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Origin of Species: Conflicting Views of American Musical Theater History

"Like most elements in American culture (except jazz), the musical's earliest roots are European."

Miles Kreuger

"Unlike our dramas, musicals are purely American as a stage form."

Martin Gottfried

The many categories of musical theater are confusing, partly because they are variously defined by different writers, and partly because—however they are defined—they overlap, sending compulsive categorizers into despair. In summarizing the categories one distinction is important: some musicals are plays and some are not. Those that are plays are likely to have a single composer and a total score, that is, a set of musical numbers conceived as one score with a balanced aesthetic whole. Those that are not plays are anthologies, strings of "acts," not all of them musical; those acts in which music is secondary (such as magic acts) and those in which music is primary (such as song and dance) are collected for the balance of the acts, so the music is from a number of hands and lacks overall musical logic. In general, the musicals that are plays can be described as musically organic, those that are not as additive. Both may incorporate a broad spectrum of styles and types of music, but only the first is concerned with musical connection, continuity, and integrity.

"Musical comedy" was the current term for the integral works when historians first began to write about them, and it has continued in use even though it is no longer appropriate. The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (1969 edition) defines musical comedy as "a play in which dialogue is interspersed with songs and dances, usually based upon a rather sketchy plot." ("Sketchy" is defined as "incomplete, superficial.")

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The history of musical comedy begins in confusion. Writers have shown a number of attitudes toward musical comedy, but most formal music historians have ignored or impugned it, from ignorance or from prejudice against it as American. The standard music dictionary, the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, mentions only operetta—not musical comedy—and lists Victor Herbert, Reginald De Koven, Rudolf Friml, Sigmund Romberg, and Jerome Kern as composers, doubtless because their styles were the closest to the styles the writer knew.¹ In the fifth edition of the standard English-language music encyclopedia, *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Eric Blom claims that Arthur Sullivan “remained the outstanding master [of operetta], and after him the later Viennese operetta showed a steep descent and the twentieth-century musical comedy a disastrous downfall.” “True?” asked critic Andrew Porter in the *New Yorker*; “Largely true, I’d say.” In a supplementary volume to the encyclopedia Blom allowed that there were “some engaging examples [of operetta] (Gershwin, Jerome Kern), but by their time . . . it had begun to degenerate into ‘musical comedy’ (American ‘musicals’). . . .”²

The standard histories of western music have likewise ignored musical comedy. Musicologists who have considered the type at all generally follow the lead of German scholar Hugo Leichtentritt, who saw musical comedy as deriving through Jewish musicians working in jazz idioms. “Gershwin combined the melodic inflection of the Negro spirituals with the dynamic swing music of jazz. . . . His Jewish sensitivity, coupled with the rhythmic force and vitality of the jazz idiom, created an authentic style of Americanism, full of vital energy. . . . Another American Jew, Irving Berlin, . . . has a flair for the simple sentiment of the people.”³ Leichtentritt also mentions John Philip Sousa, Herbert, Kern (whose *Showboat* he says “approaches a true folk opera”), and Richard Rodgers (*Oklahoma!* is “another American classic in musical comedy”).

The British generally view American musicals as a natural development of folk music, more precisely the songs and dances of the American Negro, progressing from Scott Joplin through Berlin, Kern, and Gershwin.⁴ However, Joplin’s works for musical theater—*A Guest of Honor* (St. Louis, 1903) and *Treemonisha* (New York, 1911) have erroneously been called “ragtime operas”—are mentioned only in Borroff’s *Music in Europe and the United States*, the only general history of music to deal with the musical theater.⁵

Lineage

Writers dealing more specifically with musical theater have suggested the following lineages or partial derivations of the form:

1. “American musical theatre can be traced to origins in 18th century England” (the Gay-Pepusch *Beggar’s Opera*, 1728), emerging in *Pop*, 1883.—Lehman Engel⁶
2. The American musical derived from nineteenth-century English (British) comic opera, from Sullivan through Herbert, Kern, Rodgers and others.—J. Walker McSpadden,⁷ and others

