

# INTRODUCTION

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## I. Overview

*Love Life* is a vaudeville. It is presented in two parts, each consisting of a series of acts. The sketches, which start in 1791 and come up to the present day, are presented in the physical style of the various periods. The four main characters, Susan and Sam Cooper, and their children, Johnny and Elizabeth, who present the story, do not change in appearance as time moves on. The vaudeville acts which come between each sketch are presented before a vaudeville drop and are styled and costumed in a set vaudeville pattern.<sup>1</sup>

With this prefatory note in the program of *Love Life*, Kurt Weill and Alan Jay Lerner hoped to attenuate the bewilderment that their daringly experimental new offering risked arousing in an audience expecting a typical “musical comedy” or “musical play.” They were not entirely successful. *Love Life* received mixed notices, and even its sympathetic critics described the show as “experimental,” “cerebral,” and “bitter,” suggesting that the evening was “rather tough going for the average audience.”<sup>2</sup> The public seems to have taken these warnings to heart: dwindling audiences forced the show to close with heavy losses within just over eight months. Yet those very qualities that once made *Love Life* appear overly intellectual also account for the notoriety it has acquired in recent decades despite, or perhaps because of, its relative obscurity.

The set designer of *Love Life*, Boris Aronson, suggested in 1973 that “There were enough ideas in this show for twenty musicals. . . . Throughout, the vaudeville numbers served as comments on the preceding scenes. In many ways, this show may have been the forerunner of today’s so-called ‘concept’ musical.”<sup>3</sup> Even he was confused, however: his “preceding scenes” are, in fact, “following” ones. But *Love Life*, which Weill described as “an entirely new form of theater,” did indeed anticipate many of the traits associated with innovative musicals of the 1960s and ’70s, and almost all the creators of those later shows had seen it.<sup>4</sup> Its formal organization, especially its paratactic deployment of commentary numbers and book scenes, predates *Cabaret* and its immediate successors by nearly two decades.<sup>5</sup> Yet despite its position within Weill’s output and the subsequent development of American musical theater, *Love Life* remains, more than seven decades later, a historical footnote—better *known of* than known. Apart from the

few who have seen it staged, and the fewer still who know its archival materials, scholars and performers have been unable to evaluate it for themselves. This Edition makes that possible by presenting for the first time its full score and complete text.

Weill’s penultimate stage work opened at Broadway’s Forty-Sixth Street Theatre on 7 October 1948 after tryouts in New Haven (9–11 September) and Boston (13 September–1 October). It closed on 14 May 1949 after 252 performances. Producer Cheryl Crawford had promised Weill “a landmark of production and taste,” but landmarks were expensive to maintain.<sup>6</sup> Buttressed at first by hefty advance sales of \$350,000, the production started losing money by Week 11. It survived for as long as it did largely thanks to Weill and Lerner, plus director Elia Kazan and choreographer Michael Kidd, waiving most of their royalties as of 1 January 1949. After ending its run, with only 26% of its \$200,000 capitalization recouped, *Love Life* disappeared.<sup>7</sup> It might be better known today had an original cast album been produced, but what has become known as the second Petrillo Ban, in effect for most of 1948, precluded members of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) from making commercial recordings.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, a concurrent embargo by the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) of national radio networks limited the airplay of those few single songs recorded prior to the ban.<sup>9</sup> No piano-vocal score was published (although eight numbers were individually issued in sheet-music format), nor was the libretto printed, although plans for a publication of the latter had advanced before being abandoned.<sup>10</sup> To this day, and save for a few isolated songs, *Love Life* remains Weill’s only unrecorded Broadway score. That ban and embargo in 1948 presumably also impacted box-office receipts, and a divided press did not help, with four out of the ten New York dailies publishing largely negative reviews, including the two most influential ones, the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* (see section III.ii).

Just what was it about *Love Life* that made it “experimental”? The unconventional subtitle, “A Vaudeville,” displaced the expected “new” musical, musical play, or musical comedy.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes Lerner referred to it as “a cavalcade of American marriage.”<sup>12</sup> In the post-*Oklahoma!* heyday of the “integrated” musical play, neither vaudeville nor cavalcade loomed large on the music-theatrical horizon of expectations. And *Love Life* really is neither. It has elements of both while retaining aspects of the conventional book musical. In an article published shortly before the play opened in Boston, Lerner explained that by “vaudeville,” he and Weill meant “an assortment of acts, sketches, and songs strung together.”<sup>13</sup> Vaudeville in this sense is an American form of variety show that flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Weill, writing to Caspar Neher not long after he and Lerner had begun work, likened the form to that of a *Variété-Schau*.<sup>14</sup> Vaudeville’s disparate acts might include popular songs, operatic numbers, circus routines, magic shows, dramatic sketches (both serious and comic), and even movies, among myriad other possibilities. Weill and Lerner paid tribute to one of the historical antecedents of American vaudeville when they ended *Love Life* with a minstrel show. The acts in vaudeville shows, however, were normally unrelated to each other: vaudevillians brought individual, well-honed “turns.” In *Love Life*, however, Weill and Lerner used acts and sketches alike in support of a central concept: a survey (Weill went so far as to call it a “study”) of American marriage in the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution.<sup>15</sup>

This genealogy of American marriage spanning 157 years unfolds in a series of sketches about Sam and Susan Cooper presented in a fairly realistic style. Vaudeville acts interrupt the narrative flow, offering songs that Weill composed as pastiches of popular styles. The songs anticipate the socio-economic context of the ensuing sketch, either directly (as in the satirical “Progress,” “Economics,” and “Mother’s Getting Nervous”), or obliquely, in an elegiac or allegorical manner (“Love Song” and “Ho, Billy O!”). These numbers tell us that the choices the protagonists, in their false consciousness, believe they are making as autonomous subjects are largely predetermined by their historical circumstances. The vaudeville acts do not advance the plot but “enter at a point when certain conditions are reached,” as Weill described his music for *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*.<sup>16</sup>

The organization of this Edition preserves the authors’ distinction between “sketch” and “act,” and follows the 1948 typescripts in labeling sections on either side of the Entr’acte as “parts.” Each Part contains one entirely spoken sketch: respectively, “The New Baby” and “Radio Night.” Otherwise, *Love Life* is notable for its sheer amount of continuous music. Three of the sketches are entirely musicalized, or nearly so: “The Cooper Family,” “My Kind of Night” (in which all the dialogue is underscored), and “A Hotel Room.” Music in the sketches is always non-diegetic apart from dance music (e.g., the music played by the ship’s band in “The Cruise”). The “acts” are mostly sung, although the ones in which the Coopers take part (“The Magician,” “The Locker Room Boys,” and “The Illusion Minstrel Show”) include underscored dialogue.

The tidy opposition between “sketches” and “acts,” or, to put it another way, between reality and illusion, breaks down during the framing magic and minstrel shows, which abandon any semblance of naturalistic theater. In those outer acts, the Coopers enter the vaudeville world, whose denizens do not merely offer commentary but actively spur Sam and Susan toward self-awareness. At the outset, the Magician uses illusion, paradoxically, to demystify, by sawing Susan in half and suspending Sam in the air; these physical states are metaphors for their inability to cope simultaneously with “love” and “life” in the contemporary world.<sup>17</sup> Suddenly, an uncanny chord (the notes of the G-major scale plus the flatted sixth degree) interrupts the waltz accompanying the Magician’s patter. The lights dim, and the Coopers, abandoned in their awkward positions, must confront a reality they have previously avoided. Appropriately enough, a *fugato* (which Weill borrowed from his unused score of 1937 for the film *The River Is Blue*) underscores their analysis of how they came to this pass. A flashback follows, presented as a series of historical episodes chronicling their progressive estrangement across successive socio-economic circumstances.

How Lerner launches this journey of self-discovery may have reminded audiences of Tennessee Williams’s *The Glass Menagerie* (1944), which also opens with an actor introducing himself as an illusionist of sorts: “Yes, I have tricks in my pocket, I have things up my sleeve. But I am the opposite of a stage magician. He gives you illusion that has the appearance of truth. I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion. To begin with, I turn back time.” The Magician in *Love Life* also turns back time and reveals truth in the guise of an illusion. So, in a way, do the minstrels in the chain finale at the end of Part Two.<sup>18</sup> There, the Interlocutor and his colleagues offer the Coopers illusions in the context of a minstrel show (Sam and Susan act as the “end men”) that is a “travesty on the compensation mechanisms of disoriented Americans,” as one critic observed.<sup>19</sup> But vaudeville also provides the pair with a possible way out of their impasse. Having rejected various antidotes to reality drawn from popular culture (astrology, Hollywood films), they risk a final trick of obvious metaphorical import: the curtain falls on Sam and Susan precariously balanced on a tightrope, trying to move toward one another as their children look on anxiously.

For Weill and Lerner, the concept of alternating “sketches” and “acts” emerged early on, during the summer of 1947, but their number and contents remained variable until a few weeks before the production closed. The modular construction of *Love Life* permitted them to insert, reorder, and delete entire segments to a degree that would have been impossible in

Weill’s two most recent stage works, given their genres: operetta for *The Firebrand of Florence*, and opera for *Street Scene*. Rather, the structure of *Love Life* recalls that of *Lady in the Dark*, about which Ira Gershwin predicted, accurately, that “there’s so much of an experimental nature to be written by us, I feel we’ll probably have to overwrite and then cut.”<sup>20</sup> More unorchestrated music survives for *Love Life* than for any of Weill’s other Broadway works. The holograph sketches and drafts (Dh) include a forty-one-page continuity draft of the “suffragette” sketch in an early, discarded version (the theme was picked up in Part One, Sketch iv).<sup>21</sup> Weill’s holograph piano-vocal score (Vh) contains four unorchestrated numbers: three of them (“Csardas,” “Love,” and “Drinking Song”) belong to yet another discarded version of the suffragette sketch, and the other, “There’s Nothing Left for Daddy (But the Rhumba),” originally opened “The Cruise.” In keeping with the policies of the *Kurt Weill Edition*, this volume includes only music that Weill orchestrated, or orchestrations for dances and utilities that he delegated to an arranger.<sup>22</sup> Even with this restriction, the Edition has to account for roughly a fifth of the full score that was no longer being performed when the show closed. Given the mutability of *Love Life* and the absence of a definitive version fixed by the show’s creators, the Edition offers a maximal version of it, including “Susan’s Dream,” “The Locker Room,” and “Is It Him or Is It Me?” The first two of those numbers were cut during tryouts and the last toward the end of the New York run. Other orchestrated cut numbers appear in the Appendix.

*Love Life*’s alternation and opposition of vaudeville acts and sketches of Sam and Susan’s marriage gesture not only toward Broadway’s future, but also to Weill’s past. Throughout his career, he was drawn to carnivalesque formal devices that undermined the ersatz psychologism of the conventional theater which he so deplored (witness his judgment of Cocteau’s “idiotic play,” *Laigle à deux têtes*, shortly before he started collaborating with Lerner).<sup>23</sup> When Weill suggested that *Love Life* “has form but in a formless way,” he might well have been thinking of contradictions that were, in fact, hallmarks of his oeuvre: oppositions that are simultaneously structural and contested; unity challenged but yet somehow preserved; undoing in the name of renewal.<sup>24</sup> In the context of his career, the vaudeville interludes in *Love Life* constitute yet another of the many “angles” from which Weill approached the “form-problems of the musical theater.”<sup>25</sup>

## II. Genesis and Production<sup>26</sup>

### i. Inception

Sometime in the spring of 1947, Alan Jay Lerner came up with the idea of writing a “cavalcade of American marriage,” beginning with the Industrial Revolution.<sup>27</sup> The topic would preoccupy him for most of his adult life: his chronicle of the American musical—a book still in press when he died—begins with an excursus on the Industrial Revolution’s effect on sexual relations:

Only the pyramids appeared without any cultural preparation. . . . The first crude steam engine was built in Alexandria, Egypt, in the second century BC. However, it did not become a practical invention until James Watt developed it into a useful instrument in 1769. What he did was turn on the valve of the industrial era which hatched the industrial revolution, fill the skies with the grey clouds of the factory, create a new kind of working and middle class, and with men leaving home to go to work for the first time, probably did as much to upset the sexual balance of man and woman as any single event since the inception of marriage.<sup>28</sup>

Nearly four decades after *Love Life* had closed, Lerner was still promoting its central theme, or “concept,” though he had long discouraged its revival, quipping that “I’ve turned into everything I satirized in that show” (he married eight times).<sup>29</sup>

Lerner pitched his idea for a new show not to his usual collaborator, Fritz Loewe, but to Kurt Weill. Lerner and Loewe had recently had “a mysterious falling out,” and Lerner found himself seeking a new project and a

new composer.<sup>30</sup> Only twenty-nine years old (Lenya thought he looked like a college kid behind his tortoise-rimmed glasses), Lerner already had to his credit three shows produced on Broadway (all with Loewe) and one divorce. His first hit, *Brigadoon* (which had opened on 13 March 1947), was still running; it would close after 581 performances, nine days before *Love Life* went into rehearsal. Lerner was then living with *Brigadoon*'s leading lady, Marion Bell, whom he would marry in September 1948, only to leave her for actress Nancy Olson partway through the run of *Love Life*. Undergoing psychoanalysis at the time, Lerner later claimed that his personal circumstances led him to contemplate a musical play about divorce.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, *Love Life*, in a darker manner, continues a half-century-old strand of musical theater that Stephen Banfield has called "the romantic comedy of second chances."<sup>32</sup>

Lerner's first Broadway outing, *What's Up?* (1943), a conventional farce set in a private school for girls, had fared poorly (sixty-three performances), despite choreography by George Balanchine and sets by future *Love Life* designer Boris Aronson. *The Day before Spring* (1945) did better, with 167 performances. Like *Brigadoon* and *Love Life*, *The Day before Spring* involved manipulating time to mend relationships.<sup>33</sup> A married couple, Katherine and Peter Dale, attend their ten-year college reunion. Also present is Alex, a successful author who was once romantically involved with Katherine and has published a *roman à clef* about their liaison. In the wake of a musicalized dream sequence (evidently still required in 1945) that comprises the first-act finale, Katherine becomes convinced that she married the wrong man. She runs off with Alex, but events conspire—much as they did during her graduation weekend a decade earlier—to thwart the elopement and restore her to Peter. The second act unfolds as a cyclical recreation of past events. Anticipating Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Allegro* by a couple of years, Lerner deftly interwove ballets with the plot ("they open spontaneously out of the narrative," as Brooks Atkinson would write of the dances in *Allegro*), and he gave the chorus an expanded role, charging it with expressing the characters' motivations and, occasionally, spurring them on.<sup>34</sup> But the differences from *Love Life* are telling, particularly in the handling both of commentary—the vaudevillians in *Love Life*, unlike the chorus in *Allegro*, do not represent the inner life of Sam and Susan Cooper—and of history, which is cyclical in *The Day before Spring* and dialectical in *Love Life*.

*The Day before Spring* had been conducted by Maurice Abravanel, Weill's longtime friend and associate. He seems to have first suggested to Weill that he team up with Lerner in light of Loewe's "problem" with his former collaborator, and of the seemingly too complex lyrics provided by Ogden Nash for *One Touch of Venus*:

One day after *Brigadoon*, Fritz and I had luncheon. I was worried about Kurt Weill not getting the right librettist. Obviously Kurt could not work with the Hammerstein type—AABA, AAAAA, repeat, repeat. Ogden Nash on the other hand had gone a little far. Two thirds of the audience could not understand the incredible wonderful wit of his lyrics when sung. . . .

If Fritz told me what the problem was between them, I don't remember now. But he said, "That son of a bitch, if I never write another note, I will not write with him again." . . . I said, "Now Fritz, if you're serious, I'm going to tell Kurt, because I think they could hit it well together." So I told Kurt, and he came to see *Brigadoon*.

Kurt was a marvelous guy, but he had that funny superiority on his face. Afterward he said about Alan, "Oh Maurice, that's not really up to my level." But then later he worked with Alan on *Love Life*.<sup>35</sup>

Weill, too, was seeking new projects and collaborators in 1947. That spring, he corresponded with William Saroyan about a possible venture. Meanwhile, he and Maxwell Anderson hoped to recycle material from their unfinished musical, *Ulysses Africanus* (1939), which they had abandoned after Bill "Bojangles" Robinson proved unavailable to play the lead.<sup>36</sup> Anderson came up with the idea of using a number from that abandoned project, "Lost in the Stars," as the title song for a "spaceship musical," perhaps starring Danny Kaye (who had appeared in *Lady in the Dark*). But shortly after Weill had returned in June 1947 from a trip to Europe and

Palestine, Anderson decided to make it more of a "plain play—with a few songs in it," before abandoning the project.<sup>37</sup> Although Weill had several conferences with Herman Wouk about a musical version of *Aurora Dawn*, his only concrete project for 1947–48 was an expansion of the short radio opera *Down in the Valley* for a staged production at Indiana University in the summer of 1948.<sup>38</sup>

Cheryl Crawford, the producer of *Brigadoon* and *One Touch of Venus*, apparently arranged Weill and Lerner's first meeting. The exact date is unknown. Lerner recalled that it was in April after a performance of *Brigadoon* that Weill and Lenya attended with Crawford.<sup>39</sup> But Weill either had met Lerner already or had somehow formed a favorable impression of him. Having hired the Hollywood agent Irving "Swifty" Lazar to seek out film offers, Weill wrote to him on 17 March 1947 proposing two projects to be pitched to the studios: musical versions of Maxwell Anderson's *High Tor* and of John Galsworthy's short story, *The Apple Tree*.<sup>40</sup> Weill suggested Lerner as librettist for the latter, but Lerner's account of their initial meetings does not mention it:

Kurt went to see *Brigadoon*. He was a great friend of the producer, Cheryl Crawford, and was enthusiastic about the show. We had never met. Cheryl thought it would be a wonderful idea if we collaborated. So I met Kurt the night he saw the show. We had a drink together afterwards. A couple of weeks later I went up to have lunch at his house in the country. Afterwards, we took a long walk up the road. We talked of working together. He was going off to Israel to see his family (this was in April, 1947). He said he'd be back in June. Somewhere along the line, while he was gone, I'd gotten the idea of doing a cavalcade of American marriage; of taking one family, beginning with the start of the Industrial Revolution and showing what happened to them in a satirical way. I called up Kurt when he returned and told him about it. He said it sounded interesting, that it needed a vehicle—a way of telling it. A week or so later, I thought of doing it as a vaudeville! I called him again and told him my idea. He was fascinated! I moved out to New City, where he lived, and we started working in August.<sup>41</sup>

Weill's collaboration with Lerner, described in all accounts as congenial, resulted in a *sui generis* blend of theatrical antecedents: the cavalcade tracing the fate of a family or institution over time (as Noel Coward had famously done in his eponymous 1930 play); vaudeville; and the gambit—not uncommon in comedy and musical theater—of presenting the same ageless characters in different eras (e.g., Buster Keaton's *Three Ages*, Offenbach's *Les Bergers*, Oscar Straus's *Drei Walzer*), not to mention the 1945 film *Where Do We Go from Here?* with music and lyrics by Weill and Ira Gershwin.

Soon it was semiofficial: on 30 July 1947, the *New York Times* announced that the new team of Lerner and Weill "may do song, dance show." Lerner rented "Crow House," which the artist Henry Varnum Poor had built for himself on South Mountain Road (in Rockland County, N.Y.), adjacent to Weill's "Brook House." In the 1920s, Poor and his wife, Bessie Breuer, had inaugurated a community of artists settling in this bucolic neighborhood nestled in the shadow of High Tor, some thirty-five miles north of Manhattan on the west side of the Hudson River. Maxwell Anderson had lived there since the 1920s, Weill since 1941, and now Lerner and Bell joined the colony. By then, both elements of the show's format—the 150-year narrative span and the intervening vaudeville acts—had been agreed upon and were ready to be worked out. Not long after the New York opening, Lerner offered a somewhat more sensational account of how the authors arrived at their idiosyncratic concept: "Kurt Weill and I discussed the basic story idea first. We knew what we wanted to say. And then we talked—and talked and talked—for about two months before we figured out the form our story ought to take. . . . Finally, after discussing hundreds of notions, the idea of doing the show as a vaudeville found its way to our misty heads."<sup>42</sup> But the idea must have surfaced sooner, for Weill's draft of "Progress," the second vaudeville act, is dated 26 August 1947.

*Love Life* would not be a vaudeville in the historical manner of the genre (e.g., the shows routinely mounted at Broadway's Palace Theatre during the

1910s and '20s). Rather, it was organized around a theme, its individual sketches coalescing into an overarching, if unusual and disjointed, narrative thread. Above all, *Love Life* would be “an experiment with form,” as Lerner described it in an article published before the Boston tryout:

*Love Life* is a serious subject treated, most of the way, lightly. . . . To tell a story such as this, which I am sure at first glance would seem to be intensely tragic, we selected the most theatrical and basically American form we could think of. Vaudeville. This does not mean the vaudeville we associate with the old Keith Orpheum circuit. . . . By vaudeville, as we see it, we mean an assortment of acts, sketches, and songs strung together. . . .

Mostly our feeling is that this is certainly a fluid form and one which offers a host of possibilities for the future. Unlike the musical play form which strives for complete integration of the words, the music and the movement, the form of vaudeville . . . is much more free and is admirably suited for the presentation of any kind of idea. . . .

In the case of *Love Life* we felt that one way to move ahead in the matter of form was to reach back to an older form—and give it new direction by investing it with meaning.<sup>43</sup>

Lerner identified three functions for the vaudeville acts in *Love Life*. First, they promoted continuity of a sort, leading “from one scene to the other, preparing the audience for what is coming while linking it to what had gone before.”<sup>44</sup> Second, these acts, performed in “one” (i.e., stage front before a drop or traveler curtain), covered set changes.<sup>45</sup> And third, the “loose” and flexible structure of a vaudeville bill encouraged formal experimentation away from the “integrated” musical play that had fast become the norm. Plumbing the origins of the musical in vaudeville and minstrelsy was one way to reinvigorate the genre. It is probably not unreasonable to link Lerner’s thinking here with Weill’s pronouncements, some two decades earlier, about creating *Urformen* of popular musical theater, and to regard *Love Life* as another realization of that goal.<sup>46</sup>

## ii. Creation

Lerner and Weill experimented restlessly with their show during its long genesis (see Table 1 in Critical Report, pp. 220–223, which lists successive versions of the show). Weill’s first dated holograph is a draft of “Here I’ll Stay” (23 August 1947). “Love Song,” the last vocal number added, was composed in mid-September 1948.<sup>47</sup> With Lerner and Weill living a short stroll apart, no correspondence about *Love Life* between its authors has surfaced. Indeed, there is little documentation about the show’s development prior to March 1948, when the authors deposited for copyright a “dramatico-musical play entitled ‘A Dish for the Gods: A Vaudeville’” (Tt1). Maxwell Anderson’s diary suggests that the late summer and fall of 1947 was a period of intense collaboration between Lerner and Weill, punctuated by convivial late-night gatherings when the new work and the possible role of the Playwrights’ Company in its production were discussed between hands of poker.<sup>48</sup> Lerner remembered that writing *Love Life* was “enormous fun. What made it so was discarding a lot of old rules and making up our own rules as we went along.”<sup>49</sup> He also later recalled that working with Weill was “almost like talking to a wiser version of yourself, of reaching through all one’s own floundering with an idea, and articulating for you, of understanding exactly what you were groping for. . . . No matter how daring or unconventional an idea was, Kurt was determined to find a way for the public to accept it.”<sup>50</sup>

Weill dated some of his drafts, which show that he had completed much of Part One by mid-October 1947. Besides no. 3 (“Here I’ll Stay”), other dated drafts include no. 4 (“Progress”) on 26 August, no. 13 (“You Understand Me So”) on 8 September, no. 6 (“Green-Up Time”) on 10 September, no. 8 (“Susan’s Dream”) on 20 September, no. 7 (“Economics”) on 1 October, and no. 9 (“Mother’s Getting Nervous”) on 7 October. This chronology mostly matches the ordering of these numbers in Tt1. “Economics” and “Susan’s Dream” are reversed, but they are both vaudeville numbers occurring within the same act. “You Understand Me So” seems out of place, but, like no. 5 (“I Remember It Well”), it is a love duet, so

conceivably at the time when Weill drafted the former, it occupied the position eventually taken by the latter. All but one of the remaining dated drafts (ranging from 28 August to 10 October) concern the ultimately discarded “Murder at the Museum” sketch, which in Tt1 occupies the position later assumed by no. 10 (“My Kind of Night” followed by “Women’s Club Blues”). The remaining dated song, “It’s Gonna Be a New Year for Baby” (17 October), was recycled from unused musical material in *Street Scene*. It might have been intended for “The Cruise,” which closes Part One and takes place on New Year’s Eve.

Weill ceased dating materials after 17 October. The continuity drafts for the remaining numbers in Tt1—no. 5 (“I Remember It Well”), no. 15 (“Ho, Billy O!”), no. 16 (“The Locker Room”), no. 18 (“Is It Him or Is It Me?”), nos. 21a–c (the Minstrel Show complex), and the eventually discarded “There’s Nothing Left for Daddy (But the Rhumba)” —were presumably completed by early 1948. On 4 February, the *New York Herald Tribune* reported that Weill and Lerner “expect to have the show written in about ten days.” That places the completion in mid-February, which makes sense, given that Tt1 was registered with the Library of Congress on 17 March. On Saturday 27 March (so Anderson reported in his diary for 1948), Weill and Lerner “played, read + sang” the entire show for a small group of people from South Mountain Road (including Mab and Maxwell Anderson, Lenya, and Burgess Meredith), followed by criticism and discussion well into the following Easter morning.

The proposed title for the show, *A Dish for the Gods*, remained in use until late April or thereabouts. Compared to how *Love Life* turned out, what is striking about the text transmitted by Tt1 is how much Susan dominates the show and how unpleasant her marriage is from the start; the entire exercise of going back in time seems futile. In September 1947, the *New York Times* had described the show as “the history of a woman,” and that is indeed how Weill and Lerner initially wrote it.<sup>51</sup> Sam has no solo in Tt1, singing only in the duets “Here I’ll Stay,” “I Remember It Well,” and “You Understand Me So.” In the opening vaudeville act, Susan appears alone and pleads with the Magician, who decides to transport her back 150 years. Next, a male octet performs “Progress” to prepare us for the first sketch, which takes place not in 1791 (as in the final version of the show) but in 1816, on Sam’s first day at the factory, with the marriage already starting to go wrong. Sam and Susan sing “I Remember It Well,” which motivates a further flashback to the 1790s. This internal flashback begins, like the 1821 sketch in subsequent scripts, with Susan giving the children a history lesson, though here it is musicalized and segues into a song (“Who Cares?”) for Susan’s brother, Henry (a character omitted in all subsequent revisions), who comments on newspaper items about industrialization (Dh includes sketches for this continuous stretch of music). Sam already cuts an unlikeable figure. Although Susan has arranged for a spring dance to be held at a nearby farm, Sam curtly tells her they cannot attend—he has a chair to finish. “Why do you take it from him?” asks Henry, urging Susan to assert herself. She sings “Green-Up Time” regretfully, excusing herself when neighbors come to fetch her. As it turns out, Sam wanted to stay home so he could give Susan her birthday present—the chair he has been working on all day. This tender moment motivates “Here I’ll Stay,” but it all seems too little, too late. Why can she not have both the chair *and* the dance? Toward the end of Tt1, as in all subsequent versions, Sam appears in “The Illusion Minstrel Show,” where he joins Susan in rejecting a series of illusions, including the one offered by Miss Ideal Man (the eleven o’clock number, “Mr. Right,” was already there). But once all the illusions have been shattered, the Coopers have nothing left, and they part for good. The curtain falls with Susan back at the magic show, saying through her tears, “Thank you, Magician. You can go on with your act now.”

