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Teaching Broadway : musical theater pedagogy in the classroom

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**TEACHING BROADWAY:
MUSICAL THEATRE PEDAGOGY IN THE CLASSROOM**

A Thesis

**Presented to
The Graduate Studies Office
San Jose State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in the Interdisciplinary Major:
Musical Theatre Pedagogy**

**by
Catherine Dana Snider**

August, 1995

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING BROADWAY: MUSICAL THEATRE PEDAGOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

by Catherine Dana Snider

This thesis addresses the teaching of musical theatre in the classrooms of high schools and colleges. It evaluates instructional materials currently available to educators, and contains the results of a survey questioning musical theatre teachers about their curricula. The California State Board of Education's publication Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California, which contains curriculum guidelines for the arts, is used as the main point of reference for this project.

Research revealed that no formal teaching methods exist in this subject. In response to this need, this thesis includes a sample curriculum which not only answers the needs of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire, but provides a methodology which, it is hoped, will become standard practice for the teachers of musical theatre. The sample curriculum is complementary to the Framework, and is designed to be an extension of it.

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CHAPTER I Introduction

How is musical theatre being taught today? Is there a standard pedagogy? That is, are there instructional materials, guidelines, nationally or state-wide recognized goals and objectives which guide teachers? If these standards are not in place, then how are teachers teaching musical theatre? What guidelines have they developed for themselves? Are there any similarities in the curricula different teachers have created? What do they use for instructional materials?

To discover if a standard pedagogy already exists, and whether or not instructional materials exist, three methods of research were used. First, the literature produced by the California State Board of Education was examined for an official curriculum that addresses the subject of musical theatre. Secondly, commercially produced teaching aids in various media were located, mostly through industry catalogues. And finally, a survey of musical theatre teachers was conducted, asking detailed questions about how they teach their subject.

As a result of this research, the first question can be answered immediately. No, a standard curriculum specifically geared toward musical theatre does not exist at the state or national levels, nor are there any attendant standard instructional materials.

In the Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California, which addresses elementary through high school education, much care is taken to include every conceivable form of art in the curriculum guidelines. The section on drama/theatre suggests that students "create original theatrical events which integrate live theatre with other media," then goes on to list things such as photography, film, and electronic sounds. It stresses that "schools should have courses in beginning, intermediate, and advanced theatre; play production; and stagecraft (including design and management). Larger schools should offer a wide diversity of course offerings...", including mass media and dramatic literature, among others. Finally, the survey states, "Storytelling, mime, puppetry, maskmaking, television, and film are additional areas that can be included with great success..." (Framework 56).

Remarkably, though the authors of this report have mentioned almost every theatrical adjunct, there is no mention of the Broadway musical. The Framework concludes with an appendix called "Criteria for Evaluating Instructional Materials," which discusses only music and visual arts, and not the other two disciplines the Framework addresses: drama/theatre and dance.

The creators of the corresponding state guidelines for Iowa, while clearly excited about developing an evidently

much needed curriculum guide, were also not planning to include musical theatre. Incidentally, the California guide was cited as a main reference for the Iowa educators.

The omission of musical theatre, and the apparent dearth of instructional materials to evaluate theatre instruction, is not unobserved. The 1990 Strengthening the Arts in California Schools remarks that, "college and university professors or graduate students directed by professors conduct most educational research. Unfortunately, they have largely neglected research into the key issues at the forefront of the emerging arts education movement....[i.e.] what instructional methodologies are most effective in teaching the arts?" (Strengthening the Arts 25) The report goes on to mention dance and drama/theatre as specific areas which have not received their due share of attention.

This is not to say that no studies exist on theatre arts curricula. A journal article by Barbara Salisbury Wills summarizes the last few decades' developments in the creation of theatre programs. She points out that the American Alliance for Theatre and Education published A Model Drama/Theatre Curriculum in the 1980's, which "presents goals and objectives on levels from kindergarten through twelfth grade" (Wills 25). Kent Seidel surveyed theatre teachers to research the methodology of drama

education in 1991. There has been a California Legislature Assembly Task Force on Arts Education, and a California Arts Council Arts in Education Task Force. The National Endowment for the Arts presented a report on arts education entitled Toward Civilization to the United States Congress in 1988. Senate Bill 813 in 1983 introduced arts education reforms. All of these projects are geared towards the inception of arts programs, which emphasize a sequential course of study from kindergarten through high school, designed to introduce students to music, theatre, dance and the visual arts.

While I agree absolutely with the advantages of introducing students to theatre at an early age to bolster skills such as "creative thinking, problem solving, socialization and communication" (Seidel 3), it is important to note that these curriculum guides do not offer specific information on musical theatre, or the teaching thereof. This thesis will fill this gap, incorporating musical theatre into these plans for arts education.

The lack of "instructional methodologies" in the field of musical theatre means that unlike most teachers who can obtain prepared units, films, and textbooks, teachers of musical theatre must devise their own curricula, fitting it as best they can into a state-approved framework which does not specifically acknowledge their course of study. This

leads us into the two remaining avenues of research. What are these teachers doing, and what materials are they using? In order for musical theatre studies to be successfully incorporated into the existing arts framework, a clear picture of the existing curricula and instructional aids must be provided.

I will not attempt to justify or defend the presence of a musical theatre class or major at any institution. Nor am I claiming that there is only one way to teach this subject. It has been established by the State Board of Education and by national committee that the arts are an essential element of a student's education (Framework). Thus, this paper is merely expanding the subjects covered in the California Board of Education's Framework to include musical theatre, and contains a sample curriculum which is in accordance with the general guidelines established in the Framework. This research lays the groundwork for a standardized pedagogy by giving teachers of musical theatre an idea of what their peers are doing and what is available to them.

Musical theatre classes can be found in many different types of programs. At most high schools and colleges without a musical theatre major, one class in musical theatre may be all that is offered in addition to school productions. Colleges with musical theatre majors, minors, or graduate degrees can build two-, three- or four-year

interdisciplinary programs around the subject, with classes in musical theatre history, technical subjects, acting, voice, and so on, all intended to train the "triple threat" performer--one equally proficient in singing, dancing and acting. It should be understood that these programs are not part of the target audience for this research. While places such as these can certainly benefit from more information about available instructional materials, they are hardly in need of a sample curriculum. Rather, the curriculum which appears in this paper is a prototype for the students who have available to them only the most basic or general musical theatre class, and who are able to supplement this training only with performance, and not with an entire department of other, related courses. It is intended for use primarily at the high school level, and at the college level where multi-class theatre departments do not exist. (See Appendix B for examples of professional training programs.)

According to the Framework, the four essential components of arts education are: Aesthetic Perception, Creative Expression, Arts Heritage, and Aesthetic Valuing: "The inclusion of each component in all arts instruction will allow students to become aesthetically responsive, literate, and creative citizens with a life-long interest and involvement in the arts" (ix). The document goes on to

define each of these components, and applies them specifically to each of the four arts: music, theatre/drama, dance and the visual arts. Reproduced here are the definitions of each component and the goals and objectives of those components when applied specifically to theatre/drama.

Framework Components

DEFINITION: AESTHETIC PERCEPTION--MULTISENSORY INTEGRATION.

"In the arts, the development of aesthetic perception enables one to comprehend and respond to the elements of an object or event and to express and appreciate it in greater depth" (5).

Goal I: "To experience dramatic elements, actions and characterizations.

Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Become perceptive and selective in observing and responding to the environment.
2. Use movement as the external expression of an internal idea, intention, or feeling.
3. Use the voice as an instrument for the expression of meaning and feeling....
4. Respond spontaneously and collaboratively to rapidly changing, unanticipated stimuli" (39-40).

DEFINITION: CREATIVE EXPRESSION. "Expression in the arts includes originating, creating and performing, and interpreting. Direct personal involvement in these expressive

modes is necessary for one to understand and appreciate each discipline....Creative expression in the arts helps one to know one's self and to appreciate one's own and others' uniqueness" (5-6).

Goal I: "To develop skills in storytelling, playmaking and playwriting.

Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Retell and perform a story.
2. Perform an improvisation which is structured, played, evaluated, and replayed.
3. Write original scenes or plays from improvisations.
4. Create appropriate design and technical elements for such scenes or plays.

Goal II: To develop an awareness of the collaborative nature of playmaking.

Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Participate actively in the planning of a dramatization.
2. Perform group dramatizations.
3. Evaluate group effort in exploring and expressing ideas.

Goal III: To develop acting skills for theatrical performance.

Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Become proficient in basic acting skills.

2. Use basic elements of formal acting:

characterization, conflict, motivation, and setting.

3. Acquire basic vocabulary related to formal acting.

Goal IV: To develop an awareness of the collaborative nature of theatre and the many skills needed to prepare a finished production.

Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Learn directing.

2. Learn stage managing.

3. Learn business managing; e.g., publicity, box office.

4. Learn design and technical elements of sets, lights, costumes, props, sound, and special effects.

5. Understand how other art forms, such as music, dance, visual arts, and literature, are used in drama/theatre" (40).

DEFINITION: ARTS HERITAGE. "The study of the arts within cultural contexts develops a broad base for students to understand creative artists, their works, their evolution, and their effects on society in the past and present" (6).

Goal I: "To develop a knowledge of and appreciation for drama/theatre heritage.

Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Recognize major themes, historical periods, and cultural backgrounds.

2. Recognize the importance of today's theatre as a means of understanding and appreciating cultural differences" (40).

DEFINITION: AESTHETIC VALUING. "To develop aesthetic values, the student studies the sensory, intellectual, emotional, and philosophic bases for understanding the arts and for making judgments about their form, content, technique, and purpose. Through study and direct experience, the student develops criteria for arriving at personal judgments" (6).

Goal I: "To develop a system of aesthetic valuing of drama/theatre.

Objectives: The student will be able to:

1. Evaluate informal playmaking.
2. Evaluate theatrical productions, films, and television plays.
3. Formulate and use criteria for judging theatre aesthetically" (40).

CHAPTER II Discussion of Instructional Materials

A major challenge in deciding how to teach a subject is selecting the appropriate instructional materials. Regrettably, in the subject of musical theatre, teachers have few choices. The California State Board of Education guidelines cited earlier clearly show that musical theatre as a genre has not yet entered the standard curriculum designed for students in theatre or music. Correspondingly, instructional materials receive no mention.

There do exist many organizations specializing in educational materials for the performing arts, including Contemporary Drama Service, Commedia Dell'Arte Communications, and LMI's catalogue of music products for education. But these catalogues concentrate on straight plays, offering scripts and videos of classic productions. Those geared specifically for high school offer many original plays and musicals on topical social issues. Many books which could be used as textbooks are available in the acting arena, including theatre history, stage movement and combat, costuming and make-up, and improvisation and acting skills. Videos showing dance steps (modern, ballet, and ballroom, not musical theatre) and lighting techniques (the latter mostly for television and film) also exist. Videos dealing with the musical are, on the other hand, merely films of famous movie musicals. Although there does exist a

handful of videos on audition techniques, these also are geared toward straight plays.

