The integration of words and image in Blake engravings make text-only printings of his poems a bit like printing song lyrics without their music. The cost of reproducing his color engravings in a readable form is, however, an expensive proposition. The color facsimile of the Urizen Books published by Princeton University Press currently sells for \$150. Fortunately, the Huntington Library has made available color images of most of Blake's engravings at their "Blake Archive." The images are presented in a Java applet which makes it more difficult to download the images for use outside of the site (and therefore presumably gives the library some sense of retained ownership over their collection). The applet also provides a rudimentary zoom feature that allows users to enlarge the images for closer views. Textual critic and romantic scholar Jerome McGann's Rossetti archive similarly offers users online access to the artwork which originally accompanied Rossetti's poetry. Unlike the Blake archive, the pictures may be easily downloaded but do not provide any sort of image processing (such as zoom). The archive also provides images of holographic copies of many of Rossetti's work and links to journals and academic essays on the poet-artist.

For all the work that has been done on coupling text to image, relatively little has been done to couple text to sound. This is unfortunate as, particularly in performance and film studies, sound often carries a great deal of the text's meaning. Michael Best demonstrates the way in which sound might influence interpretation of Shakespearean film. In an article for *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, Best discusses the Friar's motivation for leaving Romeo and Juliet alone at the end of the play. Best examines several film versions and notes of the Franco Zeffirelli 1968 version:

It is hard to see earlier in the film any preparation for [the Friar's] moment of panic. The increasingly dominant trumpet calls provide a kind of emotional substitute for the Friar's motivation. It is a revealing illustration of the inevitable inadequacy and selectivity of any print description of a performance that when Jill Levenson discusses this moment in her *Shakespeare in Performance: "Romeo and Juliet"*, she pays careful attention to the actors' verbal repetitions, and to camera angles, but is silent about the soundtrack. (Best, "Text in the Electronic Edition" 277)

Without a specialized and technical vocabulary, it is difficult to describe sound. Best's "increasingly dominant trumpet calls" is a good, though still unsatisfying attempt. Early Shakespearean texts often describe the sorts of instruments (hautboys, drums, etc.) that should play under a scene but an italicized name of an instrument hardly replicates the experience of

hearing the sound. A natural next step for electronic editions is the inclusion of appropriate sounds along with images.

The web operas at the *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive* (hosted at Boise State University) provide an interesting example of how sound might be linked with text. The site has the full libretto of each of Gilbert and Sullivan's 14 operettas. The music for all of the songs in the operettas are encoded in MIDI format (essentially electronic sheet music which many programs can use to generate music) and available for download near the associated text. In some cases, MIDI-Karaoke files are also available which associate the music with a text file and highlights syllables as the corresponding notes play. Pictures of important productions often accompany the texts and the archive contains a few critical essays relating to the operas and their creators. Recently, other early British musicals and operettas have been added in much the same format.

Another exciting possibility for electronic editions of dramatic works is demonstrated by David Z. Saltz's *Virtual Vaudeville Project* (2004) at the University of Georgia. The web-based introduction explains the project as follows:

Manuscripts, paintings, sculptures, films, and recordings are artifacts that can be preserved and archived for subsequent generations to appreciate and analyze. Live theatre, however, is ephemeral. Is it possible to archive a live performance? One can use film or videotape to document a present day performance and, with some creative interpretation and speculation, recreate a performance from the past. But films and videotapes are incapable of conveying the experience of attending a live performance. A filmed performance offers only a single perspective on the action: the camera decides exactly where to look at each moment. Spectators at a live event, by contrast, act as their own camera operators, selecting their own point of focus - which may not even be on stage. Films omit a vital dimension of live performance: the viewer's immersion in the world of the theatre, and the crucial role that the community of spectators plays in constituting a performance event.

Virtual Vaudeville attempts to solve this problem by recreating a 1895 vaudeville show using motion-capture technology to create animated characters based on the movements of real actors (much like that which was famously used to create the character of Golem in Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy). Visitors to the site can view the show from a variety of perspectives, follow along in an annotated script, and read articles about vaudeville and the theatre. The vaudeville show is played in Macromedia's free and widely available Shockwave player and includes a live soundtrack with recreations, not just of the dialogue and music from the show, but also of stage and audience noise. Given the intensely multimedia nature of *Virtual Vaudeville*, the program requires surprisingly little from the user's computer. Users with slower computers or slow internet connections, however, may encounter some problems. Still *Virtual Vaudeville* is among the most impressive and innovative new forms of electronic edition.

The future of electronic editions seems bright. As of this writing, TEI's website lists 126 projects using their encoding system. There are many other projects (such as *Virtual Vaudeville*) which have little use for the text-centric standards of TEI but which are producing innovative ways of rendering traditional literary art in electronic form. To the best of my knowledge, however, there is no major project attempting to create electronic editions of 20th Century American Musical Theatre. In my next chapter I will describe the creation of my electronic edition of *Parade* and offer some ideas for future work in this area.

Chapter 6: Designing an Electronic Edition of *Parade*

As I considered the best approach to a design for electronic editions of musical theatre I was at first very excited about the possibilities suggested by Saltz's *Virtual Vaudeville*. American Musical Theatre could arguably be said to have grown out of vaudeville and so there was a certain genetic connection between Saltz's project and my own. However, I feared that *Virtual Vaudeville's* emphasis on the theatrical experience somewhat limited the imaginative openness of text. That is, when one reads *Hamlet*, Claudius may look and sound just as the reader imagines him. Rooms in Elsinore can be as sparse or as furnished as one's imagination permits (but will likely have four walls). Of course, even in live performance, one must fill in the gaps left by the production. The "wooden O" must become Agincourt through the work of the "imaginary forces" of the audience. Still, performances, even very minimalist performances, limit the possibilities available to the audience. Without exceptional work applied by one's "imaginary forces," a performed Hamlet will look and sound more or less like the actor playing him.

When productions are reproduced electronically the work of the imaginary forces can be even more difficult. Saltz himself seems to realize this. In a 1997 article explicating Kendall Walton's theory of representation, Saltz describes the difference between "a virtual sculpture garden through which you can roam about at will to scrutinize virtual sculptures from any vantage point" and an actual sculpture garden:

According to Walton's theory, a sculpture of a lion is a prop that allows me to imagine that I am seeing a real lion [...] How does the situation change if I encounter a lion sculpture in a virtual sculpture gallery? In this case, I imagine that I am seeing a *sculpture* of a lion. I will probably *also* imagine that I am seeing a real lion. (Indeed, on Walton's view, if I recognize the virtual sculpture as being *of a lion*, then at some level I *must* be imagining a real lion.) That is *not* to say, however, that I imagine that I am seeing *two* things, an animal and a sculpture. Rather, I imagine that *the prop that I am using to imagine a lion is a sculpture*. (Saltz, "The Art of Interaction" 121, emphasis in original)

Being at two removes from the imagined thing likely makes it somewhat harder to suspend one's disbelief.

Further, as I watch the virtual performance, I find that what I perceive as "noise" to be ignored is as often the performers as it is the sounds of the audience. In the case of *Virtual Vaudeville* this is probably intentional. One of the advantages of *Virtual Vaudeville* is the way it calls attention to the theatrical experience. It is difficult to appreciate the texts of a vaudeville show apart from the experience of performance. The same is not necessarily true of other forms of theatre.

Saltz's work does, however, provide interesting possibilities for recreating choreography for musicals in which the story is told as much through dance as through music and text. Unfortunately, the time and expense required to produce such an edition is prohibitive to all but the most well-funded and well-staffed projects. Shakespearean studies have been advanced through less technologically ambitious projects like Best's *Internet Shakespeare Editions* and the Schoenberg Center for the Electronic Text and Image, and so, it is hoped, musical theatre might similarly benefit from a more text-centered approach.

The "Web Operas" of the *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive* hosted by Boise State University represent the closest approximation to a text-centered electronic edition of musical theatre to date. I do not, however, find it a completely useful model for electronic editions of musical

theatre for reasons I will detail below. Before doing so, however, I feel obligated to say that I have been using the archive almost since its inception and have always found it extremely helpful and so the following criticisms should not be taken as dismissive of the work of the archive's editors but rather as building upon the foundation they have so ably laid.

There are some minor cosmetic details I dislike about the archive. Although they could have been integrated into the webpage, the MIDI sound files must be downloaded and played in a different program which forces one to look away from the text and then find one's place again once the song begins. The JavaScript-controlled pop-up windows used to display larger versions of the included images will be blocked by many browsers and internet security suites (the abuse of pop-up windows by advertisers and malicious code writers has made them unpopular in current web design). The link to advance to the next page is only at the bottom of every page. This makes skimming for a particular moment more difficult than it need be.

More serious is the failure to integrate critical or textual notes in the operas. For at least *The Pirates of Penzance*, the archive has the material available in another file (titled the "definitive libretto"). However, this file must be opened in Microsoft Word and is not a hypertext. There is a note on this libretto by another contributor which points out factual errors and important informational gaps. Here the *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive's* status as a repository and not a critical electronic edition becomes apparent.

The use of MIDI files for the music is also a bit archaic. MIDI files include only the music of a song and without expensive equipment usually sound electronic and tinny. The slightly more advanced MIDI-Karaoke files used in the "web opera" of *The Pirates of Penzance* (which highlight the words in a text file as the associated music plays) are an improvement, but still fraught with problems. The karaoke files still must be downloaded and played in a program separate from the text. Very fast patter songs and duets in which singers sing completely different words cannot be easily converted to karaoke format. Indeed, the editor of the *Pirates* web opera offers a *mea culpa* in a "read me" text file included in the archive stating, "I have not found it possible within the limits of the Karaoke File format to make meaningful Karaoke files of two sections from this opera: No. 4 (O false one, you have deceived me) and Nos. 9 to 10 (How beautifully blue the sky), and consequently these are only available as MIDI Files" (*Pirates Karaoke*).

In 1993, when the *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive* first went online, MIDI files represented the only feasible way to transfer music quickly over slow dialup connections. Now, over ten years later, music file compression has greatly improved and the speed of internet connections (even dialup connections) has been greatly increased. Internet music is now usually digitally recorded (rather than digitally generated). Of course, this too presents problems for use in electronic editions. Singing is a form of performance which, as previously discussed, might limit the action of the imagination on the text. In this case, though, the opportunity to actually hear the words set to music seems an integral part of the experience of the text itself in much the same way the necessity of the theatrical experience of vaudeville may justify the performances in *Virtual Vaudeville*. Broadway producers and original casts are regularly asked to listen beyond the often weak voices of composers on demo tapes and in early rehearsals to hear the possibilities of what a song might sound like in performance. Users of electronic editions of musical theatre libretti will hopefully be able to work the same "imaginary forces."

Using recorded music does create a more complicated copyright problem, however. In the case of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, the music itself is now in the public domain. Even in cases in which the music is still under copyright, an editor need only secure permission from a

composer or his representatives to play the music using the computer as an instrument. Reproducing a performance, however, often means one must obtain reproduction rights from many interested parties. It is a difficult problem, but permission might be more easily granted if an edition does not include the music but requires the user to purchase a legal version from a vendor and have it available to the edition software. There are many free, legal, and easy-to-use programs which can copy (or “rip”) music from a CD to a computer. Many cast albums are also legally available for purchase in digital format from online retailers like iTunes, Napster, Real Rhapsody, and Wal-Mart. When first using the edition, a user can instruct the program where to find the sound files which have been purchased separately from an approved source.

Of course, even if all copyrights are cleared, problems remain. Cast recordings are rarely complete and often present a text that is different from any completely staged version of the musical. Perhaps, if electronic editors work closely with theatre departments, it will be possible for editors to record productions mounted by their own institutions. This is not to say, though, that the cast recording should necessarily be excluded from the edition. Indeed, if an electronic edition wishes to be a “critical” text, differences among all important versions of the text should be noted.

Not all electronic editions need necessarily be critical texts, however. Those designed to be so should have available as many major versions of the text as possible. However, an electronic edition that presents a single version of a text well is still of great value. Peter Robinson’s *Hengwrt Chaucer* contains very few textual notes, but has allowed medievalists inexpensive access to an important early version of the *Canterbury Tales*. An electronic edition that increases the accessibility of an important musical theatre score and libretto should not be dismissed simply because it presents only one version of the text (although the editor should, of course, be clear about which version of the text is being presented).

In all cases, whether a single version or an electronic variorum is the goal, a good design is as essential to an electronic edition as it is to the traditional codex-bound version. Ideally, an electronic edition should be easier to use than a paper-and-ink edition that presents the same material. Many humanities scholars remain relatively unfamiliar with computer technology and so an electronic edition should require as little technical skill as possible. The program should therefore employ a user interface and environment that is likely to be familiar to most computer users.

For this reason, I have decided to follow the example of many recent electronic editions, and design my own to run in a web browser. Web browsers allow both programmers and users to begin with much of their task already accomplished. Browsers are designed to integrate text and multimedia and so provide programmers with a basic graphical interface and, in most current versions, a ready-made set of XML tools. Most scholars have used the web and know how to open a web browser on their computers and so have already mastered much of the necessary technological skill set needed for use. Web pages are by nature open source. That is, other programmers and editors can easily look at the code used to design the edition and apply the concepts to their own work. One can also be relatively confident that web pages designed according to the standards set by the W3 Consortium will be displayed reasonably consistently regardless of the user’s platform (Windows, Macintosh, Linux, etc.) or browser (Internet Explorer, Netscape, Firefox, etc.). I hedge my last sentence in adverbs in the knowledge that compatibility issues will inevitably arise in any web-based program. Still it is far easier to develop cross-platform compatibility in a browser than in a stand-alone program.

After choosing to develop a browser-based edition, I was faced with several programming options. I could design the program as a Java applet. This is a relatively old solution which allows programmers to use Java (a popular and powerful programming language used to develop many stand-alone applications) that is run within a browser. Many electronic editions in the past five years have used Java programs. The first edition of the *Electronic Beowulf* uses a Java applet to handle many of the advanced features of the edition (such as searching and image manipulation). The Blake Archive uses a Java applet for resizing the images. Unfortunately, Java applets can be slow and, due to their ability to carry malicious code, are often blocked by default in popular browsers. Applets also fail to make use of many of the features which make browser-based programming attractive. Applets exist in a sort of box within a browser and so do not make use of the browser's natural ability to display text and multimedia. *The Electronic Beowulf* wisely allows the browser to handle most of the textual display and uses the Java applet only for processing and parts of the user interface that, in the year 2000, could not be accomplished easily without an applet.

Many of the best interactive and multimedia websites on the internet today (including *Virtual Vaudeville*) are designed with Macromedia's Flash and Shockwave software. Users are required to download a free viewer from Macromedia's homepage to view these pages, but Flash-based pages are common enough that many readers have likely already done so. Macromedia's software tends to run far more quickly and efficiently than Java applets and the design software permits editors to build impressive multimedia pages quickly and with very little programming knowledge. Unfortunately, while Macromedia's viewers are free, the design software currently costs several hundreds of dollars and is not commonly installed in general use university computer labs. Further, as with Java, Macromedia programs run in a box within the website and so potentially forfeit the advantages that come ready made with web browsers. Still, Macromedia's software remains one of the best ways to present interactive multimedia within a web browser and so is probably the best choice for projects like *The Virtual Vaudeville*.

For text-based electronic editions (even those, like my own, which are inextricably linked with multimedia), the newest version of HTML (and languages that can truly work within it) provide much of the functionality of Java and Macromedia's software without the associated costs. It was not always this way. User interaction in early versions of HTML was limited to a series of choices (much like the interface provided by the choose-your-adventure books). Users could follow paths offered by the author, but individual pages did not change. In 1995, Netscape released a new language called JavaScript compatible with their then dominant browser which allowed web designers to create dynamic web pages (that is, pages that can change based on user input). The language was soon adopted by other browsers and can be run today by the current versions of every commonly used browser (although, because of security concerns, some browsers do require the user to authorize its use).¹¹

At around the same time plans were made to improve the ability of web programmers to control the display and formatting of text. In the early days of the web, all display information was included in the content of the HTML page itself. If one wanted to display a word in italics, one place typed “<i>” before the word and “</i>” after it. If it was decided that underlining

¹¹ A more complete history can be read on the website of the O'Reilly network (publisher of a popular series of programming language instruction manuals) at http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/javascript/2001/04/06/js_history.html.

should be used instead, the programmer would have to replace every “<i>” with “<u>” and every “</i>” with “</u>.” Simple enough to do with a search and replace program, but inelegant. Designers also had little control over the size and positioning of elements in a webpage. They could make certain specifications, but these would be unreliably interpreted by browsers (especially those with settings that allowed visually impaired users to increase the size of the text). The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), an international web standards group, met to solve this problem in 1995.

The solution was cascading style sheets (CSS). Cascading style sheets separated the content of a web page from its display. CSS pages still used tags, but the tags simply described the group to which the content belonged. The tag “<div class=“emphasized”>” told the browser nothing about how to display the text that would follow but only classified it by the name “emphasized.” In another section (perhaps included at the beginning of the HTML page but likely part of an entirely different file), the browser would be told how exactly it should display “emphasized” text (as bold, underlined, highlighted, or even simply as plain text).¹² As JavaScript developed and given the ability to modify CSS, it became possible for web designers to allow users to truly interact with pages. The ability of JavaScript to change the style of a web page meant pages could be altered based on user input.

In the late 1990s, XML became more popular and it was clear that it could duplicate much of the functionality of HTML. A move to replace HTML with XML as the web standard began and some browsers started to support pages encoded in XML. Of more immediate importance, browsers began to allow scripting languages to navigate XML documents and integrate the information within them into HTML web pages. The XML file providing the content could even be stored in a remote location and accessed over a network (like the internet). The result was that it was now easy to alter both the style *and* content of HTML pages dynamically based on interaction with the user. Web browsers, without the addition of any external boxed-in programs like Java Applets or Flash, could now provide a versatile platform for powerful programs.

In February of 2005, Jesse James Garrett published an influential essay on the website of the consulting and technology training firm Adaptive Path in which he described the power that was now available by combining JavaScript and XML. He further described a method in which the problems caused by the unpredictable speed of network connections in delivering data could be minimized by allowing a program to accomplish other tasks while it is waiting for data from a server (called Asynchronous scripting). In the article, he gave this method the now commonly used name “Ajax” (short for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML). Garrett mentions Google Maps, an impressive interactive mapping program designed by the popular search engine company, as an example of Ajax programming (<http://www.adaptivepath.com/publications/essays/archives/000385.php>). Perhaps it was due to the association with Google. Perhaps it was the catchy name. Perhaps it was truly due to the power this approach to web design provided. But for whatever reason, Ajax quickly became one of the most talked about new ideas in web technology in 2005. At the time of this writing,

¹² An account of the development of CSS by some of its designers can be read in *Cascading Style Sheets, Designing for the Web*, by Håkon Wium Lie and Bert Bos available online at the W3 consortium website at <http://www.w3.org/Style/LieBos2e/history/>.

one year later, at least eight programming books with “Ajax” in the title are available from Amazon.com.

