

“JUST ENOUGH WOMAN FOR ME:” AN ANALYSIS OF THE
UNINTENTIONALLY FEMINIST LYRICS OF DOROTHY FIELDS

by

JESSICA KRISTIN STULTZ

(Under the Direction of Freda Scott Giles)

ABSTRACT

Dorothy Fields was a Broadway lyricist and librettist. Long overlooked by scholarship, the work of Fields is landmark. For much of the Golden Age of the American musical, Fields was one of the only women writing for the Broadway theatre. As such, her voice is distinct in many ways. The project of this dissertation is to determine that voice and, in so doing, to establish her unique contribution to the canon of musical theatre.

INDEX WORDS: “Dorothy Fields, Broadway, musicals, Golden Age, lyricist, librettist, Tony Awards, Herbert Fields, Lew Fields, Cy Coleman, theatre”

“JUST ENOUGH WOMAN FOR ME:” AN ANALYSIS OF THE
UNINTENTIONALLY FEMINIST LYRICS OF DOROTHY FIELDS

by

JESSICA KRISTIN STULTZ

BA, Furman University, 1999

MA, University of Kentucky, 2005

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2011

© 2011

Jessica Kristin Stultz

All Rights Reserved

“JUST ENOUGH WOMAN FOR ME:” AN ANALYSIS OF THE
UNINTENTIONALLY FEMINIST LYRICS OF DOROTHY FIELDS

by

JESSICA KRISTIN STULTZ

Major Professor: Freda Scott Giles
Committee: John Kundert-Gibbs
 David Saltz
 Judith Sebesta

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2011

DEDICATION

Mom, you let me watch *Annie* every single day. You endured my childhood obsessions with movie musicals from *The Sound of Music* to *The One and Only, Genuine, Original Family Band*. You never complained when I'd tap dance on top of the coffee table or sang every lyric to every song Cole Porter ever wrote. In so doing, you birthed in me a passion that is, next to my faith, the greatest gift you ever gave me.

Daddy, you saw the shows and then took me to see them. You bankrolled our common addiction — providing airfare, hotel rooms, and show tickets for our many theatre-going trips to New York City (or, in the case of Karen Ziemba's tour with *Chicago*, Nashville). You made a way for me to meet Bill McCutcheon. You celebrated my 21st birthday by taking me to the Tony Awards, and when I got the chance to go to grad school at UGA, you and Mom generously paid my way. As a result, the passion that Mom birthed, you nurtured [**cue emotional explosion into song**]:

“So I say thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing!

Thanks for all the joy they're bringing. Who can live without it?

*I ask in all honesty, what would life be? Without a song or a dance,
what are we? So I say thank you for the music, for giving it to me.”*

— from *Mamma Mia!*

I dedicate this dissertation to the two of you, because I am so unspeakably grateful for your dedication to me. In other words, “**thank you** for the music.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Theatre is a collaborative process. Though the actor on stage generally gets all the accolades, it actually takes a team of designers, directors, house staff, musicians, performers, producers, stagehands, technicians, and writers to put on a show. The process of writing a dissertation is very similar. It may be my name on the Title Page, but without the support, assistance, and input of family, friends, and fellow theatre folk, the work would never have been completed.

Thank You, first of all, to God, from Whom comes “every good and perfect gift” (James 1:17). It is undeniable to me that whatever I have accomplished in my life is an outgrowth of His mighty work in me. Without hesitation, I give Him all of the glory for this achievement, as I know that it is only through His strength that I am able to do “all things” (Phil. 4:13).

Thank you also to my family. Mom and Daddy, you have been forced to bear the brunt of my exhaustion and frustration through my four year doctoral journey. Thank you for that. Sissy, David, Camden, Payton, Lizzie Gray, and Lila, thank you for decorating my apartment when coursework kept me from having the time to do it myself. Because of you, I didn’t have to celebrate Christmas, Scrooge-style!

Thank you to my friends. More than once, you’ve heard the excuse, “No, I can’t have dinner. Dissertation.” Thank you that you’re still there now I have no more excuses! To Dr. Charlotte Greenspan, thank you for making your manuscript available to me before it was even published. Finally, thank you to my dissertation committee for reading what I’ve written and for giving me the thoughtful feedback necessary to get it into its final form.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTER	
1 THE PROJECT	1
Chapter Outline	31
2 INTRODUCTION	34
3 “A LADY WITH A PIN” OR “A GIRL WITH A FLAME?” 1776 vs. <i>ARMS & THE GIRL</i>	50
4 “HAPPY TO KEEP HIS DINNER WARM” OR “I’D RATHER WAKE UP BY MYSELF”? <i>BELLS ARE RINGING AND HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING VS. BY THE BEAUTIFUL SEA</i>	84
<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	85
<i>Bells Are Ringing</i>	88
<i>How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying</i>	92
5 “THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS” OR “THERE’S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS”? <i>LITTLE ME VS. SWEET CHARITY</i>	107
<i>Little Me</i>	122
<i>Sweet Charity</i>	125
6 CONCLUSION: “I’M WAY AHEAD”	138

REFERENCES	151
APPENDICES	
A THE SHOWS OF DOROTHY FIELDS.....	160
B THE SONGS OF DOROTHY FIELDS	161

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 6.1	139
Table 6.2	147

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROJECT¹

Dorothy Fields was a woman ahead of her time. A lyricist, Fields played a major part in the American music industry from the early years of the prohibition era (early 1920s) to the end of the hippie movement (mid 1970s). She commenced her songwriting career in 1924, four decades before the most integral years of the modern Women’s Movement. While her contemporaries worked the typing pools or ran their households, Fields wrote with more than a dozen composers — all males — to produce over 400 songs for the stage and screen. Many of these songs were immensely popular hits that became beloved American standards. Fields wrote hit after hit for more than 30 Hollywood films and 19 Broadway musicals.² “On the Sunny Side of the Street (1930),” “Close as Pages in a Book (1945),” and “Hey, Big Spender (1966)” are only a few of the recognizable titles from her expansive catalog of work.³ In addition to her work as a lyricist, Fields was also a librettist. Collaborating with her brother Herbert, she penned the books for eight Broadway musicals.

For her work, Fields became the first woman to receive an Academy Award for a song, “The Way You Look Tonight.” She wrote it with Jerome Kern for the movie musical *Swing Time* (1936), produced by the Radio-Keith-Orpheum Studio (RKO). At the time, Fields was 32

¹ Kristin Stultz, “Defining a Style for the Lyrics of Dorothy Fields” (Masters thesis, University of Kentucky, 2005). Much, though not all, of this introductory chapter is based on the research done for my Master’s thesis. The thesis, an attempt to define a style for Fields’s lyrics, was completed at the University of Kentucky in May of 2005. This chapter refines that work and updates it with more recent information.

² Deborah Grace Winer, *On the Sunny Side of the Street: the Life and Lyrics of Dorothy Fields* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997), 241.

³ Clearly, the span of time between these hits illustrates the longevity of Fields’s career.

years old. Fields later earned a Tony Award for her lyrics to *Redhead*, the Best Musical of 1959. In 1971, sixty-six year old Fields was in the early stages of her work on the musical *Seesaw* (1973)⁴ when she was again honored by becoming the first woman inducted into the Songwriter's Hall of Fame. The following year, Stanley Adams, president of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), referred to her catalog of songs as "the most significant of any woman songwriter in the history of ASCAP."⁵ Fields died in 1974, but Adams's distinction holds to this day.

Fields earned other distinctions, as well. In their book *Reading Lyrics*, published in 2000, music historians Robert Gottlieb and Robert Kimball name Fields "America's most brilliant and successful woman lyricist."⁶ That Gottlieb and Kimball include the qualification of "woman" lyricist is noteworthy. Her work, as will be shown, was in every way on par with that of her male colleagues. Still, she is known as a "woman lyricist," or, in the case of her *Variety* obituary, a "female song-lyricist."⁷ Whether intentional or not, these writers are considering her catalog as somehow outside those of her male counterparts.

Regardless, as is illustrated by these accolades, Fields enjoyed the admiration and acclaim of her peers prior to her death, and even more remarkably, her success has outlived her. Music Director Maurice Levine, who hosted and produced "An Evening with Dorothy Fields" as part of New York City's 92nd Street YMCA's Lyrics & Lyricists Series in April of 1972, quoted Adams's affirmation of Fields's work and then added:

⁴ Fields wrote *Seesaw* with composer Cy Coleman, her final collaborator and one of her favorites.

⁵ Dorothy Fields. *An Evening with Dorothy Fields*, DRG Records, Inc. - CD.

⁶ Robert Gottlieb and Robert Kimball, eds., *Reading Lyrics* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000), 376.

⁷ "Dorothy Fields, 68, Lyricist Dies; Leaves 300+ Song Heritage," *Variety*, April 13, 1974, 2. The obituary referred to Fields as "America's best-known female song lyricist."

Mr. Adams further explained to me that it wasn't only the size and the scope of the catalog but the fact that the performances have remained at an amazingly high level over the years. It seems there has never been a dip in the popularity of Dorothy Fields songs.⁸

That was 39 years ago. Fields's popularity remains strong. Her "Pick Yourself Up," also written with Kern for *Swing Time*, was included in the dance revue *Come Fly Away*, which opened on Broadway in March of 2010.⁹ President Barack Obama quoted that same lyric in his January 2009 inaugural address: "Starting today, we must 'pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off,' and begin again the work of remaking America."¹⁰ As recently as 2005, New York's City Center ENCORES! Series staged a workshop-style performance of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. The musical, which Fields wrote with composer Arthur Schwartz, premiered on Broadway in 1951. Also in 2005, the 92nd Street YMCA presented "Dorothy's Side of the Street." Another part of the "Lyrics & Lyricists" Series, it included cabaret-style performances of Fields's work. Further, a full-scale Broadway revival of *Sweet Charity* opened that April. In 2003, a new musical revue called *Never Gonna Dance* premiered on Broadway. Comprised of songs composed by Kern, the score of the show included six of Fields's lyrics. *Dorothy Fields Forever* premiered in 2002. The revue, directed by David Kernan, played at the Kings Head Theatre in Inner London.

In addition to these "on-stage" appearances of Fields's work, her songs are also frequently included on new albums that feature pop standards. For instance, Grammy Award-winning jazz vocalist / pianist Diana Krall included a cut of "Pick Yourself Up" on her 2007 greatest hits

⁸ Fields.

⁹ Directed by choreographer Twyla Tharp, the show closed in September of that same year.

¹⁰ The White House Blog, "President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address," the White House, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/inaugural-address/> (accessed June 18, 2010). The President's inaugural address was delivered on January 21, 2009.

compilation “The Very Best of Diana Krall.”¹¹ Another Grammy Award-winner, Steve Tyrell featured four Fields tracks (out of 17 total) on his 1999 release “A New Standard.” Those four are “On the Sunny Side of the Street,” “I Can’t Give You Anything but Love,” “I’m in the Mood for Love,” and “The Way You Look Tonight,” which Tyrell first performed for the 1991 remake of the film *Father of the Bride*. In addition to these popular recordings, cast recordings of several of Fields’s Broadway musicals have recently been made available on compact disc for the first time. *Up in Central Park* (1945), *By the Beautiful Sea* (1954), and *Redhead* (1959) were each released in 2003.

In spite of the enduring popularity of Fields’s work and its indisputable impact on the history of both American music and theatre, very little has been written about either Fields’s life or her work. Biographer Deborah Grace Winer published *On the Sunny Side of the Street : the Life and Lyrics of Dorothy Fields* in 1997. It was the first book dedicated solely to Fields’s life, and even Winer considers her work to be more of a “celebration” of Fields’s work than a biography of her.

Nonetheless, the book prompted a handful of publicity appearances for Winer and, thereby, sparked a renewed interest in Fields. Winer discussed the book on a 1997 episode of *Theatre Talk*, a television program that airs in the New York City market. That same year, Winer hosted a forum entitled “Sisters Gershwin: Where are the Women Lyricists and Composers?” at the New York Public Library. Winer also appeared on a 1999 broadcast of National Public Radio’s “Fresh Air” program. She joined host Terry Gross and music historian Philip Furia on a segment entitled “American Popular Song Series — Dorothy Fields.” More recently, Charlotte Greenspan wrote a more thorough biography. Written from her perspective as a musicologist, *Pick Yourself*

¹¹ Krall also recorded “I Can’t Give You Anything but Love” for her 1999 album “Let’s Face the Music and Dance.”

Up: Dorothy Fields and the American Musical was published by the Oxford University Press in 2010.¹²

In addition to these two works dedicated solely to the work of Fields, Fields is mentioned in several recent anthologies of songwriters. She was most recently included in Herbert Keyser's *Geniuses of the American Musical Theatre: the Composers and Lyricists* (2009). Fields is the only woman to have an entire chapter dedicated to solely to her work. The other 27 chapters were written about her male counterparts, save in the case of Adolph Green who splits his chapter with co-lyricist Betty Comden.¹³ Fields is also discussed in Judith Sebesta and Bud Coleman's critical anthology *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists* (2008).¹⁴ In addition, Fields's work is addressed in Andrea Most's 2004 *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical* (2004).¹⁵ Gottlieb and Kimball's *Reading Lyrics* is described in its frontispiece as "a vast anthology bringing together more than one thousand of the best American and English lyrics of the twentieth century." The chapter that contains Fields's work begins with a paragraph-long biography of the lyricist. In Furia's release *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: a History of America's Great Lyricists* (1990), he splits a single chapter between Fields and Leo Robin. This pairing is curious, as the two lyricists never worked

¹² Charlotte Greenspan, *Pick Yourself Up: Dorothy Fields and the American Musical* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3, 8. According to Greenspan, Lew Fields's parents resisted his entrance into the theatre, as well. Having immigrated from eastern Europe in the 1870s, the Schoenfelds wanted a more respectable life for their children, just as Lew would later wish for his own.

¹³ Herbert Keyser, *Geniuses of the American Musical Theatre: the Composers and Lyricists* (New York: Applause, 2009), vii-viii.

¹⁴ Bud Coleman and Judith Sebesta, eds., *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008).

¹⁵ Andrea Most, *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

together.¹⁶ It is also symptomatic of the ways in which Fields has, historically and in spite of a recent resurgence of interest in her work, been overlooked and under-appreciated by history.

William G. Hyland's *The Song is Ended: Songwriters and American Music, 1900-1950* offers proof of this fact. The book is an early history of the American popular song. It was published in 1995 and briefly references Fields a scant nine times. Hyland's attention to Fields's work is negligible and in no way indicative of her impact as "America's most brilliant and successful woman lyricist."¹⁷ The most recently released compendium of Broadway history is *Broadway: the American Musical*. Published in 2004, it is a companion to Michael Kantor's documentary film of the same name. The authors of the book dedicate pages to many who helped to shape Broadway — Al Jolson, Rodgers & Hart, Porter and others. Fields appears in the book only five times and even then only through fleeting mentions of her name. The nearly 500-page tome does not even hint at her contribution to the history of musical theatre.¹⁸

It is not surprising, then, that Fields's near-erasure from history is addressed in *Dorothy Fields Forever*. The musical revue opens with the character of Fields addressing the audience: "Dorothy Who?" she says. "That's the story of my life. Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Cy Coleman — you've heard of them. But not the lady who wrote the words."¹⁹ This same sentiment led Mark Carnes to include Fields in his 2002 book *Invisible Giants: Fifty Americans Who Shaped the Nation but Missed the History Books*. Carnes summarized the book in his introduction:

¹⁶ Philip Furia, *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: a History of America's Great Lyricists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

¹⁷ William G. Hyland, *The Song is Ended: Songwriters and American Music, 1900-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

¹⁸ Michael Kantor and Laurence Maslon, *Broadway: the American Musical* (New York: Bullfinch Press, 2004).

¹⁹ Fiona Mountford, "Songs Show Fields in Full Flower." *London Evening Standard*, June 21, 2002, 39. Directed by David Kernan, *Dorothy Fields Forever* played at the Kings Head Theatre in Inner London.

This book consists of biographical essays on 50 “invisible giants” of the American past, each selected by a prominent person in contemporary America²⁰....Although we made no systematic attempt to define “invisible giant,” we explained that we were looking for the type of figure who, though often overlooked in history books, warranted special consideration.²¹

It is no secret that the work of women has, for much of history, been overlooked.

Christine Ammer’s *Unsung: A History of Women in American Music* (1980) was inspired by such a realization. Her work focused primarily on writers and performers of classical music.²² Her findings prove that the anti-female bias was not an issue only in the world of popular song. Writes Ammer, “Several years of research showed that women indeed have been writing and performing music for as long as men have. But, owing to the social climate of earlier times, their work went unnoticed, unpublished, unperformed, and was quickly forgotten.”²³ This fact is also in sync with the ideas of Helen Keyssar, as noted in her *Feminist Theatre*. Writes Keyssar, “Drama anthologies and textbooks continue to collect almost exclusively plays by and about men.”²⁴ That Fields’s work as a Broadway lyricist and librettist was, on the contrary, “almost exclusively” about women, is likely why her work has been excluded from the so-called canon.²⁵

Given the breadth and success of Fields’s work, this oversight is astonishing. She wrote for five decades, matching — and in many cases surpassing — the work of her male peers.

²⁰ Fields was selected by David Lehman, professor and editor of the *Best American Poetry Journal*.

²¹ Mark Carnes, ed., *Invisible Giants: Fifty Americans who Shaped the Nation but Missed the History Book* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), vii, 214.

²² As a result of her focus on classical music, Ammer does not mention or discuss the work of Dorothy Fields.

²³ Christine Ammer, Author’s Note to *Unsung: a History of Women in American Music* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980), ix.

²⁴ Helen Keyssar, *Feminist Theatre* (London: the MacMillan Press, Ltd., 1994), xv.

²⁵ Coleman and Sebesta reference this fact in the introduction to their anthology (p. 2).

Bookstores are full of biographies of these men. Entire books are dedicated solely to publishing their lyrics. No such compendium exists for Fields. Though scholarly interest in her work is growing, this oversight by earlier historians demands an explanation. Three possibilities emerge as the most feasible explanations for why she has, to borrow Carnes's words, "shaped the nation but missed the history book." The first two of these reasons were posited by Fields herself. First, she suggests that her work was, perhaps, too "light" to be taken seriously. Secondly, she worked with more than a dozen composers. As a result, she was never part of a permanent pair, a la Rodgers & Hart or, later, Rodgers & Hammerstein. The third possibility is the most likely. Fields was a woman — the *only* woman for much of her career — working in a field that was dominated by men. I will now examine each of these possibilities in greater depth.

First, was Fields's work too light to warrant serious consideration? This suggestion comes from Fields herself. In discussing *Redhead*, for which she won a 1959 Tony Award, Fields said:

The plays that [my brother and co-librettist] Herbie and I have always done have been just for entertainment, without any underlying message....It seems to me a double-gaited thing, to try to give an audience real enjoyment, when they're going to have to be pulled up short by your saying, "Now look, boys, underneath all this is something that you've got to take home with you." I think, that Oscar Hammerstein did it in *South Pacific*, but then this was really a musical play. This was not my field, which is musical comedy, a very much less important department, I think than anything Oscar and Dick [Rodgers] have done.²⁶

Perhaps Fields had been reading her own reviews. Writing about *Redhead* for the [New York] *Daily Mirror*, Robert Coleman said, "Let us record right here that *Redhead* is no *King and*

²⁶ Dorothy Fields, Columbia University Oral History Project (New York: Columbia University, 1958).

I, South Pacific, or *Kiss Me, Kate*. But it doesn't aim to be. It's as unabashedly corny as that stuff that comes from those lush Iowa fields, and that's all right by us."²⁷

Though, in her self-effacing way, Fields diminished the import of her work when discussing *Redhead*, she also hints at a very interesting biographical point: the quick and easy laugh came naturally to Fields. Fields's father was famed vaudevillian Lew Fields of the duo Weber & Fields. She recalled listening to her famous father's rehearsals at home. "I remember so well hearing his lines," she said. "...I always heard his lines....The house was always filled with scripts and things that were sent to him."²⁸ The verbal acuity of the elder Fields was undeniably passed down to the younger of his two daughters, as well as to his two sons.²⁹ Lew Fields had an aversion to characters of great depth. His philosophy, according to Dorothy, was "If they [the audience] laugh, what's the difference?"³⁰

After years of writing sketches and lyrics for revues,³¹ Fields was fully capable of producing quick-witted work like her father's fluffy fare. For instance, in reviewing *Blackbirds of 1928*, J. Brooks Atkinson wrote that the piece was "an evening of enjoyably good-natured negro amusement."³² It became one of the 10 longest-running musicals of the 1920s.³³ Coleman called McHugh and Fields's *Hello, Daddy* a "tuneful, diverting, amusing extravaganza."³⁴ *A Wall*

²⁷ Robert Coleman, "Robert Coleman's Theatre: *Redhead* a Walloping Hit," *Daily Mirror*, February 6, 1959.

²⁸ Columbia Oral History Project. This, of course, is in opposition to Lew Fields's assertion in the *Christian Science Monitor* that he did not bring his work home with him.

²⁹ Of Joseph, Herbert, and Dorothy Fields, however, Dorothy was, by far, the most successful of Lew Fields's progeny.

³⁰ Columbia University Oral History Project.

³¹ Among others, Fields wrote the lyrics for revues like the *International Revue* and *Blackbirds of 1928*.

³² J. Brooks Atkinson, "The Play," *New York Times*, May 10, 1928, 31.

³³ Greenspan, preface. Kayser, 79. *Blackbirds of 1928* ran for 519 performances.

³⁴ Robert Coleman, "'Hello, Daddy' – Lew Presents and Plays in Musical Comedy Written by Son and Daughter," December 1928, unattributed press clipping in McHugh scrapbook.

Street Journal review for *Up in Central Park*, which Fields wrote with composer Sigmund Romberg, refers to the show as having “plenty of box office appeal. It has a little bit of everything that the public has come to expect of musical comedies, although it doesn’t strain itself in any department reaching for art or perfection.”³⁵

In spite of her success at writing lighter entertainment, Fields most enjoyed writing for the integrated musical like that fashioned by her dear friend and colleague Hammerstein. She called it a “luxury,” “writing for films or plays, where there’s a story line and characters to write for and songs to progress that story.”³⁶ A writer for the *Washington Post* even suggests that Fields was at the fore of this integration in film. Writing of the film *The Joy of Living* (1938), another of Fields’s collaborations with Kern, Melrose Gower posits that the film “is Hollywood’s first attempt by composers to achieve perfect unity between music and histrionics. It is a trailblazer in the Hollywood musical field.”³⁷

Still, Fields saw her work on book musicals as somehow carrying less weight than that of Hammerstein. Of *Redhead*, a vehicle for Gwen Verdon, Fields says, “It is not meant to be a great contribution to the theatre. And as one of the papers said in its review, ‘It’s fun, fun, fun,’³⁸ and that’s what it is, and anyone who goes there expecting to see a great musical play will find he’s been short-changed. It is nothing of the sort.”³⁹ Fields may have felt that way about her work, but

³⁵ *Wall Street Journal*, “The Theatre,” May 21, 1947, 8.

³⁶ Fields.

³⁷ Melrose Gower, “Music and Story are Balanced in New Way by Writing Experts,” *Washington Post*, January 16, 1938.

³⁸ This comment can be attributed to Robert Coleman in his *New York Daily Mirror* review of *Redhead* (February 6, 1959).

³⁹ Columbia University Oral History Project.

the theatre community did not. *Redhead* was one of Fields's most successful Broadway musicals, earning nine Tony Awards, including one for Fields herself.⁴⁰

Rather than being the detriment to her career that she suggested it was, Fields's professional flexibility — generating theatrical fare that was both light and heavier — was actually a secret to her success. In fact, it was because of this skill that she was afforded the chance to write *Annie Get Your Gun*. Inspired to write an Annie Oakley musical while volunteering at the USO, Fields took the idea to her friends Rodgers & Hammerstein. They were elated at the premise. They knew, though, that such a light and fun story was not their forte. According to Fields, the pair “usually take a good story, something that had been a good, legitimate play, and the adaptation was sound and kept true to the story itself and faithful to the characters.”⁴¹ As a result, Fields was tasked with writing the show's libretto, while Rodgers & Hammerstein produced.⁴² The resulting show, *Annie Get Your Gun*, became a colossal success that enjoyed its most recent Broadway revival in 1999.⁴³ Said Fields,

Out of 15 musicals [on which Fields had worked at the time when *Annie Get Your Gun* premiered], I think this was the least trouble of all for all of us. When a show works, it works. We had companies in London, Australia, France, Norway, Sweden, and, more exciting than any of these was the national company that starred Mary Martin.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Keyser, 83.

⁴¹ Columbia University Oral History Project.

⁴² Originally, Fields was also to have written the lyrics for *Annie Get Your Gun*, and Jerome Kern was to have composed. Kern, however, was felled by a lethal stroke shortly before work on the project began. Irving Berlin stepped in as his replacement, writing both music and lyrics.

⁴³ This production, which starred Bernadette Peters in the title role and Tom Wopat as Frank Butler, won Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical and Best Performance by an Actress in a Musical and ran for 1045 performances.

⁴⁴ Fields.

In spite of Fields's assessment of her work as somehow secondary to that of her peers, her ability to shift between different styles of writing was a tremendous strength of hers, setting her apart from her colleagues and helping her career to stretch over five decades. Clearly, to pin her erasure from history on her own skill is misguided and ill-informed.

The second explanation for why Fields has been overlooked by history is because she was never part of a permanent pair. Many of the great songwriting teams are known by their shared names. Of these, Rodgers & Hammerstein are likely the most notable;⁴⁵ other famous pairs include George & Ira Gershwin,⁴⁶ Lerner & Loewe,⁴⁷ and Kander & Ebb.⁴⁸ Again, Fields herself suggested this possibility.⁴⁹ It is impossible to know if Fields, who wrote with more than a dozen composers,⁵⁰ has been overlooked by historians because her name is not conveniently attached to that of a frequent collaborator. It does, however, seem like a big leap to make and indict journalists and historians alike for laziness.

Fields's readiness to accept both of these problematic suggestions is an indication of how self-effacing she was. That a woman of her success would claim that she did not write things as weighty as Hammerstein's (among others) clearly indicates that she did not seek the spotlight. Fields's self-effacement is further evident in a 1969 interview about the work of Richard

⁴⁵ Composer Richard Rodgers and lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II were known for writing many of the musicals that typify the "Golden Age" of the American musical. These include *Oklahoma!*, *South Pacific*, and *The Sound of Music*.

⁴⁶ Together, composer George Gershwin and lyricist Ira Gershwin wrote many musicals. Among them were *Lady, Be Good!*, *Of Thee I Sing*, and *Porgy & Bess*.

⁴⁷ Lyricist Alan Jay Lerner and lyricist Frederick Loewe wrote musicals, such as *My Fair Lady*, *Camelot*, and *Brigadoon*.

⁴⁸ Composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb collaborated on more than 15 musicals. *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* are some of their best-known works.

⁴⁹ *New York Times*, "Dorothy Fields, Lyricist, Dies; Wrote 400 Songs in 50 Years," March 29, 1974.

⁵⁰ Fields's collaborators included Jimmy McHugh, Jerome Kern, Fritz Kreisler, Arthur Schwartz, Sigmund Romberg, Morton Gould, Harry Warren, Harold Arlen, Burton Lane, Albert Hague, and Cy Coleman.

Rodgers. The interviewer begins to ask Fields about her own work. Her response is to very quickly cut him off: “This is about Dick,” she said. “This is not about me.” This is modest, to say the least, particularly given that Fields is the one who introduced Rodgers to Lorenz Hart, the first collaborator with whom he had great commercial success.⁵¹ Perhaps this shying away from the spotlight worked to her favor. Men may have felt more receptive to working with a woman who did not seek to eclipse their celebrity with their own. Further, as will be illustrated in subsequent chapters, Fields’s voice was likely suppressed, to some extent, by her male colleagues and by the strictures of the society in which she wrote.

Secondly, of the names of her fellow songwriters mentioned up to now, Fields is the only woman named. Indeed, she was the only major female songwriter writing for both the American Popular Song and the Golden Age Musical.⁵² This fact offers what is most likely the reason for her oversight; it also opens the door to the field most rife for exploration.

Given this, it is most likely that Fields was overlooked for a third reason—because she was a woman “in a man’s world.” Evidence that Fields was an anomaly within her peer group abounds. For instance, a photograph from the *New York Herald Tribune* and included in Fields’s papers at the New York Performing Library for the Performing Arts shows a group of

⁵¹ Milton Kaye, *Richard Rodgers: a Comparative Melody Analysis of His Songs with Hart and Hammerstein - Interview with Dorothy Fields* (microform), 1969.

⁵² Though the term “Golden Age” has long been used in reference to mid-20th Century American musicals, many scholars today do not find it either useful or helpful as a qualifier. Among the dissenters are Larry Stempel. An associate professor of music at Fordham University and the author of *Showtime: a History of the Broadway Musical Theater*, Stempel suggests in a December 9, 2010, *New York Times* article that the phrase “Golden Age” “forces you into a sense of history that places less value on all that went before and all that came after” (Larry Stempel, “What Golden Age? More Answers About Musical Theatre,” *New York Times*, December 9, 2010).

songwriters at ASCAP's 50th anniversary celebration.⁵³ The image is of Fields, Noble Sissle, Harold Arlen, Stanley Adams, Morton Gould, Lerory Anderson, Richard Adler, and Arthur Schwartz.⁵⁴ There are no other women included. A 1983 line drawing done by Broadway artist Al Hirschfeld is further indicative of this. The drawing includes the images of 12 "Great American Songwriters," as the piece is called. These writers include the likes of Rodgers, Porter, Johnny Mercer, and Duke Ellington.⁵⁵ The only woman in the drawing is Fields. Additionally, in its inaugural year, the Songwriter's Hall of Fame inducted 10 new members. Fields was the only woman of the 10.⁵⁶ That Fields was able to succeed in this man-centered milieu is indicative of the strength of her skill. Gary Stevens, a friend of Fields's, expounded on the ramifications of her success:

Dorothy Fields, starting professionally in the late 20's, had to be two, three, four, or more times more talented than many of the then thriving male songwriters, or else her creations would have never been considered or ever published. Back then, women were preferred in the kitchen and as wives and mothers. Chauvinism in Tin Pan Alley, on Broadway, and in the Brill Building (sanctum sanctorum of notes, stale cigar smoke, and the ects) was preeminently prominent.⁵⁷

⁵³ Though the clipped image is undated, it can be assumed that it was taken in 1964, which is 50 years from Victor Herbert's (et.al.) 1914 founding of ASCAP.

⁵⁴ Of these seven men, three – Arlen, Gould, and Schwartz – had collaborated with Fields.

⁵⁵ Al Hirschfeld's "American Popular Song: Great American Songwriters" line drawing includes Harold Arlen, Irving Berlin, Hoagy Carmichael, Duke Ellington, Dorothy Fields, George and Ira Gershwin, Lorenz Hart, Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer, Cole Porter, and Richard Rodgers.

⁵⁶ John S. Wilson, "10 Elected to New Hall of Fame for Songwriters," *New York Times*, March 10, 1971, 30. Others elected in 1971 include Alan Jay Lerner, Duke Ellington, Harold Arlen, Harry Warren, Hoagy Carmichael, Ira Gershwin, Johnny Mercer, James van Heusen, and Rudolf Friml.

⁵⁷ Fields

Stevens's statement stands in stark contrast to those who would dismiss Fields's success as an act of nepotism by her famous father. As will be discussed further in Chapter Two, Fields and his wife Rose fought against the theatrical involvement of any of his children. An incident from Dorothy's teen years illustrates this. When she was in high school, she toyed with the idea of becoming an actress. She attempted to join a Tarrytown, N.J., summer-stock company. Her father would have none of it; he intercepted her acceptance letter.⁵⁸ As a result, she never became an actor. In spite of his aversion to the idea, though, "three of us wound up in the theatre," Fields said, "and we had to do it on our own."⁵⁹ Dorothy was, far and away, the most successful of the three.

It comes as no surprise that historians were dismissive of women's work during the time period in which Fields wrote.⁶⁰ This is clearly evidenced in Stanley Green's 1960 history *The World of Musical Comedy: the Story of the American Musical Stage as Told Through the Careers of its Foremost Composers and Lyricists*. Writes Green, "The creators of musical comedy in America are a body of men (and some women) who have consistently refused to do less than the best that was in them."⁶¹ A lyric from 1958's *Three to Make Music* further emphasizes this. Written by Mary Rodgers and Linda Melnick,⁶² *Three to Make Music* was intended to teach children about the role of the orchestra. One especially chauvinistic lyric from

⁵⁸ Winer, 20.

⁵⁹ Columbia University Oral History Project.

⁶⁰ Coleman and Sebesta argue that this remains typical of how the work of women is chronicled. In their Introduction, they write, "Most written histories of musical theatre discuss the work of female performers but make only a cursory nod to the work of its other female creators."⁶⁰

⁶¹ Korey R. Rothman, "'Will You Remember?' Female Lyricists of Operetta and Musical Comedy," in *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists*, eds. Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., Inc. Publishers, 2008), 9.

⁶² Mary Rodgers and Linda Melnick are the daughters of Richard Rodgers. Like her father, Mary Rodgers is also a composer, most notably of *Once Upon a Mattress* (1959). Her son, Adam Guettel, is also a composer, having won a Tony Award for 2005's *Light in the Piazza*.

the piece is indicative of the absence of women in songwriting. Write the Rodgers sisters: “It takes three to make music ... the man who writes it, the men who play it, and the folks they’re playing it for.”⁶³

Rodgers’ lyric is misleading. Though none reached the success of Fields, there were other women writing songs during Fields’s career.⁶⁴ “Yours for a Song: the Women of Tin Pan Alley” is a 1998 documentary about women songwriters, which discusses Fields and several other women. Each of these began their careers in the early 1920s. According to the documentary, 178 women writers joined ASCAP between the years of 1920 and 1949. Notes music historian Artis Wodehouse, “I’m not sure that the 20’s and 30’s was a better time to break in. I just know it’s a time they [women] were able to.” In spite of the number of women songwriters of that era, none achieved Fields’s success or longevity. The list of Fields’s most notable female contemporaries includes Kay Swift (1929’s “Can’t We Be Friends?” and the score for the 1930 Broadway show *Fine & Dandy*, which ran for 236 performances), Ann Ronell (1932’s “Willow Weep for Me” and 1933’s “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?”), and Dana Seusse (1931’s “Whistlin’ in the Dark” and 1934’s “You Oughta Be in Pictures”). The major distinction between Fields and these women is that Swift, Ronnell, and Seusse wrote music, as opposed to Fields who wrote lyrics. Another distinction is that the three composers each left popular music for classical composition. Swift composed music for *Alma Mater* (1934), one of George Balanchine’s premiere American ballets. She then became the Director of Light Music for the 1939 World’s Fair in New York.

⁶³ Gary Konas, “Working with the Boys: Women who Wrote Musicals in the Golden Age,” in *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists*, eds. Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., Inc., Publishers, 2008), 122.

⁶⁴ Mary Rodgers herself is one of these women. Though she did not produce nearly as much work as Fields, she was nonetheless writing for the Broadway stage during this time.

