

Learning Places Fall 2016
Chin/Swift

OUTLINE: INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

Paragraph 1 Topic Sentence – Times Square was the home to many different typologies, but the turn of the century marked New York as the entertainment wonder.

Paragraph 1 Quote – “Times Square has played host to a kaleidoscopic mixture of residential and commercial tenants, but in this century it has been closely identified with the entertainment business.”

Paragraph 2 Topic Sentence – The combination of new amenities helps transform Times Square to a favorable condition for entertainment.

Paragraph 2 Quote – “But the combination of transportation, finance, politics, and religious acceptance could only create a series of favorable conditions; it was the entertainment industry itself, and most especially the efforts of a number of shrewd (and sometimes visionary) entrepreneurs, that were decisive in the creation and subsequent re-creation of the so-called theater district.”

Paragraph 3 Topic Sentence – Although people build theaters as a risk new technology help in their favor because of the safer streets.

Paragraph 3 Quote – “With electrification rapidly transforming dark and dangerous streets into safer, more attractive locations for legitimate amusement, the northward movement of theaters into Longacre Square was seemingly inevitable.”

Paragraph 4 Topic Sentence – At the turn of the century, theaters where money making institutions.

Paragraph 4 Quote – “...theatre became a potentially lucrative investment, at least for those who could anticipate the public’s tastes. In the days before film, radio, and television, live performance ... was the dominant form of public entertainment. And live performance was a

profit-making activity... In his chapter in this section Peter Davis explains how the evolution in patterns of theatre financing reflected changes in capitalization of other turn-of-the-century businesses.”

Paragraph 5 Topic Sentence – Touring shows were taking over the county and pose direct threat to the stock system of theatrical performances.

Paragraph 5 Quote – “...the stock market was challenged by growing popularity of touring “combination” shows. In contrast to the stock system, in which a theatre manager engaged a company of actors for a season and presented them in a variety of plays, the combination system consisted of a company of actors appearing in a single show which toured from city to city, providing its own scenery, costumes, and sometimes musical accompaniment.”

Paragraph 6 Topic Sentence – In order for the cross-county tours to be successful a testing area was of high importance.

Paragraph 6 Quote – “Since New York was already regarded as the most important theater city in America, it is not surprising that it became the headquarters for the combination system.”

Paragraph 7 Topic Sentence – Whether the group of acts were sent to “big times,” “small times,” or “family time” theatres theatrical enterprise strives from the New York base.

Paragraph 7 Quote – “Many of auxiliary theatrical enterprises that clustered in New York, such as costumiers and publicists, served both legitimate stage and vaudeville.”

Paragraph 8 Topic Sentence – Theatre owners benefited from low output and high input because they paid the workers low wages which wasn’t an issue in 1903.

Paragraph 8 Quote – “Fortunately for the budding entrepreneur, the theater, which has always been a labor-intensive industry, benefited from the relatively low wages paid in the days before the rise of theatrical unions. This meant that theaters could be constructed at a relatively low cost...”

Paragraph 9 Topic Sentence – Although the initial and operational cost was inexpensive it provided the ability for the owners to make money even if the play failed in New York due to the amount of people in the theatre.

Paragraph 9 Quote – “Although ticket prices were low, most theaters had large capacities, which enabled producers to keep even mediocre shows afloat. And even if a show failed in New York there was always the possibility of making money on the road, where audiences might be gullible enough to believe the billboards and posters that read “Smash Hit in New York.”

Paragraph 10 Topic Sentence – In times of financial collapse systems were in place to help the owners overcome such difficulties.

Paragraph 10 Quote – “If a theater owner or manager experienced financial reversals, bankruptcy was an acceptable way to emerge from the difficulties.”

Paragraph 11 Topic Sentence – Because there was so much money to be made from theatres, owners and producers seized the opportunity to control the industry.

Paragraph 11 Quote – “And so, in 1896, six theater owners and producers got together to form the “Theatrical Syndicate,” whose ostensible purpose was to bring order to the chaotic booking system.”