The most comprehensive catalogue is StageStep's Performing Arts Buyers Guide, which is highly recommended for any performing arts department. The StageStep catalogue contains books, CD's and videos under the headings Arts Administration, Dance, Health & Fitness, Film, and Theatre. Further, each category contains many different subheadings. For example, the Theatre category in the Spring, 1995 issue contains subsections which include: "Finding a Job," "Playwriting," "Mime & Circus," "Scenes & Monologues," "Improv. & Games," "In the Classroom," "Theatre Biography," "Children's Books," "Criticism & Theory," "Theatre History," "Theatre Reference," "Stage Design," and many more. The other major headings contain similar breakdowns. But this catalogue, even though it has an entire section called "Musicals," still offers books, mostly of the coffee-table variety, which are useful as reference in only very general ways, and not intended for use as textbooks in class.

Many books can be found in public libraries, most falling into just a few categories: history, audition techniques, guides to technical subjects, and how-to books on producing a musical at the high school or college level. These latter guides are more about aiding the novice teacher; a typical table of contents might read: "Casting

Your Show," "Choosing a Rehearsal Space," "Setting Ticket Prices," and so on. Such books are for the educator interested in establishing a program where none exists, and are not relevant for the teachers who are this paper's target audience--those looking for published aids to help in teaching an established course.

In order for a book which is not a textbook to be adaptable to the classroom, certain characteristics must be present. Ideally, the book should take an elementary approach to its subject, introducing basic vocabulary and assuming no previous knowledge. The book should present information so that each chapter or section builds on the one before. Books dealing with interpretation, performance techniques, or technical subjects should have comprehensive indices so that specific subjects are easily located. Detailed definitions and complete explanations of different elements of the subject can be turned into vocabulary tests and class exercises by a teacher.

Books which contain too much detail as to the presentation or interpretation of specific aspects of theatre can be problematic. The more personal opinion and subjective detail an author includes, the greater the chance that teachers will disagree with some of the text. Textbooks should be more of a guideline, with exercises which are intended to develop and stretch the imagination and

creativity of the student. Teachers should be circumspect in adopting books written by experts in a particular field who are not teachers; often these contain too much personal observation and specific application, and not enough general information.

Biographical or historical books are also difficult to manipulate. If the book is primarily anecdotal, it should be presented so that students can easily comprehend and maintain an historical perspective while reading. Clearly defined sections which address specific aspects of the subject, for example a biography divided into chapters on the subject's family, education and career, are helpful, allowing teachers to extrapolate material for short reading assignments or biographical research.

It is with these criteria in mind that the following literature reviews have been compiled.

Guides to technical vocabulary and design exist in rather large numbers. Several manuals in encyclopedic form present complex terminology to novice technicians, and some are included as Suggested Readings in this paper's sample curriculum. However, books dealing with design are often the authors' personal panegyrics; they indulge in their own views and observations, then present examples which substantiate them. At best they offer suggestions for making design decisions in various specific situations; at

worst they offer no opportunities for independent thought, or indeed thought that is at all different from the authors' own theories.

There is nothing wrong with these books. Like any one who writes a manual, these authors are simply disseminating their experiences. But for a classroom, these books are not appropriate; they contain too much author opinion and not enough tangible material which may be extracted and turned into assignments by a teacher.

Books on musical theatre audition techniques are usually self-defeating, as teaching a visual, aural and physical skill with a scientific and/or overly verbal approach is useless. There are two reasons for this. First, theatre performance calls forth an immediate emotional response from the listener; thus the development of performance skills requires an audience. Secondly, art is not a science; therefore, art cannot be taught or analyzed exclusively scientifically.

An audition book can help a performer with the vocabulary and process of auditioning, the business of theatre, even the selection of a song and some preliminary steps to interpreting it. But ultimately it is the performance which will need to be critiqued. A book can stress the elements of subtext, for example, but only a live person can tell a performer if the subtexting is successful,

and guide the performer to further emotional development of a song. Auditioners are solo performers examined under a microscope, alone, and usually seen out of the context of a show. The many nuances of an individual's performance thus become larger than normal, and subject to intense and critical examination. Because no two people are alike, an audition book can only provide a performer with the most basic of suggestions, and will never be able to actually provide the specific, individual feedback so crucial to audition preparation.

The varieties of the human voice and the differing emotional interpretations a performer brings to a lyric should prevent any writer from attempting to set down rules or diagrams intended to teach the reader the proper way to use the voice or interpret a song. Those writers who approach performance from a scientific angle are neglecting a major portion of the performance art. All performance is a combination of technique and emotion. What reaches an audience is a successful combination of the two; in essence, technique that is mastered and then "forgotten," so that the emotion may rise above the precision and create an emotional experience for the listener. To dissect the elements of vocal technique can be a very valuable part of the learning process, but to do it through the written word precludes a performer's improvement. A teacher must constantly adapt

the lessons and vocabulary to fix the specific problems each performer faces; what reaches one performer may not make sense to another.

Many, many accomplished vocal coaches and vocal directors have put their knowledge on paper to reach a wider audience, and only a few have done so skillfully. Fred Silver's audition handbook is the most valuable step-by-step guide for helping a would-be performer choose material and analyze a song, though the presence of many personally chosen absolutes prevents this book from gaining universal approval, and therefore complete approbation as a textbook. For example, Silver condones the rewriting of a lyric to fit an audition occasion (90-2), implies that an auditioner should begin getting into character halfway through a song's introduction (109), and approves the taped accompaniment (90). These particulars are ones with which this writer disagrees, and no doubt other educators will disagree with other precepts of Silver's. In cases such as this, it is up to each teacher to decide which advice best fits his or her particular classroom.

David Craig, one of Broadway's most valued vocal coaches, has published a very interesting trilogy, On Singing Onstage, On Performing, and A Performer Prepares. These books address the entire performance process, and while the second text is slightly more vague in its focus,

the last in the series eavesdrops on very interesting dialogues in a hypothetical audition and song interpretation class. While not designed for use as textbooks, the Craig series and the Silver book can be effectively incorporated into a curriculum by an inventive teacher, and Craig acknowledges in his Epilogue that his book has become occasional classroom fare.

Other authors are not so successful in their attempts to categorize the nature of performance. H. Wesley Balk also offers a trilogy of works, in which he attempts to turn the art of performing into an exact science. In The Complete Singer-Actor, Performing Power, and The Radiant Performer, Balk draws diagrams illustrating the "radiance" of the voice, coins catch words to label elusive elements of performance, and over-dissects to the point of incomprehension. The most value in the trilogy is in the first volume, which, though the language is somewhat tortuous, offers some good insights into the discipline, and some quotable quotes useful for provoking discussion in the classroom. Otherwise, the books contain only Balk's opinions and personal concepts, and are therefore unusable in all but the most highly theoretical context.

History books can be valuable as references. Gerald Bordman's American Musical Theatre is an exhaustive history chronicling every play ever produced in New York, beginning

before Broadway was Broadway. Bordman's prose is easy to read, and the names of all shows and important people are easily spotted in bold print. Biographical information about selected people are set apart in marked paragraphs, and one index each for "Shows and Sources," "Songs," and "People" make any needed information particularly easy to find. Again, this book is not intended for classroom use, but the musical theatre teacher with Bordman in his or her library would have a valuable reference tool.

While many history books take Bordman's chronological approach, others use individuals as chapter divisions. Stanley Green's The World of Musical Comedy, now in its fourth edition, offers chapters from Herbert to Hamlish, and includes not only some of the more obscure authors, but also the female composers, who often are neglected. Another reference is Steven Suskin's Opening Night on Broadway, which reprints all the first reviews from Oklahoma! (1943) to Fiddler on the Roof (1964). For the student trying to gain some insight into how successful a show was, both critically and financially, this book is invaluable.

The only book that comes close to a pedagogical approach (besides David Craig's mock classroom in A Performer Prepares) is one by the generally acknowledged grandfather of all musical theatre knowledge, Lehman Engel. His 1977 book, The Making of a Musical, offers advice to the

aspiring composer and lyricist, giving insights into how songs are formed, what their purposes can be, and how to market a completed project. At the end of the book he includes exercises for the student, which require manipulation of existing shows to apply the knowledge he presents in the book. For example, he gives the following assignment: "Write a ballad for Blanche Dubois in Tennessee Williams' play, A Streetcar Named Desire, near the end of Scene 3" (130). Another assignment asks the student to "write a musical scene near the end of Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman, starting after the exit of Willie Loman's wife, Linda, and ending abruptly on the crash of Willie's car" (131). These exercises are rather beyond the casual high school student just beginning to learn about musical theatre, but for more musically advanced students, Engel's exercises can be used in the classroom to develop critical and creative skills.

Many biographies, and some autobiographies, can be of help to students. An educationally sound biography should be one which combines an authoritative voice (i.e. formal rather than casual syntax and a credible author) with a content which holds an appeal for students.

Many are of the "tabloid" variety, and have a slightly clandestine and unauthorized scent about them. Others, like Alan Jay Lerner's two books and Carol Ilson's book on

director Harold Prince, offer enough amusing anecdotes and backstage gossip to be interesting to readers of all scholastic levels, while skillfully painting portraits of their subjects, and placing them into a useful historical context. Lerner provides an insider's perspective into the musical theatre business, so assigned readings can give students valuable insight into the collaborative nature of theatre and introduce them to the many performers with whom Lerner worked. Ilson's book boasts a detailed index and table of contents, as well as a very organized presentation, enabling a teacher to confidently send students out to gather specific information about a Hal Prince show.

Thus the search for educational materials yields the conclusion that, while many books exist which celebrate, explain or discuss musical theatre, books which adapt this information to the learning environment are few and far between.

For a complete analysis of the existing books in this genre and their merits, please refer to the Annotated Bibliography at this paper's conclusion.

CHAPTER III Questionnaire Summary

Before an evaluation of the questionnaire results is presented, it is important to detail the statistical side of the project, including the scope of the survey, the intent of the questions which were posed, and a brief summary of the responses.

The questionnaire was sent out to high school and college teachers throughout the Bay Area and in select locations around the country. The first mailing was dated February 7, 1995. Educators were asked to respond by March 1, 1995. A second mailing was sent to colleges and universities with well-established musical theatre programs. They received the same questionnaire, as well as an explanatory addendum. The deadline for this second mailing was March 20, 1995. (The cover letter, questionnaire, and addendum are reprinted in Appendix A.)

Because the focus for the sample curriculum is on the high school and general college musical theatre class, the first mailing contacted only public high schools (with presumably relatively standard budgets, and therefore presumably standard-sized theatre departments) and junior colleges and state universities. When preliminary responses began to return, they brought with them the confirmation that these theatre departments were indeed small, and, not surprisingly in California, under severe budget constraints.

To gain a standard of comparison, one should wonder what, then, the more well-established training schools are doing for their musical theatre students. The second mailing went out to some of these other institutions of higher learning to see if they had any more access to specific curriculum guides or instructional materials.

