

## Review Essay: Lullaby for Broadway?

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

Knapp, Raymond. 2005. *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Swayne, Steve. 2005. *How Sondheim Found His Sound*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Reviewed by Walter Frisch

I.

Latecomers to high culture, Americans are obsessed with identifying and canonizing indigenous art forms. In recent years, much of this attention has been lavished on jazz. Musical theater is beginning to catch up, to judge from the recent rash of companions, readers, and reference works.<sup>1</sup> As Stephen Banfield, a dean among scholars of the American musical, observed in a 2004 review essay, “So many academic books and articles have by now lamented ‘that the musical has been neglected by academics as an area of study’ that it has to be patently untrue” (2004:83).<sup>2</sup>

One challenge in the study of both jazz and musical theater is locating the specific historical moment or the precise works in which the genres assume an identity, especially an “American” one, distinct from their influences. For musical theater, those sources would include European operetta of the later nineteenth century—specifically the works of Johann Strauss, Offenbach, and Gilbert and Sullivan—as well as vaudeville, burlesque, revue, minstrel shows, variety shows, melodrama, and British musical comedy. In the first few years of the twentieth century, these traditions coalesced in the works of Victor Herbert (notably his *Babes in Toyland*, 1903) and George M. Cohan (his first big hit, *Little Johnny Jones*, 1904). Herbert (1859–1924) had been born in Ireland, raised in London, and trained in Germany, but arrived in the United States in 1886 and made his career in this country. Cohan

## Current Musicology

---

(1878–1942) was a Yankee Doodle Dandy from the start, born, as the world knows, on (or near) July 4 in Rhode Island.

Just over a century later, the American musical has had a spectacular run. As with jazz, most accounts stress a “development” or “evolution,” in this case toward greater integration of music and drama, and greater connection with social-cultural context. The landmarks are usually seen as Jerome Kern’s and P. G. Wodehouse’s shows at the Princess Theater (1915–18); Kern’s and Oscar Hammerstein II’s *Show Boat* (1927); Richard Rodgers’s and Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!* (1943); Stephen Sondheim’s *Company* (1970); and Jonathan Larson’s *Rent* (1996).

The historiography of the American musical also exhibits a special tension, not shared by other art forms, between the whole and the part, between the shows (or movies) and the individual numbers. In general, the highest value has been placed on the “book” musical, one in which the elements are subsumed within an overall musico-dramatic design. Yet for many people, the songs, not the framework, embody the American musical. Indeed, although a musical is the product of many collaborators, we usually (as I have done above) identify it by its composer, or by composer and lyricist. Tin Pan Alley, the popular song industry that flourished in New York from the last decade of the nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth, became intimately connected, but not completely coextensive, with staged shows. Harold Arlen never wrote a hit show (his music was featured in several successful movies), but is rightly acknowledged as one of the greatest composers of American popular music.

Another tension in the scholarly treatment of the American musical, as in much writing about other American art forms (including the novel and film), arises between what might be called internalist and contextualist approaches. Internalists tend to look at the works (or individual songs) for their structural and expressive qualities. Contextualists seek to embed the works and their creators within the American social, cultural, and political milieu. Since many musicologists are formalists at heart (we fetishize our objects, as one ethnomusicologist tartly remarked some years ago), the internalist approach has dominated in writing on American musicals. Of course, these perspectives are not mutually exclusive: scholars and commentators will often move back and forth from work to context.

The authors of the studies under review here handle these tensions in different ways according to their backgrounds and scholarly temperaments. Mark Grant describes himself as a writer and “composer [of] concert music and theater pieces”; his previous book was a history of classical musical criticism in America (1998). Steve Swayne is a young academic who received his PhD in 1999 and teaches at Dartmouth College; this book is a compre-

hensively revised version of his dissertation. Raymond Knapp is a senior musicologist at UCLA who has written extensively on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European concert music; his book has grown out of an undergraduate course that he teaches.

II.