Like Swift, Ronell also composed for ballet, and Seusse moved to Paris to study a more “serious” form of composition.⁶⁵

Betty Comden was the first female lyricist whose work matched the success of Fields’s. Comden’s career, in many ways, mirrors Fields’s, yet there are two major distinctions between these women. First, Comden started songwriting nearly 20 years after Fields. Comden’s Broadway career began in 1944 when her *On the Town* premiered. In the Foreword to Winer’s book, Comden wrote about this:

When in the mid-1940s I did my first show on Broadway ... there were almost no women writing for the musical theatre. But Dorothy, who was about to do *Annie Get Your Gun*, had already been a star lyricist for two decades.⁶⁶

The second distinction between these two women is that Fields worked alone on her lyrics, a single lyricist writing with a single composer. Comden always wrote in tandem with co-lyricist Adolph Green. Unlike Fields’s, Comden’s success was not purely of her own making. It was dependent on the input of Green. Together, Comden & Green wrote the lyrics and / or librettos for Broadway successes that include *Wonderful Town* (1953),⁶⁷ *Peter Pan* (1954), *Bells are Ringing* (1956), and *The Will Rogers Follies* (1991). Their film scores include *Singin’ in the Rain* (1952) and *The Band Wagon* (1953).⁶⁸

Lyricist Carolyn Leigh also wrote Broadway scores. Like Comden, the beginning of Leigh’s career followed the start of Fields’s by several decades, and her work was not nearly as extensive. Leigh’s most popular shows were *Wildcat* (1960) and *Little Me* (1962). Each of these

⁶⁵ *Yours for a Song: the Women of Tin Pan Alley*, DVD, directed by Terry Benes (New York: Fox Lorber, 1998).

⁶⁶ Winer, ix.

⁶⁷ Interestingly, *Wonderful Town* was based on a play by Joseph Fields. Having written *My Sister Eileen*, Fields also wrote the libretto for the musical it inspired.

⁶⁸ Gottlieb and Kimball, 506.

were written with composer Cy Coleman, later a Fields collaborator. Despite the existence of these other female songwriters, Fields's success and longevity elevated her above the rest. Wrote Comden: "She [Fields] was *the* woman songwriter. But woman or man, it made no difference either in her work or in the esteem in which she was held by her colleagues."⁶⁹

Why was Fields able to succeed in ways that other women were not? Perhaps this is owed to Fields's performance of her gender. In every way, save her monumental professional success, Fields carried herself as any other well-bred lady. She served as the Chairwoman of the Manhattan Women's Committee of the Girl Scout Council of Greater New York, hosting teas in her home to the end of raising a million dollars for the organization.⁷⁰ According to her personal papers, she also served as the Program Chairman for the Membership Luncheons of the Women's Division of the New York Guild for the Jewish Blind.⁷¹ She was also known for her fashion sense and for her close friendship with two other Dorothys — Rodgers & Hammerstein, the wives of Richard and Oscar.⁷² Further indicative of Fields's sense of deportment is a Cotton Club occurrence that came earlier in her career. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two. Suffice it to say, however, that the end of situation was Lew Fields's insistence that Dorothy leave show business.⁷³

Perhaps this feminine gentility and sense of propriety was one of the keys to Fields's success. Winer suggests as much during the "Sisters Gershwin: Where are the Women Composers & Lyricists" panel. Said Winer, "She was at once a pioneer and, at the same time,

⁶⁹ Winer, ix.

⁷⁰ *New York Times*, "Miss Dorothy Fields to Fete Girl Scout Aides," December 6, 1959, 92.

⁷¹ Fields was honored for this service at an April 1957 luncheon held in the Grand Ball Room of New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

⁷² Keyser, 82.

⁷³ Columbia University Oral History Project. Dorothy Fields would never name the woman who performed the song or the lyrics she sang, another illustration of her discretion.

was a really, really conventional person. She could stay so mainstream because she was very mainstream. I think, in a way, that made her much more acceptable to the men she was working with.”⁷⁴ That plus the self-effacing personality illustrated earlier ensured that her male colleagues were not threatened by her, for she did not attempt to be one of them, though her work was, in every way, on par with theirs.

In spite of this, Fields did not perceive (or did not admit to perceiving) any kind of discrimination against her work;⁷⁵ however, she was treated differently by her peers, particularly in the early stages of her career. Fields describes her early working relationships as such:

I must say all the boys ... were simply wonderful. No one was allowed to say “darn” in front of me. In the afternoons when we had rehearsals, they’d go in the kitchen and bring out the cookies and tea, and they were really just wonderful. I was the “little sister;” they were being very careful not to say anything wrong in front of me.⁷⁶

As her male co-workers grew accustomed to Fields, this changed. Winer says. “Not only did she not see herself as different, but her colleagues looked at her as an equal colleague.”⁷⁷ That may be true. Still, there is at least one recorded instance of a major discrepancy between Fields’s earnings and those of her male collaborator. Following the success of their *Roberta* (1933)

⁷⁴ Deborah Grace Winer, moderator, “Sister’s Gershwin – Where are the Women Composers & Lyricists” (panel presented at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts as part of the Speaking Out Forum, New York, New York, 1997).

⁷⁵ Fresh Air. “American Popular Song Series – Dorothy Fields,” first broadcast 1999 by National Public Radio. Hosted by Terry Gross.

⁷⁶ Columbia University Oral History Project.

⁷⁷ Winer, .

collaboration, Kern insisted that Fields be hired as the lyricist for the film *I Dream Too Much* (1935). She was paid 1/5th of Kern's \$5,000 weekly salary.⁷⁸

Her colleagues' respect notwithstanding, scholarship has been less progressive in its chronicling of Fields's career, especially when contrasted with the amount of attention it has paid to Fields's male colleagues. In *Reading Lyrics*, Gottlieb and Kimball relegate 10 pages to publishing 19 of Fields's lyrics. This is in comparison with 21 pages and 36 lyrics of Hammerstein's and 22 pages and 35 lyrics of Ira Gershwin's. Further, Hyland's nine mentions of Fields is in startling contrast with the dozens of mentions afforded each of her male counterparts — Hammerstein, Berlin, Porter, and others.

Further, there have been multiple biographies written about each of the men listed above. Anthologies have been published containing the complete lyrics of Hammerstein, Berlin, Porter, Gershwin, Hart, and other male lyricists of Fields's time. Additionally, there are songbooks dedicated solely to the work of each one. Nothing comparable exists for the work of Fields. Gender is the one thing that distinguishes her from them. Writes Winer, "As the only major-league woman songwriter of the golden age of American popular song and musical theatre, Dorothy Fields had been standing virtually alone among men for almost 50 years."⁷⁹ Gender is the only feasible explanation for Fields's virtual absence in scholarship. It is also the aspect of her career that is most rife for inquiry.

That is the purpose of this dissertation: I intend to study Fields's work in an effort to determine her unique contribution to the canon of musical comedy. A study of Fields's work is inescapably broad. That her career spanned five decades and included successes in Broadway revues (mid-1920s-mid-1930s), Hollywood films (late 1930s), and, ultimately, Broadway book

⁷⁸ Keyser, 80.

⁷⁹ Winer, xv.

musicals (1940s-1970s), makes it necessary to narrow the field of study to one particular segment of her expansive career; therefore, as my area of interest is primarily in the Golden Age American Musical, I will study the lyrics and librettos Fields penned for book musicals of the Golden Age.⁸⁰ These include *Up in Central Park* (1945), *Arms and the Girl* (1950), *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (1951), *By the Beautiful Sea* (1954), *Redhead* (1959), *Sweet Charity* (1966), and *Seesaw* (1973).⁸¹ In addition, I will reference *Eleanor*. This Coleman collaboration was written between *Sweet Charity* and *Seesaw* (ca. 1969). Though never published or produced, *Eleanor* is a musical about the life of Eleanor Roosevelt. Small fragments of it exist in Fields's papers at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts. It is from these fragments that I will make references, as appropriate.

Though I will study each of these and reference them as appropriate, my central focus will be on *Arms and the Girl*, *By the Beautiful Sea*, and *Sweet Charity*. I select these texts for several reasons: first, they were written over a span of nearly two decades. As a result, they offer a strong cross-section of Fields's work over a broad period of time. Secondly, they each feature female protagonists. Finally, the musicals are set in three distinctly different time periods. *Arms and the Girl*, for instance, is a tale of the Revolutionary War, while *By the Beautiful Sea* is set at the turn of the 20th Century, and *Sweet Charity* is a contemporary piece, set in the mid-1960s

⁸⁰ For the purposes of this dissertation, I will loosely define the "Golden Age of the American Musical" as beginning with the 1943 premiere of *Oklahoma!* and ending with the 1968 premiere of *Hair*. Though 1973's *Seesaw* falls outside this time period, the parameters are, as I said, loose. Though many scholars set 1927's *Show Boat* as the beginning of this epoch, I select *Oklahoma!* as a starting point for the Golden Age, as it was one of the first musicals to fully integrate book and music. The result of its success was a seismic shift in the shape of a musical theatre that had, until that point, been dominated by revues. *Hair* is largely held as the end of this era. It was one of the first "rock operas." In addition to bringing this new sound to the Broadway stage, it also brought new thematic content.

⁸¹ Each of these cast recordings are available on compact disc, and a text of each script is available at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts.

when it was written. This will allow me to ascertain Fields's treatment of women in different epochs of history.

For comparison's sake, I will closely survey the texts of other Golden Era musicals. Among these are *1776* (music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards), *Bells are Ringing* (music by Jule Styne, lyrics by Comden and Green), *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying* (music and lyrics by Frank Loesser), and *Little Me* (music by Coleman, lyrics by Leigh). I choose these texts, because each is centered on a situation analogous to a corresponding Fields musical. For instance, *1776* and *Arms and the Girl* are both set in the same period of history (the American Revolutionary War), but Edwards and Fields approach the period in wildly different ways. *Bells are Ringing* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* both feature working women. By contrasting the women in these works with the highly industrious protagonist of *By the Beautiful Sea*, I can illustrate the distinctions between Fields's working woman and those of her peers.⁸² Finally, I will compare the love-hungry protagonists of *Little Me* and *Sweet Charity*. The comparisons between these musicals are many: first, both feature music by Coleman.⁸³ Secondly, both feature librettos by Neil Simon, and finally, both feature lyrics by women — Leigh in the case of *Little Me* and Fields in the case of *Sweet Charity*. Further, both musicals were first produced in the 1960s. The ground here, then, is particularly fertile for determining the distinctions of Fields's voice. The analysis outlined above will lead me to a better understanding of Fields's unique voice and, thereby, to her unique contribution to musical theatre.

⁸² Making *Bells are Ringing* of particular interest to my study is the fact that it was co-written by Betty Comden. Comden was one of only two other women writing for the Broadway stage during Fields's career.

⁸³ Of the 13 composers with whom Fields worked, she cites Coleman as among her favorites. He was also her last.

The endeavor outlined above offers an unique opportunity to employ the three primary strands of feminism as outlined by Jill Dolan. In her seminal *The Feminist Spectator as Critic*, she separates these into the liberal, the cultural (radical), and the materialist. First, liberal feminism assumes that men and women are created equal. As such, women should have the same opportunities afforded to men (and vice versa). Cultural, or radical, feminism is in stark contrast to this. Writes Dolan, “Cultural feminism proposes ... a fundamental change in the nature of universality by suggesting that female gender values take the place of the generic male.”⁸⁴ Patricia Schroeder defines this urge as seeking “to create both a society and a dramatic form that repudiate patriarchy and the status quo.”⁸⁵ This is the primary feminism inspiring the feminist theatre groups studied by Charlotte Canning and discussed later in this chapter. The final form of feminism is the materialist. Materialist feminism is concerned with the ways that women have been oppressed as a class by the ruling class. As a result, the materialist feminist would be dismissive of mainstream theatrical forms, such as dramatic realism, “for presenting a mere construct and passing it off as normative ‘Truth.’”⁸⁶

From these descriptions, it may be rightly assumed that Fields, working in the mainstream Broadway theatre, embraced the tenets of liberal feminism. Though, early in her career, the term had yet to be defined, Fields did not see her gender as disqualifying her in any way from doing the same work as the colleagues whom she frequently referred to as “the boys.”⁸⁷ It may further be assumed that her work was outside of the purview of radical feminism. This is owing to two

⁸⁴ Jill Dolan, *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 2-6.

⁸⁵ Patricia R. Schroeder, *The Feminist Possibilities of Dramatic Realism* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996), 22.

⁸⁶ Schroeder, 26.

⁸⁷ Though she did not admit to feeling discriminated against, I will remind the reader of my earlier finding that Fields was paid 1/5 the weekly salary of composer Jerome Kern for one of the films on which they collaborated.

facts: first, Fields's work predated that of the radical feminist theatre groups by several decades.⁸⁸ Secondly, Fields worked within the structure of the patriarchy, as opposed to trying to replace it with a new and separate canon. Finally, there is evidence to suggest that Fields, though by no means a materialist feminist, was oppressed by the construct of the dominant gender.

As illustrated briefly in the preceding paragraph and in more detail in the passage to follow, each of these strands are relevant to my study. The materialist lens will allow me to explore the struggles Fields faced, because she was a woman working in a landscape dominated by men. This will enable me to illustrate how Fields was capable of success (when many women were not), because of her willingness to perform her gender within the constructs of the male-dominated society. Playing this role, Fields was not a threat to her male counterparts. As a result, she was able to achieve the success that eluded so many of her female peers.

A couple of interesting points can be made here. First, Fields did not consider herself a pioneer or a feminist. She worked completely outside the purview of feminism in three ways — historically, situationally, and artistically. First of all, according to Canning's *Feminist Theaters in the USA: Staging Women's Experience*, feminist theatre groups did not emerge until the late 1960s.⁸⁹ This was four decades after Fields's career began. Secondly, Fields worked in the mainstream theatre. Feminist theatres were on the fringe. In New York, they took shape off (or off-off) Broadway. Finally, Fields worked with fictionalized accounts. The feminist theatre groups, for the most part, staged oral histories or other stories born of the "shared experience of

⁸⁸ Canning states that these groups did not begin to emerge until the 1960s, years after Fields began her career.

⁸⁹ Charlotte Canning, *Feminist Theaters in the USA: Staging Women's Experience* (London: Routledge, 1996), 1. Among the groups studied by Canning are New York City's It's All Right to be Woman Theater, founded in 1969 and the Women's Ensemble of the Berkeley Stage Company (CA).

oppression” of the women collaborating on the work.⁹⁰ Canning further states that it is “not possible to conceive of a feminist art that could be detached from” this shared experience.⁹¹

Given these facts, it is clear that Fields was not a feminist of the ilk that Canning describes. If she was to have her voice heard at all, it had to be spoken within the framework of the male structure. Whether or not Fields realized it — and all indications are that she did not intentionally infuse her work with feminist themes — she was expressing the female experience much like the feminist groups did years later. Fields’s works were fictionalized, for the most part. Still, they were grounded in a uniquely feminine experience. As a result, they stretched the boundaries of what types of characters were being created for the conservative milieu of the Broadway stage.

A second point of interest comes from Sue-Ellen Case’s seminal essay “Classic Drag.” In it, Case speaks primarily of ancient theatre traditions. Still, her observance of “the noted absence of women within the tradition” can certainly be applied to Fields’s position in the musical theatre canon.⁹² Borrowing Judith Fetterly’s findings in *The Resisting Reader*, Case notes that male creations of female characters can be reduced to “two basic types of image: positive roles, which depict women as independent, intelligent, and even heroic, and a surplus of misogynistic roles commonly identified as the Bitch, the Witch, the Vamp, and the Virgin / Goddess. These roles reflect the perspective of the playwright or the theatrical tradition on women.”⁹³ Again, Case was writing primarily about ancient theatre. Still, her ideas can certainly be applied to Fields’s position as one of the only woman writing for musical theatre throughout much of her career.

⁹⁰ Canning, 113.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Sue-Ellen Case, *Feminism and Theatre Reissued Edition* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 1.

⁹³ Case, 6.

She primarily created female characters who were, like Fields, able to self-determine the courses of their lives.

Having applied Materialist Feminism in the ways outlined above, I will utilize Cultural Feminism to study how Fields's work is distinctly feminine. How did her gender impact her work? I will accomplish this by comparing Fields's work with that of her contemporaries. By identifying the disparate ways in which these writers communicate similar situations, I will determine whether or not Fields's experiences as a woman played a part in creating her distinct voice.⁹⁴ Obviously, this lens will be at play in the three "body" chapters of the dissertation – in which I make the comparison between Fields's work and others. By looking at Fields's body of work — specifically at the female characters that she created — I will be able to see what commonalities there are across the body. In so doing, I will be able to make generalizations about her work. From those generalizations, her voice will emerge.

I should note here that the collaborative nature of theatre makes it difficult to definitively separate Fields's ideas from those of her collaborators — be they composers, librettists, actors, directors, or any other member of the creative team. In fact, at times, Fields seems conflicted by this. She is drawn to strong and autonomous female characters. She is bound, however, by the rigid strictures of writing for mainstream, popular theatre. This is illustrated repeatedly in the musicals studied.

In addition to the inextricable link between theatrical collaborators, there is the discrepancy between what Martin Sutton describes as "the narrative and the numbers." In his essay "Patterns in the Meaning of Musicals," Sutton discusses the different functions of these two components:

⁹⁴The work of Betty Comden and Carolyn Leigh, both of whom began working many years after Fields's career was established, will be studied, as well. In comparing Fields's work with that of the only two women writers of Fields's caliber, I will be able to determine if Fields's voice is uniquely feminine – or uniquely "Fields"-ian.

The musical is essentially a genre that concerns itself with the romantic / rogue imagination and its daily battle with a restraining “realistic,” social order...[The plot] surrounds, regulates, and keeps in check the voluptuous, non-realist excesses of the number...The musical finally turns its wayward dreamers into conformists. The plot overtakes the numbers.⁹⁵

Fields, then, as both a woman and a lyricist was doubly-muzzled. The patriarchal structure of not only society but also the musical form served as an agent of suppression to her work. Each of these is a complicating factor to my study. Finally, liberal feminism allows me to examine the ways in which Fields’s work was distinct — regardless of her gender. This will become clearest in comparisons with the work of her female contemporaries (Comden and Leigh).

In addition to the three strands of feminisms, the work of both Shoshana Felman and Teresa de Lauretis provide an additional framework through which to view Fields’s work. In her 1981 essay “Rereading Femininity,” Felman examines Freudian ideas in light of several French texts. Building on these ideas, she suggests that

Women ... are considered merely as the objects of desire and as the objects of the question. To the extent that women “are the question,” they cannot enunciate the question. They cannot be the speaking subjects of the knowledge or the science which the question seeks.⁹⁶

Certainly, this is what Jane de Gay and Lizbeth Goodman are speaking of in their Introduction to *Languages of Theatre Shaped by Women*. They note that women had (and, as findings in the conclusion of this dissertation indicate, *have*) “unequal access to the right to

⁹⁵ Martin Sutton, “Patterns of Meaning in the Musical,” in *Genre – the Musical*, ed. Rick Altman (London: BFI, 1981), 190-196.

⁹⁶ Shoshana Felman, “ReReading Femininity,” *Yale French Studies* 62 (1981): 21.

speak.”⁹⁷ In her book of film criticism *Alice Doesn't*, Teresa de Lauretis elaborates on Felman's ideas. She suggests that a narrative is always about desire,

prompted by men's desire for woman, and by men's desire to know....Freud's is a question addressed to men, both in the sense that the question is not asked of women.... That its answer is for men, reverts to men.⁹⁸

Fields's work is, in some ways, an exception to this rule. Her protagonists, unlike the female protagonists of other writers, pursue their own interests; without exception, they embrace self-determination.⁹⁹ In the nomenclature of Felman and De Lauretis, they are prompted by their own “desires,” and the action of Fields's musicals illustrates this. In the end, however, each Fields female protagonist discussed in this dissertation is unsuccessful at achieving her dreams — they are either unsuccessful (as in the case of Charity), or their “desire” is suppressed and shifted to fit the mold of what is expected of the tradition role of women (as in the cases of Jo and Lottie). De Lauretis's framework will provide a common thread through which discuss each segment of this dissertation.

Marsha Norman, playwright and, later, lyricist and librettist,¹⁰⁰ suggests a reason why Fields's females may have been unsuccessful. Perhaps it was not an indictment of her skill but rather of the form for which she wrote. According to Norman “We do not yet have a theatre

⁹⁷ Jane de Gay and Lizbeth Goodman, editors, “Introduction: Speaking in Tongues – Making (Sense of) Women's Languages in Theatre,” in *Languages of Theatre Shaped by Women* (Bristol: Intellect, 2003), 4.

⁹⁸ Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 111.

⁹⁹ This will be illustrated repeatedly in the body of this dissertation.

¹⁰⁰ Norman is perhaps best known for her 1983 play *night, Mother*. She later wrote the lyrics and libretto to a musical adaptation of the novel *The Secret Garden*. For this work, she won the 1991 Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical.

where the problems of a female central character are seen as universal.” She continues in the Introduction to *Women Writing Plays: Three Decades of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize*.

Unfortunately, some of the greatest qualities often seen in real women — endurance, intelligence, compassion, tolerance, and strength — are very hard to dramatize. Plays that men write about us are usually about things that can be seen: abuse and victimization.

Our task now is not to write about ourselves the way men write about us. It is to convey our inner lives in ways that are exciting to watch. We must find and tell stories that show who we are.¹⁰¹

That, of course, is precisely what Fields attempted to do whether or not she realized it. In her musicals, she drew what Keith Newlin refers to as “the New Woman.” According to Newlin, this view of the female was a preoccupation of “the more interesting [turn of the 20th Century] dramas that still claim the modern reader’s attention.” As early as 1914, one critic wrote of that season’s offerings, “Every play produced on the American stage, with perhaps a few negligible exceptions, has its say on the feminist question. Until sex ceases to be the main preoccupation of drama, this must necessarily be so.”

As evidenced here, the legitimate stage was receptive to presenting women in a new way. Newlin’s anthology contains six complete texts. Each play addresses what the editor calls “the woman problem.”¹⁰² The musical theatre, however, was less progressive. Few, if any, mainstream musicals of the mid-20th Century featured self-aware, self-sufficient females

¹⁰¹ Marsha Norman, “Introduction,” in *Women Writing Plays: Three Decades of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 5-6

¹⁰² Plays included in the anthology include *The Great Divide*, by William Vaughn Moody, *A Man’s World*, by Rachel Crothers, *As a Man Thinks*, by Augustus Thomas, *Overtones*, by Alice Gerstenberg, *The Outside*, by Susan Glaspell, and *Why Marry?* by Jesse Lynch Williams.

conveying their “inner lives in ways that are exciting to watch.” Those musicals that did, however, almost always featured lyrics, libretto, or both by Fields.

It is worth noting that Newlin’s “New Woman” is also less present on the legitimate stage of the mid-Century than it had been earlier.¹⁰³ The hyper-conservatism of post-World War II-era America can be blamed for some of this.¹⁰⁴ What American drama embraced in the early part of the century, it seemed resistant to just a few years later. According to Mel Gussow, in these years, “only Lillian Hellman was a consistent presence, and she never won a Pulitzer or a Tony Award.”¹⁰⁵

That it is such an anomaly makes a study of Fields’s work all the more necessary. Such a study is also timely for two primary reasons. First, though Fields was overlooked by historians for many years, there is renewed interest in the work of women in the theatre. This is illustrated by Greenspan’s recent biography of Fields and the other recently-released books exploring the lives of women in musical theatre.¹⁰⁶ Secondly, interest in the work of women coincides with a trend in academia towards giving scholarly consideration to work once considered too popular for serious inquiry. Heeding the call of David Savrans in his November 2004 *Theatre Survey* essay “Toward a Historiography of the Popular,” many scholars conversing via these mediums have, at last, overruled “long-standing, class-based prejudices about the superiority of ‘art’ to ‘entertainment.’”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Keith Newlin, ed. *American Plays of the New Woman* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 1-29.

¹⁰⁴ This sentiment is expanded on in Chapter Three.

¹⁰⁵ Mel Gussow, “Entering the Mainstream: the Plays of Beth Henley, Marsha Norman, and Wendy Wasserstein,” in *Women Writing Plays: Three Decades of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 45. He cites Lorraine Hansberry’s *Raisin in the Sun* as a notable exception to this rule.

¹⁰⁶ Several of these were mentioned earlier in this dissertation.

¹⁰⁷ David Savrans. “Toward a Historiography of the Popular,” *Theatre Survey* 45 (2004), 211-217.

Dolan echoes Savrans' sentiments. She published "Feminist Performance Criticism and the Popular: Reviewing Wendy Wasserstein" in the October 2008 edition of *Theatre Journal*. In the article, she encourages the examination of popular theatre, a form she once eschewed.¹⁰⁸ Writes Dolan, "The fact remains that visibility in commercial, mainstream, popular forums like Broadway matters for women playwrights and performers, so it is important for feminist critics and scholars to dissect what their presence there means and what it accomplishes."¹⁰⁹ That Savrans, Dolan, and others throughout the Academy are currently revisiting and reprising their attitudes towards popular entertainment makes my embrace of them relevant and timely; however, Fields's expansive contribution to the Golden Age Musical makes my study far too overdue.

The dissertation will follow the outline listed below:

Chapter Outline

Chapter One: The Project

This chapter examines the specific work that I am attempting to do and explains why such a work is both necessary and timely.

Chapter Two: Introduction

This chapter, obviously, will introduce Dorothy Fields. It will primarily include biographical information.

¹⁰⁸ Ironically, in Dolan's 2005 *Utopia in Performance*, she makes scant reference to musicals, which is arguably the most utopian of all forms.

¹⁰⁹ Jill Dolan, "Feminist Performance Criticism and the Popular: Reviewing Wendy Wasserstein," *Theatre Journal* (2008), 442.

Chapter Three: “A Lady with a Pin or a ‘Girl with a Flame’? *1776* vs. *Arms & the Girl*”

This chapter will specifically compare Sherman Edward’s *1776* to Fields’s *Arms & the Girl*. In doing so, it will illustrate how different collaborative teams told the same story. It will also be instructive about the sociopolitical milieu in which each was written. Finally, by making generalizations about the central character of Jo in *Arms and the Girl*, I will be able to make generalizations about Fields’s female characters and trace them throughout some of her other work.

Chapter Four: “‘Happy to Keep His Dinner Warm’ or ‘I’d Rather Wake up by Myself’? *Bells are Ringing* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* vs. *By the Beautiful Sea*”

This chapter will specifically focus on “working women” in the Golden Age American musical by comparing Jule Styne / Adolph Green / Betty Comden’s *Bells are Ringing* and Frank Loesser’s *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying* to Fields’s *By the Beautiful Sea*. The resulting distinctions are many.

Chapter Five: “‘The Other Side of the Tracks’ or ‘There’s Gotta be Something Better than This’? *Little Me* vs. *Sweet Charity*”

This chapter will specifically compare two women who are desperately seeking to be loved. These women are the protagonists in Coleman / Simon / Leigh’s *Little Me* (Belle Poitrine) and Coleman / Simon / Fields’s *Sweet Charity* (Charity Hope Valentine). This will allow me to illustrate how Fields’s females are unique in their ability to pursue love with hope, while presenting a more psychologically realistic portrayal of women than the caricature-like structure of other Broadway musicals. To Case’s point, it can be assumed here that Fields’s women were more authentic, because they were written by a woman.

Chapter Six: Conclusions (“I’m Way Ahead”)

This final chapter will hold the conclusions of my inquiry. I believe that my study will reveal that Fields created female characters that were unique from those of her peers. Her heroines were self-aware, seeking more from life than simply the love of a man. This idea is typified in her *Sweet Charity* lyric:

There’s gotta be something better than this.

There’s gotta be something better to do,

and when I find me something better to do

I’m gonna get up, I’m gonna get out

I’m gonna get up and get out and do it!

Bibliography

The Bibliography will provide an easy guide to the materials I referenced in the researching and writing of this dissertation.

Appendix

The Appendix will include a chronological listing of Fields’s work as a lyricist and librettist.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION¹¹⁰

Dorothy Fields was born on July 15, 1904.¹¹¹ She was the fourth child of the famed vaudevillian and theatrical producer Lew Fields (of Weber & Fields) and his wife, Rose. Fields grew up on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, under the paternal supervision of the man who popularized such punch lines as “That’s not a lady; that’s my wife!”¹¹² Given this parentage, it might have seemed as if Fields was destined to have a career in the theatre. Surprisingly, though, Lew and Rose Fields had a different plan. They fought fiercely to keep their four children away from the theatre.¹¹³ Dorothy Fields discussed her parents’ attitude during “An Evening with Dorothy Fields:”

My mother didn’t want any of us in the theatre—on-stage or off-stage. Mother had had enough of it through the 50 or more years of Pop’s acting and producing and aggravation. Ours was not a theatrical household. Mother was supposed to have remarked, “You children must be extra polite to strangers, because your father’s an actor.”¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Stultz. Like Chapter One, much of the information in Chapter Two has been revised, updated, and supplemented from information originally written in my masters thesis.

¹¹¹ There is some discrepancy about the year of her birth. Biographer Deborah Grace Winer (and, indeed, most other sources) lists the year as 1905, while Dr. Charlotte Greenspan, author of a more recent biography, lists it as 1904. Fields’s papers, many of which are included in the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts, contain a “Biographical Data” sheet. This sheet states her birth year is 1906. According to Greenspan, however, it is 1904 that is on Fields’s birth certificate; therefore, I have elected to use 1904 as her year of birth.

¹¹² Winer, 27.

¹¹³ Greenspan, 30.

¹¹⁴ Dorothy Fields. *An Evening with Dorothy Fields*, DRG Records, Inc. - CD.

Given this, it is not surprising that Lew Fields was careful to not bring his work home.

In 1924, he recounted as much to a reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor*:

If you are asking me if I am happy, I can say “yes” at once. I am very happy, but if you ask me if I am a comedian in private life, do clowning in my home, at my dinner table, “no!” I am very serious. My job is that of a comedian. I come here to the theatre and do my job with the tools of my profession, which I keep here, just as a mechanic goes to his work and uses his tools. I do not carry my work of the theatre into my home.¹¹⁵

Thus, the Fields children were rarely allowed to see their father perform. The children — especially Herbert and Dorothy — idolized their father, though, and welcomed any opportunity to watch him onstage. The opportunities were rare, but from time to time, the children were allowed to join Lew Fields at the theatre. One particular occasion came in 1912. Fields had reunited with Weber, and the pair staged a massive production.¹¹⁶ Not only did the Fields children attend the opening night performance, but they also accompanied their father on a nationwide tour of the production. Riding in her family’s private rail car, Dorothy Fields was eight-years-old at the time, and the exposure to a train full of actors, sets, and costumes was her first immersion in the world of the theatre.¹¹⁷

Back in New York, young Dorothy and her older sister Frances attended the Benjamin School for Girls. There, Dorothy was a stand-out in the classroom and on the basketball court. She also won attention — not surprisingly for a future lyricist — for her poetry. Foreshadowing

¹¹⁵ Frank Lea Short, “A Talk with Lew Fields,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 24, 1924.

¹¹⁶ Greenspan, 30-31.

¹¹⁷ Winer, 13.

the theatrical career that was to come, her flair for the dramatic was also awarded at the Benjamin School when she won a prize for her involvement in the school's drama program.¹¹⁸

Though her parents rarely entertained Lew Fields's theatrical colleagues at home, Herbert Fields often entertained fledgling composer Richard Rodgers, a fellow Columbia University student. Herbert Fields was also a friend of up and coming lyricist Lorenz Hart, a recent Columbia graduate. 14 years-old at the time, the witty and personable Dorothy was an instant fit in her brother's circle of creative friends. In fact, it was Dorothy Fields who introduced Rodgers to Hart.¹¹⁹ Thus was born Rodgers & Hart, the songwriting team that would achieve colossal success — often with Herbert Fields as their librettist and Lew Fields as their producer.¹²⁰ When Rodgers, Hart, and Herbert Fields were commissioned to write a show for the Akron Club, a teenaged Dorothy was in the cast.¹²¹ She subsequently graduated from the Benjamin School and became a teacher at her alma mater. She was an instructor of drama.¹²²

Though Lew Fields was able to control his children when they were younger, he could not dictate the decisions they would make as adults. Frances, to her father's delight, followed her parents' plan. She married a banker and settled down as a homemaker.¹²³ Joseph became a playwright whose most notable work is the play *My Sister Eileen* (1940). This script served as the basis for Leonard Bernstein's 1953 musical *Wonderful Town*, for which Joseph Fields wrote

¹¹⁸ Winer, 15.

¹¹⁹ Kaye.

¹²⁰ Rodgers & Hart collaborations include shows, like *Jumbo* (1935), *Babes in Arms* (1937), and *The Boys from Syracuse* (1938). Their catalog of songs includes "Thou Swell," "Lover," "Bewitched," and "Isn't it Romantic?"

¹²¹ Winer, 16-17.

¹²² Winer, 20.

¹²³ Winer, 14.

the libretto.¹²⁴ Herbert became a librettist. He wrote books for five of Rodgers & Hart's Broadway revues: *Dearest Enemy* (1925), *The Girl Friend* (1926), *A Connecticut Yankee* (1927), *Present Arms* (1928), and *America's Sweetheart* (1931). Herbert also wrote books for musicals by Vincent Youmans (1927's *Hit the Deck*), George Gershwin (1933's *Pardon My English*), and Cole Porter (1929's *Fifty Million Frenchmen*, 1930's *The New Yorkers*, 1939's *DuBarry was a Lady*, and 1940's *Panama Hattie*).

Dorothy, the youngest Fields, was still teaching drama at the Benjamin School when she found her way into the entertainment industry. It happened very much by accident. In 1924, the ever-athletic Fields was playing golf at the Woodmere Country Club on Long Island.¹²⁵ While there, she met composer J. Fred Coots ("You Go to My Head," "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," "For All We Know"). The two came in from the golf course, and, just for fun, Fields began playing a piano medley of several numbers by her friends Rodgers & Hart. While playing this medley, 19 year-old Dorothy Fields was "discovered" by Coots.¹²⁶ As she recounts in her "Lyrics and Lyricists" lecture:

Fred Coots asked me, if I'd ever tried to write. "No," I said. "Well, try," he said. So, I tried. [Coots and I] wrote a couple of things — [his] music good, [my] lyrics terrible — but he was very charitable and took me around to a few publishers, and their answers were pretty much alike. When Mr. Coots insisted I had talent, the publishers answered, "If she's so damn talented, why doesn't her father do something for her?"¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Armond Fields and L. Marc Fields, *From the Bowery to Broadway: Lew Fields and the Roots of American Popular Theatre* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 441.

¹²⁵ Winer, 20.

¹²⁶ Fields and Fields, 428.

¹²⁷ Fields.

Lew Fields, ever opposed to his daughter's theatrical involvement, *was* doing something for her. In this case, he was taking his professional clout from publishing house to publishing house, threatening those who might hire the younger Fields as a lyricist. Regardless, Dorothy Fields was too skilled as a writer and too passionate about her work to be ignored. The publishers must have been impressed with her straight-forwardness, as well. Even as a 20 year-old female, Fields was not intimidated by the men who would be her bosses. She remembered an early assignment from Jack Mills Music, Inc.:

[Coots and I] finally wound up at Mills Music. We played what we had, and Jimmy McHugh, their professional manager and composer of many pop songs, listened. He listened, period. Now, Mills Music was a fast-working firm. In 1921, when Enrico Caruso died, overnight, they had a song. "They Needed a Songbird in Heaven, So God Took Caruso Away." Then, a few years later, "They Needed a New Star in Heaven, so God Took Valentino Away." Well, 1924, I think it was, they figured, since Ruth Elder was going to fly the Atlantic — what else? A song! — Irving Mills decided to give me a chance; what could they lose for \$50? Mr. Mills said, "I'll give you the first two lines of the chorus, and we'll call it 'Our American Girl.'" These were the two lines: "You took a notion to fly 'cross the ocean." I said timidly but with great conviction, "Mr. Mills, you don't take a notion to fly 'cross the ocean." But I wrote it overnight, anyway. Ruth Elder never made it, and neither did my song. Now, the Mills Music Company couldn't get rid of me. I became their \$50-a-night girl. For \$50, they got a hundred words.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Fields.