So, though the focus of this research is on high school and elementary college musical theatre, responses from the more advanced programs were sought and included in the results.

The survey questions were meant to draw as much information as possible from the teachers which would detail the way they teach their musical theatre classes. Enquiries about their syllabi, and questions concerning their use of various media, outside lessons, and unique program aspects were meant to enable the teacher to fully explain the different elements of his or her curriculum. To gain a more specific look at the actual instructional materials at their disposal, they were asked, first, if they had ever used a commercially produced teaching tool, and second, what type of teaching tool they most needed or would develop on their own to aid them in the teaching of this subject. Asking teachers whether or not their students are required to audition for school productions gives an insight into the way their semesters are balanced. Teachers who require

auditions are most likely ones who place value on performance, and who may be expected to include audition preparation in their programs. It was important that the teachers had the opportunity to discuss their views in some detail, rather than merely checking a box, so that their ideas may be directly addressed in the sample curriculum.

Background questions about the schools' theatre departments is necessary to understand in what type of environment these teachers are working. By asking schools if they rent or build sets and costumes, use professional or student musicians, and hire outside staff or use teachers, we might see how much money the school spends on its musical theatre offerings. This then speaks to the amount of support a teacher has in trying to develop a department. Of course, a school may desire to have a more complete musical theatre department, and may merely lack the means; the questionnaire is by no means meant to imply that those schools with small budgets are not trying to offer their students good musical theatre. But knowing a school's resources lends additional insights to a teacher's responses. For example, if no background information were sought, and many teachers responded that they had never used a commercially produced teaching aid, analysis would necessarily become ambiguous: did the teachers not have access to instructional materials because of limited funds? Or did

even the wealthiest of schools search for instructional materials and emerge empty-handed? By understanding a school's financial situation we can better place the responses of its teachers into some sort of context.

Sixty-nine high schools representing nineteen Bay Area school districts, and fourteen Northern California colleges received questionnaires in the first mailing. The second mailing added thirty-seven more colleges and universities to the list. Only three high school responses came from north of Millbrae (one each from San Francisco, South San Francisco, and Daly City), and three each were from the Peninsula and the East Bay, so the high school survey response is heavily weighted (70%) in the South Bay. Eleven states are represented in the thirteen respondents from the wider search: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Washington, D.C., and West Virginia.

Responses were as follows:

High schools: 20 out of 69 (29%)

First mailing colleges (California only): 5 out of 14
(35.7%)

Second mailing colleges: 13 out of 37 (35.1%)

Total questionnaire responses: 38 out of 120 (31.7%)

In the following summary, discrepancies in the numbers are due to some questions being left blank or deemed "not applicable" by the respondent. In such cases, "respondents" refers to those teachers who answered that question, and not to every person who sent back the survey.

Responses to the questionnaire were widely varied, as is perhaps not remarkable in a subject whose curriculum is reliant upon teacher ingenuity. A tally of the numbers of classes, staff and students in performing arts departments yielded the information that the respondents have vastly different programs from one another, as well; some have impressive theatre departments with many drama classes, technical and musical theatre classes and full-scale productions, while others have only straight drama classes, struggling to produce a musical once a year. Schools with the funds to do so support performance-based musical theatre classes and at least one major musical a year, and often two. Other schools tailor their limited resources to ensure their students at least some performance experience. One school writes an original Christmas show each year and produces student-written info-mercials, while several others create original skits and one-acts.

Only two of the college respondents do not require their students to audition for campus productions, while ten of the twenty high school respondents require students to

audition.

Videos of musicals currently being worked on by the students make up the lion's share of media used in the classrooms of both high schools and colleges. Most schools also sing and dance in class at least some of the time, with more than one high school educator pointing out the need for constant physical activity to hold the students' interests. Recordings of musicals are also used. At the high school level the only other media equipment mentioned are those which enhance the ones stated above: CD players are used for playing cast recordings, and microphones, MIDI-capable keyboards and dance barres aid in singing and dancing. More than one college mentioned the use of a video camera to assist with student self-evaluation.

In answer to the question, "Have you ever used a commercially produced teaching tool" the answers were overwhelmingly (and disappointingly) in the negative. Three of fifteen colleges and only two high schools had ever used any kind of published material. These were a textbook of sorts, which the teacher described as "too general to be of use," recordings of various song styles by decade, and Stanley Green's history of musical theatre video series. (The Green video was unavailable for review for this thesis.)

Most teachers make a concerted effort to expose their students to outside performances and guest speakers. Over

half of the high schools arrange group trips to performances, and over half of the colleges arrange for professionals, often former students, to visit campus or lead master classes. San Jose Civic Light Opera was mentioned frequently as a company which seems unusually responsive to educators, so teachers are encouraged to contact local companies to try to make some sort of like arrangement. Only one high school and one college answered that they did not use any kind of outside lessons, though three left this space blank.

When asked about the difficulty of teaching musical theatre, half of the responding teachers said that the hardest thing to communicate to their students is that theatre is difficult and demanding work which requires concentration, self-discipline, and teamwork. In related answers, others mentioned the complicated business side of professional theatre, and the need for history "and its importance on our work today." Two college teachers vowed that they had no difficulties teaching theatre, while three colleges and six high schools left this space blank, perhaps implying the same response. All but three of the high schools who answered this question had discipline-related responses, hardly surprising given the age of their students. College teachers had difficulties which were correspondingly more advanced: "They have very little sense

of how to shape a performance," said one; another said there was a marked "absence of a driven need, hunger for the craft"; still another said students were not "trusting the words--the script--the lyrics."

Very few respondents contented themselves with merely a check mark in response to the question which asked whether a musical theatre course should emphasize history or performance. All but three colleges said classes should incorporate both elements, a predictable reply in hindsight when one considers those teachers' perspectives--most of the surveyed colleges have separate classes in history and performance within a musical theatre major. A few went on to stress that ideally, a musical theatre program would have this interdisciplinary approach, and be geared toward training the "triple threat" performer. High school teachers differed more in their opinions. A few said that pre-professional work at the high school level is a waste of time, raising false hopes in a field where very few will "make it." Several felt that it was important just to get kids up on a stage, to increase their confidence and teach them to take risks. There was no consensus either way on the inclusion of history in a musical theatre class, although all those who were guiding their classrooms in a pre-professional direction were including history units. One college which combined a musical theatre performance

class with a technical sound class reported high success, stating that, "both classes learned a lot from working with the other."

The teaching aid desired by fourteen out of twenty-nine educators is staff, with accompanists, technical directors and choreographers the specialists most keenly missed. When asked what could be added to a classroom to make it more efficient, the answers were mixed. One college teacher insisted that technology was absolutely unnecessary: "The best way to teach is the old fashioned way--one-to-one. This way you can really track the performer's intelligence," and a high school colleague agreed, saying, "scripts are the tools. Anything else...would be a waste of time." Others wanted transposing keyboards to facilitate musical accompaniment.

When asked to develop an ideal teaching tool, several teachers wished there existed a good video series on musical theatre history. One mentioned the movie "That's Entertainment!" and said a similar program, but for the stage musical, would be valuable. Others wanted a video program that showed dance styles and the development of the musical theatre in full-scale re-enactments, complete with costumes and staging. And one teacher cried out for "a step by step course curriculum with extensive exercises." One college teacher answered this question with a human

solution, saying the most effective way to teach musical theatre was with two teachers: one, an acting teacher with very good musical understanding, and the other, a musical director with a sensitivity for the stage.

There seemed to be no distinction between advanced training institutions and the recipients of the first mailing, other than the high concentration of professional staff and the multi-disciplinary approach to training for musical theatre.

CHAPTER IV Questionnaire Analysis

The teachers' responses to the kind of curriculum they use introduces the first trend that may be spotted in the survey's results. Significantly, each school tries to give its students at least some exposure to performing, even if the only experience is a non-traditional one, such as the info-mercials, skits and one-acts. This similarity is an important one. Whatever their resources, all of these educators want their students to have practical performance experience, and are creating unique ways of accomplishing this goal.

Additionally, all those schools including intense scene work and audition techniques (i.e. professional training) in their musical theatre classes also included at least a brief unit on the history of musical theatre, indicating that teachers feel that professional theatre preparation is not complete without giving the students some idea of what came before. There are no doubt many educators who find these two studies--history and practice--obviously mutually indispensable, and it is important to point out this school of thought; it shows that musical theatre teachers who have programs geared towards pre-professional training are themselves cognizant of the importance of history to the development of the theatre performer.

Those who develop curricula for high school, and especially those who teach it, should pay special attention to the ideas and techniques college teachers claimed to be the most difficult to impart to their students. The challenges which college educators encounter should point the way for high school theatre curricula, so that problems can be addressed and habits formed early on. The survey responses to this question of challenge (lamenting the absence of drive, the hesitancy to trust the material, the lack of basic understanding of how scripts work and how shows fit together) certainly name things which can be introduced to a student at the high school level, better preparing them for the continuation of their theatrical educations.

The search for instructional materials was going on while the questionnaire responses were gradually being returned, and conclusions were reached almost simultaneously. The teachers could not enlighten the search; there clearly are no existing materials, and there just as clearly is a desire for them, though there is little consensus on what form they should take.

It is clear then that the respondents have a variety of different attitudes towards the teaching of musical theatre. Some were adamantly opposed to any technology invading their classrooms, while others heartily wished for the money to be

able to afford state-of-the-art equipment. But these two views are not as opposing as they seem. I think it safe to say that all of these teachers want their students to receive hands-on training. The difference is merely that some want the production of a play to be the exclusive venue of learning, with no additional aids, and some want to supplement their production work with prepared materials.

What is also clear is that these teachers are developing their programs themselves, using a combination of intelligent reasoning and personal preference as rationale for including particular elements in their courses. Yet a theme can assuredly be detected in those same preferences. As was clear especially from those who enclosed a syllabus with their questionnaires, the teachers have defined mostly the same crucial elements in a curriculum, and these are history, audition techniques, and the various elements of production (acting, make-up, technical subjects, etc.). It is in the decisions of how to teach the subject as a whole, and how much time to devote to each element that the variety occurs. The crucial point is this: the fact that these teachers are independently creating similar curricula is more important than the fact that they disagree as to the methods of teaching. It means that a sample curriculum is not a wasted effort, and it shows that, providing the sample curriculum allows flexibility, a standardized pedagogy can

be established that would be acceptable to most teachers of musical theatre, irrespective of their views of technology in the classroom, and in league with their personal and particular teaching styles and interests. A closer look will also show that the elements deemed essential by teachers fit extremely well into the more abstract guidelines provided by the Board of Education's Framework, proof positive that the Board researchers knew their audience and their subject.

Teachers seem to be aware that theatre is taught effectively when it is watched. Taking students to performances and/or having professionals talk to classes can mean that teachers want their students to be aware of the realities of the business, and the quality of a professional, finished product; it also shows a sensitivity to the students' own developing critical skills which will enable them to make educated choices in their own performances and form intelligent judgments about works they witness. (This "critical perspective" will be discussed in more detail in Chapter V.)