3. Musical comedy descended from eighteenth-century Italian operatic intermezzo, opera buffa, ballad opera, and—the proximate cause—American Negro folk music.—Curt Sachs⁸
4. Musical comedy derived from extravaganza, burlesque (parody), and revue, all of them originally French, beginning with *The Black Crook* (1866), through the first musical comedy, Sydney Jones's *The Geisha* (1896), to Herbert's *The Red Mill* (1906).—Stanley Appelbaum⁹
5. "The roots of America's tradition of musical comedy go back to the eighteenth century," specifically to *The Archers* (1796) by William Dunlap and Benjamin Carr; "*The Black Crook* offered nothing different from *The Archers*." The lineage continues with amateur repertory performances of comic operas, the circus, and minstrel shows; important works include William Shield's *The Poor Soldier* (Dublin, 1783; New York, 1785) and John Braham's *The Devil's Bridge* (1812).—Julian Mates¹⁰
6. *The Disappointment; or, The Force of Credulity*, a ballad opera by Andrew Barton, Esq. (1767), has been called the first American opera by several scholars, including Oscar Sonneck.—Carolyn Rabson¹¹
7. "Music and Drama have gone hand in hand from the beginning," from Greece, Rome, medieval and Renaissance times to the invention of opera in Italy. The first American productions were of English ballad operas in Charleston (1735) and New York (1753); but ballad operas, including *The Disappointment*, used tunes already known, so they were but "precursors of musical comedy." *The Temple of Minerva* (1781) by Francis Hopkinson "can be considered the first original material composed for our musical stage."—Gerald Bordman¹²
8. *The Black Crook* may have been a preview of a musical, but as such it was hardly a first—its progenitor was *Flora; or, Hob in the Well* (London, 1729; Charleston, 1735). The first musical was *The Brook* (1879) by Nate Salsbury.—David Ewen¹³
9. *The Black Crook* "had little resemblance to musical comedy." The first musical was *The Wizard of the Nile* (1895).—Stanley Green¹⁴
10. "American musical theater evolved gradually . . . at least partly in imitation of European styles and genres . . . , and Americans developed their own styles through regular comparison and competition with foreign works." *The Black Crook* was not the first American musical, though it has often been cited as such, as has Sousa's *Our Flirtation* (1881).—Deane L. Root¹⁵
11. Willard Spenser was "a pioneer in this field"; his *The Little Tycoon* was "performed many thousands of times all over the country," and his *The Princess Bonnie* was "most successful." The lineage continues with Woolson Morse (*Wang*, 1891; *Panjandrum*, 1893), De Koven, and Herbert.—Gilbert Chase¹⁶
12. Musical comedy derived from the minstrel shows, not from vaudeville shows which were "cheap, bawdy entertainment."—Daniel Blum¹⁷
13. "What is a Broadway musical if not an outgrowth of vaudeville's basic song and dance?"—Martin Gottfried¹⁸
14. The lineage of the musical includes minstrel shows (from 1841), Tony Pastor's varieties (his Music Hall opened in 1864), pantomimes (from the *commedia dell'*