McHugh and the other managers at Mills Music continued to give Fields lyric-writing assignments. These early jobs involved setting a lyric to an already existing tune, such as Ruby Bloom's "Soliloquoy" and Reginald Forsythe's "Serenade to a Wealthy Widow."¹²⁹ Having proven herself, Fields saw her writing assignments grow in difficulty. Eventually, McHugh invited Fields to become his songwriting partner. McHugh had already enjoyed success with hits, like "When My Sugar Walks Down the Street" (1924). He was a Boston-born composer who was as gifted at selling his songs as he was at writing them. Fields and McHugh's first collaboration was for a musical revue at Harlem's famed Cotton Club.¹³⁰

During the mid-1920s, revues like those at the Cotton Club were the standard fare on New York stages. Revues, descended from European music halls¹³¹ and American minstrelsy, were productions of song-and-dance numbers loosely connected by a thread of generally comedic scenes. Popularized in America by impresario Florenz Ziegfeld, revues often satirized well-known figures or ideas. They were light-hearted entertainments characterized by perennial shows, such as Ziegfeld's *Follies*, George White's *Scandals*, and Irving Berlin's *Music Box Revues*.¹³² Music from these shows frequently became popular with the public, and many of today's "standards" were born in the musical revues of this era.

Fields and McHugh's first Cotton Club writing assignment came in 1927. Fields was 23 years-old. The revue, featuring the New York debut of Duke Ellington, was called *Hot Chocolates*, and for it, Fields and McHugh wrote numbers, like "Hot-n-Tot-Trot," "Freeze and

¹²⁹ Fields.

¹³⁰ Winer, 26, 28. Fields's earliest work was produced for Harlem's Cotton Club. Songs from this segment of her career include "Diga Diga Doo," "Hot-n-Tot-Trot," and "Harlemania," each written in collaboration with composer Jimmy McHugh.

¹³¹ Donald Oliver, ed., *The Greatest Revue Sketches* (New York: Avon Books, 1982), xi.

¹³² Ibid.

Melt,” and “Harlemania.”¹³³ It was at the opening of this show that Lew Fields insisted Dorothy change careers (as I alluded to in Chapter One). Dorothy recalled:

It was my first show, opening Sunday night, and my whole family was there — Mom, Pop, my sister, Frances, brother Herbert, brother Joe, and at our table was a good friend of my father, Walter Winchell. The program read, “Music Jimmy McHugh, Lyrics Dorothy Fields.” My family was very proud for a quick minute. Then Ms. What’s-Her-Name came on for her specialty. Did she sing the songs Jimmy McHugh and I wrote for her? She did not. Double cross. She belted out three of the most shocking, ribald, bawdy, dirtiest songs anyone had ever heard in the 1920s. I looked at McHugh; McHugh looked at me; my father *didn’t* look at my mother. My brothers and sister looked down at their plates, and nobody dared to look at Walter Winchell. My father said, “You didn’t learn those words home.” I said, “I didn’t write those words.” Pop got up from the table and had a few choice things to say to the management. He had quite a temper did Lew Fields, and he had a good left hook. At his insistence, they announced at intermission that McHugh and Fields did not write the songs for Ms. Blank Blank Blank. The only comment my father made to me was, “Will you, for God’s sakes, get out of show business?”¹³⁴

Dorothy Fields did not get out of show business. She and McHugh continued to be offered songwriting opportunities. During the years of 1928 through 1933, the team wrote for a number of revues, including *Lew Leslie’s Blackbirds of 1928*. *Blackbirds* was their Broadway debut. They used “I Can’t Give You Anything But Love,” cut from an earlier revue, as one of their numbers in the show. The reviews were not kind. “One critic said, among other unflattering

¹³³ Fields.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

things, ‘It was a sickening, puerile song,’” Fields says. “My father said again, ‘NOW, will you get out of show business?’” Nonetheless, the show ran for two years, a hugely successful run for that era,¹³⁵ and “I Can’t Give You Anything But Love” became an American standard that is frequently recorded even today. Fields and McHugh’s other revue work produced standards, such as “On the Sunny Side of the Street” from the *International Revue* (1930), “Blue Again” from the *Vanderbilt Revue* (1930), and “Don’t Blame Me” from *Clowns in Clover* (1933).

Eventually, Fields and McHugh decided to head for Hollywood. They joined the major migration of East coast theatre talent to the new movie-making capital of the West. “The Stock Market crash devastated Broadway, but in Hollywood, business was booming,” explained actress Betty Buckley in *Yours for a Song*. “Movies had sound, and sound meant music, and producers needed writers to make their pictures sing.”¹³⁶ Arriving in the early 1930s, Fields and McHugh were quickly offered a contract to provide songs for the movies of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM).¹³⁷ They continued to write for the stage, as well. Both of them stipulated in their MGM contracts that they were permitted to work in New York, should the opportunity arise.¹³⁸

The more work she did, the better respected Fields became. The success of her lyrics was considered bankable, so other studios began to request her services. She continued to write with McHugh. At the same time, though, Fields was “loaned” by MGM to other production companies (Radio-Keith-Orpheum Pictures (RKO) and Paramount, for instance) where she expanded her repertoire of collaborators to include composers Fritz Kreisler, Oscar Levant, and Max Steiner.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ *Yours for a Song: the Women of Tin Pan Alley*.

¹³⁷ Winer, 61.

¹³⁸ Winer, 47.

¹³⁹ Winer, 74-75, 250.

Fields's next "on loan" assignment was to write lyrics for a melody written by Kern. For the film version of his operetta *Roberta* (1935), Kern had written a 16 bar tune. Before the song could be put into the film, it needed lyrics, so producer Pandro Berman hired Fields. She and Kern worked independently on the song that was to become "Lovely to Look At." When they finally met face to face, theirs was an instant camaraderie.¹⁴⁰ The next year, Fields and McHugh amicably ended their collaboration.¹⁴¹

Fields began to collaborate regularly with Kern on film scores. Their most successful collaboration, though, was one of their first. *Swing Time* (1936), which starred Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, produced a steady stream of hits — "A Fine Romance," "Bojangles of Harlem," "Never Gonna Dance," "Pick Yourself Up," and, the Oscar winner, "The Way You Look Tonight." Even though Fields was successful in Hollywood, she was most at home writing for the theatre in her native New York.¹⁴² According to Fields:

In theatre, you're constantly with a show, until it opens. You're with it in every phase — the writing, first — and then all through rehearsals, the out of town tryout, until you get to New York. When you write a score for a picture, you write it, and you leave. You don't see it for maybe nine months or a year. You become completely disassociated with it, and you don't even remember what you wrote. That happened to me a couple of times. I was amazed at the songs we had written.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Winer, 83.

¹⁴¹ Winer, 88-89. In his 2009 biography of Jimmy McHugh, Alyn Shipton alleges that the pair carried on a romantic affair throughout their collaboration; however, I have never read any other such claim, nor is there any information to corroborate it other than that contained in Shipton's book. Rather, the relationship between Fields and McHugh is most often described as Winer did — as one of mutual respect but no more.

¹⁴² Winer, 116.

¹⁴³ Winer, 120-121.

Thus disenchanted with the filmmaking process, Fields moved back to Manhattan in 1938. She had plans to write a Broadway musical with composer Arthur Schwartz,¹⁴⁴ which she did. She also had plans to marry New York businessman Eli Lahm, which she also did.¹⁴⁵ In the midst of setting up a new household, Fields continued to write song lyrics for films. She also began a family of her own. She gave birth to David in 1940 and Eliza in 1944.¹⁴⁶ Her professional focus then shifted back to writing for the theatre. Since Kern remained in Hollywood, Fields found other, New York-based composers with whom to collaborate on theatre pieces.

Broadway was a different place than it had been when she left it in the early 1930s. I will discuss this in greater detail in Chapter Three. In short, though, American popular theatre was transitioning from sketch-style revues to meatier musicals with songs that were indicative of character and born out of dramatic situations. This mirrored Fields's own maturation. Having worked for several years on plot-driven films, Fields had begun to think like a dramatist. It was at this point that there was a seismic shift in the shape of Fields's lyrics. When she was writing for revues, she hoped that the songs would become popular hits; therefore, those songs frequently integrated popular slang words or phrases. The new style of Broadway musical called for lyrics that advanced the story or gave insight into the character. This appealed to the storyteller in Fields.

Not only did she write more story-oriented lyrics for her next Broadway shows — there would be eight more lyrical turns — *Stars in Your Eyes* (1939), *Up in Central Park* (1945), *Arms and the Girl* (1950), *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (1951), *By the Beautiful Sea* (1954), *Redhead*

¹⁴⁴ *Stars in Your Eyes*

¹⁴⁵ Fields had previously been married to Dr. Jack Wiener, but the marriage was strained from the start and did not last.

¹⁴⁶ Winer, 116-117.

(1959), *Sweet Charity* (1966), and *Seesaw* (1973) — but she also began to write the stories themselves. Fields began collaborating with Herbert on librettos. In the years between 1941 and 1959, they wrote the books for eight musicals. Dorothy and Herbert’s list of librettos includes Broadway musicals with scores by Cole Porter (1941’s *Let’s Face It*, 1943’s *Something for the Boys*, and 1944’s *Mexican Hayride*), Sigmund Romberg (1945’s *Up in Central Park*), Irving Berlin (1946’s *Annie Get Your Gun*), Morton Gould (1950’s *Arms and the Girl*), Arthur Schwartz (1954’s *By the Beautiful Sea*), and Albert Hague (1959’s *Redhead*).

Regardless, it was her lyrics for which Fields continued to win the most acclaim. It was this work for which she was most recognized and rewarded. It was this work for which she won both an Oscar and a Tony for her songwriting, and, as I have already mentioned, she was the first woman inducted into the Songwriter’s Hall of Fame and was called “the most significant of any woman songwriter in the history of ASCAP.”¹⁴⁷ Her librettos were always written in tandem with Herbert. On the other hand, her lyrics were all of her own creation. Fields seemed to feel insecure about writing librettos without Herbert by her side. About his sudden death in 1958, she said, “I didn’t know how to go on without him. We had worked for so many years, closely, brother-and-sisterly.”¹⁴⁸

Winer put it another way:

¹⁴⁷ “Nine New Names Were Added to the Theater Hall of Fame,” *New York Times*, November 22, 1988. In 1988, Dorothy and Herbert Fields were both added to the Theater Hall of Fame. According to the *New York Times* write-up of the occasion, “The honorees join a roster of about 150 theater notables inducted into the Hall of Fame, since it was established in 1971, whose names appear on the walls of the Gershwin [Theater].”

¹⁴⁸ Fields.

She seemed lost without Herb. Her adored brother had been such an inseparable part of not only her personal but her professional life all through the decades that even when she regained the order of her world, she never quite got over being without him.¹⁴⁹

Fields did, of course, go on without Herbert. Though she never wrote another libretto, some of her greatest successes were still to come. Fields was nearly 60 years-old when she was approached by an up and coming young composer named Cy Coleman. He asked if she would be interested in collaborating. It had been seven years since Fields had worked on Broadway, and she was anxious for a return. When a project called *Sweet Charity* came along, the new songwriting team jumped at the chance. Working with Coleman was a unique and invigorating experience for Fields. As she said:

His enthusiasm, his ability to compose imaginatively, easily, enabled me to do something I had never done before — to sit down with him at the piano and write both music and lyrics. We did it together, right there, in one exciting afternoon. “Big Spender,” it was. In Philadelphia or in Detroit, we replaced two songs in record time — for me, that is....The Coleman magic got this old gal to write the kind of contemporary words that settle so well in Doc, as we called him, Simon’s book.¹⁵⁰

With *Sweet Charity*, Fields and Coleman were writing about call girls in a modern-day dance palace. Their next, and final, collaboration was on *Seesaw*. It premiered on Broadway in 1973 and was the story of an affair between a single woman and a man who is separated from his wife.¹⁵¹ Though these musicals were thematically opposed to her earlier work on more family-oriented shows, like *Annie Get Your Gun*, Fields was able to adapt. She was also able to adapt to

¹⁴⁹ Winer, 198.

¹⁵⁰ Fields.

¹⁵¹ The divorce becomes final in the closing scenes of the show.

Coleman's musical style. His jazzy inventions were drastically different from the more melodic stylings of her previous collaborators. Kern and Romberg, for instance, were both known for their composition of operettas. This stylistic flexibility can be credited with Fields's longevity and is a major reason why her career ended as strongly as it began. Winer discussed this in her 1997 interview with *Theatre Talk* hosts Susan Haskins and Michael Riedel:

[Fields] had this incredibly long career that spanned the 1920s and the Cotton Club revues all the way through to the 1970s and shows like *Seesaw* and *Sweet Charity* in the 1960s. By that time, she was working with people 25 years younger than she was, like Cy Coleman and Bob Fosse, and yet that stuff was as contemporary and hip in the 1960s, as stuff like "Sunny Side of the Street" had been in its day.¹⁵²

Fields's work was as compelling and relevant at the end of her career as it was at the beginning. Compare her twilight years with those of Irving Berlin. Known as "the Father of American Popular Song,"¹⁵³ Berlin wrote the music and lyrics for such beloved standards as "God Bless America," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "Blue Skies," and "Always." His "White Christmas" is the best-selling single of all time. He also owned and operated Broadway's Music Box Theatre. There, he produced *The Music Box Revues* (1921-1924). He later collaborated on book musicals from *This is the Army!* to *Miss Liberty* to *Call Me Madam*. This 1950 Ethel Merman vehicle — Berlin and Merman had a long and mutually beneficial working relationship — was his last new offering for the theatre, though he did not die until nearly 40 years later (September 1989).¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Theater Talk. Episode no. 409, first broadcast 1997 by CUNY-TV. Hosted by Susan Haskins and Michael Riedel.

¹⁵³ Composer — and frequent Fields collaborator - Jerome Kern is said to have said of Berlin, "Irving Berlin is American music."

Berlin and Fields were friends, and rightly so. Fields had given Berlin the idea to his most successful musical ever, *Annie Get Your Gun*. With music and lyrics by Berlin and libretto by Dorothy and Herbert Fields, the original Broadway production produced eight pop standards and ran for 1,147 performances. It was the longest run of Berlin's storied career.¹⁵⁵ In return, Berlin had taken less of a share of the *Annie* profits, so that the Fieldses might be more equitably compensated.¹⁵⁶ According to Berlin biographer Edward Jablonski, Berlin did not adapt to the changing tastes of Broadway in the 1950s and beyond.¹⁵⁷ He retreated instead to a reclusive life. Asked about his retreat from theatre by musical theatre historian Robert Kimball, Berlin, then in his nineties, responded:

It was as if I owned a store, and people no longer wanted to buy what I had to sell ...Everything changed. The world was a different place. The death of President Kennedy, the Vietnam War, the social protest. Music changed, too. The Beatles and other groups reached audiences. I couldn't. It was time to close up shop.¹⁵⁸

Unlike her colleague, Fields never retreated. On the contrary, as society changed, so did Fields's subject matter.¹⁵⁹ America grew more tolerant of sexual content as a result of the Sexual Revolution of the 1960s and early 1970s, which freed Fields to be more blatant in her later work, a fact most obviously evidenced in the main plots of her final two produced musicals. *Sweet Charity* (1966) is, in manner of speaking, a prostitute; the main story of *Seesaw* (1973), as I have

¹⁵⁴ Laurence Bergreen, *As Thousands Cheer: the Life of Irving Berlin* (New York: Viking, 1990), 584.

¹⁵⁵ Kantor and Maslon, 225.

¹⁵⁶ Edward Jablonski, *Irving Berlin: American Troubador* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1999), 238.

¹⁵⁷ Jablonski, 289.

¹⁵⁸ Robert Kimball and Linda Emmet, *The Complete Lyrics of Irving Berlin* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), xix.

¹⁵⁹ Much of the work about Fields's later work is adapted from work originally written in my Masters Thesis.

said, involves a man's extra-marital affair. Her involvement with these projects illustrates Fields's ability to change with — and reflect — the times in which she wrote. Comden cites this as one of Fields's strengths.¹⁶⁰ Fields herself notes this in her *Lyrics & Lyricists* lecture. When she discusses working on *Sweet Charity* with Coleman and Simon, she said, "This was a far cry from *Redhead*, London in 1901, to a dance palace in 1966."¹⁶¹

In March of 1974, 69 year-old Dorothy Fields was in rehearsals for the national touring company of *Seesaw*.¹⁶² Fields left the rehearsal at the end of the session. A few hours later, she died of a stroke.¹⁶³ Fields left a rich legacy. In a career that spanned more than five decades, she produced hundreds of songs that are a part of America's musical history. She was able to bend and change, as the theatrical milieu dictated such change. As a result, Fields enjoyed success after success from her early twenties into her late sixties. David Lahm, Fields's son, made a valid point about her career longevity. He said,

Unlike many of her contemporaries and companions in the songwriters pantheon, she died with a first-run show [*Seesaw*] — not a revival — playing on Broadway that night. In later years, a lot of the other writers of her era and stature felt they were being passed over or felt chastised for the declining quality of their work in later years.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰Winer, ix.

¹⁶¹Fields.

¹⁶²The original production of *Seesaw* was still running on Broadway.

¹⁶³Fields was buried alongside her husband Eli Lahm in his family mausoleum at Maimonides Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York.

¹⁶⁴Jim Steinblatt, "Fields of Gold," *Playback: ASCAP Newsletter*, Spring 2005. Certainly, the story of Irving Berlin proves the point that Lahm seeks to make.

Her success was so bankable, in fact, that she once remarked, “If, God forbid, we ever had a flop, I’d go to Sardi’s and cut my throat, quietly, with a grapefruit knife.”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ Winer, 241.

CHAPTER THREE

“A LADY WITH A PIN” OR “A GIRL WITH A FLAME”? *1776* vs. *ARMS AND THE GIRL*

The American musical is dominated by characters with dreams. According to Ian Bradley, in fact, *You’ve Got to Have a Dream*. In his book of the same name, Bradley argues that, “there is one particular message that resounds through the whole canon of 20-Century musical theatre. It is summed up in the title that I have chosen for this book.”¹⁶⁶ The two musicals on which I will focus in this chapter certainly fit Bradley’s mold. In *Arms and the Girl*, a 1950 offering for which Fields wrote the lyrics and collaborated on the libretto,¹⁶⁷ the dream of its central character (Jo) is to assist General (George) Washington in his fight for independence from the British. The dream of the characters in *1776* is much the same. Written by Sherman Edwards and Peter Stone, *1776* focuses on “the debates, intrigues, and compromises involving the delegates to the second Continental Congress that met for three stifling summer months in Philadelphia to produce the [Declaration of Independence].”¹⁶⁸

Though their shared “dream” justifies — even begs — a comparison of the two, there are still some stark contrasts to be drawn between the musicals. First, they premiered almost exactly 19 years apart.¹⁶⁹ Social and political changes in the country during this period had certainly had

¹⁶⁶ Ian Bradley, *You’ve Got to Have a Dream: the Message of the Musical* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 33. Bradley’s work is largely adapted from a Theology of the Musical class, which he teaches at St. Andrews University. He focuses on specifically on the “dream songs” of musical theatre. The principles, however, apply to the musical at large.

¹⁶⁷ Fields’s collaborators on this piece were brother Herbert and Rouben Mamoulian.

¹⁶⁸ Stanley Green, *Broadway Musicals: Show by Show, 5th Edition* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1996), 227.

¹⁶⁹ *Arms and the Girl* premiered in February of 1950; *1776* opened in March of 1969.

their impact on the Broadway stage. As a result, the two shows were introduced into two entirely different theatrical (and political) milieus.

Secondly, *Arms and the Girl* focuses on a central female character. In his review for the *New York Daily Mirror*, Coleman refers to Jo as a “patriotic tomboy with the vivid imagination.”¹⁷⁰ Robert Garland, in the *New York Journal American*, likens her to “a New England Joan of Arc [who decides] to win the war and rout the British all by herself.”¹⁷¹ Conversely, the *dramatis personae* of *1776* is almost entirely devoid of women. 25 male characters are visited only briefly by two female characters who make what reviewer Martin Gottfried called “brief and quite unnecessary appearances.”¹⁷² In this chapter, I will first look at the different theatrical milieus of the two shows. Secondly, I will analyze the very different ways in which they tell the stories of different characters in pursuit of the same dream. Finally, I will make conclusions about Fields’s women from this analysis and illustrate how it is demonstrated in other female characters written by Fields.

Arms and the Girl opened on February 2, 1950.¹⁷³ As Ethan Mordden notes in the opening pages of his *Coming Up Roses: the Broadway Musical in the 1950s*:

The musical was then central to American culture. Its songs not only topped the Hit Parade but, unlike most pop music, often passed into classic status. Its stars were American icons; better, its ability to create stardom, at times “overnight,” was awesome. Its earning power could be terrific. With production costs holding at about \$150,000-\$300,000, a hit could start paying off inside of six months, with

¹⁷⁰ Robert Coleman, “‘Arms & the Girl’ Gay and Charming Hit,” *New York Daily Mirror*, February 3, 1950.

¹⁷¹ Robert Garland, “Less in Musical-Play than There Should Be,” *New York Journal American*, February 3, 1950.

¹⁷² Martin Gottfried, “Theatre: *1776*,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, March 17, 1969.

¹⁷³ Coleman.

further profits from recordings, touring, and foreign mountings, and Hollywood transformation, routine in a day when all Americans, it seemed, loved musicals.¹⁷⁴

In many ways, the musical — well into its “Golden Age” at this point — had been completely reinvented in the 1940s. Once typified by revues,¹⁷⁵ which Mordden suggests is “the oldest indigenous American musical-theatre form,”¹⁷⁶ and operettas, a frothy descendant of European music halls, the integrated musical was increasingly becoming the norm. This form, in which all elements — story, song, and dance — unite to tell the story, was first introduced with 1927’s *Show Boat*.¹⁷⁷ Most scholars contend that it was perfected with the 1943 premiere of Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!* Rodgers & Hammerstein continued to produce in the 1940s. They opened, among others, *Carousel* (1945) and *South Pacific* (1949). In so doing, they expanded the expectation of musicals, creating what many scholars call the “musical play.” According to Ann Sears, this form is typified by an “organic unfolding of plot” and “a dramatic unity and momentum.”¹⁷⁸

John Bush Jones argues that these changes evolved over several decades of musical theatre history. A survey of this period of Broadway reveals that there were three key areas of

¹⁷⁴ Ethan Mordden, *Coming Up Roses: the Broadway Musical in the 1950s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3.

¹⁷⁵ Revues were generally a series of short sketches and songs united by a single theme. They were typified on Broadway by the likes of *Ziegfeld’s Follies*.

¹⁷⁶ Ethan Mordden, *Sing for Your Supper: the Broadway Musical in the 1930s* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 125.

¹⁷⁷ *Show Boat* was based on a book by Edna Ferber. With music by Jerome Kern and lyrics and libretto by Oscar Hammerstein, II, *Show Boat* produced such Broadway standards as “Ol’ Man River,” “Bill,” “Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Man of Mine,” and “Make Believe.” Some scholars consider the status I afford to *Show Boat* to be arguable. Their arguments against it are that many of the numbers do not move plot along; therefore, they argue, later musicals are better used as a benchmark for the beginning of integration.

¹⁷⁸ Ann Sears, “The Coming of the Musical Play: Rodgers & Hammerstein,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, 2nd ed., eds. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 152.

change (instigated, largely, by the work of three men — Kern, Hammerstein, and Rodgers). The first of these changes came with the integration, such as Sears refers to above. The second of these changes was in the types of characters populating musicals, and the third was in the way the plays were presented.

First, however, I will examine the coming of integration. In his *Our Musical, Ourselves*, Jones suggests that the work of Rodgers & Hammerstein was built on a foundation laid by the likes of Kern, P.G. Wodehouse, and Guy Bolton. This trio produced a series of musical comedies commonly referred to as the Princess Theatre Shows. Examples of these include *Very Good Eddie* (1915), *Have a Heart* (1917), *Oh, Lady! Lady!* (1918), and *Oh, My Dear!* (1918). In shows such as these, Kern, Wodehouse, and Bolton stretched the form of the typical revue.¹⁷⁹ Writes Mark N. Grant,

The books were well-plotted, realistic drawing-room comedies, and the lead-ins to the songs were cued by dramatic situation rather than by extraneous costumes or comedians....Kern's songs for these shows are not riff tunes, and they are not soaring operettic melodies. Rather, they are the first successful amalgamation of the two.¹⁸⁰

These shows were “plausible tales about believable characters who spoke like everyone else. Their songs grew naturally from the exigencies of plot and character.” Still, as Jones criticizes, their content could accurately be described as “diversionary fluff.”¹⁸¹ This fact can probably be credited with the fact that few, if any, of the Princess Theatre Shows are still

¹⁷⁹ John Bush Jones, *Our Musical, Ourselves: a Social History of the American Musical Theatre* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2002), 140.

¹⁸⁰ Mark N. Grant, *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004), 31.

¹⁸¹ Jones, 46-47.

produced today. Their impact on the evolution of the musical from revue to integration, however, is immense. They also solidified Kern's position as the "[inventor] of the modern musical."¹⁸²

In addition to the advances made in integration, there were also changes made in the types of characters presented on the Broadway stage. The one-dimensional types that dominated operetta had been the norm. Peasants, princes, pirates, and the like populated this form that William A. Everett describes as

... entertainments with plots in which characters interacted with each other in humorous and amorous ways while dressed in fanciful costumes amidst lavish sets. The action took place against a glorious musical score replete with waltzes, marches, and tour-de-force solos and duets.¹⁸³

Sigmund Romberg (*The Student Prince*), who later collaborated with Fields on *Up in Central Park*, was a master of the operetta. Rudolf Friml's (1913 *The Firefly*) and Victor Herbert (1910's *Naughty Marietta*) were, as well. Interestingly, Hammerstein himself also contributed to the form. Among others, Hammerstein collaborated with Friml and Otto Harbach on the book and lyrics to *Rose Marie* (1924).

With the shift to more realistic plots came the advent of more realistic characters. One of the earliest of these was the title character of *Pal Joey*.¹⁸⁴ With music by Rodgers and lyrics by Hart, *Pal Joey* premiered in 1940. The play featured musical theatre's first anti-hero in Joey. A

¹⁸² Grant, 30.

¹⁸³ William A. Everett, "American and British Operetta in the 1920s: Romance, Nostalgia, and Adventure," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, 2nd ed., eds. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 72.

¹⁸⁴ Another early example is *Porgy & Bess*, with music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, and libretto by DuBose Heyward.

nightclub owner, he was an “amoral, ambitious” womanizer.¹⁸⁵ Among other unsavory plot points, the show centers on blackmail, and Joey tells one of his several girlfriends to “go to hell.” This was hardly the stuff of Broadway gone-by (nor did it become the norm). Critics praised the piece,¹⁸⁶ though it ran for only 374 performances.¹⁸⁷ This relatively meager run certainly belies the impact *Pal Joey* had on the characterizations in future musicals. That its 1952 revival ran for 542 performances and prompted both a London production and a Hollywood film¹⁸⁸ indicates, however, that audiences had grown more accepting of seedy characters in the years between the two productions.¹⁸⁹

Moss Hart, Kurt Weill, and Ira Gershwin comprised the creative team behind a second musical that was landmark in terms of its characterizations, as Jones further suggests. *Lady in the Dark* premiered just a year after *Pal Joey*. The play was centered on a woman who was, in more recent terminology, clinically depressed. Looking ahead to the modern preoccupation with psychology, *Lady in the Dark* was Hart’s response to his own experience with Freudian psychoanalysis.¹⁹⁰ Writes Jones, “he judged his own course of analysis a completed success and so determined to write a play both demonstrating the process and proselytizing its worth.”¹⁹¹

Audiences were immediately excited by the premiere production. It starred Gertrude Lawrence as Liza Elliott, played Broadway for two seasons, and subsequently toured ten cities

¹⁸⁵ John Stewart, *Broadway Musicals, 1943-2004* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2006), 457.

¹⁸⁶ Ethan Mordden, *Beautiful Mornin’: the Broadway Musical in the 1940s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 50-52.

¹⁸⁷ Green, 112. Some suggest that its failure was owed to its Christmas night opening. As Jones writes, “few were either in the mood or prepared for something like that” (Jones 138).

¹⁸⁸ Mordden, 58.

¹⁸⁹ Musicals like *Carousel* also helped to change audiences’ expectations of musical plots and characterization.

¹⁹⁰ Jones, 138.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

before a return engagement in New York. Paramount Pictures paid a record-breaking \$285,000 for the rights to the film.¹⁹² Clearly, audience appetites were hungry for musical characters whose experiences more closely mirrored their own.

In addition to its form (integration) and its characterizations, there were many changes made in the performance of musicals during this period. Like each of the traits I have discussed, this is considered by many historians to have been perfected in *Oklahoma!*¹⁹³ Prior to its 1943 premiere, most musicals had opened with lavish song and dance numbers. These “curtain-raisers” served as a means of hooking the audience. Conversely, *Oklahoma!* opens with Aunt Eller sitting alone on stage. She is joined soon after by Curly, the cowboy who sings his solo: “Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin’!”¹⁹⁴

Act One ends with Laurey’s “Dream Ballet.”¹⁹⁵ Famously staged by choreographer Agnes DeMille, the ballet “takes on a quasi-naturalistic combination of traditional and vernacular movements.”¹⁹⁶ The impact of this dance, in which an independent farm girl confronts her sexuality,¹⁹⁷ was monumental. According to Grant, this sequence “was responsible

¹⁹² Bruce D. McClung and Paul R. Laird, “Musical Sophistication on Broadway: Kurt Weill and Leonard Bernstein” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, 2nd ed., eds. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 193.

¹⁹³ Other scholars consider *West Side Story* to be the watershed example of musical perfection. Though a revival is currently running on Broadway, the original New York production opened in September of 1957.

¹⁹⁴ In spite of this, its second act opens with a rousing song and dance number – “The Farmer and the Cowman.”

¹⁹⁵ Scholars who consider *West Side Story* to be more tightly integrated than *Oklahoma!* cite this “Dream Ballet” as evidence. Its nature as a “dream” indicate that it is not fully integrated into the story of the piece.

¹⁹⁶ Grant, 129.

¹⁹⁷ Certainly, the psychoanalysis of this piece can be likened to much of the material in *Lady in the Dark*.

for the emergence of choreography on Broadway to a position of nearly equal importance with book, lyrics, music, and direction in the decades following World War II.”¹⁹⁸

In these and other ways, *Oklahoma!* changed the way Broadway musicals were made. Its Americana motif, however, was nothing new. For decades, Broadway had been the stomping grounds for hyper-patriotic productions. The work of George M. Cohan was clearly indicative of this. For instance, his *Little Johnny Jones* (1904) contained “Yankee Doodle Boy” and is one of the musicals that Grant includes on his list of those that have a “fairly aggressive agenda of defining America.”¹⁹⁹ Some years later, Berlin wrote particularly patriotic pieces. Indeed, one of musical theatre’s most patriotic songs of all was written by Berlin for his *Yip, Yip Yaphank* (1918). “God Bless America” was cut from that revue but subsequently revived and performed most famously on an Armistice Day (1938) broadcast of singer Kate Smith’s radio program.²⁰⁰ Further, George and Ira Gershwin were fond of writing about the American political scene. Their *Of Thee I Sing* (1931)²⁰¹ and *Let ‘Em Eat Cake* (1933) tell the ongoing story of a candidate for the U.S. Presidency.

Generally speaking, this was the theatrical milieu into which *Arms and the Girl* was born. Specifically, however, there was not much to remember about its particular Broadway season. Broadway was still preoccupied with two mega-hits from the previous year. 1948-1949 featured the premieres of both Porter’s *Kiss Me, Kate* and Rodger’s & Hammerstein’s *South Pacific*.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ Grant, 129.

¹⁹⁹ Grant, 104.

²⁰⁰ Jablonski, 192-193. Subsequently, both Smith and Bing Crosby had best-selling recordings of the song.

²⁰¹ *Of Thee I Sing*, with book by George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind, was the first musical to win the Pulitzer Prize.

²⁰² Richard C. Norton, *A Chronology of American Musical Theatre, Vol. 2* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 946-961. The original runs of both of these shows were over 1000

Conversely, the 1949-1950 season was dotted with forgotten revues — *Funzapoppin'*, conceived by Ole Olsen, for instance, and *Cabalgata*, a “Spanish musical cavalcade” produced and directed by Daniel Cordoba — and lackluster book musicals, among which *Arms and the Girl* can be counted.²⁰³ Jule Styne’s *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* was the runaway hit of the season. With a book by Fields’s brother Joseph, the musical ran for 740 performances and was an early vehicle for Carol Channing.

Clearly, however, *Arms and the Girl* is typical of its era. A fully-integrated musical that tells a purely American story, the show has several links to *Oklahoma!* First, both shows were produced by the Theatre Guild. Secondly, they both shared the same director. Rouben Mamoulien was at the helm of each production,²⁰⁴ though the success of the latter far exceeds that of the former. Thirdly, they were each stories of pioneers. The characters of *Oklahoma!* were settling the West, while those in *Arms and the Girl* were settling the Northeast, and, more universally, the New World.

Socially and politically, however, *Arms and the Girl* swam against mainstream American thought of the time. Post-World War II, the country was hyper-conservative. Women who had, in the absence of the men at war, filled roles in factories,²⁰⁵ were suddenly shuffled back into their homes. This so-called “Eisenhower Era” gave birth to both suburbia and to the myth of white-washed family lives like those typified on sitcoms from “Leave it to Beaver” to “The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet.” As a result, most women in entertainments were portrayed in shirtdresses

performances each. Specifically, *Kiss Me, Kate* ran for 1077 performances and *South Pacific* for 1925.

²⁰³ *Arms and the Girl* ran for 134 performances at the 46th Street Theatre. The script for *Arms and the Girl* was never published. It can be read in its entirety, however, at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. It is part of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection.

²⁰⁴ Mamoulien also collaborated with Dorothy and Herbert Fields on the libretto of *Arms and the Girl*.

²⁰⁵ The “Rosie the Riveter” advertisement comes to mind.

and aprons. That Jo Kirkland, heroine of *Arms and the Girl*, should spend most of the show costumed in Revolutionary War uniforms typically worn by men made her instantly identifiable as outside of the norm.

The musical is based on Alan Child and Isabelle Louden's play *The Pursuit of Happiness*.²⁰⁶ Its story²⁰⁷ is centered on Jo Kirkland, a 19 year-old New Englander who is convinced that, without her help, George Washington and his men will never win the American Revolution. She is also committed to avenging her father's capture. The musical is set in November of 1776 and opens on the Battle of Ridgefield. Jo comes upon Franz, a Hessian soldier who has deserted from the British in order to claim the Yankees' promise of 50 acres of land to those who will fight for them. He is terrified, however, and Jo, assuming he is a spy, takes him as a prisoner. She also takes charge of Connecticut, a slave who has runaway from the Virginia plantation of Colonel Mortimer Sherwood.²⁰⁸ All three are captured by the town sheriff; they are taken to see Captain Aaron Kirkland, who, it turns out, is Jo's uncle. He assumes responsibility for all three of them.

When Colonel Sherwood comes to visit Captain Kirkland, the Colonel does not recognize Connecticut. This leads Jo to believe that he is not really Sherwood at all. Instead, she surmises, he is also a spy. Jo then decides that she will blow up bridges to prevent Sherwood from leading Kirkland's collection of militiamen into a trap set by the enemy. She is wrong, of course. This leads to General Washington asking to see Jo. This thrills her, though his message is not the one

²⁰⁶ Though I have searched for a copy of this play, I have been unable to locate one – not even in the archive at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts, making any comparison of the characters in the play and in the musical impossible.

²⁰⁷ Like the play on which it was based, *Arms and the Girl* is also not readily available. I was, however, able to access an unpublished production script. It is part of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts.