As the title of Grant's book makes clear, he has an axe to grind. For him, the American musical experienced a Golden Age that extended from about 1920 to 1970, roughly from Kern to early Sondheim, and it has since been in decline. In the Golden Age, creators of musicals strove for an integration of book, lyrics, music, choreography, and stage direction and design. In recent decades, Broadway has given us mainly vapid, flashy shows engineered by director-producers who are little more than "conceptual showmen." We are in an age of "McMusicals" (called megamusicals by others), which Grant defines as "corporately franchised stage happenings that are actually music videos packaged for theatre" (309). Take that, *Lion King!*

What makes Grant's book well worth reading is his thoughtful, multi-pronged analysis of the Golden Age musicals. His study is organized according to elements (i.e., book, lyrics, music), rather than by works, composers, or eras, as so many surveys are. This structure allows Grant to treat aspects that have rarely been addressed in the literature on musical theater, including vocal production and technique, amplification, sound design, orchestration, rhythm, stage direction, and choreography.

One of Grant's bugbears, sound amplification, became common on the stage only in the 1950s, first with foot mikes, and eventually extended to all parts of the music-theatrical enterprise. The spread of amplification, Grant argues, has fundamentally altered the sonic experience for performers and listeners. As he explains in a chapter on sound design, one of the best in the book, the first sound-mixing console appeared in the back of a theater in the late 1950s, and by the 1980s the equipment was standard. Grant provides a number of quotations from interviews with arrangers or conductors who bemoan the loss of control to sound engineers. One experienced conductor reports: "Sometimes you have to go back and say to the sound designer, 'You know, I rehearsed a diminuendo there. Don't dig them out,' because the guy who's mixing the show is undoing everything you told him" (201). Grant notes that at the time of his writing in 2003, every singer on the stage wore a wireless microphone, every musician in the pit was miked, loudspeakers surrounded the theater, and "the sound operator who sat in the rear of the theater at the mixing console was arguably more important than either the stage manager or the conductor in running the show" (199).

Grant is equally illuminating on the subject of orchestration, which has been largely invisible in literature on the Broadway musical. Early composers like John Philip Sousa, Victor Herbert, and Reginald de Koven prepared their own orchestrations. Over time, the pressures of revision and collaboration, as well as the fact that composers like Kern or Berlin had no skills in instrumentation, led to the rise of the professional orchestrator-arranger. Even the classically trained Leonard Bernstein relied on such figures.

Grant focuses on “the dean of Broadway orchestration,” Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981), who worked on some 300 shows, including many by Berlin, Gershwin, Kern, and Rodgers. The terms “orchestration” and “arrangement” barely begin to capture Bennett’s activities. Much of the score that we tend to attribute to the composers actually came from the pen of Bennett, who was “*the* ghost composer of Broadway’s golden age, having been largely responsible for the harmonies, accompaniments, and God-knows-what-else of many of the scores of the canonical tunesmiths” (177).

Grant offers ear-opening anecdotes about Bennett’s involvement in some of the most fundamental aspects of the music of *Show Boat*, including perhaps its most famous number, “Ol’ Man River.” Bennett noted in later years that when “Kern handed me his sketch [of the song] it had no name and no lyric. It was thirty-two not wholly convincing measures that sounded to me like they wanted to be wanted” (178). Bennett went to work, filling in the ends of phrases to help create musical balance; then the song was handed over to Hammerstein. Likewise, in Rodgers’s “Shall We Dance?” from *The King and I*, the “boom boom boom” that forms the orchestral response to the first vocal phrase and that is for every listener indelibly associated with the song, is, as Grant astutely observes, pure Bennett, not Rodgers.

Having read Grant’s chapter, one is struck by how even the best writing on American musical theater may give the composers—great tune writers though they were—too much credit. In *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from Show Boat to Sondheim*, for example, Geoffrey Block worshipfully analyzes quasi-Wagnerian aspects of *Show Boat* (“a vast network of thematic foreshadowing and reminiscences”) and admires “structural integrity” and “organicism” in *On Your Toes* (1997:33, 101). These features, which Block credits to Kern and Rodgers respectively, may well be primarily the work of the orchestrator-arrangers Bennett and Hans Spialek.