Perhaps the most positive trend of all is the convergent evolution of individual theatre teachers with the California Board of Education's Framework. We have seen that the major trends which emerged as a result of the questionnaire were an emphasis on performance, a value

placed on outside performance, in some cases a distinct effort to include historical information, and a need to illustrate the collaborative aspect of theatre. A glance at the definitions of the Framework's four components--Creative Expression, Aesthetic Perception, Arts Heritage, and Aesthetic Valuing--will show that, deliberately or not, these teachers are creating programs which complement the four components. This could mean that the teachers are conscious of the Framework's demands, though not one teacher mentioned any attempt to develop a program along already established lines; indeed, an atmosphere of creativity and invention was most definitely prevalent. But it does mean that the researchers who prepared the Framework have compiled a valuable guideline, breaking down their curricular elements into components which are proven to exist. Thus, it can be assumed that a sample curriculum which also follows these guidelines will be easily assimilated into these teachers' programs.

All of this analysis has been assuming that there is a need for a standard pedagogy for musical theatre. Yet is this a justifiable assumption? Previous investigations into the state of theatre education actually do include data on musicals, though musical theatre receives no mention in the corresponding summaries or analyses, remaining a quiet statistic on a chart (Seidel; "Status of Arts Education").

The Framework does not include musical theatre in its essential elements of Art. Why, then, do I? Colleges and universities all over the country offer Bachelor's and Master's degrees in musical theatre. Even the most limited budgets and the most amateur groups find ways to produce musicals--Broadway shows, church musicals, revues, original works. The preponderance of musical theatre indicates that this is an extremely popular art form, academically, professionally, and in the community. With so many students interested in the art, and in potential careers in the theatre industry, it becomes clear that haphazard training for a craft which demands some very specific skills is not an effective method of education. The inclusion of musical theatre into the arts framework is essential.

The way to achieve state-wide and ultimately nation-wide acceptance of this additional branch on the theatre family tree is unity--a unified approach to teaching this subject, to illustrate to the boards of education around the country that musical theatre is a viable vocation, an important art form, and a necessary expense.

The initial step to achieving this uniformity is in a standardized way of teaching the subject. Let us take an exaggerated hypothetical situation. The imaginary Board of Theatre Education launches an investigation into all the various musical theatre programs around the country--those

which inform, and those which train. At each site, the Board asks, "Why should your program exist? How do you teach? Can you prove that your method is so effective that your program should survive and be supported?" Now, the responses that the Board gets are hundred-fold. Everyone has a different goal--some to give a history lesson, some to train for Broadway, some to get troubled or shy kids on stage to boost their self-esteem, and the list goes on. Their curricula vary with the goals, and even those with similar goals are approaching their subject in different ways. For the Board to support all of these institutions, it would have to pay for hundreds of different sets of supplies, because every school is approaching the subject differently. The task is daunting, and the teachers will gain neither money nor support, doomed to reinventing the wheel each time they prepare a syllabus or add another aspect of the subject to their curriculum.

Now let us look at a new hypothesis. A standardized curriculum, compatible with the Framework, is in existence. Teachers have general guidelines on how to approach their subject. Those with vocational emphasis weight their curriculum toward the pre-professional, while those with other goals find ways to adapt the standard for their own uses. The imaginary Board reappears, and asks, "How do you teach? Can you prove that your method is effective?" This

time the Board is handed a curriculum from each teacher, each of which contains essentially the same elements. Because of the unification of its proponents, musical theatre is no longer a subject taught with random methodologies, but an established genre, a legitimate offspring of the Theatre family. While recognizing each other's individualities, the educators have agreed to include certain elements in their classroom. Teachers who want to communicate with other teachers to compare ideologies or methodologies will be confident that they are working from the same general lexicon, and can thus more easily assimilate new techniques into a classroom, assured that those new techniques will not be completely at odds with their existing methods. Institutions of higher learning will have matriculating students well-versed in the subject, and better prepared for the next step in musical theatre training, with its corresponding pedagogy. The hypothetical Board of Theatre Education suddenly has an established subject to reckon with, a clear pathway along which to place its funds, and a consistent list of necessary supplies, none of which diverges from the state's imposed guidelines for arts education.

Over-simplified as these scenarios may be, they make an important point. A standardized curriculum may in fact be the first crucial step in establishing a justification of

musical theatre as a school subject, and this justification is possibly the first step in gaining funding and a place in the state-wide arts curriculum. From a purely artistic viewpoint, a standardized curriculum would better train pre-professionals, giving them a mature and well-informed perspective, and more finely honed skills. In fact, who is to say that a new generation of better-trained young people isn't exactly what Broadway needs to usher in a new era of original shows in this, a period of sparsity and revivals? What advocate of musical theatre, from the most professional to the most avid amateur, wouldn't desire all of these results?

Thus am I prepared to offer a suggested curriculum which will make the second hypothetical situation a reality. The attempt has been made to address all the concerns of those educators who answered the questionnaire, and to design the curriculum in accordance with the established components in California's Framework. This curriculum is not meant to be a day-to-day pattern card of programming, though no doubt there are those teachers who would wish for such. This subject is currently too diverse, its goals too varied, and the idea of a standard too new for anything other than a general guideline. Flexibility is inherent, and educators are expected to adapt as they wish, to better mold the curriculum contents to their existing programs.

CHAPTER V Sample Curriculum

In developing a prototypical standard methodology for a subject, every attempt must be made to address the subject comprehensively. But defining what comprises a "comprehensive" program in musical theatre is difficult. The California State Board of Education has explained what they consider to be the essential elements of arts education in their Framework, and their delineations provide a logical starting point for this research.

Care will be taken to provide a sample curriculum which accurately reflects the expressed concerns and needs of the questionnaire respondents, as well as my own observations from teaching musical theatre. For the curriculum to remain representative, and not become burdened with too much information at this preliminary stage of development, not every idea from every teacher can be included. Therefore, ultimately the curriculum will reflect some personal choices, although it will be designed to be adapted to the climate in which it finds itself. Although I will suggest that the average high school or college classroom utilize the curriculum as it stands, I realize that a more well-defined program or magnet school may have justifiably different applications.

Preceding each section of the curriculum are Suggested Readings, which are meant to give both teacher and student

insights into a particular subject. Books were chosen on the basis of their usefulness as reference materials, their readability, their availability, and their content.

Desirable reference books are ones which show a wide range of entries, presented in a way which encourages quick and easy perusal. Readability refers to the language; the recommended authors write in a coherent, unencumbered way, and use language and terminology which will be understood by students and teachers, regardless of their previous knowledge of the subject. An effort was made to use books of recent publication, which can easily be found in libraries or educational catalogues. Finally, Suggested Readings are meant to give background to a class assignment. The books should allow teachers to learn or review enough to create their own assignments, or to make intelligent alterations to the existing assignments, and they should also provide information for the students, to help them with their assignments or gather further information about subjects which interest them. Also, each book contains its own bibliography which can be used for further research. Readers interested in a quick review of the Suggested Readings can find more complete information in the Annotated Bibliography at this paper's conclusion.

This sample curriculum is meant for immediate use. It will not suggest the use of as yet undeveloped instructional

materials. Sophisticated technological equipment is not required. This curriculum may be used by schools with the barest of budgets. Appendix C suggests possible instructional materials that may be developed which would fit easily into the sample curriculum.

This curriculum divides the study of Musical Theatre into four sections, each considered necessary to the development of a well-rounded student of theatre and the able performer at both the amateur and professional levels. How the sections--History, Audition Techniques, Production Values, and Professional Conduct--complement the Framework components will be discussed in each section.

1. History

Those teachers who reported on the survey that they include history units were predominately those who emphasized pre-professional training. The significance of this fact is not overlooked here. But whatever a program's emphasis, history should be incorporated into every musical theatre class.

The sample curriculum meets both of the Framework's Arts Heritage objectives. The History assignments are meant to introduce students to the people and shows who were the precursors of modern musical theatre. Specialty units with ethnic and multi-cultural themes can help students use "theatre as a means of understanding and appreciating cultural differences" (Framework 40).

There are varying opinions as to the very first "real" musical. Most argue for The Black Crook of 1866, others refute that the origins of the true musical were present before that, and some say the real musical of today did not come into its own until Show Boat, Porgy and Bess, or Oklahoma!. Regardless, historically, the important things to know about musical theatre are the forms it took before it became what it is today.

Students should learn something about music halls, minstrel shows, and Vaudeville before they start to explore the book musicals of the 1930's and their development into

today's styles.

Suggested Readings:

Gerald Bordman's American Musical Theatre: A Chronicle;
 Steven Suskin's Opening Night on Broadway: A Critical
 Quotebook of the Golden Era of the Musical Theatre;
 Allen Woll's Black Musical Theatre: From Coontown to
 Dreamgirls; Stanley Green's Rodgers and Hammerstein
 Fact Book and The World of Musical Comedy.

Suggested Assignments:

•Research a particular show which had significance to the development of American musical theatre, to be presented in a short paper or oral presentation. The teacher should assign the shows to the students, who can work individually or in groups. The Black Crook and the other shows mentioned above are all possibilities, as are the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, Florenz Ziegfeld's Follies, and George White's Scandals. Part of the assignment should include the student's analysis of why the shows contributed to the formation of the modern musical; this can be simply stated ("What similarities between <assigned show> and modern shows can you find? What differences?"), or more difficult ("Explain how <assigned show> was a product of its time, and could or could not work today.") [Corresponding Framework Components: Arts

Heritage, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2]

•Specialty units are also interesting. Some examples: shows written by women (The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, I'm Getting My Act Together and Taking It on the Road, The Secret Garden); religiously themed musicals (Jesus Christ Superstar, Godspell, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat); musicals with strong ethnic identities (Dreamgirls, Fiddler on the Roof, Zorba, Flower Drum Song; shows set against historical fact (Cabaret, The Sound of Music, South Pacific).

[Corresponding Framework Components: Arts Heritage, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2]

Modern musical theatre is not without its recent evolution, and it is important that students be able to recognize the key names and styles that preceded and may have influenced the creators of today's spectacular "mega-musicals."

Following is a list of recommended names that a student should have at least a passing familiarity with, in order to intelligently place shows within their proper historical contexts. This list is comprised of composers, lyricists and book writers who have greatly contributed to the genre, and whose works illustrate a representative cross section of styles.

•W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, George M. Cohan, Irving Berlin, George and Ira Gershwin, Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein, Cole Porter, Jule Styne, Cy Coleman, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, Leonard Bernstein, Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, Steven Schwartz, Richard Maltby and David Shire, Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley, John Kander and Fred Ebb, Jerry Herman, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Tim Rice, Steven Sondheim, James Lapine, and Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg.