We do not know what advice the group gave after that Easter Saturday reading, but Weill and Lerner evidently came to realize that their script was excessively bleak. Moreover, no actor of any stature would have consented to play Sam as then written. That spring, Lerner and Weill revised the show, while Anderson and Weill outlined a musical treatment of Alan Paton’s *Cry, the Beloved Country*. Weill tried to keep that project a secret from Lerner

“for fear that Alan would give up thinking of ideas for him.”<sup>52</sup> Weill and Lerner expanded Sam’s role, made the couple more appealing, and ended their story on a note of guarded optimism. On 2 May 1948, the *New York Times* announced that the title *A Dish for the Gods* would be “thrown to the dogs,” and that the authors had produced a revised script, in which the husband “has assumed increased importance.” The next day, Anderson reported in his diary that Weill and Lerner “have found an end for their musical—the man + wife approach each other on a tight-rope.” It is not clear how this shift might relate to the problems they had in finding a strong female lead, as was their original intent (see section II.iii).

The framing acts at the beginning and end were probably the first to be revised, for the next script chronologically, **Tt1a**, is a doctored copy of **Tt1** with revisions mainly limited to them. Sam now appears in the magic show, his dialogue with Susan approaching its definitive state. “The Illusion Minstrel Show” has acquired its moderately sanguine close. The next script, **Tt2**, bears the title *Love Life* and presumably emerged not long after the *New York Times* announcement on 2 May. Matching more closely than any other script the musical continuity in the initial layer of Weill’s score (**Fh**), it was probably finished by early June, around the time that Weill started orchestrating.<sup>53</sup> While the new script leaves the second half of the show largely untouched, it thoroughly revises Part One. For example, the 1816 Mayville sketch with its internal flashback now becomes two sketches, set in 1791 and 1821. For the first, Lerner and Weill wrote a long, operetta-like, concerted *introduzione* with a rousing, partly fugal choral ensemble and an aria-like entrance number for Sam (“Who Is Samuel Cooper?”), followed by a fast *segue* into the repositioned “Here I’ll Stay.” “Progress” introduces the 1821 sketch; the new date more accurately reflects when furniture factories actually started replacing small family shops in Connecticut.<sup>54</sup> This sketch retains the business about the chair but omits “I Remember It Well.” As in **Tt1**, Susan sings “Green-Up Time” wistfully, because Sam still will not let her go to the dance—after all, he has a big day coming up. Acts III (“Quartette”) and IV (“The Three Tots and a Woman”) are unchanged. Sketch iii (“The New Baby”) relocates the action from 1876 to September 1857, which makes better historical sense, since the financial Panic of 1857 began that very month and affected the railroad industry in particular. In this context, Sam, who has recently entered the railroad business, is understandably reluctant to father a third child. The revised sketch omits a neighbor, Joanna, a fellow activist of Susan’s in the 1876 version.

In **Tt2**, Susan’s political activities surface only in the next sketch, “My Kind of Night,” which retains the suffragist theme and some comic aspects of its **Tt1** counterpart, “Murder at the Museum,” but is otherwise wholly new. In **Tt1**, Susan leads a group of women in destroying both a nude Venus statue and a love affair between a policeman and the museum curator’s daughter.<sup>55</sup> This quasi-surrealistic sketch, with its resonances of an *opéra bouffe*, might have proved too disorienting too soon, for up to this point, the sketches unfold in a fairly realistic manner. The revised suffragette sketch (Part One, Sketch iv) is decidedly less farcical than its predecessor. It provides a second solo for Sam (no. 10a, “My Kind of Night”) and a different type of number for Susan (no. 10b, “Women’s Club Blues”), a strophic song that some opening-night critics would compare to the show-stopping “Saga of Jenny” in *Lady in the Dark*.

The rest of **Tt2** exhibits mostly minor revisions, except for the “locker room” act, which was expanded to include Sam, who tries to persuade his lawyer that Susan deserves a generous settlement in their divorce. In this excoriating satire of wounded male ego, the Locker Room Boys boast about their sexual and athletic prowess, although the words that Lerner puts in their mouths hint at their impotence (“With our own wedded mate, / Our av’rage is nought. / But, boy, are we great / With women we’ve bought! / We’re the sexiest men women know. / We pay them to act like it’s so.”). Their physical inadequacies become comically evident when they endure the ministrations of Sven the masseur—a figure recalling the similar role played by Henry Bergman in Charlie Chaplin’s *The Cure* (1917). The scene begins as an “act,” with the Locker Room Boys singing in front of a trav-

eler. When the traveler opens, Sam appears, but the vaudevillians remain on stage. The interspersed exchanges between Sam and his lawyer might suggest that we are witnessing a realistic plot “sketch” rather than an extended, farcical “act,” but the lawyer, Freebish, is himself a vaudeville-style character—a zany sharpster with a hint of Groucho Marx. A running gag has Freebish warning Sam that he will need all the money he can salvage for legal expenses. Sam asks what these might entail, and Freebish has an attendant throw a glass of water in Sam’s face in response. The revision marks a startling departure from the distinction between “sketch” and vaudeville “act” that the show has maintained up to this point.

Unlike **Tt1**, all of the musical numbers in **Tt2** appear in Weill’s holograph piano-vocal score, **Vh**.<sup>56</sup> For example, in “Here I’ll Stay,” **Tt2** introduces a new verse for Sam with a metrical scheme that differs from Susan’s and requires a distinct musical setting. Weill sketched one using music from “Who Is Samuel Cooper?” (no. 2, mm. 194–201), revising it in **Vh** to begin with the same pentatonic collection that opens no. 1 (“The Magician”) and no. 2. **Vh** includes “There’s Nothing Left for Daddy (But the Rhumba),” a number edited out of **Tt2b**, a somewhat later script annotated by director Elia Kazan and dating from the rehearsal period. Oddly, **Vh** also contains music for a version of the suffragette sketch that does not appear in any extant script. This music comprises three versions of a *czardas*, one instrumental and two sung by the “Women’s Club, Local Branch, Chapter Seventeen” (the same organization named in no. 10b); a song for Susan (“Love”) based on what had first appeared as an instrumental tango-habanera in *Marie Galante* (1934) that Weill had already recycled four times;<sup>57</sup> and a syncopated two-step “Drinking Song.” Weill and Lerner evidently worked out at least one alternate version of the suffragette sketch, probably after **Tt1**, since the musical material for “Murder at the Museum” never progressed to the fair-copy stage.

### iii. Casting and production

*Love Life*’s protracted genesis is intimately bound up with its casting. While it took only three months for Weill and Lerner to develop their concept and draft most of Part One, five more months elapsed before they deposited a script for copyright. When the authors had begun work, they hoped to open in spring 1948, but by the beginning of that year, no leading lady had yet emerged. When the authors signed a Dramatists Guild contract with producer Cheryl Crawford on 21 November 1947, the three of them had already decided to postpone production until the following fall—even though the newspapers continued to speculate on an earlier opening—with further work being put on hold while Lerner traveled to London to plan a West End production of *Brigadoon* (which opened on 14 April 1949).

The contract included sixteen “special arrangements” beyond the Writers Guild Minimum Basic Agreement.<sup>58</sup> One of them called for a delivery date for the complete script and piano-vocal score by 1 May 1948 (making a spring opening unlikely). Others included the usual non-interpolation clause that Weill always required; the stipulation of 8.5% royalties, later amended to 9% (5% to Lerner, and 4% to Weill); Weill’s approval of the chorus, musical arranger, contractor, rehearsal pianist, conductor, and musicians; and requirements concerning the size of the orchestra. Weill called for an orchestra of at least twenty-four players, or twenty-seven if the house were at least the size of the Ziegfeld Theatre (i.e., a capacity of 1,638 or larger). Indeed, when Weill started orchestrating, he had twenty-seven players in mind, including fifteen strings (6 Vn I, 4 Vn II, 2 Vn III, 2 Vc, 1 Cb). But Crawford eventually booked the Forty-Sixth Street Theatre (1,319 capacity), so the production ended up with twenty-five. The decision to eliminate one stand of Vn I appears to have been made fairly late. The 1948 instrumental parts (**Im**) include a third Violin I book for most of the score save material added during tryouts. This book is mostly unmarked, suggesting that the string section was reduced around the time orchestral rehearsals began. The provision concerning arrangements stipulated that “Kurt Weill agrees to provide musical arrangements and to or-

chestrated the score at his own expense, but in the event he requires assistance the Manager agrees to pay for same." According to her own estimate, Weill saved Crawford approximately \$5,000.<sup>59</sup> In the case of *Love Life*, at least, Weill seems not to have derived supplementary income from orchestrating his own show.<sup>60</sup>

Well before Lerner and Weill signed with Crawford, she was helping them find a leading lady. Her papers contain an undated list of nearly thirty possibilities to play Susan, including Gertrude Lawrence and Mary Martin.<sup>61</sup> Lawrence and Martin were the first to be approached, perhaps because they had starred in Weill's two greatest commercial successes to date, *Lady in the Dark* and *One Touch of Venus*, respectively. Indeed, Crawford was negotiating with Gertrude Lawrence's lawyer, Fanny Holtzmann, by September 1947. On the 17th, the *New York Times* reported that Lawrence would star in Weill and Lerner's new show, to be staged by Robert Lewis, the director of *Brigadoon*. But negotiations broke down when Lawrence said that she was unwilling to perform during the summer, so she wrote, probably in early October:

I am most disappointed by the way our plans have mis-carried. . . . At no point in our plans did either you or Mr. Lerner ever mention the subject of my being expected to act through the heat of a New York summer. . . . I had hoped, I confess, that your enthusiasm for our association would prompt you to see your way clear to postpone until early fall, but as there has been no word from you, I presume you are re-writing and re-casting. Well, better luck next time!<sup>62</sup>

Weill replied testily:

when you say that you had hoped my enthusiasm [*sic*] to work with you again would overcome all the difficulties, I must confess that I had expected the same from you.

We always made it very clear that our plans called for a production of the show this season, and, frankly, it never occurred to me that you would expect us to open a show in March and close it on June 1st. . . . I am more than sorry that things have developed [*sic*] this way because there is no doubt in my mind that it would have been one of the great parts in your career.<sup>63</sup>

Lawrence seems not to have reconsidered, even though doubts soon arose about whether the show could be ready in the following spring after all, so Weill explained to Caspar Neher on 19 October in a letter describing his current work on a *Schuloper* (*Down in the Valley*) and on a history of the relation between man and woman over the last hundred years presented in the form of a variety show.<sup>64</sup>

Weill and Lerner did not have any better luck with Mary Martin, then starring in the touring company of *Annie Get Your Gun*. They met with her in Chicago on or around 17 November 1947 and showed her some sort of draft, about which her husband and manager, Richard Halliday, soon conveyed her suggestions. She thought Sam's part too minimal and proposed expanding the role and adding a song for him (advice that Lerner and Weill ultimately followed).<sup>65</sup> But Martin rejected the part. According to Crawford, "Susan's Dream" was the only song she liked (even though it was not intended for Susan's character).<sup>66</sup> Weill and Lerner approached Martin again the following March, when Halliday definitively turned them down:

we both have no sympathy with this man-woman-made-problem! . . . I do think you know Mary well enough to realize that personally there is little, if any, of Mary, of what she thinks and believes and feels, in the script. . . . The point is—Mary has no liking for this man or this woman. She knows they exist. She knows the world has been and is full of 'em. . . . But she can't manufacture any interest in [the] woman as pictured here. . . . Oh, damn, oh, damn! how rare and wonderful it is to have an interest as fine, and good as yours. . . . But now we fail you, and your patience, and your great generous kindness. But (and I really think you'll agree) we don't fail us.<sup>67</sup>

Other names on Crawford's list included Lucille Ball, Joan Blondell, Kitty Carlisle, Irene Dunne, Mary Ellis, Celeste Holm, Patricia Morison, and Ginger Rogers, as well as Nanette Fabray. We do not know how seri-

ously each of them was considered, but Rogers, at least, got an audition when Weill and Lerner traveled to California in February 1948. Afterward, the *New York Times* reported that "the lady can't tear herself away from Hollywood," and the *New York Post* asserted that Rogers balked at a one-year minimum commitment.<sup>68</sup> Lerner later suggested, diplomatically, that Rogers rejected the part because her mother deemed the show "anti-capitalist," but Maxwell Anderson's diary entry for 24 February suggests a different reason: "Kurt just back from Calif[ornia]. Ginger R. can't sing."<sup>69</sup>

The *New York Herald Tribune* had already made the right call on 16 December 1947: "There has been much speculation as to who will play the feminine lead in *A Dish for the Gods*. . . . This department has reason to believe that they will wind up by offering it to Nanette Fabray."<sup>70</sup> In early May, press reports confirmed that Fabray was indeed leaving the cast of *High Button Shoes* to play Susan.<sup>71</sup> She signed the contract (for \$1,250 a week, a 25% increase over her salary for *High Button Shoes*) during the weekend of 29 May.<sup>72</sup> *High Button Shoes* (opened 9 October 1947), with music and lyrics by Jule Styne and Sammy Cahn, had given Fabray her first chance to create a leading female role in a long-running Broadway show. (In *By Jupiter* and *Bloomer Girl* she had taken over from the original stars.) She had played the vaudeville circuit as a child star. Although Weill had considered her, however briefly, to play Angela in *The Firebrand of Florence*, they seem not to have met until spring 1948.<sup>73</sup> Fabray would later describe her first impressions of Weill: "We went up to [Lerner's] place in the country for the weekend and he [Lerner] played the songs and I just absolutely fell in love with them. And then I met with Kurt Weill, and I was just stunned, because I studied with Max Reinhardt. . . . I was just absolutely overwhelmed, because I knew who he was and how famous he was."<sup>74</sup> She remembered his adjusting certain songs for her; in fact, he transposed "Women's Club Blues" down a whole step, "Is It Him or Is It Me?" down a fourth, and "Mr. Right" down a major third when orchestrating them.<sup>75</sup>

Anderson noted in his diary entry for 17 May 1948 that Elia "Gadge" Kazan had agreed to direct *Love Life*. Rumors about Kazan's involvement had been circulating since April, when Robert Lewis had already withdrawn.<sup>76</sup> For some reason, Lerner and Weill had been considering replacements for Lewis for a while; they met with Jerome Robbins and Rouben Mamoulian before deciding on Kazan.<sup>77</sup> According to *Variety*, their giving a "private audition" to Joshua Logan was Lewis's reason for backing out.<sup>78</sup> Lewis himself gave a different account of the matter: he had doubts about the show and sought Kazan's advice; Kazan persuaded him to leave the show because the book needed too much revision; but then, shortly after Lewis had withdrawn, Kazan signed with Crawford. An embittered Lewis soon broke with his Actor's Studio cofounders, resigning from the Studio on 15 June.<sup>79</sup>

The *New York Times* announced Kazan's hiring on 22 May: "His new commitment, it is understood, will entail some postponement of Arthur Miller's new play" (i.e., *Death of a Salesman*). Kazan's contract stipulated a \$5,000 fee, 2% royalties, and 15% of the net (after the limited partners had recouped their investments, which they never did). Lerner would recall that it was "My idea of a tough contract."<sup>80</sup> It was reportedly the highest fee ever promised to a Broadway director.<sup>81</sup> But Kazan was at the peak of his career: he had just won the Academy and Golden Globe awards for *Gentleman's Agreement* and would soon have three shows running simultaneously on Broadway—*A Streetcar Named Desire* (opened 3 December 1947), *Love Life*, and *Death of a Salesman* (10 February 1949).

It is unclear why Kazan was engaged, given everyone's reservations about his handling of *One Touch of Venus* (Kazan himself thought he was little more than an overpaid stage manager for that show). His biographer suggests that Weill's choosing him remains "one of those insoluble theater puzzles," and speculates that "Crawford talked him into it," and that probably the show's "structural resemblance to *The Skin of Our Teeth* was a factor."<sup>82</sup> Harold Clurman thought otherwise: Weill "always took the best he could get" and so insisted on Kazan. From the very beginning of their association in the mid-1930s with the Group Theatre, Weill seems to have



held him in high regard, wanting him, for example, to co-direct *Johnny Johnson* with Stella Adler, despite Kazan's inexperience at the time.<sup>83</sup> After *One Touch of Venus*, Weill then asked him to direct *The Firebrand of Florence*.<sup>84</sup> The esteem appears to have been mutual, for during work on *Love Life*, Kazan sent Weill a note: "Thank you again for the pleasure of working with you. In all my wanderings I have never met a greater craftsman or man of the Theatre than you. I admired you from the first and every day it just grew."<sup>85</sup> As late as December 1948, Kazan intended to direct *Lost in the Stars*, so Anderson noted in a diary entry for the 17th. Yet in a letter from 1978, Kazan reported that "Weill and I did not part on very good terms. I don't know exactly why. . . . I'd prefer not to talk about him."<sup>86</sup>

Harold Prince later recalled thinking that "*Love Life* was too much of everything. And I don't think Gadge . . . knew how to organize that."<sup>87</sup> Perhaps Weill, too, came to believe that Kazan should shoulder most of the blame for the show's demise, for he was probably ill-suited for the sort of collaboration that musical theater required, not to mention his commitment to "method" acting.<sup>88</sup> According to Boris Aronson, Kazan had wanted to try a second musical because "he was interested in all phases of theater," but problems arose from his "attempt to unify the show, to give it logic and continuity," when it "required a light touch, charm, humor, and pure theatricality" and "was basically written in the form of a revue."<sup>89</sup> Nanette Fabray concurred: "One of the big problems we had was Kazan. He's probably one of the most brilliant directors that ever lived . . . but Kazan was not a man with a light touch, he was not a man of fun and magic," and he "directed the show with a heavy hand."<sup>90</sup> Lys Symonette, the rehearsal pianist and Weill's later musical assistant, recalled that Kazan "really messed it up—he didn't have any idea about how to stage the musical numbers." She thought that choreographer Michael Kidd was "too young and didn't have the guts to stand up to Kazan."<sup>91</sup> Kidd himself wished that Kazan had remained on the sidelines (as would have been customary) when it came to the music: "he tried very hard to stage some of the musical numbers, and I think . . . where it was a realistic number, he did beautifully. Where it was a highly stylized number like the Minstrel Show, he was not really in his element. . . . I thought it was too realistic and required a little more stylization in order to be theatrically correct. It was only my second show, and I didn't have the . . . authority to say, Gadge, I think this is wrong. He was Gadge Kazan, after all."<sup>92</sup> Conversely, Kazan blamed Weill for insisting on conventional performances of musical numbers: "Though we kept saying that this shouldn't be like other musicals, Weill wanted the performers down center, down front, facing the audience for his songs. He was the most traditional of the authors—he wanted success very badly."<sup>93</sup> But what seemed conventional to Kazan may have been necessary musically given that Weill knew where the singers would have to be if they were to be heard without amplification.

Kazan's genius lay in his ability to "draw performances out of actors who had some sort of psychological affinity with their roles."<sup>94</sup> *Love Life* did not provide many opportunities for that mode of presentation, but Kazan found psychologically fraught moments wherever he could. In the first sketch ("The Cooper Family")—that point of apparent pastoral perfection from which the family's trajectory would decline—Kazan stressed the antagonistic aspects. The townspeople, with George as their spokesman, have gathered around the new Cooper store out of anxiety-tinged curiosity. Kazan considered this "the essential conflict of the scene." George and Sam are "big tough independent Americans challenging each other. Formal—reserved—almost hostile, strangers not necessarily welcome." Kazan wanted Sam to sing "My name is Samuel Cooper" (part of no. 2) with an attitude of "Go fuck yourself if you don't like it."<sup>95</sup> The latent tension between Sam and George was meant to capture in microcosm the historical situation:

This period, which is immediately after the Revolution, is characterized by distrust and political friction. The argument was that of states' rights vs. Federal rights. The Whiskey Rebellion of 1791 in Pennsylvania, when the townspeople fought the Federal troops more in protest to government interference than to the Federal tax, typifies their independent attitude. The

people of Mayville probably considered Mayville more important than the United States. All of this verifies your idea about the townspeople being reluctant to accept Samuel Cooper into their community when they first meet him.<sup>96</sup>

Kazan invested even minor roles with idiosyncratic characterizations. George is the man behind whom the people retreat, "making him the spearhead of the town's opinion." Jonathan is "his successor to be," and Charlie, "his brown nose." Kazan also had an eye for sexually charged situations, even if they were not obviously present in the script. In "The Cruise," he suggested that Sylvia Stahlman should play Boylan's daughter as "a teen-age girl whom everyone on the boat has laid and keeps laying." In the modern-apartment sketch in Part Two ("Radio Night"), he sought an atmosphere of "neurotic intrigue" and "general dislocation" among the children, with hints at Oedipus and Electra complexes. Johnny wants to "unconsciously beat up on the old man" while winning his mother's sympathy with a feigned illness. Elizabeth, wearing a pair of "neurotic, cat-like" glasses, exudes "sex—getting Sam on her side."<sup>97</sup>

The *New York Times* announced Boris Aronson's involvement on 6 June 1948; his 24 June contract stipulated a \$5,000 fee plus \$100 a week.<sup>98</sup> Like Kazan and Weill, he had been associated with Crawford since the Group Theatre days. Aronson's ongoing career as a set designer would provide a direct link between *Love Life* and later concept musicals on which he worked, including *Cabaret* (1966) and the Sondheim-Prince shows of the 1970s. Aronson's *moderne* apartment for the 1948 sketches anticipated his designs for Sondheim's *Company* (1970), while aspects of his decor for "The Illusion Minstrel Show" resurfaced in the "Loveland" sequence in *Follies* (1971). His designs supplement other structural and narrative similarities between the finales of *Love Life* and *Follies*.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, Aronson's sets and drops for *Love Life* were remarkable. The most lavish was the art-deco set for "The Cruise," which cost \$5,455, or some 11.5% of the total budget for sets, drops, and painting.<sup>100</sup> For the curtains and minimal sets that the vaudeville acts required, Aronson "followed the vaudeville approach by designing a variety of sketchy scenes and vaudeville drops, each making a comment of its own."<sup>101</sup> He created a non-realistic set for "The Magician," with Matisse-like cutouts and figures. He adorned the curtain for "The New Baby" with languorous nudes, even though nothing sensual is happening in that bedroom. For "My Kind of Night," he designed a stylized, vaguely unsettling Victorian house, with the exterior wall removed stage left of the porch, so that the raucous proceedings inside could be juxtaposed with an oblivious, somnolent Sam rocking on the porch. The interior wallpaper, gray-green and purple, looks sickly; the painted trees in the corners oppressive.<sup>102</sup> For the locker room, where the men feel more at ease than they do at home with their wives, Aronson provided another *moderne* design, supplemented by an incongruous, folksy sampler bearing the message "Home is where you find it." Even the painted backdrops for scenes performed in "one" could be elaborate and witty. In a nifty metadramatic touch, the drop depicting a city street in Part Two featured a theater billboard advertising *Love Life*.<sup>103</sup>

Michael Kidd, who signed on 24 June 1948 for \$5,000 plus a 1% royalty, had made his Broadway debut as a choreographer with *Finian's Rainbow*, which opened on 10 January 1947, the day after *Street Scene*.<sup>104</sup> Kidd recalled that "The creative team of Alan Lerner, Kurt Weill, and the director, Elia Kazan, worked very closely together, and most of the decisions were made jointly. I think they got together to discuss who should we ask to do the choreography. I assume they had seen *Finian's Rainbow* and the ballet I [had] done and so they decided to ask me to come in and work on it."<sup>105</sup> Costume designer Lucinda Ballard's 21 June contract called for a fee of \$1,500 plus \$50 a week. By 23 June, conductor Joseph Littau, most recently the music director for *Carmen Jones* (1943–45) and *Carousel* (1945–47), had agreed to conduct.<sup>106</sup> (Weill's longtime friend and associate, Maurice Abravanel, who had conducted Weill's five previous Broadway shows, had recently left New York to become music director of the Utah Symphony Orchestra.)

Soon after the team had been assembled, Crawford wrote Weill to assure him that she had “fallen in love with the show.”<sup>107</sup> Years later, however, she expressed a rather different opinion: “Its theme was fresh, the form unusual, the cast exceptional, the settings by Boris Aaronson [*sic*] delightful. But it had no heart, no passion. The audience couldn’t get emotionally involved in the marital problems of the couple. And though it was satirical, it lacked penetrating wit for the most part. Because Kurt’s score served the style of the writing, it didn’t have the warmth of his best ballads.”<sup>108</sup>

Crawford accurately budgeted \$170,700 for the show (it ended up costing \$168,634.43).<sup>109</sup> By the end of April, she had raised \$200,000; the additional funds would cover bonds and out-of-town expenses. The capitalization of *Love Life* was the second largest of Weill’s Broadway career, after *The Firebrand of Florence* (\$225,000). On 3 May 1948, Cheryl Crawford and fifty-six investors formed a limited partnership “Dish for the Gods and Company.” Louis Lotito, the owner of City Playhouses, Inc., was the biggest investor at \$18,000. He had another vested interest in the show’s success, for on 14 June, Crawford booked his Forty-Sixth Street Theatre for *Love Life*. His business partner, Robert W. Dowling, contributed another \$4,000. *Finian’s Rainbow*, the current occupant, would close on 1 October.<sup>110</sup>

By mid-July 1948, the show had a revised script, a mostly orchestrated score, a production team, financing, a leading lady, and a singing ensemble and a dancing one, for which over seven hundred singers, dancers, magicians, and trapeze artists had auditioned (the last call for auditions at the Martin Beck Theatre was on 13 July).<sup>111</sup> But it lacked a leading man. The *New York Times* reported that “Oddly enough, although rehearsals are scheduled to get under way on Aug. 9, a male performer to play opposite Miss Fabray is still to be found.”<sup>112</sup> Alfred Drake had considered the role but chose *Kiss Me, Kate* instead.<sup>113</sup> Not until 19 July did the press announce that Juilliard-trained operatic baritone Ray Middleton, who had created the role of Washington Irving in *Knickerbocker Holiday*, would leave *Annie Get Your Gun* for *Love Life* (despite producers Rodgers and Hammerstein making a counteroffer of a salary increase). “I want an aria,” Middleton soon demanded.<sup>114</sup> In fact, he received two new numbers, “I’m Your Man” and “This Is the Life.”