- arte* of sixteenth-century Italy), and the extravaganzas brought to the United States by the Ravel (from about 1845) and Ronzali (from 1857) troupes; but *The Black Crook* was indeed the work in which "the popular musical stage in the United States reached major dimensions for the first time."—Cecil Smith¹⁹
15. Edward (Ned) Harrigan, who wrote and directed over two dozen shows from 1878 to 1893, was the vital figure, a "pioneer" of "that type of musical comedy which is so distinctly American." The lineage is Dave Braham (Harrigan's chief composer), Ed Rice (*Evangeline*, 1874), and De Koven (*Robin Hood*, 1890). The operettas of Sullivan, particularly *The Pirates of Penzance* (New York, 1879), are "entrenched in Tin Pan Alley."—Jack Burton²⁰
 16. The American musical "developed from comic opera and burlesque in London during the 1890s." The works of George M. Cohan (*Little Johnny Jones*, 1904) were "the forerunners of an essentially American musical comedy style."—Andrew Lamb²¹
 17. *Little Johnny Jones* (1904) was the first American musical, but the heritage "derives in essence from the Middle Ages" via *Singspiel* (Mozart, *The Magic Flute*, 1791), *opéra-bouffe* (Offenbach, *Orpheus aux enfers*, 1858, and *La Belle Hélène*, 1864), and English operetta (Gilbert and Sullivan). But specifically, American musicals began "largely in emulation of Viennese operetta," particularly Johann Strauss, *Gypsy Baron* (1885), and Franz Lehar, *Merry Widow* (1905).—Ethan C. Mordden²²
 18. The American musical finds its "early beginnings in the burlesque-extravaganza and the operetta patterned on European models." The first successful musicals were *Adonis* (1884), *A Trip to Chinatown* (1891), and *Floradora* (1891).—Abe Lafe²³
 19. "The modern musical may be considered as beginning its history shortly before the First World War with the Ziegfeld Follies," a series of revues. This would make Irving Berlin the first composer of musicals, since he worked with Ziegfeld as early as 1917. Gershwin was associated with George White's *Scandals* (he composed five of them), so he completes the lineage.—Christopher Headington²⁴
 20. Musical comedy developed from Viennese operetta, of which the first, Strauss's *Indigo* (1871), "carried in itself all the germs which were to ruin this type of the lyric stage."—Paul Henry Lang²⁵
 21. Musical comedy derived from melodrama with interpolated dance and spectacle; *The Black Crook* was the first.—Miles Kreuger²⁶
 22. The American progenitors were two works by James Ralph of Philadelphia: *The Fashionable Lady*, a ballad opera produced in London in 1730, and, following that, a pantomime, *The Taste of the Town*. "By the middle of the eighteenth century there were English ballad operas a-plenty, not only in Philadelphia and New York but also in smaller communities." Barton's *The Disappointment* is among them, but not Hopkinson's *The Temple of Minerva*, which was in the category of grand opera.—Edward Hipsher²⁷
 23. Musical comedy derived from Jewish sensitivity brought to bear upon Negro styles. Its first practitioner was Irving Berlin.—Hugo Leichtentritt²⁸

24. Musical comedy derived from the revue and its first practitioner was Kern; specifically, it "emerged in the Kern-Bolton-Wodehouse 'Princess Theatre shows.'"—Richard Lewine and Alfred Simon²⁹
25. The prototypes for the musical were Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* (1786) and Rice's *Evangeline*; Blum calls this "a big, frolicsome musical," but the species "was invented by George Edwards [sic] in the early 1890s," and his *Gaiety Girl* was the first musical.—Reginald Norcom Laurence³⁰
26. Operetta and musical comedy are in fact two distinct types, and their lineages differ. The operetta "*H.M.S. Pinafore* [Sullivan, 1878] was probably the most important musical ever presented on English-speaking stages"; its popularity in America signaled the real beginnings of American musical theater, and *Rose-Marie* (Friml, 1924) and *Oklahoma!* (Rodgers, 1943) are its descendants. As for musical comedy, "there are no [such] earthshaking landmarks," but George Edwards's [sic] *In Town* (not *A Gaiety Girl*) was "the first musical conceived in the new fashion."—Gerald Bordman³¹
27. Musical comedy "had its roots in middle European operetta and English musical comedy, and when the talkies came was further elaborated and sophisticated through a succession of 'musicals' "; it emerged in J. M. Barrie's burlesque *Rosy Rapture, the Pride of the Beauty Chorus* (1902) with music by Kern.—Roy Fuller³²
28. Musical comedy is a side growth on the essential lineage of pop music, which in the United States is an ethnic mixture: the musical comedy was musically "based on European harmony, the Negro 'blues' scale, . . . the sadness of the Jews, the tender nostalgia of the Irish, the Italian love of soaring melody, the Latin-American leaning towards contrapuntal rhythms"; the lineage is minstrelsy, ragtime, Dixieland jazz, swing, rock.—Arnold Shaw³³

One More Theory

An aggregate of twenty-eight theories is enough to impugn theories in general. One can predict that to find another writer would be to find another theory. I contribute a twenty-ninth, an antitheory which claims simply that metaphors of descent and derivation are false. A creative person is influenced by his or her predecessors, potentially by everything he or she has ever experienced; the process of selection remains mysterious, but certainly it is not genetic.