Ajax pages are, of course, intended to be distributed over the internet. However, in order to protect the copyrights of the creators, electronic editions of musical theatre are probably best distributed at present on removable media (CDs and DVDs). Therefore, the increase in network efficiency provided by the asynchronous nature of Ajax does not really benefit the electronic edition. Still, the combination of JavaScript and XML is a convenient and powerful way to develop electronic editions. The widespread use of TEI XML for electronic editions makes Ajax’s use of XML files particularly useful. For my electronic edition, I therefore decided to use Ajax to design the user interface.

Having selected the technology, I was then faced with a choice of texts to use as a model. I wanted a recent, well-written text that I felt would reward close reading and literary analysis but which is rarely staged (and would therefore benefit from the improved accessibility of an electronic edition). Jason Robert Brown and Alfred Uhry’s *Parade* met these standards. The musical opened at Lincoln Center in November of 1998 but closed after only 84 performances due largely to the indictment of its financier Garth Drabinski for questionable accounting practices. The musical earned some positive critical reviews and won the 1999 Tony Awards for best book and best score. A national tour was launched, but never achieved any great degree of popularity among audiences used to more familiar titles like *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. The musical is now licensed by Music Theatre International, but is not often staged due to the large cast and expensive production requirements (putting it out of the reach of most non-profit theatres) and the difficulty of the subject matter (making an unlikely choice for commercial and high school theatres). The text has been unfortunately overlooked by scholars and deserves to be experienced and studied, and so I selected it for my demonstration.

The verbal text has been published in its entirety twice before. A 2000 issue of *Show Music* magazine printed the Broadway version of the libretto and the touring version was published in the 2003 anthology *The New American Musical*. Both suffer, however, from the previously discussed nature of text-only editions of musical theatre libretti and both differ slightly (the former much more than the latter) from the text Jason Robert Brown now considers the “official” text licensed by Music Theatre International. For my edition I used an electronic version of this text Brown sent to me as a Microsoft Word file. The formatting is slightly different from the MTI version, but this electronic text is essentially identical to the one licensed for production today. Brown felt including a multitude of texts in this edition could potentially suggest to performing groups that the other texts were authorized alternative to the MTI script and so, after the model of Peter Robinson’s *Hengwrt Digital Chaucer*, I have not attempted to collate the entirety of the text with other existing editions. I have, however, collated the text with the *Show Music* version for Act 2, Scene 1 (a scene that was significantly changed from the Broadway version to the current one) in order to demonstrate the power of the electronic edition to present texts that exist in many different versions. I have used the Original Cast Recording for the music files. It is not an ideal choice as it represents a version of the libretto slightly different from the version contained in the text. It is, at present however, the only legal recording of the musical.

After receiving the text and permission from Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown to use it for my demonstration, I prepared the text according to the TEI guidelines for drama. I encoded act and scene divisions, identified the text as either verse (song) or prose; marked stage directions and music cues; noted paragraph, stanza, line, and word divisions; and recorded

speaker identification (thereby associating lines with characters). I further attempted to link simultaneous lines (such as duets or songs sung under dialogue). In a small departure from TEI guidelines (which remain very text-centered and did not offer a good alternative), I included the track number and start and end times from the original cast recording in the TEI tags for stanza divisions.

Effectively linking music and text was a primary goal in my edition, but a difficult one to accomplish. I was initially attracted to a new W3-approved mark-up system known as SMIL (an acronym for Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language). SMIL attempts to provide a time-based script which can control and simultaneously play various multimedia objects (movies, sounds, formatted text, etc.). I expect that most browsers will soon be able to play SMIL objects without additional software. Unfortunately, at present only the latest version of Internet Explorer can play SMIL files within the browser itself (other browsers require a special plug-in which must be installed by users). This solution would also, unfortunately, require the songs to be separated from the rest of the text and create problems similar to those incurred by the *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive's* use of MIDI-Karaoke files. This I thought unacceptable. I decided, instead, to play the music in a QuickTime plug-in. QuickTime is freely available from Apple's website and is included with the popular iTunes software. It is therefore likely that most users, regardless of their platform, will have QuickTime already available.

When the user clicks the lyrics of a song, a QuickTime plug-in is started at the beginning of the stanza that was clicked and the music is stopped at the end of the stanza. Clicking the music cue at the beginning of a song causes QuickTime to play to the end of the track. This, I felt, was a way to easily and naturally link sound and text while keeping the spoken and sung sections undivided. I originally wanted to force the user to play the music from the CD of the Original Cast Recording (to better ensure protection of the performance copyrights). Unfortunately, the QuickTime plug-in is unable to play directly from a CD. I also was reluctant to exclude users who legally purchased and downloaded the CD from an online retailer. I therefore designed a system in which the user can, upon first using the program, give the location of the sound files (which can be stored in any of the many formats playable by QuickTime). The user browses the file system for the first file and selects it. The program automatically attempts to determine the location of the rest of the tracks based on the filename of the first one. For instance, if the user selects "Track01.mp3" as the first file, the program will guess that the second file is "Track02.mp3." After all the tracks are located, the program stores the information in a cookie (a small data file, associated with a particular webpage, which is stored on the user's computer). The next time the user opens the program, the location of the sound files will be loaded from the cookie.

Creating an elegant and easy-to-use interface for the display and navigation of the text was my next goal. I wanted users to be able to move easily about the text (not necessarily in linear order) and to be able to compare two different sections of the text without opening a new browser window. One of the first books on Ajax programming, David Crane, Eric Pascarello, and Darren James's *Ajax in Action*, offered, as an example, an Ajax-based webpage which created windows which, in turn, opened various other web pages within a single browser. Using the ideas (and some of the code) presented in this example, I developed an interface in which scenes from the text could be loaded into window-like objects. These windows each have a header with navigational tools (a drop down menu listing all scenes as well as next and back buttons to linearly advance or reverse through the text) and can be maximized to fill the browser window. The user can create new "window-objects" and dispose of old ones at will.

The text is loaded into these windows from the TEI XML file I described earlier. It is transformed into HTML via JavaScript. For two reasons, I have decided not to use the more common approach of XSL (extensible stylesheet language) style sheets which, like CSS, direct browsers how to display content. First, the display of XML documents using XSL style sheets is not yet universally or consistently accomplished by web browsers. Secondly, XSL's are not easily dynamically modified using JavaScript. It is common to generate XSL stylesheets using server-based languages like PHP and PERL. I wanted to run the program from the edition CD and did not want to require the user to either have or install PHP or PERL interpreters. I could accomplish the transformations I wanted quickly and easily using JavaScript and so decided to adopt this, admittedly rather unorthodox, solution.

I wanted the edition to include tools helpful to both the literary critic and potential theatrical producer. I have therefore included with the edition textual, critical, and explanatory notes designed to treat the libretto as both a literary and theatrical piece. I have included, along with the standard search feature, an exhaustive concordance of every word in the libretto. I have also included a tool which will extract all the lines for a particular character along with cue lines to aid actors in memorization of their parts. I have added a tool which adjusts the transparency of the various windows. I foresee this to be of particular interest to those comparing the two versions of Act 2 Scene 1.

I designed the edition to be easily extended. The XML of the *Parade* libretto is also easily extensible to anyone familiar with TEI encoding. Other libretti prepared in TEI XML may be easily adapted into my design with very few changes in the HTML or JavaScript. Perhaps future electronic editions may be developed which include specially performed versions of a score or which are designed to facilitate study of variant readings among different versions of a libretto. Such electronic editions would be invaluable for the serious study of musical theatre.

These critical electronic editions should, of course, provide the same sort of scholarly analysis found in their traditional counterparts. Along with explanatory and critical notes, these editions usually offer an essay on the edited work as a "critical introduction." In my next and final chapter I will demonstrate what a literary introduction to a scholarly edition of a musical might look like. I will narrate the production and reception history of *Parade* and offer a literary analysis (based in contemporary performance theory) of the musical. This introduction is also included in electronic form in the "About" menu of the edition.

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Chapter 7: Critical Introduction to *Parade*

Genesis of the Project

The 1990s were a transitional time on Broadway. While the four major musical “war ships” of the British invasion of the previous decade (*Cats*, *Les Misérables*, *Phantom*, and *Miss Saigon*) remained anchored on the Great White Way in 1999, the era was at its end. *Sunset Boulevard* had shuttered after only three money-losing years on Broadway, and *Whistle Down the Wind* and *Martin Guerre* never quite made it to Manhattan. In the next few years even *Cats*, *Miss Saigon*, and *Les Misérables* would finally end their record-breaking runs. Those who felt the British musicals were spectacle-driven and musically derivative might have been tempted to rejoice when it became clear *Cats* was really just “Now and Four Weeks More,”¹³ were it not for the line of dance revues and movie adaptations that replaced them. If the British musicals were popularizing glosses of the classic works of Victor Hugo and Puccini, the new American musicals were theme-park-style adaptations of animated children’s movies.

In part this shift from mega-musical to dance musical and movie adaptation was a reflection of the economics of the time. The late 1980s were a time of relative economic prosperity. In 1987, a year after *Les Misérables* and a year before *Phantom*, unemployment in America was only 6.2%, the lowest since 1979 (U.S. Department of Labor). Such prosperity could afford to support the \$8,000,000 production cost of the New York *Phantom of the Opera* (www.thephantomoftheopera.com). By 1991, when *Miss Saigon*, the last of the successful mega-musicals opened, unemployment had risen to 6.8% (U.S. Department of Labor). As production costs soared and the economy became shaky, the era of the mega-musical began to pass away. In a 1999 article for the *Maryland Sun*, John Rousuck writes of the tour of *Sunset Boulevard*:

Designer John Napier's original mammoth set featured a mansion that rose up an entire story, allowing a separate scene to be performed underneath. That set cost \$1 million to transport from city to city. As a result, the show's first tour (which did not have a star in the lead) played less than a year of a projected multi-year tour and closed at a loss. (“Catching Up With Petula Clark”)

Perhaps stories like this one caused producers in the early and mid-nineties to look more favorably on proposals for dance musicals that often featured minimalist sets. Only large corporations like Disney, with income that did not depend on the success or failure of its Broadway ventures, could afford to mount large spectacular shows, and even they chose to stick with popular titles that had already made them money in other media.

By the end of the 1990s, in the 1998-1999 season, three of the new musicals were revues (*Fosse*, *Ain't Nothing But the Blues*, *Band in Berlin*), one was a concept musical by *Jekyll and Hyde* composer Frank Wildhorn (*The Civil War*), and one was a movie adaptation (*Footloose*). Three were solo ventures (*Mamaloshen*, *Aznavour*, *An Evening with Jerry Herman*) that ran for less than a month. The rest were mostly revivals (*Little Me*; *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; *Peter Pan*; *Swan Lake*; *On the Town*). All of these musicals were either inexpensive to

¹³ During the last few years of its run, the publicity for *Cats* included the catchphrase “Now and Forever”

produce or else had titles or composers guaranteed to bring crowds based on familiarity. The season was a fair representation of the entire decade.

Fortunately, though, there were a few exceptions. Jonathan Larson's *Rent* had neither spectacle nor a popular title to draw crowds (its connection to a 19th century opera was presumably not a selling point). Yet (in part due to special reduced pricing for the best seats in an effort to draw younger audiences) it became one of the most popular musicals of the 1990s. Despite critical acclaim of the E.L. Doctorow source material and its earlier adaptation as a PBS miniseries, the title of McNally, Ahrens, and Flaherty's *Ragtime* was unlikely to assure it a large fan base, yet Livent invested \$10,000,000 in both the Toronto and Los Angeles pre-Broadway productions of the show. And, around 1996, veteran director Hal Prince chose to employ a young, unknown composer and a book writer better known for plays to write a musical about the 1915 lynching of a Jewish factory supervisor, Leo Frank.

Like the subjects of many of Hal Prince's projects, the Leo Frank case seemed an unlikely topic for a musical. Frank was a Brooklyn-born Jewish man who moved to Atlanta in 1907 to marry a southern-born Jewish woman and to work as a supervisor in the factory of the National Pencil Company. On April 26, 1913, Mary Phagan, a girl who worked for Frank in the factory, was found murdered. Frank was convicted of the murder and sentenced to death on the basis of what even the *Marietta Journal Courier* acknowledged was "circumstance evidence" and on the testimony of a black janitor who claimed Frank had bribed him not to tell anyone about his guilt ("Frank Guilty" 2). In 1915 the governor of Georgia commuted his sentence to imprisonment for life, but several months later a mob from Marietta abducted Frank from his prison cell and lynched him. The State of Georgia pardoned Frank in 1986.

In an interview with Alfred Uhry and Hal Prince on New York television's *Charlie Rose Show* a few weeks before *Parade* closed, the host began the episode, speaking for what was likely much of the audience: "If someone said to me [...] this is going to be a musical, I would have said, 'show me.'" Hal Prince, director of *West Side Story*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, responded, "I have a lifetime of walking the streets and having people saying 'What are you doing next?' and then I tell them and they say, 'That's a musical?' Well I've been encouraged enough to go right on."

In a career spanning over half a century, Prince has successfully demonstrated that the musical need not be simply escapist entertainment but may be used artfully as a form of social commentary. Like Arthur Miller's thinly veiled criticism of McCarthyism in *The Crucible*, Prince's musicals often address contemporary situations through an analogous situation in another time and place. Prince describes an early rehearsal for the 1966 musical *Cabaret* in which he brought in a photograph and asked the cast to identify when it was taken:

Everyone naturally assumed it was Berlin in the early thirties because that's the time and place of our show. They were surprised when I said it was taken in Little Rock, Arkansas in the mid-fifties: these aren't Hitler Youth but blond white kids snarling at black kids entering an integrated school, an image that is still relevant today, unfortunately. (Hirsch 40)

Parade, similarly, was reflective of events of the 1990s. The fairness of the United States judicial system was very much in doubt in the 1990s. The Rodney King verdict, its ensuing riots in 1991, and what was arguably its sequel in the 1996 O.J. Simpson trial caused many to see the court system as corrupt and racially motivated. These attitudes are reflected explicitly in both *Ragtime* and *Parade* and hinted at in *Rent* as the characters find it more effective to stage sit-ins and riots rather than go through the court system for justice. In a sad sort of confirmation of the

legitimacy of these doubts, Alton White, an actor playing Coalhouse Walker in the Broadway production of *Ragtime*, was arrested in Harlem in 1999 in an instance of what seemed to be racial profiling by the New York Police Department.¹⁴

One wonders if these events in any way inspired the decision to begin work on the musical *Parade*. Certainly the popularity of the O.J. Simpson case, in which a white woman was killed and an ethnic minority man was charged, bears certain similarities to the Leo Frank case. However, the creative team has not cited any of these events in their discussion of the creation of the musical. The origin of *Parade* seems much more personal. In the liner notes for the Original Broadway Cast Recording, book writer Alfred Uhry writes that Leo Frank's widow was "his grandmother's friend" (Uhry). There is some debate among the creators concerning whose idea the project was, originally. In Prince's version (as told at Lincoln Center a year earlier), Uhry has the idea to adapt the story as a musical:

[Uhry] called me one day and I actually said to him that somebody had been needling me about doing a musical about Sammy Davis Jr. I said I can't imagine why they asked me, or why they think it's a good idea. And then I thought, "Well, maybe the good idea of it is that you don't know anything about Sammy Davis Jr." I knew him rather well, but that's very complicated. Simultaneously I thought, "Nobody wants to see that musical about Sammy Davis Jr. They want to see the one they know about Sammy Davis Jr." So it seemed like a lousy idea. So I mentioned all this to Alfred, and he said, "I have a good idea, I think, for a musical." And he mentioned Leo Frank's story. ("A Conversation With Hal Prince")

In an interview with the Lincoln Center Theater, however, Uhry told the story in this way:

Hal Prince asked me to write a show about Sammy Davis Jr., which I didn't want to do [...] Then, I was talking to him about [*The Last Night of*] *Ballyhoo*. And he said, "I wonder why those Atlanta Jews were so desperately assimilating?" And I said, "Well, probably because of Leo Frank." He said, "I know about Leo Frank, sort of. Tell me the story." And I did. And he jumped up out of his chair, literally, with his glasses on top of his head, and he said, "This is the musical I have been looking for. This is the musical I want to do." ("A Conversation With Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown")

Jason Robert Brown was also present at the Uhry interview and pointed out the discrepancy, but Uhry maintained, "My memory is that he thought of it as a musical, and I immediately saw the possibilities" ("A Conversation With Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown").

Uhry and Prince are both well known to the theater community. Hal Prince has worked on musicals since he produced *The Pajama Game* in 1954. He directed most of Stephen Sondheim's early work including *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Company*, *Follies*, *A Little Night Music*, and *Sweeney Todd*, as well as Andrew Lloyd Webber's long-running adaptation of *The Phantom of the Opera*. Although Uhry had written the books to two musicals before *Parade* (*Here's Where I Belong* and *The Robber Bridegroom*), he is better known as a playwright than as a book writer. His *Driving Miss Daisy* enjoyed success as both a play and a movie. His second Broadway venture, *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*, won the Tony award for best play in 1997 and is now often produced by college and amateur groups across the nation. All of his work thus far deals with Judaism and racism in the American South. In *Driving Miss Daisy* a

¹⁴ *Playbill Online*'s July 19, 1999 can be found at <http://www.playbill.com/news/article/46736.html>.

white Jewish woman develops a deep friendship with her black chauffeur. In *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* a Southern Jewish family must sort out their prejudices against other Jews from different regions. These themes also figure prominently in *Parade*.