Non-singing actor Lyle Bettger, recently featured in Norman Krasna’s hit, *John Loves Mary*, was hired at \$100 a week for the relatively small part of Bill Taylor, Susan’s potential love interest in “The Cruise.” The seventeen-member singing ensemble (nine women, eight men) covered the remaining adult roles in the sketches and the choral passages in both the sketches and the acts.<sup>115</sup> Among them was nineteen-year-old Sylvia Stahlman in her first professional stage appearance; she sang the challenging coloratura part of Miss Ideal Man in “The Illusion Minstrel Show” and would go on to have an international operatic career. David Collyer, a veteran with a string of small roles on Broadway (most recently in *Allegro*), was a well-respected voice instructor. He negotiated Sven’s song in “The Locker Room”—a tongue-twisting feat in the manner of “Tschaikowsky (and Other Russians)” in *Lady in the Dark*. Fabray’s understudy, Holly Harris, and Middleton’s then girlfriend, Carolyn Maye, both members of the singing ensemble, sang “Madame Zuzu.”

A fourteen-member dance ensemble handled Kidd’s choreography. Arthur Partington and Barbara McCutcheon were the lead dancers, assigned the roles of Punch and Judy in the divorce ballet in Part Two (“The All-American Puppet Ballet”). Melissa Hayden (best known later as Claire Bloom’s dance double in Charlie Chaplin’s *Limelight* of 1952) had an important solo in that number. She left the show prematurely at the end of October to join the New York Ballet Theatre; Shirley Eckl, one of the original dancers in the Bernstein-Robbins *Fancy Free*, replaced her.

Some of the vaudeville acts required specialty casting. In all the typescript librettos, Lerner specified that “Economics” and “Susan’s Dream” should be sung by a “Negro Quartette,” presumably to emulate the style of such currently popular groups as the Golden Gate Quartet, the Ink Spots, the Mills Brothers, and the Delta Rhythm Boys. But rather than casting an existing group, the team drew their quartet from singers who

had appeared in Broadway shows featuring largely Black casts (e.g., *The Hot Mikado*, Crawford’s revival of *Porgy and Bess*, and *Our Lan*). One of them, Joseph James, would soon understudy Todd Duncan in *Lost in the Stars*. For “Mother’s Getting Nervous,” Crawford hired trapeze star Elly Ardely, the “Russian Bird of Paradise.” She had purportedly studied with Pavlova and had enjoyed a distinguished career in vaudeville, music hall, and circus, particularly in Paris (at the Folies Bergère and Cirque Medrano), frequently working with Barquette, the famed aerialist and female impersonator. At \$350 a week, Ardely commanded the highest salary in the cast other than Fabray and Middleton. She left after one month to resume her appearances in the Ringling Brothers Circus, replaced by another Ringling veteran, Elizabeth Gibson, who had already played the part during the tryouts.

On 3 August, the press announced that the show had acquired a third featured player: vaudevillian Rex Weber, best known today for having introduced the Depression-era song “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?” Weill was surely aware that he had played the role of Peachum in the short-lived 1933 New York production of *The 3-Penny Opera*. In *Love Life*, Weber was to play four vaudeville parts: the Magician, the Con Man/Interlocutor in “The Illusion Minstrel Show,” and the Ventriloquist in a reprise of “Economics” (no. A11b) originally occupying the slot between Part One’s last two sketches. This act featured a cuckolded dummy who, the ventriloquist suggests, would do better with girls if he were more competitive, earned more money, and feigned disinterest. This advice contradicts what actually unfolds in “The Cruise,” when Sam is cuckolded (or nearly so) precisely because he is too engrossed in making money and neglects Susan. Weber would have played four incarnations of a disquieting figure (Kazan wanted the Magician to be “a heavenly yet diabolical cur”) who would reappear throughout the evening, somewhat like Lindorf/Coppélius/Crespel/Daper-tutto in Offenbach’s *The Tales of Hoffmann*.<sup>116</sup> Weber’s casting was timely, for rehearsals began on 9 August at the Martin Beck Theatre (another Louis Lotito enterprise) and the Nola Dance Studios. That day, Kazan told a reporter that “*Love Life* is the most interesting musical play I’ve ever known; absolutely original and there was never anything quite like it. . . . It will be the second musical show for me. I hope I can get away with it.”<sup>117</sup>

#### iv. Rehearsals, tryouts, and Broadway

Between Ray Middleton’s casting in July 1948 and the New York opening on 7 October, *Love Life* went through an astonishing amount of rewriting, which included adding new numbers, abandoning others, and curtailing or expanding most of what remained. How it all ended can be reconstructed from surviving documents. The musical continuity of the orchestral parts (**Im**) in their final state—including cuts, paste-ins, inserted leaves, and entirely recopied parts—accords with **Tt3**, a typescript prepared shortly after the New York opening.<sup>118</sup> The chronology of the changes leading up to that point is somewhat speculative, but the physical characteristics of **Im** remove some of the guesswork. Of its six professional copyists, only John Costa Coll traveled with the show, and several revisions are entirely in his hand. In Boston, a local copyist, Harry Silberman, provided last-minute assistance. Irving Schlein, who stayed with the company as rehearsal and pit pianist (doubling on accordion), extracted parts for revisions or for numbers added there (e.g., “Love Song”). (He was not a professional copyist, and awkward page breaks prompted one disgruntled reed player to write in his part, “Irving du hast a Kopf wie a Tuchus.”) It is likely, then, that revisions for which Schlein extracted parts date from the tryouts. He also orchestrated the dance arrangements for nos. 6a, 9a, 10b (mm. 85–160), 19 (except mm. 56–88), and A11a (mm. 35–102).<sup>119</sup>

Stages of revision documented in **Tt2b** (Kazan’s working copy of **Tt2**, with inserted pages bearing dates ranging from late July to late August 1948), plus various programs, correspondence, and diaries, provide further evidence for how the show evolved during the summer of 1948, particularly with respect to Middleton’s new numbers. Lerner and Weill drastically revised “The Cruise,” replacing all of its musical content. **Tt2b**



eliminates the sketch's original opening number, "There's Nothing Left for Daddy (But the Rhumba)" and replaces it with "I'm Your Man" (no. 12a). Preserving the rhumba would have made the episode excessively long, and it would have introduced a diegetic commentary number *within* a sketch, thereby breaking the formal pattern established thus far. Weill retained a dollop of Latin flavor by opening the sketch with a brief arrangement of "Green-Up Time" as a beguine. **Tt2b** also shortens Susan's flirtation with Bill Taylor by cutting her song "You Understand Me So" (see Appendix) and eliminating Sam's simultaneous dalliance with Betty, whose character disappears. Instead, **Tt2b** introduces a *finaletto* (no. 12d, a reprise of "I'm Your Man"). At this stage, no. 12d included a strophe for the abandoned Susan bravely putting up a front, but there are no extant musical materials and it disappears in **Tt3**, a script reflecting the running order of the New York premiere.

It is not clear exactly when no. 13 was cut, and there could have been a short period during which a maximal version of "The Cruise"—including both "I'm Your Man" and "You Understand Me So"—was being rehearsed. **Tt2b** appears to have contained both numbers at one point (see Critical Report for no. 13), and the first two tryout programs (**N1**, **N2a**) list nos. 12a, 13, and 16 ("The Locker Room"); the program for the second week in Boston (**N2b**) omits no. 16; that for the final week (**N2c**) also omits no. 13. Tryout programs were not always reliable, however, because of printing schedules. Two pieces of evidence suggest that no. 13 was actually cut earlier, probably before the New Haven opening. Cheryl Crawford's production files contain a list of charges for altering sets, including "the cost of ripping out [the] cabin scene in Cruise unit" and a charge for rebuilding the steam house in the locker room."<sup>120</sup> This suggests that no. 13 was cut at a time when no. 16 not only was still in the production, but also was even being restaged. A letter from John F. Wharton (theatrical attorney and member of the Playwrights' Company) to Weill, dated the day after the New Haven opening, probably settles the matter regarding no. 13: "I thought everything ran beautifully up to the New Year's Eve scene. Here the theme began to get a little fudged. I am glad you took out the abortive love affair (although I seem to recall a particularly charming love song which went out with this), but even so, I did not think the audience was entirely clear as to just what the scene meant to imply." Wharton then went on to suggest that the "locker room" act be thrown "bodily out of the play."<sup>121</sup> This eyewitness testimony belies the Boston programs, according to which no. 16 disappeared before no. 13. It may also be relevant that none of the reviews mentions no. 13.<sup>122</sup>

Middleton's other new number, "This Is the Life" (no. 20), first appears in a typed scenario for the divorce ballet inserted in **Tt2b**. Earlier scripts offer only a minimal description: "The All-American Ballet: This will be a ballet depicting a divorce. The principles [*sic*] will be SUSAN and SAM. Near the end, after they have gotten the divorce, they both turn to exit in opposite directions. Then, a sharply dressed CO[N]-MAN strolls jauntily on. He is flipping a coin up and down in the air and singing." The Con Man's reprise of "Here I'll Stay" (which the Edition places at the start of no. 21a) and his dialogue with the Coopers follow, apparently still using the ballet set. The curtain then closes and reopens for "The Illusion Minstrel Show," which forms a distinct number, both scenically and musically. The **Tt2b** scenario, dated 29 July 1948 (a Thursday), offers more details and a provisional placement for "This Is the Life":

Section 1: Two lawyers, Sam and Susan set up compromising position. Lawyer takes kimono out of suitcase. They arrange everything for photographer who enters with Susan. She says, "That's my husband." Sam and blonde rise from bed. All shake hands—Sam pays everybody off. End: Sam borrows \$5 from Susan.

Section 2: Courtroom scene. A ballet depicting various steps of divorce, including waiting in spectator box until preceding case is over. Presentation of Susan's case to Judge by lawyer. Lawyer acts it out. Judge reads magazine. Newspapermen who are covering a day in court and are completely disinterested. etc. etc. etc. (very worried about etc.'s). . . . Anyway it all ends in divorce granted. Sam pays off everybody again and both are each

given diplomas by judge. Suddenly everybody leaves and Sam and Susan are left alone.

Section 3: Susan's busy days. It's to be clear here that we are suggesting lapse of time of three or four months. Susan goes home. Dinner sequence with two children ending with all three staring at Sam's empty chair. When they look toward it, lights come up on Sam in hotel room. Song by Sam: "This is the life." In middle of song is interpolated a dialogue section between Susan and the children.

Street Scene: Susan and Sam wander along Avenue of the Americas. The gloom walks in on cat feet. They meet the con-man who sells them illusions.

Below this, Kazan typed (all in upper case) "Dear Michael: Please work etceteras over weekend."

**Tt2b** includes dialogue for the dinner sequence in "Susan's Busy Days," followed by the lyrics for "This Is the Life." The ending of the ballet still seems to have been staged this way in New Haven. Among Aronson's designs are two insets, representing a dining room and a hotel room, which were pulled on and off the ballet set. John Wharton's letter to Weill written the day after the New Haven opening notes that "the two vignettes after the divorce ballet again slowed the play down. With the ballet you go into symbolism, and I think the attempt to sandwich in these two vignettes between the ballet and the minstrel show again just fails to come off. I realize that you have got to give Middleton some kind of solo number in the second act . . . but I think he has an uphill battle in the spot that is given him." The creative team evidently agreed in part—they abandoned the vignettes but preserved "This Is the Life." **Tt2b** was revised to eliminate the dinner sequence, replacing section 3 of the ballet with "A Hotel Room" now scenically distinct from the ballet and "City Street." As Table 1 in the Critical Report shows, it is first listed in the second Boston program (**N2b**). Accordingly, Aronson designed a new hotel set for no. 20 and a drop for the "City Street" so it could be performed in "one" while the hotel set was switched for "The Illusion Minstrel Show." Since the drop could be raised to reveal the final set without a break, Weill welded the Con Man's reprise of "Here I'll Stay" and the minstrel show into a single musical sequence (no. 21a). Instead of the spoken dialogue that originally separated the two numbers, the Con Man now tempts Sam and Susan in song, with the minstrels seamlessly taking it over as the traveler opens. These revisions resulted in everything from no. 18 ("Is It Him or Is It Me?") onward comprising continuous music, with all dialogue underscored.

Scant evidence for Kidd's solution to the "etceteras" that worried Kazan has survived. Kidd recalled the ballet's prologue, in which "a floozy with an overdone blonde wig" established grounds for divorce. For the courtroom scene, he came up with a "very stylized version of the dancers behaving like puppets in a Punch and Judy show." Thanks to Kidd's recollections, the programs (which divide the ballet into sections), and the cues in Irving Schlein's scores (**Fh** and **Pm-Sch**), it is possible to reconstruct a plausible scenario (see Critical Report). Weill drafted the "Prologue" using repurposed passages from *The River Is Blue* and *Die sieben Todsünden* ("Faulheit"); Schlein's arrangement omits the latter. The "Lawyer's Dance" that opens the courtroom episode was at first borrowed from *Der Kuhhandel* ("Das Erlebnis im Café"), but the definitive version (the only section of the ballet that Weill orchestrated) incorporates part of the cut "Hollywood Dream" from *Lady in the Dark*, also used in "Ho, Billy O!" Melissa Hayden (half of a "Flighty Pair") danced to the "Barbarischer Marsch" from *Die Bürgschaft*.<sup>123</sup> The rest of the ballet derives from "Green-Up Time" and "Economics."

Part One, Sketch ii ("The Farewell") changed radically in the weeks preceding the New Haven performances. **Tt2b** and corresponding revisions to **Fh** show the authors continuing the process of making Sam and Susan more sympathetic. To that end, they restored "I Remember It Well," which now segues directly into "Green-Up Time." Sam no longer refuses to attend the party: in fact, he hosts it, even though "those dances sometimes last until morning." Thus, "Green-Up Time" became a production

number. Michael Kidd recalled that “‘Green-Up Time’ was . . . a song illustrative of that feeling of America greening, that ebullient, buoyant, joyful, optimistic, innocent feeling. . . . I tried many different ways of doing that particular dance, and none of them seemed to have any life to them until finally I said, try it in the polka form, and suddenly it became alive.” That the polka did not exist in 1821 did not matter. Kidd was not trying to recreate “authentic folk dances . . . because the songs weren’t authentic folk songs either”: they were either “comments on the period” or else a “theatricalization” of it that merely “had a feel as if they occurred during that period.”<sup>124</sup> As Kazan put it, “The Era of Good Feelings is a convenient historical fact for the spirit of ‘Green-Up Time’.”<sup>125</sup> In its definitive version, “Green-Up Time” stands as a valediction to a form of life on the brink of extinction. (In Aronson’s design, a new backdrop showing smokestacks belching black fumes where a pastoral landscape had once stood was all that differed between the 1791 and the 1821 sets.) Weill’s setting of the song’s refrain, with its turn to the minor in its second subphrase, neatly encapsulates the ambivalence of the moment. Weill had repeatedly promised Lerner—who did not want “two thousand years of Jewish misery” creeping into “Green-Up Time”—an “all-major song,” but he used modal mixture anyway.<sup>126</sup> These portents of troubled times ahead notwithstanding, Sam and Susan have been given a respite.

The staging of “Mother’s Getting Nervous” (no. 9) likewise became progressively more elaborate in rehearsal. Lerner’s text is something of a pastiche. In the idiom of an end-of-the-century waltz, a trio of children wonder why Mother is nervous. The situation recalls a parodistic song in 3/4 that the Whiffenpoofs had recorded the previous year, “Daddy Is a Yale Man,” where children also wonder “What’s got into Mother?” Whether or not Weill or Lerner knew it, no. 9 is stylistically similar. The trapeze act might have suggested yet another waltz in that vein, “The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze,” to which the second episode in the dominant key (mm. 120ff.) bears a superficial melodic resemblance. This episode also alludes musically to the 1908 hit “Take Me Out to the Ball Game,” a fitting intertextual reference since that song was something of a feminist statement when it first appeared (the person who wants to be taken out to the ball game is a “baseball mad” young lady who not only attends games but also argues with umpires in a most unladylike fashion). In the first episode (mm. 71–88), Lerner spoofs the lyrics of the maudlin song by lyricist Howard Johnson and composer Theodore Morse (1915), “M–O–T–H–E–R, a Word That Means the World to Me,” one regularly trotted out on Mother’s Day in twentieth-century America. Weill does not cite that song but does switch to its duple meter. Before the tryouts, Schlein added a dance break titled “Foxtrot (Kronk),” *kronk* being an old jazz term for “corny.” This choice of idiom reinforces the spoofing of old-time, sentimental popular songs.<sup>127</sup>

A sudden casting change required last-minute revisions. On 2 September, the day before the company decamped to New Haven, the press announced Rex Weber’s departure from the production.<sup>128</sup> Robert Strauss, best remembered as Stanislaus “Animal” Kuzawa in Billy Wilder’s *Stalag 17* (1953), replaced him as the Con Man/Interlocutor and was billed as a featured player in the New Haven program (N1) and the first two Boston ones (N2a, N2b). For reasons unknown, he, too, soon dropped out. From 27 September on, chorus member Victor Clarke took over these roles, but without featured billing. The ventriloquist act disappeared; no. A11a, a reprise of “Progress” augmented with a soft-shoe dance evolution, replaced it in New Haven and Boston. For the New York opening, no. A11a was replaced in turn by “Love Song,” when that number was moved from its original location in Part Two. Jules Racine, the assistant stage manager and chorus member, temporarily took the part of the Magician (and he remained the understudy for it). In New York, Jay Marshall, a popular professional magician, took over. In fact, Marshall had tried out earlier for the show, lost out to Weber, but was hired to design the levitation and sawing-woman-in-half tricks. Being left-handed, he built them accordingly, which apparently accounted for some of his predecessors’ problems.<sup>129</sup> Although Marshall was also a ventriloquist, that act was not

restored. He bicycled to his engagement at the Village Vanguard jazz club directly following his four-minute appearance (for which he received \$175 a week, making him the highest paid cast member per minute). “Maybe I don’t get to stop the show, but I sure as hell get to start it,” he quipped.<sup>130</sup> The casting disarray derailed the plan of having the Magician provide unity across vaudeville acts.

Beginning on 3 September, the production moved to New Haven. The sets were installed on the 4th and 5th, the orchestra arrived on the 6th, and the company, on the 7th. Following rehearsals in the Taft Hotel ballroom and the Shubert Theatre, *Love Life* opened on Thursday 9 September for a four-performance run, including a matinee on the 11th. The show then moved to Boston for a three-week engagement (twenty-four performances) at the Shubert Theatre there, beginning on 13 September; this was part of a subscription series under the auspices of the American Theatre Society and the Theatre Guild. For Lerner, it was a chance to reunite with one of the opening-night attendees, his Choate and Harvard classmate, Congressman John F. Kennedy.<sup>131</sup> Reviews in both towns were generally favorable, and the critics were quick to recognize the show’s original format. Of the four major New Haven reviews (*Billboard*, *Variety*, the *New Haven Journal-Courier*, and the *New Haven Register*) and the five major Boston dailies (the *Globe*, *Herald*, *Post*, *Traveler*, and *Christian Science Monitor*), only three were mostly negative: those from the *Register*, *Herald*, and *Traveler*. As would be the case in New York, Weill’s score came off well, despite caveats about its dearth of catchy ballads: “Mr. Weill’s music is solid and clever from light to serious mood, but of easily whistlable [*sic*] tunes there are few.”<sup>132</sup>

The most enthusiastic critic was Elliot Norton, a consistent admirer of Weill, who deemed *Love Life* “the most mature musical the American stage has yet produced.” He predicted that, like Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *All the Way*, it would “create controversy and perhaps indignation.” The show’s experimental aspects (“it uses some of the old conventional show techniques to unconventional ends”) were cause for celebration.<sup>133</sup> In contrast, Elinor Hughes felt that “the overall effect is one of too much attempted, a broken narrative line, and more symbolism and commentary than people, story and music.” She understood the form well enough: “*Love Life* is a complicated and uneven combination of musical play, problem play, and straight vaudeville, with the latter designed to explain each serious or musical interlude before it arrives.” But she nonetheless considered the interludes “somewhat distracting and though their purpose is reasonably clear, they do tend to confuse the action and their connection to the story is not always well motivated.”<sup>134</sup>

As would happen in New York, much came down to whether a critic found “broken narrative” lines intellectually stimulating, confusing, or perhaps both, as the report on the New Haven performance in *Variety* seemed to suggest:

First thing to be noted about *Love Life* is its original pattern. It’s an outstanding example of how far musicals have progressed since the hackneyed books that concluded Act One with some vapid situation, the obvious solution of which at that point would have obviated the need for Act Two.

As a matter of fact, staging of play [*sic*] is so unorthodox it stumbles over its own originality in getting off on a somewhat nebulous foot . . . which . . . makes necessary too much retroactive thinking to catch up with proceedings as the story moves on.<sup>135</sup>

Even sympathetic reviewers thought that the show needed pruning. In New Haven, the curtain came down at 11:45 P.M.<sup>136</sup> Lerner recalled that “Max Anderson, Elmer Rice and Moss Hart, among other friends, came up. . . . Opinions ran the gamut from ‘I don’t think you can fix this’ to ‘I’m sure you can fix it’.”<sup>137</sup> Boris Aronson sensed that the show was a harbinger of things to come, though “it would take twenty years” for its formal innovations to be accepted. But Hart was skeptical: “Of course the show needs integration.”<sup>138</sup> He thought they had two different plays: “The first act was a satire and in the second act satire was abandoned and the play was solved realistically.”<sup>139</sup>

Hart's critique—or Lerner's memory of it—does not stand up under scrutiny. There is plenty of satire in Part Two, and “The Illusion Minstrel Show” could scarcely be said to solve anything “realistically.” The show was very much about questioning the opposition of “illusion” and “reality”—two words that crop up repeatedly in the script—and the formal structure, separating and then dissolving the boundary between “sketch” and “act,” functioned as a metaphor of that overall theme. “Integration” was not the goal but something to be questioned. But if even Hart failed to appreciate this, perhaps there was indeed a problem. As Lerner wrote shortly after the Broadway premiere, “practically every scene in the play was rewritten” between the openings in New Haven and New York, “and three completely new scenes were added.”<sup>140</sup> In Boston, “all attempts were made to unify the style. When heaviness could be avoided, things were lightened.”<sup>141</sup>

In the interest of lightening things up, the team replaced Part Two's first sketch, the rather dark “A Ticket to the Fight,” with the lighter “Radio Night.” In both sketches, the Coopers have evolved into a two-income household; each begins with Sam dealing with the children on his own and leads to a crisis after Susan's return home. In the former sketch, the children spy on their parents and turn them further against each other. This “neurotic intrigue among the kids” (Kazan's note in **Tt2b**) illustrates the advanced social dysfunction foreshadowed in the madrigal “Ho, Billy O!” that opens the act. Johnny is a mama's boy who resents his father. Meanwhile, being her father's pet does not stop Elizabeth from trying to win her mother's favor by framing Sam. She plants false evidence that Sam lied about attending a boxing match the previous night, and Susan assumes that Sam is having an affair (“Because you're a man and you've got to have a woman, and you sure never come to me”). Sam storms out, leaving a regretful Susan to sing her torch song, “Is It Him or Is It Me?” The sketch and preceding madrigal had apparently been inspired by events from Lerner's childhood:

Every Friday night my father went to the prize fights at the Madison Square Garden. . . . I should have said almost every Friday night, for on many occasions his taste for combat drew him to other, more quilted arenas. . . . One Saturday morning, my father later told me, as he was preparing to go to the office, two things happened that had never happened before during his entire married life. The first was that while he was dressing my mother woke up. The second was that as she opened her eyes she said: “Who won the fight?” Alas, that Friday happened to have been one of the nights that my father's ringside seat was empty. I do not remember who fought in the main bout, but will call them Smith and Jones. My father, taking a chance, said: “Smith.” My mother turned over and went back to sleep. My father went into the dining room and opened the *New York Times* to the sports page. Jones had won. . . . By the time my mother fully awakened, my father and all that was his were gone. As he later explained to me, it seemed the only sensible thing to do. . . . It avoided a great deal of noise and he would have ended up at the Waldorf anyhow.<sup>142</sup>

After that, Lerner's mother would sometimes slap him for the same reasons cited by the madrigal's hapless narrator: “My father used to stay away, / With home he'd never bother. / And Mother hit me twice a day / Because I looked like Father.”<sup>143</sup>

“Radio Night” finds the family in an equally dysfunctional state, with Sam and Susan sleeping in separate bedrooms. But the crisis emerges merely from heated bickering over which radio program to listen to; it all becomes moot when the radio breaks down. “Is It Him or Is It Me?” was relocated to a new sketch, “Farewell Again.” Sam moves into a hotel, his leave-taking prompting a heart-wrenching reprise of “I Remember It Well.” The curtain falls on a desolate Susan singing her torch song.<sup>144</sup> The comic and somber aspects of “A Ticket to the Fight” were disaggregated into two distinct sketches, temporarily separated by a new vaudeville act featuring a hobo (see Table 1 in Critical Report). The vagabond whose “Love Song” goes unheard belongs to the succession of sad-but-sage clowns and tramps who had long populated vaudeville. Weill and Lerner wrote “Love Song” on 14–15 September (just after the Boston opening), while Crawford flew to New York to audition nightclub and radio singer Johnny Thompson,

whom she and Weill had recalled hearing at the Savoy-Plaza Hotel.<sup>145</sup> Thompson signed for \$200 a week. Weill then rewrote the last part of “The Illusion Minstrel Show,” replacing sixteen measures of underscored dialogue with a climactic reprise of “Love Song” to mark that moment when Sam persuades Susan to join him in negotiating the precarious path—symbolized by a high-wire act—toward a reconciliation based on realistic rather than romanticized expectations (see Plate 6).<sup>146</sup> The new ending incorporated at least two of Kazan's suggestions: first, that after “Mr. Right,” Sam should take the lead in questioning Miss Ideal Man and the other girls (“if Sam does this it means he loves Sue and wants her”); and second, that something more should be said about two people making a marriage work.<sup>147</sup>

To shorten the show, the creative team had removed two numbers by 20 September: “Susan's Dream” and “The Locker Room.”<sup>148</sup> At least one New Haven critic had suggested that the “locker room” act be cut, as had John Wharton, who in his letter to Weill expressed his conviction that the number had failed to “come off”: “you abandon the technique of using vaudeville acts to explain the coming scene; you jump from symbolism to reality, and back to symbolism without warning.” The surreal alternation of genre-specific registers (realistic plot elements, a commentary choral number, and slapstick comedy) apparently did not go over well. Sam's appearance breached the hitherto rigorously maintained division between “sketches” and “acts,” which may explain why Wharton found the number confusing.<sup>149</sup>

Eliminating “Susan's Dream” seems to have been a tougher decision. Maxwell Anderson reports in his diary seeing the show on the 25th, when the number had apparently already been cut, and discussing “Susan's Dream” with Weill and Lerner the next day.<sup>150</sup> But “Susan's Dream” was part of an act that already had a number, “Economics,” commenting unambiguously on the following sketch. It was less obvious how “Susan's Dream” prepared “The New Baby,” and two back-to-back numbers performed in “one” slowed the progression of the plot. The alteration of its order number in **Im** suggests that “Susan's Dream” may have been temporarily relocated to the much-contested slot between “My Kind of Night” and “The Cruise” that had previously been occupied first by a reprise of “Economics,” and then by one of “Progress” ending with a soft-shoe routine. By the time the show opened in New York, “Love Song,” with revised lyrics referring to the Prohibition-era setting of “The Cruise,” had been moved to this position. This in turn meant relocating “Ho, Billy O!” from the opening of Part Two to the spot between the “Radio Night” sketch and the “Farewell Again” one.