My history of European and American music omits the genetic metaphor altogether.³⁴ Appelbaum presents it but settles uneasily for a combination of influences: beginning with *The Black Crook*, "the development of musical comedy seems to have involved a complex intermingling of British and American features."³⁵ The metaphor of a mixing or intermingling of types seems less suspect than that of descent, but it too must be approached with trepidation. Probably closer to the truth is that musical entertainments have included theatrical elements

(and vice versa) from the earliest times, and that shows of the vaudeville type (i.e., entertainments on a stage but without a play) conformed to American culture as operas and operettas did to European culture (and to the southern American colonial cities, Charleston and New Orleans, for example, which imported operas remarkably quickly after their European premieres). The vaudeville spirit may have been related to the rough and tumble of entertainments in a pioneer society, where raising the roof or holding a hoedown was a catch-as-catch-can affair, a lining up of whatever was available and where professional musicians were virtually unknown. The amateur hour was a particularly American phenomenon, for example, surviving through early radio and into television.

As far as I can determine, the designation "musical comedy" was first used on a score in the United States for *The Belle of New York* by Gustave Kerker in 1897; Laurence says the designation was used by George Edwardes for *A Gaiety Girl* in London "in the early 1890s."³⁶ *The Belle's* music was very much like that of American popular music in the Gay Nineties. After World War I, musical comedy became extremely popular, as did operettas in the German style (Friml, Romberg), and the revue and related follies and scandals, the success of which seems to have been related to the craze for ragtime. Ragtime music was associated with one-shot dances and songs, typical of revues, and did not sustain entire shows. "May Irwin's Bully Song," interpolated in 1895 into *The Widow Jones*, "a comedy with song interludes," may have been the first ragtime song in a stage production outside minstrelsy and other black featured acts. It was arranged for the star by a newspaperman, Charles E. Trevathan.³⁷

Minstrel shows had been popular from the 1840s and vaudeville shows from the 1880s. Minstrel shows grew bigger and bigger (some were billed as "spectaculars") and eventually disappeared, in part because the hugeness was untrue to the concept, in part because the public outgrew its taste for them, and because the string of excellent black revues (Sissle and Blake et al.) offered something closer to public interest.³⁸ Black revues incorporated ragtime more systematically, but it was not until *Carib Song* (1945) by Baldwin Bergersen (book and lyrics by William Archibald) that a black culture was treated with genuine respect.

As the revue was akin to an olio, the radio show of the 1930s was like the "first part" of a minstrel show. Radio grew up during the 1920s as an opposite of films: the radio show had sound but not sight; the movie had sight but not sound (though it was given musical background in the theaters and was thus played as pantomime). Television had both and would become a natural medium for variety shows. *Your Show of Shows* was called a revue because of its continuity of stars (Imogene Coca and Sid Caesar), writers (Carl Reiner et al.), and composers (Bergersen et al.); the *Ed Sullivan Show* was a classic variety show, with a new lineup every week featuring everything from jugglers and animal acts to classical and Balinese ballet and the opera singer Maria Callas.³⁹

The popular appeal of radio, movies, and television along with their relatively low cost to the audience may well have been responsible for the decline in production of Broadway musicals after 1930. The 1920s were the most active decade for the

Broadway show: each year averaged thirty-eight openings (fifty-three in 1927 alone), but the 1930s averaged only fifteen per year, eleven in the 1940s, and ten in the 1950s.⁴⁰

Another reason for the decline in numbers may have been the increasing demand by audiences for musical plays rather than revues; musical plays were much harder to put together and required careful overall control by a composer in the demanding task of producing a work of integrity. Shows not based on a story line—revues, minstrel shows, vaudeville—had a broad scope of specialty numbers, and so they often used music by several composers. It was thus possible for a young composer to get a start by having one number in a show, especially if it was associated with a star performer (Gershwin's "Swanee" sung by Al Jolson, for example, in *Sinbad*, 1919). The demise of that possibility made it necessary for a young composer to begin at once with an entire show; the financial and professional ramifications of that barrier have yet to be written about.