Prince and Uhry set out to find a composer and lyricist. Prince first approached Stephen Sondheim. Prince and Sondheim had not worked together since the spectacular commercial failure of *Merrily We Roll Along* in the early eighties. In an interview at the Lincoln Center, Prince explains that though the two had both hoped to work together again, Sondheim did not feel up to the project:

Steve and I have been wanting to work together for a long time. Again. We took a long hiatus, close to twenty years, but we have been wanting to. So I told him about this. And he said, "I love it. I'll do it." And then, close to six months later he said, "I can't. It's too serious coming after *Passion*." And I said, "I understand." So Alfred said, "What do you want to do?" And I said, "I want you to listen to this young man." ("A Conversation with Hal Prince")

The young man was Jason Robert Brown. Brown, an Eastman School of Music drop-out, had only one prior New York show to his credit--*Songs for a New World*. *Songs* was an intimate off-Broadway revue staged at the WPA Theater by Hal Prince's daughter, Daisy. Brown rehearsed *Songs for a New World* at Hal Prince's house and, while there, came to know Daisy's father (Bryer and Davison 38). Brown worked as a rehearsal pianist for Hal Prince on *Kiss of the Spider Woman* and as a music director for Michael John LaChiusa's *The Petrified Prince* ("A Conversation with Jason Robert Brown"). In his own interview at Lincoln Center, Brown explains how Prince eventually approached him to write the music and lyrics for a new project:

Hal got me... a dog [...] And he used to arrange appointments where I would walk the dog across the park and meet him, so he could say hello to the dog. [...] One time when I walked Bernstein [the dog] across the park, Hal said, "I want to talk to you in two or three days, why don't you come by the office. There's something I want to talk to you about writing," he said. "It's like an American opera." And I thought, "Um, okay, sure! Sounds good." ("A Conversation With Jason Robert Brown")

Prince and Uhry told Brown about the project and asked him to "consider putting a couple of numbers together for it, entirely on spec, of course" (Bryer and Davison 39). After some false starts that nonetheless impressed the senior members of the collaboration, he began meeting weekly with Uhry to talk about the world of the show. Brown remembers that in the months between August of 1994 and March of 1995:

I spent one day a week, at least, in Alfred's apartment or at his house, just talking to him and writing everything down he said. He would talk about life in the South, about what it meant for southerners to lose the Civil War, about life before the Civil War. [...] In March I wrote the opening number, "The Old Red Hills of Home." (Bryer and Davison 39).

The song deeply impressed Uhry, who remembered in the Lincoln Center interview, "I really was moved to tears by it, and still am. [...] And I called Hal and said, 'Sign him'" ("A Conversation with Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown").

Creative Development

After the creative team was assembled, the show went through several workshops (a process disliked by Brown). In an article for *Show Music*, Eric Grode writes:

The show went through various readings and workshops, including a New York workshop starring Matthew Broderick, before the final product opened at Lincoln Center. Brown says he holds little stock in workshops – “they often happen because the shows aren’t good enough, and they’re often an excuse not to actually do the show because it isn’t good enough [...]” (38)

According to Brown’s liner notes for the cast recording, the show had “a reading in Philadelphia, a reading in New York, [and] a workshop in Toronto.” After the workshop series there was talk of premiering the play in Atlanta. Uhry, however, was strongly opposed to the idea. In Dan Hulbert’s 1998 article for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Uhry was quoted as saying:

There are still people around Atlanta who are descended from players in the story [...] The skin is still raw on these wounds - not everyone agrees that Leo Frank was innocent of the murder of Mary Phagan [...] The show's reception might be distorted by factors that have nothing to do with the quality of the show. (“Uhry Opposes an Atlanta Premiere”)

Jason Robert Brown remembers they had planned to open the show in Boston in June of 1998, “but, mysteriously, [producer] Garth Drabinski didn’t book the try-out.” The show eventually opened on December 17, 1998, at Lincoln Center’s Broadway theater, the Vivian Beaumont. The choice of a non-profit venue somewhat moderated the risk of opening such a unconventional musical. In an interview at Lincoln Center, Hal Prince acknowledged that while the show would have cost around \$10 million at a commercial theater, the Lincoln Center production cost only \$4 to \$5 million (“A Conversation with Hal Prince”). It was hoped, even expected, that the show would transfer to a commercial venue relatively quickly. Instead, it closed on February 28, 1999, after only 84 performances.

Ironically, given the relatively novice status of the book writer and composer, it was arguably the choice of a well-known and successful producer that ultimately contributed to the premature closing of *Parade*. Canadian Producer Garth Drabinsky of Livent theatricals, described as a “flamboyant impresario” by Eric Grode, was indicted for financial mismanagement and his company fell apart as *Parade* was beginning its Broadway run (“*Parade Marches On*” 37). Without the financial backing of the producer, the musical quickly ran out of funds and was forced to close. The musical did, however, go on to win the Tony Awards for “Best Book” and “Best Score” and enjoyed a short but critically acclaimed tour in 2000.

Sources and Background

The Leo Frank story has long been a popular topic for artistic interpretation. Artists began telling the story almost as soon as it began. Frank scholar Jeffrey Melnick writes, “according to some accounts, [country music singer] Fiddlin’ John Carson was on the courthouse steps every day of the trial singing his ballad ‘Little Mary Phagan’ to an appreciative audience” (6). The story has been adapted as a film (*They Won’t Forget*) in 1937, as a two-part television miniseries in 1988 (*The Murder of Mary Phagan*), and as a novel by David Mamet (*The Old Religion*) in 1997.

There have also been numerous historical accounts of the case. Arguably the most complete, Steve Oney's *And The Dead Shall Rise*, was not completed during the creative development of *Parade* but now provides interesting historical background on the events of the musical. Prior to Oney's book, Leonard Dinnerstein's *The Leo Frank Case* provided the best, and remains the most scholarly, examination of the topic. The book was originally published in 1968 but was revised in 1987 after Dinnerstein won Frank's pardon from the State of Georgia. Jason Robert Brown cited his own sources in the Lincoln Center interview:

I read the materials they gave me, which consisted primarily of [Charles and Louise Samuels's] *Night Fell on Georgia*, which is a wonderful book about the case. There is another book by Harry Goldman called *A Little Girl is Dead*, which I read. And there were a whole stack of newspaper articles from *The Tennessean*, which had come out when a man came forward years after the murder to say he had seen Jim Conley with the body of the girl. [...] *The Tennessean* did a special series on it, and they published pages of research about the case. And that was most of what I read. The Atlanta Jewish Museum was also kind enough to send a videotape; it was only 8 or 9 minutes, part of their newsreels that they show. I watched that to give me some flavor of what it looked like. But that was the only historical research. ("A Conversation With Jason Robert Brown").

Uhry also cites *Night Fell On Georgia* as influential in his understanding of the case, but also considers it something of a family story. In an article for the *New York Times*, Uhry writes, "My great-uncle was [Frank's] employer. Two cousins were on his defense team. Lucille Frank, his wife, was my grandmother's friend" ("A Sorry Chapter, A Source for Song"). However, Uhry's family did not often talk openly of the affair. Uhry writes, "When they realized I was listening [to conversations about Frank], they pursed their lips, exchanged significant looks and changed the subject" ("A Sorry Chapter, A Source for Song").

In many cases, Brown and Uhry adapted dialogue and lyrics directly from recorded history. In the Lincoln Center interview, Uhry claimed, "A lot of the trial stuff is quotes. And the governor's speeches were all actually said" ("A Conversation with Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown"). Uhry further explains Lucille's line in the final scene, "I'm a Georgia girl," comes from a letter the historical Lucille wrote and permitted to be published¹⁵ ("A Conversation with Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown"). The title of the opening song, "The Old Red Hills of Home," comes from Mary Phagan's gravestone ("A Conversation with Jason Robert Brown").

The characters in the play are mostly historical. Judge Roan, Hugh Dorsey, the defense attorney Luther Rosser, and Governor Slaton all represent historical characters of the same names who did and said more or less the same things as they do in the musical. In other cases, usually when a character is similar to a historical person but diverges from that source in significant ways, the character is given a historical last name but a new first name. Frankie Epps, for instance, seems suggested by the historical "George Epps" who did claim to have spoken with Mary on the streetcar just before her death but who was probably not part of the lynch mob. Similarly, a historical Monteen Stover worked in the factory and testified against Leo Frank at the trial, but, unlike the Monteen and Iola Stover in the musical, never, to my knowledge, recanted her testimony.

¹⁵ Oney prints this letter, originally published in *The Augusta Chronicle*, in his book (601-602).

The music, though original, draws its inspirations from several sources. In the interview at Lincoln Center Brown cites a few:

I focused on just certain composers of the period who I thought could really help me. And the best of them was Charles Ives. I had loved him all through college. The place is wrong— Ives is a famous New Englander. But his sense of adventure, of the American spirit, what American music should be, I thought he represented what 1913 might have been about, musically. There was all this kind of bursting at the edges, ragtime was just coming out, and at the same time there was still all of the old European tradition, and people singing parlor songs around the piano. So there was [sic] all of these kinds of things garbled together and mixing and starting to become a music of their own. For the "chain gang song" in *Parade*, and things like that, I had an album which is a wonderful collection called *Sounds of the South*. It's four CDs, and it was originally done in the '50s. A guy with a stereo microphone just wandered through the South, into the gullies, into the plantations, into the swamplands, and he just found people who sang or played strange indigenous instruments made out of bamboo sticks or straws, or whatever it is that they played on. And he recorded them. That kind of sound, I didn't get a lot of chance to use it in the show, which was unfortunate, because it's very rich stuff. But I did use it for the chain gang number, and for some of the other songs like "A-Rumblin' and A-Rollin'." A lot of the black material comes from stuff that I pulled from there.

Brown explains that his inspiration for "The Dream of Atlanta" was "Something between 'Dixie' and 'The Stars and Stripes Forever,' I'm sure, though I didn't take any specific notes. [Orchestrator Don] Sebesky, God bless him, threw a 'Dixie' quote into the orchestration, buried in the piccolos somewhere in the first couple of bars," (personal email / 25 February 2005).

Reception

Although the withdrawal of Livent certainly hurt the musical, it would be unfair to place all the blame on Garth Drabinski for the early closing of *Parade*. The all-important *New York Times* was decidedly negative. Critic Ben Brantley wrote, "[*Parade*] arrives with an innately sympathetic hero undoubtedly worthy of our tears. But for those tears to flow, we have to get to know Leo Frank as a man, not as a symbol. The civics lesson that is 'Parade' forbids our ever approaching such knowledge" (32). A shorter and later review by Vincent Canby calls the show "Full of promise unfulfilled" and asks "What was Mr. Prince thinking of in allowing 'Parade' to be produced in this condition?" (5, 12).

Still, in the interview on the *Charlie Rose Show*, Prince insisted that *Parade* would likely have survived a bit longer than its two month run had it not been for troubles at Livent. He has some reason for thinking so. Despite the *New York Times* response, many other critics lavished the piece with superlative praise. Ken Mandelbaum, a theater critic at least as respected as Brantley, wrote in response to the Brantley review on BroadwayNow.com:

As one who loves "Parade," I was disheartened to see that Brantley still has yet to enjoy a new Broadway musical that isn't "Side Show." And I do feel that if one doesn't respond to Jason Robert Brown's "Parade" score, as Brantley did not, then one can't possibly like the show, which is very much akin to a contemporary American opera. ("This Is Not Over Yet")

Mandelbaum was not alone. *USA Today*'s David Patrick Stearns gave it three and a half out of four stars and wrote that the show "boldly exploits the musical-theater medium to its fullest, fulfilling every promise implied by *West Side Story*, *Company* and other ambitious musicals that have threatened to become Broadway anomalies" ("*Parade* Pointedly in Step With Today"). Linda Winer of *Newsday* wrote that *Parade* "is one of the most gratifying serious book musicals in a long time (and that includes Livent's similarly intentioned 'Ragtime')" ("Murder-Trial Parade is a Powerful Musical"). More reserved praise came from Clive Barnes at the *New York Post* who called the show "a sort of defining moment in the hopefully ongoing story of Broadway musical theater" but argued "Prince's 'Parade' is not a masterpiece. It's too diffuse..." ("*Parade* Passes Muster").

In spite of its early closing, *Parade* also gained several Tony nominations, including one for "Best Musical" (which it lost to *Fosse*). Jason Robert Brown was nominated for "Best Score" (music and lyrics) and Alfred Uhry for Best Book. Both won the awards. Hal Prince was also nominated as director but lost to Matthew Bourne's all-male interpretation of *Swan Lake*. Although *Parade* is not a dance-heavy show, choreographer Patricia Birch's work (best known from the popular revival of *Grease*) was nominated for both the Tony and Drama Desk awards. Though she lost both to the more terpsichorean *Swan Lake*, it is worth noting that the Tony's "Best Musical," *Fosse*, did not receive even a nomination from either. Unlike the dark and sexy gyrations of Bob Fosse, Birch's dancing tends to be relatively fast paced and optimistic. In *Parade* this up-beat style is used ironically, as *Newsday* reviewer Linda Winer writes: "Patricia Birch's cakewalks and other period choreography go effectively for ironic contradictions in tone, especially for 'Pretty Music,' where Lucille corners the governor [...] at a political dance" ("Murder Trial *Parade* is a Powerful Musical").

Riccardo Hernández's scenic design for *Parade* was also nominated for a Tony (the only musical of that year to earn such an honor) but lost it to Robert Hoover's work for *Not About Nightingales*. The sets were not spectacular. In a review of the production for the *Chicago Tribune*, Richard Christiansen writes, "*Parade* does not have an excess of heavy scenery, its dominant image being a huge tree that is ever present in the back of the stage. What it does have, through inventive use of trap doors and playing levels, is a high degree of skilled stagecraft" ("*Parade* Sets the Pace in Reinventing Music Drama"). The design sometimes even called attention to its minimalist tendency. David Patrick Stearns notes in his review for *USA Today* that the creative team "often fill[ed] out crowd scenes with eerie-looking cardboard cutouts" ("*Parade* Pointedly In Step With Today"). This style is somewhat characteristic of Hernández. *Bring in da Noise/Bring in da Funk* and the 2001 revival of *Bells are Ringing*, his two other Broadway musical designs, were similarly modest.

Orchestrator Don Sebesky earned his second Tony nomination for *Parade* (though he lost the award to *Fosse*). Sebesky's first Tony nomination had come two years previous for his work on Cy Coleman's *The Life*, but in *The Art of the American Musical* Brown specifically cited his work on a 1991 symphonic arrangement of Stephen Sondheim songs as the reason for selecting Sebesky for *Parade* (Bryer and Davison 36). Brown especially praises Sebesky's "encyclopedic knowledge" of 1916 music and his technical ability to "get every effect he wants" (Bryer and Davison 37). Sebesky orchestrated only about half the show, however ("the large stuff" like "The Funeral" and "Pretty Music" says Brown). The "smaller," "chamber" songs such as the duets between Leo and Lucille were originally assigned to Bruce Coughlin of *Urinetown* and *Light in the Piazza* fame ("A New Round of Asking JRB"). His work, however, was deemed

inappropriate for the project by Brown, and the composer eventually orchestrated these songs himself (Bryer and Davison 36-37).

Although not nominated for a Tony award, the show's lighting design was also praised by most critics. Designer Howell Binkley's past experience with musicals has run the gamut from the dark prison cells of *Kiss of the Spider Woman* to the more brightly lit celebration of "The Brotherhood of Man" in the revival of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. His work on *Parade* falls somewhere in between.

In a review for the electronic magazine *CurtainUp*, Elyse Summers writes Binkley:

once again proves himself a wizard of lighting (his outstanding design contributed enormously to another trial-of-the-century play, *Never the Sinner* [...]). The red sky chain gang scene in Act II captures some of the splendor of the burning of Atlanta in *Gone With the Wind*. ("A CurtainUp Review: *Parade*")

The lighting effect which opens the show is noted in nearly every review but best described in Richard Christiansen's piece for the *Chicago Tribune*:

A young Confederate soldier (Jeff Edgerton), alone in a spotlight, sings passionately of 'The Old Red Hills of Home.' Then, in one of designer Howell Binkley's many startling shifts of lighting, the boy is replaced by his later self, a ragged, grizzled, one-legged veteran who steps forward into the light as his young persona retreats into the shadows. ("*Parade* Sets the Pace in Reinventing Music Drama")

The original cast of *Parade* was equally praised by many critics. Brent Carver, who had previously won the Tony and Drama Desk awards for his performance as Molina in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, was nominated for the Tony award for Best Actor in a Musical for his portrayal of Leo Frank. *Newsday* reviewer Linda Winer praises Carver's versatility as a actor, noting that his "Leo is so different [from *Kiss of a Spider Woman*'s Molina that] he could be another species altogether" ("*Murder Trial Parade* is a Powerful Musical").

Carolee Carmello's performance as Lucille Frank was also nominated for a Tony award (for Best Actress in a Musical). Carmello had appeared as a replacement actress in several Broadway productions (*City of Angels*, *Falsettos*). She won an OBIE for her performance in the Lincoln Center's production of Michael John LaChiusa's *Hello Again* and later appeared in Andrew Lipka's *john & jen*. Her performance as Lucille was praised for its many layers. In a review for the website "Talking Broadway," Wendy Guida writes:

When I saw excerpts from *Parade* at a preview, I was struck by how un-Jewish Carolee Carmello's Lucille Frank seemed, but the reason for this became clear as I watched the show. Lucille Frank was a thoroughly assimilated Jewish woman. She was more Southern Belle than Hadassah Maven. ("*Parade*: Special Broadway Review")

Even reviewers not particularly fond of the show found Carmello's performance praise-worthy. Ben Brantley, who had almost nothing good to say about the show in his *New York Times* review, nonetheless praises Carmello's performance as "stirringly heartfelt" and claims "the second act is mostly hers."

Finally, Rufus Bonds Jr., in his relatively small part as the man who is thought to be the actual murderer, was also highly praised. In another generally negative review for the *New York Times*, Vincent Canby writes:

In addition to Mr. Carver, the only actors to register with distinctively realized performances are Carolee Carmello, who plays Lucille and has a lovely voice, and Rufus Bonds Jr., who plays Jim Conley, the janitor at the pencil factory, the man

thought to be the true killer. Mr. Bonds even survives one of the silliest chain gang scenes ever put on a stage.

At the time of *Parade*, Bonds had only one other Broadway credit to his name (*Once on this Island*) but he had won a Canadian award for his performance in the original Canadian cast of *Miss Saigon*. Even on the cast recording, Bonds' Jim Conley comes across as strangely funny and sympathetic, given the fact that he is likely responsible for the crime for which Leo Frank will hang. Wendy Guida puts it best in her aforementioned "Talking Broadway" review when she writes, "The role he plays is a thankless one, as it is apparent that he incriminates Frank to divert attention from his own part in the crime, but he sure gets to belt out a few great numbers."