As the Boston tryouts wound down, the Forty-Sixth Street Theatre was doing brisk business in advance sales—\$350,000 by 6 October.<sup>151</sup> Just before the opening, Weill wrote an entr'acte, replacing utilities of “Here I'll Stay” and “Green-Up Time” by Chappell house arranger Walter Paul. To save time, Weill incorporated most of Paul's “Here I'll Stay” arrangement, but added his own violin countermelody (see Plate 4).<sup>152</sup> After the 7 October opening, the show's content stabilized for about five months, at which point the “Farewell Again” sketch disappeared, including “Is It Him or Is It Me?” as well as the reprise of “I Remember It Well” (“too tragic,” Lerner recalled).<sup>153</sup>

Lerner and Weill were well aware that their show's experimental nature might puzzle audiences, and they had already tried to forestall confusion with articles, interviews, and their prefatory program note.<sup>154</sup> Then, four days before the New York opening, a skit appeared in the Sunday *New York Times* in which they explained their concept to a prospective ticket buyer:<sup>155</sup>

MAN: Pardon me. Do either of you know anything about this show?

LERNER: Yes, we saw it in New Haven.

MAN: What is it? I am a little confused. It says here on the sign it's a vaudeville.

WEILL: That's right, it is.

MAN: You mean it has vaudeville acts?

WEILL: Lots of them.

MAN: That's fine. Then I don't have to worry about following a plot. That's a relief.  
 LERNER: No. There's a plot.  
 MAN: I thought you said it was a vaudeville.  
 LERNER: It's a vaudeville with a plot.  
 MAN: How does that work?  
 WEILL: Well, the sketches and the vaudeville acts have a continuity and supplement each other.

Weill goes on to summarize the narrative and the idea behind the show concluding that "You see, it's very simple." But confusion still reigns:

MAN: What holds it together?  
 LERNER: Vaudeville.

...

MAN: . . . Is it like a lot of little plays strung together?  
 WEILL: Not exactly. One sketch is a musical play, one is an American ballad, one is a straight comedy, one is satire, one is danced, one is musical comedy, one is dramatic. All different styles.  
 MAN: How do they all fit together?  
 LERNER: With vaudeville.  
 WEILL: Isn't that simple?  
 MAN: No. You mean it all has a form?  
 WEILL: Yes, in a formless way.

Throughout the grueling process of revision, Weill maintained an outwardly insouciant demeanor. Lerner said that "Kurt was the most uncrumbling man . . . (at periods like this strong men crumble). The director gets a bad cold, the producer finds business in New York, everybody disappears." But he sensed that "Kurt's quietness was only on the surface. He was an exposed nerve."<sup>156</sup> Writing to Madeleine Milhaud on 17 October, Weill summed up the ordeal:

It was terribly hard work because we had to change a great deal, and every time we changed something I had to sit up at night and orchestrate. . . . The opening of "Love Life" was quite an experience. In Boston we had a very bad première and lots of things were wrong with the show. But the next morning we had wonderful notices and the show was practically sold out for 3 weeks. In New York we had the most enthusiastic [*sic*] opening night I've ever seen and the play was in excellent condition. Next morning the 2 important papers (Times and Tribune) were negative about the play (although they liked the music). Although most of the other papers were excellent, we were not sure if we [would] outlive those bad notices. But the play has become the most discussed theater evening of the season. It has been sold out since the opening, the audiences love it and I think it has a good chance to survive.<sup>157</sup>

He wrote almost the same to his parents on the same day, adding that the usual frenzy had intensified because of the show's experimental quality:

This time it was especially hard because I tried out an entirely new form of theater, a new mixture of various elements, and as always when one attempts something new, we had no way of knowing how effective the different parts of the work would prove with the public before actually performing it in front of an audience. As a result, when we opened in New Haven, we discovered that several parts that had seemed promising to us were not very effective, and vice versa. This meant that already before the opening in Boston, we had to make changes within a few days' time. . . . But despite its being a lot of work, it was a lot of fun because I had excellent collaborators—a first-class librettist and America's best director—so that the work could always carry on harmoniously and without any tiffs. On top of that we all lived in a wonderful hotel with good food service.<sup>158</sup>

The preceding July, Crawford had calculated that in order to break even, the production would have to earn a weekly gross slightly exceeding \$25,000, based on the theater owner receiving his minimum share; that figure was revised to \$27,000 once the production had been running for a couple of months.<sup>159</sup> Buoyed by advance sales and theater parties, receipts at first exceeded this point handsomely. Press agent Wolfe Kaufman announced a \$39,900 gross for the first full week, which he claimed was

\$200 above capacity with standees. But because of certain costs associated with the early performances (such as "special rehearsal pay" and intense advertising), profits that week amounted to only \$4,087.12.<sup>160</sup> As advertising and other initial costs were reduced, profits reached a high of \$7,033.78 on a \$38,000 gross in Week 8 (ending 27 November). Had receipts continued at that level, *Love Life* could have amortized its investment by Week 30. By the end of Week 10, Weill had earned a respectable \$16,041.19 in royalties.<sup>161</sup> But *Daily Variety* made the right call on 8 October when it predicted that "it will do fair business for a spell, but it may never recoup its \$200,000 investment." Sure enough, a sharp drop in attendance precipitated losses beginning in Week 11, with receipts dipping below the minimum in Week 12 (ending on Christmas day). *Variety* cited cold weather and the usual holiday slump as mitigating factors. Although receipts did surge to \$33,500 in Week 13, thanks to a top New Year's Eve ticket price of \$8.40 (the 100th performance, as it happened), the team recognized this as a temporary respite and agreed on 3 January 1949 to a cut in royalties from 12% to 8%.<sup>162</sup> Thanks to this expedient, plus Sunday evening performances in Weeks 15 and 16, and further cuts in royalties to 4.5% beginning with Week 15 and then to 2.25% beginning with Week 17, the show continued posting modest weekly profits. But from Week 19 onward, receipts rose above the minimum only during Easter week, despite a final cut in royalties to \$150 and a reduction of approximately 15% to the salaries of the cast and stage manager. In short, the show never recovered from that first downward turn in December. Lotito, who allowed *Love Life* to continue despite the stop clause, diagnosed the situation in an interview on 27 January: "We always have that big drop just before Christmas and there's always that reaction after New Year's. It's then that the weak sisters have to go. The unhealthy thing about the whole situation is that a play running along to fine grosses has to close because of high operating costs."<sup>163</sup>

Did Lerner and Weill really hope that cutting the "Farewell Again" sketch in February would turn things around? It must have been clear by Christmas that *Love Life* would no longer be financially viable without sacrifices being made. On 29 December, responding to Abravanel's interest in mounting a summer performance in Salt Lake City, Weill wrote that the orchestra material would be available because the show "will close some time before summer."<sup>164</sup> Cast members were making other plans. On 29 January, the *New York Times* announced that Nanette Fabray would go into Morton Gould's *The Pursuit of Happiness* (styled *Arms and the Girl* when it opened on 2 February 1950) after her contract with *Love Life* ended on 1 June. Lyle Bettger left the cast to play Barbara Stanwyck's villainous boyfriend in the film *No Man of Her Own*; chorus member Evans Thornton took over Bettger's role for the last seven weeks. *Love Life* closed on 14 May 1949 after 252 performances, with the limited partners recouping only 26% of their investment.

The mixed New York reviews had undoubtedly contributed to the sudden but then steady decline in box-office receipts after ten weeks, once the show was no longer benefiting from advance sales. A second contributing factor was the Petrillo Ban of 1948 and the nearly concurrent ASCAP embargo, which took off the table the two principal ways to promote the show: the release of an original-cast album and the broadcasting of recordings on national radio networks. Of all the musicals that premiered in 1948, only two managed original-cast recordings. Eleven numbers from the revue, *Inside U.S.A.* (music by Arthur Schwartz and lyrics by Howard Dietz), had been recorded on 31 December 1947, the day before the ban took effect. *Kiss Me, Kate* opened 30 December 1948, two weeks after the ban was lifted, and was then recorded on 19 January 1949. There had evidently been some hope that a substantial amount of *Love Life* could be recorded just in time: on 25 November 1947, Cheryl Crawford's general manager, John Yorke, announced that "it was quite possible that the score would be ready for recording before Dec. 31."<sup>165</sup> But unlike *Inside U.S.A.*, *Love Life* had not advanced enough for a substantially complete recording: the show had not been cast, and Weill had orchestrated none of the numbers. By the end of the year, Weill did produce neatly written piano-

vocal scores for nos. 3, 6, and 13 (collectively, **Vh**<sup>1</sup>) for ozalid reproduction, the first two numbers bearing a non-holograph 1947 copyright notice. With their meticulous ink notation, they are of the same quality as the holographs Weill would typically prepare as masters for piano-vocal rehearsal materials. Although the entire score was not ready, Weill presumably chose the three numbers that he thought had the strongest commercial prospects and prepared fair copies from which band leaders could create arrangements. Indeed, Buddy Clark and Sammy Kaye both recorded “Here I’ll Stay” and “Green-Up Time” in advance of the recording strike; the discs were released in September 1948, shortly before the New York opening.<sup>166</sup>

Chappell seems to have done a good job, despite all obstacles, in plugging songs for live performance on radio. Weill said that it was “The only time in all my years with Chappell’s that I got a real full-fledged exploitation of a score.”<sup>167</sup> “Here I’ll Stay” did particularly well, reaching the no. 2 spot in *Variety* on 3 November 1948, the only Broadway song among the top twenty-five. There were several live performances on popular radio shows, such as those hosted by Perry Como (27 October) and Arthur Godfrey (25 November). On 18 November, members of the cast appeared on ABC radio performing selections for *Theatre USA*, a show sponsored by U.S. Army and Air Force recruiting services with the cooperation of the American National Theater and Academy (ANTA). *Love Life* also benefited from the new medium of television: Nanette Fabray appeared twice on the CBS show *Toast of the Town* (soon to become known as the *Ed Sullivan Show*), singing “Green-Up Time” on 19 December 1948 and “Mr. Right” on 16 January 1949 (only the latter used Weill’s orchestration). Weill himself appeared on NBC’s *The Swift Show* on 31 March 1949, accompanying soprano Martha Wright singing a refrain of “Here I’ll Stay” in a duet with the show’s host, Lanny Ross.<sup>168</sup>

Between 5 August and 29 December 1948, Chappell published eight selections from *Love Life* in sheet-music format in the following order: “Here I’ll Stay,” “Green-Up Time,” “Susan’s Dream,” “Economics,” “Mr. Right,” “Is It Him or Is It Me?,” “Love Song,” and “This Is the Life” (**Ae**). It also published “Here I’ll Stay” and “Green-Up Time” in dance arrangements by Jack Mason. Sales were modest: in the six months ending 31 December, Weill earned royalties of \$514.78, at two cents a copy, against a \$2,500 advance from Chappell.<sup>169</sup> The decision to print “This Is the Life,” a long aria almost entirely devoid of functional harmonic progressions, was particularly courageous, since it was obviously not destined for popular consumption. Weill seems to have taken particular care in preparing this number for publication, for unlike the other sheet-music offerings, “This Is the Life” includes subtleties of tempo and expression absent in **Vh**. (Indeed, it is the only portion of **Ae** upon which the Edition draws substantively.)

*Love Life* had to contend not just with its mixed critical reception and limited promotion, but also with stiff competition. The previous season’s *High Button Shoes* was still playing to capacity audiences and would close on 2 July 1949 after 727 performances. *Annie Get Your Gun*, which celebrated its 1000th performance the night *Love Life* opened, would close on 12 February. Another holdover, *Inside U.S.A.*, played through 19 February. At first, the only new show to provide serious competition was *Where’s Charley?*, which opened five days after *Love Life* and lasted two seasons. Forays onto Broadway by Heitor Villa-Lobos (*Magdalena*) and Benjamin Britten (*The Rape of Lucretia*) fizzled after 88 and 23 performances, respectively. Sigmund Romberg’s career ended with *My Romance* (95 performances, opening on 19 October). But starting on 13 November, Bobby Clark packed them in as the hapless first gentleman to female president Irene Rich in *As the Girls Go* (with music by Jimmy McHugh); noted especially for its chorus of leggy beauties, it was very much the traditional sort of Broadway offering that *Love Life* was not, and it lasted for 414 performances. Then on 30 December 1948 and 7 April 1949, respectively, *Kiss Me, Kate* and *South Pacific* began their long runs.<sup>170</sup> The former won the Tony Award, and the latter, the New York Drama Critics’ Circle Award, in each case for best musical of 1949. *Love Life* won just one award: a Tony for Nanette Fabray.

### III. Reception

#### i. Comparisons and connections

Reviews of the premiere abound with comparisons between *Love Life* and three recent plays: Thornton Wilder’s *The Skin of Our Teeth* (1942), Moss Hart’s *Christopher Blake* (1946), and Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Allegro* (1947). For example, Cyrus Durgin in the *Boston Globe* (14 September 1948) warned that “This is a show bound to arouse diverse opinion, for it is at once sentiment and acid satire, serious and gay, reality and fantasy, and touched over with something of the moral preachment of *Christopher Blake* and *Allegro*. But most people will agree on one point: the knowing showmanship and theatrical flair with which it is done.” John Lardner in the *New York Star* described *Love Life*’s plot as “roughly speaking . . . *The Skin of Our Teeth* . . . set to music.”<sup>171</sup>

*Love Life* recalled *Christopher Blake* mainly because both deal with divorce. But they also share a modular structure, with Hart’s play unfolding very much like *Lady in the Dark* minus the music. *Christopher Blake* is about a boy who cannot make up his mind when a judge asks him with which parent he would prefer to live. Realistic scenes set in the judge’s chamber alternate with vignettes enacting the boy’s fevered daydreams—wish-fulfillment dreams of reconciliation, revenge fantasies, and nightmares of abandonment. As he did for *Lady in the Dark*, set designer Harry Horner used revolving stages to accommodate the protagonist’s shifting in and out of reveries, although this time the device seems to have fallen flat.<sup>172</sup>

Comparisons to *The Skin of Our Teeth* were prompted by the non-aging of the Antrobus family and their maid Sabina over several historical epochs juxtaposed in absurdist fashion (the Ice Age somehow unfolds in suburban New Jersey). Weill admired Wilder, and in the mid-1940s he entertained the possibility of a collaboration, noting that William Saroyan, Thornton Wilder, and Paul Osborn “are the guys to work with.”<sup>173</sup> *Love Life* prompted Cheryl Crawford’s suggestion that Weill should base an opera on *Our Town*, with which it also shares some traits.<sup>174</sup> But the differences between *Love Life* and *The Skin of Our Teeth* are no less crucial than their commonalities. Wilder manipulates time in order to celebrate the persistence with which humans remake their world over and over in the wake of catastrophe. *Love Life*, in contrast, does not really celebrate anything. Instead, it exposes tensions between socio-economic “progress” and human relations, sometimes with grim humor, sometimes with pathos, thereby encouraging reflection on this dialectic without offering solutions. Like Sam and Susan on their tightrope, *Love Life* leaves us in the air.

By the time *Allegro* opened on 10 October 1947, Weill had almost finished sketching Part One of *Love Life* in its **Tt1** guise. But on 6 September he had attended a tryout performance of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s new show in New Haven. Might it have influenced Lerner and Weill? At least one critic assumed that to be the case: “The first half of the evening is a little better than the second. . . . There were some evidences that *Allegro* was not entirely out of mind during the composition of this part.”<sup>175</sup> Although Weill saw *Allegro* over a month after he and Lerner had settled on their show’s theme and structure, he could also have learned something about Rodgers and Hammerstein’s plans just from gossip. Indeed, in light of Weill’s well-documented sense of rivalry with Rodgers, some scholars have been tempted to read *Love Life* as an effort to best his competitor.<sup>176</sup>

Regardless of whether *Allegro* had any effect on *Love Life*’s genesis, it certainly had an effect on its reception, and not always for the better, for *Allegro* had not been a hit (it closed on 10 July 1948 after 315 performances).<sup>177</sup> “A sort of *Allegro* stretched out across two centuries” and “the flavor of an anemic *Allegro*” were two unenthusiastic descriptions of *Love Life*.<sup>178</sup> After calling *Love Life* “a brave experiment,” Elinor Hughes went on to complain that

Last season’s *Allegro* and this year’s *Love Life* give me the distinct impression that our successful writers of musical plays, dissatisfied with present-

ing the public with shows whose object is to entertain rather than to provide social comment or point a moral, are seeking to find a new form of expression in the guise of a song and dance entertainment. It is also apparent, from the sharp division of opinion on the merits of *Allegro* and the heated word battles now raging over *Love Life* that the public is by no means of one mind in the matter.<sup>179</sup>

Elliot Norton opened his positive review of *Love Life* with a similar comparison: "Like last season's *Allegro*, which delighted some of us and infuriated others, *Love Life* will create controversy and perhaps some indignation. For it uses some of the old conventional show techniques for unconventional ends; and it even points a moral."

Hughes and Norton inaugurated a tendency for critics to mention *Allegro* and *Love Life* in the same breath, eventually in connection with competing claims over the origins of the concept musical. Harold Prince would assert flat out that "*Love Life* and *Allegro* were the first concept musicals."<sup>180</sup> Stephen Sondheim linked the two shows when describing the experimental aspects of his own *Company* (1970): "*Company* is overtly experimental, in that it's an attempt to blend the revue and the book forms, although you could say that Weill and Lerner's *Love Life* had that in it, too. . . . If *Love Life* or *Allegro* had been smash hits, the musical theatre might very well have accelerated in terms of experimentation."<sup>181</sup>

Yoked though they may be in the present historiography of musical theater, *Allegro* and *Love Life* are very different plays. Despite its innovative staging, *Allegro* is more conventional, and very much of the psychological type that Weill often bemoaned. Hammerstein used a singing chorus "to interpret the mental and emotional reactions of the principal characters, after the manner of a Greek chorus," as he stated in the published libretto.<sup>182</sup> Although the protagonist was meant to represent an Everyman, Hammerstein aimed at inducing a strong affective connection between audience and character: "Complete dependence must be placed on one's efforts to interest an audience in a group of characters, and interest them to such a degree that they will care about the smallest things that happen to them—everyday things, untheatrical things."<sup>183</sup> The commentary numbers in *Love Life*, in contrast, do not reflect the characters' inner being but, rather, invite us to interpret episodes in the Coopers' lives in the context of broader historical developments, and to adopt a critically distant attitude in doing so. By constantly interrupting the Coopers' story, the vaudevillians impede emotional involvement of the kind that Hammerstein sought to arouse.

## ii. Critical reception of the Broadway production

Theater historian John Gassner's account (January 1949) of the original production of *Love Life* was the only one that assessed the show from the perspective of Weill's career as a whole. He interpreted it as an "epic" *Lehrstück* that gestured toward a non-realistic theater better equipped to address contemporary problems than the more conventionally unified (read "integrated") realistic drama:

Of all the plays produced this season, it is a musical comedy, *Love Life*, that commends itself as a contribution to the advance of theatrical art—in spite of the possibility of registering dissatisfaction with it both as continuous entertainment or finished artistry. The book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner and the score by the renowned Kurt Weill are crudely joined and have a roughness of surface that drew a mixed press and that would have normally spelled disaster on Broadway. That *Love Life* has managed to hold its own at the Forty-Sixth Street Theatre is due in part to its dealing with the very viable subject of marriage in the United States. . . . But I should like to suggest that *Love Life* exerts a fascination of form and technique, too. . . .

*Love Life* is subtitled "a vaudeville," and a touch of that virtually extinct genre is present. Actually, this musical comedy is a chronicle and leans toward the *Cavalcade* type of drama, but with a difference, since both its vaudeville and chronicle character are in the service of the kind of documentary and pedagogic drama that used to be called a *Lehrstueck* in Germany. . . .

The "learning play," more broadly called "epic drama" by its German founders Berthold [*sic*] Brecht and the director Erwin Piscator, is the one stage form of our century which can combine vaudeville, chronicle, and musical comedy techniques in an amalgam suitable for the expression of important modern ideas. It is, in a sense, the drama of the future, if the future is to continue and extend sociological trends in the arts—or at least our general concern with the complexities of social and economic machinery.

What Lerner and Weill, who was identified with Brecht's work in Germany, have done is to compose a sort of sociology of marriage, emphasizing the effect of the industrial age and economic pressures, including women's entry into the business world. "Economics," says the musical, is "tough on love," and this is a far cry from the sentimental celebrations of love and romance indigenous to musical comedy even at its best, as in *Show Boat*, *Oklahoma!*, and *Carousel*. . . .

[*Love Life*] is pregnant with possibilities for intelligent non-realistic theatre. . . . It is precisely in non-realistic theatre that the greatest possibilities lie. It alone can serve social realism fully in our time, since the Ibsenite type of unified, prosaic, individual case history drama whittles down the size of contemporary issues and oversimplifies contemporary problems. . . .

For the variables of social history and the complex of social determinants, we need a more comprehensive kind of dramaturgy, and *Love Life* has this configuration.<sup>184</sup>

Gassner's was unquestionably the richest, most erudite response to *Love Life*. Moreover, it resonates with Weill's own published essays about musical theater, which also celebrate non-realist theater as an effective conveyor of urgent contemporary ideas.<sup>185</sup>

Most reviews of the Broadway production, favorable or otherwise, were not of this caliber (although it is probably unfair to compare items appearing in the daily press with an article written for an intellectual journal by someone who seven years later would be named Sterling Professor of Playwriting at Yale University). Lerner succinctly summarized the general tenor of the critical reception: "The variety of styles seemed more like breaches of style."<sup>186</sup> For example, William Hawkins of the *New York World-Telegram* registered the schoolmasterly rebuke that *Love Life* "tries too hard for comfort to be different" and "suggests that theatrical conventions, like unities of time, place and subject, were developed over the years for pretty good reasons."<sup>187</sup> Meanwhile, Harold C. Schonberg complained that *Love Life* was a "pastiche" lacking opera's "emotional synthesis and unity."<sup>188</sup> Schonberg was right: it is not an opera, some of its numbers are pastiches, and Lerner and Weill were not aiming for "synthesis and unity." But he drew the wrong conclusions. Hawkins and Schonberg made a categorical mistake by applying genre-based criteria appropriate for opera and "musical plays" to a very different sort of work. To their way of thinking, Gassner's "amalgam suitable for the expression of important modern ideas" did indeed involve "breaches of style."

Of the ten New York dailies, five (the *Sun*, *Daily News*, *Post*, *Daily Mirror*, and *Morning Telegraph*) printed largely favorable opening-night notices. But the four that published negative reviews included the two most influential ones: the *Times* and the *Herald Tribune* (the other two were the *Star* and the *World-Telegram*). A tenth daily, the *Journal-American*, issued a mixed notice that ended amusingly on a cautiously positive note: "In the stunning new interior of the 46th Street Theatre, *Love Life* may not turn out to be the pot of gold at the end of *Finian's Rainbow*. But, as a 'vaudeville,' it is elegant, unusual, and, for the most part, entertaining, with a message for those who take the time to care."<sup>189</sup>

Critics without exception praised the performers along with Kidd's choreography, Aronson's sets, and Lucinda Ballard's costumes.<sup>190</sup> Acclaim for Nanette Fabray and Ray Middleton was virtually unanimous, as it was for Lyle Bettger (William Taylor), Jay Marshall (Magician), Johnny Thompson (Hobo), and the "unusually competent" members of the dancing and singing ensembles.<sup>191</sup> Several critics deemed Fabray the show's principal asset given that she "can make you think you are having any fun at all, and that may easily be the outstanding achievement of the season."<sup>192</sup> The only performance generally panned was the "dreadful display of infantile precocity" of the three "juvenile wisenheimers" who sang "Mother's Getting



Nervous”—especially the soloist Rosalie Alter.<sup>193</sup> Some dozen critics expressed a visceral distaste for the number, despite the charms of trapeze artist Elly Ardely, who represented the Mother.<sup>194</sup>

Harold Clurman captured the general impression of Aronson's sets in describing them as “fluent, diverse, suggestive, witty, and, above all, un-hackneyed. Aronson . . . makes each of his *décors* solve some special theatrical problem he has set himself.”<sup>195</sup> Concerning the choreography, Brooks Atkinson joined most of the critics in singling out “a jubilant spring ballet to the glorious tune and lyrics of ‘Green-Up Time’.”<sup>196</sup> Reactions to the divorce ballet in Part Two, Act III (“The All-American Puppet Ballet”) were mixed, however. George Freedley thought that Kidd's choreography had “considerable brilliance but will likely annoy the average audience, particularly his startling ‘Punch and Judy’ ballet.”<sup>197</sup> Elinor Hughes echoed many others in deeming it “overly prolonged.”<sup>198</sup> The contrasting responses to these two ballets were typical: critics tended to lavish the most praise on the traditional, “feel-good” numbers, and the least on the more challenging, less Pollyannaish aspects of the show.

Most theater specialists thought highly or at least well of Weill's score.<sup>199</sup> Atkinson gave it a glowing assessment, despite disliking *Love Life* generally: “As a matter of fact, most of the pleasures come out of Mr. Weill's music-box. He has never composed a more versatile score with agreeable music in so many moods—hot, comic, blue, satiric and romantic. ‘Progress’ and ‘Economics’ are very literate satire. ‘Love Song’ is a beautiful ballad. . . . ‘This Is the Life,’ lanky and ruminative[,] is an especially stirring number, Miss Fabray . . . makes something lively and gay out of ‘Mr. Right’.” Atkinson heard the score's versatility and stylistic pluralism as virtues and cited the strengths of several songs (many critics mentioned only “Here I'll Stay” and “Green-Up Time”). That versatility, however, may explain why other critics, after describing the score as brilliantly conceived and intellectually stimulating, appended caveats to the effect that it was not as accessible or ingratiating as some of Weill's other music.<sup>200</sup> Freedley wrote that “Kurt Weill has written a knowing and a glowing score, even if it is not the best he has yet given us.” Wolcott Gibbs found “nothing remotely approaching his ‘September Song,’” though the score was “far more interesting and original than most of the derivations that pass for music these days.”<sup>201</sup> John Chapman of the *Daily News* was the rare theater critic who noted Weill's orchestrations: “He has been both deft and humorous. The arrangements are uncommonly vibrant and varied.”<sup>202</sup> Exceptionally, Howard Barnes in the *New York Herald Tribune* was dismissive of what he called a “fair to middling” score.