For teachers with the time to give their students even more complete history units, and for more advanced students, a second list comprised of additional important personages follows:

•Producers/Directors: Florenz Ziegfeld, the Shuberts, George White, Busby Berkeley, George Abbott, David Merrick, Michael Bennett, The Nederlanders, Joseph Papp, Harold Prince, Tommy Tune; Writers: George S. Kaufman, DuBose Heyward, Herbert and Dorothy Fields, Moss Hart, Arthur Laurents; Composers: Otto Harbach, Sigmund Romberg, Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, Marsha Norman and Lucy Simon; Choreographers: Robert Alton, Michael Kidd, Bob Fosse, Agnes de Mille, and Jerome Robbins. (Note: Many of these versatile individuals belong in more than one category, and that in itself

may serve as an interesting research problem for students.)

Often early Broadway shows were created as vehicles for particular performers. These stars had a uniqueness that made them forever identifiable, either with a specific role, or for a singular style. Teachers should add their own favorites to this list:

- Fanny Brice, Ray Bolger, Al Jolson, Will Rogers, Helen Morgan, Ethel Merman, Carol Channing, Zero Mostel, Mary Martin, Rex Harrison, Julie Andrews, Pearl Bailey, Lauren Bacall, John Raitt, Alfred Drake, Debbie Reynolds, George Hearn, Angela Lansbury, Yul Brynner, Joel Grey, Theodore Bikel, Robert Morse, Liza Minnelli, Robert Preston, Gwen Verdon, Chita Rivera, Elaine Stritch, Barbra Streisand, and Tommy Tune.

Suggested Assignment:

Create a "vocabulary" list, similar to the ones students receive in English classes, only with names instead of words. The assignment could read as follows:

- Look up the following people and write down their specialty (lyricist, composer, etc.), their most productive years (not their birth/death years), their nationalities, and at least three shows they've created or been involved with.

Now that you know a little about them, can you find something interesting and different about them? (a common denominator among their shows--are they all tap shows, shows with little to no dialogue, etc; a particular working arrangement--do teams always write the same way, did they have any eccentricities, etc.)
[Corresponding Framework Components: Arts Heritage, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2]

Those names whom the teacher feels to be very important can be dealt with at length, doing in-depth biographical work in the form of essays that explore the person's career or a particular aspect of it, readings, or actually producing one of that person's musicals. Those people deemed less important by teachers can be dismissed after the briefest of mentions in an exercise such as the above "vocabulary" list. In either case, the students will at least have heard the names before, should they encounter them later on.

2. Audition Techniques

This section of Audition Techniques seeks to hone many skills which the Framework specifically mentions as essential to the development of a well-educated theatre student. The use of movement and the voice to communicate an internal idea, or "subtext," and the observation skills required to skillfully select proper material and spontaneously adapt it to the audition environment are all covered in the Framework's Aesthetic Perception component. Creative Expression is of course an audition element, calling on students to create and perform what is in essence a complete, condensed story. An auditioning student must take control of his or her environment and command the attention of the listeners with acting and singing skills. The Framework uses "evaluate," "formulate," and "judge" as key words in their fourth component, and Audition Techniques assignments which call for the students to evaluate their peers furthers the development of these Aesthetic Valuing skills. Learning proper audition techniques is valuable for students at all levels. At the very least, those in a musical theatre class will presumably be auditioning for school musicals, and should have some guidelines by which to prepare their audition pieces. For those schools which emphasize theatre as a way of building self-esteem, teamwork and social skills, auditioning is a valuable tool,

developing the important skills of confidence, preparation and public speaking that a student can take out into the world. For pre-professional programs, proper audition training is a must, since there is no more important calling card that an aspiring performer carries.

Audition techniques should include helping students determine vocal range and type, so that they may better select their own audition material. It is important to stress that, especially at the high school level, voices may not have completely developed, and type may change; it is dangerous for a student to leave high school already typecast. Departments without access to musical staff can use cast albums, which students can sing along with to determine preferred range and style.

Suggested Readings:

David Craig's A Performer Prepares: A Guide to Song Preparation for Actors, Singers and Dancers; Fred Silver's Auditioning for Musical Theatre; Donald Oliver's How to Audition for the Musical Theatre.

Suggested Assignments:

- The most obvious way to prepare for an audition is to hold mock auditions in class. This way the teacher and the other students can offer constructive criticism, and the auditioner gets practice before appearing before the casting staff of the school musical.

[Corresponding Framework Components: Aesthetic Perception, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2, 3; Creative Expression, Goal I, Objective 1, Goal III, Objectives 1, 3]

•An interesting twist on the mock audition process is to have a panel of students, each with an assigned role of Producer, Director, Assistant Director, Musical Director, and possibly Choreographer, if the teacher wants to include a dance audition. The students should have each of these positions explained to them, so that they understand the responsibilities of the roles they assume. They should have forms to fill out as they listen to each audition. This will offer them insight into what a casting staff is looking for. After the auditions they can explain to the class who they might have called back or cast and why. It should go without saying that peer critique such as this should be presented in the most positive way possible. Appendix D presents an actual audition form which can be adapted to the teacher's needs. [Corresponding Framework Components: Aesthetic Perception, Goal I, Objective 1; Creative Expression, Goal II, Objective 1, Goal IV Objectives 1, 2; Aesthetic Valuing, Goal I, Objectives 1, 3]

•After the students have selected their audition pieces, have them prepare them for the audition pianist. Then let a pianist (the actual audition pianist if possible) look over the music to determine if the page turns are handled well, if desired cuts and tempo changes are marked clearly, and if the music is generally playable. "Unapproved" pieces must be fixed and resubmitted until the students fully understand what is expected of them in preparing their music.

[Corresponding Framework Components: Creative Expression, Goal I, Objective 1, Goal II, Goal III, Objective 3]

•If a musical theatre class has access to a musical director, choir teacher, or other musician, a valuable segment of an audition lesson can focus on the call-back. The instructor can give students who do not read music general tips on finding their way around a sheet of music, thus enhancing their call-back skills.

Simple vocabulary and notation lists might include: repeat signs and first and second endings, jumping intervals vs. scales, diatonic vs. chromatic intervals, recognizing introductions and rideouts to audition songs, and being able to intelligently prepare music for a pianist. As a further assignment:

•Assign students an extremely long song, with multiple verses, and ask them to cut it down to an appropriate audition length. To make it more challenging, have them do it on the spot, even if they are not familiar with the song. This will force them to recognize introduction and rideout lengths, and learn about song structure, as well make intelligent decisions about verses, refrains, and bridges. When they have made their cuts, have a pianist play the piece to see if the students' choices were viable. [Corresponding Framework Components: Aesthetic Perception, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4; Creative Expression, Goal I, Objective 1, Goal II, Goal III, Objectives 1, 3; Aesthetic Valuing, Goal I, Objective 3]

3. Production Values

Part of being a successful performer is being a successful observer. Too many students' participation in plays is limited to regurgitating lines, without any concept of the whole. One of the oft-mentioned problems theatre teachers feel they face today is the difficulty of getting students to realize they are participating on a team, and that producing a play is a multi-faceted endeavor. The student who graduates from a theatre program having only been on stage will lack not only an appreciation for fellow non-acting artists, but will neglect the development of the "critical perspective." This elusive skill is that which enables someone to become a knowledgeable observer and interpreter of the theatre craft both on the stage and behind the scenes. The critical perspective is that part of the intellect which makes judgments about what is good and bad in a performance--what the Framework deems as part of Aesthetic Valuing. Performers, even the most gifted, who have no critical perspective are unable to accomplish any effective self-critique or self-evaluation, never having developed a standard for comparison; and without accurate self-evaluation, a performer cannot effectively understand his or her personal performance strengths and weaknesses. This distorted sense of self makes it difficult to select appropriate material, and can cause a performer to place

energies and studies along the wrong track, instead of the one which gives the best chance of success and fulfillment.

The following assignments implement every goal and almost every objective of all four Framework components. "The collaborative nature of theatre" (40) is a crucial phrase in the Creative Expression component, and special care was taken to find a variety of ways to make students aware of this concept. With these assignments, students will learn about technical theatre, understand the roles of the different people on a staff, and develop their own version of a musical, thereby exploring every avenue of musical theatre. In preparing their condensed shows, they will, at the very least, have to make technical and directorial decisions, find ways to express their ideas, place their plays into context for the other students, and make judgments about what is important to a show and what is expendable.

Many schools are fortunate to have technical theatre classes. Those who do not, often haven't the time within a semester or quarter to include information on technical theatre. But a brief unit is necessary, to familiarize the students with the other people in the theatre, and to begin the development of the critical perspective. The following exercises are designed to give students an understanding of the different jobs in a theatre, and an idea of how to

become critically aware of this field.

Suggested Readings:

Lehman Engel's The Making of a Musical; Francis Reid's The Stage Lighting Handbook; Graham Walne's Sound for Theatres; Bert Gruver's Stage Manager's Handbook.

Suggested Assignments:

- Students should be able to define the following terms: director, assistant director, musical director, vocal director, accompanist, orchestrator, arranger, musical supervisor, choreographer, dance captain, technical director, stage manager, make-up designer, costume designer, dresser, production assistant, lighting designer, sound designer, light board operator, sound board operator, house manager. If available, a guest technician would be valuable here. He or she can take the class through each of these terms, and the students can later be required to furnish their own definitions. [Corresponding Framework Components: Creative Expression, Goal II, Objective 1, Goal IV, Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4; Aesthetic Valuing, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2]
- Supply students with an agenda for the production of a play and ask them to delegate each responsibility to the proper person. For example, your agenda might read:

- see if Guys and Dolls is available
- check budget to see if we can afford it
- check if sets or costumes are available for rental
- go over music and see if we have a potential cast
- decide to build sets; need to check out space
- decide how big an orchestra to use, and where to put it
- will we cut any lines or scenes?
- how long will our show run? how much will we charge for admission?...

You can go on in this vein, creating a hypothetical check list for a director. The students must put themselves in the director's place and decide how best to get all these questions answered. [Corresponding Framework Components: Creative Expression, Goal II, Objectives 1, 3, Goal IV, Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4; Aesthetic Valuing, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2, 3]

•Condensed shows. Give the students the following:

You are required to produce a 30-40 minute version of a well-known musical. You must choose which songs and scenes to include, bearing in mind that they must directly propel the plot forward, or otherwise be integral to a shortened version of the show. Each

person in your group will be responsible for an aspect of the show. One person will have final say in choosing the appropriate scenes and songs, though you should work on this together. One person will cast the play, one will block the scenes, one will decide on any sets, costumes or props you may want, one will be responsible for supplying musical accompaniment of some kind (giving your accompanist the correctly marked music, editing a tape together for accompaniment, etc.). It is up to you to decide on a concept for your play--for example, will you use a narrator to link scenes together, or can the play be cut in such a way that no narrator is necessary? You must also determine an efficient way of utilizing your rehearsal periods--how much time to be spent learning music, learning blocking, etc.