²⁰⁸ Connecticut changes her name to reflect whatever state she is in at the moment.

she wanted to hear. He asks her to “surrender her sword.” This is his plea in Act II, Scene 4 of the musical:

My child, you are a hazard! A peril! You are confusing us! We know what to expect from the British, but we tremble to think of what great sacrifice you are planning next! If you do not stop loving these with such a devastating passion, you will cause us to lose a war, which, by the grace of God, we must ultimately win!²⁰⁹

Jo is devastated by Washington’s admonition. All she has ever known has been pursuit of war. As an early number in the show says, she is “the girl with the flame.” Washington has extinguished the flame, leaving Jo dejected and prompting many reviewers to compare her to a modern-day Joan of Arc.²¹⁰ Jo’s impact, however, was nowhere near that of Joan’s. Instead, as Garland wrote in his *New York Journal American* review, “deciding to win the war and rout the British all by herself, she almost succeeds in routing the war and winning the British instead”²¹¹ (This, of course, provides fertile ground for a discussion of feminist ideas, which I will take up later in this chapter).

Arms and the Girl ran for 134 performances at the 46th Street Theatre.²¹² This short run belies its mostly-positive reviews. It was called a “delightful new musical,” “a welcome addition to our roster of musical hits,”²¹³ and “a lavish and colorful musical show.”²¹⁴ Pearl Bailey, for

²⁰⁹ Herbert Fields and Dorothy Fields, *Arms and the Girl* (unpublished), Act II, scene 4, page 2.

²¹⁰ Among these were Robert Garland in his review for the *New York Journal American*, Brooks Atkinson writing for the *New York Times*, and Howard Barnes writing for the *New York Herald Tribune*.

²¹¹ Robert Garland, “Less in Musical-Play Than There Should Be,” *The New York Journal American*, February 3, 1950.

²¹² Stewart, 37.

²¹³ Robert Coleman, “‘Arms and the Girl’ Gay and Charming Hit,” *The New York Daily Mirror*, February 3, 1950.

her part as the runaway slave, stole the show. Without exception, Bailey's work garnered exuberant notices. Richard Watts, Jr., wrote in *The New York Post*, "Miss Bailey ... has never been more engagingly skillful, and her humorous brilliance made what I suspect are fairly ordinary songs seem witty and charming."²¹⁵ In *The New York Daily News*, John Chapman adds to that, "Every time Miss Bailey puts foot on the stage for a comedy scene or a song, she takes charge of the show and picks it right up."²¹⁶

Co-stars Nanette Fabray, as Jo, and Georges Guetary, as Hessian soldier Franz, were praised, as well, for their work. In fact, the entire creative team was celebrated for its work, though criticisms included their "indecision [as to] whether to concentrate on the drama ... or on the musical festivities."²¹⁷ Garland's review was, overall, the most tepid. He found the show to be "routine,"²¹⁸ and Atkinson concurred, writing that the story was "not conspicuous for originality, skill, or point of view."²¹⁹

Reviews condemning the story can certainly be levied against co-librettist Fields. Others, however, praised her work. William Hawkins considered the show to feature "some of her best lyrics, and the book at large has wit superior to its sense of direction."²²⁰ Howard Barnes found it "a bountiful, if somewhat ponderous, entertainment."²²¹

Opening almost exactly 19 years after *Arms and the Girl, 1776* was born to a very different social climate. The Women's Movement was in full effect. Betty Friedan's seminal *The*

²¹⁴ Howard Barnes, "Spectacular Production," *The New York Herald Tribune*, February 3, 1950.

²¹⁵ Richard Watts, Jr., "The Girl and the Revolution," *The New York Post*, February 3, 1950.

²¹⁶ John Chapman, "'Arms and the Girl' a Good Show, Thanks to Some Frisky Principals," *The New York Daily News*, February 3, 1950.

²¹⁷ Barnes.

²¹⁸ Garland.

²¹⁹ Atkinson.

²²⁰ William Hawkins, "'Arms and the Girl' Close to Top Drawer," *The New York World-Telegram*, February 3, 1950.

²²¹ Barnes.

Feminist Mystique had been published in 1963. In it, Friedan had written about the lives of suburban housewives who were unhappy and dissatisfied with the June Cleaver-like lives (mentioned earlier) they were called to live. The resulting upheaval — skyrocketing divorce rates, the Sexual Revolution, etc., each gained some momentum thanks to Friedan's book and others like it — caused the book to be considered by many as one of the most influential of the 20th Century. These new attitudes toward women certainly impacted theatrical audiences, as female characters became more richly developed and increasingly empowered.

Though society's views of women had changed drastically between the premieres of *Arms and the Girl* and *1776*, the Broadway landscape was similar. For the most part, the Great White Way was still preoccupied with integrated musicals: the 1960s produced such Golden Age classics as *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Mame*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *Sweet Charity*. As it had done in the years prior to *Arms and the Girl*, however, Broadway was undergoing another seismic shift. Rather than transitioning from revues to integration, Broadway was making room for the rock musical.

The first of these, *Hair*, premiered on Broadway in 1968. As Elizabeth Wollman writes in her *The Theater Will Rock: a History of the Rock Musical from Hair to Hedwig*,

[*Hair's*] phenomenal popularity and impact led some theater critics to proclaim

that rock music's influence would revolutionize the musical theatre ... and

indeed, the rock musical has become something of a staple in New York City.

Almost every season since *Hair* arrived at the Biltmore, at least a few musicals

that borrow heavily from contemporary popular genres have appeared on, Off, or

Off-Off Broadway to wildly varying degrees of commercial and critical success.²²²

Hair itself was the product of an evolving off-Broadway scene. Playwright Edward Albee described the state of American theatre up until this time as “highly parochial, essentially middlebrow, and geared to the alarming proposition that an uneducated audience was the best guide to that which could educate itself toward a more sophisticated consideration of the uses and values of theatre as a socially useful art form.”²²³ That began to change in the middle of the 20th-Century. No longer was the Broadway stage the only one in New York. Coined as a term in the 1950s,²²⁴ off-Broadway became a breeding ground for shows — “vanity plays, revivals of classics, and ... new plays from Europe”²²⁵ — for which mainstream audiences might not yet be ready. A decade later, the works in these theatres became more normalized. Off-off Broadway (OOB) was born as a result. Caffè Cino,²²⁶ Ellen Stewart’s La Mama,²²⁷ and the Judson Poet’s Theatre are examples of these studied by David Crespy in his book *Off-Off Broadway Explosion*. Though each company produced notable alums — playwrights Lanford Wilson and Sam Shepard among them — Crespy argues that *Hair* is off-off Broadway’s greatest success story. It

²²² Elizabeth L. Wollman, *The Theater Will Rock: a History of the Rock Musical, from Hair to Hedwig* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 1.

²²³ Edward Albee in *Off-Off Broadway Explosion: How Provocative Playwrights of the 1960s Ignited a New American Theater* (New York: Back Stage Books, 2003), 9. Albee, Richard Barr, and Clinton Wilder began their own off-off Broadway theatre in the 1960s. The Albarwild Theatre Arts (ABR) was known for producing innovative theatre pieces that would not have been welcome on Broadway.

²²⁴ Wollman, 42.

²²⁵ David Crespy, *Off-Off Broadway Explosion: How Provocative Playwrights of the 1960s Ignited a New American Theater* (New York: Back Stage Books, 2003), 20. Crespy notes several specific examples of European plays that were produced off-Broadway. These include Samuel Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape*, Eugene Ionesco’s *The Killer*, and Harold Pinter’s *The Dumbwaiter*.

²²⁶ Playwright Lanford Wilson is a notable alumnus of Caffè Cino.

²²⁷ Playwright Sam Shepard is a notable alumnus of La Mama.

was the production “that changed OOB from an underground movement to a mainstream attraction.”²²⁸

Originally produced at Joseph Papp’s off-Broadway Public Theatre,²²⁹ *Hair* was the brainchild of two out-of-work actors. Jerome Ragni and James Rado “wanted to bring the magic of the hippie street scene to the stage.” After its successful, six-week run at the Public, *Hair* transferred to the East Village. Its eventual home, however, was Broadway’s Biltmore Theatre. It opened in April of 1968 and played for more than 1700 performances.²³⁰ With its lewd lyrics — there are references to masturbation and sodomy, among other things not often seen before on the Broadway stage — and its progressive subject matter — an American flag is desecrated on stage, e.g. — *Hair* was instantly controversial. It also made an immediate impact on the landscape of the Great White Way.

As is to be expected of the season following the premiere of the ground-breaking, formula-changing “American Tribal Love-Rock Musical,”²³¹ 1969-1970 was typified by musicals that both reacted against and warmly embraced Broadway’s brewing change. There were revivals of the classics. Among these were new productions of *My Fair Lady* and *West Side Story* and repertory productions of Gilbert & Sullivan’s most popular operettas.²³²

²²⁸ Crespy, 158.

²²⁹ *Hair* was the new company’s inaugural production.

²³⁰ Crespy, 158-159.

²³¹ Richard C. Norton, *A Chronology of American Musical Theatre, Vol. 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 222. Though *Hair* was thought by most to signify the end of the Golden Age of the American musical, Elizabeth Wollman argues in her book *The Theater Will Rock* that, “despite their constant presence, staged rock musicals remain somewhat marginal, and their status problematic.” (Elizabeth Wollman, *The Theater Will Rock: a History of the Rock Musical from Hair to Hedwig* (Ann Arbor: the University of Michigan Press, 2006), 1-2.

²³² Specifically, these operettas included *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Patience*, *The Mikado*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *Iolanthe*. Produced by the New York City Center, each production was directed

Others followed the new standard set by *Hair* and sought to stretch long-held formulaic boundaries. For instance, Shmuel Bunum created *The Megilla of Itzik Manger*. Based on a series of poems and the Biblical account of Queen Esther, the musical was presented in both Yiddish and English. *But Never Jam Today* was “an Afro-American Adaptation” of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Lookingglass*, both books by British author Lewis Carroll. *Fiesta in Madrid* was Tito Capobianco’s two-act zarzuela, and *Trumpets of the Lord* was “a program of spoken word, poetry, sermons, spirituals, and gospel music.”²³³ *Itzik Manger’s* 90 performance run was, by far, the longest of the others, which ran for an average of 10 performances a piece. In spite of these short runs, the fact that these shows were presented on Broadway indicates that the Great White Way was standing at a crossroads between the old way of working and the new.²³⁴

In many ways, *1776* (with book by Peter Stone and lyrics by Sherman Edwards) straddled these two camps. It was arguably the most memorable new musical of the season.²³⁵ Thematically, it squared with the “American Dream”-scape typified by its Golden Age forebears (what could be more American than a musical that ends with the signing of “the Declaration of Independence to the pealing crescendo of the Liberty Bell”?)²³⁶ Reviewer Richard P. Cooke

by Herbert Newby under the supervision of Bridget D’Oyly Carte. D’Oyly Carte’s grandfather, Richard D’Oyly Carte, originally produced Gilbert & Sullivan’s works at London’s Savoy Hotel, which he owned.

²³³ Norton, Vol. 3, 227-251.

²³⁴ Most scholars agree that *Hair* marked the end of the “Golden Age” of the American musical. That “Age” was typified by conservative themes presented through idealized stories that glorified all the whimsical hope of the American dream.

²³⁵ Others that survive are Kander & Ebb’s *Zorba*, Jerry Herman’s *Dear World*, and Burt Bacharach & Hal David’s *Promises, Promises, Promises, Promises*, with book by Neil Simon, is currently enjoying a successful Broadway revival, starring Sean Hayes and Kristin Chenoweth. Its original run lasted 1281 performances, as compared to *1776*’s 1217 performance run.

²³⁶ Ethan Mordden, *Open a New Window: the Broadway Musical in the 1960s* (New York: Palgrave: MacMillan, 2001), 255.

called this the “most American of all events”).²³⁷ Its form, however, was one of only a handful of Broadway anomalies, and it took advantage of the boundary-stretching done by *Hair* and others.²³⁸

First, there is very little action in the musical. This prompted Richard Watts, Jr., to write in his *New York Post* review that the show “has no plot, in a conventional sense.”²³⁹ Instead, “Edwards and Stone concentrated their musical on the debates, intrigues, and compromises involving the delegates to the second Continental Congress that met for three stifling summer months in Philadelphia to produce the [Declaration of Independence].”²⁴⁰

Secondly, there were no glitzy, glamorous song and dance numbers that were the staples of musicals made in the older ilk. Instead, there was a 20-minute gap in which there were no songs at all. Here, *1776* differs from the music-saturated *Hair*. This lack of dance is made all the more unusual by the continued rise in importance of the Broadway choreographer. Beginning with deMille’s work on *Oklahoma!*, the status of the choreographer had continued to rise. Others had joined the ranks. Among these were Gower Champion, Bob Fosse, and Michael Bennett. Grant argues that, increasingly, these director-choreographers “pursued the direction of conceptual showmanship and abandoned the playwriting choreography of deMille and [Jerome] Robbins.”²⁴¹ *1776* certainly bucks this trend with its remarkably stagnant staging. In his *New*

²³⁷ Richard P. Cooke, “The Theater” in *The Wall Street Journal*, March 18, 1969.

²³⁸ Mordden argues that *Hair* was not all that ground-breaking. Instead, he argues in his *Open a New Window*, it achieved its status by making “such an occasion of itself that it fooled some into thinking it was a breakthrough of some kind” (231).

²³⁹ Richard Watts, Jr. “The Declaration of Independence,” *The New York Post*, March 17, 1969.

²⁴⁰ Green, 227.

²⁴¹ Grant, 279.

York Times review of the musical, Clive Barnes supposes that “[Director Peter] Hunt has encouraged his actors to behave precisely as if they were in a play rather than a musical.”²⁴²

Finally, there were essentially no “girls.” Since its beginnings, Broadway had glorified the showgirl. Exemplified by the so-called “Ziegfeld Girls” who starred in the annual *Follies* revues produced by impresario Florenz Ziegfeld, these girls personified the height of sophistication and glamour for much of the early 20th century. In her book *The Ziegfeld Follies: a History in Song*, Ann Ommen van der Merwe argues that these “idealized image[s] of femininity” are Ziegfeld’s “greatest and most enduring legacy.”²⁴³ Showgirls are present throughout the canon of musical theatre. *1776*, however, is possessed of only two female characters. Abigail Adams, wife of John, and Martha Jefferson, wife of Thomas, make what reviewer Martin Gottfried describes as “brief and quite unnecessary” appearances.²⁴⁴

For all of its disparities from the norm, *1776* was adored by critics. The show received raves. It was “magnificently staged and stunningly original,” according to John Chapman.²⁴⁵ Walter Kerr found it to be “the most independent new musical in years” and urged readers to “go to see it instantly.”²⁴⁶ Barnes gushed, “*1776* ... is a most striking, most gripping musical. I recommend it without reservation. It makes even an Englishman’s heart beat a little bit faster. This is a musical with style, humanity, wit and passion.”²⁴⁷

Except for one dissenter, none of the other all-male reviewers were bothered by the lack of women in the cast. Chapman, instead, notes that “the only two women in the company ... give

²⁴² Clive Barnes, “Theater: Spirited ‘1776’ – Founding Father’s Tale is a Happy Musical,” *The New York Times*, March 17, 1969.

²⁴³ Ann Ommen van der Merwe, *The Ziegfeld Follies: a History in Song* (Lanham: the Scarecrow Press, 2009), 39-40. Ina Claire, Lillian Lorraine, and Ruth Etting are examples of Ziegfeld Girls.

²⁴⁴ Martin Gottfried, “Theatre,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, March 17, 1969.

²⁴⁵ Chapman.

²⁴⁶ Walter Kerr, “‘1776’ and All’s Well,” *The New York Times*, March 23, 1969.

²⁴⁷ Barnes.

touches of feminine softness when it is needed. Two dozen men complete the roster, and this is, perforce, a man's play."²⁴⁸ His suggestion, of course, is that revolution is the purview of men. The musical premiered against the political backdrop of the Vietnam War, a conflict for which women served in a variety of roles. That *1776* overlooks this suggests that, for all of its innovations, the show is actually a throwback to more a more conservative Broadway, and, given the success of *1776*, audiences agreed. The one reviewer who expresses disdain at the lack of female characters in *1776* is Gottfried. Not surprisingly, he was writing for *Women's Wear Daily*. He is critical of the show overall. Perhaps a case of "playing to his audience," Gottfried characterizes the musical as "a wooden replica of souvenir-shop patriotism."²⁴⁹

Given their similar themes, their common entry points into a shifting Broadway milieu, and, to a significantly lesser extent, their shared theatrical home (both musicals premiered at the 46th Street Theatre),²⁵⁰ *Arms and the Girl* and *1776* are ripe for comparison. That Fields did not consider herself a feminist has been established. Given that they collaborated on a musical that is essentially devoid of the female, it can be assumed that Edwards and Stone were, likewise, not feminists; nevertheless, feminist themes emerge from a comparison of the two works. Also emerging is a stronger understanding of Fields's voice. This can be introduced by a study of *Arms and the Girl* and *1776*. It can then be further proven by looking at several other of Fields's females.

Though the two musicals are centered on a common event, they tell the story in very different ways. *Arms and the Girl* features a female heroine. Conversely, the women of *1776* (Abigail Adams and Martha Jefferson) are "quite unnecessary afterthoughts" to a cast of over

²⁴⁸ John Chapman, "'1776' Opens at the 46th Street; It's Funny, Moving and Artistic," *The New York Daily News*, March 17, 1969.

²⁴⁹ Gottfried.

²⁵⁰ Stewart, 37, 531.

two dozen domineering males. Jo, on the other hand, is referenced in the title of the musical, so central is she to the play's action. The centrality — or lack of it — of the female characters is evident at first glance. A deeper inspection reveals a divergent depiction of women in each of the shows.

First, Jo is possessed almost entirely of conventionally male traits. She has been reared since birth as “The Girl With the Flame.” An early number in the show reveals this breeding:²⁵¹

[VERSE]

I was taught to grind my teeth
long before I cut ‘em!
I thumbed my nose at Redcoats,
and I taught our bulls to butt ‘em!
No talk of Santa Claus I heard!
Father only talked of George the Third,
and Father said that George the Third
was a very nasty Anglo-Saxon word.
War was drummed and drummed into my head!
Fifty times a day, my father said:

[CHORUS]

Stick a gun in your belt;
hold a prayer in your heart.
Put a long, bright sword in your hand.

²⁵¹ Please note that, while Fields co-write the libretto, the lyrics were entirely hers.

You're a girl with a flame, my darling daughter,
and when you've got a flame, you keep it fanned!

Here's a pair of my pants;
don't you dream of romance
'til the dream is won for the land!

You're a girl with a flame, my darling daughter,
and, by Gad, you're going to have to keep it fanned!

Like Fields, Jo is very much a woman in a man's world. "My country calls, but gentlemen don't," the lyrics continue. As a result, Jo's primary concern is "the gun in her belt" and "the sword in her hand." This, for De Lauretis, is her "desire." Not only is her name and breeding gender-bending, but with few exceptions, she is dressed like a man throughout the entire show. This is alluded to several times in the script. For instance, when her clothes arrive at her uncle's home, they are all men's clothes. This prompts Colonel Sherwood to ask her, "Are you a boy with long hair, or a girl with long pants?" Jo responds: "I'm a girl, of course." The following exchange ensues:

Sherwood: Of course. Are you in the Ridgefield Militia? If you are, you're marching away with me!

Jo: I'm from Pennsylvania, and I'm not a regular soldier!

Sherwood: You're not. Well, you certainly had me fooled.

Jo: Don't think I couldn't be. I was brought up like one!²⁵²

²⁵² *Arms and the Girl*, Act I, scene 2, page 16.

The women of *1776* are far more conventionally female in their desires and pursuits. Abigail Adams and Martha Jefferson are completely relegated to the domestic sphere. This is made clear very clear throughout the musical. Unlike Jo, who is convinced she alone can win the Revolution, Adams and Jefferson are completely uninterested in it. Adams, for instance, refers to her husband's work with the Continental Congress as "carrying on."²⁵³ Instead, she is preoccupied with the health of her children and her female friends' desperate need for hatpins. This need supersedes her husband's request that she organize ladies to create saltpetre — necessary for gunpowder — to use against "12 thousand German mercenaries"²⁵⁴ that the English are sending against the Colonies. To her husband's request, Abigail responds that "We have a more urgent problem, John." She proceeds to sing:

[VERSE]

There's one thing every woman's missed in
Massachusetts Bay —
Don't smirk at me, you egotist, pay
heed to what I say!
We've gone from Framingham to Boston
and cannot find a pin.
"Don't you know there is a war on?"
says each tradesman with a grin.
Well!

²⁵³ Peter Stone, *1776* (New York; Penguin Books, 1976), 6.

²⁵⁴ Stone, 7.

We will not make saltpetre
until you send us pins!²⁵⁵

Further, Abigail longs to reconnect with her husband intimately — and he with her. They discuss their loneliness in the following exchange:

John: How goes it with you, Abigail?

Abigail: Not well, John — not at all well.

(She sings)

I live like a nun in a cloister —
solitary, celibate, I hate it.

Abigail: And you, John?

John: *(he sings)*

Hm! I live like a monk in an abbey —
Ditto, ditto, I hate it!²⁵⁶

The character of Martha Jefferson is similarly dispositioned. Her appearance is precipitated only by her husband's desperate need for a conjugal visit. She is then summoned, on his behalf, to Philadelphia (clearly, then, both Abigail and Martha play out the desires of their husbands). In Philadelphia, she is greeted by Benjamin Franklin with "View-hal-loo, and whose-little-girl are you?"²⁵⁷ Martha's love for Thomas is not based on his many "accomplishments" — she specifically cites that he's an "author, lawyer, farmer, architect, statesman"²⁵⁸ — instead, she loves him for his ability to play the violin. She sings:

²⁵⁵ Stone, 8.

²⁵⁶ Stone, 72.

²⁵⁷ Stone, 67.

²⁵⁸ Stone, 77-78.

[VERSE]

I hear his violin,
and I get that feeling within,
and I sigh ... oh, I sigh ...
He draws near,
very near, and it's

[CHORUS]

Heigh, heigh, heigh diddle-diddle, and
goodbye to the fiddle!
My strings are unstrung.
Heigh-heigh-heigh-heigh-igh-igh...
Heigh — I'm always undone!²⁵⁹

This is in stark contrast with Jo. Jo has no interest in things generally associated with the women of her time. Love, for instance, is completely outside of her purview. This is illustrated several times in *Arms and the Girl*. The first is in her early interactions with Franz, the Hessian deserter. He makes romantic advances to her; she rejects them:

Franz: You're the prettiest soldier I ever saw!

Jo: Talk with your sword, Hessian!

Franz: Ah! You're beautiful.

Jo: Fight, Coward! Fight! Fight!²⁶⁰

²⁵⁹ Stone 78-79.

²⁶⁰ *Arms and the Girl*, Act I, scene 1, page 3.

Later, after Jo has stepped in to save Franz's life from execution at the hands of her uncle,²⁶¹ he thanks her in another exchange that illustrates her discomfort with those things traditionally associated with the feminine.

Franz (*kissing her hand*): Fraulein, I'm so grateful.

Jo: Don't do that! I'm not used to people kissing my hand!

Franz: Excuse me! It is difficult to thank one for so great a service! You just now saved my life.

Jo: Don't thank me. It would have been foolish to shoot you ...

Franz: But you must have had a kindly feeling.

Jo: La! Be assured there was nothing personal in it.²⁶²

For Jo, love is an unwanted distraction from the task at hand — gaining freedom from England. For Abigail and Martha, it facilitates the freedom. In 1776, Thomas Jefferson is having trouble writing the Declaration of Independence. This is when Adams summons Martha to visit from Virginia. After Thomas and Martha have spent time alone together, he is at last capable of finishing his assignment.

John Adams: Franklin, look! He's written something — he's done it!

[*reading*] 'Dear Mr. Adams: I am taking my wife back to bed. Kindly go away.

Y'r ob'd't, T. Jefferson.'²⁶³

Jefferson's next appearance comes as his Declaration is read. It is, according to Adams, a "masterpiece."²⁶⁴ Interestingly, though, the document would never have been written were it not

²⁶¹ *Arms and the Girl*, Act I, scene 2, page 6. She suggests, instead, that they "just sort of ... torture him."

²⁶² *Arms and the Girl*, Act 1, scene 2, pages 10-11.

²⁶³ Stone, 81.

²⁶⁴ Stone, 102.

for an intimate visit from Martha Jefferson. Herein lies a distinct difference between the treatment of women in *Arms and the Girl* and *1776*. In the former musical, a woman nearly destroys the Colonies' attempt at freedom. In the latter, they facilitate it. Interestingly, they do so by fulfilling — or not, in the case of Jo — the roles traditionally assigned to women.

Jo is entirely possessed of traditionally masculine traits — her name, her dress, her commitment to fighting, her passion for the cause. In each of these ways, Jo bucks the feminine norm. As a result, however, she very nearly frustrates the cause to which she is so committed. Washington calls her “a hazard! A peril!” She is “confusing” to her compatriots who “know what to expect from the British” but “tremble to think of”²⁶⁵ what destructive plans Jo may concoct. After Washington “relieves” Jo of her duties as soldier, she feels listless, useless.

Jo: I've been kicked out of the war! He said I was a hazard! And I thought I was going to be decorated! Oh, what a stupid, fumbling, overbearing fool I was!

Franz: We both were! But once we learn that we are ... then we aren't any more. We had to learn, and it took the greatest man in America to teach us!

Jo: I love my country so much, and see how badly I served it!

Franz: Each must serve only in a way he is good for. You can only serve your country. You can do something that even George Washington cannot do.

Jo: What?

Franz: You can have a baby — lots of babies!²⁶⁶

The materialist feminist might rightly read these interactions as indicative of Jo's being oppressed by the patriarchy. Because she is not a man, she is unable to fulfill the role she wishes

²⁶⁵ *Arms and the Girl*, Act II, scene 4, page 2. This unpublished script is available as part of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts.

²⁶⁶ *Arms and the Girl*, Act II, scene 4, page 4.

to. Instead, she must fill the role expected of women — that of having “a baby — lots of babies!” Reared by her father to pursue liberty above all else, she is subsequently rejected by the male-dominated society of which she longs to be a part. In fact, both Jo and Connecticut the slave are women who are fighting to be free — Jo is seeking freedom from the British and from the conventional expectations of the society in which she lives; Connecticut is pursuing freedom from slavery.

Clearly, Jo has dreams beyond those that her father has for her. He tells her in the “Girl with the Flame” number, “Don’t dream of romance.” She responds, “My country calls, but gentlemen don’t / and Father thanks that’s quite alright.” In the next line, however, Jo expresses how her thoughts differ from her father’s. She wistfully sings, “A girl can’t kiss the 13 colonies / on a summer night.” In spite of this, however, Jo follows the mandate of her father. With “the gun in [her] belt,” she promises to fan the flame of patriotism ignited by her famous father.

But at what cost?

Jo is oppressed by her father’s mandate that she fight the Redcoats. This comes at the cost of her femininity. This is illustrated in an early exchange with Franz:

Franz: I’m so glad I’m on YOUR side.

Jo: Wait! I have a far more deadly weapon.

Franz: What?

Jo: You forget, Lieutenant, I am a woman!

Franz: Who’s forgetting? I wish YOU would remember. Once in a great while, I see this sweet, womanly expression on your face. It makes me want to thank you for saving my life!

Jo: It was nothing. Nothing at all.

[Later in the scene, he tries to make a romantic advance, which she rejects.]

Jo: You are merely a con expediency. There is nothing personal in our relationship. It's just that you may be useful to us.

Franz: I would love to be useful to you.

Jo: Not to me. To my country. My life is dedicated to my country.²⁶⁷

Jo sacrifices self — at her father's insistence — to her country. Clearly, Jo is an enigma in the canon of musical theatre heroines. She is no doe-eyed ingénue. Instead, borrowing again from Bradley, she is committed to a dream outside of herself, outside of pursuing love. She is committed to liberty. In fact, when Franz ultimately proposes to her, she agrees to marry him under the condition that he wait until “after [her] mission.” He gives her an ultimatum: “You are either Joan of Arc or Frau von Schilling!” She chooses her “call.” “It's Joan of Arc!” Jo says. “She's calling me!”²⁶⁸

In the end, however, Jo's attempts are thwarted. When Washington calls her to himself at the end of the musical, Jo expects that he is seeking her help. In a sense, he is, though it is not the sort of help she expects to offer. “My child,” he tells her, belittling her status of woman with the degrading use of “child.” “You are a hazard, a peril!” With that, he banishes her from the war effort. Adding insult to injury, another male leader tells her, “We will miss you, my child. You added an element of danger to this war....Now we have nothing to overcome but the British.”²⁶⁹

The implication here is clear: industrious women are hazards. Those who do not play the roles outlined for them by male-dominated society are “stupid, fumbling, overbearing fools” whose best efforts at helping must be thwarted, lest the cause be lost. In the end, *Arms and the*

²⁶⁷ *Arms and the Girl*, Act I, Scene 3, pages 3 and 6.

²⁶⁸ *Arms and the Girl*, Act II, Scene 3, pages 3-5.

²⁶⁹ *Arms and the Girl*, Act II, Scene 4, page 2.

Girl tells the story of the American Revolution through the eyes of a woman who must ultimately be saved by a man. She is the one, however, who takes most of the action; she drives the musical and is the character on whom it is centered — and even named for. That is a key trait of Fields’s female characters; they are do-ers, active participants in their own destinies.

The American musical was not receptive, obviously, to industrious women assuming traditionally male roles. Ironically, though, those characters that perform the conventional role of “woman” are able to save the day. This is exhibited very clearly in *1776*. In fulfilling their roles as women — Abigail obsesses over hat pins and stays home to care for measles-stricken children;²⁷⁰ Martha rushes to meet her husband’s sexual needs²⁷¹ — they ultimately facilitate the Revolution. Thomas, fresh from an encounter with his wife, is finally able to write the Declaration that ultimately instigated the Colonies’ independence from England. Abigail finally follows her husband’s instructions and makes salt petre. She initially ignores his direction. First, she thinks finding hat pins is “a more urgent problem.”²⁷² Secondly, she does not know how to make salt petre, as her husband has never told her how (the implication here is clear: women are helpless without the direct aid of men). This debate between the Adamses recurs throughout *1776*. It reaches its climax, however, in Act II, Scene 7. Just before the Declaration of Independence is signed and the Revolutionary War officially begins, John Adams receives a shipment of two kegs. His wife’s voiceover underscores the action:

Compliments of the Concord Ladies’ Coffee Club
and the Sisterhood of the Truro Synagogue
and the Friday Evening Baptist Sewing Circle

²⁷⁰ Stone, 71.

²⁷¹ Stone, 81.

²⁷² Stone, 8.

and the Holy Christian Sisters of Saint Claire

All for you, John ...

Salt petre, John!²⁷³

The women of *1776* save the Revolution that the central woman of *Arms and the Girl* nearly lost. The materialist feminist must ask why that was allowed in a musical which premiered in 1969 but not in one that premiered only 19 years earlier. There are two reasons, in my opinion. First, the women of *1776* performed their gender without attempting to usurp those traits generally associated with the male. This is illustrated in the characters of Abigail Adams and Martha Jefferson. It is also shown in the number above. Groups of women worked in “coffee clubs” and “sewing circles” to produce the salt petre. They were not, like Jo, trying to work with men from within the male society.

Secondly, the Women’s Movement gained significant ground in the years between the premieres of the two musicals. As such, society’s view of women had shifted significantly. The feminist theatre groups of which Canning spoke were springing up, and many American women were beginning to embrace the examples set by the life of Gloria Steinem and the writings of Betty Friedan. As a result, the construct of society began to shift. A comparison of these two musicals makes clear the differences between the two sociopolitical milieus in to which they were born.

Having compared the two musicals, I will now use the character of Jo to make generalizations about her and Fields’s other women. Fields frequently created female characters who were misfits. It can be assumed that, professionally-speaking, Fields probably felt very much like a misfit herself. Working, as she did, with a peer group of men, she was far more

²⁷³ Stone, 127-128.

similar to Jo than to Abigail Adams or Martha Jefferson. It was shown earlier that Fields performed her gender in very conventional ways. The fact remains, however, that she was a professional anomaly. This trait shows up in several of her female characters.

Certainly, this was true of Jo. In Act II, Scene 1 of *Arms and the Girl*, she sings “I’ll Never Learn.” In it, she illustrates that she understands

... a lady is supposed to keep her big mouth closed.

I part my lips and feathers start to fly.

I just keep confusing the lives of all my friends.

There’s not a stomach in town that I can’t turn.

He was wrong, that Hessian boy [Franz].

I’m not Helen. I’m the horse of Troy.

I’m just not intelligent, and I’ll never, no never, ever learn.²⁷⁴

Gittel Mosca, heroine of *Seesaw*, for which Fields wrote the lyrics but not the libretto, is similarly self-effacing. *Seesaw* premiered in 1973. Based on William Gibson’s play *Two for the Seesaw*, it is the story of a love affair between Bronx-based dancer Gittel and Jerry Ryan, a separated Nebraska attorney who is in New York on business. Gittel meets Jerry and is instantly attracted to him. When he calls her, she is biting sarcasm to him. “Nobody Does it Like Me” is the number that follows. In it, Gittel embodies not only the self-effacement that Fields has already been shown to have, but she also expresses a frustration at herself for breaking from the norm. This is a trait she shares both with Jo and with Charity, the central character of Fields’s *Sweet Charity*.

²⁷⁴ *Arms and the Girl*, Act II, scene 1, page 15.

If there's a wrong way to say it, a wrong way to play it,
nobody does it like me!

...

I've got a big, loud mouth. I'm always talking much too free.

If you go for tact and manners, better stay away from me.

If there's a wrong way to keep it cool, a right way to be a fool,

Nobody does it like me.

...

and though I try to be a lady, I'm no lady, I'm a fraud,

and when I talk like I'm a lady, what I sound like is a broad,

If there's a wrong way to get a guy, the right way to lose a guy,

nobody does it like me!²⁷⁵

Gittel's insecurities are further expressed in her number "He's Good for Me." Just before meeting the friends of Ryan, a lawyer, Gittel, a dancer, asks herself: "He's good for me, but am I good enough for him? / How can I impress his friends? / Stand there like a dope and 'yes' his friends? I'd be out of place....I'm wrong. / He would see I don't belong."

Another of Fields's characters is similarly ill-suited for the world in which she is forced to live. The title character of the musical *Eleanor* is very much like Jo and Gittel. Though *Eleanor* was never produced, it was another collaboration between Fields and Coleman. It is the story of Eleanor Roosevelt and another example of Fields writing for the type of strong female that was atypical in the canon of American musicals. Eleanor is telling "Uncle Ted" (former

President Theodore Roosevelt) about her new skill-set. Unlike Jo's father, who encouraged her behavior, Uncle Ted is hardly supportive in the unpublished number.²⁷⁶

Uncle Ted, I have learned to wrestle, perfect sport for the amazon!²⁷⁷
for the girl too tall to nestle. Let me see just how good you are
when I try my surprising headlock, stronger grip, I would say, by far
than the grip that is known as wedlock.

An interesting side note to this study of the females Fields created can be found in her collection of papers at the New York Public Library. In those files is the page of a legal pad on which Fields was brainstorming ideas synonymous with failure. Interestingly, she lists phrases like “blow out” and “drag-assed.” Illustrating the insecurity and ill-fit of several of her female characters, however, she also lists “I’m a dime a dozen dame” and “I’m much ado about nothing.”²⁷⁸

In the characters of Jo, Gittel, and Eleanor, an overriding trait of Fields's females can be uncovered. They were not the norm, or, at least, they did not feel like they were well suited to the society in which they lived. They were, so to speak, “fish out of water,” pursuing their own desires until those desires were extinguished by men — lovers, or, in the case of Jo, a general. In spite of Fields's insistence that she was treated equally, it can be assumed that Fields wrote about these types of women, because she empathized with them. She, too, was a misfit. Like Eleanor,

²⁷⁶ Certain excerpts from this unproduced musical are available in Fields's papers at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts.

²⁷⁷ By “amazon,” Roosevelt is referring to her height.