Among the music critics, Howard Taubman gave a generally positive assessment later in the *New York Times*:

The truth is—and the long-haired traditionalists may make of it what they wish—that Mr. Weill does not seem to have any hankering to go back to inditing old-fashioned operas that might get performed half a dozen times at a place like the Metropolitan and then be forgotten. He prefers writing for Broadway. Here there are more performances, more money and, in Mr. Weill's judgment, vast new fields to conquer.

Mr. Weill has helped to develop and popularize a form that has had an increasing vogue on Broadway—the musical play.

He then gave a list, beginning with *Johnny Johnson* and ending with *Love Life*, and continued:

Not a one of them is a completely conventional example of the musical-with-girls pattern. Either they are plays in which the music had a more significant role than the customary one of incidental background or they are musicals in which the music took fresh and original paths. . . .

Mr. Weill does not merely write a score for a finished libretto that is submitted to him. He hunts for competent writers and likes to lay out the work in great detail with the playwright. . . .

Mr. Weill writes music with flexibility and adaptability. He can do a torch song or a hot jazz number with the best of Tin Pan Alley specialists. He can also turn out a thoroughly sophisticated spoof of the formalized art of madrigal singing, like his “Ho, Billy O!,” one of the most delightful things in *Love Life*.<sup>203</sup>

Taubman recognized that each of Weill's Broadway shows was to some extent *sui generis*, and he had perceptive things to say about the composer as collaborator.

Unlike Taubman, most other music critics damned Weill's score with faint praise, repeating old saws about his American decline. In general, they missed the point, namely that *Love Life* was neither a “Broadway opera” nor an “integrated” musical play (quite its antithesis, in fact). Leo Gaffney of the *Boston Daily Record*, could perhaps be excused for mishearing *Love Life* as an “integrated score almost operatic in its steady flow,” since he was not a music critic. But Harold Schonberg in the *Musical Courier* compared *Love Life* to opera. Unlike Gaffney, he found it wanting:

By all accounts, the score is a superior job, according to Broadway standards. It is well planned, it actually suggests something of a contrapuntal line in the opening chorus, and the part-writing is deft. It does not often get off the ground, but at least you know that a professional musician is writing it. . . . *Love Life* provides a fairly enjoyable evening of theatre, but it has nothing to do with opera; and—despite the occasional felicities of the score—the music possesses little real validity. Weill is writing down, trying to find the common denominator between art and commerce.

Cecil Smith in *Musical America* was more evenhanded but still found the score disappointing:

Left to its own devices, the story of *Love Life* might have seemed almost as bromidic as the biography of the doctor who was the tiresome hero of last season's *Allegro*. Fortunately, however, the people who conceived *Love Life* were more intent on making time pass brightly for their customers than on preaching a sociological dogma. In consequence, while the piece has its ups and downs, it is in the main a well integrated, ingratiating piece of light lyric theater. . . .

*Love Life* can hardly be said to discover a new form for a Broadway musical, but it does combine—for the most part successfully—the plot continuity of a musical comedy with the freedom of a revue.

Mr. Weill's score is animated, singable, and full of whimsical borrowings from the popular music of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His orchestration is pungent, solid, and dramatically apposite, without ever drowning out the limited voices on the stage. To those who keep hoping that Mr. Weill will one day recapture the beguiling qualities of the music for the *Dreigroschen Oper*, or even for *Knickerbocker Holiday* and *Lady in the Dark*, however, the new score is a disappointment. It is high-class Broadway writing, but it shows us no new facets of Mr. Weill's imagination.<sup>204</sup>

Smith did mention that Weill was mostly successful in combining “musical comedy with the freedom of a revue,” but oddly, he considered it just another “well integrated” show that broke no new formal ground. Not one of the 1948 reviews, whether by music or drama critics, reacted to the extraordinary disjunctions of genre and structure between *Street Scene* and *Love Life*.

Alone among music critics—and very much like Gassner—Wolfgang Stresemann (a future intendant of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra), noticed the European antecedents. Comparing it favorably with Weill's German works, Stresemann found *Love Life* a fascinating “blend of revue, satire, drama, cabaret, and operetta.”<sup>205</sup> Antedating Kander and Ebb, he explained that the vaudeville acts effectively took over the role of a cabaret *conférencier*.

Compared to their musical colleagues, drama critics, unsurprisingly, devoted much more space to the show's unusual structure and social import. For some, the praiseworthy music, dancing, sets, costumes, and performances participated in a brilliantly executed overall design. To others, the success of these individual components merely proved that *Love Life* was “not a good show but just a show with good things in it.”<sup>206</sup> The word “experimental” crops up repeatedly in the critical reception, and everything depended on whether the experiment had succeeded in the eyes of the beholder. Brooks Atkinson thought it had not:

Although billed as “a vaudeville,” it is cute, complex and joyless—a general gripe masquerading as entertainment. . . .

*Love Life* is an intellectual idea about showmanship gone wrong. Vaudeville has nothing to do with the bitter ideas Mr. Lerner has to express about marriage. . . .

After a glowing beginning, *Love Life* gets lost in some strange, cerebral labyrinth, and the pretense that it is vaudeville is a pose. Vaudeville is not pale and wan but hearty.

The use of vaudeville also failed to impress Howard Barnes, although a negative comment about Kazan suggests that the problem may have lain more in the execution than the conception: he thought that Lerner's "originality is not matched by a disciplined imagination in this new concoction. For much of the first act there is a fresh and impudent alternation of period song and dance numbers and magic acts, satirical ballads and even a trapeze artist. . . . In the final scenes the whole device becomes something of a hodge-podge. . . . The old-style musical is not seriously threatened by *Love Life*. . . . It remains more of an approach than an accomplishment."<sup>207</sup> Echoing one of John Wharton's concerns, Barnes complained about the confusion of vaudeville and musical comedy in Part Two, Lerner getting them "hopelessly mixed up as he brought the parable down to the present," while Kazan "never seemed to be quite sure what mood he is trying to evoke."<sup>208</sup>

More positive critics, however, celebrated the show's intellectual ambitions. George Freedley's review of the premiere was one of the warmest:

*Love Life* is the most intelligent and adult musical yet offered on the American stage. Its sophistication may keep it from the wide popularity of simpler musicals, but for many of us, it is a sheer delight. . . . Alan Jay Lerner's book and lyrics represent a sharp advance over any work he has yet done for the theater.<sup>209</sup>

He then developed the argument when he went back in February 1949:

This is a show which demands a great deal from its audience. If you are willing to think in the theater as well as respond to the obvious impulses, then you will find *Love Life* as rewarding as I did. . . . It is . . . rather tough going for the average audience, which still thinks in terms of "girlie shows" or sentimental operetta, even those leavened with good taste such as *Oklahoma!*. . . . Kurt Weill's score is . . . the most versatile that he has created for the theater.<sup>210</sup>

To Richard Watts Jr., this "combination of revue, serious drama, and symbolic parable" offered "the latest evidence" that "by and large, the American popular musical play currently has more imagination and creative spirit than the American drama."<sup>211</sup> "Vitamins for the Mind," exulted Thomas R. Dash when he revisited the show.<sup>212</sup> Admittedly, he had earlier felt that its special structure occasionally dammed its flow: "Sometimes the fusion of the vaudeville form and the pageant of economic sweep is achieved with felicity. Sometimes this mating of the two distinct ideas does not constitute a happy confluence. When the latter is the case, the show bogs down, for in all candor it must be reported that there are a number of dead spots, which undoubtedly can be livened up with subsequent performances."<sup>213</sup> He was not alone in finding the ritualized succession of sketches and acts tiresome after a while: Robert Garland thought that "Even as a 'vaudeville,' . . . *Love Life* is not always as exciting as the title implies. As 'act' follows 'act,' the interest lessens as the novelty runs down."<sup>214</sup> But, as Dash suggested, the execution rather than the conception may have been to blame.

"I'm not bored! I'm just puzzled," exclaimed a woman seated behind John Chapman of the *Daily News* on opening night. Despite Weill and Lerner's attempts to explain their conception in advance (in the *New York Times* skit and their prefatory program note), many theatergoers, as well as critics, evidently found the show confusing. Even the sympathetic Chapman recognized that *Love Life* was intellectually challenging, or, as William Hawkins put it, "a game which keeps the audience fighting for its own assimilation of purposes."<sup>215</sup> Nanette Fabray recalled that the audience's confusion figured significantly in the show's reception. She thought spectators

found it hard to follow the sudden shifts between historical periods, and between realistic episodes and commentary numbers ("it's very hard to try to be real and to be tongue-in-cheek at the same time").<sup>216</sup> Because of its unique structure and the intellectual demands it imposed, *Love Life* impeded rather than encouraged audiences from immersing themselves in the theatrical experience and uncritically identifying with the onstage personae.<sup>217</sup> That *Love Life* left one emotionally cold became something of a critical trope.<sup>218</sup> One could point out that some of Weill's European works were colder still, but the United States would not begin to discover them until the mid-1950s.

### iii. Socio-economic critique in *Love Life*

Toward the end of the run, Weill received two letters, one from a critic and one from a sociologist, each attesting to the excellence of *Love Life* from their respective professional perspectives. While visiting the United States, leading German drama critic Friedrich Luft wrote that "Such a combination of music, lighting, dance, and wit with such nonchalant precision can scarcely be imagined at home [i.e., Germany], now or in the foreseeable future."<sup>219</sup> David M. Fulcomer, Director of Social Studies at Drew University (Madison, N.J.), found the show sociologically sound and a potential pedagogical tool given that it

presents in a very accurate way . . . the theme of a very prevalent and important problem of American life. . . . The artistic sense with which important points in the theme are made is truly outstanding, in my estimation. The only discouraging thing about it to me is that I am afraid that it will be so good, so subtle, and yet so to-the-point that many people will miss it and others will dislike it. Is there any possibility of getting the script for classroom use?

He was particularly fond of "Mr. Right," which "is worth a dozen lectures on the romantic complex and how it works in modern America."<sup>220</sup>

The sociological aspects of *Love Life* that sparked Fulcomer's interest may have contributed, as the professor feared, to its mixed reception. Apart from the show's experimental structure, there were broader, cultural issues at stake. Kim H. Kowalke has noted that *Love Life*

challenged rather than affirmed traditional American values. Its premise that free enterprise and personal ambition had caused the American dream to self-destruct would not appeal widely to a postwar audience snatching up Dr. Spock's first book and magazines featuring Norman Rockwell covers. Divorce, disillusion, disenchantment, and the show's acidic argument lost it public favor in the rosy glow of post-World War II America.<sup>221</sup>

Miles Kreuger, Lerner's long-time assistant, had already made a similar diagnosis:

I think *Love Life*'s script is far and away the best thing Alan Jay Lerner ever wrote for the stage. It is totally original, and it has a remarkable vision of how to use musical theater as dramaturgy to make a philosophic point. Unfortunately, in 1948 when it opened, it was not the philosophic point American audiences wanted to hear. It was a harsh criticism of American values. We had just won the Second World War and we were very self-satisfied.<sup>222</sup>

Indeed, "sour," "acid," and other such adjectives abound in the 1948 reviews of *Love Life*. Musicals during wartime and its aftermath largely eschewed the politically engaged theater that had emerged in the 1930s. *Finian's Rainbow* (1947), which confronted racism and satirized "Dixiecrat" politicians, was something of an exception among successful postwar book musicals.<sup>223</sup>

Gilbert W. Gabriel (in the January 1949 issue of *Theatre Arts*) dubbed *Love Life* "a Kinsey Report in a lace-paper binding." *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* by Alfred C. Kinsey and others appeared in January 1948, well into the genesis of *Love Life*, and probably had little, if any, influence on Lerner's book. But a similar remark in John Beaufort's generally favor-

able review in the *Christian Science Monitor* (16 October 1948) requires some unpacking: “To say that *Love Life*, a ‘vaudeville,’ goes fantastically and delightfully beyond the dictionary definition doesn’t do it any kind of justice. Yet to say that it is a study of the effect of the industrial revolution—or ‘progress’ in general—on people and marriage makes it sound as if Ferdinand Lundberg and Dr. Marynia F. Farnham had a hand in the writing.” This quip reminds us that although the subject matter and formal organization of *Love Life* transcended the horizon of expectations for a musical play and were to that extent ahead of their time, the show was also timely. In January 1947, Lundberg and Farnham had published *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*, in which they attacked the notion of the independent working woman; those seeking employment equality were guilty of nothing less than the symbolic “castration” of their husbands.<sup>224</sup> When Sam, whose daughter has shamed him for having a working wife, angrily tells Susan, “You don’t have to work and you know it,” she bitterly replies, “Oh! Now I don’t have to! A couple of years ago, they said it was patriotic.”<sup>225</sup> By 1948, Susan Cooper would have been among the mere seventeen percent of married women in the United States who were still employed. The protagonists of *Love Life* share the anxieties expressed in *Modern Woman*: the men in “The Locker Room” are afraid of their working wives, and Lerner’s lyrics suggest that they have problems mustering their libido. Kazan even suggested that Middleton should play up the gender inversion in “Radio Night” after Susan comes home from work: “He stands in apron holding coffee as she bawls him out! Like scolding a servant! Wants to chatter like a woman—should remind audience of wives.”<sup>226</sup>

Lerner may well have read *Modern Woman*, for it is uncanny how closely the narrative of *Love Life*, especially in Part One, aligns with Lundberg and Farnham’s view that women were relatively fulfilled before the Industrial Revolution, when industry was home-based and they had a more direct economic role to play. When men went off to work, and home became merely a place to raise children, eat, and sleep, women supposedly lost their bearings and sought outlets as feminists and suffragists. Mother’s getting nervous, indeed! Lerner comes uncomfortably close to suggesting that the female search for parity arises from psychological maladjustment (shades here of *Lady in the Dark*). It is small wonder that Lee Newton of the *Daily Worker* thought that Lerner’s main points were “strictly from MGM and MC—Metro-Goldwyn Mayer and Male Chauvinism.”<sup>227</sup> Susan’s words about being sawn in half are practically a gloss on the conclusion of *Modern Woman* that “no matter how great a woman’s masculine strivings, her basic needs make themselves felt and she finds herself facing her fundamental role as wife and mother with a divided mind. . . . Thus she stands, Janus-faced, drawn in two directions at once, often incapable of ultimate choice and inevitably penalized whatever direction she chooses.”<sup>228</sup>

Critics generally understood that *Love Life* chronicled the effect of industrialization on the American family, and some hinted at a broader critique of capitalism: “Alan Jay Lerner’s book shows the two lovers, Sam and Susan, as a Mr. and Mrs. America living and loving under the handicaps of our history and economics. The almighty dollar might be called the villain of the piece, with the machine age the deputy imp.”<sup>229</sup> The Magician returns the Coopers to the dawn of industrialization, which was also the dawn of the love-based marriage that capitalism would both encourage and make difficult to sustain. Sam and Susan look back on this time, when furniture shops were still domestic enterprises, as a point of utopian harmony: “We had it then.” As market production separated from household production, and outside wages allowed men to provide solely for their families, marriage came to depend less on economic bonds and more on affective ones. But companionate marriages based primarily on emotional compatibility were easier to leave. The ideas about love and capitalism expressed in *Love Life* resonate with the scholarly economic and sociological literature of that time. For Joseph Schumpeter, the economist and one-time Austrian Finance Minister who taught at Harvard (Lerner’s *alma mater*) from 1932 until 1949, the decline of the family was a touchstone example of capitalism’s “creative destruction”:

To men and women in modern capitalist societies, family life and parenthood mean less than they meant before and hence are less powerful molders of behavior. . . . As soon as men and women learn the utilitarian lesson and refuse to take for granted the traditional arrangements that their social environment makes for them, as soon as they acquire the habit of weighing the individual advantages and disadvantages of any prospective course of action . . . they cannot fail to become aware of the heavy personal sacrifices that family ties and especially parenthood entail under modern conditions.<sup>230</sup>

Love-based marriage, in a grim dialectic, was a product of the same economic forces that gradually undo it over the course of *Love Life*. Elia Kazan seems to have understood this, for in his notes inserted into his copy of the script (Tt2b), he comments that the 1821 sketch, with industrialization already underway, actually marks “the high point of their love together,” and not the earlier, pre-industrial one, when “they are not aware of being in love. . . . They are simply necessary to each other.” This is Schumpeter’s point exactly.

Richard P. Cooke in the *Wall Street Journal* offered a pithily lucid summary of the show: “The Coopers are shown breaking up housekeeping under dismally convincing circumstances. . . . The reconciliation was on a sound note of scepticism, reversing the normal musical comedy formula, a point very much in its favor.” Ultimately, *Love Life* may have been too “dismally convincing” for comfort. The metaphorical tightrope that the Coopers negotiate as the final curtain descends is one whose referent would have been recognized by audiences of *Love Life*. Many of them had surely fallen off tightropes of their own, and the shock of recognition may account for some of the resistance to *Love Life* in its day.

#### iv. Successors and the “concept musical”

It has become a critical trope to follow Aronson, Prince, and Sondheim in describing *Love Life* as having been two decades ahead of its time, anticipating many of the traits we now associate with the “concept musical.”<sup>231</sup> Like *Love Life*, its successors are generally organized around a central idea; musical numbers comment on and even guide the audience toward understanding that idea; the book abandons Eugène Scribe’s ideal of the well-made play—one to which Rodgers and Hammerstein largely subscribed—in favor of looser structures, such as a series of vignettes that may or may not be arranged in chronological order and that may cut across several historical epochs. Some share thematic concerns with *Love Life*, notably by presenting anatomies of marriages or friendships in a decidedly non-linear fashion (e.g., *Company*, *Follies*, and *Merrily We Roll Along*). Bernstein’s *Trouble in Tahiti* (1952), a relatively early musical exploration of postwar marital estrangement, has other features reminiscent of *Love Life*: commentary numbers by a vocal trio, a locker-room scene, and a song (“Island Magic”) ironically extolling Hollywood-derived illusions as panacea. Several shows follow *Love Life* in using revue-like theatrical genres as a frame (e.g., cabaret in *Cabaret*, vaudeville in *Chicago*, and minstrel show in *The Scottsboro Boys*). Kowalke has noted the debt that the finales from *Follies* and Bob Fosse’s *All That Jazz* owe to “The Illusion Minstrel Show,” a debt that Fosse himself acknowledged.<sup>232</sup>

In 1955, Lerner said that he would “always draw on *Love Life*.”<sup>233</sup> He did so in *Gigi* by reworking the lyrics to “I Remember It Well.” More substantially, his *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* (1976; music by Leonard Bernstein) shares with *Love Life* the conceit of allowing characters to remain the same over several historical epochs in the service of delivering a broad socio-political critique. This time racism was the object, as it had been in Jule Styne’s *Hallelujah, Baby!* (1967; lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, book by Arthur Laurents). *Hallelujah, Baby!* and *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* both feature a black couple who do not age over time. Instead of vaudeville, Lerner uses the framing device of the play within a play; *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* is partly about putting on *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*. The actor who plays all ten presidents also serves as an emcee of sorts. The high point of its second act is Lerner’s depiction of the Garfield administration as a minstrel show.

To be sure, the idea of the “concept musical” has a venerable history. Some of its characteristics were already in place in older shows, notably those belonging to the genre of the revue.<sup>234</sup> But *Love Life* provides a direct link because of Aronson’s involvement, and given that so many creators associated with the concept musical (Prince, Sondheim, Fosse, and Ebb) saw the original production and acknowledged at least some degree of influence, though not necessarily without reservations. Harold Prince even suggested that *Love Life* might have come off better without the commentary numbers.<sup>235</sup>

Like *Love Life*, some concept musicals, while enjoying a *succès d’estime*, have encountered audience resistance because of their abstraction, emotional remoteness, and lack of appealing characters. Michael Kidd grasped the connection between *Love Life* and the later concept shows early on.<sup>236</sup> He thought that *Company* “probably” worked more successfully than *Love Life*, but that it, too, left the “audience longing for some kind of romantic involvement.”<sup>237</sup> He explained that the form of *Love Life* made it difficult for the audience to make emotional connections with the show and its characters:

I think the form was so progressive for its time that audiences were a little confused by it. They were accustomed to a conventional musical comedy that had a linear development of its plot. . . . The whole concept of picking up the same couple, say, every fifty years apart . . . was odd to them; they’d never seen them [*sic*] that, and the idea of making musical comments upon it in between perplexed them. . . . Also they may have been disturbed by the rather cynical undertones that went through the show. . . .

Ordinarily, in a musical comedy, one scene leads to another and it’s a hangover of an emotional content, an emotional reaction, you’re waiting for the new turn. This was almost revue-like in its form where there was no carry-over. Each time a new scene came on, they had to readjust their thinking. . . .

In one scene we identify with the characters on stage. In the scene that follows we are now required to identify not with the characters we see before us but with the authors’ concept of what progress was. . . .

Are we listening to the characters on stage as if we were part of their life or do we dismiss that and listen to the author’s editorial comment upon what the characters on stage went through?<sup>238</sup>

Although *Love Life* may be criticized on the grounds that idea overwhelmed character, emotional distance was the point. By requiring audiences to “readjust their thinking,” as Kidd said, Lerner and Weill were dispelling the illusion of immediacy, so characteristic of conventional theater, that enabled audiences to identify with on-stage personae, an identification that Hammerstein had hoped for the principal character in *Allegro*, Joseph Taylor Jr. Sam and Susan function more as nexuses of socially conditioned desires than as individual subjects. Susan may blame Sam for everything that has happened to their family over the past 150 years, but Weill and Lerner are interested in problematizing the very notion of personal agency. Sam and Susan do not so much act as they are acted upon, and their fates stand for a more global process. The sketches form a loose “sequence of ‘morality pictures,’” as Weill described *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*: “The fate of the individual is depicted only where it exemplifies the fate of social institutions in general.”<sup>239</sup> In replying to *Love Life*’s critics, Weill could have repeated his suggestion to Hans Mersmann on how to approach *Die Bürgschaft* (1932): “perceive ‘economic conditions’ . . . as a concretization of what the Ancients called ‘fate’.”<sup>240</sup> Like the dancing Anna in *Die sieben Todsünden* and Juan and Juanita in *Der Kuhhandel*, the Coopers’ love life is shaped by economic forces beyond their control.

#### IV. Editorial Principles, Challenges, and Solutions

Although *Love Life*’s overall conception remained stable throughout its genesis and production, its numerous revisions pose special challenges for a critical edition. *Love Life* was Weill’s most “overwritten” show, and no document ever emerged—whether published script, engraved piano-vocal score, or even a complete copyist’s rehearsal score—that could gesture, however tenuously, toward a “definitive version” that the authors wished to

transmit for future productions. Its concatenation of many closed musical forms resulted in a higher-level open text presenting numerous viable performance options. Consequently, this Edition does not propose a single, authoritative version. Rather, the Main Text transmits a “maximal” version of the show that includes most of the performable (i.e., completed and orchestrated) musical material, informed by a critical evaluation of the numerous textual and musical sources. Much of the Edition’s critical commentary is devoted to describing and resolving discrepancies among the sources, which often belong to chronologically diverse stages of the production history. The documentation that the Critical Report and the Introduction provide is intended to guide users in making informed choices among viable alternatives. Where possible, these alternatives appear in the Main Text as *ossias*, optional cuts, passages in cue-size notation, or explanatory footnotes.

The Edition includes in the Main Text two numbers eliminated after the first week of the Boston tryouts: nos. 8 (“Susan’s Dream”) and 16 (“The Locker Room”). The Main Text also presents four numbers in their uncut form, even though for various reasons they were abridged during the original production: no. 1 (the “Opening” for “The Magician”), no. 9 (“Mother’s Getting Nervous”), and nos. 10a and 10c (“My Kind of Night” and its reprise).<sup>241</sup> By means of footnotes, *vide* markings, and cross-references to the Critical Report, the Edition offers both the complete and the shorter versions, the latter cutting the running time slightly. To be sure, performing all the orchestrated numbers and without any cuts would result in an overly long theatrical evening, as the creative team realized after the New Haven premiere. The Edition does not, however, propose a single way of pruning this material. Nor were the shorter versions necessarily definitive. In the case of no. 1, for example, the shorter version was performed during tryouts and the longer one in New York. Some of the revisions introduced during rehearsals and tryouts were motivated by cast changes and by the strengths and weaknesses of individual performers, particularly for the specialty acts that the show’s vaudeville component required. Future productions, facing casting and staging challenges of their own, will need to make their own choices.

The Edition presents three musical numbers and one dramatic sketch in the Appendix. Because no. 13 (“You Understand Me So”), though orchestrated, apparently went unperformed and no extant script includes both it and no. 12, the Edition relegates it to the Appendix. The Appendix also provides the score for no. A11a (“Progress Reprise”) in full, since only mm. 1–34 derive from no. 4. The complete reprise was performed throughout the tryouts, and it might have been used in a different position after “Love Song” replaced it (see Critical Report for nos. 4 and A11a). An invoice for “extras” from the Eaves Costume Manufacturing Company includes costumes for the “dancing boys in scene 3” (i.e., no. 4), raising the possibility that the dance evolution in A11a was appended to the earlier iteration.<sup>242</sup> The orchestration for no. A11b (“Economics Reprise”) derives unchanged from no. 7; the parts are unmarked (the number was cut before tryouts). In this instance, the Appendix does not (redundantly) reproduce the score but furnishes the dialogue for the ventriloquist act that provides its context. The Appendix also presents the sketch “A Ticket to the Fight,” performed through the first week in Boston. Omitted is a partial reprise of “Love Song” that appears in **Im** and seems to have been used at some point in Part Two. The reprise is literal enough not to require reproduction in full score (see Critical Report for no. 11).