Like orchestrators, directors and choreographers have played a major role in musical theater, albeit one that has received more recognition in playbills, on posters, and by critics. Again, Grant focuses on certain key figures from the Golden Age, including Rouben Mamoulian, whom he calls the first significant “total vision” stage director on Broadway, responsible for *Porgy and Bess* (1935), *Oklahoma!* (1942), and *Carousel* (1945). Grant

argues that the renowned “Carousel Waltz” that opens the show, although often credited solely to the choreographer Agnes de Mille, was really “pure Mamoulian” in its conception, its pacing, and its almost cinematic exposition. (The number was also in large part the work of the highly trained composer Trude Rittmann, who arranged ballets for several Rodgers and Hammerstein shows and is another unsung heroine of Grant’s book.) Grant sees Mamoulian as the first great director to work against what he calls “song presentationalism,” that is, the practice of having a character step forward, either actually or metaphorically, to sing a number. Mamoulian “took the downstage footlight out of the musical comedy song, integrating its performance within the total canvas of narrative” (242).

Conspicuously underrepresented in Grant’s book is Stephen Sondheim, to whom he devotes a brief section of commentary entitled “The Martyrdom of Saint Stephen.” For Grant, Sondheim’s work is “perceived rightly as an elegy for the great musical theater of the past.” Grant admires *A Little Night Music* for its “parity” of music and lyrics, but tends to dismiss Sondheim’s other scores as “recitatives built on rifflike repetitions of vamps” (98). Grant is also put off by the hagiographic appreciation of Sondheim, which has “led to a certain unwillingness to entertain further development of the artistic possibilities of the musical, as if American musical theater history ends with Sondheim, or as if Sondheim worship somehow purges Broadway of its larger creative failure” (97–98).

In his assessment of Sondheim we can detect the limitations of Grant’s book, for he fails to make clear what the “artistic possibilities of the musical” might be or why we are in a period of “creative failure.” Sondheim himself may not be in sympathy with a lot of what has gone on in musical theater over the past twenty years, but he does not seem to share Grant’s pessimism. In 1998, Sondheim said in response to Swayne’s question about the future of musicals: “I don’t know if they’re going any particular place. What’s nice about it is that (as far as I can tell) virtually all the categorical rules have been broken, torn down, and dissolved” (179–80). This comment sounds like neither sour grapes nor Schadenfreude.

Almost by definition, golden ages are finite. The economic, social, and cultural conditions that enabled the Broadway musical were special and unrepeatable, as was the confluence of talented composers, lyricists, arrangers, directors, and choreographers. But golden ages—the “good old days”—are also to some extent fictional; they are nostalgic constructions by those who come after and look back. Decline-and-fall scenarios like Grant’s are rhetorically attractive but also very restrictive.

### III.

The elephant in the room of Grant's book is the prime subject of Swayne's. The critical and scholarly literature on Sondheim is by now far larger than that on any other composer of musical theater of the past fifty years. Sondheim is eminently "musicologible," if I may coin a term, in part because he has a large oeuvre that has extended beyond half a century; he is highly articulate about his work and about the traditions of musical theater; and he has seemed ready to grant interviews to scholars.