²⁷⁸ Though I am not completely certain of this fact, none of these words or phrases were ever used in a show with which Fields was associated.

she broke with the norm and, as proven by her parents' aversion to her career choice,²⁷⁹ this caused some familial strain. Obviously, this is especially at play in the character of Jo.

In Chapter Four, I will explore the way Fields's treatment of "working women" differs from that of her fellow writers.

²⁷⁹ Lew and Rose Fields were ultimately supportive of their daughter's career. It did not start out this way, as is proven by Lew Fields's repeated attempts to get her out of show business.

CHAPTER FOUR

“HAPPY TO KEEP HIS DINNER WARM” OR “I’D RATHER WAKE UP BY MYSELF”?
BELLS ARE RINGING AND HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING
VS. *BY THE BEAUTIFUL SEA*

In her 2002 book *Bachelor Girl*, Betsy Israel traces “the secret history of single women in the 20th century.” From spinsters to swingers, flappers to feminists, each incarnation of the single woman is examined.²⁸⁰ It is only in recent years, Israel suggests, that these unattached females have moved (closer) to the center from their previous perches on the fringe of society. She writes, “[they] seem forever to unnerve, anger, and unwittingly scare large swaths of the population, both female and male.”²⁸¹

The female leads in each of the musicals discussed in this chapter could rightly be considered “bachelor girls.” Unlike *Oklahoma’s* Laurie, Eliza Doolittle of *My Fair Lady*, or the heroines of countless other musicals who are “kept” by men (fathers, lovers, etc.), Lottie Gibson (1954’s *By the Beautiful Sea*), Ella Peterson (1956’s *Bells are Ringing*), and Rosemary Pilkington (1961’s *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*) reflect the growing trend of women who are making their own ways in the world. Interestingly, each of these musicals predates the major legislation precipitated by the Women’s Movement. The Equal Pay Act, which mandated that women be compensated equitably when performing duties comparable to

²⁸⁰ Beth Israel, *Bachelor Girl: the Secret History of Single Women in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002).

²⁸¹ Israel, 2. This is not at all to say that Israel believes the single woman is now accepted as an equal player in a mostly-married adult society. It is, however, to state that Israel’s history proves that single women are more accepted now than at any other point in their history.

their male peers, was not passed until 1963. It was followed in 1964 by the Civil Rights Act. This legislation “forbade discrimination in employment on the basis of sex.”²⁸² Lottie, Ella, and Rosemary did not benefit from this legislation; nonetheless, they are indicative of Broadway’s attempt to progressively reflect the social milieu in a time of political upheaval.

In spite of this similarity, this is also a point of distinction between Lottie on the one hand and Ella and Rosemary on the other. Ella and Rosemary, as an answering-service operator and a secretary respectively — were, like the women of 1776, working in roles most often associated with and filled by women. Lottie, like Jo, was not. She worked as a vaudevillian and operated a boardinghouse, which she also owned. Once again, Fields’s females are playing atypical parts in their respective societies.

Given the dates of their premieres (1954, 1956, and 1961), each of the musicals discussed in this chapter was born into the same general milieu (both socially and on Broadway) as those in the previous chapter. Revisiting that, then, is unnecessary. I will, however, chronologically discuss the specific seasons in which each musical premiered.

By the Beautiful Sea

The second of Fields’s two collaborations with composer Arthur Schwartz opened on April 8, 1954, at the Majestic Theatre. Mordden summarizes the plot of *By the Beautiful Sea* as such:

Turn of the century Coney Island setting; gauche but charming vaudevillian of the third-rank [Lottie Gibson] romances moderately prominent Shakespearean; the midway, the rides, the fun. Plot hitch number one: [Lottie’s father] jumps in on Brooklyn-Bridge-for-Sale business opportunities, constantly throwing her

²⁸² Jones, 236.

finances into chaos. Plot hitch number two: he's divorced but his daughter hates the vaudevillian who would be stepmother.²⁸³

By the Beautiful Sea starred Shirley Booth, an immensely popular entertainer of the time, and featured a libretto by Dorothy and Herbert Fields. Though its run of 270 performances does not place it among the great musicals of its time, it does position it as one of the most successful shows of its season. From 1953-1954, there were 15 new musical offerings made on Broadway. These included operettas (*Die Fledermaus*, *Regina*, and *Fledermaus*), revues (*Anna Russell and her Little Show*, *At Home with Ethel Waters*, *Comedy in Music*, and *John Murray Anderson's Almanac*), and book musicals, which, as always, dominated the theatrical landscape (*Oklahoma!* (revival), *Carnival in Flanders*, *Kismet*, *The Girl in Pink Tights*, *By the Beautiful Sea*, *The Golden Apple*, *Showboat* (revival), and *The Pajama Game*). Of these, *The Pajama Game* ran the longest (1063 performances), followed by *Comedy in Music* (849 performances), and *Kismet* (583 performances). With its 270 performances, *By the Beautiful Sea* was the fourth longest-running show of the season.²⁸⁴

Reviews of the piece were mixed. Several reviewers noted that it was among the best of its season, but they also added that it was a lackluster season. For example, Brooks Atkinson wrote in the *New York Times* that the piece “is no masterpiece. But it restores the era of good feeling to music on Broadway. Nothing done in the field this season has been so hospitable and funny.”²⁸⁵ John Chapman's *New York Daily News* review was similarly tepid. “Although I did

²⁸³ *Coming Up Roses*, 119.

²⁸⁴ Norton, 14-23.

²⁸⁵ Brooks Atkinson, “Shirley Booth Stars at the Majestic,” *The New York Times*, April 9, 1954.

have a bit of fun,” he wrote, “I came away from the Majestic last evening feeling that Coney Island is too big for Schwartz, the Fieldses, Mielziner ... and me.”²⁸⁶

Critics were particularly unimpressed with the Fieldses’ libretto. Robert Coleman criticized that the book “has a lot of hilarious moments, but it is hardly off of their top shelf.”²⁸⁷ John McClain wrote that Dorothy and Herbert “folded up coming into the homestretch.”²⁸⁸ For Atkinson, “the book ... does not dance with the spirit that informs the rest of the show. Still, it does get the performers on and off, and it makes them look beguiling.”²⁸⁹ Perhaps most damningly, Walter Kerr wrote that the show features “a splendid balloon ... that sails right up off the ground.” He added, “There is also a book by Herbert and Dorothy Fields that never does.” He later calls the libretto “half-hearted and fumbling”²⁹⁰ (Interestingly, Mordden, writing in 1998, called the musical “a show without a story”).²⁹¹

For their complaints about the Fieldses’ book, critics offered far warmer praise for the music. Schwartz’s music and Fields’s lyrics combined for what Richard Watts, Jr., described as “warm and tuneful [with] the proper suggestion of its nostalgic period.”²⁹² Atkinson referred to the “melodious score” as “a pleasure to encounter” “after the banal sort of musical comedy Broadway has been afflicted with this season.”²⁹³ That Fields’s lyrics were praised while her libretto was panned is noteworthy. It is a study I will pick up in greater detail in the final chapter of this dissertation.

²⁸⁶ John Chapman, “‘By the Beautiful Sea’ Gets Soggy,” *New York Daily News*, April 9, 1954.

²⁸⁷ Robert Coleman, “‘By the Beautiful Sea’ Offers Lots of Robust Fun,” *Daily Mirror*, April 9, 1954.

²⁸⁸ John McClain, “It’s Worth Seeing: Only One Shirley Booth, and This is Her Show,” *Journal American*, April 9, 1954.

²⁸⁹ Atkinson.

²⁹⁰ Walter F. Kerr, “Theater: ‘By the Beautiful Sea,’” *New York Herald Tribune*, April 9, 1954.

²⁹¹ *Coming Up Roses*, 120.

²⁹² Richard Watts, Jr., “Shirley Booth at Coney Island,” *New York Post*, April 9, 1954.

²⁹³ Atkinson.

Though reviewers were mixed in their opinions of the show itself, star Shirley Booth was unequivocally heralded. Her “immaculate services”²⁹⁴ made her, according to Coleman, “a tower of strength to a pedestrian musical.”²⁹⁵ Atkinson found her to be “a doll on either the dramatic or musical stage.” He added that “she is in great form [in] *By the Beautiful Sea*.”²⁹⁶ For Kerr, Booth held “a special incandescence” as “the only performer in the world from whom a child cannot steal a scene.”²⁹⁷

Since it closed after 270 performances, *By the Beautiful Sea* has had only one major restaging. This occurred at New York City’s Lamb’s Theatre in 1999 and was part of the Musicals Tonight! staged readings series.²⁹⁸

Bells Are Ringing

Bells Are Ringing, written by composer Jule Styne and the lyricist / librettist team of Comden and Green, premiered at Broadway’s Alvin Theatre on November 29, 1956. 17 other musicals were produced that season (1956-1957). As in the 1953-1954 season, 1956-1957 featured revivals of operettas (*Orpheus in the Underworld*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Beggar’s Opera*, and *The Merry Widow*) and revues (*Leonard Sillman’s New Faces of 1956*, *That Girl at the Bijou*, *Cranks*, and *Ziegfeld Follies of 1957*). Book musicals, however, dominated the landscape (*Shangri-La*, *Li’l Abner*, *Bells are Ringing*, *Happy Hunting*, *Brigadoon* (revival), *Shinbone Alley*, *South Pacific* (revival), *New Girl in Town*, and *The Pajama Game* (revival)). Of

²⁹⁴ McClain.

²⁹⁵ Coleman.

²⁹⁶ Atkinson.

²⁹⁷ Kerr.

²⁹⁸ Stewart, 96.

these 17 shows, *Bells are Ringing*, which ran for 924 performances, was far and away the most successful of the lot.²⁹⁹

The show tells the story of Ella Peterson. An honest to goodness “working girl” (or “bachelor girl,” as Israel puts it) — prior to her current position as an operator at Susanswerphone, Ella was employed by the Bonjour Tristesse Brassiere factory — Ella meddles in the lives of her answering service clientele. She is most notably involved in the life of Jeffrey. A playwright, he calls on Ella when he suffers from writer’s block or needs advice about the opposite sex. Ella, of course, is in love with Jeffrey. She cannot admit to this love, however, because he believes her to be far older than she actually is. In fact, he refers to her as “Mom.” Through a series of events, the two meet. Her identity is uncovered, and their mutual love is confessed.

Reviews for *Bells are Ringing* were, for the most part, more exuberant than those for *By the Beautiful Sea*. For example, McClain called it “a big, brilliant success.”³⁰⁰ For Kerr, it was “a sweetheart of a show” in “a cozy, old-fashioned, warm-hearted way.”³⁰¹ Coleman gushed that *Bells are Ringing* was “a bright new hit” and that “a pair of ducats for the ... song and dancer would be a prize for Santa Claus to leave in anyone’s stocking.”³⁰²

In spite of these few exuberant notices, the reviews generally followed the same formula as those of *By the Beautiful Sea* — functional book, music that will join the Hit Parade, and a star so powerful she steals every scene. Watts found the show to be full of “outstanding virtue”

²⁹⁹ Norton, 50-61. The next most successful show was Gene DePaul and Johnny Mercer’s *Li'l Abner*, which ran for 693 performances.

³⁰⁰ John McClain, “Judy Holliday Triumphs in Nifty Frolic,” *New York Journal American*, November 30, 1956.

³⁰¹ Walter Kerr, “Theater: *Bells are Ringing*,” *New York Herald Tribune*, November 30, 1956.

³⁰² Robert Coleman, “Bells are Ringing Latest Broadway Click,” *New York Daily Mirror*, November 30, 1956.

and “a warm-hearted friendliness that is wonderfully endearing.”³⁰³ The book, however, he criticized as having “quite a bit of plot exposition at the outset,” while he found Holliday to be “a comedienne of rare deftness, warmth and charm,” adding that “you hardly know the extent of her powers if you haven’t seen her as the eager, helpful, and imaginative employee of a telephone-answering service in *Bells are Ringing*.”³⁰⁴ Atkinson believed the musical to have “one of the most antiquated plots of the season.” It was filled with “labored plot complication and manipulation,” leaving “*Bells are Ringing* on the level of a routine vaudeville show.” Holliday, however, he found to be “a fantastic entertainer with a personality that is both amusing and endearing.” She “is even more talented than you may have suspected.”³⁰⁵

The common structure of the reviews for these two musicals suggests a pattern that is worthy of exploration. Was the musical of the Golden Age more concerned with its star than with its story? McClain suggests as much in his review of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. He refers to “the usual complaints about a storyline.”³⁰⁶ Kerr does the same. Writing of the same musical, he says that “what most distinguishes a sassy, gay, and exhilarating evening is — and you’ll never believe this — the book.”³⁰⁷ The implication in both of these reviews is that the book is of secondary concern. Fields suggests the same. As was mentioned earlier, she referred to the librettos she wrote with Herbert as “just for entertainment, without any

³⁰³ Richard Watts, Jr., “A New Triumph for Judy Holliday,” *New York Post*, November 30, 1956.

³⁰⁴ “A New Triumph for Judy Holliday.”

³⁰⁵ Brooks Atkinson, “Theatre: *Bells are Ringing* for Judy Holliday,” *New York Times*, November 30, 1956.

³⁰⁶ John McClain, “A Gay, Zingy Smash Hit,” *New York Journal American*, October 16, 1961. It is important to note here that he does not find these complaints in the storyline of *How to Succeed*. Instead, he finds the show to be “the sheerest farce ... shot with style.”

³⁰⁷ Walter Kerr, “First Night Report: *How to Succeed in Business*,” *New York Herald Tribune*, October 16, 1961.

underlying message.” She adds that their work was musical comedy. The meatier musicals — she specifically mentions Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *South Pacific* — she considered to be “musical plays.”

Mordden agrees with this dichotomy. Though he wrote decades after Fields’s death, he noted the distinction “between the musical play and musical comedy — that the former is an author’s medium and the latter a performer’s medium.”³⁰⁸ Scott McMillin joins this conversation in his recent book *The Musical as Drama*. He suggests that “the Broadway musical [is] one of the most important forms of American drama we have.”³⁰⁹ His ultimate conclusion, however, is that the musical must be defined broadly enough that it embraces both forms, the musical comedy and the musical play. He writes:

What kind of drama is this? It is popular and illegitimate, originating in vaudeville and revue, as well as in operetta and retaining links to the tradition of low culture, despite its high prices. When *Oklahoma!* arrived in New York in 1943, one could have added that most musicals are comedies that end in marriage between hero and heroine, but the possibility that the genre was becoming a form of romantic comedy was brought to an end by Rodgers & Hammerstein themselves in *Carousel* (the marriage occurs early, and the husband is killed) and *The King and I* (the attraction between Anna and the King of Siam cannot develop into romance), and by Elmer Rice, Kurt Weill, and Langston Hughes in *Street Scene* (the young lovers break apart at the end, after the girl’s mother is murdered by her husband). Since then, and certainly since *West Side Story* in 1957, the most influential musicals have not had the love-and-marriage outcome of romantic

³⁰⁸ *Coming Up Roses*, 121.

³⁰⁹ Scott McMillin, *The Musical as Drama* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), ix.

comedy, and the question of what kind of drama this is demands a broad and inconclusive answer.³¹⁰

Could these musicals, then, be viewed as vehicles only, a means to an end of showcasing stars and selling seats? Certainly, this is a subject worthy of discussion. It is not, however, directly relevant to my study. Regardless, *Bells are Ringing* ultimately returned over five million dollars on its original investment of \$360,000. Its post-Broadway life was just as vibrant. There was a national tour, a London production (292 performances at the Coliseum theatre), a Mexico City mounting (performance count unknown), and a 1960 film directed by Vincente Minelli. It has subsequently enjoyed major revivals at the Goodspeed Opera House (Connecticut) and on Broadway (Plymouth Theatre, 2001).³¹¹

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying

The most successful of each of these three musicals is Loesser's *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (book by Abe Burrows).³¹² It opened on October 14th, 1961, at the 46th Street Theatre, earlier the home of both *Arms and the Girl* and *1776*. The Broadway season of 1961-1962 was far more prolific than either of the other two seasons surveyed in this chapter. Of the 26 new musical offerings that season, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* was immensely more successful than any of the others. Its 1417 performance run bested the season's second most popular show (*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*³¹³) by nearly 500 performances. As was the norm, the season included operettas (*The Mikado*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Consul*, *Porgy & Bess*, *Iolanthe*, and *The Gondoliers*), revues (*The Billy*

³¹⁰ McMillin, 180.

³¹¹ Stewart, 53-54.

³¹² Loesser, a composer and lyricist, was also famous for *Guys & Dolls* and *The Most Happy Fella*.

³¹³ This piece was Stephen Sondheim's first outing as both composer and lyricist. In his previous Broadway turn, he had worked only as lyricist.

Barnes People, From the Second City, An Evening with Yves Montand, Leonard Sillman's New Faces of 1962), and book musicals (*Sail Away, Milk and Honey, Let It Ride, How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, Kwamina, Kean, The Gay Life, Subways are for Sleeping, A Family Affair, No Strings, All American, I Can Get it for You Wholesale, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Can Can* (revival), *Bravo, Giovanni*, and *Brigadoon* (revival)).³¹⁴

The most popular musical of its season is a satire of the American businessman's obsession with climbing the corporate ladder. A spoof of the book of the same name by Shepherd Mead, *How to Succeed*, as it is most often called, chronicles the rise through the ranks of J. Pierpont Finch. He is completely unqualified for his various jobs at the World Wide Wicket Company; nevertheless, the show ends with "Ponty" assuming the role of Chairman of the Board. He also assumes the role of fiancé to Rosemary, a position that is secondary, in his opinion, to that of his professional status.

As is to be expected of a show with the enormous success of *How to Succeed*, the musical has enjoyed a long afterlife. In addition to a national tour, productions in London and Paris, and a 1967 film directed by David Swift, the show was revived on Broadway in 1995 and, more recently, in 2011.³¹⁵

Not surprisingly for such a smash hit of a show, reviews were resoundingly positive for the original production of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. It was "crafty, conniving, sneaky, cynical, irreverent, impertinent, sly, malicious, and lovely, just lovely" for

³¹⁴ Norton, 113-127.

³¹⁵ This production features Daniel Radcliffe, star of the *Harry Potter* series of films, in the leading role. It also features Emmy Award-winner John Larroquette.

Kerr.³¹⁶ Chapman called it “the definitive musical about high life in the city,”³¹⁷ and Coleman prophesied that “it should be one of the all-time long record-breakers.”³¹⁸

What is surprising, however, is the shape of these reviews. Music — “it is possible that Frank Loesser’s score lacks any outstanding hit song,” writes Watts, though not disparagingly³¹⁹ — and stars take a backseat to the story. As was mentioned earlier, the musical’s book was heralded as the glue that held the evening together. Norman Nadel wrote in the *New York World Telegram* that the “playbook ... maintains an almost unbelievable level of satirical brilliance.” Watts found the libretto “captures the mood of sharply satirical fun and maintains it to the end without ever lapsing into moments of romantic sentimentality.”³²⁰

This break from the norm — as established by a survey of reviews for *By the Beautiful Sea* and *Bells are Ringing* and solidified by comments, such as those by McClain and Kerr — is another area worthy of brief exploration. I believe that there are two explanations for the discrepancies between these two sets of notices (the first two musicals comprising the first set and the third musical the second set). Both of my suggestions are centered on the roles of the women in the shows:

First, the glowing praise for two female leads by a panel of all-male reviewers suggests an objectification of the actresses. In Booth, Kerr found

nothing pushy about this easy-going Duse’s comic method. She strides coolly across the stage, flicks a finger at her feather boa, and coos out an epithet like,

³¹⁶ “First Night Report: *How to Succeed in Business*.”

³¹⁷ John Chapman, “*How to Succeed in Business* is Splendid Satire with its Grand Cast,” *New York Daily News*, October 16, 1961.

³¹⁸ Robert Coleman, “*How to Succeed Really Does!*” *New York Mirror*, October 16, 1961. Turns out, he was right. The original production of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* remains the #60 longest running musical in Broadway history.

³¹⁹ Richard Watts, Jr., “A Brilliant New Musical Comedy,” *New York Post*, October 16, 1961.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

“You’re somewhat of a little stinker, aren’t you?” with all the gentleness in the world...There is so much warmth behind the blowzy façade that the most routine musical comedy love scene takes on a sudden defiant shine.³²¹

“Pushy,” of course, was not a desirable trait for women of the period. It suggests that the character Fields created was crafted subtly, so as not to offend audience — or reviewer — sensibilities. Further, he admires what are essentially feminine qualities. Booth possesses “all the gentleness in the world” and “there is so much warmth behind the blowzy façade.” Similarly, Holliday was heralded for her “glazed look in her large dark eyes and a surprised smile on her face.”³²² This is distinctive, because she is not praised for her active intellect. Coleman called her “sheer delight for the eyes and ears.”³²³ McLain refers to Bonnie Scott’s Rosemary as “the love interest.” He says nothing more of her than that she “has an agreeable voice and is appropriately decorative.”³²⁴ Sexism in the reviews is further proven by the fact that neither Morse nor Vallee are given the same sort of over-the-top feedback from their reviewers (the same, it is worth noting, who reviewed the other shows in the previous decade).

To apply DeLauretis’ lens here is also appropriate. Clearly, these women are objects of desire for the all-male panel of reviewers.

Secondly, both of the musicals whose librettos were considered sub-par feature female protagonists. Both *By the Beautiful Sea* and *Bells are Ringing* present more progressive views of women, while *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, though the last to premiere chronologically, offers the most antiquated and misogynistic view of women. That is the concern

³²¹ Kerr.

³²² “Theater: *Bells are Ringing*.”

³²³ “*Bells are Ringing* Latest B’way Click.”

³²⁴ John McClain, “A Gay, Zingy, Smash Hit,” *Journal American*, October 16, 1961.

of the remainder of this chapter. I will consider the ways in which each musical presents women differently.

The most glaring distinction between the ways these musicals deal with women has been previously mentioned. *By the Beautiful Sea* and *Bells Are Ringing* both have female heroines. In *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, the women's roles are secondary, window-dressing to the primary story of Ponty's climb up the corporate ladder. Secretaries cavort around the World Wide Wickets headquarters, each seeking nothing more than a husband for whom they can keep a suburban home. Obviously, in deLauretis' terms, they are valuable only inasmuch as they are desired by men.³²⁵

That's a second distinction between the three musicals. They each place different import on the wishes of the female characters. Here, *How to Succeed* and *Bells are Ringing* are in sync, while *By the Beautiful Sea* offers a different spin on women. In *How to Succeed*, the women are not only seeking husbands, but they are also willing to be their spouse's lowest priority.

Rosemary considers it "such Heaven" to be "there in the corner of his mind / darling absent mind." She is "Happy to keep his dinner warm / 'til he comes wearily home from downtown." Her flighty, fickleness is illustrated immediately after she meets Ponty for the first time. As soon as he exits the scene, she begins daydreaming, mentally choosing between New Rochelle and White Plains³²⁶ as "the place where the mansion will be / for me and the darling, bright young man / I've picked out for marrying me."³²⁷

³²⁵ The exception to this is the character of Smitty.

³²⁶ Each of these are suburbs of New York City, where the musical is set.

³²⁷ These lyrics are excerpted from the "Happy to Keep His Dinner Warm" number.

Rosemary is not alone in thinking this way. Each woman in the musical embraces her point of view. Their collective objective — and a desperation to achieve it, no matter if it requires sacrificing personal fulfillment - is expressed in the “Cinderella, Darling” number:³²⁸

[VERSE]

How often does it happen that a secretary’s boss wants to marry ‘er?

How often does the dream come true without a sign of conflict or barrier?

Why treat the man like he was a typhoid carrier?

How often can you fly from this land of carbon paper to the land of flowers and chintz?

How often does Cinderella get a crack at the prince?

[CHORUS]

Don’t rewrite your story.

You’re the legend, the folklore, the working girl’s dream of glory.

We were raised on you, Darling, and we’ve loved you ever since.

Don’t mess up a major miracle.

Don’t, Cinderella.

Don’t turn down the prince.

Oh, let us live it with you,

each hour of each day —

on from Bergdorf Goodman

to Elizabeth Arden

³²⁸ This number was cut from the 1995 revival.

in the station wagon.
Hurry from 21
to the Tarrytown PTA.
We want to see his highness
married to your lowness.
On you, Cinderella, sits the onus
Why spoil our enjoyment?
You're the fable, the symbol
of glorified unemployment.

Clearly, unemployment is “glorified,” and women here are seen as lowly and second rate to his “highness,” the Prince of Professionalism. These women can only achieve their desires if they become the desire of a man. The women acknowledge this earlier in the number — “How often does it happen that a secretary’s boss wants to marry ‘er?”

Another glaring illustration of these womens’ willingness to take backseat to the men in their lives comes in the final Act One exchange between Rosemary and Ponty. Just after Ponty is named a Vice President (in Charge of Advertising), Rosemary asks, “Aren’t you gonna kiss me?” After putting her off as “his secretary,” he responds, “Wait a minute, Rosemary. Hello, name painter.”³²⁹ He proceeds to inform the painter how he would like his name pasted on the door of his new office. Rosemary, on the other hand, begins a reprise of the previous number, “Rosemary.” In it, she sings, “All of my lifetime program / give me more of the same.” Instead of rejecting this subpar treatment, she accepts it and wishes it will continue. Most modern readers would doubtlessly find that the outlook is bleak for the women of *How to Succeed*. On

³²⁹ Abe Burrows, Jack Weinstock, and Willie Gilbert, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (Music Theatre International, 1961), Act I, scene 14, page 93.

the other hand, DeLauretis would note that Rosemary is only able to achieve her desire insofar as it is reciprocated — and instigated — by Ponty’s

The same is true of Ella Peterson in *Bells Are Ringing*.³³⁰ Though she has somewhat more autonomy than the group-thinking “working girls” in *How to Succeed*, she is still content to take the sloppy seconds of Jeffrey Moss’s affection. For the bulk of the musical, Jeff assumes that she is elderly. The two have never met face to face. Instead, they have only spoken on the phone. He goes to Ella for dating advice — and even relies on her for morning wake up calls — but, as Ponty pursues his career rather than considering Rosemary’s needs, so Jeff remains oblivious to the notion that Ella might have a life of her own. He refers to her as “mom”³³¹ and “that little old lady at my answering service.”³³² Ella allows this. She betrays herself, because Jeff “needs a mother.”³³³ But what of Ella’s own needs? They go unmet, her “desires” secondary to his.

Herein lies a great distinction between the central female in *By the Beautiful Sea* and those in the two musicals mentioned above. Just a year before the show’s premiere, *Look* magazine published a fresh affirmation of marriage: “Not since the age of Victoria has the idea of the happy home compelled such overt sentiment and general admiration.”³³⁴ In so doing, they illustrated the pervading thought in America’s neo-conservative milieu. Israel suggests that this is owed to “a postwar man shortage, or to the pop-Freudian imperatives to ‘adjust.’” She adds, “Many women had abandoned their drive to work in the world of men.”³³⁵

This can certainly not be said of Fields (or Comden), nor can it be said of Lottie Gibson, heroine of *By the Beautiful Sea*. Both creator and character buck the normative trend embraced

³³⁰ Betty Comden and Adolph Green, *Bells Are Ringing* (New York: Random House, 1956).

³³¹ Comden and Green, 14.

³³² Comden and Green, 81.

³³³ Comden and Green, 14.

³³⁴ Israel, 183.

³³⁵ Israel, 183.

by women in *How to Succeed* and *Bells are Ringing*. There, Rosemary and Ella respectively are motivated by the dictum of a 1950s advice columnist. “Every American girl must acquire for herself a husband and a home and children....Any program for life in which the home is not the center of her living, is worse than death.”³³⁶ Lottie pursues these things, yet she is unwilling to have them if they require her to sacrifice her high quality of life. That, then, is her desire. She is seeking true fulfillment in a mutually-beneficial relationship.

Lottie Gibson is a “vaudevillian of the third rank.” The man she is dating (Dennis Emery) is a “prominent Shakespearean.” In the tension between these two ranks, there is a clear division between the high-brow (Shakespeare) and the low (vaudeville). At the opening of the musical, Lottie and Dennis have just begun their relationship. Already, though, it has changed Lottie from a flamboyant and garishly-dressed boarding house operator to one who has, according to Lottie, “changed my type. I’m real refined now. I only wear two colors at a time.”³³⁷ She does this because of Dennis. He is, according to her, a “very fine gentleman.”³³⁸

Little does Lottie know, however, that Dennis is in financial ruins. Like Charity in *Sweet Charity* (who will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five), Lottie finds herself “investing” in Dennis by giving him \$1000 of her own money. Complicating matters is Dennis’s long-lost daughter. Dennis’s ex-wife took off with their daughter (Betsy) when she was young. Unbeknownst to Dennis, both of them have been living at Lottie’s boarding house. Betsy is fiercely protective of her father, now that they are reunited. She is unwilling for him to date

³³⁶ Israel, 154.

³³⁷ *By the Beautiful Sea*, Act I, scene 1, page 4. This unpublished script is only available for review in the reading room of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts.

³³⁸ *By the Beautiful Sea*, Act I, scene 1, page 6.

Lottie. In a great display of self-sacrifice, Lottie foregoes their relationship, so that Betsy, a teenager, can get to know her father.

Dennis: To our glorious future!

Lottie: Dennis, we got no glorious future.

Dennis: Nonsense. I've never been so happy as I was last night!

Lottie: Dennis, listen to what you just said — YOU were never so happy! You only thought about yourself. That's the trouble.

Dennis: What do you mean?

Lottie: That's what's the matter with Betsy....Whatever she is, mixed up, lopsided, you only got yourself to blame.

Dennis: But I didn't know what I was doing to her.

Lottie: Well, you should have. She's your child, ain't she? You should have made her mother let you see her.

Dennis: Perhaps, you're right, Lottie.

Lottie: Sure, I'm right. Then you know what you gotta do.

Dennis: But I know so little about her!

Lottie: What's to know? She was brought up lousy — that's all. You gotta change all that. You gotta take her to let her live with you. You must straighten her out.

Dennis: That's a mighty difficult job.

Lottie: You got to do it. You're all she's got in the world.

Dennis: You'll have to help me. This is women's work.

Lottie: I'm not the woman. She don't want no part of me. I'd only make it tougher for you to get close to her. I can't never marry you, Dennis.

Dennis: Lottie, will you just let me work this thing out?

Lottie: Not this one. You're givin' me up, and I'm givin' you up.

Dennis: I won't give you up!

Lottie: Thanks for sayin' that, but it won't do you no good. My mind's made up. I gotta go now.³³⁹

The high-brow / low-brow dichotomy mentioned earlier is made clear again in the different diction of the two characters. Another distinction becomes evident in the exchange, too. Lottie offers the voice of reason; she is selfless and mature in making the right decision for Dennis's daughter. This is a way in which Fields's women differ from most women in the musical canon. They are not so desperate to be loved that they are willing to settle for something less than ideal.

In the case of *By the Beautiful Sea*, Lottie and Dennis do ultimately end up together. Betsy realizes her own selfishness and approves of her father's relationship. Ultimately, Betsy and Lottie both join Dennis's troupe of Shakespearean actors, and they all end up happy and successful. In this way, Lottie and Dennis's relationship is mutually beneficial in a way that most in Golden Age musicals were not. Lottie was able to provide him with the money he needed when he needed it; Dennis was able to provide Lottie with the stage work to advance her career. This type of autonomous female is characteristic of the women for which Fields wrote. Among others, these same traits are exhibited in Charity (discussed in Chapter Five) and in Jo and Eleanor (discussed in Chapter Three).

³³⁹ *By the Beautiful Sea*, Act II, scene 3, pages 15-16.

In fact, one number sung by both Eleanor and Franklin in the unproduced musical illustrates their partnership perfectly. They sing:

Eleanor: I think we've got a lucky star. Senator, you'll go far.

Franklin: No, we'll go far.

Both: It's plain this campaign is bound to be spectacular
for Mr. & Mrs. FDR.³⁴⁰

Far more typical of Golden Age musicals were storylines in which women were saved by men. The women for which Fields wrote were, like Fields, women of agency. They played a part in determining their own fates, going so far as being willing to lose love if it meant the most sensible decision, as almost occurred in *By the Beautiful Sea*.

Conversely, Rosemary is "Happy to Keep His Dinner Warm," as she sings. While J. Pierrepont Finch goes "onward and upward," his adoring secretary endures being ignored and prioritized just beneath having his name printed on the clear window of his new office. Lottie's response to that type of treatment is illustrated in the number "I'd Rather Wake Up by Myself."

[VERSE]

This is the first man I've wanted to marry,
but it looks like it ain't gonna be.

All my life I appealed to the guys from left field
who never appealed to me.

I've nibbled at offers of marriage,
but I wiggled myself off the hook,

³⁴⁰ This is a number from the unproduced Cy Coleman / Dorothy Fields musical *Eleanor*. Cuttings of the musical – though no complete script – are available in Dorothy Fields's papers, which are maintained as part of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts.

and gee, am I glad I stayed single
when I think what I might have took.

[CHORUS]

That fresh air fiend was healthy
but not too bright
My wifely duties would've been very light -
inhale, exhale, that's all we would do all night
I'd rather wake up by myself.

My Latin lover had a disturbing whim
When girls passed by,
his eye went from limb to limb.

I know darn well if I hadda married him
I'd always wake up by myself.

My cowboy friend was rugged from top to bottom

Before I got 'im, some injun shot 'im.

So if I feel I'll never get my ideal
Why should I rest my head with
some big baboon I wouldn't be found dead with.
I'm sure I'd rather wake up by myself.

Joe made big dough.

His business he said was printin'.

What Joe was printin'

got him San Quentin.

So there's the list of husbands I'm glad I missed.

If I can't be the wife for

the only guy I'd risk my life for,

I know I'd rather wake up by myself.

Another distinction between Lottie and Rosemary and Ella is that Lottie has agency of her own. She is the owner of a boarding house. Rosemary and Ella are subservient not only to second-rate objects of their affection but also to the people for whom they work. Lottie is very much independent. She calls her own shots and makes her own way. Just before her first entrance in the musical, one of her boarders illustrates her control. Ruby says, "All right, gimme a hand! Take those bathing suits off the fence. Half-Note, get that crate outta here! We gotta clean up this backyard! Miss Lottie'll be in before you know it!"³⁴¹

Conversely, Rosemary is a secretary in a musical in which a colleague (Hedy Larue) is hired not for her skill but for her "vital statistics." She gives these as "39-22-38."³⁴² Obviously, these are Hedy's measurements; they should have nothing to do with her performance in the office. It is assumed there that "the smaller her abilities, the bigger her protector."³⁴³

In *By the Beautiful Sea*, Fields is able to see her strong and independent character through to the end. She is somewhat muzzled by the expectations of what Israel suggests is a neo-conservative audience that was not receptive to a woman in a position of power. Still, Lottie is an autonomous woman who calls the shots in her life and whose relationship is mutually beneficial. As they were in Chapter Three, parallels can also be drawn here between Fields and her heroine.

³⁴¹ *Coming Up Roses*, 121.

³⁴² Burrows, Act I, scene 6, page 42.

³⁴³ Burrows, Act I, scene 9, page 66.

Like Lottie, Fields was the odd “man” out. She was a professional woman in a time when women were not, generally speaking, professional. The characters she drew, then, were unique. Though this has already been illustrated in Jo, Gittel, Eleanor, and Lottie, Eleanor sings a lyric especially relevant to this chapter. In “I’ve Got a Job,” she is telling Franklin that she is unlike most women he has dated in one glaring way:

Eleanor: I’ve got a job! Sh — sh — I work!

Franklin: You what?

Eleanor: I work!

Franklin: Would you believe it? I’ve never met a girl who

Eleanor: What?

Franklin: Worked!

...

Eleanor: Standing before you in real life you see

the ugly duckling who turned out to be the black sheep of the family

because I work!