Each group will be doing a very different musical. Therefore you are also required to give a SHORT prologue, where you explain what kind of show you are doing, and a brief history of the original performance, including how long it ran, when it opened, and any interesting anecdotes about the run or cast. Also be prepared to defend your decisions on cut or kept scenes and musical numbers. [Corresponding Framework Components: Aesthetic Perception, Goal I, Objectives

1, 2, 3, 4; Creative Expression, Goal I, Objectives 1, 3, 4, Goal II, Objectives 1, 2, 3, Goal III, Objectives 1, 2, 3, Goal IV, Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Arts Heritage, Goal I, Objective 1; Aesthetic Valuing, Goal I, Objectives 1, 3]

If you are of the fortunate few who can take students to professional or semi-professional theatre productions, the following assignment can be a valuable follow-up to a field trip. Those with budget constraints can do the same assignment without leaving class--Sweeney Todd was produced for television and is available on video. Into the Woods also aired on public television, and may become available in the future. Contact your local video stores, or try Video Finders, a Los Angeles-based public broadcasting station video supplier.

•Have the students fill out a form with these questions:

1. What show did you see? Give a brief history--who wrote it, when was it originally produced, did it star anyone famous, did it win any Tony awards?
2. Briefly (in a paragraph) outline the plot, making sure you mention all the major characters and what happens to them.
3. How was this production overall? Could you understand the dialogue and lyrics? How was the energy

on stage?

4. What about the orchestra--where was it, how large was it, was it too loud/soft?

5. Did you notice any unusual technical decisions? For example, was lighting used to convey something in a specific or unexpected way? Was there a particularly clever set design? Would you say the sets were simple or complicated? Why?

6. How did the audience respond to this performance? Did their response seem appropriate (was it an "off" day, where the audience seemed lethargic, or was the audience involved)?

[Corresponding Framework Components: Aesthetic Perception, Goal I, Objective 1; Creative Expression, Goal II, Objective 3, Goal IV, Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Arts Heritage, Goal I, Objectives 1, 2; Aesthetic Valuing, Goal I, Objectives 2, 3]

Cast albums offer an interesting insight into a play. It is important to make students aware that not every professional production they see is excellent, and that not everything that makes it on to a CD is flawless. An example of an awful cast album in terms of musicality, pitch, and orchestral precision is the London cast album of Seven Brides for Seven Brothers. An excellent cast album, which incidentally is so thorough it practically eliminates the need for liner notes, is The Secret Garden. The same

Framework components applied to the performance evaluation apply here.

- Play a cast album from a show the students know well, and give them the following:

1. Rate this cast album on the following scale: 1. would never buy, 2. might buy, 3. would definitely buy. Remember, cast albums are supposed to make us relive a performance.

2. How did the ensemble sound? Was the harmony accurate? Was the energy palpable?

3. How were the leads? Were they in tune? Did they have good energy?

4. How were the musicians? Were they in tune? Were they together? Did the conductor do a good job of following the singers in talk-sing (colla voce) sections?

5. Do you think this album accurately reflects the show? (was transition dialogue or underscoring included? should it have been?) Do you think the composer would be happy with the way the album sounds?

4. Professional Conduct

This section contains the most basic of laws governing the theatre classroom, and while they are not strictly under the umbrella of "curriculum," I think it is nevertheless important that they be mentioned. Permit the assumption that "standard pedagogy" must be standard at all levels, from the lofty (in the form of pre-Broadway training) to the most banal (elementary theatre etiquette).

Concerns expressed by survey respondents as to the apathy and unpreparedness of their students will be dismissed by this section, as well as the section preceding. By manipulating scripts in their condensed shows, and through intense audition work, students learn to "trust the material," which was a weakness acknowledged by several teachers. Study of the various elements of a show, and the process of making production decisions, should increase the students' awareness of the magnitude of a musical production.

The synthesis of the four Framework components is present under the heading Professional Conduct. All the rules of theatre etiquette and professionalism are intended to create in the student an understanding of the ART of musical theatre--the nature of the craft, and of the tools necessary to the building of creations in that craft. Becoming acutely aware of and responding to their

environment promotes an atmosphere of creative expression and perception. Students with this Aesthetic Perception will gain further understanding of themselves, and of the ways they interact with other people. From this understanding grows more mature self-expression, and the beginnings of the crucial critical perspective, or Aesthetic Valuing.

The most common problem when producing a musical seems to be getting students to perform in rehearsal. (What teacher hasn't threatened with the line, "If you don't perform in rehearsal, you'll be rehearsing in performance"?) The concept that shows need not come together before the final dress rehearsal is one that is too prevalent among student performers. Often they dawdle and idle until the last minute, only to have the performance come off fairly well. The kudos they receive from friends and family convince them that the performance was good enough, and they did not have to work hard early on after all. This habit must be eliminated at the first opportunity. Firm deadline dates should be set for learning and memorizing songs and dances and getting off-book. Directors should insist on full energy performances during the entire rehearsal process, not only to build up the performers' stamina, but to show them how much better the performance can become if it is at the "good enough" level early on.

It should go without saying that throughout a musical theatre course emphasis should be placed on the importance of theatre etiquette. By insisting on an attention to detail teachers can instill in their students the many good habits that are expected of professionals, and which make rehearsal time progress much more smoothly. The following are some of the important details this writer has often observed lacking at the high school and college rehearsal, all of which could be improved by an example set by the director. [Corresponding Framework Components: Aesthetic Perception, Goal I, Objectives 1, 4; Creative Expression, Goal II, Objectives 1, 2, 3, Goal III, Objectives 1, 2, 3; Aesthetic Valuing, Goal I, Objectives 1, 3]

- Students should always have a pencil for marking scripts and scores, and paper for writing down their notes at the end of rehearsal.
- Students should carry or share blank tapes and portable cassette players at all times to record vocal parts or musical accompaniment.
- Rehearsals should always start exactly when they are supposed to, so that students do not develop a habit of tardiness, and end exactly on time, so that students respect the limited rehearsal time.
- Supervised dance and vocal warm-ups before performances or run-throughs should eventually teach the students to warm-up

on their own before every rehearsal.

- Proper attire should be encouraged from the first day.

Students should wear shoes like those they will wear in the show as early as possible.

- Directors should try to supply students with the actual vocal books for a show. Supplying only lyrics will impede the learning process; even those performers who do not read music will learn more quickly if they can follow rhythms and rests with the music in front of them. Constantly looking at the music will improve their sight-singing skills, as well.

The director should foster a sense of unity between the cast and technical staff, keeping the cast aware of what the crew is doing to make their production run more smoothly. Casts who never see the crew until performance time will be more apt to be in the crew's way, and are in danger of developing an indifference towards them. This same advice applies to the costumer, who is too easily devalued in the excitement of tech. week. Programs in which the performers build their own sets and costumes are fortunate in the sense that students gain an understanding of the demands of all the aspects of production.

A professional, organized teacher/director with high expectations will create a professional, organized, and accomplished performer.

CHAPTER VI Conclusion

It is the aim of this thesis to present musical theatre as an important subject which is deserving of a standard method of teaching. Unified teaching methods will produce students more knowledgeable about the musical theatre. This knowledge will, in turn, better prepare students for professional theatrical careers, for teaching positions, or simply for a lifelong personal enjoyment of the art.

The diversity of the questionnaire responses pointed to an interesting conclusion. While the teaching methods of these educators were widely different, their goals were basically the same. Performance is a priority, and witnessing professional performances is a highly valued, if too often rare, commodity. Division existed mainly over the balancing of a school term--how much history vs. how much performance--a decision often made for the teacher according to available budgets.

This paper illuminates a need for instructional materials geared specifically toward the subject of musical theatre. If the items on the "wish list" in Appendix C are developed, much will be gained toward the legitimization and standardization of musical theatre education. The sample curriculum presented here will hopefully start this process, prompting teachers to become creative with the exercises while adapting them to the proven successful elements of

their programs. The Annotated Bibliography and the sample curriculum exercises are meant as a guide, from which teachers must extrapolate appropriate materials and establish their own opinions. The object here is not to depersonalize musical theatre. In this field, as in any art form, where so much critical evaluation is based upon personal opinion, this curriculum can only hope to provide a launch pad for educators who are searching for the basic components of a comprehensive program.

Care was taken to adapt this information to the Visual and Performing Arts Framework of California. Perhaps in time the Framework will include a musical theatre component in its Drama/Theatre section. In that event, this simple curriculum will have to be expanded to adapt to whatever new components and guidelines the Board of Education researchers develop. Similarly, the more technological advances which apply to musical theatre, such as the items on the "wish list," the greater the need will be for further research into the uses of such technology.

Until then, it is hoped that the sample curriculum and the evaluations of existing materials and methodologies gathered together here, will lead to musical theatre classes which are more successful and fulfilling for students and teachers alike.

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- Suskin, Steven. Opening Night on Broadway: A Critical Quotebook of the Golden Era of the Musical Theatre. New York: Schirmer Books, 1990.
- Woll, Allen. Black Musical Theatre from Coontown to Dreamgirls. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989.

Recommended Texts for Theatre Library--Audition

- Oliver, Donald. How to Audition for the Musical Theatre. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1985.
- Silver, Fred. Auditioning for the Musical Theatre. New York: Newmarket Press, 1985.

Recommended Texts for Theatre Library--Biography

- Green, Stanley. The World of Musical Comedy, 4th ed. New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, Inc., 1980.
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Recommended Texts for Incorporation into Curriculum

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- Engel, Lehman. The Making of a Musical. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1977.
- Gruver, Bert, rev. Frank Hamilton. The Stage Manager's Handbook. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1972.
- Ingham, Rosemary and Liz Covey. The Costume Designer's Handbook. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983.
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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Offers some good insights into the discipline, but very plodding reading.
- . Performing Power: A New Approach for the Singer-Actor. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985.
Balk's technique is over-explained and too diagrammatic for any but the most theoretical reader.
- . The Radiant Performer. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990.
As in his other books, Balk attempts to make the natural gifts of voice and soul into a programmed science.
- Bordman, Gerald. American Musical Theatre: A Chronicle. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
This is a great reference book for a school library. Bordman offers a complete look, in prose form, of every musical ever produced, since before The Black Crook, presented season by season.
- Buzza, David. "Managing a Responsive and Responsible Theater Production Program in a Small College." Annual Meeting of the Central States Speech Association. Schaumburg, Illinois, April 16 - 18, 1988.
While there is no mention of musical theatre in this article, it offers a good justification of theatre programs and their educational validity.
- California State Board of Education. Handbook for Planning an Effective Visual and Performing Arts Program. Sacramento: The Committee, 1990.
This handbook was prepared by the California State Board of Education for grades K-12, and is a companion to the Framework. It is mainly for use at the district level, and not at the teaching level, although educators interested in how new programs are implemented may find it interesting.
- California State Board of Education. Prelude to Performance Assessment in the Arts, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1993.
- Craig, David. On Performing. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987.
Interviews with professionals in theatre in the form of twenty questions which are vaguely answered. This is mostly just a panegyric on the field.

- . A Performer Prepares: A Guide to Song Preparation for Actors, Singers and Dancers. New York: Applause Books, 1993.

This third book of Craig's trilogy is excellent--pedagogy in dialogue form.

- Dunkel, Stuart Edward. The Audition Process: Anxiety Management and Coping Strategies. Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press, 1989.