Swayne's goal is a traditionally musicological and internalist one: he is searching to define and trace the origins of Sondheim's "sound," which is really a catchy euphemism for style. Swayne initially focuses on Sondheim's work before 1970 (before *Company*), and on the influences that helped form him. Swayne has combed archival materials exhaustively, among them Sondheim's own record collection and card catalogue, and documents from the composer's days as a Williams College undergraduate, including a paper on Ravel's piano concertos and Sondheim's early unpublished compositions (musicals and a piano sonata from 1949–50). Swayne posits the main classical influences, all acknowledged by Sondheim, as those of Ravel, Rachmaninoff, Hindemith, and (more obliquely) Copland. Among musicals, Sondheim himself points to *Show Boat*, *Porgy and Bess*, and *Carousel* as his "three favorites" (51). Swayne details the song composers most admired by Sondheim, including Kern, Berlin, and Rodgers, and especially Gershwin and Arlen. Swayne understands that "influence" is no simple, innocent concept, and in his introduction he pays some lip service to Joseph Straus's recent theory of musical influence (1990). But instead of problematizing the concept, he assesses it the good, old-fashioned way, without the psychological component.

The two meatiest chapters in Swayne's book, and ultimately the most original, are his close readings of individual Sondheim numbers. One chapter looks at the song "What Can You Lose?" from the film *Dick Tracy* (1990), the other at "Putting it Together" from *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984). Swayne is a diligent and gifted analyst. The chapter on "Putting it Together" is a *tour de force*, perhaps the most comprehensive discussion (at sixty pages) of any number from musical theater now in the critical literature. Swayne calls "Putting it Together" the "pinnacle of Sondheim's abilities" (198). A complex ensemble taking place during a cocktail reception at a contemporary art gallery, it occupies nearly a fifth of the printed score of *Sunday in the Park* and some eleven minutes of continuous music. Swayne approaches it not as a "song" but as a musico-dramatic entity, discussing what he calls "cinematic" techniques of Sondheim and his collaborator James Lapine: "The intent is for the eleven-minute sequence of musical events to play

as a unified whole, a single scene comprising many discrete shots, joined through skillful montage” (207).

The term “unified whole” betrays Swayne’s basic analytical approach, as well as its potential limitations. In this book, Swayne examines Sondheim’s music according to the organicist precepts that have dominated musical analysis since the nineteenth century: unity and coherence. While these principles have always seemed applicable to the music for which they were developed (that of the Austro-German classical tradition, especially Beethoven), we have seen in recent decades how ill-fitted they are to other repertoires, such as French and Italian music, let alone most popular, folk, and non-Western musics.

This is a debate with which Swayne chooses not to engage, and with some justification. Sondheim seems to identify himself as a composer in the organicist tradition. He is quoted as saying he aims for music that is “closely structured,” and he even appears as a quasi-Schenkerian: “I generally make a kind of long line reduction in the music, because I was trained in a sort of conservative school of composition about the long line. I . . . know what the key relationships are going to be in the various sections of the song” (197). It may thus be reasonable for Swayne as analyst to follow Sondheim’s lead, especially since the overall theme of *Sunday in the Park with George* is how great art, like Seurat’s painting *La grande jatte*, is assembled out of many disparate elements that are “put together” by the creator.

At the same time, we might question whether unity is the proper criterion for analyzing the scene “Putting it Together.” Swayne identifies a modular technique, acknowledged by the composer, in which sections are moved around, added, and omitted. “There is no song per se,” Swayne explains, “only pieces of songs that are assembled and disassembled throughout the course of a show, or even the course of an individual song” (231). Coherence and unity may be less helpful paradigms for understanding this kind of structure than some contemporaneous postmodern models (Lyotard or Bakhtin, for example) that account for fragmentation and multiple perspectives, and that question metanarratives. Swayne-and-Sondheim-as-organicists is a fairly minor quibble, however, since Sondheim’s “Putting it Together” and Swayne’s explication of it creatively engage one of the tensions in musical theater identified at the opening of this review—that between the part and the whole.

#### IV.

Grant and Swayne adopt internalist approaches to the American musical, which is to say that they are concerned mainly with the creators, collabora-

## Current Musicology

---

tors, and the works themselves. There is little about audiences, the marketplace, or the broader cultural, social, and political issues that have shaped the genre. Knapp sets out from a strongly contextualist perspective, arguing that to understand a form like the American musical, we must understand how it is “connected in vital ways to its American constituency.” The musical, he argues, “provided what audiences wanted” and “draws heavily on elements of society much lower than its well-educated, more aesthetically minded elite; it appeals broadly to educated and uneducated alike; it responds shamelessly to commercial stimuli” (4).