In Lottie (and other characters), Fields presented a view of the female experience that was not seen anywhere else on the Broadway stage. Her nearest colleague, Comden, co-created the character of Ella Peterson. Even Ella, however, fit the mold created by Comden’s male peers. That Fields bucked this trend illustrates that hers was not a uniquely *feminine* voice. It was a unique voice altogether.

CHAPTER FIVE

“THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS” OR “THERE’S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS”? *LITTLE ME VS. SWEET CHARITY*

Broadway’s bread and butter has always been a steady diet of boy-meets-girl stories. In fact, even those trying to distance themselves from the formulations of their theatrical forebears have found it problematic to do so. Rodgers lamented this fact in a 1963 interview:

[Hart and I] wanted to write shows that had different settings. *The Girl Friend* was about a big thing at the time, a six-day bicycle race, and so the fellow meets the girl there. In *A Connecticut Yankee*,³⁴⁴ it was a fantasy in the days of King Arthur, and the fellow goes back in time, and what do you think happens? He fell in love with a girl.³⁴⁵

Little Me and *Sweet Charity* certainly fit into this mold. Belle Poitrine, heroine of *Little Me*, spends the entire show pursuing “wealth, culture, and social position,” those things required before she can win the hand of Noble Eggleston. The original production of *Sweet Charity* opened with a placard descending from the ceiling. It read “the story of a girl who wanted to be loved.”³⁴⁶ Charity’s name further underscores her great pursuit. The moniker “Charity Hope Valentine” leaves little question as to what Charity desires from life. The names of the two characters are worth discussing, as they each illuminate much about the character to which they refer. Belle Poitrine means “beautiful bosom;” Charity Hope Valentine means, in essence, “love,

³⁴⁴ Interestingly, *A Connecticut Yankee* featured a libretto by longtime Rodgers & Hart pal Herbert Fields.

³⁴⁵ Maslon and Kantor, 108-109.

³⁴⁶ Neil Simon, *Sweet Charity* (New York: Random House, 1966), 3.

love, love.” What’s in a name? In this case a good bit, for Belle Poitrine, as her name suggests, is largely valued by the way she looks. Charity Valentine, conversely, is known for what she wants. Like Fields’s other females, she is very much in control of her own destiny in a way that Belle, who allows herself to be objectified, does not. In this — and several other ways — the two musicals are rife for comparison.

First, they both feature female heroines. Secondly, for the most part, they share a creative team. Both were written by composer Coleman,³⁴⁷ librettist Simon,³⁴⁸ and choreographer / director Bob Fosse.³⁴⁹ Only the role of lyricist differed on each creative team. *Little Me*’s lyrics were penned by Carolyn Leigh; *Sweet Charity*’s were written by Fields. This, of course, is a critical difference, and the one with which this chapter is most concerned, as will be discussed later.

A final point of similarity between *Little Me*, which opened in 1962, and *Sweet Charity*, in 1966, is that they each premiered at a time when the Broadway scene was beginning to shift. This shift occurred in two primary ways: first, an increasing number of women were beginning to write for the New York theatre. No longer would Fields be one of the only women working amid a peer group of men. Secondly, Broadway music was evolving from its roots in operetta to a jazzier and, later, more rock-oriented sound typified by the songs of 1968’s *Hair*.

³⁴⁷ *Little Me* was Coleman’s second Broadway work. His first was 1960’s *Wildcat*, also written with Carolyn Leigh and best-known as Lucille Ball’s Broadway debut.

³⁴⁸ Simon, Tony Award-winning playwright of plays, such as *The Odd Couple* and *Biloxi Blues*, debuted on Broadway with sketches interpolated in 1955’s *Catch a Star!* Revue. His first full-length play was *Come Blow Your Horn*. *Little Me* marked his first turn as a librettist.

³⁴⁹ As a performer, Fosse premiered on Broadway in 1950’s *Dance Me a Song* revue. *The Pajama Game* (1954) was his first opportunity to choreograph a complete musical, and *Redhead*, a 1959 musical with book and lyrics by Dorothy Fields, afforded Fosse his first opportunity to direct.

The influx of women writing for theatre was noticed by Milton Esterow of the *New York Times*. In May of 1963, Esterow published an article entitled “Women at Work Making Musicals: Role Increasingly Active in Creating Broadway Shows.” The story begins: “Judging by the current theatrical season, musical impresarios are saying that now is the time for all good women lyricists and composers to come to the aid of Broadway.”³⁵⁰ He goes on to cite the work of Leigh,³⁵¹ Mary Rodgers,³⁵² and Anne Crosswell,³⁵³ all of which was then represented on the Broadway stage. He further acknowledges the work of women with longer professional tenures. Fields, of course, is cited for the longest career. Also mentioned are Comden³⁵⁴ and Bella Spewack, who, with her husband, Sam, co-wrote the libretto for Porter’s musical *Kiss Me, Kate*.³⁵⁵

This influx of women — and its continued impact on the Broadway stage — is also the subject of a recent collection of essays edited by Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta. *Women in Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists* was published in 2008. The book’s extensive purview is made clear by its title. Its chapter on “women who wrote musicals in the Golden Age” was written by Gary Konas. He writes much of Fields, Comden, and Leigh and, from that, draws a noteworthy conclusion: “Nearly everyone we have discussed wrote words,

³⁵⁰ Milton Esterow, “Women at Work Making Musicals: Role Increasingly Active in Creating Broadway Shows,” *New York Times*, May 11, 1963.

³⁵¹ *Little Me*

³⁵² The daughter of Richard Rodgers composed the music for that season’s *Hot Spot*.

³⁵³ Crosswell wrote the lyrics for *Tovarich*.

³⁵⁴ Betty Comden’s work as the co-lyricist and co-librettist of *Bells are Ringing* was discussed in a previous chapter. She always worked with Adolph Green..

³⁵⁵ *Kiss Me, Kate* premiered in 1948. Spewack also wrote a number of now-forgotten plays, including *Spring Song* and *Miss Swan Expects*. Further, Spewack produced 1950’s *The Golden State*, a play written and directed by her husband.

rather than music.”³⁵⁶ Building on Mary Rodgers’s assertion that composing was “viewed as an essentially masculine act,”³⁵⁷ Konas suggests that Fields and others may have been successful at lyric writing because they had “a man at the piano to run the show.” He also — quite rightly — points out that, though Fields wrote lyrics alone, her librettos were all penned with brother Herbert. Likewise, Comden was tightly tied to Green.³⁵⁸

Materialist feminists should be incensed at Konas’s well-taken point. Women — though not many — in the Golden Age were afforded opportunities, provided they were always under the care of a male chaperone. Mary Rodgers proves this fact in the Speaking Out forum. The younger Rodgers recalls being asked by Fields if she would like to collaborate. Though Rodgers appreciated the gravity of Fields’s proposition, she nonetheless turned it down. Rodgers said, “I remember thinking, ‘She’s a brilliant lyric writer, but I would feel uncomfortable unless I was working with a man...I’d grown up thinking that that’s where the authority is.’”³⁵⁹ These father-like figures served as propagators of the patriarchy. The resulting censure of these women’s work can never be known or quantified, lost as it is to history.

Esterow’s point remains, however. In the 1960s, more women were writing for the professional theatre than ever before. In addition to writing, women were also designing. For instance, lighting designer Jean Rosenthal enjoyed a Broadway career some three decades long, and Irene Sharaff, costume designer of both *By the Beautiful Sea* and *Sweet Charity*,³⁶⁰ designed more than 60 Broadway musicals. She won a Tony Award for her work on *The King & I* and was

³⁵⁶ Konas, 121.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Konas, 122.

³⁵⁹ “Sister’s Gershwin – Where are the Women Composers and Lyricists?”

³⁶⁰ Sharaff also designed *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, for which Fields also wrote the lyrics.

subsequently awarded five Oscars.³⁶¹ Theresa Helburn, Lucille Lortel, and Jean Dalrymple worked as producers.³⁶² Clearly, women were at work on Broadway, if not in great numbers. Both possessed of female lyricists, *Little Me* and *Sweet Charity* can justly be inserted into this milieu.

They are each part of Broadway's shifting sound, as well. Mordden suggests that this shift in music was to blame for the collapse of the Golden Age. No longer were Americans taking "their hit parade from Broadway" as had been the norm up until this point.³⁶³ Instead, rock & roll ruled the radio, and with a few exceptions (most notably 1968's *Hair*, discussed in a previous chapter), Broadway was unable to keep up with this shifting sound.

That is not to say that it did not try.

In fact, John Kenrick cites this as one of the reasons for *Sweet Charity*'s success. In his *Musical Theatre: a History*, Kenrick writes, "[The show] did something none of the members of the '1000+ Performance Club' could claim: It recognized the existence of rock music."³⁶⁴ Into a musical theatre milieu of shows with status quo sounds, like *Mame*'s, Coleman's music and Fields's lyrics infused different rhythms, which had, until then, been relegated mostly to rock &

³⁶¹ Tish Dace, "Designing Women," in *Women in Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performances Artists*, eds. Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., Inc. Publishers, 2008), 133.

³⁶² Bud Coleman, "Helburn, Dalrymple, and Lortel: a Triumvirate of Great Producers," in *Women in Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performances Artists*, eds. Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., Inc. Publishers, 2008), 155.

³⁶³ Ethan Mordden, *One More Kiss: The Broadway Musical in the 1970s* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 7.

³⁶⁴ John Kenrick, *Musical Theatre: a History* (New York: Continuum, 2008), 312.

roll radio stations.³⁶⁵ According to Winer, “The feel of *Sweet Charity* was very contemporary ... with a wry nod to the mid-‘60s swingers’ scene. It was the first time an electrified keyboard, a ‘Rocksachord,’ was used in a Broadway orchestra.”³⁶⁶ Mordden adds to Winer’s claim. He cites *Sweet Charity* as the first time Broadway had been confronted with the electric guitar.³⁶⁷

The music of *Sweet Charity*, in fact, is what attracted Simon to the project. In his autobiography *Rewrites*, Simon describes Fosse’s attempts to entice Simon to write the show. Fosse played a recording of “Hey, Big Spender,” which is arguably the show’s most recognizable number. “[My wife] Joan and I were pulled into the number immediately,” writes Simon. “You knew this was something special, something we hadn’t heard in musical comedy before.”³⁶⁸

Rodgers was similarly attracted to this new sound. During the show’s out of town try-out, he wrote to Coleman and Fields via telegram: “Have just heard your demo album and am joyously excited by it. This is the freshest and best score to come to us in many years. Good luck and thanks to both of you! Love, Dick Rodgers.”³⁶⁹

Indeed, Gerald Bordman notes in his *American Musical Theatre: a Chronicle* that “Dorothy Fields and Cy Coleman created lyrics and music that were soon causing coins to be fed into jukeboxes,” and Coleman himself was known as a jazz musician before becoming a

³⁶⁵ Much of the work for the next several pages was originally done in fulfillment of a requirement for Dr. David Saltz’s Critical Methods class, which I took in the Fall semester of 2008. What is included here is adapted from that work.

³⁶⁶ Winer, 210.

³⁶⁷ *Open a New Window*, 219. Mordden acknowledges that the electric guitar had been used briefly in *Bye, Bye Birdie*, “but only for generic authentication of Conrad’s two rock and roll numbers. In ‘Rich Man’s Frug,’ the electric guitar is meant as a noise of the times, its amplified anomie a kind of merit badge for being Where at exactly the right When.”

³⁶⁸ Neil Simon, *Rewrites: a Memoir* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 216.

³⁶⁹ This telegram was sent to Coleman and Fields at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit and is dated December 21, 1965. It is included in Fields’s papers maintained as part of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts.

Broadway composer.³⁷⁰ Still, Simon is overstating it when he suggests that *Sweet Charity* was a musical anomaly. In fact, at this point, *Little Me* can rightfully be introduced into the discussion of Broadway's transition from "show music" to "pop music." The musical was Coleman's second foray into Broadway. His first was 1960's *Wildcat*, another Leigh collaboration and the Broadway debut of Lucille Ball. As I have already established, *Little Me* and *Sweet Charity* shared a composer in Coleman, a librettist in Simon, and a choreographer in Bob Fosse. It is reasonable to assume, then, that the two shows also shared a similar artistic aesthetic.

Though most Broadway show music of the early to mid 1960s remained in the "Golden Age" orchestral stylings of Rodgers & Hammerstein, whose 1959 *The Sound of Music* was their final collaboration, such stylings by no means held a monopoly. As early as the 1940s, musicals had introduced new sounds to the Great White Way. Some of these "new sounds" were, in fact, old styles sentimentally revived for younger audiences. For instance, Fields worked with Romberg to revive the sound of old-fashioned operetta. The result was *Up in Central Park*, which premiered in January of 1945.³⁷¹ With songs such as "It Doesn't Cost You Anything to Dream" and "Close as Pages in a Book" (made popular by Bing Crosby's recording of the song), the music of *Up in Central Park* was deemed by reviewer Lewis Nichols to be "pleasant enough in a nostalgic fashion."³⁷² Richard P. Cooke saw this nostalgic tone as a welcome addition to the Broadway aesthetic. In his *Wall Street Journal* review, Cooke notes that the show possessed "tunes which can actually be remembered."³⁷³ Presumably, Cooke's statement is juxtaposing Romberg's music with the more conventional show music of the period.

³⁷⁰ Gerald Bordman, *American Musical Theatre: a Chronicle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 646-647.

³⁷¹ Bordman, 545.

³⁷² Lewis Nichols, "The Play," *New York Times*, January 29, 1945.

³⁷³ Richard P. Cooke, "Big Backyard," *Wall Street Journal*, January 29, 1945.

West Side Story adopted yet another sound several years later. Classical composer Leonard Bernstein wrote the score for the 1957 piece which challenged the traditional Broadway sound with its music (to Bernstein's music, Stephen Sondheim provided the lyrics), its story (book by Arthur Laurents), and its dance stylings (by Jerome Robbins). This questioning of Broadway norms was by no means an accident. According to Robbins, he was inspired to create the project by asking several questions about the traditional approach to musical comedies.

Said Robbins,

Why do we always have to do rather cheapish stories in musical comedies? Why can't we do something where we use the best part of ourselves? Why do I have to go over to the ballet company?...Why did Lenny [Bernstein] have to write a symphony? Why did Arthur have to write [a serious play]? I said why can't we put those all together into a work that we like and try our best to put our best features that we're capable of into a work? ... and so we did.³⁷⁴

Critical response to this groundbreaking approach was explosively positive. According to Atkinson's *New York Times* review, "Leonard Bernstein ... composed another one of his nervous, flaring scores that capture the shrill beat of life in the streets."³⁷⁵ Audiences were just as excited by it. Not only did the original Broadway production run for a healthy 732 performances, but several audience members wrote of their interest in the *New York Times* "Drama Mailbag."³⁷⁶ Gary Smith and Barry Frank were struck by the musical's "dramatic social significance," while

³⁷⁴ Kantor and Maslon, 262-263.

³⁷⁵ Brooks Atkinson, "Theatre: the Jungles of the City," *New York Times*, September 27, 1957.

³⁷⁶ Kenrick, 284.

Liz Kleiner felt that the production offered “a most moving experience.”³⁷⁷ Obviously, neither critic nor audience was put off by this break from the Broadway norm.

Another example of Broadway exploring new musical territory prior to *Little Me* and *Sweet Charity* was 1960’s *Bye, Bye Birdie*. According to Kenrick, this piece, with music by Charles Strouse and lyrics by Lee Adams “brought the sound of early rock & roll to Broadway, framed in an otherwise traditional Broadway score.”³⁷⁸ I have already mentioned that the mainstream musical, particularly that of the Golden Age, is often considered to be a relatively conservative form. The score of *Bye, Bye Birdie* was not a complete departure from this norm;³⁷⁹ nonetheless, it was indicative of Broadway’s willingness to bend and shift in the same way that the tastes of their audiences might bend and shift.

Broadway reaped the benefit of these infrequent forays onto new musical ground. Of the examples mentioned above, both *West Side Story* and *Bye, Bye Birdie* appealed to younger, broader audiences. The musical styles were more accessible to a youthful crowd than the stodgy and antiquated sounds of shows such as *Up in Central Park* and others that had dominated the form up until them.

In addition, there was also a change in the storylines of musicals. The characters — particularly of *West Side Story* — appealed to an audience that was not traditionally seen in Broadway houses. Robbins recounts visiting Spanish Harlem in preparation for *West Side Story*. An inspiration for the play’s setting, Spanish Harlem also provided Robbins with much

³⁷⁷ Liz Kleiner, Gary Smith, and Barry Frank, “Found in the Drama Mailbag,” *New York Times*, October 13, 1957.

³⁷⁸ Kenrick, 300.

³⁷⁹ Ironically, much of the music of *Bye, Bye, Birdie* is far more traditional show-tune than cutting-edge rock & roll.

inspiration for his choreography. In his research, he befriended a group of gang members and invited them to see the show after it opened. They came. Says Robbins of the occasion:

They watched the show up till the end of Act One, which ended with two dead bodies on stage. And they came out and said goodbye. I said, “What do you mean goodbye?” They said, “Well, isn’t that the end of the show?” I said, “No. That’s only the first half. Don’t you want to see what happens after that?” And then strange expressions crossed their faces. “Oh. There’s more than just death.” They didn’t expect any more. There’s something after, so back they went into the theatre again.³⁸⁰

That the musical might be used for purposes other than entertainment was also addressed by Smith and Frank in their letter to the *New York Times* Drama Mailbag. They write:

Having seen and been deeply moved by *West Side Story*, we wonder if the dramatic social significance of the musical might serve some practical purpose. Could special matinees, sponsored by the city, be given for high-school audiences? Some of our teenagers might benefit from such a searching, creative, and entertaining treatment of their problems.³⁸¹

Like *Sweet Charity*, however, *Bye, Bye Birdie* was significantly less weighty in terms of its subject matter. It was “a fresh, unpretentious, funny, and melodic show that kidded the flourishing rock & roll rage and its wriggling superstar Elvis Presley.”³⁸² Its thematic connection to popular culture is a clear one, however. In a sense, it is almost prophetic of the rock & roll

³⁸⁰ Kantor and Maslon, 265-267.

³⁸¹ Liz Kleiner, Gary Smith, and Barry Frank, “Found in the Drama Mailbag,” *New York Times*, October 13, 1957, 123.

³⁸² Bordman, 616.

explosion that is to come in its treatment of rocker Conrad Birdie. It very clearly expresses a popular culture dominated by weekly broadcast variety programming, such as

The Ed Sullivan Show.

According to Knapp, this shifting in subject matter was indicative of another new trend in musical theatre. The infusion of more socially significant themes (as expressed in *West Side Story*) and more contemporary, mainstream storylines (as in *Bye, Bye Birdie*) slowly paved the way for ground-breaking work of shows like *Hair*. Writes Knapp, “The American musical stage [occasionally attempted] to acknowledge emergent music and life-styles from the standpoint of prevailing norms — that is, from the parental side of the ‘generation gap’ — but to render them in the end unthreatening and even laughable.”³⁸³ Like the musicals mentioned above, *Sweet Charity* fits into this milieu musically. It stands out as distinct from the norm yet, as evidenced by the existence of shows like *West Side Story* and *Bye, Bye Birdie*, it is not entirely unique in that regard.

The same can be said of *Sweet Charity*'s storyline. 1966, the year of *Charity*'s premiere, was a tumultuous year. President Lyndon B. Johnson had decreed that American troops should remain in South Vietnam until the threat of Communism was squelched. James Meredith was shot while marching across the Mississippi on behalf of Civil Rights, and eight student nurses were murdered in their Illinois dormitory. Audiences, once typified by the aggressive optimism that followed World War II and the subsequent neo-conservative “Eisenhower Era,” were beginning to be jaded by events both at home and abroad. The Hippie movement was getting underway, as was the Women’s Liberation Movement (as I have mentioned before, Friedan’s *Feminist Mystique* was published just a few years earlier, and it led to the creation of the

³⁸³ Knapp, 154.

National Organization for Women). As a result, *Charity* reflected this new cynicism. Writes Winer, “It was dark. It had an edge, an irony, a look that was always showmanlike but not always pretty.”³⁸⁴ This darkness was also discussed by Simon. Fosse described one scene to the playwright thus:

When the lights come up, it’s all dark blues and reds and a black background, and lots of smoke in the foreground. We see seven or eight girls, some with legs wrapped around a brass bar, two girls leaning against each other, a few of them smoking, all in cheap wigs, tight short skirts, beauty marks, and tons of make-up. They’re the pits, got it?³⁸⁵

Further indicative of its darkness is the fact that *Charity* ends the musical alone. Shattering the Broadway norm of boy-gets-girl, “The girl who wanted to be loved” does not get her “desire,” as defined by deLauretis. Rather, she is abandoned by a fiancé who cannot reconcile himself to her work as a dance hall hostess at New York’s fictional Fan-Dango Ball Room. This ending is antithetical to most Golden Age musicals. These are characterized with happy conclusions — the von Trapp family successfully flees the Nazis in Rodgers’ & Hammerstein’s *The Sound of Music*;³⁸⁶ Nathan Detroit and Miss Adelaide marry (after an engagement that lasted longer than a decade) in *Guys and Dolls*,³⁸⁷ and Rosemary and Ponty are similarly united in *How to Succeed*.³⁸⁸ *Charity* meets a more realistic end, one indicative of the

³⁸⁴ Winer, 211.

³⁸⁵ Simon, 216.

³⁸⁶ *The Sound of Music*, which premiered in 1959, was Rodgers & Hammerstein’s final collaboration.

³⁸⁷ Frank Loesser’s musical, based on Damon Runyon’s stories, became one of Broadway’s biggest successes. The original production ran for more than 1,100 performances and, to date, has spawned no fewer than three Broadway revivals.

³⁸⁸ *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, with book and lyrics by Frank Loesser, has been discussed in greater detail in a previous chapter.

post-modern aesthetic not too frequently seen in Broadway storylines. Her final interaction with her fiancé Oscar indicates this:

OSCAR: I can't, Charity. I can't go through with it....I thought this time it would be different, but it's not. It's the same. It's always the same.

CHARITY: What's the same?

OSCAR: The other men. I always get this far and then I start thinking about the other men.

CHARITY: What other men?

OSCAR: You know the other men!

CHARITY: But, Oscar, you said ...

OSCAR: Oh, I know I kept saying it didn't matter, because I thought if I said it enough I could convince myself it was true....it's not your fault. You're a wonderful girl ... but it's my problem, Charity. I have this neurosis-a mental block....I have this childish, incomprehensible, idiotic fixation about purity. In this day and age, it's laughable, isn't it?³⁸⁹

This exchange is clearly an example of the tension expressed by Knapp. Oscar represents the older component of the generation gap. Charity, though middle-aged, sits squarely on the other side. The show's 1966 premiere occurred just as the Sexual Revolution was beginning to have its strongest impact. In the relationship between Oscar and Charity, the proverbial "old guard" of this dialectic must meet the new face-on. Who wins? Neither. Both Oscar and Charity are left alone. He exits, saying, "I feel sick about this. You may not believe that, but I feel just terrible." Charity is alone. Her dreams have been dashed, yet she concludes the experience with

³⁸⁹ *Sweet Charity*, 109-111.

the promise of living “hopefully ever after.”³⁹⁰ Certainly an indictment of a stridently conservative culture exists in this exchange. It — embodied by Oscar — is what prevents Charity’s dream from coming true.

A similar disenchantment is expressed in Fields’s lyrics for the play. This is specifically illustrated in the “Rhythm of Life” number. The number, performed by a cult-leader character, is described by Scott Miller as taking “wicked aim at the country’s growing disenchantment with organized religion, its growing spiritual bankruptcy, and American’s subsequent search for ‘alternative’ spirituality.”³⁹¹ In these ways, the storyline of *Sweet Charity* is clearly indicative of the shifting social culture in which she was created.

That is not to say, however, that *Sweet Charity* was the only play exploring those themes, just as it was not the only one with innovative, non-traditional (to Broadway, anyway) styles of music. This can be evidenced by a return to the original comparison with *West Side Story*. According to McMillan, *West Side Story* boldly explored themes few musicals had explored before. He cites racism and misogyny as key themes of the work.³⁹² Jones goes further. He notes Bernstein’s commitment to challenging “the validity of certain kinds of idealism.”³⁹³ The creators accomplished this by a close look at prevailing social ideas of the period in which the piece was created (mid-20th century New York City). This storyline — a tale of gang fighting and deep-seated prejudices among New York ethnic communities, ends with the death of Tony, a

³⁹⁰ *Sweet Charity*, 112-113.

³⁹¹ Miller, 103.

³⁹² McMillin, 49.

³⁹³ Jones, 191.

central character, at the hands of a rival. In her final speech, another central character (Maria) indicts the participants in prejudice as guilty of murdering. “We all killed him,” she screams.³⁹⁴

Though, based on their shared composer, it can be assumed that *Little Me* is similar musically to *Sweet Charity*, it cannot be said that the musical is thematically the same. They tell similar stories but in very different ways. *Sweet Charity*’s gritty and realistic approach has already been discussed. *Little Me*’s approach harkens back to the slapstick and cheap laughs of vaudeville. Like those discussed in Chapter Four, the musical was primarily a vehicle for television star Sid Caesar. Caesar was well-known for his work on the 1950s program “Your Show of Shows.” In *Little Me*, he played eight characters, ranging, according to reviewer John Chapman, “from a schoolboy to a skinflint old banker to a bum — not to mention a World War I ace and a Chevalier-type singer with amnesia.”³⁹⁵

On this point, *Little Me* and *Sweet Charity* cannot be compared. They are different musicals attempting to do different things. *Little Me* was more about caricature; *Sweet Charity* was concerned with character. An analysis of the two heroines illuminates Field’s unique voice, however. As Fields wrote only the lyrics for this musical — and Leigh did the same for *Little Me* — I will focus only on the characters as they are presented in the lyrics of these musicals.

According to Grant, lyrics in early musicals “marked time for the melody.”³⁹⁶ He argues that, in the current Broadway aesthetic, lyrics once again “dress the music in broad brushstrokes.”³⁹⁷ That was not so during the Golden Age. As typified by the work of Fields,

³⁹⁴ Jones, 195. The musical, nonetheless, ends on a hopeful note, as members from both games come together to carry Tony’s body off-stage.

³⁹⁵ John Chapman, “Sid Caesar Multiplied by Eight Makes *Little Me* Big Laugh Show,” *New York Daily News*, November 19, 1962.

³⁹⁶ Grant, 83. Grant considers this period to be pre-Golden Age.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Hart, Porter, Berlin, Hammerstein and others (though Grant lists no other women, not surprisingly), Golden Age lyrics were defined by the following characteristics:

using specifics to evoke universals ... playwrighting the human condition in miniature, rather than writing lyrics about casually observed trivia, writing dramaturgically even when the lyrics were interpolated into revues and thus not book-driven, using the emotional power of poetic language freely and without embarrassment while also using vernacular language with maximum cleverness, achieving complete expressive freedom while abiding by the technical constraints of versification, interacting dialectically with the song's melody and the composer's personality, subsuming expression to elegance, which means that off-color material could get expressed but was filtered through oblique wordplay, and, above all, being sincere — that is, believing in what they were writing, not just going through the motions.³⁹⁸

In comparing Fields's work, which undeniably follows the guidelines outlined above, with Leigh's, which does not, it is not surprising that Leigh did not make Grants's list of Golden Age lyricists.³⁹⁹

Little Me

Little Me premiered on November 18, 1962, at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre. It is the story of Belle Schlumpfert, a poor girl who dreams of living “On the Other Side of the Tracks,” as an early number states. Society lad Noble Eggleston becomes her ticket out of unsavory surroundings. She is instantly smitten with him, but his mother insists that she first attain

³⁹⁸ Grant, 86.

³⁹⁹ Specifically, he lists Hart, Porter, Ira Gershwin, Berlin, Hammerstein, E.Y. Harburg, Howard Dietz, Fields, Caesar, Frank Loesser, and Alan Jay Lerner.

“wealth, culture, and social position” before Belle can be with Noble. The musical follows her pursuit of those endeavors — through multiple marriages, an illegitimate child, and an accidental murder. In the end, of course, Noble and Belle are reunited. A drinking binge has robbed Noble of his “wealth, culture, and social position,” so Belle, now possessed of these, shares them with him that they might be together forever.

Feminists reading this script would be appalled. Belle utilizes her “beautiful bosom” in order to obtain her goals. Her objectification is clear, as is her willing participation in it. For example, after Belle accidentally shoots the character of Mr. Pinchley, a pair of vaudeville promoters begs her to join their circuit. They convince her with this lyric: “When a girl has got what you have got a lotta / you know what you got! You got something hot!” Belle is convinced. The proceeding number — “Dimples” — can be read as a double entendre for her cleavage. Further, in lines like, “Oh / dem doggone dimples / oh / dey did it again,” Belle illustrates that she is at the mercy of her body, as opposed to being in control of it. Through all of this, Belle is portrayed as doe-eyed and innocent.

In so doing, her character is a proto-example of what Elaine Aston calls “girl power.” Writing about this feminism of the 1990s, Aston suggests that such work is “more accurately to be understood as an individualistic style of self-promotion: one which encourages girls to believe that self-confidence and sexually aggressive behavior is a means to empowerment, a means of getting on and getting what you want.”⁴⁰⁰ Certainly, this is a tactic Belle employs in her pursuit. Charity, as will be shown later, does not.

⁴⁰⁰ Elaine Aston, “‘Bad Girls’ and ‘Sick Boys’: New Women Playwrights and the Future of Feminism,” in *Feminist Futures? Theatre, Performance, Theory*, Elaine Aston and Geraldine Harris, editors (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 73.

Little Me, which starred Caesar (mentioned above) and Virginia Martin, ran for 257 performances and was part of a Broadway season that looked like most other. Revivals (*Fiorello*, *Brigadoon*, *Wonderful Town*, *Oklahoma!*, *Pal Joey*), operettas (*The Mikado*, *The Merry Widow*, *The Gondoliers*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Trial by Jury*, *HMS Pinafore*, and *Iolanthe*), operas (*Street Scene*),⁴⁰¹ revues (*Eddie Fisher at the Winter Garden*, *Bamboche!*, *Beyond the Fringe*, *Maurice Chevalier*, *The Hollow Crown*, *Jack Benny*, *Danny Kaye*, and *The Beast in Me*), and new musicals (*Stop the World. I Want to Get Off*, *Mr. President*, *Nowhere to Go but Up*,⁴⁰² *Little Me*, *Oliver!*, *Tovarich*, *Mother Courage and her Children*, *A Man in the Moon*, *Sophie*, *Hot Spot*, and *She Loves Me*) were the offerings. Of these, *Oliver!* was far and away the favorite. The musical, based on Charles Dickens's Victorian epic *Oliver Twist*,⁴⁰³ ran for 774 performances. *Stop the World - I Want to Get Off*⁴⁰⁴ was the next most popular at 556 performances.⁴⁰⁵

At 257 performances, *Little Me* was significantly less successful with audiences. Critics, on the other hand, were mostly positive. John McClain's *Journal American* review was the most rousing of all. He called the show a "smash musical" and a "sumptuous success."⁴⁰⁶ Norman Nadel described it as "Broadway's biggest boon and brightest benefit since *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*."⁴⁰⁷ Walter Kerr found it to be "a blockbuster so genial it looks

⁴⁰¹ Composer Kurt Weill referred to this as an "American opera;" however, its structure certainly borrows from the musical form.

⁴⁰² Interestingly, this musical featured both book and lyrics by James Lipton. The author is better known as the host of the Bravo network's television show "Inside the Actor's Studio."

⁴⁰³ *Oliver!* featured music and lyrics by Lionel Bart. It premiered in London's West End Theatre District before its transfer to Broadway in the 1962-1963 season.

⁴⁰⁴ *Stop the World - I Want to Get Off* featured music and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley, the pair that later went on to provide songs for the popular children's film *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (1971).

⁴⁰⁵ Norton, 128-143.

⁴⁰⁶ John McClain, "All Hail to Caesar!" *New York Journal American*, November 19, 1962.

⁴⁰⁷ Norman Nadel, "Little Me at Lunt-Fontanne," *New York World-Telegram*, November 19, 1962).

like a breeze.” Without exception, each of these noted Caesar’s star quality. The show, Kerr wrote, “is ... for people who always did think Sid Caesar ought to be twins. They can promptly get three and one-half times their money’s worth at the Lunt-Fontanne.”⁴⁰⁸

Less enthusiastic were reviewers Howard Taubman and Richard Watts, Jr. Taubman put it thus: “In a non-vintage year, ordinary wine must do. *Little Me* looks good, because it arrives after a poor crop of musicals.” He found it to be a “flimsy contrivance” and “lighthearted spoof.” Coleman’s musical was “functional” and Leigh’s lyrics were “lively, if not brilliant.”⁴⁰⁹ Watts was just as tepid. To him, *Little Me* was “disappointing,” having “the ingredients of regular success, but I stubbornly maintain that it should have been better.” He found Coleman’s music “bright and attractive, and Leigh’s lyrics are serviceable.”⁴¹⁰ Though he found much of the musical to be entertaining, he was, overall, underwhelmed. Judging by its relatively short run, so were audiences.

Sweet Charity

Sweet Charity premiered on January 29, 1966, and ran for 608 performances at the Palace Theatre. As I have previously stated, it is “the story of a girl who wanted to be loved.” The title character is a dance hall hostess at the Fan-Dango Ballroom. As such, she has encountered her share of losers. She ultimately meets Oscar, however. They fall in love and get engaged, Charity blissfully imagining she has finally found all that she has sought so long. In the end, though, Oscar cannot overcome the fact that Charity is not a virgin. He leaves her. Charity remains

⁴⁰⁸ Walter Kerr, “First Night Report: *Little Me*,” *New York Herald Tribune*, November 19, 1962.

⁴⁰⁹ Howard Taubman, “Theatre Caesar and Virginia Martin in *Little Me*,” *New York Times*, November 19, 1962.

⁴¹⁰ Richard Watts, Jr., “Two on the Aisle: the Men in Belle Poitrine’s Life,” *New York Post* November 19, 1962.

unchanged, however. Just as a placard descended at the opening of the original production, so did one at the close. It read: “And she lived *hopefully* ever after.”⁴¹¹

In many ways, the 1965-1966 Broadway season looked like most others. It featured an assortment of shows old and new, book musicals and revues. It was a particularly prolific season, though, with more than 30 openings. Limited run revivals of American classics (*South Pacific*, *The Music Man*, *Kismet*, *Oliver*, *Carousel*, *Oklahoma!*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *The Most Happy Fella*, and *Annie Get Your Gun*) joined operas (*The Saint of Bleecker Street*, *Street Scene*, and *The Consul*), operettas (*Die Fledermaus* and *The Merry Widow*), revues (*The World of Charles Aznavour* and *Wait a Minim*), and new musicals (*Pickwick*, *Drat! The Cat!*, *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*, *The Zulu and the Zayda*, *Skyscraper*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Anya*, *The Yearling*, *Le Grosse Valise*, *Marat / Sade*, *Sweet Charity*, *Pousse-Café*, *It's a Bird! It's a Plane! It's Superman!*, *A Time for Singing*, *Mame*, and *Where's Charley?*) to create a season of great variety. Of these, *Sweet Charity* was the third most popular offering of the year (608 performances). *Man of La Mancha* at 2,328 performances and *Mame* at 1508 performances were the only two shows that ran longer.⁴¹²

Interestingly, each of these three shows feature wildly different storylines and musical styles. The music of *Man of La Mancha* is inspired by the Spanish sounds of the land in which it is set, while *Mame* is still cited as a classic example of the Golden Age.⁴¹³ This discrepancy clearly illustrates Broadway's changing tastes. The difference was noted in the reviews *Sweet Charity* received. Nadel wrote that the score was possessed of “an ingenious variety of structural

⁴¹¹ *Sweet Charity*, 112-113.