In his acceptance speech at the Tony Awards, Alfred Uhry offered a sort of "You can't keep a good show down" proclamation and announced that a national tour would soon open in Atlanta. The tour opened as planned on June 13, 2000, and moved on to Memphis, Dallas, St. Paul, Pittsburgh, Green Bay, Denver, Seattle, and Cleveland. Despite its playing to only half-capacity in Atlanta, Charles Manos, co-producer of the musical, called the Atlanta run "a success in every way" in a June 20, 2000, interview for the *Journal-Constitution* (Hulbert, "Theatrical Bright Side to Atlanta's Dark Story"). Dan Hulbert's review in the same newspaper was somewhat less enthusiastic, calling the tour, "a powerful and moving evening of theater, if frequently flawed" ("A Human *Parade*"). Still, the reviews of the tour were for the most part very good. Linda Romine of the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* wrote, "PARADE is [...] an utterly enthralling, if somber, piece of musical theater in which such important issues as prejudice, race, loyalty and love are plumbed with unusual profundity and meaning" ("Simply a *Parade* of Riveting Portrayals"). Lawson Taitte of the *Dallas Morning News* compared the show to Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" and *West Side Story* ("Musical Reaches Admirable Heights Despite Against-the-Grain Love Story"). Warren Gerds in the *Green Bay Press Gazette* wrote, "Mostly, 'Parade' is like a sit-down with an intriguing book, full of the multiple, complex shadings of humankind. It's intriguing" ("*Parade* Packs Punch at Weidner"). Sandra C. Dillard of the *Denver Post* called *Parade* "a thoroughly satisfying theatrical experience" ("Dramatic, Funny *Parade* On Route to Local Success"). Keith A. Joseph joined the many in New York who felt *Parade* developed the genre ("A Melodic Treat"). In a review for the *Cleveland Scene* he wrote that *Parade* "rekindles our love for the vast possibilities of the American musical." Chris Jones wrote in *Variety* of the tour as a whole, "The show is a decidedly dark one compared to most road fare, and flaws certainly remain. But there's no disputing the high quality of Prince's compelling, moving and surprisingly expansive touring production. It is far superior to the original Lincoln Center Theater effort" (*Parade*).

While many reviewers complained of technical flaws (in particular the sound), only two reviewers responded in any way similar to the notorious *New York Times* pan. Both felt the show was simply too dark. Joe Adcock, *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, wrote "Awards notwithstanding, 'Parade' is quite literally hopeless" ("Subtlety, Drama Take a Hike in Plodding *Parade*"). Dominic Papatola of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* wrote, "But while the story of Leo Frank is worthy of dramatization, its density makes it a hard sell for a musical" ("*Parade* Tells an Important Story, But Is It a Musical?"). Both of these reviewers acknowledge some of the best musicals of the 20th century have been dark (it seems references to *Sweeney Todd* must appear in every review) but they nevertheless seem to feel *Parade* crosses the line that defines what sort of material a musical might legitimately cover. Given the show's overall message of hope and the possibility of redemption, it is difficult to understand the reaction of these reviewers who are willing to praise the far more pessimistic *Sweeney*.

The show never returned to Broadway as the creative team hoped. The popular licensing agency Music Theater International bought the amateur rights, but the musical is not often produced. In an interview for Jackson R. Bryer and Richard A. Davison's book, *The Art of the American Musical*, Jason Robert Brown says of the show's post-Broadway life, "*Parade* gets maybe ten [amateur productions annually], but it's a big show with a very ethnically diverse cast, which is hard to do. It's very complicated and very difficult, so I'm not surprised it hasn't been done more" (47). It is the goal of this electronic edition to increase both appreciation for and access to this brilliant work of musical theatre which might otherwise be unfairly overlooked by theatrical and literary scholars.

Analysis

As with Prince's other musicals, the title serves as a multivalent metaphor for many of the themes of the musical. In the interview at Lincoln Center, Jason Robert Brown explained that the creative team considered several titles before finally setting on *Parade*. Early titles included *Night Fell on Georgia* (the title of an early book on the Frank case), *The Devil and Little Mary*, and *I Love a Parade*, the last of which was eventually shortened to join *Cabaret*, *Company*, and *Follies* on the list of one word titles on Hal Prince's résumé. Jason Robert Brown said of the title:

I think that if you read any of Hal's discussion about the work that he does, he always talks about how he wants an overarching framework, how he wants an overarching concept. And I think that Hal was looking for that through a lot of the period we were working on the show. And I think he always knew that it had something to do with the *Parade*. So that was in large part his contribution, was to say "That's the frame and the structure." ("A Conversation with Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown")

The Confederate Memorial Day parade is a celebration of what Alfred Uhry called, "the Glorious Lost Cause" ("A Sorry Chapter"). Its pageantry may represent a forward march into a better future, but its annual recurrence and martial overtones also suggests the sort of endless vengeful remembering that arguably inspires the violence in the musical. "Everyone [in the musical] had been, in effect, victimized by the results of Civil War," says Jason Robert Brown; "The end result of that, for at least one generation, is what brought about the Leo Frank tragedy" (personal interview / 26 March 2005).

Act 1: Scene 1

In the opening song, "The Old Red Hills of Home," the Old Soldier believes it is his duty to tell the story of "the lives that we led when the Southland was free." The chorus repeatedly sings "Evermore lives the dream of Atlanta." This is a dream in which everyone may be thought of as a "brother." Specifically, this means everyone is a white Christian who "looks like I do and talks like I do." It is a pastoral ideal in which "a man can grow his cotton and his crops" (presumably with the necessary labor of black slaves). The Civil War, emancipation, and the arrival of northern factories (and with them non-Christian immigrants who came to the country via the Northern seaports) made this dream insubstantial. Yet the citizens of Atlanta continue to insist on its reality. In order to maintain the illusion that the "the brothers are unified" and "the people are proud and free," the citizens of 1913 Atlanta must carefully maintain the performance of their roles in a drama that ended almost fifty years before.

We see the poignant yet pointless pride that stems from the dream incarnated in the character of the Old Soldier. Though the Old Soldier lacks a leg and must be cared for by two attendants, he still thinks he will be able to “march down Peachtree Street today.” He resents the help of the Aide and his Assistant which he, in reality, needs. The desperate though ultimately limiting desire for independence is not unique to the Southern characters (Leo later admits his attempt to “do it alone” has resulted in “wasted time”), but it is a common trait of the Southerners in the play who, because of the increasing economic dominance of Northern factory owners, find the need to express their independence particularly compelling.

One of the few ways for those as victimized as the Old Soldier to believe in their own independence is to escape into a memory and perform that memory in the present. This is precisely what the Old Soldier does at the end of the scene. He speaks to his “Lila” who, presumably, has died long ago. In words suggesting he is entering a dream state, the soldier says he can “close [his] eyes and hear / All the treasures we held dear.” Suggestively, at this point the chorus of Atlanta citizens joins his song. This performance of a memory is not limited to the Old Soldier but is endemic to the entire citizenry of Atlanta.

Yet, the audience is not meant to despise the Southerners for this dream. The pitiable state and the admirable ferocity of the Old Soldier is the first cue to the audience that directs how they should read the Southerners in the play. They may be arrogant, foolish, even vicious, but they should be seen as victims and not devils. Alfred Uhry expressed the desire that he “didn’t want [the story] to be some sort of noble thing about this Jewish man who was brought down by vicious rednecks” (“A Conversation with Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown”). The helplessness of the Old Soldier typifies the helplessness of the entire South and so, at least in part, excuses their attitude.

The particular nature of the Old Soldier’s wound suggests the loss and imbalance caused by the Civil War. If “a house divided against itself cannot stand,” neither can one that has lost half of its foundation. The Old Soldier suggests that the North, no less than the South, is crippled by Southern loss in the Civil War. Leo Frank will serve as an example that the South’s victimization also victimizes the North.

Act 1: Scene 2

Leo and Lucille Frank are introduced in Scene 2 as characters who are not naturally a part of the Southern drama. Although Lucille is a native southerner, she remains “Other” in a society that is, in “the dream of Atlanta,” homogenously Christian. Melnick discusses the conflicting ideas of the “whiteness” of Jews in 1913 America, but it is clear the Jewish population, in both historical Atlanta and in the musical, is thought of as a distinct and recognizable minority (34-46). Their distinctiveness does not necessarily completely exclude them from the Southern drama, however. Like many of the Jewish characters in Uhry’s work, Lucille has thoroughly assimilated into Southern culture. She tells Leo that she is as Jewish as he is “but it doesn’t mean I have to speak a foreign language”—a clear statement of her opinion that being a Jew does not exclude her from the Southern drama. She refuses to use Yiddish words, calls her scriptures “the Bible,” does her hair in a southern style, and, as indicated by her willingness to leave her fallen hair pins for her maid “Minnie” to pick up, considers herself socially superior to blacks.

Leo, by contrast, claims he “can’t understand how God created you people Jewish and Southern at the same time.” He uses not only Yiddish words but also Latinate words like “asinine” that signify a level of education higher than most of his fellow citizens. The fact that

he applies the adjective to “Confederate Memorial Day” further demonstrates that, unlike other marginalized groups, Leo chooses his “Other”-ness, and considers himself superior to the majority. This attitude alienates Leo from both his wife and the audience of the musical. Indeed, in this scene Leo is actually more arrogant and distasteful than any of the Southerners portrayed thus far, fulfilling Uhry’s intention to avoid telling a story of a poor Jewish martyr “brought down by vicious rednecks.”

Act 1: Scene 3

In musical theater, songs may be used like a Shakespearean soliloquy to let the audience know how a character, even a relatively unsympathetic character, views him or herself. The song that opens scene 3 serves this purpose. Jason Robert Brown related the origin of “How Can I Call This Home” in *The Art of the American Musical* interview, saying:

In the original draft of the show, [Leo] didn’t sing until “Come Up to My Office.” We had made a very deliberate point of that, but at the same time having him so enigmatic really worked against us ever getting particularly invested in him emotionally. So I came up with a new idea that eventually turned into a duet between Leo and Lucille, “What Am I Waiting For?” and “Leo at Work.” Once we’d done that, we still felt like we hadn’t done enough for Leo [...] and that’s when I wrote “How Can I Call This Home?”, which was the last song to go into the show. (Bryer and Davison 41)

In the place of the arrogant and cold workaholic of the previous scene, the audience sees a man who suffers from feelings of alienation.

The scenery of the South praised by the Southerners in the first scene, things like “magnolia trees and endless sunshine,” are to Leo a reminder that he does not, in his own view, belong. Leo, no less than the citizens of Atlanta, hopes that by entering a dream state (by going “to bed at night”) the present reality will be gone “like it was just a dream.” Leo, like the old soldier, dreams of a lost “home,” not of “old red hills,” but nonetheless of a place where there are “people who look like I do and talk like I do.” The song ends as both Leo and the Southerners articulate their respective dreams of home.

The song is immediately followed by the introduction of Frankie Epps and Mary Phagan. The theme of differing perceptions, first articulated in this scene with Leo’s criticisms of the previously celebrated Southern topography, is briefly reprised in the initial dialogue between the pair:

FRANKIE: Well, hey sunshine!

MARY: Sunshine? Looks like rain to me.

FRANKIE: (pulling on her hair ribbon) Not in here, it don't.

The song that follows portrays the innocent seduction and deceptions that foreshadow and contrast with the more serious ones that follow. Ethan Mordden observes that though the song may seem an “excrement idyll” it “poses an interesting question: how do such charming kids figure in the Parade? Mary’s friends give false testimony in court, and Epps, we know, will be Leo Frank’s murderer” (“The Happiest Corpse” 277). It is a song, Jason Robert Brown notes,

written as “an old-style entertainment” (Bryer and Davison 31). It is, in Mordden’s words, so “disarming” it makes “the entire show disturbing” and is perhaps why *Parade* is “the only musical [theatre historian Mordden] can think of that has stirred real anger in people” (“The Happiest Corpse” 278).

Although Mordden is perhaps intentionally forgetting the furor surrounding more controversial musicals like *The Cradle Will Rock* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, he does make an interesting point about “The Picture Show.” Mordden asks, “Does ‘The Picture Show’ humanize monsters?” and then implies an answer in the affirmative. The characters, at least temporarily, create an innocent, *Grease*-like world of care-free teenage flirtation, but one will be murdered and the other become a vengeful bigot. Hal Prince suggested this move earlier with *Cabaret*’s Nazi youth anthem, “Tomorrow Belongs to Me,” but here he makes it boldly by using more fully developed characters, one of whom continues to play a part throughout the rest of the story.

Act 1: Scene 4

“What Am I Waiting For” and “Leo At Work” begin after the chorus reprises “The Dream of Atlanta,” ending prematurely on the line, “When the brothers are unified.” What follows is a scene of great disunity. Lucille and Leo are portrayed as separated, both by physical and emotional distance. Both are struggling to perform the roles they’ve adopted. Leo seems to be struggling in his attempt to balance the factory ledger (“This is wrong, this is wrong”) yet, as ever, he refuses to give up his independence, insisting “I can fix this weight” and “seldom” relying on the aid of the “adding machine” within his reach. Lucille, likewise, struggles with “her hairpins,” a symbol of her performed role as a proper Southern woman who, as she says later, “swallow[s] all she feel[s].” Leo, though absorbed in his work, hardly seems happy. Lucille, likewise, “wait[s] for more.” This is, no doubt, part of the “wasted time” both will later regret. The scene is ended suddenly by the arrival of Mary Phagan, come to collect her pay. Mary’s visit will ultimately, of course, permanently end the performances Leo and Lucille are enacting.

Act 1: Scenes 5-6

When the police come to the Frank’s house, neither Leo nor Lucille is wearing the costumes of their usual roles. Lucille’s “hair is not fixed,” the stage directions tell us, and Leo’s shirt is unbuttoned. Lucille is able to perform the role of Southern housewife graciously and is treated with kindness by the police, but Leo is completely unable to give an unrehearsed social performance. His nervousness is perceived as guilt and leads the police to cast him in the role of “suspect.” Therefore, although he originally guesses the police are there to tell him about a fire, Starnes and Ivey “exchange looks” when Frank eventually asks “Is somebody dead?”

Of course, Leo Frank is, by his very nature, an object of suspicion. He is a northern, Jewish, factory owner and refuses to pretend otherwise. One of his first worries on learning of the tragedy is that it will be reported “in the papers” and that such a report will damage the reputation of the factory. This sort of economic preoccupation serves to confirm the Southern perception of northern factory owners as heartless and financially-obsessed. Further, Frank’s language continually asserts his education--he uses words like “absurd” and “preposterous” to deny the accusations. His complete failure to perform the role expected him culminates in his

stripping off the few vestments of Southern respectability he has in order to show that his body bears no sign of struggle.

Leo's attitude contrasts markedly with the calm, deferential testimony of Newt Lee going on at the same time. In the Southern drama, blacks are to be humble and subservient. Newt Lee performs his role well, singing his "I am Trying to Remember" to careful, plodding music that suggests the deferential humility Lee shows to his white interrogators. By placing Leo's anxious and bombastic testimony in counterpoint to Lee's calm performance, Uhry and Brown allow the audience to see why, in a city segregated by skin color, the citizenry will eventually believe the word of a poor black man over that of a wealthy light-skinned man.

Act 1: Scene 7

Scene 7 introduces Britt Craig and with him the news media that will play such an important role in the Frank case. Craig's song, "Big News," like Leo's "How Can I Call This Home," articulates an educated man's feeling of displacement in Atlanta. Craig's escape, however, is not through dreaming but through drink. He does not openly insist on his "Other"-ness. He covers the local news and (at least while inebriated) declares his love for its citizenry (telling the barkeeper who has thrown him out "I love you"). For this reason, he gets along with his fellow Georgians a great deal more easily than Leo. Even the police seem to like him and are willing to give him leads for stories. Being a friendly drunk, it seems, is preferable to being a sober yet unpleasant Yankee. Drunks, after all, do not threaten the Southern Drama. They existed even when "the Southland was free."

Act 1: Scenes 8-10

Scene 8 begins with the opening of the William Cowper hymn "There is a Fountain." The hymn continues through the next scenes, finally culminating at Mary's funeral. The song celebrates the idea of the substitutionary atonement, a theology based on a retributive concept of justice. Wrong-doers must pay with blood for the wrongs they commit. This theology, foundational to the fundamentalist sects of Christianity popular in America since the time of the Civil War, proposes that Christ's death paid the required price of sin of humankind—the blood of a spotless member of the community. Christ's death, in this view, satisfied the Justice of a God who impartially demands this payment.¹⁶

¹⁶ Of course, the idea of sacrificial atonement was articulated by European Christian reformers long before the Civil War. However, it became particularly distinctive of American fundamentalism in the late 19th century. Historian George M. Marsden writes in his book *Defining Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, "the vast cultural changes of the era from 1870 to the 1920s created a major crisis within [the American evangelical Christian community]. Essentially it split it in two. On the one hand were theological liberals who, in order to maintain better credibility in the modern age, were willing to modify some central evangelical doctrines, such as [...] the necessity of salvation only through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. On the other hand were conservatives who continued to believe the traditionally essential evangelical doctrines" (3). In a book review for *The American Historical Review* Marsden further explains that this division often correlated to the division between the American North and South. Marsden writes, "after the Civil War [...] while the North progressed, diversified, and became

In the musical the characters often read this central narrative of their faith into their secular life. The Young Soldier of the first scene sings, “Let all the blood of the North spill [upon the Old Red Hills] / ‘Til they’ve paid for what they’ve wrought.” If, as his early appearance suggests, the Soldier is to serve as a sort of emblem of the South, Southerners see themselves as wronged by the Civil War and long due the payment of a bloody debt. Mary’s death comes to be seen as representative of the evils of this perceived imbalance of justice. Slaton observes in scene 9:

Good people of Georgia been raisin' Hell about children bein' forced to work in fact'ries. Now they're gonna' read in their newspapers about a thirteen year old girl fastening erasers to pencil caps - 200 caps an hour, ten hours a day, six days a week. And not only that, she got herself killed doin' it!

As the use of the hymn at her funeral suggests, Mary Phagan begins to be seen as a type of Christ-figure. She, like Christ, is a “dying lamb.” Her friends celebrate her innocence in their eulogies (“She loved ridin’ swings / and she liked cotton candy” and “she loved when I tied ribbons in her hair”). By the time of the trial she is pictured as an “angel” who “died a noble death without a splotch or blemish upon her.” Frankie’s personal connection to Mary may allow him to be the most articulate, but his vengeful speech at the end of the funeral clearly articulates the views of many present.