As musical plays became more common, the taste for comedy (but not farce) changed from satirical plots, in which stereotypes served the satire, as in Gilbert's librettos for Sullivan, to stories of significance in human terms. Kern's *Showboat* (1927) was a landmark of the early musical play (though Gottfried says it still "smacks of operetta");⁴¹ Gershwin's *Of Thee I Sing* (1931, called a "burlesque" in the score) of the modern satire; and Rodgers's *Oklahoma!* of the fully developed musical play. (See Stanley Green's article in this issue of the journal.)

The Mature Ideal

In the 1940s theater songs began not only to incorporate an overall balance of musical types and moods (as they had done in comic opera), and to mirror the varying aspects of the plot (as they had done in early musical play and satire), but also to delineate and deepen awareness of character and situation. In that sense, songs and dances were no longer parenthetical, but could and did advance the dramatic motion of the work through clarification of the characters, their realizations, their perceptions, and their responses. Thus a love ballad in a comic opera was part of an overall musical balance, providing a slow, pleasant lyrical moment; in an early musical play it would balance the score but also be a poignant lyric that enlarges our knowledge of love (Gottfried calls this a "show ballad" and says that Kern invented it in 1914 with "They Didn't Believe Me" in *The Girl from Utah*, to lyrics by Herbert Reynolds); and in a fully developed musical play the ballad balanced the score, enlarged our knowledge of love, and also portrayed the character who sang it as a particular individual in a particular moment of self-realization.

Added to the character song that developed in the 1940s was a conscious incorporation of techniques and musical types from a wide swath of past genres. The score stopped striving for an obvious homogeneity and became musically multilingual, increasing its interest and scope while supporting differentiation of character/mood and moving toward dramatic/musical integrity. Frank Loesser's *Guys and Dolls* (1950) incorporated a dance tune, ballad, burlesque tune, Gilbert-and-

Sullivan-style duet, folksong, spiritual, straight popular song, and Salvation Army march. Bergersen used recitative in *Carib Song* (1945), in addition to traditional American and Calypso forms. Meredith Willson's *Music Man* (1957) used *Sprechstimme*, barbershop quartet, hoedown, fast "gossip song" combined with the traditional "Goodnight, Ladies" (a technique popular in the sixteenth century), Sousa-style march, and the gentle waltz-ballad "Goodnight, My Someone," a character song transformed by change of meter into the march "Seventy-Six Trombones" (another sixteenth-century technique known as a "double").

The musical plays that most forcefully incorporated the ideals suggested above spanned the years 1943 to 1957. They reflected the two complementary aspects of postwar America: works that looked affectionately inward at American character and works that looked admiringly outward in a new appreciation of other cultures and other times. Berlin's *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946), Loesser's *Guys and Dolls* (1950), and Willson's *The Music Man* (1957) represent the inward American musical; Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate* (1948), Frederick Loewe's *Brigadoon* (1947) and *My Fair Lady* (1956), and Rodgers's *The King and I* (1951) represent the outward or exotic counterpart, while Rodgers's *South Pacific* (1949) reaches in both directions at once.

The strength of characterization in these works minimizes their differences: we are all the governess facing a strange and fearsome culture; we are all the high life of *My Fair Lady* and the low life of *Guys and Dolls*; we are all the bumptious Harold Hill and the prim Marian. Valid human expression is not subject to national borders but speaks eloquently for the whole of humanity. The dramatic and musical scope and coherence of these musicals have produced a vigorous and compelling art, whose ideals define a classicism of form in musical theater, a splendor of American culture.