⁴¹² Norton, 183-197.

⁴¹³ In fact, each work by *Mame* composer / lyricist Jerry Herman is indicative of this. Among others, Herman also wrote *Hello, Dolly!*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and *Dear World*. It is interesting that *Mame* is possessed of a strong, female lead.

and harmonic touches.”⁴¹⁴ Chapman found “the music and lyrics ... are considerably above the Broadway average; the Fields lyrics are intelligently wrought, and the Coleman score, which should develop several hits, has been deepened with fascinatingly modern internal rhythms.”⁴¹⁵

Overall, the reviews for *Sweet Charity* were favorable. As *Little Me* notices praised its star (who, interestingly, did not play its protagonist), so did *Charity's*. The musical was very much a vehicle for star Gwen Verdon. Verdon, who had also starred in Fields's earlier hit (and the longest-running of all the musicals for which Fields served as librettist) *Redhead*, became Broadway's darling when she starred in 1953's *Can Can* and 1955's *Damn Yankees*. She won Tony Awards for both of those musicals, as well as for her subsequent turns in *New Girl in Town* (1958) and *Redhead* (1959). Further, she was director Fosse's wife. As such, she was monumentally influenced by him.⁴¹⁶

Reviewers were passionate about her performance. Of it, Kerr wrote, “There are at least six things that will interest you in *Sweet Charity* — the dances, the scenery, the songs, Gwen Verdon, Gwen Verdon, and Gwen Verdon.”⁴¹⁷ According to Chapman, “with the incomparable Gwen Verdon acting and dancing her way into our hearts, [*Sweet Charity*] can't miss,”⁴¹⁸ and John McClain called the musical “an atomic smash and a happy tenant of the new Palace [Theatre].”⁴¹⁹ Not surprisingly, *Sweet Charity* enjoyed a healthy original run, a film version

⁴¹⁴ Norman Nadel, “Gwen Verdon Biggest Gift to *Sweet Charity*,” *New York World Telegram*, January 31, 1966.

⁴¹⁵ John Chapman, “Palace Theatre Greets Broadway with a Sparkler, *Sweet Charity*,” *New York Daily News*, January 31, 1966.

⁴¹⁶ Fosse's artistic vision was so sweeping that it is difficult to separate each element from his influence.

⁴¹⁷ Walter Kerr, “*Sweet Charity*,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 31, 1966.

⁴¹⁸ “Palace Theatre Greets Broadway with a Sparkler, *Sweet Charity*.”

⁴¹⁹ John McClain, “Gwen Verdon in Big, Fat Hit,” *New York Journal American*, Jan. 31, 1966.

starring Shirley MacClaine, and two Broadway revivals. The most recent of these opened in 2005; it starred television actress Christina Applegate. London's Menier Chocolate Factory hosted a 2009 revival, which closed in March of 2010.

Having already justified a comparison of the two musicals, I will now compare the heroines of them. Belle Schlumpfert Poitrine and Charity Hope Valentine are possessed of several similarities and a few key differences. I will explore each of these via the way that the characters are presented in the lyrics. The first similarity is a surface one: both women are from similar backgrounds. Belle falls in love with Noble Eggleston, "The richest boy in town," adding that she is "the poorest girl." Further, one of her first numbers is "On the Other Side of the Tracks." This will be discussed in greater detail later. Suffice it to say, however, that it is an anthem about her desire to climb socially.

Charity sings a similar number about her low social status. Accidentally ending up in the swanky apartment of a male celebrity, she sings "If They Could See Me Now:"

If they could see me now, alone with Mr. V.,
who's waitin' on me like he was a maitre'd,
I'd hear those stumblebums say say, "Crazy, what gives?
Tonight, she's living like the other half lives!"
To think the highest brow, which I must say is he
should pick the lowest brow, which there's no doubt is me —
What a step up, holy cow! They'd never believe it,
if my friends could see me now.

Further, not only are Belle and Charity's social statuses similar, but they are both in similar occupations. Charity is a hostess at the Fan Dango Ballroom, offering 10-cent dances to

her male clientele. Belle holds different jobs throughout the musical. At one point, however, she is a Cigarette Girl at the Skylight Roof Hotel. Both of these jobs, it is interesting to note, service the patriarchy.

Secondly, both women are incredibly self-reliant. Belle expresses this self-reliance in her opening song, which is also the title number of the show:

Who to tell my troubles to? Lend a sympathetic ear?
Who to cheer me when I'm blue? Wipe away each little tear?
When there's no one left, I am not bereft! There is always little me.
When a year goes down the drain, and I haven't made a cent,
When I fall in love in vain, or I give it up for Lent,
Friends can fly the coop, leave me in the soup,
Who'd come through with lentils? And to get to fundamentals:
When the chips are really down, who will not be out of town?
Who do I esteem most? Who do I adore most?
Who deserves the cream most? Who built up the candy store most?
Who comes first and foremost? Obviously, when you add it all up,
Ever-lovin' little me.

In the original production, this rousing number was sung as a point-counterpoint between the two incarnations of Belle — Old Belle and Young Belle. There is a brazen independence here. It is so brash that it is almost bravado. This is a moment in the discussion when Aston becomes especially enlightening. Though Belle's bravado is not inherently negative, it stands in contrast to the way that Charity's self-reliance is presented. Trapped in a broken-down elevator with an obsessive-compulsive stranger, Charity attempts to comfort her new companion with the

number called “I’m the Bravest Individual.” In so doing, she illuminates a significant element of her character:

When I’m so jittery my knees buckle,
ice water tickles my spine.
I’m trapped like a butterfly in a net,
then I say to myself, ‘I’m the bravest individual I have ever met.’
This game makes very good sense.
I get results.
Get back my confidence and then even pulse — 78!
So when I panic and feel each day
I come to the end of the line
Then I say that fear hasn’t licked me yet.
I keep telling myself
I’m the bravest individual I have ever met.

There is a deep vulnerability to Charity that Belle does not possess. Her repetition of “I’m the bravest individual I have ever met” in an attempt to conquer fears is an ironic one, for it is, in essence, a confession that she *has* fears. Already, it becomes clear that Charity is a more deeply-developed character than Belle. This same vulnerability has been illustrated in other characters mentioned in previous chapters. For example, *Seesaw*’s Gittel is very unsure of herself, as expressed in her “He’s Good for Me” number. Charity, similarly, must combat her insecurities. On the other hand, Belle’s self-assurance reads as bravado. Charity (and Gittel, etc.) are far more psychologically real characters, as they confront real pressures and questions and admit to real fears and misgivings. In spite of this, however, Fields’s characters remain self-reliant.

Charity's self-reliance is further illustrated in the "Where am I Going?" number. Throughout the show, she has clung to her belief that "There's Gotta Be Something Better Than This." "This," of course, is the life that she leads, dancing with many anonymous partners when she longs for a much deeper commitment. Finally, she is frustrated to the point of leaving her work at the ballroom. Afterwards, she stumbles through Times Square, singing a soliloquy as she does. In so doing, she illustrates her independence. She alone is responsible for her actions and her decisions. This sort of autonomy is rarely expressed by female characters of the Golden Age.

Where am I going? And what will I find?
What's in this grab-bag that I call my mind?
What am I doing, alone on the shelf?
Ain't it a shame, no one's to blame, but myself.
...
Where am I going? Why do I care?
No matter where I run, I meet myself there.
Looking inside me, what do I see?
Anger and hope and doubt,
What am I all about?
And where am I going?
You tell me!

Again, in this number, we see both Charity's strength and her vulnerability, the latter of which is a trait never seen in Belle. In this way, Fields's characters are indicative of what Norman envisions for women playwrights. She imagines "female characters [that] face the same difficulties real women do in a world where being beautiful, weak, and tragic makes the

headlines.” In other words, Fields’s women “show who we are.”⁴²⁰ That Fields’s writing pre-dates Norman’s essay by several decades underscores the pioneer that she, however unwittingly, was. Not only does her work pre-date the essay, but Norman is writing about what *should* happen with women’s writing but what, in her opinion, has not yet — at least not on any large scale. Whether she knows it or not, Norman is describing the writing of Fields.

Thirdly, both Belle and Charity are optimistic dreamers. In this way, they are not unlike the protagonists of most musicals. They dream of a life better than the one they are presently living. This common theme of most musicals is the subject of Bradley’s book, as was discussed in the introduction of Chapter Three. Belle expresses her dream in “The Other Side of the Tracks,” an equally rousing number that follows “Little Me.”

My heart says, ‘Reach for the stars,’ and my heart I cannot deny,
though it’s my hard luck that I’m sorta stuck on the farthest one in the sky,
so my eyes are destined to wander and my brain no more to relax,
‘cause there’s nothing farther out yonder than the other side of the tracks.
On the other side of the tracks, it’s a long and difficult climb,
but the air up there on the bill of fare is a choice of lemon or lime,
and the muscles keeping your nose up are the only muscles you tax.
Oh, I envy someone who grows up on the other side of the tracks.

Further, Belle sees the best in others. Early in Act I, she meets Mr. Pinchley, one of the many characters portrayed in the original production by Sid Caesar. A so-called “geezer,” he is hated by everyone in the story, save Belle. She sums up her feelings in song:

No man is a true pariah, deep down inside, deep down inside,

⁴²⁰ Norman, 5-6.

Deep down in the old spare tiah.

No man is a true Uriah Heep down inside.

There's a lover that you just can't keep down,

Deep down inside, deep down inside.

Like Belle, Charity also dreams of a better life. Along with her fellow dance hall hostesses, she sings "There's Gotta Be Something Better than This:"

There's gotta be some life cleaner than this.

There's gotta be some good reason to live,

And when I find me some kind of life I can live,

I'm gonna get up, I'm gonna get out ...

I'm gonna get up, get out, and live it!

In this similarity, we also see a difference between Belle and Charity. Charity is "the girl who wanted to be loved." Belle, on the other hand, simply wants to live "on the other side of the tracks." Her pursuit throughout the musical is to attain "wealth, culture, and social position." Though she ultimately does each of these things to fulfill the requirements set by her "beloved's" mother, she is still more concerned with winning those things for their own sake than with winning them that she might, with them, win Noble. Therein is another manifestation of Charity's vulnerability. It is a very emotionally naked thing to want and pursue love.

Emotional vulnerability is a hallmark of Fields's female characters; however, Charity's self-awareness and internal exploration make her distinct from Belle. It might be argued that this is owed to the writing of librettist Simon. A Tony Award winning playwright, he was — and remains — adept at drawing three-dimensional characters; however, if he were responsible for this depth, then it would be evidenced in both characters, as he wrote both librettos. As it is only

a trait of Charity, it can be rightly assumed that the character depth comes from Fields, herself a Tony Award-winning librettist.⁴²¹

This vulnerability is illustrated in a number of songs in which Charity examines her life and her dreams. Several of these numbers have already been discussed. Another is “Charity’s Soliloquy.” In it, we see the good and the bad of Charity’s life. She admits to mistakes she has made and expresses resolve to never make them again. Psychologically, this is as close to realism as most musicals get.⁴²²

Can I remember how this song and dance began?

Yes, I can and damn right I can!

It began, well, anyway you see there was this man

who stopped and asked me if I knew which way was Lexington Avenue.

He said, ‘I’m goin’ to Bloomingdale’s.’ I said, ‘I’m goin’ to Bloomingdale’s,’

so we hoofed it over the Bloomingdale’s,

He wanted to buy some jockey shorts...

Then he said: ‘Miss, would you like a cup of tea, or maybe some Seven-Up?’

I left the tea picked up the tab for the jockey’s shorts and the taxicab

...

But what can you do when he knocks on your door, ‘cause they locked him out of his furnished room, so...he moves in!

He moves in with his jockey shorts and a paper bag - nothing else!

⁴²¹ Fields won a Tony Award for *Redhead*. The Best Musical of 1959, *Redhead* also starred Gwen Verdon.

⁴²² Many cite Laurey’s “Dream Ballet,” choreographed by Agnes DeMille and discussed earlier in this work, as an early example of psychological realism in a form most often typified by flat characters.

He needs toothpaste and a tooth brush and pajama tops.

He needs razor blades, a razor and a comb - several!

He needs sistering and brothering and fathering and mothering.

He needs a hat to hang up in my flat and call it home.

In no time at all, I find we're very much in love,

and I'm blushing like a sentimental slob.

and he's kissing me and hugging me, and all the time he's bugging me to
go out and try to find myself a better paying job.

Comes July; it's 98 degrees.

He wants a coat. He wants a fur-lined coat -

fur collar, cuffs, the works!

While I really didn't begrudge it when I figured out my budget for that coat,

I had to dance with something like 1100 jerks.

Now comes February, 10 degrees - I need a coat,

need a coat to walk his poodle that I bought!

So he gives me his old sweater sweatshirt,

A muffler and a stretcher

And I give to him - ha ha ha! - the bronchial pneumonia that I caught.

Then I give him pocket money,

poker money, smoking money, skating money

bowling money, movie money, haircut money,

shoeshine money,

Money for a bill from Louis' Bar

Money for a bill from Maxi's Bar
Money for a bill from Charlie's Bar,
but will he ask for subway money?
Now he won't want subway money
'cause, it turns out,
the bum wants to go to Florida!
'Come on down!'
Now hear this and get this
Oh, Susannah, amen
This big fat heart ain't gonna be torn apart
ever, ever, ever again!

In this number, it becomes clear that Charity has been abused by the men of her past. She has made poor decisions in an effort to gain what she most desires — love. Instead of being loved, however, she has been objectified and is ultimately discarded by a man for the fact that she is not a virgin. In this way, *Sweet Charity* further expresses the cynicism of the period that was discussed earlier in this chapter. It was the norm of Golden Age musicals that they would end “happily ever after.” Indeed, *Little Me* fits this trend. *Sweet Charity*'s ending is far more ambiguous. Charity is, obviously, not with Oscar; however, whether or not she will ever be with any one remains to be seen. In creating such a character, Fields presents a human experience that is far more closely aligned to reality. Characters as richly developed as Charity were not only not present in *Little Me*, but they also were not the norm for Golden Age musicals. They were a hallmark, however, of the musicals for which Fields developed characters. This element of her

work — her ability to create “female characters [that] face the same difficulties real women do in a world”⁴²³ — will be more deeply explored in the next chapter.

⁴²³ Norman, 5.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION: “I’M WAY AHEAD”

In 1987, Rick Simas published *The Musicals No One Came to See*. Subtitled “A Guidebook to Four Decades of Musical Comedy Casualties, on Broadway, Off-Broadway and in Out-of-Town Try-out 1943-1983,” the book examines “musical shows premiering in New York over a 40-year period — between the 1943-44 and 1982-83 theatre seasons inclusive — which ran on or off Broadway for less than 300 performance sor which closed in previews or pre-Broadway try-out.”⁴²⁴ Of the shows examined in this dissertation on which Fields was a collaborator, two are included in this book — *Arms and the Girl* and *By the Beautiful Sea*. For the most part, however, Fields’s career as a Broadway librettist was as successful as her career as a lyricist of popular songs. In fact, as the chart below illustrates, she achieved equal success in both roles.

This chart lists the musicals for which Fields served on the creative team, either as the lyricist, the librettist, or both.⁴²⁵ It clearly illustrates the fact that Fields was remarkably flexible,

⁴²⁴ Rick Simas, *The Musicals No One Came to See: a Guidebook to Four Decdes of Musical-Comedy Casualties on Broadway, off-Broadway, and in Out of Town Try-Out, 1943-1983* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987), 16.

⁴²⁵ This chart does not include those shows for which a Fields song (or songs) was interpolated, nor does it include her earliest work on Broadway revues, such as *Swingin’ the Dream*, a 1939 variety show which included “I Can’t Give You Anything But Love” and *Sugar Babies*, a very successful 1979 burlesque. It also does not include her early revues. These include *Blackbirds of 1928* and the *International Review* (1930). Instead, I included only those so-called “book musicals.” My reason for this is because this dissertation is primarily concerned with Fields’s creation of character. Revues are not at all concerned with character. Thus, they are, for the most part, irrelevant to this discussion.

professionally speaking. While her lyrics are what won her the Oscar and the distinction as the most successful woman songwriter in the history of ASCAP,⁴²⁶ it was actually her librettos with which Fields found the greatest success on Broadway, as measured by longevity of run.⁴²⁷

Table 6.1

Year	Show	Fields role	# perfs.
1946	Annie Get Your Gun	libretto	1147
1966	Sweet Charity	lyrics	608
1941	Let's Face It	libretto	547
1945	Up in Central Park	lyrics / libretto	504
1944	Mexican Hayride	libretto	481
1959	Redhead	lyrics / libretto	452
1943	Something for the Boys	libretto	422
1973	Seesaw	lyrics	296
1954	By the Beautiful Sea	lyrics / libretto	270
1951	A Tree Grows in Brooklyn	lyrics	267
1950	Arms and the Girl	lyrics / libretto	134
1939	Stars in Your Eyes	lyrics	127

In spite of her self-abasing suggestion that the books she wrote with Herbert were sub-par, they were, instead, the framework that held together some of the Golden Age's longest-running musicals. Three of the four musicals for which Fields co-wrote the libretto featured music and lyrics by Cole Porter. Her outstanding skill as a lyricist is clear in the success of her songs. Her skill as a librettist is made clear in the reviews of these works with Porter — *Let's Face It* (1941 — 547 performances), *Mexican Hayride* (1944 — 481 performances), and *Something for the Boys* (1943 — 422 performances). Of *Let's Face It*, Richard Lockridge wrote in the *New York Sun*, “Breaking a book writer's tradition of long-standing, the Fieldses have found funny things of their own to write. The dialogue may not always crackle, but often

⁴²⁶ That Stanley Adams, then president of ASCAP, said this of Fields was discussed in Chapter One.

⁴²⁷ The length of the runs of these musicals were all determined by visiting www.ibdb.com, the Internet Broadway Database.

enough, it explodes, and there is hardly a cliché in it.”⁴²⁸ John Mason Brown also praised the Fieldses originality. *Let’s Face It!* was adapted from a 1925 farce called *Cradle Snatchers*.⁴²⁹ Of their adaptation, Brown wrote,

Herbert and Dorothy Fields are original librettists. They do not borrow the whole arch, merely its keystone. That central situation is all that they have taken, and even it they have reworked and admirably restated in terms both contemporary and appropriate to musical comedy.⁴³⁰

Originality was also the hallmark of the *Mexican Hayride* libretto. Burton Rascoe took note of this in his *New York World Telegram* notice. He called the show’s book “inspired, contemporary, satirical, logical in development, and full of ingenious incidents,”⁴³¹ while Burns Mantle wrote this of *Something for the Boys*:

[Show star] Ethel Merman can generously credit Herbert and Dorothy Fields for a couple of assists. They are among the few librettists who have developed skill in writing a book show that holds together with acceptable sequences and reasonably sane, as well as smart, patter.⁴³²

“Originality,” in fact, is perhaps the best word to describe the work of Dorothy Fields. As the lone woman writing — at least the lone woman with any significant commercial success — for much of the Golden Age, Fields had a unique voice. This is a logical point to introduce a

⁴²⁸ Richard Lockridge, “*Let’s Face It!* with Danny Kaye is Offered at the Imperial,” *New York Sun*, October 30, 1941.

⁴²⁹ This play was written by Russell Medcraft and Norma Mitchell.

⁴³⁰ John Mason Brown, “Season Has a Hit at Last as *Let’s Face It!* Arrives,” *New York World Telegram*, October 30, 1941.

⁴³¹ Burton Rascoe, “*Mexican Hayride* Lavish, Beautiful,” *New York World-Telegram*, January 29, 1944.

⁴³² Burns Mantle, “*Something for the Boys* is Also One for the Hit Column,” *New York Daily News*, January 8, 1943.

parallel between Fields's position and the ideas set forth in Case's 1985 essay "Classic Drag: the Greek Creation of Female Parts." In the essay, Case applies a materialist feminist viewpoint to the theatre pieces of ancient Greece. Case posits that portrayals of women in ancient Greek texts "represent a fiction of women constructed by the patriarchy."⁴³³ As there were no females writing at the time, Case assumes that the male poets constructed their female characters solely to represent their "patriarchal values," suppressing altogether the matriarchy.⁴³⁴ Startlingly, a similarly patriarchal system dominated the landscape of the mid-20th-Century American musical. It follows that characters created by these men would be equally suppressive of the matriarchy. Given this, I believe that Case's ideas can rightly be applied to the Golden Age of the American musical.⁴³⁵

The musical of these years was dominated by male creators. Among them were the men whose names became synonymous with the genre, many of whom have already been discussed in this dissertation — Rodgers & Hammerstein, Berlin, Porter, and others. The era's dismissive attitude towards the work of women is epitomized in Green's 1960 statement (quoted earlier): "The creators of musical comedy in America are a body of men (and some women) who have consistently refused to do less than the best that was in them."⁴³⁶ The suppression of women's work is further indicated by the following lyric from *Three to Make Music*. As was mentioned before, this was written for a 1958 show which was to teach children about the role of the

⁴³³ Sue-Ellen Case, "Classic Drag: the Greek Creation of Female Parts," in the *Wadsworth Anthology of Drama, 5th ed.*, ed. W.B. Worthen (Boston: Thomson Higher Education, 2007), 132.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 132-133.

⁴³⁵ The idea for – and much of the writing of – this segment were born of work originally done for Dr. David Saltz's Critical Methods class, which I took in the Fall of 2008.

⁴³⁶ Korey R. Rothman, "'Will You Remember?' Female Lyricists of Operetta and Musical Comedy," in *Women in Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists*, eds. Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., Inc., Publishers, 2008), 9.

orchestra. Mary Rodgers wrote this: “It takes three to make music ... the man who writes it, the men who play it, and folks they’re playing it for.”⁴³⁷

Hearing this, the case for applying Case’s viewpoint to the Golden Age of American Musicals is a convincing one. In so doing, I assert that canonical characters, such as Eliza Doolittle in Lerner & Loewe’s 1956 *My Fair Lady* and Fraulein Maria in Rodgers & Hammerstein’s 1959 *The Sound of Music* should be dismissed by the feminist spectator. As the creations of men, it can be argued that they are nothing more than “suppressions” of actual womanhood with whom women should not attempt to identify, for they “contain no information about the experience of real women.”⁴³⁸ In the culture of the American musical of the mid-century, as in the Greek theatre tradition of which Case wrote, “real” women are suppressed by the dominant culture of musicals’ primarily-male creators.⁴³⁹

Authentic female characters are one of Fields’s contributions to the American musical. Before the patriarchy of Broadway even acknowledged the female experience, Fields expressed it. Admittedly, there were attempts to silence her voice. This was done both by the societal structure of the time in which she wrote and by the perpetual presence of the male “chaperone” on the creative team – be it the composer with whom she wrote or the brother with which she collaborated. Nevertheless, Fields consistently presented a view of women that was not present in the work of the men. Such a view is in opposition to the concerns raised by de Gay, Goodman, and a long line of feminists before them. As de Gay and Goodman write, “Language is figured as a male privilege: such language represents ‘woman’ as the desired other and thus fails to embody her. Language becomes a tool that objectifies women and cannot convey their perspectives or

⁴³⁷ Konas, 122.

⁴³⁸ Case, 136.

⁴³⁹ The work of Stacy Wolf, particularly her 2002 *A Problem Like Maria: Gender and Sexuality in the American Musical*, views canonical females through the lesbian gaze.

experiences.”⁴⁴⁰ In the work of Fields, this is proven to not be the case. She conveys the female experience as, following Case, she had experienced it.

Her work abounds with examples of authentic female experience, and her voice has been proven in this dissertation to not only be distinct from those of the male lyricists and librettists but also from those of Comden and Leigh. Because of this, it can be said that her work is characterized by authenticity, of, to borrow again from Norman, telling stories that show “who we are [as women].”⁴⁴¹ Among the examples of these are Charity’s vulnerability and Lottie Gibson’s unwillingness to settle (“I’d Rather Wake Up by Myself”). Gittel also is unusually self-aware, as she bemoans her bad luck with men. In so doing, she presents a brilliantly honest and self-aware assessment of the female situation.

If there's a wrong way to say it,
and a wrong way to play it.
nobody does it like me!
If there's a wrong way to do it,
a right way to screw it up,
nobody does it like me!
I've got a big loud mouth,
I'm always talking much too free.
If you go for tact and manners,
better stay away from me!
If there's a wrong way to keep it cool,

⁴⁴⁰ De Gay and Goodman, 5.

⁴⁴¹ Norman, 6.

a right way to be a fool,

Nobody does it like me!

Like Charity, Gittel ends the show alone. This is a departure from Broadway norms, but it is not unique for Fields's heroines. Rather than the cookie-cutter endings where all loose ends are neatly tied up, Fields's endings are more real. To use a word I used earlier, her work is authentic. It is more closely aligned to reality than the falsified, *deux ex machina* endings of most musicals. Just as Charity, though alone, ends the show to live "hopefully ever after," so Gittel is not jaded by having loved and lost. Her final number is "I'm Way Ahead." It comes after Jerry has left her life and begins with a Charity-esque internal monologue:

I must've been outta my mind. I must've been out of my thought!

I really believed I would have an affair that wouldn't wind up on the rocks.

What a laugh ... so who's laughin'?

...

I'll miss you, Jerry Ryan.

Damn you, damn you, Jerry Ryan.

I love you, Jerry Ryan.

Though it's you I must forget, I can't let myself regret it.

I'm way ahead.

So that's that, I loved, I lost.

What's a heart, that's all it cost me!

I'm way ahead!

My chin is up! My hands are steady now —

Come on, new dream, new life - I'm ready now.

When I think of every night, even nights when we were fighting,
I'm way ahead.
Once you said the way to live is to take as well as give
Well said, well said.
Good bye, good luck, I see now
What love like yours can be now
Thank you, Jerry.

In the preceding pages, I have illustrated the uniqueness of Fields's voice. Fields herself discussed the importance of following the adage to "write what you know." During the Evening with Dorothy Fields lecture, she remarked:

In my early writing years ... I did a lot of quoting. I wouldn't say I swiped a rhyme or an idea, but rather, I would say I was influenced. This was a mistake. As Oscar Hammerstein pointed out in his book of lyrics, "The amateurs try to imitate another man's songs. They are being — or trying to be — Irving Berlin or Cole Porter, Lorenz Hart, and all the other greats." True, I took a little. Not much, from this one or that one. I probably would've lifted a bit from Stephen Sondheim or Sheldon Harnick, but they hadn't been born yet! Took me some time to unmake that mistake — to write what I felt, rather than what other writers had to say.⁴⁴²

Though Fields's voice was sometimes squelched — by either herself, by society, or by the normative trends of the Broadway musical — she nonetheless expanded the boundaries of female characters created for the mainstream musical stage. She worked within the dominant structure — appropriating the male-centric "language" as a tool of telling the female experience.

⁴⁴² Fields.

Fields's characters pursued their own desires outside of the desires of men. Interestingly, with the exception of Lottie, most of these heroines fail at their endeavors. They are dreamers whose attempts at a better life are thwarted — Gittel and Charity end up alone; Jo is kicked out of the Revolution. Nevertheless, these characters were anomalies — strongly opinionated women, each driving her own fate. Fields was willing to experiment with different forms. This is proven by her collaborations with Romberg (operetta) and Coleman (jazz).

In addition to showing her unique voice, I have also shown the longevity of her career. It is clear from this evidence that Fields was a writer of enormous significance to the Golden Age of the American musical. This is further illustrated in the influence that she had on those writers who came after her. It is clear in her desire to work with Mary Rodgers that Fields wanted to facilitate the careers of younger songwriters. Not only did Fields pave the way for contemporary female lyricists like Comden and Leigh, but it can be argued that she also opened doors for women writing songs for today's theatre.

As Esterow first noticed in his 1963 article, women continue to work in ever-increasing numbers on Broadway today. Directors like Julie Taymor, the first woman to win a Tony Award for a musical,⁴⁴³ and Susan Stroman, who has directed hit musicals from *The Producers* (2001) to *Young Frankenstein* (2007), are in hot demand, and composer Jeanine Tesori, Tony nominated for *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (2002) and *Shrek the Musical* (2008), was named by *American Theatre* as one of "America's brightest young composers."⁴⁴⁴ Lyricist Lynn Ahrens also garnered critical acclaim for her work on shows, like *Ragtime* (1998) and *Seussical* (2000).

⁴⁴³ Taymor won a 1998 Tony Award for her direction of *The Lion King*. She was recently dismissed from the helm of *Spiderman*, a musical adaptation of the popular comic book series.

⁴⁴⁴ Jennifer Jones Cavanaugh, "A Composer in Her Own Right: Arrangers, Musical Directors, and Conductors," in *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists,*

In spite of these successes — and there are several others that could also be mentioned — the collaborative teams of mainstream American theatre pieces remain very much the domains of men. Certainly, there are more women working today than there were in Fields’s era; however, there are still startlingly few. Tesori herself noted that “she is often the only woman in musical production meetings,”⁴⁴⁵ and it seems like there is a particular dearth of female lyricists. A survey of recent Tony Award nominees reveals as much. Each year, Tonys are awarded to composers and lyricists in two categories — Best Musical and Best Original Score. Generally, four musicals are nominated for each category. For the last decade (2001-2010), dozens of new shows have been nominated; however, only five of them are possessed of female lyricists and only one of these five has won the Award for which it was nominated.⁴⁴⁶

Table 6.2

Lyricist	Musical	Award	Year
Lynn Prebble	Enron	Score	2010
Dolly Parton	9 to 5	Score	2009
Nell Benjamin	Legally Blonde	Score	2007
Brenda Russell & Allee Willis	The Color Purple	Musical & Score	2006
Lisa Lambert	The Drowsy Chaperone	Musical & Score	2006

This fact suggests that the question posed by the title of Winer’s 1997 panel discussion is as relevant in 2011 as it was in 1997 — and, for that much, during the career of Fields. “Where are the Women Composers and Lyricists?”

Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists, eds. Bud Coleman and Judith Sebesta (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2008), 79.

⁴⁴⁵ Cavanaugh, 80.

⁴⁴⁶ Lisa Lambert won for her role in developing 2006’s *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Interestingly, she co-wrote the music and lyrics with Greg Morrison, suggesting that Mary Rodgers’ belief that a female needs a male chaperone to work in the professional theatre holds true still today.

An absence of female collaborators is not surprising to theatre practitioners. In 2002, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) released the findings of a research initiative entitled “Report on the Status of Women in Theatre: a Limited Engagement?” According to the report, there is a “consistently low main stage participation of women playwrights and directors, particularly among theatres with higher budgets.”⁴⁴⁷ Clearly, this benchmark transcends the roles of playwrights and directors. Its evidence, as illustrated above, is seen also in the limited numbers of women writing books and music for musicals.

That there are women working in mainstream theatre at all, however, is evidence of the trail blazed by Fields. Her influence is more specifically seen in the influence she had over the writers who followed her.⁴⁴⁸ Sheldon Harnick is one of these. Known for the lyrics to *She Loves Me*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and others, Harnick was an up and coming writer in the latter years of Fields’s career. He said of her:

For me, one of Dorothy Fields’s special gifts was her magical ability to mix sophisticated and imaginative ideas with utterly prosaic, “kitchen sink” words and images, resulting in lyrics of a remarkably appealing freshness. This was a balancing act, requiring an impeccable ear and an unusual sense of selectivity — and she had them both. A splendid example is “A Fine Romance.”...Rather than quoting the entire lyric, let me simply pay the ultimate tribute one lyricist can pay another and acknowledge that “A Fine Romance” is one of the many Dorothy Fields lyrics I wish I had written!⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁷ Norman, 1-2.

⁴⁴⁸ Much of the material from here to the conclusion of this dissertation was also written originally for my master’s thesis (cited earlier).

⁴⁴⁹ Winer, 100.

This idea of Fields's use of "kitchen sink" words also impressed Sondheim, who counts Fields among his favorite lyricists.⁴⁵⁰ Sondheim attempted to emulate this element of Fields's style in a number from his 1971 musical *Follies*: According to Joane Gordon, a Sondheim biographer, "[the intention was] to imitate the styles of the great songwriters of the times, and affectionately comment on them, as well." The resulting lyric is a Fields-ian slant to Sondheim's "Losing My Mind."⁴⁵¹

An examination of "Losing My Mind" helps delineate what Harnick meant in using the phrase "kitchen sink words." In it, Sondheim uses everyday phrases ("sun," "coffee cup," "every single chore"). To some, these might seem mundane, but when paired with the romantically charged sentiment of "It's like I'm losing my mind," the mundane becomes the magical. Also noteworthy is the straight-forwardness of this lyric. Not characteristic of Sondheim's writing (ironically, the Hammerstein prodigy is better known for tongue-twisting lyrics, like "Better stop and take stock / while you're standing here stuck / on the steps of the palace" from 1987's *Into the Woods*), it is certainly characteristic of Fields's. Thereby, it is appropriate in a song that attempts to capture her style:

The sun comes up,
I think about you.
The coffee cup,
I think about you.
I want you so
it's like I'm losing my mind

⁴⁵⁰ Stephen Sondheim, "Theatre Lyrics," *The Dramatist* 6 (2004), 14.

⁴⁵¹ Joane Gordon, *Art Isn't Easy: the Achievement of Stephen Sondheim* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois Press, 1990), 88.

The morning ends,
I think about you.
I talk to friends
and think about you,
and do they know

In addition to influencing Harnick and Sondheim, Winer notes that Fred Ebb considered Fields his “mentor.” Known for his Tony Award-winning work with composer John Kander on shows, like *Cabaret* (1966) and *Chicago* (1975), Ebb auditioned for Fields early in his career. Fields made an impact on Ebb that lasted until his death in September of 2004:

I can still recall Miss Fields smiling at me and encouraging me and nodding her head, “Yes.” When we had finished, nobody said anything. I think they were asked not to, and Dorothy walked me to the door of the office in which we had played. As I was going out, she impulsively kissed me on the cheek and said, “I wish I were in your shoes right now.” I took it to mean that she envied my youth and, as she later told me, was really impressed with my talent. I still do, and I will always remember that afternoon.⁴⁵²

In spite of her many fans in the theatre community, Fields biggest fan was once her biggest foe. Just before Fields won the Oscar for “The Way You Look Tonight,” Lew Fields wrote to her, “Your lyrics are great, funny stuff. I’m just coo-coo about them,”⁴⁵³ and so he expressed the sentiments of audiences everywhere.

⁴⁵² Winer, 96.

⁴⁵³ Fields and Fields, 512.

REFERENCES

- Albee, Edward. "Notes." In *Off-Off Broadway Explosion: How Provocative Playwrights of the 1960s Ignited a New American Theater*. New York: Back Stage Books, 2003.
- Ammer, Christine. Author's Note to *Unsung: a History of Women in American Music*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980.
- Aston, Elaine. "'Bad Girls' and 'Sick Boys': New Women Playwrights and the Future of Feminism." In *Feminist Futures? Theatre, Performance, Theory*, Elaine Aston and Geraldine Harris, editors. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006.
- Atkinson, J. Brooks. "Shirley Booth Stars at the Majestic." *The New York Times*, April 9, 1954.
- Atkinson, J. Brooks. "Theatre: *Bells are Ringing* for Judy Holliday." *New York Times*, November 30, 1956.
- Atkinson, J. Brooks. "Theatre: the Jungles of the City," *New York Times*, September 27, 1957.
- Atkinson, J. Brooks. "The Play." *New York Times*, May 10, 1928.
- Barnes, Clive. "Theater: Spirited '1776' – Founding Father's Tale is a Happy Musical." *The New York Times*, March 17, 1969.
- Barnes, Howard. "Spectacular Production." *The New York Herald Tribune*, February 3, 1950.
- Bergreen, Laurence. *As Thousands Cheer: the Life of Irving Berlin*. New York: Viking, 1990.
- Bordman, Gerald. *American Musical Theatre: a Chronicle*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Bradley, Ian. *You've Got to Have a Dream: the Message of the Musical*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.
- Brown, John Mason. "Season Has a Hit at Last as *Let's Face It!* Arrives." *New York World Telegram*, October 30, 1941.
- Burrows, Abe, Jack Weinstock, and Willie Gilbert, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Music Theatre International, 1961.
- Bush Jones, John. *Our Musicals, Ourselves: a Social History of the American Musical Theatre*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2002.