Once Mary becomes a Christian martyr, Leo’s Judaism becomes even more of a liability to him. Since the very early days of Christianity, some have blamed the Jews for Christ’s death (usually because of the version of the Passion narrative in Matthew 27 in which the Jews accept responsibility for Jesus’s execution). Once Mary is transformed into a Christ-figure, Leo is in danger of becoming a sort of Southern Caiaphas.

Of course, Leo’s treatment of those Southerners he encounters does little to improve their opinion of him. While Lucille treats the prison guards with civility and so earns some freedom of access to her husband, Leo imperiously gives orders to the guard and, in the guard’s presence, his wife. He contemptuously refuses the Southern (and non-Kosher) food offered him—thus confirming the prejudices against him.

Interestingly, the scene’s composition mirrors that of Scene 1. In both an incapacitated man gives orders to a man and a woman who actually hold more power than he does. Like the Old Soldier, Leo, his pride severely threatened, is attempting to assert his independence. Unlike the Old Soldier, however, Leo’s social role as Northern Jew inspires distrust rather than respect.

Act 1: Scene 11

At the opening of Scene 11, the authorities still have not yet decided whether to charge Newt Lee or Leo Frank of the crime. As a black man, Lee is the obvious suspect. In the Southern drama, blacks *should* be subservient, but they also have a propensity for violent crime. Lee, however, is able to play his role in the Southern drama a great deal better than Leo. He remains appropriately deferential, always remembering to address white men as “Suh.” While Leo Frank demands to have his morning coffee, Newt Lee “looks to Ivey for an okay” before drinking the cup Dorsey offers him. By reciting the King James translation of the Christian New

pluralistic, the South held tightly to the antebellum heritage, including their homogeneous, privatistic, but culturally supportive evangelicalism” (1139).

Testament when he is interrogated, he shows he is a benign black man who has internalized Christian morality. Nonetheless, Dorsey tries very hard to implicate Lee. It is a difficult task. In Scene 7 Britt Craig points out that the police “wouldn't be holdin' a well-off man like that unless [they] had a damn good reason.” Yet, as Ivey admits, the police “got no evidence” against Frank. Lee might be convicted relatively easily on the basis of little more than his skin color. Convicting a white man like Frank is a harder.

Ironically, it is the common white expectation of black violence that likely saves Newt Lee from the gallows. While interviewing Lee in 1.11, Dorsey exclaims “Hangin' another Nigra ain't enough this time. We gotta do better.” In his book on the Frank case, Jeffrey Melnick quotes a letter to Governor Slaton that explains why:

A mere roustabout, drunken, brutal, criminal negro would not satisfy this all permeating, absorbing, high-class demand...It would be too plain, too simple, too commonplace, lacking in mystery and sensation. Too much like things that had happened before to be the public solution of a “great mystery.” (12)

In other words, in the Southern drama, blacks were the expected criminal. Yet Mary's murder has by this time become so iconic of Southern victimization that the expected criminal will not satisfy. As Dorsey and the police ponder what to do, Watson is shown singing his “lullaby” to Mary. He explicitly describes her murder in religious terms. He assures Mary that “soon Armageddon comes.” Hanging a black man would not provide the sort of resolution this sort of cosmic battle requires.

Dorsey realizes this and begins to focus on Leo's personal appearance and “Other”-ness. For Dorsey, the problem is not necessarily a religious one. When asked if he is sure “Leo Frank murdered that little girl,” Dorsey responds blasphemously, “Jesus Christ on a stick! Of course I'm sure.” His certainty comes from classist rather than religious bigotry. “Look at that those clothes and that big fancy talk,” he sings. Newt Lee, at least, fits into the Southern drama. Leo, by his very identity, threatens it.

Act 1: Scene 12

Scene 12 introduces another black man, and potential suspect, Jim Conley. Conley is less self-abasing than Newt Lee (insisting that he be called a “cleaning supervisor” rather than a “sweeper”). This attitude places him on very dangerous ground. Melnick observes, “What Conley needed to do before and during the trial was demonstrate that he was willing and able to follow the cues of the white southern men who were now running the show” (14). After Dorsey threatens Conley by calling him “an escaped convict,” Conley adopts the subservient role and plays it exceptionally well.

Leo Frank, on the other hand, will not adapt to the role the Southern drama demands, even to save his own life. Even in prison he insists on playing the part of a northern factory owner. In the drama of the “Glorious Lost Cause,” however, the South is not controlled by northern factory owners. The part Leo Frank insists on playing is therefore not the right one for the setting. In Act 1, Scene 12, the defense lawyer Rosser recognizes this and tells Leo, “Problem is you don't look a lot like a real person, Leo. No wonder everybody thinks you tore into that little girl.” A real person, Rosser tells Leo, is a “good ole boy.”

Leo cannot play this part. He lacks the vocabulary (as we see when he tells his lawyer, in the intellectual parlance of a college educated yankee, to “be specific” about the characteristics of the role of “good ole boy”). Yet, like a man who goes through the wrong door in a theater and

finds himself onstage, Leo has undeniably become part of the Southern drama. When other characters in the drama stop performing, they leave the stage. When Governor Slaton stops “dancing,” he goes into exile. Judge Roan writes his “Letter to the Governor” only when he is alone. This choice is not available to Leo. At the beginning of the play he realizes, due to his economic and marital situation, that he is “trapped inside this life.” Less than half-way through the first act Leo is trapped in a literal prison which he never escapes. Since he will not perform a role indigenous to the Southern drama and cannot leave the stage, the other actors must improvise a new part. “Give ‘im fangs, give ‘im claws, give ‘im scaly, hairy palms!” sings Britt Craig, assigning Leo the new role of “monster.” The citizens prefer to turn the “dream of Atlanta” into a nightmare rather than wake from its illusion.

Act 1: Scenes 13-14

If most of the citizens of Atlanta have been convinced by this version of Leo offered to them by the press, at least one has not yet made up her mind. Scene 13 ends with the press demanding to know, “What’s the word from Mrs. Frank?” Lucille is obviously not threatened by Leo’s faith, heritage, or place of birth (she earlier prides herself on finding a husband “straight from New York”). However, the picture the press has painted of her husband is disturbing. Leo has not really treated her any better than he has treated the rest of the Southerners. Lucille, herself a Southerner (the type who, while unlikely to eat a “plate of pig fat,” may make “watermelon pickles” and “deviled eggs”) is deeply conflicted over the case. Could it be that her husband is, in fact, guilty?

Still, ever the supportive housewife, she does what she can to defend Leo. She gives Britt Craig a list of the good things she knows about her husband, but, as the astute Craig observes, never says he’s innocent (even after Craig challenges her with this observation). Although she continues to bring Leo his food and care for his affairs, she considers skipping the trial. She tells Leo, “I don’t want everybody staring at me when they say all those awful things about you in the courtroom.” She is perhaps concerned that she will be convinced by the prosecutor’s arguments and will be unable to perform the supportive role she knows the situation demands. Leo clearly does not trust Lucille (reminding her to do the things she already knows to do), but he does not realize that she does not completely trust him.

Act 1: Scene 15

Leo’s trial is, from the outset, portrayed as a trial of the Southern drama. Fiddlin’ John describes the trial as a question of avenging the hurt pride of the South. “People of Atlanta, / Better bow your heads in shame,” he sings, “There’s a man who came / And spit on your fine city’s name!” The judge is played by the same actor who played the Old Soldier—the lead actor of the Southern drama. His entrance in a wheelchair pushed by a nurse suggests that this doubling occurs for more than economic reasons. Leo is to be judged on the basis of how well he plays the Southern drama as articulated in the first scene. No wonder, then, that Leo reacts in horror when he first sees who will preside over his case.

Prosecutor Dorsey steps dangerously close to destroying the illusion of the Southern drama himself, singing in his opening statement that Atlanta “is a fact’ry and [its citizens’] children are its slaves.” He carefully modulates his pace, though, singing this line quickly and ending by pointing to Leo with an emphatic “look at what you’ve wrought!” Dorsey reminds his

fellow players how tenuous their illusion is, and then shows them how they might maintain it by offering a new way of seeing Leo.

Leo's new role is described most explicitly by the factory girls in the testimony that follows Dorsey's opening. The song "Come Up To My Office" is performed, in the composer's words, as "old-style entertainment." Brown says of the number, "it's a lie, and you know it's a lie because all of a sudden it sounds like a musical" (Breyer 31). In other words, the song represents performers creating a performance. Ethan Mordden notes the music is a "kind of mutation" of the music in the streetcar scene in which Frankie Epps attempts to seduce Mary Phagan (albeit in a more innocent context) (*Happiest Corpse* 277). The lyrics of these two songs also parallel each other. In the first verse of both songs, "see" in the second line is rhymed with "three" in the fourth. The Southern portrayal of Leo the monster is a perversion of an innocent Southern seduction. Leo the monster can therefore now be seen as indigenous to the drama.

Once Leo has been assigned the role of monster, Jim Conley offers a narrative that explicitly links Leo Frank to the crime. Conley is a black man, though, and so his testimony is automatically vulnerable to racist suspicion. Still, he is ultimately able to seduce his audience by adopting the role of a black entertainer. The line "Bring in Jim Conley!" also spoken in the historical trial, is no less than a dramatic entrance cue. Historian Steve Oney reports that in 1913 "the request sparked a smattering of applause" (238). In the musical, it cues dramatic music and excited chatter among the chorus. The musical's Conley sings with the charisma of a gospel singer leading a choir (the courtroom audience echoes the appropriate affirming response to his calls of "that's what he said!"). Minstrelsy scholar Eric Lott argues that many whites in the years following the Civil War connected the most popular forms of black entertainment with the songs and performances of slaves at work on a plantation (105). A black entertainer who plays the fool and sings music traditionally associated with black culture suggests a black slave. Conley's testimony in the musical is something like a minstrel show--meant to affirm the white audience's sense of superiority and reassure it of the performer's benignity.

Rosser believes his only hope is to destroy the illusions created by the prosecution. He therefore forces Leo to make an unprepared closing statement. By removing the script, Rosser hopes to end the performance. Of course, this is exactly the wrong strategy. The view of Leo as monster was not developed simply to convict a man. Leo's description of himself as "a little man who's scared and blind, / Too lost to find the words he needs" makes him neither a "good ole boy" nor a monster, and so the players are again faced with the awkward problem of an unnamed character. As when Leo strips in the police station to prove his innocence, Leo's metaphorical disrobing in his closing statement only annoys and threatens his accusers.

It does, however, convince one very important member of the audience. Removed from any erotic context, the sight of a disrobed man is a cause for awkwardness for all who see—except, perhaps, that for the man's spouse. Leo's social disrobing does not threaten Lucille, and it reveals that Leo has nothing to hide. The stage directions after Leo's speech direct, "LUCILLE and LEO lock eyes SHE knows HE is innocent." He has been vindicated by the one who is, in many ways, the most important judge at the trial.

The act ends with the stage direction, "The eerie music is replaced by an exultant celebratory cakewalk. And this, for the first time, is heard by LEO and LUCILLE -- THEY embrace each other, terrified." The change in music suggests the change in mood that will occur between the acts. The first scene was mostly dark. There was a murder, of course, but there was also a picture of a cold and fruitless marriage. The "exultant cakewalk" and the picture of Leo and Lucille embracing foreshadows what will come in the next act. Act Two will be full of

metaphorical and literal dancing as those in power attempt to maintain the “Dream of Atlanta” in the aftermath of the Frank trial. However, the second act will also be one of exultation and embracing and Lucille and Leo fall in love. The discordant music at this point encompasses the different voices and emotions present at the end of the act.

Act 2: Scene 1

At the beginning of the second act supporters of Frank begin to arrive from the North. Britt Craig, observing that this arrival threatens the tenuous basis of the peace between the North and the South, sings, “Gee – wouldn’t take such a lot / For the opening shot of a new Civil War.” The black characters likewise recognize that the arrival of the Northerners threatens the Southern drama, and they know they will likely bear the brunt of the Southerner’s anger if it is shattered. If any in the black community had started to let slip the mask of subservience assigned to them, they must now “start mumblin’ and shufflin’” and “polish [their] smiles.” The lyrical and musical quotations of Stephen Foster songs in “Rumblin’ and a Rollin’” underscore the black characters’ understanding of the role the dominant culture expects them to play.

Meanwhile, Leo has fired his lawyer and has taken charge of his own case. In the last act Leo’s lawyer told him he doesn’t “look a lot like a real person.” In Act 2, Scene 1 Leo therefore begins a performance for those he considers “real people”--the intelligentsia of the North. The problem is, of course, that Leo is trapped in the South. Though he may stir up sympathy in the North, this sympathy, in the words of Angela, “ain’t gonna do [him] no goddamn good.” If Frank has the support of the North, it only serves to confirm his villainy in Georgia.

Act 2: Scene 2

Fortunately for Leo, Lucille *is* able to play to a Southern audience and has started her performance. She has arranged an interview with Britt Craig and offers to “scream across the whole damn South.” Of course this is not her assigned role. In the Southern drama she should, “be a quiet little girl.” Leo at first demands she play this part. However, when Lucille demonstrates for Leo the power she can command by stepping out of her deferential role, he is rendered “speechless.” The degree to which Lucille has played her assigned role in Act I makes her stepping out of character all the more subversive to the Southern drama.

Act 2: Scene 3

Scene 3 begins by showing the aftermath of the Frank trial in the circles of power. Dorsey and Watson, of course, remained convinced of Frank’s guilt. Governor Slaton, however, has heard of the case from the elite of the North (it seems Frank’s Northern audience does have some limited power in the South), and questions the justice of the trial. Still, as a politician, Slaton must please his constituency. It seems that since the cakewalk started at the end of the trial, the people of Georgia have been dancing. Some, like Watson and Dorsey, dance in celebration of what they see as a victory for their concept of righteousness. Others, like Slaton perhaps, dance around the issue of injustice in order to preserve the “dream of Atlanta.”

Slaton’s skill at this dance is demonstrated in the song “Pretty Music.” His first partner is awkward and easily led. He is equal even to the second--a skilled dancer. It takes Lucille, who “didn’t come [...] to dance,” to throw him off balance. Lucille, “dressed severely,” is not in the

appropriate costume. Her refusal to perform brings the dance to a halt. Sally Slaton attempts to begin the dance again, but it is “abruptly stopped by a chord in the orchestra which tears the two step in half.” The chord signifies another person’s choice to stop performing, a choice which will be the subject of the next scene.

Act 2: Scene 4

In “Letter to the Governor,” Judge Roan, like Lucille, decides to stop performing. It is somewhat easier for him since, in his old age, he is more or less alone. At the top of the scene he is accompanied, like the Old Soldier of Act 1, by an “irritatingly ingratiating nurse,” but when she leaves to “tidy the bedclothes” he is left without an audience. It is only in such a situation that the Judge can introspectively analyze his performance in the early scenes.

Act 2: Scene 5

Scene 5 begins with the prison guard giving Leo a coded message from Lucille reporting Slaton’s decision to reexamine Leo’s case. The guard, in Leo’s words, doesn’t “know what any of this means.” Leo tries to tell him, but the guard leaves before he can understand. Leo continues his explanation alone (and eventually to Lucille). As celebratory as the song is, it underscores the tragedy of the musical. Although Leo has learned to trust and love Lucille, he remains unable to communicate with any other member of the Southern audience.

Act 2: Scenes 6-7

In Scene 6 Slaton, who has stopped “dancing,” as Lucille requested, begins to deconstruct the performances given at Frank’s trial. With the help of Lucille he discovers the misinterpretations and lies that constructed the testimonies of Newt Lee and the factory girls. The only performance Slaton cannot completely unravel is Jim Conley’s. In scene 7 Conley remains the performer. As he did at Leo’s trial, Conley plays the leader in a call-and-response chorus with his fellow chain gang members. Uhry and Brown have suggested they believe Conley was guilty of the murder and imply this belief through the sexual and violent lyrics of Conley’s song. Conley cannot, therefore, stop performing. To do so would be to admit a crime far more serious than perjury. Conley is the only witness Slaton interviews alone. The text suggests that Slaton is not quite as adept as Lucille at stopping performance.

Act 2: Scene 8

Now that Slaton has stopped performing, he is as liable as Frank to suffer the wrath of those still intent on performing the Southern drama. Like Leo, the governor has the sincere support of his wife, but it is not enough to save him from the consequences of threatening the “Dream of Atlanta.” In Act 1, Scene 11, Watson predicted that as a result of Mary’s murder “Armageddon comes.” Carrying torches and singing of floods, the people of Atlanta seek to bring this cosmic purgation to their city in order to assure that no one will again threaten their post-bellum illusions. Slaton must flee into exile.

Act 2: Scene 9

Was Leo Frank predestined for destruction in a sort of tragic Greek fatalism? In Scene 9, the musical suggests the option of assimilation was available to Leo Frank and, had he taken it earlier, might have offered him a longer and happier life. In his final meeting with Lucille, Leo comfortably identifies himself as “probably the only Jewish farm boy in the South.” In such a role, say the stage notes, Leo “looks comfortable in his own skin for the first time.” By ceasing to perform the role of “Other,” Leo is finally able to join with his wife. Thus, the scene serves as a sort of wedding. Lucille arrives looking, the stage directions say, “flushed, excited, radiant--almost like a bride.” The scene culminates in sexual union. It seems much of what Leo previously considered part of his identity had nothing to do with Judaism. Unfortunately, Leo is notoriously slow to understand important truths (“all the wasted time”) and does not grasp this until it is too late. It is not Leo’s faith or his heritage that leads to his condemnation, but his insistence that he is “Other” in a society struggling to maintain its own, shaken, identity.

Act 2: Scene 10

In Scene 10, Leo is offered one last change to perform a role in the Southern drama. It is too late for him to perform the role of “good ole boy,” even if such a role were truly within his ability. However, he can adopt the role of “monster” given him by the press and those at the trial. The lynch mob recognizes that Leo might have “got himself a life sentence” if only “he’d a’ confessed it in the courtroom and said he was sorry and all.” The choice is offered again at the end of the play, but Leo again refuses. After denying any role in the crime, Leo’s last words are a Hebrew prayer, a linguistic and religious declaration of “Otherness.” Clearly either the “dream of Atlanta” as a homogenous white Christian land must die, or this man must hang. The lynch mob chooses the latter.