There are numerous instances in which the editor has had to decide whether to interpret a cut, alteration, or addition as merely an expedient, production-specific change to the original “script” or as an enduring revision to the “text” (for example, a “compositional” change to the score, as opposed to an *ad hoc* redressing of a balance issue). Most of these decisions concern local events, but some substantially affect a number’s musical continuity. Weill significantly revised **Fh** for nos. 3, 10b, 12a, 12d, 19, and 21c. For these numbers, the Edition regards the revisions as definitive and does not provide the earlier versions as alternatives. For example, a list compiled by Kazan mentions that the end of no. 10b needed to be “short-

ened and heightened.”<sup>243</sup> Schlein’s dance arrangement, a boogie-woogie (*quasi doppio movimento*), originally had come to a full stop, followed by Weill’s orchestration of a complete third refrain of the “Women’s Club Blues” using the common-time blues tempo that preceded the dance. Weill eliminated the last dozen bars of Schlein’s arrangement, cut the first eight bars of the third refrain, and reorchestrated the remainder, maintaining the dance’s *doppio movimento*, thereby fusing the dance and song into a single, frenzied climax (see mm. 161–190). The revised ending of no. 12d counterpoints the motive of “I’m Your Man” in the violins with the melody of “Here I’ll Stay” for solo trumpet, poignantly suggesting how far apart Sam and Susan have drifted. In no. 19, Weill replaced Schlein’s orchestration of the “Courtroom” dance with his own (mm. 60–88). The Edition deems all of these cases to be author-sanctioned, compositional revisions that are adopted accordingly.<sup>244</sup>

One type of revision involving passages marked *tacet* in **Fh**(**R**) and/or **Im** poses a particular editorial challenge. Sometimes, the orchestral texture may have been thinned to accommodate specific singers or acoustic conditions, in which case the full version of Weill’s orchestrations could be effective in productions using different singers or exploiting current amplification practices. In other instances, the thinning appears to have been a deliberate reorchestration. But there is a considerable gray area across this spectrum. The Edition assesses each *tacet* marking on a case-by-case basis, recording and justifying any action in a critical note. It deals with such passages in one of three ways:

- a) The Edition ignores the marking, upholding material in its original location in the score.
- b) It upholds material in its original location, but in cue-size notation. A footnote usually explains the user’s range of options.
- c) It adopts the *tacet* marking, describing the omitted material in a critical note.

The “Statement of Source Valuation and Usage” in the Critical Report provides details regarding the musical and textual sources, their chronology, and their status for present purposes. The Edition privileges **Fh** for most musical parameters, except for the vocal lines, which Weill omitted, as was his routine practice in the United States (and in Europe when he was pressed for time). **Fh** for no. 11, the last vocal number composed, has not survived; the Edition is based on **Im**. **Fh** lacks several reprises because their orchestration duplicates earlier passages. Here, **Im** is crucial; without the parts, there is no way of knowing, for example, that the reprise of “Here I’ll Stay” at the beginning of no. 21a derives from **Fh** for no. 5a and not from no. 3. **Im** also permits differentiating between stages of revision by way of paper types and copyists, and to decipher them accordingly. For example, **Fh**(**R**) for no. 6a exhibits a welter of sometimes incompatible revisions in several hands (see Plate 2), but the neatly prepared paste-overs in **Im** show how it all turned out. Moreover, consulting **Im** prevents potential misreadings of **Fh**, clarifying, for example, that holograph revisions to **Fh** for no. 9 pertain not to “Mother’s Getting Nervous” but to the interpolation of that material as underscoring within no. 1 (see Plate 3). **Im** also makes sense of an otherwise mysterious holograph orchestration (in **Fh**) of a passage from the madrigal “Ho, Billy O!” The orchestration corresponds to paste-overs in **Im** replacing some of Schlein’s score for the divorce ballet (see Plate 5).

Apart from no. 11, the only passages in **Im** that do not derive from somewhere in **Fh** are utilities used for diegetic dance music or for exit music. Chappell house arranger Walter Paul’s full score for one utility (**Fm**) has survived because Weill retouched it and incorporated it into no. 14 (see Plate 4). Jazz arrangements of nos. 6 and 7 appear to have been notated (and perhaps created) by the performers themselves. They can be situated within “The Cruise” thanks to dialogue cues in the parts.

The Edition privileges **Vh** for the vocal parts and lyrics. With the exception of no. 10b (“Women’s Club Blues”), no professional copyist’s

piano-vocal scores (**Vm**) were ever prepared. Reproductions (ozalid copies) of **Vh** served as rehearsal scores. Several numbers, however, were so transformed during the original production that **Vh** was no longer adequate for that purpose. Accordingly, various hands (Symonette, Schlein, Littau) marked up exemplars of **Vh**(**R**), annotating, cutting, and pasting as needed. For nos. 1, 3, 9, 10a, 11, 12a, 12d, 18, 20, 21b, and 21c, Schlein (**Vm-Sch** and **Pm-Sch**) and Symonette (**Vm-Sym** and **Pm-Sym**) prepared new piano-vocal or piano scores. Since **Vh** has not survived for no. 11, the **Vm** sources are especially crucial for that number, but the Edition draws extensively on **Vh**(**R**) and **Vm** generally. They clarify the musical continuity of the vocal parts, help distinguish stages of revision, provide verbal cues informing the Edition’s pacing of underscored dialogue and stage directions, and sometimes add part writing to what was originally a unison texture. For example, **Vm-Sym** (“Here I’ll Stay”) shows what happens when Sam and Susan sing the refrain together (mm. 87ff.), and it makes sense of a passage in **Fh**, where Weill exceptionally shows the vocal parts, in thirds and sixths, for mm. 106–108 (see Plate 1); **Vm-Sym** reveals that Weill’s notation signals a longer, non-unison vocal passage.<sup>245</sup>

For the spoken text, the Edition privileges **Tt3** on the grounds that it best reflects the running order in New York, and that **Fh** more often accords with it than with earlier scripts. **Tt3** is also privileged for sung text when **Vh** is based on the jettisoned **Tt2** version (e.g., nos. 6 and 18). The Edition relies on **Tt2** and **Tt2b** for nos. 7, 16, material in the Appendix, and the longer versions of nos. 10a and 10c. Occasionally, the Edition adopts, with comment, Kazan’s supplementary stage directions and clarifications in **Tt2b**, but most of these belong more to the “event” and its script than to the work and its “text.”

The Edition sporadically draws on the printed sheet music (**Ae**); playbills (**N**); videos of Fabray singing selections from *Love Life* on *Toast of the Town* (**R**); scrapbooks, press clippings, production stills, Aronson’s designs and papers, and Crawford’s production records; and interviews with original cast members or members of the production team. Diaries (Maxwell Anderson’s in particular) and correspondence help establish the chronology of the sources and of their genesis.

## V. Performance Issues

*Love Life* is a demanding but rewarding show to mount given its multifarious allegiances to different genres (vaudeville, musical comedy, operetta, and even opera for “This Is the Life”), its kaleidoscopic shifts in stylistic register, its vocal challenges for principal and minor roles alike, its large cast, and its numerous set changes. Perhaps the first choice a would-be producer will face is determining what to perform. As noted in section IV, *Love Life* is Weill’s most “over-written” Broadway show, with a modular structure that accommodates viable alternatives in the number and ordering of its components. It is very much an “open text,” but the Edition provides guidance for structuring a script out of that.

Not all of the numbers retained for the original Broadway run will suit every production. For instance, nos. 1 (“Opening”) and 9 (“Mother’s Getting Nervous”), especially in their maximal form, depend for their full effect on having a magician and aerialist of the calibers of Jay Marshall and Elly Ardely. A modern-day production might be better served by shortening this material so that elements cut during the tryouts can be included instead. The Edition makes two versions of no. 1 available. The longer version was assembled after the tryouts to accommodate Marshall when he joined the show. He was known for his patter delivery, which required the additional musical underscoring that the longer version provides. Productions not employing a professional magician might opt for the tryout version. Over the course of the original production, mm. 90–151 of “Mother’s Getting Nervous” were cut and a dance (no. 9a) added, although not necessarily at the same time. The Edition presents the entire number, but performing all of the material would likely prove tiresome, especially without trapeze stunts. Depending on the dancing or singing abilities of the child actors, one could cut the dance or shorten the song, or both.

The Edition presents two versions of nos. 10a and 10c (“My Kind of Night” and its reprise). The shorter versions resulted from revisions to the verbal text rather than simple cuts in the musical number. In the earlier version of no. 10a, which reflects the musical continuity of **Vh** and **Fh**, the children interrupt Sam’s reveries, singing his tune as they enter. **Im** accommodates the second version, which replaces the children’s material with underscored dialogue for Sam and his neighbor, Mike. No. 10c survives in three versions. The first and longest (from **Tt2**) does not conform to any surviving orchestral source and is therefore unperformable. The second version, transmitted in Kazan’s script (**Tt2b**), matches the musical continuity and verbal cues in **Fh(R)** and the initial layer of **Im**.<sup>246</sup> Here the children once again beg for Sam’s attention, and Susan appears briefly on the porch to berate him. A production photograph in **M5** (NYPL) documents this version. The third version, transmitted by **Tt3**, reduces the reprise to a partial strophe for Sam alone, corroborated by a cut in **Im**. The Edition provides nos. 10a and 10c as orchestrated, but also indicates cuts and dialogue for the abridged versions, which seem to have been performed in New York, even though all programs through spring 1949 list the children, not Mike, for this sketch’s cast. Opting for the shorter versions means that Johnny and Elizabeth no longer need to sing anywhere. The maximal version, however, makes an ironic point when it shows Sam contentedly singing “Nicest little fam’ly a fellow ever had” while ignoring his children. Sam has reached a point where he seeks only peace, not love.<sup>247</sup> A production might choose the longer versions for dramaturgical reasons.

Weill and Lerner hesitated before cutting “Susan’s Dream,” and it may have been moved temporarily to a different location. In **Im**, the song was renumbered, shifting its position to the slot ultimately occupied by “Love Song.” Having the vocal quartet sing “Economics” and “Susan’s Dream” back-to-back had probably slowed things down too much; the latter could be relocated, perhaps to cover a set change in Part Two.<sup>248</sup>

Contemporary productions of Broadway shows from the Golden Age must frequently contend with dated attitudes toward gender politics, and with offensive racial tropes. *Love Life* is very much a case in point. Already in 1948, the show raised hackles insofar as it seemed to elevate the nuclear, patriarchal family to the status of an ideal type while implying that the feminist insistence on the right to work and vote stemmed from sexual repression and neurosis. The socio-economic critique in *Love Life* is more nuanced than that (see the discussion in section III.iii), but, needless to say, present-day society still confronts the problems raised by the show. Bridging the gulf between “love” and “life” remains a paramount challenge for many couples and their families, and working women are still more likely than men to feel “sawn in half” trying to balance their dual roles as breadwinner and homemaker. Still, there is no dispelling altogether a lingering whiff of misogyny in the show. Thus, modern productions might choose to perform the longer version of “My Kind of Night,” juxtaposing the comic treatment of the suffragist movement and the sorry spectacle of the “wayward male” ignoring his children. Restoring “The Locker Room” (no. 16) with its scathing depiction of male repression, weakness, and self-deception, could be justified on similar grounds.

Weill had been interested in minstrelsy well before he and Lerner wrote the *Love Life* finale. Among Weill’s surviving papers are several pages of research on the genre.<sup>249</sup> In the unfinished *Ulysses Africanus* (1939), the title character becomes the owner of a minstrel show, emphatically undoing a case of cultural appropriation. For *Lady in the Dark*, Weill and Gershwin originally thought of a minstrel show in the position eventually occupied by the “Circus Dream.” To Weill and Lerner, vaudeville was “the most native form” of American theatre “after the minstrel show,” implying that the minstrel show was a precursor to vaudeville.<sup>250</sup> Modern-day audiences, however, are well aware of how actual minstrel shows (usually performed in blackface) sustained racial hierarchies. The post-Reconstruction years, which wiped out whatever political and economic gains Southern Blacks had achieved immediately following the Civil War, even became known as the “Jim Crow Era” after a stock blackface minstrel character. Later concept musicals drawing on minstrelsy (*1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, *The Scottsboro*

*Boys*) at least confronted racism head-on. *Love Life*’s minstrel show was not performed in blackface (so photos of the 1948 production show), but it risks appearing gratuitously offensive if it is not sensitively interpreted.

A passage from Weill’s notes on minstrel shows suggests that his reason for ending *Love Life* as he did was anything but gratuitous. Weill writes that in minstrel shows, finales “should be pure hokum, shamelessly playing upon the popularity of some current idea.” This is an apt description of what Weill and Lerner aspire to in their own finale, especially with the material they wrote for Miss Horoscope, Miss Mysticism, and Miss Ideal Man. “The Illusion Minstrel Show” indeed purveys hokum, but participating in the show disabuses the Coopers of their own illusions and launches them on their perilous path to reconciliation. Naomi Graber situates *Love Life* within a tradition of “using blackness . . . to perform an ‘exorcism’ . . . on the issues plaguing the white community.”<sup>251</sup> To be sure, the likes of this would take some explaining to a theater audience, and future productions may want to skirt the entire issue by renaming the finale and slightly altering the opening lyrics.<sup>252</sup>

As performed in New York in 1948, *Love Life* required a cast of forty-seven, of which seventeen members formed the singing ensemble, and fourteen the dancing one. Apart from the Cooper family, Bill Taylor was the only non-vaudeville role separately cast. The singing ensemble handled most of the three dozen speaking and singing roles in the sketches, and performed most of the vaudeville acts. Four prominent Black singers from the New York stage were hired to sing “Economics” and “Susan’s Dream”; nightclub singer Johnny Thompson delivered “Love Song”; and three child performers were recruited to sing and dance in “Mother’s Getting Nervous.” The children also appeared in the first two Mayville sketches. Stage manager Jules Racine was the Judge in the divorce ballet and one of the “Go-Getters” (the male octet in “Progress”; the remaining seven were members of the singing chorus). Two non-singing performers, a magician (for the opening number) and an aerialist (for “Mother’s Getting Nervous”) rounded out the cast.

It is certainly possible to mount a production of *Love Life* with fewer performers.<sup>253</sup> For example, the creative team had originally planned for one actor to play the Magician, the Con Man/Interlocutor, and the Ventriloquist (in the vaudeville spot eventually taken by the Hobo).<sup>254</sup> Bill Taylor could be played by a chorus member, as he was during the show’s closing weeks after Lyle Bettger left for Hollywood. Absent a singing-and-dancing stage manager, a chorus member could handle Racine’s roles. The days of separate singing and dancing choruses are largely gone; a single ensemble of versatile performers could handle the dances in nos. 6a and 10b, although the divorce ballet (no. 19) would benefit from at least one specialized dancing couple.

The two principal roles of Susan and Sam require, if not stars, then charismatic actors endowed with acting and dancing ability and voices capable of negotiating both “popular” and “classical” idioms. They need stamina, since they appear in all of the sketches and each sing four solo numbers and in two duets. In the original production, the roles were physically demanding: the box for the sawing trick was uncomfortable and the concluding tightrope perilous (a very thin board gave the illusion of a rope).<sup>255</sup> The show revolves very much around Susan. From the beginning, Weill and Lerner conceived the role as a *tour de force*, comparable to Liza Elliott and Venus, which is why they first turned to Gertrude Lawrence and Mary Martin. Nanette Fabray’s performance won her a Tony Award, and for many critics, she was the show’s most valuable asset. The part requires a Broadway mezzo/belt mix with a great deal of charm and personality. Her earlier numbers (“Here I’ll Stay,” “I Remember It Well,” “Green-Up Time”) might be at home in a Broadway operetta. These songs, well-suited for a lyric mezzo, lie mostly between B $\flat$ 3 and F5. But the bump-and-grind “Women’s Club Blues” and the torch songs (“Is It Him or Is It Me?” and “Mr. Right”) lie distinctly lower, with a combined range of F3 to C4 (Weill transposed them down for Fabray). A mixed-belt voice would be appropriate for these later songs, as they are the antithesis of “legitimate” numbers, both vocally and dramaturgically.



After casting Fabray, the creative team set about making Sam's part equally prominent vocally. What critics praised most about Ray Middleton was his operatically trained bass-baritone and stalwart stage presence. Ideally, the part should be sung by someone with similar training who can handle the sustained F4 at the end of Part One, ringing out over the male chorus and orchestra. Sam demands a certain mature stolidity for the early sketches, a cavalier touch for "I'm Your Man," and the right mix of bravado, anxiety, and introspection for "This Is the Life."

The remaining singing roles are smaller but often present challenges. Retaining "The Locker Room Boys" means casting a singer who can negotiate the masseur's tongue-twisting aria. Miss Ideal Man's solo (reminiscent of Viennese operetta) demands an agile coloratura. The vocal ranges and elaborate melismas in "Economics" (Weill's brilliant take on the Black male quartet tradition) require skilled singers—ideally, ones steeped in the style, since Weill does not always specify how the three singers who are not singing the melody should perform their untexted material. Weill's arrangement makes the second bass sing down to C2; **Im** was copied up a semitone, but the part as a whole still lies extremely low. Most productions will choreograph both the quartet in "Economics" and the octet in "Progress," thus requiring singers who "move" if not really "dance." For stylistic musical guidance, performers might consult contemporaneous recordings. As John Chapman pointed out in his review in the *Daily News*, "Economics" is somewhat in the style of "Dry Bones," which the Delta Rhythm Boys recorded in 1947. Weill may well have heard it; the album had "September Song" on the back side.<sup>256</sup> "Progress" and "Ho, Billy O!" (which, according to production photos, used all but two members of the singing chorus) are virtuosic ensemble pieces, not standard musical-theater choral numbers.

The orchestra in the original production comprised twenty-five musicians. Weill scored *Love Life* for five reed players (handling clarinets, saxophones, flute/piccolo, oboe, and bassoon), four brass players, percussion, and strings. The pianist doubled on accordion, and the contrabass player on tuba. The percussion part can be handled by a single performer, with one exception: no. 16 requires timpani and ratchet simultaneously. The score calls for three timpani (only no. 2 uses three at once). Weill uses consistent spaces on the staff for the snare drum/bass drum combination and usually cues the remaining unpitched instruments, but not always. This occasional lack of clarity is not unusual, and Weill may sometimes have intentionally left choices up to the performer. In no. 18, for example, there are three identical passages for two unpitched instruments, the first of which is merely labeled "drums." Tom-toms might be appropriate here; the Edition leaves the choice to the performer. An optimal string count would be fifteen (6–4–2–2–1, with three violin sections and no violas). This is the number Weill had in mind when orchestrating his score, but the original production made do with thirteen (4–4–2–2–1). Without any doublers, the score requires an additional ten musicians. If necessary, the accordion passages could be played on piano, and the tuba ones on bass. The musical sources show a certain flexibility in this regard; the decision to use accordion or tuba for a particular passage was sometimes made after Weill had initially orchestrated it using piano or bass. Sometimes performers who double are asked to change instruments too quickly. The Edition reports on solutions adopted by individual players (annotations in **Im**) but does not attempt to revise parts within the Main Text.

Absent modern techniques of amplification, the orchestra in 1948 sometimes overpowered the singers. Some reviews of the premiere suggested that Nanette Fabray's voice was not big enough. According to Ward Morehouse of the *New York Sun*, "Miss Fabray dances, clowns, shrieks, whistles, and sings—well enough." George Freedley (*Morning Telegraph*) thought the voice was "still not as rich and full as it should be, but she has developed projection." Richard P. Cooke of the *Wall Street Journal* wrote, "Although lacking a little in vocal volume, she has just about everything else." Fabray herself once confessed that "*Love Life* was a little beyond my talent frankly."<sup>257</sup> In her numbers, Weill (or Littau acting on Weill's advice) occasionally thinned his orchestration (with **Im** parts marked *tacet* or with

mutés), and this also happened for other singers (e.g., the nineteen-year-old Sylvia Stahlman). The Edition usually retains such markings but renders them in cue-size notation, allowing present-day conductors to see what solutions were adopted in the original production, should they, too, encounter problems of balance. But the Edition adopts some *tacet* markings without reproducing the omitted material. A case in point is the removal of BsDr/SnDr in no. 16, mm. 347–374. Balance is not a problem, but the passage is (ironically) pastoral in tone; the Edition interprets the *tacet* as a deliberate reorchestration intended to enhance that affect. Finally, the Edition sometimes restores silenced material using normal notation, with a critical note. In no. 21a, for instance, the muted Tpt 1–2 in mm. 196–199 provide an effective accompaniment to the two singers as they cadence. Their removal could have been prompted by the players having trouble following the singers; it is doubtful that the issue was one of balance. Sometimes, an instrumental part doubling the singer was silenced and sometimes not. In mm. 80–84 of "Mr. Right," not only did the original production retain the Reed 1 passage doubling Susan, but the saxophonist renotated the part, evidently to match Fabray's *rubato* (a footnote in the score transmits this indication). The decision whether to restore silenced doublings depends on whether the singer needs support and on how well the instrumentalist and the singer can coordinate their efforts. More generally, whenever a vocal line is doubled by an instrument in the orchestra, its function should be evaluated, particularly with respect to freedom of phrasing and the intelligibility of the lyrics.

Because of the haste in which Weill frequently had to work, especially when orchestrating and adding material during tryouts—and because he never had occasion to revise **Vh** for publication—tempo and expression marks in the holograph sources are sometimes sparse. To compensate, the Edition frequently incorporates non-holograph information about expression and tempo (and in particular, modifications within a prevailing tempo) from materials used in the original production, such as performance annotations in **Fh(R)**, **Vh(R)**, **Im**, and the various piano-vocal materials (**Vm** and **Pm**) prepared by Irving Schlein and Lys Symonette. All such decisions are noted in the Critical Report. Except for the purpose of conforming analogous passages, the Edition does not normally add tempo and expression marks where none appears in any source. Musical notation and critical commentary can accomplish only so much, however. *Love Life* demands fluency in the stylistic conventions of several musical-theater genres ranging from opera and operetta to vaudeville, of song types (ballad, blues, torch song), and of dance and other popular idioms: soft shoe (no. 4), slow waltz (no. 5), polka (no. 6a), clog waltz (no. 9), foxtrot (no. 9a), boogie-woogie (no. 10b), fandango (no. 16), and jitterbug (no. 19). Consequently, the orchestra has to sound at times like an opera orchestra, and at others, like dance bands belonging to various eras (e.g., the 1920s for no. 9a, and 1940s for no. 10b).

The choreographer, dancers, and vocalists in the musical numbers will face similar challenges in rendering idiomatically a kaleidoscopic palette of historical dance idioms, vocal styles, and genre-based conventions. Numbers such as "Women's Club Blues" and "Mr. Right," for example, access traditions that are essential to their dramaturgical impact, characterization, and metadramatic commentary. One size does not fit all in *Love Life*. Each number requires informed performance practice: vocal production, including use of vibrato; "legitimate" vs. popular singing style; fidelity to historical dance characteristics and staging expectations. Though such challenges are not unique to *Love Life*, their range may exceed that of *Gypsy* or *Chicago*, both of which are very much "vaudevilles" in their own way.

The section of the Critical Report entitled "Commentary: General Issues" addresses many aspects of musical performance, including dynamics, articulation, details of instrumentation (e.g., muting, bowing), tempo, and rhythm, including the notation and execution of swung rhythms. While it is beyond the scope of this Introduction to touch on all these issues, a few words about swung eighth notes are in order, this being an aspect of performance practice that the Edition can capture only imperfectly with notation. Weill (and Schlein for no. 19 and the dance in no. 10b) gener-

ally used dotted rhythms for notes intended to be swung, although there are cases where equal eighth notes are used for the same effect. The dotted rhythm in “Progress” should probably be performed more like triplets. The dotted rhythms and occasional equal eighths in “Women’s Club Blues” might be swung more vigorously, especially in the boogie-woogie section starting at m. 98. In “Mr. Right,” Weill calls for “Swing tempo” at m. 59 and notates the melody using dotted rhythms instead of the equal eighths that had predominated previously; those earlier even rhythms should not be swung. Fabray’s television performance of the number (R2) provides guidance, as does **Im** for no. 19, where the players renotated straight eighths as dotted rhythm (mm. 177, 179, 181, and elsewhere). But performers should not assume that dotted rhythms always imply swung performance; those in “Love Song” (mm. 11–26, 81–86) are better performed strictly.

When it comes to staging *Love Life*, the dramatic sketches and the vaudeville acts each pose distinctive challenges. The sketches are, in a word, “sketchy,” providing very few stage directions and almost no characterization of minor roles. We have seen (section II.iii) how Kazan created a “backstory” of sorts for some of the villagers in the first Mayville sketch, suggesting tensions between Sam and George at which Lerner had barely hinted. Kazan staged the “Radio Night” sketch as a “neurotic intrigue” in which the children play off the parents against each other. “The Cruise” is arguably the most difficult sketch to direct because the entire company is on stage, yet once past “I’m Your Man,” the dialogue and stage directions concern Sam, Susan, and Taylor almost exclusively. Everyone else needs to keep busy somehow. From the stage directions Kazan added to his annotated copy of the script (Tt2b), one can reconstruct an unspoken subplot involving Mrs. Boylan, the teenage Miss Boylan, and a suave Argentine who seduces them both. The joke is that in “I’m Your Man,” Mr. Boylan had been characterized as a prig who preaches family values.

Using “vaudeville” acts as the concept for a musical is no small feat in that they need to be viable as acts on their own. Real vaudeville acts would have been rehearsed off-season and then refined over the course of multiple daily performances on the circuit. Already in 1948, when vaudeville was not quite forgotten, it was difficult to assemble Broadway performers to do such “specialty acts,” as the numerous last-minute cast changes for *Love Life* in the summer of 1948 demonstrate. It is even more so today, when

vaudeville is remembered only as an ancient progenitor of musical theater. The original production benefited from two well-honed specialty acts, Jay Marshall’s magician show and Elly Ardely’s trapeze act, as well as Johnny Thompson’s singing of “Love Song” as a hobo. They were the three highest-paid cast members after Fabray and Middleton. Factoring in the Black vocal quartet (not an existing group like the Ink Spots but composed of seasoned Broadway veterans) in no. 7, and the Three Tots in no. 9, the collective salaries of these ten performers, who appeared on stage for just a few minutes each, accounted for some five percent of the weekly running costs. Future productions are unlikely to go to such trouble and expense. Vaudeville may be something suggested, rather than actualized, though these numbers must then be staged anew with high entertainment values appropriate to their stylistic norms and genre-based conventions.

Awkward set changes could have been partially responsible for some critics deeming the vaudeville acts “disjointed interruptions.”<sup>258</sup> Fabray complained about the primitive state of stage technology, which required each vaudeville turn to be performed in “one” while sets were pushed on and off, along with the lack of microphones, which restricted the performers’ freedom of movement around the stage. While the alternation of sketches with acts in front of a drop seems to have worked well enough in Part One, critics complained that things got bogged down in Part Two.<sup>259</sup> None of the surviving documents indicates how changes were handled in Part Two once past the “Madrigal Singers,” the last of the numbers exclusively performed in “one.” Both the modern-apartment and the locker-room sets took up half the stage, while the divorce ballet used the full stage (see Plate 8). Tt2b indicates that the initial chorus in no. 16 was performed in front of a traveler, but it is unclear how the transition from the locker room to the ballet set was handled. Even after no. 16 was cut, there remained the problem of leading from the apartment set into the ballet and then into the hotel room. **Im** includes an abbreviated reprise of “Love Song” that bears signs of use but is unlisted in programs; it could have served to cover set changes, as could the “Progress” reprise. Whatever the solution, Part Two must have presented problems with flow and pacing. Future productions, if fully staged, will need to find ways of moving fluidly in and out of sketches and acts, lest *Love Life*’s formal innovations, which make it a historical milestone on the path to the concept musical, also make it a historical millstone.