Dunkel's book is a psychological approach to the audition process, and though it is written for orchestral musicians, it is applicable to auditioners of any kind. He includes lists of things to do or not do, including, "Keep your purpose in mind" (13), "do not respond to your imagination" (13), and "center your attention" (15). He includes sections on relieving Fear, Worry, Doubt, and Self-Consciousness, and discusses relaxation techniques and building confidence. This is a helpful book for those who are truly terrified of the audition process.

- Ellis, Roger. An Audition Handbook for Student Actors. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1986.

This book contains a twenty-six page section on musical theatre and includes tips for non-singers. But basically Ellis is too general and obviously uninformed.

- Engel, Lehman. The Making of a Musical. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1977.

Engel offers advice to the would-be composer/lyricist, complete with exercises to do. He covers music, lyrics, libretto, and has essays on production values, auditioning a show, and the use of copyright material.

- Gänzl, Kurt. The British Musical Theatre, vol. II 1915-1984. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

This is an exhaustive (1205 pages) survey of each show that played Britain, year by year, with cast lists and other production information, with a summary of each season beginning each chapter. It is valuable only if one is specifically doing a unit on British musical theatre.

- . The Encyclopedia of the Musical Theatre. New York: Schirmer Books, 1994.

This is a glossier version, in two volumes, of Green's Encyclopedia, but with European entries. It the definitive encyclopedia, but would be too comprehensive for the average musical theatre class.

---. Gänzl's Book of the Musical Theatre. New York: Schirmer Books, 1989.

Plot summaries of musicals from Great Britain, France, the United States, Austria, Hungary, Germany, and Spain.

Green, Stanley. Encyclopedia of the Musical Theatre. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1976.

Of the ones available, this is the best encyclopedia. The entries include song titles, and it is quite comprehensive. An excellent reference tool.

---. Rodgers and Hammerstein Fact Book: A Record of Their Works Together and with Other Collaborators. New York: The Lynn Farnol Group, Inc., 1980.

In-depth biographies in resume form of each man list all the firsts of their careers: first professional score, first song written together, etc. Biographies include statistics on performances, professional positions held, society memberships, and awards and recognitions. Their shows follow, with each song, the plots, the cast, run statistics and reviews. A complete periodical bibliography of works written about the team finishes the volume. Excellent classroom reference, and a must for anyone needing any information, professional or biographical, about these two men.

---. The World of Musical Comedy. 4th ed. New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, Inc., 1980.

Chapters are by author, from Herbert to Hamlish, including the female writers Gretchen Cryer and Nancy Ford and Carol Hall.

Gruver, Bert, rev. by Frank Hamilton. The Stage Manager's Handbook. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1972.

Gruver admits this is too big a job to be written about, but offers the book as "a guidebook to help [the stage manager] utilize his basic knowledge" (vii). He lists the stage manager's general duties, and goes through each one in detail. The appendices include a script, in its original form, and after it has been marked up by a stage manager.

Hirsch, Foster. Harold Prince and the American Musical Theatre. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Forwards by Harold Prince and Stephen Sondheim are the most interesting portions of the book.

Hischak, Thomas S. Stage It With Music: An Encyclopedic Guide to the American Musical Theatre. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993.

An A to Z guide, with entries which include producers, actors, designers, and so on, as well as the expected composers and shows. It is a quick reference, not very scholarly, and based in popular knowledge. Valuable more as a casual reference guide in a junior high or high school class.

Ilson, Carol. Harold Prince: From Pajama Game to Phantom of the Opera. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989.

A minute-to-minute account of each Prince show, from inception to close. It contains good anecdotal material, but is too complete for quick or easy research. It is interesting if one wants the inside scoops on staff and shows.

Ingham, Rosemary and Liz Covey. The Costume Designer's Handbook: A Complete Guide for Amateur and Professional Costume Designers. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983.

This is an excellent guide to analyzing a play, getting from it what is needed, and designing the production. Includes practical tips on the business end of design, including tax and union information. This book does not include costume illustrations.

Iowa State Department of Public Instruction. Theatre Guide to Curriculum Development. Des Moines: 1986.

This is like California Framework, except for Iowa. Like California's, there is no mention of musical theatre. Does, however, ask, "How adequate is the variety, quality and quantity of instructional materials and media? How accessible are they to the students and teachers, and how well are they utilized?" (108)

Lerner, Alan Jay. The Musical Theatre: A Celebration. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1986.

Lerner traces the history of musical theatre from opera-bouffe to Andrew Lloyd Webber, with an emphasis on the historical context of the early forms in Paris and America's Industrial Revolution. He calls special attention to the oft-forgotten Otto Harbach, and has harsh words for critics, accusing them of closing many publicly acclaimed shows with bad reviews. Good personal anecdotes.

---. The Street Where I Live. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978.

A charming, funny autobiography, which focusses on Gigi, My Fair Lady, and Camelot. Not very valuable for a classroom, but a very good read.

Loney, Glenn, ed. Musical Theatre In America. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984.

A collection of papers, with keynote address by Lehman Engel (who says, incidentally, not to worry about the demise of musical theatre--it will live on, he is sure). Includes transcriptions of panel discussions about working on and creating musicals; essays on musical theatre history, minstrel shows, dancing, George M. Cohan, Weill and Broadway, and much more.

Mandelbaum, Ken. A Chorus Line and the Musicals of Michael Bennett. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.

A detailed account of Bennett's career, and the conception of each of his musicals. The lack of gossip or anecdotes may deter all but the most diligent researcher or Bennett fan.

Mast, Gerald. Can't Help Singin': The American Musical on Stage and Screen. New York: The Overlook Press, 1987.

Mast combines Bordman's detailed history with a musical analysis of the greats of the musical theatre, but one doesn't need to be a musician to understand it. He tackles many angles of theatre history, including racial issues, morality, and personal stories. Includes chapters on Berlin, Kern, the Gershwins, Fred Astaire, and Busby Berkeley.

Mates, Julian. American Musical Stage: Two Hundred Years of Musical Theatre. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Mates wants to "demonstrate the interrelationship of musical stage forms" (p.4). He gives explanations of theatre companies in the American west--how they started and where they were, and the development of repertory. Mates denies The Black Crook is the first musical, and emphasizes that there is more to "musical theatre" than the "book musical;" all forms are related.

Mordden, Ethan. Better Foot Forward: The History of the American Musical Theatre. New York: Grossman Publishers, 1976.

A self-described "race through" the early history, with much on the role of operetta, and good mention of some of Broadway more obscure shows. The un-scholarly tone is almost too much, making the reader wonder how much Mordden

actually studied his subject before casually forming some opinions on it; this opinion solidifies with the "Very Select Bibliography" of 11 titles.

NASM Opera/Musical Theatre Committee. The Education and Training of the Singer-Actor. Virginia: National Association of Schools of Music, 1984.

An exercise in futility. This survey names no schools, and merely has sketchy information on which plays were produced by the surveyed schools.

Oliver, Donald. How to Audition for the Musical Theatre. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1985.

A pretty good, but less than scholarly, work. There is a good section on preparing music for a pianist, although Oliver has some opinions to which some audition coaches may take exception.

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An excellent dictionary covering British and American theatre lighting terminology.

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Bearing in mind that much may have changed in eight years, this is a good beginner guide, and still one of the newest, with a good balance between practice and theory.

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This article is a defense of musical theatre in high schools with a guide for putting on a show. Includes a questionnaire sent to survey schools in British Columbia.

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This is the ultimate professional guide for a serious student of design. Part I, "Theory and Technique," is more relevant for musical theatre designers, as Part II, "Theory and Style," deals with specific, full-scale dramatic productions.

Seidel, Kent. "Theatre Education in United States High Schools." Teaching Theatre 3.1 (Fall, 1991).

This is a very comprehensive and well-written survey of the status of theatre education, but the musical theatre mention is slight.

Silver, Fred. Auditioning for the Musical Theatre. New York: Newmarket Press, 1985.

A very good book, but which, like Donald Oliver, contains some questionable opinions. For example, Silver condones changing or even writing new lyrics for an outdated song; implies one should get into character halfway through the song introduction; says it is acceptable to have taped accompaniment; and presents movement suggestions which are too formulaic.

Sunderland, Margot, with Kenneth Pickering. Choreographing the Stage Musical. New York: Theatre Arts Books/Routledge, 1990.

A very unscholarly work which shows the authors' suggested choreography for a few selected numbers. The many error in song and show titles strongly diminish the authors' authority, as does their self-promotion, using one author's own--and completely unknown--work as a frequent example.

Suskin, Steven. Opening Night on Broadway: A Critical Quotebook of the Golden Era of the Musical Theatre. New York: Schirmer Books, 1990.

A very interesting compilation of every review for Oklahoma! (1943) through Fiddler on the Roof (1964), with summaries of how many critics liked or didn't like it, and whether the show made or lost money. Includes an introduction on who the critics and their papers were, with biographies of each critic and of other "notable careers" in the theatre. Good reference book.

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Suskin lists every copyrighted song each man wrote, whom he wrote it with, and what he wrote it for. "Production Index" is a list by show, with all the songs. The Forward gives background on the writers. It is difficult to imagine needing such a work as this, but Suskin clearly is trying to compile a detailed reference work.

Swain, Joseph P. The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

A self-styled survey of the "achievements of [the American musical theatre] music as a dramatic element" (3). This book traces the evolution of the musical, musically; it is unreadable by non-musicians, and analyzes to death the greatest landmark songs of Broadway; it is an entire book on the technical, musical reasons for a particular song interpretation. It might be valuable for a director looking

for insights.

Tumbusch, Tom. Complete Production Guide to Modern Musical Theatre. New York: Richards Rosen Press, 1969.

This book is one in The Theatre Student Series, and deals solely with productions at the high school and college levels. It contains step-by-step advice for the teacher who has no experience in producing or directing a musical, and includes sections on choosing a show, interpreting it, casting, and choosing the appropriate level of sophistication of sets, costumes, and instrumentation. Tumbusch forgets nothing, discussing set materials, the need to pace the orchestra and chorus to avoid strain, and budget concerns. Experienced directors will find this book redundant; novices will welcome the information.

Walne, Graham. Sound for Theatres. Eastbourne, East Sussex: J. Offord, 1981.

Walne states in his Preface, "I have set out to provide a comprehensive work of basic reference on sound theory, acoustics, equipment and system design..." and he does just this, in an excellent fashion.

Walsh, Michael. Andrew Lloyd Webber: His Life and Works. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989.

A coffee-table book, with good illustrations, this book would be useful in a classroom only to give students an idea of the look of his musicals, which are often hard to find in photographs.

Wills, Barbara. "Theatre Education: Approaching a New Decade," Design for Arts in Education 90.3 (Jan/Feb 1989): 24-29.

Although there is no mention of musical theatre, the article's strength lies in the very clear summary of the various curriculum advances that have been made since the mid-1980's.

Woll, Allen. Black Musical Theatre: From Coontown to Dreamgirls. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989.