Act 2: Scene 11

One might be tempted to read assimilation as an unfortunate but necessary concession to the dominant culture. Such a reading, however, is not supported by the text. Lucille’s claim in the final scene of the musical that she remains, in spite of all the preceding events, “a Georgia girl” goes uncontested. Southern culture, and the elements of its drama, are mostly neutral and may be used well or cruelly. The title of the musical refers to one of these multivalent symbols. There are many others. The “tall pines” may represent strength and glory. Lucille sings that Leo is “loyal and stable as any tree,” and the Franks both compare their rediscovered love to a tree with “leaves too high to touch and roots too strong to fall.” “Magnolia” and “dogwood trees” may serve as icons of innocence and youth. One may carve one’s lover’s name “in the trunk,” children like Mary may play in them (as Dorsey suggests she did), they may be used to hang swings (such as the ones Mary and the Old Solider and his Lila enjoyed). They may also be used to hang men. Similarly the Passion story of Southern Christianity may inspire a governor to see himself as a second Pilate and commute the death sentence of an innocent Jewish man. On the other hand, the shedding of blood for the removal of sin (as celebrated in the hymn at Mary’s funeral) inspires the bloody concept of justice advocated by Tom Watson and Frankie Epps. The ambiguity of these symbols and narratives underlines the moral neutrality of Southern culture.

Like any culture, it suffers from its own forms of xenophobia and its stories and symbols may be manipulated for better or for worse, but it is not, by nature, evil.

The final stage direction in the musical reads, “LUCILLE walks across the stage putting the wedding ring on her finger. She turns as though she sees something. A final tableau of the proud citizens of Atlanta.” What is it Lucille sees? The direction is immediately preceded by the reprise of the meeting between Leo and Mary Phagan in which Mary, in some otherworldly plane, wishes Leo a “happy memorial day.” Perhaps Lucille has caught a glimpse of another “dream of Atlanta” in which the citizens may retain their greatly valued pride, independence, and unity without need of performance. Perhaps she has seen the culturally and racially integrated dream of Atlanta articulated by another of its citizens in Washington D.C. some fifty years later. A few scenes earlier, Leo Frank sings that though “he might reach the end of his rope,” yet, “loud as a mortar, there is hope.” Perhaps Lucille’s final vision is that, despite her earlier declaration that “the story’s over,” the truth is “this is not over yet.”

The Text

The text of this edition is taken directly from a Microsoft Word file sent to me by Jason Robert Brown. It is labeled “National Tour Revision 6/13/00” and represents the basis of the touring version starring David Pittu and Andrea Burns which ran from June 13 to October 29, 2000. There have been two other complete published versions of the text and five partial publications. The earliest partial publication is the text performed on the Original Cast Recording and printed in the liner notes for that CD. The CD was released on April 29, 1999, two months after the original Broadway production closed. Piano-vocal selections (including lyrics) from this version were published in February of 2000. Four songs from *Parade* were also printed in Mr. Brown’s folio of sheet music, *The Jason Robert Brown Collection*, published in April of 2006.¹⁷ The Summer 2000 issue of *Show Music* magazine represents the earliest complete publication of the libretto and, according to Jason Robert Brown, “was edited from the version of the script stored on [his] computer, which is to say the authors’ original typing, with editing and corrections done from that” (personal email / 27 March 2005). The Original Cast Recording and the *Show Music* versions are almost identical and both most closely represent the text that served as the basis of the original Broadway production. The text sent to me by Mr. Brown and reproduced in this edition is most similar to the version printed in Wiley Hausam’s anthology *The New American Musical* and the one licensed for amateur production by Music Theatre International. The song lyrics from the touring version also appear on Jason Robert Brown’s professional website (<http://www.jasonrobertbrown.com>). There are several minor differences between the Broadway and the touring production--most notably in Act 2, Scene 1. I

¹⁷ The songs included in the Piano-vocal selections are: “The Old Red Hills of Home,” “What Am I Waiting For,” “Big News,” “You Don’t Know This Man,” “Come Up To My Office,” “My Child Will Forgive Me,” “That’s What He Said,” “It’s Hard to Speak My Heart,” “Do It Alone,” “Pretty Music,” “This Is Not Over Yet,” and, “All the Wasted Time.” *The Jason Robert Brown Collection* includes “The Picture Show” and reprints “The Old Red Hills of Home,” “You Don’t Know This Man,” and “All the Wasted Time.”

have therefore electronically scanned and manually proofed the *Show Music* text of that scene and included it as part of note 66.

Although the text in this edition was electronically copied directly from Mr. Brown's Word file, the transfer from word processor to web browser necessitated some minor formatting changes. In the Word document, stage directions are right-justified and rendered in plain text. The use of justification to distinguish types of text is better suited to a printed page than an electronic "window" which may be resized to the point that the distinction between left and right justification is lost. I have therefore left-justified the stage directions and rendered them in italics. I have also followed the approach of the Music Theater International licensed script (but departed from that of the Word document) and reversed the color of the music cues, printing the text in white on a black background. This provides a larger and more distinct area for the user to click on in order to hear the song.

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Appendix A:
Interview with Jason Robert Brown: March 26, 2005.

I met with Mr. Brown at a Los Angeles restaurant at a very early stage in my work. At that point, I was unsure whether I would be looking at musical theatre as ritual drama (an idea I still find interesting) or from a textual-critical perspective. The questions I ask, therefore, attempt to cover both subjects. Although some of the interview therefore has little to do with the topic of this work, I have decided to print the interview in its entirety because I feel Mr. Brown's thoughts on musical theatre are insightful and possibly relevant for future work.

Doug Reside: In his book *Ever After*, theatre historian Barry Singer portrays you as sort of dissatisfied with the way that musical theatre is at the moment--at least on Broadway. I wondered, as I was reading, what it was that you think the function of musical theatre in society should be. That is, what is special about musical? What does musical theatre do that straight drama doesn't do--that television and movies don't do?

Jason Robert Brown: Oh, I don't know I would even say that musical theatre does anything that straight drama doesn't do in terms of societal function (not that I can say I've thought a lot about whether musicals have a function in society). I don't think that a musical has to separate from the [rest of] theatre in any respect in terms of its aims or intentions. I think that a musical can be as effective a piece of theatre as anything else, and I think it should aspire to be as good a piece of theatre as anything else, the only problem I have with musical theatre at the moment is that we've got a whole lot of sort of boulevard comedies and no *Death of a Salesman*. There is no high art in musical theatre. There's a whole lot of entertainment, which is fine, but nobody seems to want there to be an "arty musical theatre." Nobody seems to want there to be a level of musical theatre that is above "let's all go have a good time and put on sparklers." And that's fine, but I can't claim to understand it, and I certainly don't know how to write it.

DR: You say that "nobody seem to want there to be an arty musical." Do you mean audiences, producers, or...

JRB: I think that producers want whatever audiences want, so no, it's not producers. I think the critical community does not like its musicals to be smart. I think critics prefer it when they can understand [a piece of art]. The minute you add music, you're essentially adding a foreign language. It's like if you do a play, it's all fine, and then imagine there was at the same time an alternate text that's suddenly happening in Italian. That is, essentially, what I think a musical does. And I think a lot of critics get intimidated by that. There's a whole lot of musical language happening that they don't have the faculty to discuss. When the musical language is sufficiently simple, they aren't threatened by it. When you get to *The Producers*, which has no musical language at all, or even *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, which was deliberately pastiche and therefore something they can understand, then they are much more inclined to go with it. You know, *Avenue Q* does not have challenging music and so therefore you don't have to work too hard to appreciate it on its own terms. You're probably pretty level to it. You're probably equal to *Hairspray*. But when things get more complicated than that...

I think that critics get very frightened by what Adam Guettel does. I think they get frightened by what I do, or what Michael John [LaChiusa] does or even frightened by contemporary opera (most of which is terrible). So, I mean it's fine, but you know, I think that once the musical language rises above a certain level they don't know what the hell to do with it. Again fine. But I think the critics don't want a musical that they can't understand. And *audiences* by and large, when they say "musical," when they say "here's our hundred dollars for a ticket to a Broadway musical," they have a certain idea of what that is. It involves tap dancing. It involves mistaken identity. It involves slamming doors and high notes being warbled at a certain pitch...They don't want their expectations subverted to the point where they haven't enjoyed the hundred dollars they've put down. And so, before you can even start writing a Broadway musical you've got like a list of 75 things that you know you're going to have to do....I don't have a problem with that, and when I write for Broadway shows now I have my list, I know what I have to do before I can go on and do the other stuff. But I think it's sort of shameful that it's necessary.

You know, you certainly don't ask that of a contemporary play. No one asks Tony Kushner that [his work] also be able to accomplish what Neil Simon's does. No one needs that to happen. No one asks August Wilson to also be Neil Simon. No one asks him to be Paul Rudnick. He's just who he is. And yet, if a Broadway [musical] is not a financial success then it's a failure. Whereas there hasn't really been a successful straight play (with the exception of *Proof*) in the last ten years that was financially successful on those terms, but they aren't considered failures. They aren't considered flops. They're considered plays. You know, they are what they are. And yet the definition of a musical has a lot to do with its popular success.

DR: You say there is a list of things that you know you have to accomplish in a musical before you can move on to the more artistic...What are some of those things?

JRB: It's more a question of what does an audience expect. What is it that an audience expects? They expect something to be funny. They expect it to be very recognizable. They expect the music to have a rhythm to it that they can identify. They expect the characters to speak in a language that's familiar to them (in every sense of that word). There's a moment—like I said—there's going to be a moment where somebody hits a high note, belts it out, sticks their arms out, the lights raise and we all get very excited. The numbers have to have big buttons on them so the audience knows how to applaud at the end of it. Even on a structural level...musically the songs have to be structured so that the audience knows what they are. And if you start doing more adventurous structure they tend to not know where you're going. Things can't be too long...they get confused. That's the beginning of a laundry list...

DR: Terrence McNally has said that he worries that in the process of developing a new play he loses what he wanted to do with it. Have there ever been any changes that you have made, or that have been made by others in the production of your shows that you wish (although they might have been necessary for that particular production) hadn't been made?

JRB: Well, what's hard is that the only musical that I can really talk about like that is *Parade*, which is the only one that had a lot of changes in it (during previews). Unlike when Terrence McNally is developing a play, a big musical like *Parade* is developed by an enormous number of people. The creative work is not limited to Terrence sitting alone in a room with a typewriter

and maybe Dan Sullivan yelling at him afterwards. [In a musical] there are just a whole lot of folks wandering around. It was Hal, and Alfred, and myself, *and* the producer and the choreographer all of whom are in someway entrusted with and responsible for the content of the show. The very thing that comes down on paper at the end of it is still the result of all of that collaboration.

Musicals are still very much a director's medium these days (and especially when you're working with Hal Prince). So there were changes in the process of writing *Parade* that Hal very much wanted to make that I did not agree with that ended up in the show (and that I still think are not as good as the idea that they replaced). But Hal is and was as much an author of that piece (if not more so) than I was and it was my job to do what he wanted to do. So, you know, I had opinions, but I don't know that [they] altered the shape of the show, because Hal had determined the shape of the show to begin with. He's the one who commissioned the piece for me so it was his prerogative to make those changes, presumably to bring the piece closer to what he wanted. The worst thing that can happen in a musical is that you *feel* all of the different authors' voices showing up at various times.

I remember *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, which was with Hal, you felt the times when it was a Terrence McNally show; you felt when it was Fred Ebb's show and when it was Hal's show; and you can feel that as the show goes on. Clearly the energy of each of those creators pops up in various idiosyncratic ways, and it keeps the show from being a complete statement. Alfred and I agreed at the beginning of writing *Parade* that we didn't want to fall into that trap. We were going to write Hal's show. So we did. So there may well have been things that would have been better as far as I'm concerned, but when Hal was happy with the way things ended up then that's what we were all supposed to be doing.

DR: I guess in that case, where Hal Prince and Alfred Uhry both were there from the beginning, the director's opinion may matter more than the writers'. Stephen Schwartz, though, has said that when he was working on *Wicked* he made a list of things that he didn't want to change. I'm thinking here more of *The Last Five Years* where you were there throughout...

JRB: *The Last Five Years* was not as big a show as that and so I didn't have to listen to what anybody told me. Nobody ever tried to monkey with my vision of the show to begin with. If you saw it in New York, you saw the second draft of the show. If you saw it in Chicago, you saw the first draft of the show. There was not a tortured development period. I mean I wrote it and no one ever expected me or asked me to make any changes.

DR: Were changes made on account of [performers] Norbert Leo Butz or Sherie Renee Scott?

JRB: I mean, there were some musical changes made for Sherie because she couldn't hit some of the notes that Lauren Kennedy could hit...So we did some of that...and then I got stuck in a lawsuit and I had to change some things, none of which altered my essential vision of the show. It was still mine. You know, there are two problems with what you are asking: the first one is that, like I said, musicals have a lot of authors so it's hard to identify whose vision gets to be the one that "wins." And it's naïve to wonder whose vision wins. It doesn't matter whose vision wins, you're just all doing the show.

So, I think it's more the producer who has to say, "This is my vision of the show and I'm going to realize it with all of you people." And it's only the producer who would then be able to say "yes we achieved it" or "no, we didn't." And then the second weird thing about it is a lot of Broadway musicals--unlike say what Terrence McNally writes at his house or home--are purely commercial entertainment. And they're not born of such a thing as an artistic vision. They're born of a "this will make a lot of money for people." And so in that respect, it's silly to talk about...I'll be really mean...it's silly to talk about *Brooklyn* as having any kind of artistic ethos. It was just a show that some people threw up on stage because they hoped it would make a lot of money. You know, surely there's a point at which *Grease* reflects what the authors wanted it to reflect...but if they were sitting in the middle of rehearsal, and it didn't work, the producer is allowed to fire the writers.

Look at *Grand Hotel*. *Grand Hotel* had been written in the 50s by Bob Wright and George Forrest. It was called "At the Grand." It couldn't get produced. Tommy Tune saw it. They sent him the script and the tape for whatever reason. He said, "I want to do this, I love it," and he fired Bob Wright and George Forrest brought in Maury Yeston. And so the score consists of three different writers who have all contributed to it over the years and the book is by a number of different people who all had their hands in it. So you wonder whose vision was that by the end of the party (and, incidentally, it was all based on a Vicky Baum book, so was it all true to her vision or not?). So, because it's such a bastardy art form, it's hard to articulate this in the same way you would analyze Edward Albee who has a real sense of control over his piece from one end to the other. In the musical that control is dissipated very early on in the process, and *should* to a certain extent if you want a commercially successful piece. A commercially successful piece is something that is entertaining to a broad group of people, and that is not that same mandate that August Wilson follows.

DR: In the introduction to the vocal score of *Parade* you're very specific about the way you want the songs to be played. You talk about how you wrote it with a particular rhythm and warn against speeding up in certain places. You warn that if a singer changes it to make it "more natural," such changes could damage the piece. I was surprised, then, that the lyrics in the vocal score are different from the version published in *Show Music* and in *The New American Musical* anthology in ways that, I think, actually alter the rhythm. In "Pretty Music," in *Show Music*, Governor Slaton doesn't say "yes a-m'am" just "yes m'am." A lot of Jim Conley's dialect is made more standard in the *Show Music* version. I guess I was wondering if a critical editor is producing an edition of *Parade*, which lyric should be published?

JRB: Well, if the score is published, it's published because I've gone through it as closely as I could, so that as far as the score is concerned generally what we've done is the last word on the score, and the lyrics will lay into the score slightly differently than they'll lay into the book. That happens. And sometimes an actor will adapt something... To the degree that it really matters the score generally wins, and then whatever the last version of the script is (it's probably the last one that passed through our hands, though there's no guarantee). You know, in the case of *Parade*, it is. This magazine [*Show Music*] I proofed it line by line and it was what I wanted it to be. There are some things that are there to make it easier to read (because you wouldn't want to read how I articulate the thing on the page). And when the music director is teaching it

to the actor, he's going to teach it off the score, and therefore it's going to be pretty close to what I want. And I'm specific about the score work not so much because I never want the music to deviate from that, but because a lot of people are sloppy or they're not quite up to the challenge of doing the work that I write, and so they try to take to take short cuts. So the notes I write at the beginning of the Vocal Selections are to say, "Don't take the short cuts, just do it." There are certain things that are more important than others. The rhythms are very important and the naturalness...a cleanness to the line...is prime in my work...it's supposed to be conversational. That felt like not an answer.

DR: No that helped. I saw a production of *The Last Five Years* in Louisville last year in which they cut all of the spoken lines except two or three that were not on the cast album. It's like they just did a concert version of the cast album. So that being sort of the extreme example of directorial changes, how much should directors, post-Broadway, be allowed to make their own changes?

JRB: Never. I mean "their own changes" is a horrible idea. If they were that good either they should have directed the show in the first place or they should write a show of their own. It's not up to somebody else post facto to decide what they think will make the show better. If I wanted someone to re-look at my show, I would ask someone who I thought was qualified to do it...not a director in Louisville, Kentucky. I think it's sort of extraordinarily presumptuous--and not at all surprising.

And you know, before I was a professional in the business I was guilty of exactly the same thing. I listened to *Merrily We Roll Along* and I thought, "Oh I could have made this thing better. If they had only trusted me I could have made this thing work" and it was arrogant and it was stupid and maybe I could have even done it but it didn't matter. In terms of the legitimacy of whatever they did in Louisville by cutting any of my dialogue, bull-shit, it's a terrible thing that they did and they shouldn't infringe upon an author's rights that way. In the same way, you couldn't do the *Zoo Story* by cutting out Peter. I mean, they're accepting the responsibility to put it on. And for some reason because musicals have gone through many lengthy gestations and because there are [several] versions of [many musicals] out in the world, people feel like they get to pick and choose in the same way you can get to pick and choose which version of *The Firebird* you're going to do...but as far as my stuff is concerned if I'm letting it be published, *that's* the version that I want. But not everyone...well...I think anyone whose alive is going to say that...none of us want to go and see, well, the dialogue taken out of our show.

DR: I wonder with varying cast albums (and this hasn't happened with any of your shows) but if someday there was a revival of *Parade* or a revival of *The Last Five Years* and there were changes that were made for that new Broadway production that's different from the version MTI has, should it be up to the director which one to go with?

JRB: Well, if I choose to make both versions available then it's the director's responsibility to choose the version they feel closest to. And then do only that version. I get sort of offended when I go to see a production of *Anything Goes* and it uses elements of all three scripts. I sort of think, "That wasn't the option available to you." But it's a standard production [practice]. I guess its Tam-Witmark's fault for allowing there to be three versions of the score available.