## Notes

1. This prefatory note appears in N3b, N3c. Other variants appear in Tt2, Tt2a, N1, N2a; these sources lack the third sentence. Tt2 and Tt2a begin with the sentence “Love Life is a vaudeville,” but this would have been redundant in the programs, which designate the show as a vaudeville underneath the title (see Plate 7). Oddly enough, the typescripts and programs from the original production identify every episode as an “act,” jettisoning the authors’ distinction between Sketch and Act as retained in the Edition.
2. George Freedley, “Reviewer Visits *Love Life* Again, Enjoys It More Than at Opening,” *Morning Telegraph* (New York), 4 February 1949.
3. Boris Aronson, “Notes on Elia Kazan (1973);” NYPL, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Boris Aronson Papers and Designs, Box 9, Fld. 4.
4. Weill described the show to his parents as “eine ganz neue Form von Theater.” Weill to Albert and Emma Weill, 17 October 1948; *W-Fam*, 413.
5. Several writers have described *Love Life* as a progenitor of the concept musical; see, for example, Frank Rich (with Lisa Aronson), *The Theatre Art of Boris Aronson* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 85–94. The most thorough analysis along these lines is in Kim H. Kowalke, “Today’s Invention, Tomorrow’s Cliché: *Love Life* and the Concept Musical,” in “. . . dass alles auch hätte anders kommen können”: *Beiträge zur Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Susanne Schaal-Gotthardt, Luitgard Schader, and Heinz-Jürgen Winkler (Mainz: Schott, 2009), 175–93.
6. Crawford to Weill, “Friday” [25 June 1948]; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 26. The date can be deduced from Crawford’s mention that she is going away for a week, returning on Sunday 3 July.
7. Advance-sale figures are given in an article in the *New York Journal-American*, 6 October 1948. Financial figures, including the details of reduced royalties, are taken from post-closing financial statements prepared by the accounting firm of Seidman & Seidman (CCP, Box 30, Fld. 14). Agreements regarding waiving royalties between Crawford, the authors, and the Dramatists Guild are in CCP, Box 30, Fld. 3.
8. The ban was named after the president of the AFM, James Caesar Petrillo, and lasted from 1 January to 15 December 1948 (the first “Petrillo Ban” was in 1942–44). All Broadway musicians were required to join the AFM, an affiliate of the powerful AFL-CIO union, which exercised, in effect, a monopoly over theater orchestras. At issue was the renewal of a royalty agreement between the AFM and recording companies,

- which had expired on 31 December 1947. See Robert A. Gorman, "The Recording Musician and Union Power: A Case Study of the American Federation of Musicians," *Southwestern Law Journal* 37, no. 4 (1984): 697–787.
9. ASCAP functions as a collection agency for "small performing rights," including radio airplay.
  10. Over the course of the summer and fall of 1948, Chappell published nos. 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 18, 20, and 21b in piano-vocal format (Ae), and nos. 3 and 6 as dance-band arrangements. In November 1948, it was announced that Coward-McCann, Lerner's usual publisher (for *Brigadoon*, *Paint Your Wagon*, and *My Fair Lady*), would print the libretto of *Love Life*. The earliest announcement of that kind seems to have been in the *Newark Star-Ledger*, 22 November 1948; the last is in the *Daily News* (New York), 13 February 1949. On 29 December 1948, Weill wrote to Maurice Abravanel—in response to the possibility of a summer production at the University of Utah (which did not materialize)—that "the book is being printed now and will be available in a couple of months"; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 1.
  11. The subtitle appears in Tt1, whose title page reads "A Dish for the Gods: A Vaudeville." Later typescripts have the final title, *Love Life*, but omit the subtitle; it reappears in the programs from 20 September 1948 on. (The first two programs, N1 and N2a, subtitle it "A New Musical.")
  12. Alan Jay Lerner, liner notes to R3.
  13. Alan Jay Lerner, "Show in Vaudeville Form: New Musical Play *Love Life* Uses Songs, Dances, Sketches to Tell Story in Novel Experimental Fashion," *Boston Post*, 12 September 1948. Lerner also mentions the term's French origins, and individual numbers such as "Economics" do recall *vaudevilles* with which many a French eighteenth-century comedy ended (e.g., Beaumarchais's *Le Mariage de Figaro*). These were strophic songs summarizing general lessons to be drawn from the preceding play—they were, therefore, commentary numbers.
  14. Weill to Neher, 19 October 1947; photocopy in WLRC, Series 40. In both French and German theater, *variété* denotes a theatrical form very much like vaudeville, with a number of disparate acts making up the evening.
  15. Weill to Irving Sablosky, 24 July 1948; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 14. By organizing their "vaudeville" around a theme of socio-economic import, Weill and Lerner also owe something to the politically engaged revues that flourished in the 1920s and '30s in Berlin and New York (e.g., Friedrich Hollaender's *Es kommt jeder dran* [1928] and Harold Rome's *Pins and Needles* [1937]). Some idea of the myriad ways in which vaudeville shows could be organized may be gleaned from the collection of theater programs included in the Library of Congress's online resource, *The American Variety Stage: Vaudeville and Popular Entertainment, 1870–1920*. A generous compilation of archival footage of actual vaudeville acts was included in the television documentary "Vaudeville," narrated by Ben Vereen and first aired on 26 November 1997 as part of PBS's *American Masters* series. It has been released on digital video disc (Winstar WHE73060).
  16. "setzt da ein, wo Zustände erreicht sind." Weill, "Anmerkungen zu meiner Oper *Ma-hagony*," *Die Musik* 22, no. 6 (March 1930): 440–41, reprinted in GS2, 102.
  17. Stephen Hinton notes the unusually large gap between the words "Love" and "Life" on the title pages of the original programs, "as if they have become incompatible substantives, not a harmonious compound"; *Weill's Musical Theater: Stages of Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 405.
  18. Musicologists first applied the term "chain finale" (an English rendering of *Ketten-finale*) to the eighteenth-century *opera buffa* finale, which comprised a through-composed series of musical sections in different tempos, meters, and keys.
  19. John Gassner, "The Theatre Arts," *Forum* (Philadelphia) 111, no. 1 (January 1949): 32–33, at p. 33.
  20. Gershwin to Weill, 18 March 1940; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 33.
  21. When Lerner reported that he and Weill had written and discarded a "complete 20 minute opera bouffe," he may well have been referring to this sketch; see Alan Jay Lerner, "Lerner's Life and *Love Life*," clipping (mis-)identified as coming from *PM*, 14 November 1948, in M2b; publication of the daily *PM* ceased on 22 June 1948, when it was replaced by the *New York Star*. In addition to this episode, Dh includes some fifty-six pages of other unused material in draft form.
  22. The "Rhumba" number is published in *Unsung Weill: 22 Songs Cut from Broadway Shows and Hollywood Films*, ed. Elmar Juchem (Miami: European American Music, 2002). Most of the unused lyrics from Dh and Vh (except those that do not proceed beyond an incipit or are largely illegible) have been published in *The Complete Lyrics of Alan Jay Lerner*, ed. Dominic McHugh and Amy Asch (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), including all the superseded suffragette material.
  23. Weill to Lenya, 17 May 1947; W-LL(e), 470.
  24. Kurt Weill and Alan Jay Lerner, "Two on the Street: Collaborators Stage a Scene Aimed at Explaining Their Musical Play," *New York Times*, 3 October 1948. Stephen Hinton compares the formal oppositions in *Love Life* to other systems of oppositions deployed across Weill's output in *Weill's Musical Theater*, 407.
  25. "Ever since I made up my mind, at the age of 19, that my special field of activity would be the theatre, I have tried continuously to solve, in my own way, the form-  
problems of the musical theatre, and through the years I have approached these problems from all different angles." Weill, "Two Dreams Come True," undated typescript; WLA, Box 68, Fld. 16. This text was included in the souvenir program for *Street Scene* and as part of the liner notes for its original-cast recording issued in 1947 (for the latter, see WPD(e), Plate 19).
  26. I build on prior discussions in Gene Lees, *Inventing Champagne: The Worlds of Lerner and Loewe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 57–63; David M. Kilroy, "Kurt Weill on Broadway: The Postwar Years (1945–1950)" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1992), 206–51; Edward Jablonski, *Alan Jay Lerner: A Biography* (New York: Holt, 1996), 36–50; Foster Hirsch, *Kurt Weill on Stage: From Berlin to Broadway* (New York: Knopf, 2002), 276–99; and Kowalke, "Today's Invention, Tomorrow's Cliché." However, the sources identified for this Edition provide significant new information.
  27. So Lerner wrote in the liner notes for R3.
  28. Alan Jay Lerner, *The Musical Theatre: A Celebration* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1986), 11.
  29. Lerner gave this explanation for disallowing a revival in a 1964 conversation with Miles Kreuger; see the latter's "Some Words about Kurt Weill on Broadway," liner notes for *Kurt Weill on Broadway* (CD; EMI Classics 7243-5-55563-2-5; 1996), 38.
  30. Cheryl Crawford, *One Naked Individual: My Fifty Years in the Theatre* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1977), 167. See also Lees, *Inventing Champagne*, 58. Lees never discovered just what had caused this temporary rift, despite interviewing numerous friends, associates, and ex-spouses.
  31. Alan Jay Lerner, "On Kurt and *Love Life*," interview with George Davis (1955), unpublished typescript; WLRC, Series 37, Box 1, Fld. 17 (p. 1).
  32. Stephen Banfield sees *The Merry Widow* (1905) as initiating the type; *Jerome Kern* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 74. In 1944, Cheryl Crawford produced Samson Raphaelson's play *The Perfect Marriage*, in which an estranged couple embarks half-heartedly on flings and discusses divorce in a civilized manner before resolving to work things out.
  33. McHugh and Asch (*Complete Lyrics of Alan Jay Lerner*, 26) point out how "playing with the dimension of time" is one of Lerner's "favorite theatrical devices." The reincarnation theme in *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever* (1965) is an obvious example, but more relevant to *Love Life* is *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* (1976).
  34. Brooks Atkinson, *New York Times*, 11 October 1947.
  35. Quoted in Lees, *Inventing Champagne*, 58–59. Both Lenya and Lerner also recalled that Abravanel started things rolling. For Lenya, see the unfinished typescript titled "Love Life" in WLRC/DD (where she also comments on Lerner's appearance and personality); for Lerner, see his "On Kurt and *Love Life*" (1955 interview), 1.
  36. Elmar Juchem, *Kurt Weill und Maxwell Anderson: Neue Wege zu einem amerikanischen Musiktheater, 1938–1950* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2000), 141–42.
  37. Weill to William Saroyan, 1947, otherwise undated (but probably spring); WLA, Box 47, Fld. 14. Weill and Anderson corresponded about the "Lost in the Stars" spaceship project while the latter was in Hollywood working on the screen adaptation of *Joan of Lorraine*. Anderson begged off the project in a letter dated "Sunday"; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 19. This was probably written on 13 July; Anderson notes that he wrote to Weill on that day in his diary for 1947 now in University of Texas at Austin, Harry Ransom Center, Maxwell Anderson Papers. Weill replied on 25 July; WLRC, Series 40.
  38. Wouk described his work with Weill in a letter to Lotte Lenya, 7 October 1953; WLA, Box 51, Fld. 90.
  39. Lerner, "On Kurt and *Love Life*" (1955 interview), 1.
  40. Weill to Lazar, 17 March 1947; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 9.
  41. Liner notes to R3. Weill sailed for Europe on 6 May 1947 and returned on 12 June. Lerner may have had lunch at Weill's house on Sunday 4 May; both Lerner ("On Kurt and *Love Life*" [1955 interview], 1) and Lenya ("Love Life") recalled that it was on a Sunday. On Thursday 1 May, Weill wrote to Arthur Lyons that he had already talked to Lerner several times and would see him that weekend. Following Weill's return, Lerner's phone call probably took place around 20 July; in his letter to Anderson of 25 July 1947 (WLRC, Series 40), Weill mentioned "an interesting idea which Lerner brought to me last week and which we are investigating now." Lerner gave Miles Kreuger a different account of that walk up South Mountain Road (or maybe it was a different walk) when "suddenly the contrast between the vernal beauty of the countryside in New City compared with the urban quality of New York came to mind, and that drifted into an idea for a work about the industrial revolution and the effect that it has on people's love life—and how simple and natural love used to be." Quoted in Lees, *Inventing Champagne*, 59.
  42. Lerner, "Lerner's Life and *Love Life*."
  43. Lerner, "Show in Vaudeville Form."
  44. Elinor Hughes, "Lerner and Weill Attempt New Style in *Love Life*," *Boston Herald*, 13 September 1948.
  45. A scene in "one" (for which the term *olio* is often used in vaudeville) is performed downstage in front of a curtain (traveler or backdrop), typically to cover a change of scenery behind. The curtain could be painted to suggest scenic elements; Boris Aron-

- son provided elaborate designs for the drops in *Love Life*. “One” refers to the first (i.e., furthest downstage) set of “legs” (the draperies masking the wings). The practical need for scenes performed in “one” could have an unhappy effect on theatrical form—without them, we would have fewer extraneous soldiers’ choruses, such as the one Weill and Gershwin were obliged to provide in *The Firebrand of Florence* (“We’re Soldiers of the Duchy”). But one could make a virtue of necessity, as Cole Porter did in *Kiss Me, Kate*, whose eleven o’clock number, “Brush Up Your Shakespeare,” accommodated the opulent final set’s installation. In *Love Life*, the theatrical convention becomes part of the show’s concept.
46. For *Urformen*, see Hinton, *Weill’s Musical Theater*, 46–48.
  47. Weill wrote to Lenya on 15 September 1948 about working on what was then called the “Ocean Song”; *W-LL(e)*, 476. The last number completed was the Entr’acte (no. 14) on 4 October 1948, according to the entry for that day in Maxwell Anderson’s diary for 1948, now in University of North Dakota, Orin G. Libby Manuscript Collection, Maxwell Anderson Papers, Series I, vol. 14.
  48. The relevant entries in Anderson’s diary for 1947 concerning Weill and Lerner are dated 20, 22, 26 August, and 3, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, 20, 25, 27, 29 September. The entry for 14 September marked the day that Anderson’s son Alan took a job as stage manager for *Brigadoon*. The Playwrights’ Company did not in the end become involved in *Love Life*.
  49. Lerner, “Lerner’s Life and *Love Life*.”
  50. Lerner, “On Kurt and *Love Life*” (1955 interview), 1, 4.
  51. “Lewis to Direct Musical,” *New York Times*, 17 September 1947.
  52. Lerner, “On Kurt and *Love Life*” (1955 interview), 3.
  53. On 24 June 1948, Weill wrote to his parents: “I am working like mad on my new piece. It is called ‘Love Life,’ and this time I have a very good librettist (Lerner), who has just bought a house quite close to mine, so that we can work together constantly. I have been orchestrating for some weeks now, which means that I sit at my desk about ten hours a day.” (“Ich arbeite wie ein Wilder an meinem neuen Werk. Es heisst ‘Love Life’ (‘Liebesleben’), und diesmal habe ich einen sehr guten Librettisten (Lerner), der sich jetzt ganz nahe von mir ein Haus gekauft hat, so dass wir dauernd zusammen arbeiten können. Seit einigen Wochen orchestriere ich, und das bedeutet, dass ich ungefähr 10 Stunden am Tag an meinem Schreibtisch sitze.”) See *W-Fam*, 412.
  54. Connecticut’s first such factory, the Hitchcock Chair Company, opened in 1818 in Barkhamstead (now Riverton).
  55. The suffragette Mary Richardson slashed the so-called *Rokeby Venus* (a painting by Diego Velázquez) in 1914.
  56. *Vh* served as the rehearsal score for the 1948 production. Revisions subsequent to *Tt2* appear in the piano-vocal sources either as additional *Vh* pages or as rehearsal scores in the hands of rehearsal pianists Lys Symonette and Irving Schlein.
  57. The tango-habanera was given lyrics by Roger Fernay as “Youkali” in 1935; see KWE IV/2. Some of it was incorporated in the “The Song of the Goddess” in *Johnny Johnson* (1936; KWE I/13). Weill then included it in his unused score for the film *The River Is Blue* (1937), and the material reappears among the sketches for *The Firebrand of Florence*.
  58. The Weill-Lerner contract, and later revisions to it, are in CCP, Box 30, Fld. 3.
  59. A budget that Crawford prepared for potential investors (CCP, Box 30, Fld. 10) includes a side-by-side comparison of estimated costs for *A Dish for the Gods* and actual costs for *Brigadoon*, showing \$2,000 versus \$7,094.77 for arrangements. Crawford’s explanation is that “Mr. Weill makes his own orchestrations, which accounts for the smaller amount under that item.”
  60. Weill’s orchestral contractor, Morris Stonzek, claimed in an interview with Ronald Sanders (18 May 1978) that up to \$25,000 per show for arranging was another incentive for Kurt Weill to do his own orchestrations; NYPL, Manuscripts and Archives Division, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 20, Fld. 13 (photocopy in WLRC, Series 30, Box 19, Fld. 10). Weill had asked for only \$3,000 to orchestrate *The Firebrand of Florence*, pointing out that this was a good deal because Broadway arrangers, who only notated four bars per page, cost between \$6,000 and \$8,000. (In *Love Life*, Weill averaged six bars a page.) The \$25,000 figure may have been inflated to reflect 1970s costs.
  61. The list has disappeared from CCP. It was part of a 2002 NYPL exhibition (“Kurt Weill: Making Music Theater”) and was evidently misfiled afterward. A photocopy survives in WLRC, Series 47.
  62. Lawrence to Weill; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 42. The letter is undated but obviously precedes Weill’s reply. For *Lady in the Dark*, Lawrence had successfully negotiated an eleven-week summer recess, which proved highly disruptive (the production lost its four male leads during the hiatus).
  63. Weill to Lawrence, 11 October 1947; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 9.
  64. Weill to Neher, 19 October 1947; photocopy in WLRC, Series 40. The press began reporting around 31 October that the show would likely not appear that season.
  65. Halliday to Crawford, 21 November 1947; CCP, Box 2a, Fld. 5.
  66. Crawford, *One Naked Individual*, 168.
  67. Halliday to Crawford, 5 March 1948; CCP, Box 2a, Fld. 4. As late as 14 March, Lewis Funke asserted in the *New York Times* that “Mary Martin is the top contender,” but added, “there’s the hint that Miss Crawford may come up with a surprising entry, meaning that she has someone in mind who’s been around but who has been overlooked.”
  68. *New York Times*, 3 March 1948; *New York Post*, 19 March 1948. The *New York Times* reported of Rogers on 27 February that “With or without her, rehearsals are planned for August.”
  69. Lerner, “On Kurt and *Love Life*” (1955 interview), 2. The possibility of casting Celeste Holm must have been announced at some point, because the *New York Times* reported on 12 October 1947 that she was out of the running owing to film commitments.
  70. “Yes, Yes, Nanette,” *New York Herald Tribune*, 17 December 1947.
  71. According to various clippings in M2a and M4.
  72. So both the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* announced on 29 May.
  73. Weill included Fabray’s name in a jotted list of casting ideas for *The Firebrand of Florence* now surviving as a loose sheet in WLA, Box 47, Fld. 16.
  74. Nanette Fabray, interview with Peggy Sherry, 1 October 1991; WLRC, Series 60, p. 2.
  75. Kilroy (“Kurt Weill on Broadway,” 220–21) suggests that the “Murder in the Museum” sketch in *Tt1*, with its Venus statue, was written with Mary Martin in mind. He further proposes that “Women’s Club Blues” was intended to allude to Fabray’s role in *Bloomer Girl* (233–34). The neat intertextual references notwithstanding, “Murder in the Museum” was largely written when Gertrude Lawrence was still under consideration, and there is no evidence to prove that “Women’s Club Blues” was composed before (or after) Fabray’s casting. We know only that the number was transposed down to accommodate her wishes.
  76. On 27 April 1948, the *New York Herald Tribune* reported that Kazan was “being sought.” The *New York Times* confirmed Lewis’s withdrawal on 28 April. At the same time, Kazan was reading Anderson’s draft of *Lost in the Stars* (now based on *Cry, the Beloved Country*, i.e., no longer the spaceship idea) with a view to directing that as well.
  77. Lerner, “On Kurt and *Love Life*” (1955 interview), 2.
  78. *Variety*, 5 May 1948. Jules Dassin’s name also came up (e.g., in the *New York Times*, 2 May 1948).
  79. Robert Lewis, *Slings and Arrows: Theater in My Life* (New York: Stein and Day, 1984), 181. Lewis had cofounded the Actors Studio with Kazan, Crawford, and Lee Strasberg.
  80. Lerner to Crawford, 11 May 1951; CCP, Box 1a, Fld. 51.
  81. According to the *New York Post*, 9 September 1948. Kazan’s contract, dated 4 June, is in CCP, Box 30, Fld. 4.
  82. Richard Schickel, *Elia Kazan: A Biography* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 184. Kazan had directed the first production of Thornton Wilder’s *The Skin of Our Teeth* (opened 18 November 1942). Concerning the “structural resemblances,” see section III.i.
  83. According to Harold Clurman, interview with Ronald Sanders, 20 February 1978; Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 20, Fld. 5 (photocopy in WLRC, Series 30, Box 19, Fld. 10). In the event, Lee Strasberg directed the show.
  84. Kazan begged off in a telegram dated 18 June 1944; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 16.
  85. Kazan to Weill, undated; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 41.
  86. Kazan to Ronald Sanders, 18 April 1978; Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 18, Fld. 11 (photocopy in WLRC, Series 30, Box 19, Fld. 8).
  87. Harold Prince (interview with Elmar Juchem), “Weill and Lenya Come to Broadway,” *Kurt Weill Newsletter* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2006): 11.
  88. Kazan once quipped that “I think there should be collaboration, but under my thumb”; Schickel, *Elia Kazan*, 185.
  89. Aronson, “Notes on Kazan (1973).”
  90. Fabray, interview with Peggy Sherry (1991), 4.
  91. Quoted in Hirsch, *Kurt Weill on Stage*, 293.
  92. Michael Kidd, interview with Peggy Sherry, 1 October 1991; WLRC, Series 60, pp. 13–14.
  93. Quoted in Rich, *Theatre Art of Boris Aronson*, 85.
  94. Schickel, *Elia Kazan*, 185.
  95. *Tt2b*, marginal notes on Part One, Sketch i, pp. 3–4.
  96. Kazan, “Background Data, Facts, and a Few Schmaltzy Ideas”; notes on two loose sheets in *Tt2b*.
  97. *Tt2b*, notes by Kazan.
  98. Boris Aronson’s contract is in CCP, Box 30, Fld. 3.