A Glossary of American Musical Theater Types, in Approximately Chronological Order

Melodrama, originally French *melodrame*: in the eighteenth century, a play with music behind it; in the nineteenth century, the term came to mean an overdramatic presentation. **Pantomime**, a type of wordless drama known since Roman times, was popular through the nineteenth century and was a form of melodrama. (See Anne Dhu Shapiro's article in this issue of the journal.)

Comic opera, opera buffa, opéra-bouffe, light opera, ballad opera, operetta: dramatic presentations in which the action is carried forth in speech, with an interspersion of musical numbers (as distinct from **grand opera** in which the entire libretto is sung). Subjects tend to be humorous or light, but this is by no means always the case. The modern forms were defined in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Minstrel show: an American entertainment whose contents derived from many sources (European, African, and American), but whose form was original, classical in design, a balanced mixture of steady and changing elements. It was the most popular form of entertainment in the United States at the middle of the nineteenth century, by no means limited to cities or the East.

Vaudeville, variety show: a presentation of independent performers of several types, each unit called an "act." In addition to singers and dancers (solos and teams, performing tap, soft shoe, acrobatic, ballet, folk, or social dances), vaudeville featured magicians, contortionists, knife throwers, comedians (stand-up singles, or teams, generally of two men), acrobats, jugglers, dog acts, rope dancers, and "none of the above." The British music hall and French nightclub shows were comparable, but male comedians were popular in American shows, while bawdy female impersonators were characteristic of the British and French shows. Tony Pastor developed vaudeville in the 1860s as an attempt to clean up beer-hall shows and create theatrical entertainments for the whole family.

Farce: "a theatrical composition in which broad improbabilities of plot and characterization are used for humorous effect; something ludicrous; mockery."⁴² Farce was popular from ancient times. Modern musical farce was loosely connected to story line; *A Trip to Chinatown* used music by many composers and changed stars and their numbers many times during its long run.⁴³

Burlesque: originally a parody of French theater or other models. (See William Brooks's article in this issue of the journal.) American burlesque in the 1870s had "British blonds" in tights spoofing everything from Shakespeare to Robinson Crusoe—played by one of the blonds,⁴⁴ and later "broad, ribald comedy, dancing, and display of nudity."⁴⁵ The true meaning—"a dramatic work that makes a subject appear ridiculous; a take-off"⁴⁶—has never disappeared.

Revue, follies, scandals, vanities, extravaganza: a topical and somewhat unified variety show, lavish, constantly changing, featuring individual and team acts around a central theme—singers, solo and chorus-like dancers, comedians (solo and team), and specialty acts including everything popular in vaudeville.