As a really well-written account of the origins of the black musical, this book fills a major gap in the general public's knowledge of theatre. Although not in textbook form, this book could easily, and should be, incorporated by teachers into their curricula.

APPENDIX A - The Questionnaire

Dear Educator:

Please take part in a research project designed to assess the field of musical theatre education at the secondary school and college levels. The aim of this project is to garner a full understanding not only of the existing methods of teaching musical theatre, but the areas of greatest need. This study takes place under the aegis of Dr. David Kahn of San Jose State University's Theatre Arts department, and will be incorporated into a master's degree thesis.

The advent of new technology will make multi-media classrooms a standard reality, and courses in the arts will be particularly targeted for new instructional materials. It is important that such developments answer a specific need, and do not merely serve as examples of what impressive feats technology, such as the CD-ROM, can accomplish.

In order for musical theatre to be taught comprehensively, a clear picture of the existing curricula and instructional aids must exist. It is my hope that with the valuable input of educators like you, instructional materials and curricula may be developed which will enhance the teaching experience for educators and students alike.

In gratitude for your participation in this study, I will forward to you the results of this questionnaire, which

is being sent to high school and college teachers all over the Bay Area.

Please feel free to use additional space to answer questions, and to enclose any information which would give me a greater understanding of how your classroom works. This questionnaire will take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete.

If this mailing has been misdirected, please forward it to the appropriate musical theatre educator on your campus. Thank you very much.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS OF MUSICAL THEATRE

1. Does your school have straight drama AND musical theatre classes, or are they combined? (please check one)

classes in each _____ combined _____

2. What is your curriculum? In other words, how do you structure a semester-long class in this subject? Do you have a syllabus you can enclose with this questionnaire?

3. Are your students required to audition or crew for school productions? yes _____ no _____

4. How do you use various media in your classroom--do you show movie musicals, listen to recordings, sing/dance in class, etc.?

5. Have you ever used a commercially produced teaching tool in the musical theatre genre? yes _____ no _____

If yes, what was it, and what did you like and dislike about

it?

6. Do you use any outside lessons, i.e. guest lecturers or performers, group trips to performances? yes _____ no _____

If yes, what are they?

7. What do you find the most difficult aspect of theatre to communicate to students in the classroom? Why?

8. Do you believe a course in musical theatre should:

_____ 1. emphasize the history of the genre and the various styles and elements of it, or

_____ 2. focus on performance, with the goal of preparing students for a career in theatre?

Or, do you have other ideas of what a course in musical theatre should accomplish? Please explain.

9. Is there a teaching aid that you wish you had at your disposal (a particular media tool, computers, a piano, additional staff like a musical director or choreographer)?

10. If you could develop some kind of teaching tool, like a CD- ROM, video or book, what would it be? (Be as vague as you like; I just want an idea of what's missing in the classroom these days.)

11. Is there any unique aspect of your program of which you are particularly proud, and which has had especially good results?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR _____

1. How large is your performing arts department?

-number of staff (including part-time) _____

-number of straight drama classes _____

-number of musical theatre classes _____

-approximate total number of students in the program _____

2. How many musicals does your school produce each year? _____

3. How big is your theatre, and what do you charge for admission?

_____ seats \$ _____

4. Do you _____ rent or _____ build your sets and costumes?

5. Are your director, choreographer, musical director, technical director, and stage manager

_____ teachers on staff

_____ students

_____ outside professionals?

6. Do you use a _____ full orchestra, _____ combo or _____ piano?

(if this changes per show, you may check more than one)

Are the musicians _____ students, _____ adults or _____ both?

7. May I have your phone number so I may contact you with any further questions? Please include the best time to reach you. () _____

8. Please print your name (for my records):

9. May I refer to you or your school by name in my report?

yes _____ no, I'd rather you didn't _____

YOU'RE FINISHED!!

Once again, my sincere thanks for taking the time to participate in this study.

ADDENDUM TO SECOND MAILING:

Dear Educator:

Enclosed is a questionnaire sent out to teachers of musical theatre in the San Francisco Bay Area as part of a project designed to research instructional materials in this field. The results of that preliminary survey yielded the information that instructional materials dealing with the musical theatre genre are rarely produced, and almost never utilized in the classroom. Therefore, this search is being extended to colleges and universities all over the United States with well-established musical theatre classes and departments. The emphasis now is being placed on curriculum--not only what commercial aids you may use in class, but what you yourself have developed, to illuminate more clearly how musical theatre is being taught.

I would greatly appreciate your filling out this questionnaire, enclosing a syllabus, and detailing specifically how you guide your students.

APPENDIX B - Existing Musical Theatre Programs

The reader may be curious as to what constitutes a truly comprehensive education in musical theatre. The institutions listed here are only a few of the several which offer an excellent training in the history and performance of musical theatre, including extensive audition training and focus on the development of the critical perspective. Teachers wanting to develop a program can perhaps look to these schools to gain a clearer understanding of the various subjects deemed important by well-established, respected institutions.

BOSTON CONSERVATORY

minimum requirements for a BFA in Musical Theatre

4 yrs. each of Musical Theatre, Private Voice, Acting, Speech

3 yrs. each of Ballet, Tap, Liberal Arts Core classes

2 yrs. each of Jazz and Music Lab

1 yr. each of Ear Training, Piano, Intro. to Professional Theatre, Proprioceptive Movement, Stagecraft, Stage Make-up, Movement for Actors, Shakespeare, Directing, History of Theatre, Modern Drama

6 units in a chosen concentration: Directing, Acting, Dance, Music, or Technical Theatre

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY--FULLERTON

requirements for a BA in Musical Theatre with a
Production/Performance Concentration

1 yr. each Voice/Movement for Stage, Beginning Acting,
Intermediate Acting, Musical Theatre Workshop
1 semester each of Art of the Theatre, Diatonic Harmony w/
Lab, Piano, Intermediate Tap, Intermediate Ballet,
Intermediate Jazz, Fundamentals of Directing, World
Theatre, Seminar in Critical Techniques, Dance for
Musical Theatre, Production and Performance
Continued instruction in Private Voice

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

requirements for a BFA in Music Theatre

86 of 132 credits in:

Play Analysis, History of Costume, Directing, Acting, Voice,
Movement, Tech. Productions, Make-up, History of Musical
Theatre, Music Theory, Music Theatre Workshops, Keyboard,
Singing, Dance

46 of 132 credits in:

Writing, History, Social Science, Humanities, Natural
Science, Fine and Performing Arts

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ARTS--INTEGRATED PROGRAM

requirements for a two-year Certificate:

4 semesters each of Dance and Voice (3 sem. private; 1 sem. class)

3 semesters each of Voice Production and Speech, Musical Theatre Performance, Acting (Techniques; Scene Study; Rehearsal/ Presentation)

2 semesters each of Sight-singing/Musicianship and Musical Theatre Film Lab

special classes in: Career Preparation; Commercial Television; Monologues/Cold Readings; Cabaret/Microphone Technique; Stage Combat; Acting for Film/Television

ITHACA COLLEGE

requirements for a BFA in Musical Theatre

Theatre Practice; Stagecraft; Scene Study; Voice and Movement; Jazz; Ballet; Modern; Tap; Advanced Dance in jazz, ballet, modern or tap; Intro. to Theatre; Voice/Speech for Stage; Movement for Stage; Styles of Acting; Music Theatre and/or Opera Workshop; Dance for Musical Stage; History of Theatre; Music Theory; Sight singing; Involvement with Music American Musical Theatre; Applied Voice; Keyboard Musicianship.

APPENDIX C - Suggested Instructional Materials

The following list of instructional materials was culled from the questionnaire responses and my own observations, and represents a "wish list" for teachers of musical theatre. It is hoped that the developers of educational resources will be assiduous in responding to the specific needs of teachers.

1. A video or CD-Rom which explains the different styles of theatre dance, and demonstrates them, using complete excerpts from Broadway shows to place the examples in context.
2. A video or CD-Rom which explains the history of musical theatre, with visual examples. These examples should be complete reenactments, with sets, lighting and costumes, to allow students to really compare styles and gain insights into show styles which may not be in existence any more.
3. A complete musical theatre course curriculum, with specific exercises and included instructional materials, to be used by teachers who do not have experience in teaching musical theatre.
4. A collection, in book or CD-Rom form, of scenes which include songs. Many scene and monologue books exist, but students and teachers should be able to find self-contained scenes that include songs for presentation in class. Ideally this selection should be divided into scene/songs

for one person, duets, trios and small groups.

5. A video of audition techniques which is based upon sample auditions, both good and bad. All the reading in the world will not have as much impact on a student as the chance to actually view a particularly bad or excellent audition. This video should follow each audition example with a set of questions for the students to answer with the help of their teacher (Would you cast this person? Why or why not? Was the song selection wise? How was his acting? What kind of a voice did he have? etc.). Then, once the students have had a chance to review the sample audition, a complete analysis by a knowledgeable casting staff should follow which answers all the same questions and gives further insights.

6. An assignment-based workbook for a technical theatre class or unit, requiring sound, light and costume design.

APPENDIX D - Sample Audition Form

The form reprinted here is a detailed musical evaluation, to be filled out by the musical or vocal director during an audition. Many students will not be ready to give such a detailed musical critique. In those cases, have the students evaluate only the most obvious and most important in each categories. My suggestions are: in Area 1, "resonance/projection"; in Area 2, "pitch" and "diction"; in Area 3, "facial expressions" and "projection of meaning." As students become more skillful listeners, they will be able to form opinions for the other categories on the form.

Some explanatory information: "Range" indicates the actual top and bottom notes of a singer's vocal range; the letters which appear after "Range" refer to the general vocal ranges Soprano, Mezzo, Alto, Tenor, Bass; "No." is the number assigned to each auditioner upon arrival. On this form, auditioners are rated on a scale of 5 to 1, with 5 signifying excellence, and 1 indicating extreme weakness in a particular area. Some panelists will prefer to place checks in specific boxes, others will rely more heavily on the "Comments" sections to record their observations in longhand.

This form is reproduced with permission from the Peninsula Civic Light Opera of San Mateo, California.

NAME _____ RANGE _____ S M A T B

NO. _____ SONG _____ Do you read music?
(Not necessarily sight sing) _____

AREA 1: Use of Voice Component Elements	5	4	3	2	1	Summary rating for Area 1: _____
Posture to support breathing						Comments
Breath control						
Tone quality, placement						
Vowel colors						
Resonance, projection						
Control of Registers/Ranges						
Legato technique						
AREA 2: Accuracy Component Elements	5	4	3	2	1	Summary rating for Area 2: _____
Notes						Comments
Rhythm						
Pitch (intonation)						
Dynamics						
Tempos						
Words						
Diction						
Expressive markings						
AREA 3: Poise, Expression Component Elements	5	4	3	2	1	Summary rating for Area 3: _____
Poised posture						Comments
Control of mannerisms						
Facial expressions						
Direct approach to audience						
Phrasing						
Use of mood						
Projection of meaning						