99. Kowalke, "Today's Invention, Tomorrow's Cliché," 190–91.
100. Scene-by-scene construction costs (by Nolan Bros., based on Aronson's specifications) are given in CCP, Box 30, Fld. 10, as are itemized costs of draperies (Weiss and Sons) and painting (Triangle Scenic Studios). Aronson's designs for *Love Life* are in M1. Twenty-one of them appear in Rich, *Theatre Art of Boris Aronson*, 86–94.
101. Aronson, "Notes on Kazan (1973)."
102. The *Sunday News* (27 February 1949) included a color spread of the actual set; see *WPD(e)*, Plate 22.
103. The drop (shown in Rich, *Theatre Art of Boris Aronson*, 86) appears to have been intended for "A City Street," which N2b lists between the "Hotel Room" set and that for "The Illusion Minstrel Show."
104. Kidd's contract is in CCP, Box 30, Fld. 4. The *New York Herald Tribune* and other papers had already announced his involvement on 12 June 1948.
105. Kidd, interview with Peggy Sherry (1991), 2.
106. On 23 June 1948, Weill sent Littau a telegram: "Am very pleased that you will conduct my new show. Looking forward to start working with you after July fourth." WLA, Box 48, Fld. 26. Apparently, Weill first asked Lehman Engel, who had conducted the original production of *Johnny Johnson* (1936), but Engel was committed instead to Harold Rome's *That's the Ticket!*, which closed in Philadelphia on 2 October 1948, never making it to Broadway.
107. Crawford to Weill, "Friday" [25 June 1948]; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 26.
108. Crawford, *One Naked Individual*, 171.
109. An undated budget for "A Dish for the Gods" is in CCP, Box 30, Fld. 10. This folder also contains another estimated budget for "Love Life" that is "based on actual contract figures"; it is virtually on the mark at \$168,700. Actual production costs are given in the post-closing financial statements prepared by Seidman & Seidman (CCP, Box 30, Fld. 14). J. S. Seidman had a 2% stake in the show.
110. Other investors from the worlds of show business and the arts included Theresa Helburn and Armina Marshall Langner of the Theatre Guild (\$2,000 each); Al Greenstone, souvenir-program publisher (\$5,000); Bea Lawrence, production assistant for *Carousel* and *Brigadoon*, and now heading into production herself (\$8,000); Edward A. Bragaline, art collector and philanthropist (\$4,000); Mitzi Newhouse, arts patron (\$4,000); Arthur Rapf and Michael Rudin, film exhibitors (\$8,000); Carroll Case, film producer (\$8,000); and Clinton Wilder, stage manager for *A Streetcar Named Desire* and eventual co-producer with Cheryl Crawford of Marc Blitzstein's *Regina* (\$4,000). Advertising mogul William H. Weintraub was also one of the larger investors (\$8,000). Weill's sister-in-law Rita and Lerner's siblings, Richard and Robert, each invested \$2,000. Then there were various investors from the world of business, including executives Nathan Hirschfeld and Lester A. Neumann of Chicago, who jointly contributed \$8,000.
111. This information on auditions is taken from assorted press clippings in M2a. The most substantial is Helen Ormsbee, "'Green Thumb' Cheryl Crawford Ready to Transplant a Musical," *New York Herald Tribune*, 8 August 1948.
112. *New York Times*, 15 July 1948.
113. A report in the *New York Times*, 31 May 1948, has him "perusing" both shows.
114. So Lys Symonette recalled (personal communication).
115. Jules Racine, assistant stage manager, supplemented the chorus, taking small speaking and non-speaking roles (e.g., the Magician during tryouts, and the Judge in the divorce ballet).
116. Tt2b, notes on the back of the table of contents.
117. As reported by Ward Morehouse, *New York Sun*, 9 August 1948. According to the *New York Times*, 29 August 1948, Kazan rehearsed Bessie Breuer's *Sundown Beach* from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. and *Love Life* from 3 to 10 P.M.
118. It had to have been within a month of the opening, because according to various clippings in M2b beginning on 25 October, an audience member wrote to Crawford's office pointing out that the Mary Margaret McBride program, which Susan wanted to hear in the "Radio Night" sketch, aired only in the afternoon. In Tt3 it was changed to *Cinema Theater*. Moreover, Tt3 identifies the trapeze artist as "Mme Ardely," but by 13 November, Elizabeth Gibson had replaced her.
119. Schlein (1905–1986) was hired in accordance with Article D of Weill's contract, which required Crawford to engage an arranger of Weill's choosing should he require assistance. He had earned a degree in pharmacy before switching to musical studies, with degrees in piano from the New York College of Music (1928) and the Juilliard School (1930). For several years, he served as Al Jolson's accompanist and worked as a pit pianist in a number of Broadway shows. His involvement in that capacity with *Brigadoon* may have brought him to Weill's attention. By that time, Schlein had composed many musical works (including nine symphonies). It is unclear why Weill did not turn to any of Chappell's professional house arrangers/orchestrators for *Love Life*; for *Lady in the Dark*, *One Touch of Venus*, *The Firebrand of Florence*, and *Street Scene*, he had enlisted the help of Ted Royal, who subsequently had orchestrated *Brigadoon*. Weill would hire Schlein again for his next (and last) Broadway work, *Lost in the Stars*, for which Schlein again played piano/accordion but orchestrated only one number ("Who'll Buy?"). After Weill's death, Schlein added a viola part to *Knickerbocker Holiday* and orchestrated the last two-thirds of the Whitman song "Dirge for Two Veterans," which had been left unfinished. He appears to have had no subsequent work as a Broadway orchestrator.
120. CCP, Box 30, Fld. 10.
121. Wharton to Weill, 10 September 1948; WLA, Box 50, Fld. 71.
122. Fabray was the focus of Helen Eager's review of *Love Life* in the *Boston Traveler* ("Nanette Fabray Shines in 'Love Life' at Shubert," 14 September 1948). Eager mentions each of her four solo numbers; had there been a fifth, she probably would have alluded to that one as well.
123. That section is titled "Millie's Dance" in Pm-Sch; Melissa Hayden was usually addressed as Millie.
124. Kidd, interview with Peggy Sherry (1991), 3.
125. "Background Data, Facts, and a Few Schmaltzy Ideas"; inserted sheets in Tt2b. The Era of Good Feelings was a term coined in 1817 that it is now generally taken to mean the period in U.S. history from 1815 to 1825.
126. Kowalke, "Today's Invention, Tomorrow's Cliché," 178.
127. "Mother's Getting Nervous" (no. 9) was the show's most frequently revised number (see Critical Report). At least four distinct versions may be reconstructed from the sources.
128. See the various clippings in M2a. That this was a sudden decision is confirmed by an invoice from the Eaves Costume Manufacturing Company dated 3 September 1948 and including a charge of \$250 for Rex Weber's costume as the Magician, and \$125 for a ventriloquist costume (University of Houston Libraries, Special Collections, Cheryl Crawford Papers, Box 4, Fld. 7). Moreover, instrumental parts for the reprise of "Economics," in which Weber was to participate, had already been copied.
129. Edmund Leamy, "Magic à la Southpaw," *New York World-Telegram*, 31 December 1948. The *New York Sunday News* had run a similar story about the left-handed equipment on 31 October.
130. Marshall, interview in *Gotham Life*, 20 November 1948. Here Marshall discussed his other engagements and his habit of bicycling between gigs.
131. George W. Clarke, "Around Boston," *Boston Record*, 15 September 1948.
132. Cyrus Durgin, *Boston Daily Globe*, 14 September 1948.
133. "Love Life Big Hit at Shubert," *Boston Post*, 14 September 1948.
134. *Boston Herald*, 14 September 1948.
135. Harold Bone, "Love Life," *Variety*, 15 September 1948.
136. "F. R. J." in the *New Haven Journal-Courier*, 10 September 1948, noted when the curtain "finally came down," suggesting an overly long evening.
137. Quoted in Lerner, "On Kurt and *Love Life*" (1955 interview), 5.
138. *Ibid.*, 3.
139. Quoted in Alan Jay Lerner, *The Street Where I Live: A Memoir* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), 226.
140. Lerner, "Lerner's Life and *Love Life*."
141. Lerner, "On Kurt and *Love Life*" (1955 interview), 5.
142. Lerner, *The Street Where I Live*, 16–17.
143. According to an interview with Lerner and Loewe published as a *Time* magazine cover story ("Two Parfit Broadway Knights") in anticipation of the New York premiere of *Camelot*; *Time*, 14 November 1960.
144. Hirsch (*Kurt Weill on Stage*, 295) claims that "Is It Him or Is It Me?" was added "at the last minute," replacing an earlier torch song, "Where Do I Belong?" A draft in Dh is the only source for the latter. Tt1 (registered for copyright in March 1948) already indicates "Is It Him or Is It Me?" and not "Where Do I Belong?"
145. On Friday 17 September, the *Boston Record* reported that "Crawford flew to New York Wednesday to audition a night club singer for a new song to go into *Love Life* this week." Hirsch (*Kurt Weill on Stage*, 295) asserts that Weill cut "Love Song" in Boston but reinstated it in New York. It is clear, however, that Weill and Lerner did not write the song until mid-September, which is why it appears only in the last of the Boston programs (N2c).
146. Boston copyist Harry Silberman extracted the parts for the revised no. 21c.
147. Kazan mentions these items on a list titled "To do—Big" on the verso of "Background Data, Facts, and a Few Schmaltzy Ideas" inserted in Tt2b.
148. The two numbers are listed in the program for the week of 13 September (N2a) but not for the week of the 20th (N2b).
149. The number does not necessarily pose a problem for modern critics. David Drew thought it one of the show's strengths: "The decisive collapsing together of vaudeville

- and drama occurs in the penultimate [*sic*] 'Locker Room' scene, where the confined space and the highly combustible subject matter ensure that the explosive effect of the satire is very much greater than the force applied." David Drew, *Kurt Weill: A Handbook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 358.
150. "We ate + then to Kurt's to talk the show over with him. Got into a discussion of Susan's Dream—and called Alan L. down." Anderson had already attended the first tryout performance in New Haven.
  151. *New York Journal-American*, 6 October 1948.
  152. Maxwell Anderson recorded in his diary for 1948 that Weill finished the entr'acte on 4 October.
  153. Lerner, "On Kurt and *Love Life*" (1955 interview), 5.
  154. Oddly enough, the prefatory note is missing from the second and third Boston programs (N2b, N2c) and those from the first couple of months in New York (N3a). In addition to Lerner's article in the *Boston Post*, his later one in what is (mis-)identified as *PM*, and Lerner and Weill's interview in the *Boston Herald* (all three cited above), Lerner and Weill were interviewed by Robert Wahls for "Lerner Says Weill Is Great—and Kurt Says Alan Is Great," *Daily News* (New York), 6 September 1948.
  155. "Two on the Street," *New York Times*, 3 October 1948.
  156. Lerner, "On Kurt and *Love Life*" (1955 interview), 3.
  157. Weill to Madeleine Milhaud, 17 October 1948; Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Sammlung Darius Milhaud (photocopy in WLRC, Series 40).
  158. *W-Fam*, 413–14: "Diesmal war es besonders schwer, da ich eine ganz neue Form von Theater, eine neue Mischung der verschiedenen Elemente ausprobiert habe, und wie immer, wenn man etwas neues versucht, konnten wir nicht wissen, wie die verschiedenen Teile des Werkes auf das Publikum wirken würden, bevor wir es wirklich vor einem Publikum spielen konnten. Wir fanden daher, als wir in New Haven eröffneten, dass manche Teile, von denen wir uns viel versprochen, nicht so wirksam waren, und umgekehrt, dass wir schon in den wenigen Tagen vor der Boston Premiere manche Änderungen machen mussten. [...] Aber trotzdem es viel Arbeit war, hat es doch viel Spass gemacht, da ich ausgezeichnete Mitarbeiter hatte, einen erstklassigen Librettisten und den besten amerikanischen Regisseur, sodass die Arbeit immer sehr harmonisch und ohne jede Reibereien durchgeführt werden konnte. Dazu lebten wir alle in einem wundervollen Hotel mit guter Verpflegung." The "wonderful hotel" was the Boston Ritz-Carlton.
  159. Budget dated 8 July 1948; CCP, Box 30, Fld. 10. A stop clause gave theaters the contractual right to close a production with one week's notice if weekly receipts fell below a specified amount, which would have depended on the theater's size (\$25,000 in the case of *Love Life*). The theater's share of the weekly gross was 30%, but no less than \$7,500 (i.e., 30% of \$25,000). Assuming a \$25,000 gross, Crawford calculated running costs, including full royalties, at \$17,815, entailing a loss of \$315. The revised figure is from an annotation on Crawford's copy of Seidman & Seidman's statement for the three weeks ending 4 December 1948; CCP, Box 30, Fld. 14.
  160. Seidman & Seidman, however, calculated capacity at \$41,490 without standees.
  161. Weill notes this figure at the outset of his diary for 1949; WLA, Box 68, Fld. 20. The diary entry for 2 February notes another \$4,766.25 through 22 January.
  162. CCP, Box 30, Fld. 5.
  163. Louis Lotito, interview with Ward Morehouse, *New York Sun*, 27 January 1949. Lotito suggests cutting "the big fellows—the authors, the top performers, the directors, and the composers," who are probably paying 75–80% in taxes anyway.
  164. Weill to Abravanel, 29 December 1948; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 1.
  165. *New York Herald Tribune*, 25 November 1947.
  166. The releases (Clark on Columbia 38294; Kaye on RCA Victor 20-3063) were announced in the *Daily News* (New York), 23 September 1948, along with the caveat that they had been recorded before the Petrillo Ban took effect. No recordings seem to have been made of "You Understand Me So." "Here I'll Stay" and "Green-Up Time" were recorded by other artists as well, mostly after 15 December (as with Frank Sinatra's version of "Here I'll Stay"). Gracie Fields's recordings of nos. 3 and 6 were made in London (on Decca) and released in the United States in November 1948.
  167. Weill to Larry Spier, 19 December 1949; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 14.
  168. Video in WLRC, Series 140/238.
  169. CCP, Box 30, Fld. 16. "Here I'll Stay" did best, selling 15,907 copies, followed by "Green-Up Time" (7,951). For detailed information on "Here I'll Stay" and a facsimile, see KWE IV/2.
  170. For the Circle Award, *South Pacific* received 18 votes, *Kiss Me, Kate*, 6, and *Love Life*, 1; *New York Herald Tribune*, 13 April 1949.
  171. John Lardner, "A Redundant *Love Life*," *New York Star*, 10 October 1948.
  172. Richard Watts Jr., "Moss Hart's Play on Divorce Overburdened by Production," *New York Post*, 2 December 1946. *Christopher Blake* had only a modest run of 111 performances.
  173. Weill to Lenya, 18 May 1945; *W-LL(e)*, 460.
  174. Crawford to Weill, "Friday" [25 June 1948]; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 26. For the similarities, see Hinton, *Weill's Musical Theater*, 412.
  175. Richard P. Cooke, *Wall Street Journal*, 11 October 1948. Lewis Funke (*New York Times*, 2 May 1948) seems to have been among the first columnists to notice "a kinship between *Allegro* and that musical play Kurt Weill and Alan Jay Lerner hope to have on the boards this fall."
  176. On Weill's rivalry with Rodgers, and in particular his bitterness over *Carousel* (since Weill had once hoped to acquire the rights to Ferenc Molnár's *Liliom*), see Gisela Schubert, "Ein 'Wettlauf'? Kurt Weill und Richard Rodgers," in *Kurt Weill-Symposion: Das musikdramatische Werk—Zum 100. Geburtstag und 50. Todestag*, ed. Manfred Angerer, Carmen Ottner, and Eike Rathgeber (Vienna: Doblinger, 2004), 79–89. Naomi Graber, citing common subject matter (societal pressures on marriage over a period of many years) and structure (commentary numbers), suggests that *Allegro* "likely influenced *Love Life*": "Given *Allegro*'s relative failure," Weill "may have seen the chance to compete with Rodgers on the more familiar ground of the experimental musical." *Kurt Weill's America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 201–202.
  177. Five of the New York dailies praised *Allegro* (as many as would applaud *Love Life*), although even positive reviews complained about its sententiousness or "hackneyed moral overtone," as Brooks Atkinson put it (*New York Times*, 2 November 1947).
  178. Gilbert W. Gabriel, "Playgoing," *Theatre Arts* 33, no. 1 (January 1949): 11–20, at p. 18; Allene Talmey, *Vogue*, 1 December 1948.
  179. Elinor Hughes, "Reflections on *Love Life*; A Postscript to Sundown Beach," *Boston Herald*, 19 September 1948. Hughes is evenhanded but ultimately reveals that she did not care much for either show, finding them ingenious but also confusing and cheerless.
  180. Quoted in Hirsch, *Kurt Weill on Stage*, 297.
  181. Quoted in Rob Weinert-Kendt's interview with Sondheim, as "A Playwright in Song: Stephen Sondheim Ponders His Accomplishments, His Way of Working, and the Form and Future of the American Musical," *American Theatre* 28, no. 4 (April 2011): 24–29, 76, at p. 26.
  182. Oscar Hammerstein II and Richard Rodgers, *Allegro: A Musical Play* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), [2].
  183. Hammerstein and Rodgers, *Allegro*, p. viii.
  184. Gassner, "The Theatre Arts," 32–33.
  185. Weill apparently also felt the same way about Ibsen; he once declined to support Arthur Miller for the Sidney Howard Award on the grounds that *All My Sons* was merely a "talented, though quite unfinished play in the good old Ibsen technique." Weill to John Wharton, 7 April 1947; WLA, Box 47, Fld. 15.
  186. Lerner, *The Musical Theatre*, 171.
  187. "*Love Life* a Basic Marriage Allegory," *New York World-Telegram*, 8 October 1948.
  188. Harold C. Schonberg, *Musical Courier*, 15 November 1948.
  189. Robert Garland, *New York Journal-American*, 8 October 1948. Between *Finian's Rainbow* and *Love Life*, the Forty-Sixth Street Theatre received new decor designed by Dorothy Draper.
  190. However, Howard Barnes (*New York Herald Tribune*, 24 October 1948) complained about "the sorry scene in which the members of a women's club in the '90s strip to long winter underwear and cavort about the stage." This was a fairly common reaction to the suffragettes' "striptease." Production photos confirm that it was indeed unappealing, which may have been the point.
  191. John Chapman, *Daily News* (New York), 8 October 1948.
  192. Claudia Cassidy, *Chicago Tribune*, 20 February 1949.
  193. Howard Barnes, *New York Herald Tribune*, 8 October 1948; E.A. Single, *Journal of Commerce* (New York), 11 October 1948.
  194. For example, John Lardner, who tolerated Part One of the show but considered Part Two a "vermiform appendix," suggested relocating "Mother's Getting Nervous" so as to "set up a *cordon sanitaire* at intermission time, with every hostile element sealed off on the far side of the border." *New York Star*, 10 October 1948.
  195. Harold Clurman, *New Republic*, 1 November 1948.
  196. Brooks Atkinson, *New York Times*, 8 October 1948.
  197. *Morning Telegraph* (New York), 9 October 1948.
  198. Elinor Hughes, *Boston Herald*, 14 September 1948.
  199. All these first-night (etc.) reviews come from the drama critics generally responsible for Broadway musicals in the New York daily papers, whose music critics rarely dealt with them at that stage, even if they sometimes did so later.
  200. Lawrence Schwab thought it "Cooled by sophistication"; *Miami Herald*, 21 November 1948.



201. *New Yorker*, 16 October 1948.
202. *Daily News* (New York), 8 October 1948.
203. "From Long-Hair to Short," *New York Times*, 23 January 1949.
204. Cecil Smith, "Broadway Concessions in New Kurt Weill Score," *Musical America* 68, no. 12 (1 November 1948): 20.
205. "'Love Life' nennt sich 'Vaudeville', ist aber in Wirklichkeit ein seltsames Gemisch von Revue, Satire, Schauspiel, Kabarett und Operette"; *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung und Herald*, 11 October 1948.
206. *Time*, 18 October 1948.
207. *New York Herald Tribune*, 8 October 1948.
208. *New York Herald Tribune*, 8 October (Kazan not quite sure), 24 October (hopelessly mixed up).
209. *Morning Telegraph* (New York), 9 October 1948. Given that this paper was especially devoted to theatrical matters, it is not surprising that Freedley's review was one of the most substantial.
210. "Reviewer Visits *Love Life* Again, Enjoys It More Than at Opening," *Morning Telegraph* (New York), 4 February 1949.
211. "A Smash Musical Hit Called *Love Life*," *New York Post*, 8 October 1948.
212. *Women's Wear Daily*, 28 January 1949.
213. *Women's Wear Daily*, 8 October 1948.
214. Robert Garland, "'Vaudeville' Show Elegantly Unusual," *New York Journal-American*, 8 October 1948. On the popular radio show "Breakfast with Dorothy and Dick," co-host Richard Kollmar (who had created the role of Brom Broeck in *Knickerbocker Holiday*) quipped that "the people who put on *Love Life* called it a vaudeville because they thought they might avoid criticism of the book." Transcript prepared by Radio Monitor Inc. (4 December 1948) in M2a.
215. *New York World-Telegram*, 8 October 1948.
216. Fabray, interview with Peggy Sherry (1991), 13. Fabray also blamed the lack of a cast recording (p. 5: "I think if we'd had an album, it would have done it for us"), Kazan's direction, and Crawford's being too much in awe of Kazan, Lerner, and Weill to be sufficiently in charge.
217. Compare Cheryl Crawford's later assessment of the show as having "no heart, no passion" (quoted in full, above) in *One Naked Individual*, 171. Several of the 1948 critics expressed opinions along these lines. So did Stephen Sondheim years later when he acknowledged *Love Life* as an influence on his own work but thought "it failed because it started out with an idea rather than a character"; quoted in Foster Hirsch, *Harold Prince and the American Musical Theatre*, rev. ed. (New York: Applause, 2005), 17–18.
218. See, for example, Harold Clurman in the *New Republic*, 1 November 1948: "*Love Life* is an educated musical. Without being exactly pretentious about it, it is an intellectual, philosophical, historical show. . . . Despite these assets and the credit deserved by any musical that attempts to be 'different,' *Love Life* left me a little cold and even weary. Its multiple ingenuity is overstrenuous. It is a gesture without substance; juiceless at its core. It does not seem to spring out of any human source except the resolution to be up-to-date, intelligent and successful. It has ability, but little love." Clurman, however, was never very sympathetic to Weill (with the exception, naturally, of *Johnny Johnson*, which he himself had co-produced).
219. "Solche Mischung von Musik, Licht, Tanz und Witz duerfte bei uns zuhaus heute und in absehbarer Zeit in solcher laessigen Praezision kaum herzustellen sein." Luft to Weill, 14 May 1949; WLA, Box 48, Fld. 44.
220. Transcript of letter (no date provided) from David Fulcomer to Kurt Weill in WLRC/DD. The previous year, Fulcomer had published "Some Newer Methods of Teaching Sociology," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 21, no. 3 (November 1947): 154–62.
221. "Today's Invention, Tomorrow's Cliché," 183.
222. Quoted in Lees, *Inventing Champagne*, 61. It is worth bearing in mind that while such diagnoses may reflect how postwar audiences preferred to see themselves, the historical reality was something other than a "rosy glow." For example, political divisions, previously tempered by the Depression and World War II, erupted in 1946; that year's mid-term elections saw the Democrats lose control of both houses for the first time since 1928. Their unexpected victory in 1948 required smoothing over tensions between the party's progressive wing and racist "Dixiecrats."
223. Other exceptions include the successful Harold Rome revue *Call Me Mister* (opened 18 April 1946); the short-lived *Beggar's Holiday* (Duke Ellington and John Latouche's reworking of *The Beggar's Opera*, which played 111 performances beginning 26 December 1946); and the brief revival of *The Cradle Will Rock* (opened 26 December 1947; 34 performances). Within the larger context of postwar American arts and letters, however, *Love Life* and *Allegro* count among numerous cultural artifacts exploring the underside of the American Dream and dissecting familial malaise, including straight plays like those of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams, movies such as William Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives*, and novels (e.g., Sloan Wilson's *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*). Much of the contemporaneous social-science literature addresses the same issues.
224. Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1947). Its reception in the 1940s and '50s is discussed in Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1992). Another widely read study of the family from the so-called "Chicago School" of sociology came out shortly before *Love Life*: Ernest Burgess and Harvey Locke's *The Family: From Institution to Companionship* (New York: American Book Company, 1945). Although they are not primarily focused on the family, sociological analyses such as David Riesman's (with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney) *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950) and William H. Whyte's *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956) are also relevant. Riesman's three cultural types map onto Sam Cooper's trajectory, with the early Mayville scenes enacting a transition from a communal, "tradition-directed" culture to one that is "inner-directed," with an emphasis on individual autonomy. By the end of Part One, Sam is "other-directed" to a fault: a manipulator of others with little sense of self.
225. This dialogue was performed during the tryouts as part of the sketch "A Ticket to the Fight" (see Appendix), which was eventually replaced by "Radio Night" and "Farewell Again."
226. Marginal notes in Tt2b. Some of these issues are explored in chapter 8 of Angus McLaren, *Impotence: A Cultural History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
227. *Daily Worker*, 12 October 1948.
228. Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, 241.
229. Leo Gaffney, *Boston Daily Record*, 15 September 1948.
230. Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942), 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1950), 157.
231. As of this writing, there have been three English-language productions since 1949: University of Michigan (1987); American Music Theater Festival, Philadelphia (1990); and Opera North (U.K., 1996). These prompted roughly three dozen reviews, and most of these indeed describe *Love Life* as the progenitor of such shows as Kander and Ebb's *Cabaret* and *Chicago* and the Sondheim-Prince-Aronson musicals (*Company*, *Follies*, *Pacific Overtures*). In the scholarly literature, the connections between *Love Life* and the concept musical have become well-trodden ground. Tellingly, Hirsch's *Love Life* chapter (in *Kurt Weill on Stage*) is titled "Before Sondheim," while Hinton's (*Stages of Reform*) is "Concept and Commitment." Kilroy devotes a section of his dissertation ("Kurt Weill on Broadway") to "*Love Life* and the Idea of Concept Musicals." Kowalke in "Today's Invention, Tomorrow's Cliché" cites about a dozen concept musicals, drawing particularly detailed parallels between *Love Life* and *Cabaret*, *Follies*, and *Assassins*.
232. Kowalke, "Today's Invention, Tomorrow's Cliché," 190–91.
233. Lerner, "On Kurt and *Love Life*" (1955 interview), 4.
234. Stephen Banfield cites Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffman* as a precursor to the "concept musical"; *Sondheim's Broadway Musicals* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 147–48. David Kilroy ("Kurt Weill on Broadway," 330–33) points to an entire tradition of commentary musical numbers going back to the ancient Greeks.
235. Prince, "Weill and Lenya Come to Broadway," 11: "Why was there a tightrope? Why wasn't it all simplified down to 'Let's follow these people through American history? Why did it have to have the extra stuff? I thought it just got very complicated. But it's wildly talented.'" For a small collection of reactions to *Lady in the Dark* and *Love Life* from creators of concept musicals, see *Kurt Weill Newsletter* 37, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 7, 11.
236. Kidd recalled seeing *Cabaret* in its Boston tryout (November 1966), when he went backstage to talk with Lotte Lenya (who was appearing in it). He said: "They finally did it. Kurt and Alan tried to pull it off and it didn't quite work. Now they've used the same basic idea and it worked." Lenya responded: "You're absolutely right, Michael. It was the idea that Kurt tried to do a long time ago." Kidd, interview with Peggy Sherry (1991), 9.
237. *Ibid.*, 12.
238. *Ibid.*, 9–11.
239. "Das Schicksal des einzelnen wird nur dort vorübergehend geschildert, wo es beispielhaft für das Schicksal der Stadt ist." Weill, "Vorwort zum Regiebuch der Oper *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*," *Anbruch* 12, no. 1 (January 1930): 5–7, reprinted in GS2, 104.
240. "Vielleicht hilft es dem Fragesteller, wenn er die ‚wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse‘, wie wir sie meinen, als eine Konkretisierung dessen, was die Alten das ‚Schicksal‘ nannten, auffassen darf." "Kurt Weill antwortet," *Melos* 11, no. 10 (October 1932): 336–37, reprinted in GS2, 139.
241. The Edition also rejects a cut in no. 18 and a few minor ones in no. 21a. These were standard time-saving expedients.
242. Cheryl Crawford Papers (Houston), Box 4, Fld. 7.
243. Kazan mentions this on a list titled "To do—Big" on the verso of "Background Data, Facts, and a Few Schmaltzy Ideas," inserted in Tt2b. Peggy Doyle in the *Boston*

- Evening American* (“*Love Life: 3 Hours of Excitement at Shubert*,” 14 September 1948) also thought the number needed “blue penciling.”
244. See the Critical Report on the Edition’s adopting the final versions only of nos. 3, 12a, and 21c.
245. See the Critical Report for nos. 10b, 12d, and 16 for three particularly vexing instances where coordinating **Vh** and **Fh** would have been well-nigh impossible without a variety of rehearsal materials.
246. Weill did not provide a new orchestration for no. 10c, but the copy of his holograph score, **Fh(R)**, was used in rehearsal.
247. See Kazan’s annotation concerning Sam in **Tt2b**: “No connection now at all. He finds his only peace in ‘nature’ and he needs ‘peace’ now, not love. She’s got to do something with her energy—his happiness comes from knowing that the ‘house and lot are his’ and that ‘he has a little salted away,’ and he doesn’t understand ‘Mommy’s night with her girlfriends.’ The kids are wandering around unconnected too.” Compare also the description of the overworked “wayward male” in Lundberg and Farnham, *Modern Woman*, 342–49.
248. The March 2020 production by Encores! at New York City Center (canceled after its first run-through because of the COVID-19 shutdown of New York’s theaters) inserted “Susan’s Dream” between the “Radio Night” and “Farewell Again” sketches.
249. WLA, Box 68, Fld. 18. Weill’s notes also include references to Black male vocal quartets.
250. “Two on the Street.”
251. Graber, *Kurt Weill’s America*, 213.
252. The COVID-canceled production by Encores! renamed it the “Vaudeville Illusion Show.”
253. The Encores! production had a cast of thirty.
254. In the 2017 Theater Freiburg production—the first to use this Edition (in the form of an advanced proof)—the same performer played the Magician, Hobo, and Con Man/Interlocutor.
255. See Lewis Nichols, “Between the Saw and the Rope,” *New York Times*, 21 November 1948.
256. RCA Victor P193.
257. Quoted in Ronald L. Davis, *Mary Martin, Broadway Legend* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 121.
258. See, for example, Wolcott Gibbs in the *New Yorker*, 16 October 1948.
259. The set changes in Opera North’s fully-staged production (1996) seem to have been particularly sluggish; see Julian Rushton, “Love Stories,” *Musical Times* 137, no. 1837 (March 1996): 28–29, which complains of “modern stage technology, seemingly incapable of slickness” and “too much waiting around.” In contrast, Theater Freiburg’s 2017 production flowed well enough thanks to a revolving stage, projections, lighting, and sparse sets.