- Canning, Charlotte. *Feminist Theaters in the USA: Staging Women's Experience*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Carnes, Mark, ed. *Invisible Giants: Fifty Americans who Shaped the Nation but Missed the History Book*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Case, Sue-Ellen. "Classic Drag: the Greek Creation of Female Parts." In the *Wadsworth Anthology of Drama, 5th ed.*, ed. W.B. Worthen. Boston: Thomson Higher Education, 2007.
- Case, Sue-Ellen. *Feminism and Theatre Reissued Edition*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008.
- Cavanaugh, Jennifer Jones. "A Composer in Her Own Right: Arrangers, Musical Directors, and Conductors," In *Women in Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists*, edited by Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc., Publishers, 2008.
- Chapman, John. "'Arms and the Girl' a Good Show, Thanks to Some Frisky Principals." *The New York Daily News*, February 3, 1950.
- Chapman, John. "'By the Beautiful Sea' Gets Soggy." *New York Daily News*, April 9, 1954.
- Chapman, John. "*How to Succeed in Business* is Splendid Satire with its Grand Cast." *New York Daily News*, October 16, 1961.
- Chapman, John. "Palace Theatre Greets Broadway with a Sparkler, *Sweet Charity*." *New York Daily News*, January 31, 1966.
- Chapman, John. "Sid Caesar Multiplied by Eight Makes *Little Me* Big Laugh Show." *New York Daily News*, November 19, 1962.
- Chapman, John. "'1776' Opens at the 46th Street; It's Funny, Moving and Artistic." *The New York Daily News*, March 17, 1969.
- Coleman, Bud. "Helburn, Dalrymple, and Lortel: a Triumvirate of Great Producers." In *Women in Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performances Artists*, Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta, editors. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. Publishers, 2008.
- Coleman, Bud, and Judith Sebesta, eds., *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008.

- Coleman, Robert. "‘Arms & the Girl’ Gay and Charming Hit." *New York Daily Mirror*, February 3, 1950.
- Coleman, Robert. "Bells are Ringing Latest Broadway Click." *New York Daily Mirror*, November 30, 1956.
- Coleman, Robert. "‘By the Beautiful Sea’ Offers Lots of Robust Fun." *Daily Mirror*, April 9, 1954.
- Coleman, Robert. "‘Hello, Daddy’ – Lew Presents and Plays in Musical Comedy Written by Son and Daughter." Unattributed press clipping in McHugh scrapbook, December 1928,
- Coleman, Robert. "How to Succeed Really Does!" *New York Mirror*, October 16, 1961.
- Coleman, Robert. "Robert Coleman’s Theatre: *Redhead* a Walloping Hit." *Daily Mirror*, February 6, 1959.
- Cooke, Richard P. "Big Backyard." *Wall Street Journal*, January 29, 1945.
- Cooke, Richard P. "The Theater." *The Wall Street Journal*, March 18, 1969.
- Comden, Betty, and Adolph Green. *Bells Are Ringing*. New York: Random House, 1956.
- Crespy, David. *Off-Off Broadway Explosion: How Provocative Playwrights of the 1960s Ignited a New American Theater*, New York: Back Stage Books, 2003.
- Dace, Tish. "Designing Women." In *Women in Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performances Artists*, Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta, editors. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. Publishers, 2008.
- de Gay, Jane and Lizbeth Goodman, editors. "Introduction: Speaking in Tongues – Making (Sense of) Women’s Languages in Theatre." In *Languages of Theatre Shaped by Women*. Bristol: Intellect, 2003.
- de Lauretis, Teresa. *Alice Doesn’t: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982.
- Dolan, Jill. "Feminist Performance Criticism and the Popular: Reviewing Wendy Wasserstein." *Theatre Journal* (2008).
- Dolan, Jill. *The Feminist Spectator as Critic*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1991.
- "Dorothy Fields, 68, Lyricist Dies; Leaves 300+ Song Heritage." *Variety*, April 13, 1974, 2.

- “Dorothy Fields, Lyricist, Dies; Wrote 400 Songs in 50 Years.” *New York Times*, March 29, 1974.
- Esterow, Milton. “Women at Work Making Musicals: Role Increasingly Active in Creating Broadway Shows.” *New York Times*, May 11, 1963.
- Everett, William A. “American and British Operetta in the 1920s: Romance, Nostalgia, and Adventure.” In *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, 2nd ed., edited by William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Felman, Shoshana. “ReReading Femininity.” *Yale French Studies* 62 (1981): 21.
- Fields, Armond, and L. Marc Fields. *From the Bowery to Broadway: Lew Fields and the Roots of American Popular Theatre*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Fields, Dorothy. *An Evening with Dorothy Fields*, DRG Records, Inc. - CD.
- Fields, Dorothy. Columbia University Oral History Project. New York: Columbia University, 1958.
- Fresh Air. “American Popular Song Series – Dorothy Fields,” first broadcast 1999 by National Public Radio. Hosted by Terry Gross.
- Furia, Philip. *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: a History of America’s Great Lyricists*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Garland, Robert. “Less in Musical-Play than There Should Be.” *New York Journal American*, February 3, 1950.
- Gordon, Joanne. *Art Isn’t Easy: the Achievement of Stephen Sondheim*. Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois Press, 1990.
- Gottfried, Martin. “Theatre: 1776.” *Women’s Wear Daily*, March 17, 1969.
- Gottlieb, Robert, and Robert Kimball, eds. *Reading Lyrics*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2000.
- Gower, Melrose. “Music and Story are Balanced in New Way by Writing Experts.” *Washington Post*, January 16, 1938
- Grant, Mark N. *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004.
- Green, Stanley. *Broadway Musicals: Show by Show, 5th Edition*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1996.

- Greenspan, Charlotte. *Pick Yourself Up: Dorothy Fields and the American Musical*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Gussow, Mel. "Entering the Mainstream: the Plays of Beth Henley, Marsha Norman, and Wendy Wasserstein." In *Women Writing Plays: Three Decades of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2006.
- Hawkins, William. "'Arms and the Girl' Close to Top Drawer." *The New York World-Telegram*, February 3, 1950.
- Hyland, William G. *The Song is Ended: Songwriters and American Music, 1900-1950*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Israel, Beth. *Bachelor Girl: the Secret History of Single Women in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Harper Collins, 2002.
- Jablonski, Edward. *Irving Berlin: American Troubador*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1999.
- Kantor, Michael, and Laurence Maslon. *Broadway: the American Musical*. New York: Bullfinch Press, 2004.
- Kaye, Milton. *Richard Rodgers: a comparative Melody Analysis of His Songs with Hart and Hammerstein - Interview with Dorothy Fields* (microform), 1969.
- Kenrick, John. *Musical Theatre: a History*. New York: Continuum, 2008.
- Kerr, Walter. "First Night Report: *Little Me*." *New York Herald Tribune*, November 19, 1962.
- Kerr, Walter. "*Sweet Charity*." *New York Herald Tribune*, January 31, 1966.
- Kerr, Walter. "Theater: *Bells are Ringing*." *New York Herald Tribune*, November 30, 1956.
- Kerr, Walter F. "Theater: 'By the Beautiful Sea.'" *New York Herald Tribune*, April 9, 1954.
- Kerr, Walter. "'1776' and All's Well." *The New York Times*, March 23, 1969.
- Kerr, Walter. "First Night Report: *How to Succeed in Business*." *New York Herald Tribune*, October 16, 1961.
- Keyssar, Helen. *Feminist Theatre*. London: the MacMillan Press, Ltd., 1994.
- Keyser, Herbert. *Geniuses of the American Musical Theatre: the Composers and Lyricists*. New York: Applause, 2009.
- Kimball, Robert, and Linda Emmet. *The Complete Lyrics of Irving Berlin*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001.

- Kleiner, Liz, Gary Smith, and Barry Frank. "Found in the Drama Mailbag." *New York Times*, October 13, 1957.
- Konas, Gary. "Working with the Boys: Women who Wrote Musicals in the Golden Age." In *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists*, edited by Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. Publishers, 2008.
- Lockridge, Richard. "Let's Face It! with Danny Kaye is Offered at the Imperial." *New York Sun*, October 30, 1941.
- Mantle, Burns. "Something for the Boys is Also One for the Hit Column." *New York Daily News*, January 8, 1943.
- McClain, John. "A Gay, Zingy Smash Hit." *New York Journal American*, October 16, 1961.
- McClain, John. "All Hail to Caesar!" *New York Journal American*, November 19, 1962.
- McClain, John. "Gwen Verdon in Big, Fat Hit." *New York Journal American*, January 31, 1966.
- McClain, John. "It's Worth Seeing: Only One Shirley Booth, and This is Her Show." *Journal American*, April 9, 1954.
- McClain, John. "Judy Holliday Triumphs in Nifty Frolic." *New York Journal American*, November 30, 1956.
- McClung, Bruce D., and Paul R. Laird. "Musical Sophistication on Broadway: Kurt Weill and Leonard Bernstein." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, 2nd ed., edited by William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- McMillin, Scott. *The Musical as Drama*. Princeton, NH: Princeton University Press, 2006.
"Miss Dorothy Fields to Fete Girl Scout Aides." *New York Times*, December 6, 1959.
- Mordden, Ethan. *Beautiful Mornin': the Broadway Musical in the 1940s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Mordden, Ethan. *Coming Up Roses: the Broadway Musical in the 1950s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Mordden, Ethan. *One More Kiss: The Broadway Musical in the 1970s*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003.
- Mordden, Ethan. *Open a New Window: the Broadway Musical in the 1960s*. New York: Palgrave: MacMillan, 2001.

- Mordden, Ethan. *Sing for Your Supper: the Broadway Musical in the 1930s*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.
- Most, Andrea. *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Mountford, Fiona. "Songs Show Fields in Full Flower." *London Evening Standard*, June 21, 2002.
- Nadel, Norman. "Gwen Verdon Biggest Gift to *Sweet Charity*." *New York World Telegram*, January 31, 1966.
- Nadel, Norman. "*Little Me* at Lunt-Fontanne." *New York World-Telegram*, November 19, 1962.
- Newlin, Keith, ed. *American Plays of the New Woman*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000.
- Nichols, Lewis. "The Play." *New York Times*, January 29, 1945.
- "Nine New Names Were Added to the Theater Hall of Fame." *New York Times*, November 22, 1988.
- Norman, Marsha. "Introduction." In *Women Writing Plays: Three Decades of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2006.
- Norton, Richard C. *A Chronology of American Musical Theatre, Vol. 2*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Norton, Richard C. *A Chronology of American Musical Theatre, Vol. 3*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Oliver, Donald, ed. *The Greatest Revue Sketches*. New York: Avon Books, 1982.
- Ommen van der Merwe, Ann. *The Ziegfeld Follies: a History in Song*. Lanham: the Scarecrow Press, 2009.
- Rascoe, Burton. "*Mexican Hayride* Lavish, Beautiful." *New York World-Telegram*, January 29, 1944.
- Rothman, Korey R. "'Will You Remember?' Female Lyricists of Operetta and Musical Comedy." In *Women in American Musical Theatre: Essays on Composers, Lyricists, Librettists, Arrangers, Choreographers, Designers, Directors, Producers, and Performance Artists*, edited by Bud Coleman and Judith A. Sebesta. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc. Publishers, 2008.
- Savrans, David. "Toward a Historiography of the Popular." *Theatre Survey* 45 (2004): 211-217.

- Schroeder, Patricia R. *The Feminist Possibilities of Dramatic Realism*. Madison, WI: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996.
- Sears, Ann. "The Coming of the Musical Play: Rodgers & Hammerstein." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, 2nd ed., edited by William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Short, Frank Lea. "A Talk with Lew Fields." *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 24, 1924.
- Simas, Rick. *The Musicals No One Came to See: a Guidebook to Four Decades of Musical-Comedy Casualties on Broadway, off-Broadway, and in Out-of-Town Try-out, 1943-1983*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987.
- Simon, Neil. *Sweet Charity*. New York: Random House, 1966.
- Sondheim, Stephen. "Theatre Lyrics." *The Dramatist* 6 (2004), 14.
- Steinblatt, Jim. "Fields of Gold." *Playback: ASCAP Newsletter*, Spring 2005.
- Stempel, Larry. "What Golden Age? More Answers About Musical Theatre." *New York Times*, December 9, 2010.
- Stewart, John. *Broadway Musicals, 1943-2004*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2006.
- Stone, Peter. *1776*. New York; Penguin Books, 1976.
- Stultz, Kristin. "Defining a Style for the Lyrics of Dorothy Fields." Masters thesis. University of Kentucky, 2005.
- Sutton, Martin. "Patterns of Meaning in the Musical." In *Genre – the Musical*, edited by Rick Altman. London: BFI, 1981.
- Taubman, Howard. "Theatre Caesar and Virginia Martin in Little Me." *New York Times*, November 19, 1962.
- Theater Talk. Episode no. 409, first broadcast 1997 by CUNY-TV. Hosted by Susan Haskins and Michael Riedel.
- "The Theatre." *Wall Street Journal*, May 21, 1947,
- The White House Blog. "President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address." The White House, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/inaugural-address>.
- Watts, Jr. Richard. "A Brilliant New Musical Comedy." *New York Post*, October 16, 1961.

Watts, Jr., Richard. "A New Triumph for Judy Holliday." *New York Post*, November 30, 1956.

Watts, Jr., Richard. "Shirley Booth at Coney Island." *New York Post*, April 9, 1954.

Watts, Jr., Richard. "The Declaration of Independence." *The New York Post*, March 17, 1969.

Watts, Jr., Richard. "The Girl and the Revolution." *The New York Post*, February 3, 1950.

Watts, Jr., Richard. "Two on the Aisle: the Men in Belle Poitrine's Life." *New York Post*, November 19, 1962.

Wilson, John S. "10 Elected to New Hall of Fame for Songwriters." *New York Times*, March 10, 1971.

Winer, Deborah Grace. *On the Sunny Side of the Street: the Life and Lyrics of Dorothy Fields*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1997.

Winer, Deborah Grace, moderator. "Sister's Gershwin – Where are the Women Composers & Lyricists. Panel presented at the New York Public Library for Performing Arts as part of the Speaking Out Forum. New York, NY, 1997.

Wollman, Elizabeth L. *The Theater Will Rock: a History of the Rock Musical, from Hair Hedwig*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006.

Yours for a Song: the Women of Tin Pan Alley. DVD. Directed by Terry Benes. New York: Fox Lorber, 1998.

APPENDIX A

THE SHOWS OF DOROTHY FIELDS

SHOW (titles followed by * indicates revival)	FIELDS'S ROLE	OPENING NIGHT	# of PERFS.
<i>Blackbirds of 1928</i>	lyricist	5/9/1928	518
<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	lyricist	12/26/1928	198
<i>The International Review</i>	lyricist	2/25/1930	95
<i>The Vanderbilt Revue</i>	co-lyricist	11/5/1930	13
<i>Shoot the Works</i>	co-lyricist	7/21/1931	87
<i>Singin' the Blues</i>	co-lyricist	9/16/1931	45
<i>Stars In Your Eyes</i>	lyricist	2/9/1939	127
<i>Let's Face It!</i>	co-librettist	10/29/1941	547
<i>Something for the Boys</i>	co-librettist	1/7/1943	422
<i>Mexican Hayride</i>	co-librettist	1/28/1944	481
<i>Up in Central Park</i>	lyricist co-librettist	1/27/1945	504
<i>Annie Get Your Gun</i>	co-librettist	5/16/1946	1147
<i>Arms and the Girl</i>	lyricist co-librettist	2/2/1950	134
<i>A Treet Grows in Brooklyn</i>	lyricist	4/19/1951	267
<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	lyricist co-librettist	4/8/1954	270
<i>Redhead</i>	lyricist co-librettist	2/5/1959	452
<i>Sweet Charity</i>	lyricist	1/18/1966	608
<i>Annie Get Your Gun*</i>	co-librettist	9/21/1966	78
<i>Seesaw</i>	lyricist	3/18/1973	296
<i>Sweet Charity*</i>	lyricist	4/27/1986	369
<i>Annie Get Your Gun</i>	co-librettist	3/4/1999	1045
<i>Sweet Charity*</i>	lyricist	5/4/2005	279

APPENDIX B

THE SONGS OF DOROTHY FIELDS⁴⁵⁴

YEAR	SONG	SHOW / FILM (titles followed by an * indicate written for film)	COMPOSER
Unknown	Moody's Mood	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1926	I'm a Broken Hearted Blackbird	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Bon Soir Cherie	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Harlem River Quiver	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Collegiana	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Baby!	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Bandanna Babies	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Diga Diga Doo	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Dixie	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Doin' the New Low-Down	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Here Comes my Blackbird	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	I Can't Give You Anything But Love	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	I Must Have that Man	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Magnolia's Wedding Day	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Porgy (Blues for Porgy)	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Shuffle Your Feet (and Just Roll Along)	<i>Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	As Long As We're in Love	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Futuristic Rhythm	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	I Want Plenty of You	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	In a Great Big Way	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Let's Sit and Talk about You	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Maybe Means Yes	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Out Where the Blues Begin	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Party Line	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Three Little Maids from School	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1928	Your Disposition is Mine	<i>Hello, Daddy</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	For One Another	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Hot Chocolate	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Hottentot Trot	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	A Japanese Dream	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	A Japanese Moon	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Let Me Sing Before Breakfast	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Think of You Think of Me in the	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy

⁴⁵⁴ Winer, 247-253.

	Moonlight		
1929	Arabian Lover	<i>Cotton Club Parade</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Freeze an' Melt	<i>Cotton Club Parade</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Hot Feet	<i>Cotton Club Parade</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Collegiana (<i>originally written in 1928</i>)	<i>The Time, the Place, and the Girl*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Looking for Love	<i>Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Squeaky Shoes	<i>Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	What a Whale of a Difference Just a Few Lights Make	<i>Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Because I Love Nice Things	<i>Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic, 2nd Edition</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	I Can't Wait	<i>Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic, 2nd Edition</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1929	Raisin' the Roof	<i>Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic, 2nd Edition</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Dance, Fool, Dance	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Rosalie	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Spring Fever	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Topsy and Eva	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Big Papoose is on the Loose	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Cinderella Brown	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Exactly Like You	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Gypsy Love	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	I Could Go for You	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	I'm Feelin' Blue, 'Cause I've Got Nobody (<i>cut from show</i>)	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	International Rhythm	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	I've Got a Bug in My Head	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	I've Got the Blues	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Keys to Your Heart	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Make Up Your Mind	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	The Margineers	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	On the Sunny Side of the Street	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Spain	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	That's Why We're Dancing	<i>The International Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Man on Earth is Worth Half a Dozen on the Moon	<i>Kelly's Vacation</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Any One Else	<i>Kelly's Vacation</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Do I Know Why	<i>Kelly's Vacation</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Dreaming	<i>Kelly's Vacation</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Wearin' of the Green	<i>Kelly's Vacation</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Go Home and Tell Your Mother	<i>Love in the Rough*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	I'm Doin' that Thing	<i>Love in the Rough*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	I'm Learning a lot from You	<i>Love in the Rough*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Like Kelly Can	<i>Love in the Rough*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	One More Waltz	<i>Love in the Rough*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	There's a Kick in the Old Girl Yet	<i>March of Time*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Isn't Nature Wonderful	<i>A Social Success*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy

1930	Blue Again	<i>The Vanderbilt Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Button Up Your Heart	<i>The Vanderbilt Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	Cut In	<i>The Vanderbilt Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1930	You're the Better Half of Me	<i>The Vanderbilt Revue</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	Cheerio	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy / Stothart, Herbert
1931	Harlemania	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	I'm So Backward and She's So Forward	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	It Costs Nothing to Dream	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	Lolita	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	Love Magician	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	Nobody's Fool	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	Scene on the Dock	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy / Stothart, Herbert
1931	There's Love in the Air	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	Cuban Love Song	<i>Cuban Love Song*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy / Stothart, Herbert
1931	Tramps at Sea	<i>Cuban Love Song*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy / Stothart, Herbert
1931	Examination Number	<i>Flying High*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	I'll Make a Happy Landing (*the Lucky Day I Land You)	<i>Flying High*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	We'll Dance Until the Dawn	<i>Flying High*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	I'm Feelin' Blue	<i>Rhapsody in Black</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	How's Your Uncle	<i>Shoot the Works</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	It's the Darndest Thing	<i>Singin' the Blues</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1931	Singin' the Blues	<i>Singin' the Blues</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	Ain't it the Truth	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	Happy Times	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	I've Got a Date with Kate	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	Then You Went and Changed Your Mind	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	Whisper to the Moonlight	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	It's the Darnedest Thing	<i>Dancers in the Dark*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	Happy Times	Radio City Music Hall Opening	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	Hey Young Fella (Close Your Umbrella)!	Radio City Music Hall Opening	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	Journey's End	Radio City Music Hall Opening	McHugh, Jimmy
1932	With a Feather in Your Cap	Radio City Music Hall Opening	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	I've got a Roof Over My Head	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	In the Little White Church on the Hill	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Let's Sit This One Out	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Let's Whistle a Waltz	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Pride of the Mountainside	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	What Is There About You?	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	At Sea	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Clowns in Clover	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Don't Blame Me	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Hey Young Fella (Close Your Umbrella)! (originally from the Radio City Music	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy

	<i>Hall Opening)</i>		
1933	I'm Full of the Devil	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Make Up Your Mind	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	The Margineers (originally written for The International Revue)	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	My Favorite Person	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Play Half a Chorus	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Positively Love You	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Prologue	<i>Clowns in Clover</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	My Dancing Lady	<i>Dancing Lady*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Bus Ride Sequence	<i>Meet the Barron*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Clean as a Whistle	<i>Meet the Barron*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Dinner at Eight	<i>Meet the Barron*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Don't Blame Me (originally written for Clowns in Clover)	<i>Meet the Barron*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Drumming Out	<i>Meet the Barron*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Hail to the Baron Munchausen	<i>Meet the Barron*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Musical Opening	<i>Meet the Barron*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1933	Lucky Fella	<i>The Prize Figher and the Lady*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Debutante	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Dinah's Daughter	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	El Choclo	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy / Villoldo, A.P.
1934	I Love Gardenias	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Lucky Duck	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Moonlight on the Riviera	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Over on the Jersey Side	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Say How D'Ye Do-a to Kalua	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Serenade for a Wealthy Widow	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy / Forsythe, Reginald
1934	Sing You a Couple of Choruses	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Step In	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Tell Me	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Who Said that Dreams Don't Come True	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Full of the Devil	<i>Fugitive Lovers*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Lost in a Fog	<i>Have a Heart*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Thank You for a Lovely Evening	<i>Have a Heart*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1934	Goodbye, Blues	<i>Strictly Dynamite*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy / Johnson, Arnold
1935	Every Little Moment	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	Harlem at Its Best	pop song	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	I Can't Waltz Alone	<i>Alice Adams*</i>	Steiner, Max
1935	Every Night at Eight	<i>Every Night at Eight*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	I Feel a Song Coming On (with George Oppenheimer)	<i>Every Night at Eight*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	I'm in the Mood for Love	<i>Every Night at Eight*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy

1935	It's Great to Be in Love Again	<i>Every Night at Eight*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	Speaking Confidentially	<i>Every Night at Eight*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	Take it Easy	<i>Every Night at Eight*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	That's the Hollywood Low-Down	<i>Every Night at Eight*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	Hooray for Love	<i>Hooray for Love*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	I'm Livin' in a Great Big Way	<i>Hooray for Love*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	I'm in Love All Over Again	<i>Hooray for Love*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	Palsie Walsie	<i>Hooray for Love*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	You're an Angel	<i>Hooray for Love*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	I Dream Too Much	<i>I Dream Too Much</i>	Kern, Jerome
1935	I Got Love	<i>I Dream Too Much</i>	Kern, Jerome
1935	I'm the Echo (You're the Song I Sing)	<i>I Dream Too Much</i>	Kern, Jerome
1935	The Jockey on the Carousel	<i>I Dream Too Much</i>	Kern, Jerome
1935	Don't Mention Love to Me	<i>In Person*</i>	Levant, Oscar
1935	Got a New Lease on life	<i>In Person*</i>	Levant, Oscar
1935	Out of Sight, Out of Mind	<i>In Person*</i>	Levant, Oscar
1935	Music in my Heart	<i>The Nitwits*</i>	McHugh, Jimmy
1935	Fashion Show	<i>Roberta*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1935	I Won't Dance (<i>with Oscar Hammerstein</i>)	<i>Roberta*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1935	Lovely to Look at	<i>Roberta*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1935	Russian Lullaby	<i>Roberta*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1936	Learn How to Lose	<i>The King Steps Out*</i>	Kreisler, Fritz
1936	Madly in Love	<i>The King Steps Out*</i>	Kreisler, Fritz
1936	Stars in my Eyes	<i>The King Steps Out*</i>	Kreisler, Fritz
1936	What Shall Remain?	<i>The King Steps Out*</i>	Kreisler, Fritz
1936	Bojangles of Harlem	<i>Swing Time*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1936	A Fine Romance	<i>Swing Time*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1936	It's Not in the Cards	<i>Swing Time*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1936	Never Gonna Dance	<i>Swing Time*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1936	Pick Yourself Up	<i>Swing Time*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1936	Swing Low, Swing High	<i>Swing Time*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1936	The Way You Look Tonight	<i>Swing Time*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1937	Our Song	<i>When You're in Love*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1937	The Whistling Boy	<i>When You're in Love*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1938	Heavenly Party	<i>Joy of Living*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1938	Just Let Me Look at You	<i>Joy of Living*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1938	What's Good about Good-Night?	<i>Joy of Living*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1938	You Couldn't be Cuter	<i>Joy of Living*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1939	He's Goin' Home	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	All the Time	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	As of Today	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	I'll Pay the Check	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	It's All Yours	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	Just a Little Bit More	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	A Lady Needs a Change	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	Never a Dull Moment	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	Okay for Sound	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur

1939	One Brief Moment	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	Places, Everybody	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	Self-Made Man	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	Terribly Attractive	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	This is It	<i>Stars in Your Eyes</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1939	Swing Left, Sweet Chariot	<i>Sticks and Stones</i>	Henderson, Ray
1940	Back in my Shell	<i>One Night in the Tropics*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1940	Farandola	<i>One Night in the Tropics*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1940	Remind Me	<i>One Night in the Tropics*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1940	You and Your Kiss	<i>One Night in the Tropics*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1945	Let's Have an Old-Fashioned Christmas (and Pray for a Happy New Year)	pop song	Adamson, Harold
1945	Sergeant Housewife	pop song	Meyer, Joseph
1945	April Snow	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	The Big Back Yard	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	The Birds and the Bees	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	Boss Tweed	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	Carousel in the Park	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	Close as Pages in a Book	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	Currier and Ives	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	The Fireman's Bride	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	It Doesn't Cost You Anything to Dream	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	Opening Scene	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	Rip Van Winkle	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	Up from the Gutter	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	When She Walks in the Room	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	When the Party Gives a Party	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1945	You Can't Get Over the Wall	<i>Up In Central Park</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1948	Oh! Say Can You See	<i>Up In Central Park*</i>	Romberg, Sigmund
1950	A Cow and a Plough and a Frau	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	Don't Talk	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	A Girl with a Flame	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	He Will Tonight	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	I Like it Here	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	I'll Never Learn	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	I'll Never See You Again (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	I'm Scared	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	Johnny Cake	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	Little Old Cabin Door	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	Mister Washington! Uncle George!	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	Nothin' for Nothin'	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	Plantation in Philadelphia	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	She's Exciting	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	That's My Fella	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	That's What I Told Him Last Night	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1950	There Must be Somethin' Better Than Love	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton

1950	You Kissed Me	<i>Arms & the Girl</i>	Gould, Morton
1951	Get a Horse	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Goin' Steady	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	I'd Like to Take You Out Dreaming	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	It Couldn't Happen to Two Nicer People	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Lorelei Brown	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	One More You	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Spring has Spring	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	That's for Children	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Where Can I Run from You?	<i>Excuse My Dust*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Andiamo	<i>Mr. Imperium*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1951	Let Me Look at You	<i>Mr. Imperium*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1951	My Love an' My Mule	<i>Mr. Imperium*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1951	Carnie's Pitch	<i>Texas Carnival*</i>	Warren, Harry
1951	It's Dynamite	<i>Texas Carnival*</i>	Warren, Harry
1951	Love is a Lovely Word	<i>Texas Carnival*</i>	Warren, Harry
1951	Schnapps	<i>Texas Carnival*</i>	Warren, Harry
1951	Whoa, Emma	<i>Texas Carnival*</i>	Warren, Harry
1951	You've Got a Face Full of Wonderful Things	<i>Texas Carnival*</i>	Warren, Harry
1951	Young Folks Should Get Married	<i>Texas Carnival*</i>	Warren, Harry
1951	The Bride Wore Something Old (<i>cut</i>)	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Call on Your Neighbor	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Don't Be Afraid	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Growing Pains	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	He Had Refinement	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	I'll Buy You a Star	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	I'm Like a New Broom	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	If You Haven't Got a Sweetheart	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Is That My Prince?	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Look who's Dancing	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Love is the Reason	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Make the Man Love Me	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Mine 'til Monday	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Oysters in July (<i>cut</i>)	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Payday	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	That's How it Goes	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1951	Tuscaloosa (<i>cut</i>)	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	Boys are Better than Girls	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	Dance Me Around	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	Goin' with the Birds	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	I Did It, and I'm Glad	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	I'm Proud of You	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	Now is Wonderful	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	The Profezzor	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	Where Do I Go from You?	<i>The Big Song and Dance*</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1952	I'll Be Hard to Handle (<i>with Bernard</i>)	<i>Lovely to Look At*</i>	Kern, Jerome

	<i>Dougall)</i>		
1952	Lafayette	<i>Lovely to Look At*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1952	The Most Exciting Night	<i>Lovely to Look At*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1952	Opening Night	<i>Lovely to Look At*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1952	When We Were Very Young	<i>Lovely to Look At*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1952	You're Devastating (<i>with Otto Harbach</i>)	<i>Lovely to Look At*</i>	Kern, Jerome
1953	Can You Spell Schenectady?	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	The Evils of Drink!	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	Happy the Bride the Sun Shines Upon	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	I Could Cook	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	I Was Wearin' Horseshoes	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	Look Who's Been Dreaming	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	On the Erie Canal	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	Something Real Special	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	Today I Love Everybody	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	We're Doin' it for the Natives in Jamaica	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	We're in Business	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	When I Close My Door	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	Why am I Happy?	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	With the Sun Upon Me	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1953	Yes!	<i>The Farmer Takes a Wife*</i>	Arlen, Harold
1954	Alone Too Long	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Coney Island Boat	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Good Time Charlie	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Hang Up!	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Happy Habit	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Hooray for George the Third	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	I'd Rather Wake Up by Myself	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	It's All Mine (<i>cut</i>)	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	It's Not Where You Start (<i>cut</i>)	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	It's Up to You (<i>cut</i>)	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Lottie Gibson Specialty	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Me and Pollyanna (<i>cut</i>)	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Moments from Shakespeare (<i>cut</i>)	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Mona from Arizona	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	More Love than Your Love	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Old Enough to Love	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	The Sea Song (By the Beautiful Sea)	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Thirty Weeks of Heaven (<i>cut</i>)	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1954	Throw the Anchor Away	<i>By the Beautiful Sea</i>	Schwartz, Arthur
1956	April Fooled Me	pop song	Kern, Jerome
1956	Introduce Me	pop song	Kern, Jerome
1956	Nice to Be Near	pop song	Kern, Jerome
1957	Marcha Del Toros	pop song	Kern, Jerome
1957	The Happy Heart	Junior Miss (<i>TV musical</i>)	Lane, Burton
1957	Have Feet, Will Dance	Junior Miss (<i>TV musical</i>)	Lane, Burton
1957	I'll Buy It	Junior Miss (<i>TV musical</i>)	Lane, Burton

1957	It's Just What I Wanted	Junior Miss (TV musical)	Lane, Burton
1957	Junior Miss	Junior Miss (TV musical)	Lane, Burton
1957	Let's Make it Christmas All Year Long	Junior Miss (TV musical)	Lane, Burton
1957	A Male is an Animal	Junior Miss (TV musical)	Lane, Burton
1959	Behave Yourself	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	Dream Dance	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	Erbie Fitch's Twitch	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	I'll Try	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	I'm Back in Circulation	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	It Doesn't Take a Minute (cut)	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	Just for Once	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	Look Who's in Love	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	Merely Marvelous	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	My Gal's a Mule (cut)	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	My Girl is Just Enough Woman for Me	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	The Right Finger of Me Left Hand	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	She's Not Enough Woman for Me	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	The Simpson Sisters	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	Two Faces in the Dark	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	The Uncle Sam Rag	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1959	We Loves Ya, Jimey	Redhead	Hague, Albert
1966	Baby, Dream Your Dream	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Big Spender	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Charity's Soliloquy	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Did You Ever Look at You (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Free Thought in Action Class (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Gimme a Raincheck (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	A Good Impression (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	I Can't Let You Down (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	I Love to Cry at Weddings	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	I'll Take Any Man (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	I'm Way Ahead (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	I'm a Brass Band	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	I'm the Bravest Individual	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	I've Tried Everything (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	If My Friends Could See Me Now	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Keep it in the Family (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Pink Taffeta Sample Size 10 (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Poor Everybody Else (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	The Rhythm of Life	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Sweet Charity	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	There's Gotta Be Something Better than This	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Too Many Tomorrows	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	When Did You Know? (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	Where am I Going?	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy
1966	You Can't Lose 'em All (cut)	Sweet Charity	Coleman, Cy

1966	You Should See Yourself	<i>Sweet Charity</i>	Coleman, Cy
1966	You Wanna Bet (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Sweet Charity</i>	Coleman, Cy
1968	Where There is Love, There is Hope	<i>To Hell with Heroes*</i>	Jones, Quincy
1968	It's a Nice Face	<i>Sweet Charity*</i>	Coleman, Cy
1968	My Personal Property	<i>Sweet Charity*</i>	Coleman, Cy
1969	Five o'Clock Sky	pop song	Lahm, David
1970	After Forty, It's Patch, Patch, Patch	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	Charge	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	A Good Impression (<i>originally written for Sweet Charity</i>)	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	I Can't Let You Go	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	I Struck Out	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	Keep it in the Family (<i>originally written for Sweet Charity</i>)	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	Love and Logic	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	Meat and Potatoes	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	The Old Kitchen Sink	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	Red Hot Tomatoes	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	Sixty Percent of the Accidents	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	So What Now?	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	What Do I Do?	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	When Did You Know? (<i>originally written for Sweet Charity</i>)	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1970	Whisper on the Wind	<i>Eleanor</i> (unproduced)	Coleman, Cy
1973	Big Fat Heart (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Chapter 54, Number 1909	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Did You Ever Look at You (<i>cut,originally written for Sweet Charity</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	He's Good for Me	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Hospitality (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	I'm Way Ahead (<i>originally written for Sweet Charity</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	I'm in a Highly Emotional State	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	In Tune	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	It's Not Where You Start	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	More People Like You (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	My City	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Nobody Does it Like Me	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	The Party's on Me (<i>added for tours</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Pick Up the Pieces (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Poor Everybody Else (<i>originally written for Sweet Charity</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Ride Out the Storm	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Salt (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Seesaw	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Spanglish	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Tutu and Tights (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Visitors (<i>cut</i>)	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy

1973	We've Got It	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	Welcome to Holiday Inn	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy
1973	You're a Lovable Lunatic	<i>Seesaw</i>	Coleman, Cy