Knapp never quite supports this large set of claims. We learn little about either the “educated” or “uneducated” to which the musical appeals, and little about its “shameless” responses to the commercial world. Nor is there much about critics or actual audiences. Knapp’s book is really concerned to demonstrate—and this it does very well indeed—how the integrated book musicals from the Golden Age reflected certain core social, cultural, and political values. That those values may ultimately come from the creators, and not necessarily from the vaguely defined “audience” or “constituency,” does not diminish Knapp’s achievement.<sup>3</sup>

The strength of his book is apparent when it is compared with a 2003 study of which Knapp was apparently unaware, *Musical Theater and American Culture*. In it, two British sociologists, David Walsh and Len Pratt, seek to provide Geertzian “thick” description of the American musical, to “offer a sociocultural analysis of [it] as a phenomenon of popular culture specifically originating in American society” (Walsh and Pratt 2003:11). In fact, despite their social science pedigrees, the authors’ theoretical approach fails to illuminate the American musical or its context. Popular culture remains a rather inchoate entity in their book. The authors have little new to say and rely on secondary literature in their examination of the musico-dramatic aspects of the musicals. By contrast, Knapp has clearly studied and thought a great deal about the works he discusses, and his greatest insights come from the balance he achieves between internalist and contextualist perspectives.

Knapp has two basic goals. The first and more traditional one, carried out in Part 1 of the book, is to explore the American musical’s roots in operetta, minstrel shows, and the early Tin Pan Alley era. The second, more ambitious goal (Parts 2 and 3) is to “define America” by looking at certain key shows for their “mythologies,” and then to consider how America “manages” its “Others” through three perspectives: race and ethnicity, the Second World War, and exoticism. Each of these topics is grounded in an exploration of individual musicals, including *Show Boat*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Oklahoma!*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Music Man*, *West Side Story*, *The Sound of Music*, *Cabaret*, *Hair*, *Pacific Overtures*, and *Assassins*.



In his account of *Show Boat*, Knapp demonstrates how the “white” and “black” musical numbers are deployed dramatically to reflect the show’s central concern with “the difficulty of achieving true racial blending in America” (185). “Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Man” is analyzed as “partial fusion”: a standard AABA form, in which the A section itself has a blues form (aab). Knapp points out that the “verse” for the song (“Oh, listen, sister”), modeled directly on the blues, is sung by Julie, the black woman passing as white. Knapp suggests that by beginning the song with the chorus (“Fish got to swim”) rather than the more obviously “colored” section, “Julie attempts to bypass the most obviously ‘colored’ part, consistent with her attempt to pass more generally as white” (192).

As in this commentary, Knapp often makes perceptive analytical points by showing how conventional song structures or patterns are subverted for dramatic effect. Thus Tevye’s “If I Were a Rich Man” from *Fiddler on the Roof* begins as an AABA form, but the B section (“I’d build a big tall house”) keeps extending and repeating itself as “Tevye’s imaginings become ever more elaborate” (222). In “Ya Got Trouble” from *The Music Man*, end-rhymes and tunes emerge only halfway through, when Harold Hill’s musicality begins to affect the townspeople (144–45). In “Willkommen” from *Cabaret*, an insinuating atmosphere is projected by pungent, unresolved dissonances that appear on normally weak syllables (“Willkommen,” “bienvenue,” etc.) (243).