NOTES

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2. Eric Blom, "Sullivan, (Sir) Arthur (Seymour)," in *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 5th ed., ed. Blom, vol. 8 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1954), p. 181, and "Operetta," in Supplementary Volume (vol. 10) to 5th ed., ed. Blom (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), p. 334. Andrew Porter, "Musical Theatre," *New Yorker*, Sept. 22, 1980, p. 140.
3. Hugo Leichtentritt, *Music of the Western Nations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 302-4.
4. Edward Lee, *Music of the People* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1970), pp. 139ff., and Christopher Headington, *History of Western Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1974), pp. 353ff.
5. Edith Borroff, *Music in Europe and the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971). *Treemonisha* is an opera with four ragtime choruses and dances. (*A Guest of Honor* is lost—possibly destroyed—and has not been studied.)
6. Lehman Engel, *The American Musical Theater: A Consideration* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 1ff.
7. J. Walker McSpadden, *Light Opera and Musical Comedy*, rev. 2d ed. as *Operas and Musical Comedies* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1951), pp. 366ff.
8. Curt Sachs, *Our Musical Heritage* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1948), pp. 272ff., 368ff.
9. Stanley Appelbaum, ed., *Show Songs from "The Black Crook" to "The Red Mill"* (New York: Dover Publications, 1974), pp. xv-xviii.
10. Julian Mates, *The American Musical Stage before 1800* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1962), p. 230.
11. Carolyn Rabson, "Disappointment Revisited: Unweaving the Tangled Web, Part I," *American Music*, 1 (Spring, 1983), 12.
12. Gerald Bordman, *The American Musical Theatre: A Chronicle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 1-3.
13. David Ewen, *The Complete Book of the American Musical Theater*, rev. 2d ed. as *New Complete Book of the American Musical Theatre* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. xxiii.
14. Stanley Green, *The World of Musical Comedy* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1960), pp. 1ff.
15. Deane L. Root, *American Popular Stage Music, 1860-1880* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981), p. 1.
16. Gilbert Chase, *America's Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955), p. 618.
17. Daniel Blum, *American Theatre 100 Years 1860-1960* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1960), p. 13.
18. Martin Gottfried, *Broadway Musicals* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979), p. 7.
19. Cecil M. Smith, *Musical Comedy in America* (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1950), pp. 7-9, quote on p. 1.
20. Jack Burton, *The Blue Book of Tin Pan Alley*, vol. 1 (Watkins Glen, N.Y.: Century House, 1962), p. 23.
21. Andrew Lamb, "Musical Comedy," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1980).
22. Ethan C. Mordden, "Musical Theater," in *Encyclopedia Americana* (1979).
23. Abe Laufe, *Broadway's Greatest Musicals* (London: David and Charles, 1969), pp. 1, 31ff.
24. Christopher Headington, *History of Western Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1977), p. 353.
25. Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1941), p. 1004, a typically musicological view.
26. Miles Kreuger, "The American Musical Theatre," *Listen*, 17, no. 2 (Feb. 1964), 3-4.
27. Edward Ellsworth Hipsher, *American Opera and Its Composers* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1978 [orig. publ. Philadelphia: Theodore Presser Co., 1927]), pp. 20-24.
28. Leichtentritt, *Music of the Western Nations*, pp. 302-4.
29. Richard Lewine and Alfred Simon, *Encyclopedia of Theatre Music* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1961), pp. 3-5.
30. Reginald Norcom Laurence, "Musical Theater," in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1969).
31. Gerald Bordman, *American Musical Comedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 5ff.

32. Roy Fuller, "The Melodious Modulator," *London Times Literary Supplement*, Sept. 19, 1980, p. 1015.

33. Arnold Shaw, "Popular Music from Minstrel Songs to Rock 'n' Roll," in *One Hundred Years of Music in America*, ed. Paul Henry Lang (New York: G. Schirmer [distributed by Grosset and Dunlap], 1961), pp. 140-68.

34. Borroff, *Music in Europe and the United States*.

35. Appelbaum, *Show Songs*, pp. xv-xviii. This is a strange limitation, since Appelbaum omits minstrelsy and vaudeville and since most of the types he mentions were originally French: extravaganza, pantomime, English burlesque, operetta, *opéra-bouffe* (French comic opera), parody, and farce-comedy (the Harrigan and Hart shows, which are called burlesques by Blum, *American Theatre*).

36. Laurence, "Musical Theatre." David Ewen, in his *New Complete Book*, p. 120, attributes first use of the term to Edward Everett Rice in describing his burlesque extravaganza *Evangeline* (1874), but does not date the incidence (Rice lived to 1924). A production of *The Pet of the Petticoats* at Niblo's Garden in 1866 was billed as a "Three-Act Musi-

cal Comedy," implying a comic play on a musical subject.—Ed.

37. Appelbaum, *Show Songs*. See Stanley Green, liner notes to "I Wants to Be a Actor Lady" and Other Hits from Early Musical Comedies, New World Records NW 221.—Ed.

38. See Robert C. Toll, *Blacking Up: The Minstrel Show in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).—Ed.

39. These media as musical theater are described by Robert C. Toll, *The Entertainment Machine: American Show Business in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).—Ed.

40. Lewine and Simon, *Encyclopedia of Theatre Music*. These figures were derived by the writer by counting the number of musicals listed for each year.

41. Gottfried, *Broadway Musicals*, p. 167.

42. *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.

43. Appelbaum, *Show Songs*, pp. xv-xviii.

44. Bernard Sobel, *History of Burlesque* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1956), pp. 14ff.

45. *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.

46. *Ibid.*

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