And you know, when they did *Kiss Me Kate* on Broadway a couple of years ago, the Porter estate, because they knew they would make a lot of money if the production went well, allowed them to make certain changes to the show. Those changes are not published, they are not printed, you cannot do them. You are not allowed--as an amateur performing group--to do the version of *Kiss Me Kate* that was on Broadway three years ago. And I thought that was a wise, and smart, and brave, and groovy thing to say. And by the same token if the trustees of that estate then thought, "We think this represents a viable version of the show that is equal to in some respects or has some things that are more valuable than the other version...that's their prerogative and that's fine. I just think that given that all the authors were dead, that would be a sort of presumptuous thing to say. I remember I got really pissed off when they did that *Diary of Anne Frank* a couple of years ago, and they asked Wendy Kesselman to revise the script. It was [James] Lapine, who is a writer, which is even more bizarre, who was directing it. But I just thought, "It's *The Diary of Anne Frank*, I mean just do it. If you're not going to do it, then just do something else." It was hardly a bad play.

DR: I've been at a pop culture conference all weekend where there was a presentation on *Parade* comparing it to *Assassins*, saying they were both dark and hopeless, but it still seems to me that they are both more hopeful and optimistic than what one might call a "downer of a straight play." I guess musicals seem to me to be more optimistic. I mean in *Parade*, Lucille has the ring...

JRB: Of course...no, no, no, no. I mean while *Parade* is certainly a bummer of a story we tried to end it as forward looking as possible. I don't think that's Hal's worldview but it is mine. I happen not to be a particularly dark person, I mean you wouldn't know it from this conversation, but by and large, I think people are good and I would rather emphasize that. Whereas, say, the end of *The Goat* is purely devastating and cruel. I mean, you've got Neil LaBute who I think is sort of hateful and sadistic all the time. I don't have an idea of what that is. And you know, I think writing tonal music to begin with, which we all do if we're writing musicals, is to suggest there is an orderliness and harmony in the world. I mean, that's what we do for a living. I can't think of too many composers on a contemporary level whose worldview is that dark to begin with.

DR: I think even Sondheim seems to have a more positive worldview. Even *Sweeney Todd*, I think, is critiquing society rather than the world. Whereas even Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, which is a more optimistic straight play, seems to critique the cosmic order of things more than, say, *Parade* or *Assassins*.

JRB: No, we said at the beginning of writing *Parade* that we wanted everyone in the play to be a victim. And that included the Governor, and that included Leo and Lucille, and it included Dorsey, and it included all the people in Atlanta. Everyone had been, in effect, victimized by the results of the Civil War. Whether for better or for worse the end result of that, for at least one generation, is what brought about the Leo Frank tragedy. It was because of all the horrible things that the war had brought up that it continued on with Leo Frank. That was certainly our [idea] from the beginning of the show and that was why we started the show with The Civil War. So I think given that we let everyone off the hook in *Parade*--as I generally do in life.

I find it very hard to ascribe horrible motives to people, even when I have found out in the end that they are horrible people and have done horrible things I still sort of think “They don’t know that. They don’t know what they did.” And I think that’s naïve, but your core beliefs are what they are. My core beliefs are that people are sort of good. And like I said, being a tonal musician, being a composer who spends most of his time writing major and minor chords for the most part, is to believe in there being an order and a harmony in the universe. And that carries over into your worldview. I mean, I don’t think you could write music that has a tonal center if you generally felt like the center drifts. And there is no such thing as a musical without a tonal center. So while I’ve never sort of put that thought into it, I think there’s probably validity to it. If you want to write plays that really hate the world, I don’t think there’s anything to sing about in that. I think singing is an ultimately generous act. Giving the character a chance to sing is generous. Even the actor singing is generous. I don’t think an ungenerous spirit can activate a musical. That would be my gut response to that.

DR: What if there was an atonal musical?

JRB: I can’t imagine what it would be. I mean, I’ve never bought into atonality as a musical language to begin with, so I have a hard time understanding how you would do a serialist musical for example. I mean, a musical should be a commercial entertainment among all the other things it should be. But there is no such thing as commercially entertaining serialist or atonal music. It just doesn’t exist. There’s no such thing as it. The thing about atonal music and serialist music, to my ear, is that they are deliberately obscuring. And so, they can’t reveal anything. And what the songs do in musicals is reveal the character. And so I think a musical language that was deliberately obfuscating would have a lot of trouble accomplishing the basic aims of a musical piece. There’s no reason to sing if you’re not revealing a character. I’m going to have Charles Warren come and yell at me after I’ve said this...

DR: You said that the musical should be commercially entertaining, what do you mean by that? I mean obviously there are a lot of musicals that aren’t commercially successful...

JRB: Well, you see that’s not what I said. I said they should be commercially entertaining. They should speak in a common language. I mean Greek drama should speak in a common language. It did when it was originally performed. Musicals are very much that same instinct. So I think very much that musicals should speak in the language of the people who are in the audience. An atonal piece won’t do that.

DR: What do you mean “speak in the language of the people?” I mean obviously some of Sondheim’s work doesn’t ...

JRB: Sure it does. Sondheim’s work is not obscure. Look, I’ve studied atonal music and I’ve studied serial music, that’s obscure. Nothing Steve is doing speaks outside of the language of the audience. The audience may not want to hear what he has to say, the audience may not respond the way he likes. But if you speak to the smartest 10% of people in the world, you’re only going to have that 10% understand you. Steve writes smart pieces. I like to flatter myself that I write smart pieces. We should therefore not be surprised when people who are not as smart as that

don't get it. I mean there is such a thing as gradations of intelligence and I think that if you're trying to appeal to the widest possible audience you can't then cut off 90% of your audience.

You know Tom Stoppard doesn't worry about these things. He writes what he wants to write. His plays have become subsidized and institutionalized to the degree they are, that he can either be successful or not, but he's going to write at the level he wants to write. If I wrote only at the level I wanted to write, I would have to do it with the understanding that I'm never going to make a whole lot of money doing this. But that's just writing something smart; I'm still not writing from an alien planet. There are things I want to say that I feel go beyond what *Mamma Mia* has to say. I feel it is my right and privilege to do that, and I feel like I can't do that in a commercial musical theatre setting. Either people will go with me or they won't, but it's not because I'm being deliberately weird.

DR: At some point though, if something is too difficult for anyone to get, does it just become self expression?

JRB: Yeah, I don't know if I want to put pejorative terminology on it. There's a clear point at which you're talking about the heads of the majority of people likely to understand what you're saying. And I don't think Steve's work or my work or Michael John [LaChiusa]'s work (which is as obscure as it gets) is so "out of the mainstream" that it doesn't make any sense.

DR: What is the connection, do you think, between musical theatre and Judaism?

JRB: It's easy to say this because I'm Jewish--and I don't know that anyone who's not Jewish and writes musicals for a living has anything to say about this--but I grew up in a family of story tellers who are not professionals, but it's our heritage as Jews that we tell stories. There's a large oral tradition that's the same as with the African-American tradition of telling stories and talking and being able to communicate through speech. There's also a tradition of respecting the value of education. There was never what there was in the Catholic Church where they didn't want anyone to learn how to read because they might read the Bible for themselves. That has never been the case in Judaism, where, from the beginning, everyone participates in the Torah. Everyone participates in the Talmud to whatever degree [they can] (except for the women...of all the people the Jews would consider people there was an understanding that they would participate in the dialogue). So I think that oral tradition, such as it is, explains why we make theatre period.

I mean, look, anything that Cole Porter and Steven Flaherty can participate in to the degree they do and did is not an exclusively Jewish form. It's like saying comedians are only Jews. I mean the impulse is not confined to Judaism. But I'd say it's a natural impulse for Jews to have. For all the uptight WASPs you hear about in the world, their stereotype is that they are less gregarious and less open and less sharing, so if we just want to live on the level of stereotypes, the Jewish stereotype is that they are more talkative, more gabby, and they like showing off all the time...and that's the best I can offer you.

DR: Is there some communal nature about the nature of musical theatre?

JRB: I don't know that its musical theatre *per se*, I think it's just music in general and because the effect that music has is not easily, or even remotely, articulable on a verbal level people experience it in a really personal way. People experience it in a way that makes them feel they can own it. In the way that language feels more like something we can describe. I can tell you that those words put together have that effect, but I can't explain why music does something to you. Even if I have an extraordinary vocabulary in music, I can't tell you why that major chord does that particular thing when you add the sixth to it. I know it has sort of a collective effect to it, and I think people have a very personal response to music, and therefore they feel a very specific ownership of it. I think that what happens in musical theatre under the best circumstances is that there is that personal response wrought collective. You're in a room with people who are all having that same experience, and because of that it magnifies...and remains inarticulable and remains difficult to express. I can't say to the person sitting next to me "Wasn't that song so great because of the X?" I just say "Wasn't that the greatest thing?" and clearly we both agree because we're standing up and we're clapping and therefore the mystery is broadened because of what we're doing together.

DR: Some have compared *Parade* to opera. What is the difference between musical theatre and opera?

JRB: Go sit in an opera and go sit in *Parade* and you will see there's no relationship between the two of them at all. There's a lot of music in *Parade*, and some of it they don't understand, and therefore it must be an opera. Opera is about voices. Opera has always been about voices. It's about stories on a nominal level, but primarily what opera is about is the people on stage and the way they sing. I think, for example, that *Smokey Joe's Café* is closer to opera than *Parade* is. *Smokey Joe's Café* is about performers and about singing in a way that makes the audience feel like they're in a world that they understand and that they're comfortable with. *Parade* is like theatre. *Parade* is like a play. *Parade* is something that takes you to a new place, a different place, and asks you to bring yourself into it and try to understand what those people are doing. The musical language is not operatic. It doesn't sound like Verdi. It doesn't sound like Puccini. I think it sounds like a Broadway musical. It speaks in the language and in the vernacular of a Broadway show, though occasionally there are interesting musical things that happen (which I guess is unusual for a Broadway show these days but it certainly wasn't when *West Side Story* was around). The musical language in *Parade* is not any more complex than *On the Town*. But no one suggested *On the Town* was operatic. It's just because there's a paucity of critics who are able to have any kind of musical vocabulary whatsoever, and if producers do have a musical vocabulary they feel so proud of themselves that they then say well this should be in an opera house where people can appreciate it.

That's the response I have to it. An opera belongs in an opera house, and *Parade* does not. Who in the opera house would do it? I mean you'd have to get a whole bunch of Broadway actors to do it because no one in the room would know how to do it. And I feel more or less the same thing about *Sweeney Todd*. Every time someone does it [as an opera] they have to bring in Broadway actors to do the lead roles because none of the opera singers can act. They're not supposed to. They aren't trained to. They're trained to project their voices across a 3000 seat auditorium, which is not something anyone on Broadway knows how to do any more. So I don't think there's a whole lot of relationship between the two of them at all--specifically not with the

serious musical. I don't think *Marie Christine* belongs in an opera house. It would make no sense in that space.

DR: I recently saw a production of *Les Misérables* in which it seemed almost as if the actors were attempting to simply sound different than the cast recording rather than truly act the piece. The emphasis was more on song than story. After 20 years, can a show turn into an opera?

JRB: I don't even know that *Les Miz* is turning into an opera. I think what you're seeing is a bad production of *Les Miz*, but what you're also seeing is *Les Miz* turning into a music video. *Les Miz* turned into a performers' showcase where no one is taking care that the text is being presented. The underlying piece is still the underlying piece. You're asking about performance which is a more complicated question for me to answer, because I think there's a lot of bad performance practices and I think there's a performance practice that no one would ever get away with if the authors were still on top of it. But you can't stay on top of every production of *Les Miz*. I can't stay on top of every production of *The Last Five Years*, and I don't want to. There were 400 productions of it in the last two years. Good luck, have a great time, do what you want to do. If we were really lucky there would be a common vernacular in terms of the way that we all perform. I know that's not the case, and that a lot of productions of *The Last Five Years* in fact I'd would say 99.73% of them, are going to be performed by actors who can't act and/or singers who can't sing. I don't think Trevor Nunn intended for *Les Miz* to be performed the way you're suggesting it is. It does become a communal experience at a certain point because the actors are observing it from the outside in the same way the audience is, and the audience is inside it the same way the actors are in the same way anything with a sort of excessive familiarity becomes that phenomenon. But I don't think it has anything to do with the writing, and I can only speak to the writing.

DR: In *Songs for a New World* and in *Urban Cowboy* you were on stage during the performance. What effect does that have?

JRB: *Urban Cowboy* I had nothing to do with conceptually. Before I came onboard it was determined that the musical director was onstage with the band and that the music director sang. I think that came from the idea that the whole show was supposed to take place in Gilly's and therefore that the person on stage would be part of the club. It certainly didn't have anything to do with why I was onstage in *Songs for a New World* (I was also onstage *The Last Five Years*, I just happened to be behind a panel for most of the show. That wasn't my intention when I wrote the show. My intention was that the band was supposed to be visible). But that wasn't about having the author on stage. It was about, "I know how to play the music better than anybody else does. Why don't I just do it?" I like playing my shows. It makes me happy to do it. I, as an author, know how to do this better than anyone else will know how to do it. It's not my ego talking. I wrote this for my fingers, so I wanted to be the person to put it out there because I felt like I had more control over how the audience would hear it if I had it under my fingers. But there was not a specific aesthetic involved in that. It was also not something about my celebrity or my ego. I prefer playing to sitting in the audience and watching.

DR: In the original production of *Songs for a New World* you sang the last verse. What do you see as the significance of that?

JRB: [Director] Daisy [Prince]'s belief was that the show was better unified by understanding that. I don't think the show depends on it. I don't think the success of *Songs for a New World* is dependent on me showing up at every performance and singing that line. I certainly hope not.

DR: What should be done with that line now?

JRB: It's written in the score to be sung by the second man. I don't think it makes any sense for the piano player to turn around and sing it. You're like, "who the hell is that?" It's not the same as when I did it.

DR: Why is musical theatre popular today?

JRB: Understand that the definition of popularity is a lot different in 2005 than it was say in 1943 [when *Oklahoma* opened and] when straight plays ran for the same length of time as musicals. What happens now is that musicals now run for years and years and years--I mean for decades. In order for something to achieve that sort of universality, it has to be, at heart, a truly collective experience. It's a real communal thing that happens. And there's something about the live-ness of it, and there's something about the familiarity of it at a certain point.

I mean it's sort of a given for those of us who do this that if we write something that's really out there, if we write something that's really new, it's not going to do what *Hairspray* does (which is just a nostalgia trip with a couple of different chords). I mean there's nothing, musically, that's new in *Hairspray* whatsoever, or in the *Producers*, for example. It's going to be easier to write a show that's successful and "popular" with the quote marks around it if you're writing a musical with a vocabulary that's simple. It's reassuring. It costs you \$100, and you're getting what you paid for. *Wicked* does the same thing. A person going to *Wicked* says, "Oh we're going to see the Witch in *The Wizard of Oz*" and congratulations, you do!

Why do musicals become more popular in the first place? Because musicals are designed to reassure. A really popular musical reassures the entire audience the whole time it's there. They pay their \$100 and they get their \$100 worth. They know what \$100 looks like and they get it. And there's not a playwright in the world who wants to do that. There's not a playwright in the world who wants to write something that's going to reassure their audience. Only in musicals do things exist with the sole purpose of entertaining their people and not hoping to make them think about the world. *Mamma Mia* does not make you think one iota of anything about anything in the world, and I think that has a great deal to do with why it's so successful. I think if there was even one iota of social commentary or political thought to be found in *Mamma Mia* that would have limited its commercial appeal considerably. But if you come to something that's cotton candy, and people make the enormous investment that they have in the cotton candy...you know like \$100 for a piece of cotton candy...that had better be the best piece of cotton candy you ever had... *Phantom of the Opera* (and I love Hal obviously and he's a very close personal friend of mine) is not a political work in any sense of the word—it's schmaltz. It's a lot of schmaltz and some tricks on stage. But it's very reassuring to an audience that knows what they come in wanting to expect. Movies don't do that for the most part (the ones that do are very successful). Plays certainly don't do that. Not even records (except for like Britney Spears albums which

again are designed with the sole purpose of attracting the attention and love of a huge, broad audience). No other art form does that.

And the reason musicals are seen as so corny and ridiculous and over-the-top and stupid for the most part is because they are! They're dumb pieces of theatre because if they were any smarter then they wouldn't run for 20 years.

That's certainly the negative version of why musicals are so popular because you can get a million clichéd answers about people love singing the songs, and people love seeing what happens on stage when there's that electric moment, and there's something emotional about what happens in a musical that can't happen in a straight play, and all of that's true, but that has nothing to do with why *Cats* ran for 23 years. It has nothing to do with it. And I don't want to confuse the issue.

The reason why *Kiss Me Kate* was popular in 1948 is that it managed to unleash something in the audience collectively that it could not have as just Shakespeare. It added music to it, added a level to it that the audience could understand without having to speak the language. That has nothing to do with *Cats* or *Miss Saigon* or any of that. Those plays work because an audience knows what they're going to expect. They pay a lot of money. Then when they get what they expected to expect and they're very satisfied by it, they tell their friends.

DR: What approach are you taking to write what you want in this environment?

JRB: The most important thing to say about it is that I've never felt that what I wrote was particularly obscure or particularly un-commercial. I know that what I write is not *Mamma Mia*. And outside of that, I don't know how to make my work more accessible. I mean, I think that *Parade* is a really accessible piece of writing. I know what the language would be if I wanted to write something weird. Even Sondheim's stuff is much more complicated, on some level, than *Parade* is. So I'm still writing shows, and I try not to be burdened with "Am I going too far out... am I doing something that people won't understand." I just really don't think I'm capable of writing something that is so far above anybody's head. I'm not that much smarter than most of the people on planet earth. I'd like to think that what I have to say is pretty much easily understood. So I just sort of write like I write and I try not to get my head too wrapped around it.

There are certain topics that I will stay away from if I want to write a *Broadway* musical. When I want to write a show that's going play in *that* theatre with 2,500 seats eight times a week and then go out on a national tour, then I know I'm going to stay away from certain ideas. And if I want to work on a piece that has those ideas, then I have to think about it in terms of its scale. I have to think about it financially--how much it's going to cost to put the show up. If I'm going to write a show about, say, a group of Nazi rapists, I can't expect it to have an orchestra of forty and a cast of twenty-two. If I want to write the show about Nazi rapists, and I want it to get produced at some point (why I picked that I have no idea), then I think I have to a small cast. I have to have a small orchestra. I have to plan on it knowing that it doesn't live in the commercially viable world. But outside of that general idea of subject matter that I think is marketable or saleable on a most base level, as a writer I really just try to write.

DR: Critics have called *Parade* or *Songs for a New World* inaccessible...