Knapp analyzes *Oklahoma!* as a “kind of morality play about the path to adulthood, both culturally and in term of its characters.” The western lands of the US are dividing into states; farmers and cowboys are learning to get along and share land, as exemplified by the characters Laurey and Curly. The opening number of *Oklahoma!*, “Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin’,” is essentially a waltz-song in the Viennese operetta tradition, the kind of number that has been present throughout the history of the musical, from Kern’s and Hammerstein’s “You are Love” in *Show Boat*, to Rodgers’s and Hart’s “Lover” in the film *Love Me Tonight*, to Rodgers’s and Hammerstein’s “This Nearly Was Mine” in *South Pacific*, to the entire score of Sondheim’s *A Little Night Music*. The idea to begin *Oklahoma!* with a waltz, which would be nostalgic both for the audiences actually hearing the show in 1943 and for the characters within the show, was clearly a departure from the original Lynn Riggs play, *Green Grow the Lilacs*, in which Curly comes on stage singing a cowboy song, “Git along, little doggies!” This song would also have had some nostalgic or sentimental value, but Rodgers and Hammerstein went a step further to fit the conventions and associations of musical theater. Here, as in much of the book, Knapp draws on previous commentary—in this case the excellent dissertation by Graham Wood (2000), which analyzes

## Current Musicology

---

the song forms in Rodgers's shows through *Oklahoma!* from textual, musical, and cultural perspectives. Knapp acknowledges his sources in endnotes or in the helpful bibliographic supplements at the back of each chapter. But he also offers new insights on each work and writes in an accessible, engaging style.

In his chapter on "Dealing with the Second World War," Knapp treats *The Sound of Music* and *Cabaret* in tandem. Each show, set in the pre-war 1930s, offers a different "version of Europe that supports our evolving myth of national origin." The former depicts an apparently innocent, natural, and rural nation (Austria), a "latter-day version of who we imagine our true ancestors to have been" (the von Trapp family does in fact emigrate to America at the end). *Cabaret* portrays a corrupt, unnatural urban context (Berlin), thus "the decadent branch of our European heritage, spinning off out of control, potentially seducing us if we're not careful" (229). Knapp argues that the screen versions of both musicals enhance these messages. In the film version of *Cabaret*, the camera's gradual pull backwards during "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" reveals that the number is sung by a Nazi youth; then, as the tune modulates upward ("a traditional device to generate enthusiasm," Knapp points out), it is taken up by a wider crowd. In passages like this, Knapp is the most effective of the three authors under review at negotiating the tensions I outlined earlier: between work and context, and between part and whole.

## V.

Ultimately all three studies accomplish what they set out to do. We learn from Grant that the Golden Age musicals were the unique result of collaborations between great creative talents; from Swayne, that Sondheim is a late, great master of that kind of musical theater; from Knapp, that the Golden Age musicals and those of Sondheim are special and compelling products of American culture. I am left wondering, however: what next, or really, what now? Already in 1998, Sondheim, as noted above, announced the dissolution of "virtually all the categorical rules" of musical theater, a situation which, moreover, he found "nice." That suggests we should not lament the demise of American musical theater; reports of its death may be greatly exaggerated. We need more sympathetic, informed commentary on the present day.

In the final chapter of *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical* (2002), Paul Prece and William Everett attempt a brief overview of what they perceive to be recent trends, including "pastiche" scores that invoke styles from the earlier twentieth century (i.e., the 1996 revival of *Chicago*);

works with music and lyrics by Rodgers's grandson Adam Guettel (whose *Light on the Piazza* is currently enjoying a long run at Lincoln Center); and Michael John LaChiusa's *Marie Christine* (1999), which "includes musical complexities atypical of most Broadway musicals" (Prece and Everett 2002:264–65). Opera, not treated by Prece and Everett, may be a place to look for the legacies of the Golden Age and of Sondheim. André Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1997), Jake Hegge's *Dead Man Walking* (2000), and Tobias Picker's *An American Tragedy* (2005) suggest that lyricism, tunefulness, coherent musico-dramatic structure, and American cultural values—all topics treated by Grant, Swayne, and Knapp—are alive and well in American opera. That lineage was suggested already fifty years ago by Leonard Bernstein in his chapter/broadcast on American musicals in *The Joy of Music* (1959:178–79).

As I complete this review (March 2006), a new music theater work by LaChiusa, *Bernarda Alba*, based on a Lorca play and musically inspired by flamenco, is about to open for a month's run at Lincoln Center, one day after his new short opera premieres at the Houston Grand Opera. A *New York Times* profile on the forty-three-year-old LaChiusa emphasizes how he moves comfortably and frequently among Broadway, Off Broadway, the opera house, and television. LaChiusa has been critical of current Broadway shows, arguing that "all sense of invention and craft is abandoned in favor of delivering what the audience thinks a musical should deliver" (Green 2006:6). The continuing Disneyfication and Lloyd-Webberization of Broadway (yet another multimillion dollar Disney show, *Tarzan*, is about to open as I write) would seem to support LaChiusa's complaint.

That the crystal ball is clouded should neither surprise nor dismay us. But surely we need sharper criticism of contemporary directions than the vapid concluding Pollyannaism of Prece and Everett, who report that "the rich traditions" of the musical "continue to be developed and transformed by creative artists who strive to combine music, words, dance and other theatrical elements into an art form that continues to entertain, edify and enchant audiences throughout the world" (2002:265). Such commentary hardly begins to address some of the central issues I have tried to sketch here, including part versus whole, internal versus contextual, opera versus musical theater. We should be bound by neither Grant's gloomy eschatology nor Prece's and Everett's cockeyed optimism. The next generation of scholarship should be less restricted by conventional categories of musical theater, perhaps incorporating some of the pan-generic perspectives outlined by Nicholas Cook in his stimulating study of musical multimedia (1998). Ranging from films and concert music to car commercials and Madonna's "Material Girl" video, Cook explores how music permeates different forms

of cultural expression today. Musical theater must be understood—and celebrated—as part of this complex if messy picture.

### Notes

1. Among noteworthy studies in these genres are Richard Norton (2002); Geoffrey Block (2002); Robert Wyatt (2004); and Everett and Laird (2002).
2. Another recent review essay which discusses the Grant and Knapp books reviewed here is Charles Hamm (2005). I am grateful to Rose Rosengard Subotnik for bringing Hamm's article to my attention, and for many other helpful suggestions and references.
3. Knapp notes that this volume is the first of a projected pair on American musical theater. The second will deal with the more "personal" aspects of musicals, rather than with political/national ones (283–84).

### References

- Banfield, Stephen. 2004. In the Finest Tradition: New Books on Musical Theatre. *Musical Times* 145: 83–92.
- Bernstein, Leonard. 1959. *The Joy of Music*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Block, Geoffrey. 1997. *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from Show Boat to Sondheim*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 2002. *The Richard Rodgers Reader*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cook, Nicholas. 1998. *Analysing Musical Multimedia*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Everett, William and Paul Laird, eds. 2002. *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Grant, Mark. 1998. *Maestros of the Pen: A History of Classical Music Criticism in America*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Green, Jessie. 2006. So Many Musicals to Write, So Little Time. *New York Times* (March 5): Arts & Leisure.
- Hamm, Charles. 2005. Omnibus Review: Five Recent Books on American Musical Theater. *Kurt Weill Newsletter* 23 (2): 9–15.
- Norton, Richard. 2002. *A Chronology of American Musical Theater*. 3 vols. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Prece, Paul and William A. Everett. 2002. The Megamusical and Beyond: The Internationalisation and Impact of a Genre. In *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, edited by William Everett and Paul Laird, 246–65. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Straus, Joseph. 1990. *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Walsh, David and Len Pratt. 2003. *Musical Theater and American Culture*. Westport, CT, and London: Praeger.
- Wood, Graham. 2000. *The Development of Song Forms in the Broadway and Hollywood Musicals of Richard Rodgers, 1919–1943*. PhD dissertation, University of Minnesota.
- Wyatt, Robert. 2004. *The George Gershwin Reader*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.