JRB: No one ever said that about *Songs for a New World* and I think it's important to make that distinction. *Songs for a New World* is not a depressing show. *Songs for a New World* is not a particularly challenging show. *Songs for a New World* doesn't ask you to think about anything unsettling or upsetting. *The Last Five Years*--where the musical language is actually much simpler than in *Songs for a New World*--people would go around saying that [it's inaccessible] because it's about a divorce and therefore it's depressing. People will think whatever they want to think, and it has no relationship to evidence at hand. *Parade* is not an inaccessible score by any stretch of the imagination--by any one's definition of "inaccessible." It's not just me being subjective about it. "Inaccessible" means we're really talking in a language outside of other people's language. I don't know where in *Parade* that ever happens.

DR: Yeah, my friends who aren't musical theatre people tend to connect with your shows more than any of the recent Tony award winners...

JRB: That, and I'm tooting my horn to whatever degree I am, but that's because I think most music that musical theatre trades in is supposed to be like musical theatre. It feeds on itself. Most musicals are about musicals in some sort of way that *Parade* is not and *The Last Five Years* is not. They're not about musicals, they don't function the way musicals function, the way musicals feed on [their own] vocabulary. *The Producers* is just eating itself. *Hairspray* is just eating itself. They're shows that sound and look like other shows. And therefore they get very popular and they are very accepted because people like their entertainment pre-digested. *Parade* does not. If critics say it's inaccessible, I think it is a response to the fact that *Parade* at no point sounds like *Grease*. It does not sound like *Cabaret*. I made a really conscious decision that I didn't want to write a pastiche. I didn't want to write a show that was that. But what people responded to most in *Parade* was "Come Up to My Office." Far from the best number I'll ever write in my life and far from the best number in *Parade* as far as I'm concerned, but it does what, say, a lot of numbers in *Cabaret* do. It comments on the action in the way the audience was familiar with because they've seen a lot of Bob Fosse shows. So the musical language becomes very pastiche-y and very transparent and it wasn't challenging in any way whatsoever. I don't think it's an embarrassing moment. I'm very proud of it theatrically in terms of what it does, but it doesn't mean anything musically.

The opportunities to do that in *Parade* were very few, and deliberately so. We didn't want to write a self-referencing show. We wanted to write something that created its own world and its own vocabulary. And *The Last Five Years* obviously has no reference whatsoever. There's nothing like that. It's more like *Betrayal* than it is like *Merrily We Roll Along*. And nobody likes *Merrily We Roll Along* either. I don't think nobody liked *Merrily We Roll Along* because it was backwards, but I think it didn't help.

DR: Are there five shows you wish your students knew that are not Sondheim and not your own?

JRB: They know most of them. I mean specifically *Floyd Collins* is a very important piece. I think *Once on this Island* is an almost perfectly written piece of theatre. And then beyond that I

don't think there's such a lot of great work. I mean I would say certainly you got to go back to *West Side Story* or *Sweeney Todd*. I mean, I know you said no Sondheim, but I mean the meat and potatoes of why I do what I do are in those pieces. Those were the pieces that had something to say and had a really interesting language with which they chose to say it. And that is not a prevalent factor in most musical theatre, and then the musical theatre in which it is a prevalent factor is sometimes written by people who are not talented enough to say it. I think *Floyd Collins* and *Once on this Island* are sort of as good as musical theatre can be. And not that either of them is perfect, but I don't think anything's perfect. *Death of a Salesman* isn't perfect so that doesn't matter. But in terms of finding a language and finding a thing to say and then being able to commit to it and go follow through it, they are outrageously good pieces. But I don't think most musicals are that precise and that specific.

[I might include] even the musicals that have a point of view like *Evita*. There's a lot of shit in *Evita*; it's mostly a terrible show, but it's one that had enough of a point of view that the bad stuff gets carried away and the good stuff survives it. And you don't realize until you're sitting listening to it again that you're not like, "Wow that's one powerful thing after another." That's not what you remember about *Evita*; it makes a general impression so it survives it. And I think a lot of shows get away with that exactly and therefore are good without reason. Obviously I'm not going to say that those are shows that everybody should know.

Gypsy is as good as a piece of musical theatre can be. *Gypsy* happens to be one of those shows I admire immensely without being in love with it. I think maybe I don't understand the impulses behind it, but I appreciate how well it's written. I always thought *The Music Man* was probably the greatest show [of its time]. Hal hates me when I say that because it beat *West Side Story* at the Tonys. Hal was always mad about *The Music Man* which he thinks--and rightfully--was entertainment. *West Side Story* was political statement. Why would you give the award, the enduring piece, to the entertainment as opposed to the thing that had something to say, and ok fine, but...

DR: But the Tonys have never rewarded that anyway.

JRB: Exactly the point.

DR: What about the Rodgers and Hammerstein...

JRB: I think the best of them to my mind is *The King and I*. I think *The King and I* is the best of what Rodgers and Hammerstein did. I think it's the smartest and most interesting and in a lot of ways it's very parochial and it's sort of condescending now, but I think, given when it was written and what it has to say, it's a pretty amazing piece of writing. And certainly in terms of, "We know how to make a musical work and now we're going to do something you don't expect," it fulfills the audience's expectations while being new and exciting all the time; it has a language all its own. I think *The King and I* is great.

Show Boat's a complicated issue because there's so many versions of *Show Boat* that it's hard to know what the authors intended. I don't know that they even did. At a certain point they'd put it up on stage because it was time to open the show. And then they'd revisit it. There was a

movie, and there was another movie, and then there was the Houston Grand Opera, and then there was Hal's production. All of which are successful in degrees. There's so much great material in *Show Boat* that I think you just have to take it as a whole--just *Show Boat* as opposed to being the specific *Show Boat* that might have happened at any one time. There's a general instinct that blossoms with that piece.

You know I think *Porgy and Bess* is a tremendous piece of theatre outside of what it was as a piece of musical theatre or what it is was a play. I think the opera is much better than the play.

I'll say this...I think it's hard to consider certain musicals important. I think *The Full Monty* was a wonderfully written show--technically dead-on. I like the score a whole lot; I thought the book was great. It's hard to say it's important in the same way it's hard to say that *The Music Man* is important because, fundamentally, it's a comedy. Whereas *West Side Story*...which may not have anything to say really when you come right down to it, "You mean gangs are bad?"...so with *West Side Story* it's hard to say that it's important on any level, but it's serious and therefore you feel more comfortable acknowledging that it has an importance. So, more than anything else, I tend to respond to the craft of writing these extremely difficult, collaborative pieces. The ones that are written extremely well I find very "important." So, for that reason I think *The Music Man* is important, and I think *The King and I* is important, and I think *Cabaret* is important because they do their job very well. They communicate this thing in a language that is almost entirely exclusive to what they are.

Musicals have a vernacular. But then they adapt the vernacular to the specific needs of the piece. There's a milieu that's brought up by, say, the first four bars of *Once on this Island* that is different from *Ragtime*, that is different than *My Favorite Year*, that is different than *A Man of No Importance*, that is different than *The Seussical*. When they know how to do what they're doing it sort of comes through and some pieces have a sort of innate magic to them. I think *Once on this Island* is one of those pieces. You know where you are the minute it starts. And you know [the same thing happens in] *Guys and Dolls*. Those pieces understand their world in some way that's beyond analysis. There's something that bubbles up from the ground and made *West Side Story* such an organic piece. So I respond to craft. And I respond to a real musical intelligence. That is why it's hard for me to applaud *Avenue Q*, which I like a great deal. I had a great time at it, and I think it's well done. But the music is not interesting. It's right; it's appropriate for what it is; it's just not novel. There's a palpable distinction between *On the Town* and *Avenue Q*, and they're both musical comedies. *On the Town* is this zany, incredibly, thrilling musical, and *Avenue Q* sounds like an episode of *Sesame Street*, which it was supposed to. Congratulations, and we move on. And that's how I feel about *Hairspray*, and most of what's on Broadway right now. It sounds derivative and not really very interesting.

DR: Is there anything you want to say about your current projects?

JRB: No, not particularly. Again, for whatever reason, I feel like the way that I know best how to express what I want to say in a world is by writing a piece of musical theatre. And I have chosen to use that as my tool of expression. And to a certain extent on a professional level I've taken my lumps for using musical theatre to express serious things...to not write just fluffy things...to not write a musical that looks and sounds like every other musical. I still nonetheless

felt like that's how I know how to make my art. That's the art I want to make: a piece of theatre that sings. And I still think that. I never thought I was doing anything revolutionary or even by any standards particularly new or interesting. I just was writing the plays I wanted to the way I knew how to write them. I still think that's what I'm doing, and I think to a certain extent some of them will hit and some of them won't, and we can look back when I'm 80 and we'll see if I ever actually made any money doing this. I have no idea. Other than that I don't think I have any guiding aesthetic. I mean I think that I know what I would want to see on stage, I know what would compel me...

[After a brief break we continued talking about textual matters.]

DR: How much care do you put into punctuation of liner notes? There was some online debate about the proper punctuation of "Letting You Go."

JRB: I'm usually pretty specific about it. Especially things where I know that your ear could take them in two different ways, I try and make sure your ear goes to where I want it to. You know it's important in that context to make sure you read the one that's printed as opposed to the one that somebody transcribed. But "Letting You Go" has a couple of things that are, I wouldn't say deliberately ambiguous, but things that I left without clarifying them too much. At a certain point a song is a song and you want it to sing right. None of the solutions I had to the problem of imprecise language were better than what was already there. "Letting You Go" was not a theatre song, it was a pop song. And therefore I thought, you know what, I'm choosing to let it sound better. It was clear enough what the song meant. I didn't think it mattered if this line was not as clear.

DR: In the *Show Music* magazine printing of *Parade*, the first line, "**Fare well** my Lila" is two words whereas in the anthology its one word.

JRB: There are also editorial decisions that I don't know that I noticed go by. You know, I tend not to check the red lines too closely unless it's clear they've made some dastardly emendation. But if what we sent them was "fare well" and the editor said "Well that's not a word; we want to do farewell because that's clearly what they're saying" and they did it, and I never noticed, then it went by me, and I can read it on the page and think it's right. What I actually typed at a certain point is a long way away.

DR: You do care about punctuation, though?

JRB: I care about intention. I certainly intend for things to be meant a certain way. But the process of getting anything on a page printed where people buy it is so drawn out. We used a different master script for the anthology than we used for the magazine. And I think what actually happened is the finished master we used for the *Show Music* magazine draft was the version before *Parade* went on the road. And once we were on tour, we made the changes at the beginning of the second act. We shifted the stuff around at the top of act 2, and that necessitated us going back and revising the script throughout based on that. So I know that what's in the anthology is a considerably more precise version of the script than what's in *Show Music* magazine. We all felt and still feel that [the magazine printing] was going to go away one of

these days and we shouldn't concern ourselves with it. I mean it's going to be out of print and sort of gone. I was more certain, when the book came out, that the book would be the thing that was generally referred to. But to be honest, what we really refer to as the published script is what MTI sends out. And that's the performing edition, and that's the one we've taken most care with (and there are mistakes in that).

Email 3/27/05 1:42 AM

Thanks for tonight; I hope you got what you wanted. One further thought I had regarding the *Show Music* magazine versus the published anthology: The *Show Music* script was edited from the version of the script stored on my computer, which is to say the authors' original typing, with editing and corrections done from that. The anthology script was actually edited from the final stage manager's script of the tour, which was generated from Hal's computer, all of which had been re-typed from our original manuscript because Hal likes to be able to edit with his own programs. So in a sense, the *Show Music* script is more "authentic," though the anthology script is more accurate and certainly better reflects the final production.

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Appendix B: Email Interview with Stephen Schwartz

October 19, 2004

Dear Mr. Reside: I hope the following answers will be useful for your thesis.

1) Terrence McNally has been quoted as saying "I worry that in the process of developing my new play I lose it." Were there any changes made during rehearsals or previews that, while perhaps ultimately necessary, you wish had not been required?

The biggest regret I have about the final version of WICKED is that we were forced, for pacing reasons, to cut the original ending. In this ending, Elphaba is discovered living a scruffy subsistence in the Badlands, trying with her limited remaining power to help damaged Animals who have fled there to regain their powers of speech. We see her make a beginning with Dr. Dillamond, who becomes able once again to say her name. This ending seemed to me to complete the story more fully -- that in the end, Elphaba has had to give up her ambitions to be celebrated and accepted by the people of Oz, but she is still, in a way that will always remain unknown and unsung, trying to "make good". During our development process, it became clear that we had too many endings to the show and that the emotional climax had passed, and so we had to eliminate this scene. We tried to make the point more efficiently that it was a bittersweet ending, when Elphaba says to the Scarecrow "We can never come back to Oz, can we?" and in her regret that her one true friend can never know she is alive. But I will always miss our original ending.

2) I notice there are a few minor changes made in the new script that seem to reflect the idea of the audience not just as theater-goer but, potentially, as reader. For instance, Glinda's bubble is more precisely described in the new version and Elphaba's parents lose their names not just in the dialogue but also in the stage directions. Do you know why these changes were made?

Changes in the stage directions were made mostly so people reading the show, such as Universal executives, would be able to follow the script more easily. You are correct in assuming that we were conscious of "readers".

3) How much did you and Ms. Holzman directly comment on each others' work? Did you make any major lyric changes because of the way the book developed? Did she make any changes based on your lyrics?

Winnie and I worked extremely closely together throughout the process. I always wait for book material to exist before I begin writing lyrics, and of

course I make changes throughout the process as the book continues to develop. A superficial example would be the "Ozisms" (words slightly altered from English) that Winnie invented for her book and that I then added to lyrics (e.g. in the opening number, Glinda urging the citizens of Oz to "rejoicify".) But many of the concepts for songs were Winnie's (she first proposed the idea for a "hate at first sight" song that became "What Is This Feeling?") and many of the titles (during a brainstorming session, she came up with the brilliant song title "For Good", for instance.) Similarly, the lyrics continued to affect the book, and of course, I contributed structural ideas, concepts for scenes, and even a couple of jokes (I'm embarrassed to say that Glinda's reference to "the poor little dog ... Dodo" is mine.) The point is that we functioned as a team, and that the individual credits belie the true working relationship.

4) The lyrics to "Dancing Through Life" do seem to me superior to the old "Which way's the party?" but I was wondering what prompted the change. Were you never really satisfied with "Which way's the party?" to begin with, or did something in particular inspire you to rewrite the song?

I began to feel that the song needed to be more clearly a statement of Fiyero's philosophy of life. "Which Way's the Party?" seemed to be functioning simply as an "up number", without really defining the character as much as I hoped it would. So I made the subtext of "Which Way's the Party" the text of "Dancing Through Life". I also tried to write a number that would fit better on the actor playing Fiyero, Norbert Leo Butz, both in its musical style and its lyric content.

5) In general, when your work reaches the amateur licensing stage, how is the authorized version approved? When a revival occurs, how is it decided what should be changed in the licensed copies? Do you have authority only over your lyrics or do you have some say in changes in the book as well? In the case of Children of Eden, for instance, how did you and John Caird decide to make the Paper Mill version the "official" version?

I often continue to work on a show after its initial commercial presentation, particularly in a case such as CHILDREN OF EDEN, where the first major production has not been successful. When I have a collaborator, such as John Caird in the above case, he or she and I continue to work as we did when originally writing the show, and we see subsequent productions of the show until we are satisfied that it is as good as we can make it. We felt we had finally "completed" CHILDREN OF EDEN for the Paper Mill production, and so that became the definitive version. It is Joe Stein's and my hope that the upcoming Paper Mill production of THE BAKER'S WIFE (coincidentally) will be the final version of that show. And I have no doubt that Winnie and I will make some minor changes to WICKED, despite its enormous commercial success, before finally declaring a version to be

"official".

As I said, I hope these answers help you with the thesis, and I thank you for the intelligence and depth of your questions. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

October 20, 2004

Dear Mr. Reside: I realized this morning that I had answered your first question in a very limited and specific way, and I just wanted to say a little more, since it seems to me that question gets to the heart of your thesis.

I just wanted to say that I very much agree with Mr. McNally. If there is one chief lesson I have learned through experience working in the commercial theatre, it is how easy it is for a writer to become deflected from his or her original goals for a project. The act of collaboration and the pressures brought to bear in bringing a project to fruition necessitate constant adjustments and compromises; plus of course, the writer himself is always striving to improve the work. So what I have learned is that it is vital to articulate for oneself the goals of the project at the very beginning and to check in periodically with that to be sure that they are being maintained. I had several discussions on WICKED in which I would say about a specific suggestion that, while it sounded good, it actually changed the intention of the show too greatly and that therefore a different solution had to be found. I think it's exactly right that you are focusing on this issue, so I wanted to expound on it a bit more.

Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

November 11, 2004

[I had asked about the "regime change" line and about recent reports of a change in the lyrics of the song "Wonderful" which were made after a cast change.]

*<< surely some of the references to terrorism and a panicked and increasingly oppressive state became more pointed in light of world events
>>*

Absolutely. The themes were always there pre-9/11, including lines such as the Wizard saying "The way to bring people together is to give them a really good enemy". But obviously lines such as referring to the cyclone as a "regime change" were directly influenced by current events. We even played with the idea of having Madame Morrible announce to the citizens of Oz that they were now on "green alert", which I think is mordantly funny, but there wasn't really a good place for it in the show. We try to be careful though

not to do too many references so topical that they will date or lessen the timeless aspect of our themes. After all, the current US administration did not invent the idea of using fear to keep a population in control, and I'm sure they won't be the last.

The changes made in "Wonderful" are as follows:

1. I put back a couplet which had been cut as we were structuring the song for Joel Grey and which I decided was thematically important and that I missed:

"The truth is not a thing of fact or reason
The truth is just what everyone agrees on".

2. Instead of a choreographed "button" -- that is, ending the number on a choreographic step -- I put in the following few lines:

WIZARD AND ELPHABA: "Won't it be wonderful? We'll BOTH be wonderful!"
WIZARD: "Once you TOO are the wonderful ONE"!

This now gets a bigger hand for George Hearn as the Wizard, since he gets to display his great voice and is not really a dancer the way Joel Grey was. So we now have two endings, one for a Wizard whose strength is movement and one for a Wizard whose strength is singing, and I'm sure we will go back and forth, depending on who's playing the role throughout our run. The replaced couplet, however, is staying for good, no matter who plays the role.

Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

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Papers Presented

“Electronic Editions of Musical Theatre.” *DRHA Conference 2006*. Bristol, England. September 2006. (Accepted and Forthcoming)

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