Paragraph 12 Topic Sentence – Conflict between the Syndicate and the independents, and later between the Syndicate and Shubert brothers resulted in ridiculous amount of theatres and playhouses in New York.

Paragraph 12 Quote – “By time the Syndicate and the Shuberts had declared a truce in 1907, New York had more theaters than it really needed...by the 1919-20 season 50 playhouses were operating in New York, and by the 1929-30 season there were 71 in use. The expansion in New York was mirrored in theater districts throughout the United States.”

Paragraph 13 Topic Sentence – Even though prostitution houses and bars existed before theatres in Longacre, they avoided them as much as possible to prevent the collapse of that institution.

Paragraph 13 Quote – “As Timothy Gilfoyle has documented, taverns and houses of prostitution existed in the Longacre Square area even before the theaters arrived, but they avoided the kind of blatant self-advertisement that would lead to a permanent crackdown.”

Paragraph 14 Topic Sentence – Success was measured by satisfying as many people as possible, by using presidents that just work!

Paragraph 14 Quote – “To appeal to the widest possible audience, shows followed tried-and-true formulas, avoiding themes and ideas that were difficult or controversial. Most plays were adopted from British or Continental successes, and even new musicals tend to hew to the wall-worn formulas of European operetta, comic opera, and opera bouffe...Many plays were adopted from popular novels and stories, such as *Sherlock Holmes*, *Becky Sharp*, and *Quo Vadis*...Broadway still hosted great stars, both American and European, in limited engagements.”

Paragraph 15 Topic Sentence – Other economic turmoil had little to no effect on the American theatres economy however things changed when Syndicate member died due to the Europe war.

Paragraph 15 Quote – “Although the 1914-15 season was generally considered a disastrous one for Broadway stage, a total of 133 productions were mounted in 42 theaters. Europe was at war, but America was feeling few of the effects...Denizens of the theater district had to the war brought home to them when Charles Frohman, one of the most distinguished theatrical producers and founder of the Theatrical Syndicate, perished on the *Lusitania*.”

Paragraph 16 Topic Sentence – New split design theatre was introduced at the turn of the 20th century.

Paragraph 16 Quote – “And so, in the spring of 1915 a well-heeled theatergoer could see a gorgeously mounted production of the Ziegfeld Follies, starring W . C. Fields, Ed Wynn, Ina Claire, and Bert Williams, and then take elevator upstairs to the roof to view a smaller, but less elaborate, revue in a cabaret setting.”

Paragraph 17 Topic Sentence -

Paragraph 17 Quote –

Paragraph 18 Topic Sentence – The “photoplays” rise up and gave the live performances competition.

Paragraph 18 Quote – “Film...The success of Griffith’s film led to more full-length “photoplays,” which in the years to come would provide strong competition for live theater.”

Paragraph 19 Topic Sentence – The future of American drama moved in 1917 from Times Square to Greenwich Village where specialized playhouses developed.

Paragraph 19 Quote – “The Washington square players specialized in the new drama of Europe (Ibsen, Chekhov, Maeterlinck, and the like) while the Neighborhood Playhouse brought modern dance.”

Paragraph 20 Topic Sentence – When hit with hard times, one has to figure out ways in which to overcome the struggles via hard decision making and innovation.

Paragraph 20 Quote – “The loss of Victoria meant that the Palace, built farther north on Broadway in 1913, would now become the city’s premiere vaudeville house...Rialto Theatre, and early movie palace and the first built without a stage.”

Paragraph 21 Topic Sentence – The notion of building groups of work was the time of characterizing as much as possible to make things easier in the future.

Paragraph 21 Quote – “Irving Berlin...had already developed the generic Broadway song which was to characterize all forms of musical entertainment for the next half century. Damon Runyon...was beginning his explorations of local argots in order to evolve the genre of colorful sports reporting that was to characterize the work of generation of writers from Runyon to Hecht to Ling Lardner.”

Paragraph 22 Topic Sentence – Due to constraints and conditional change economically, the architectural Design of the new theatres had to be modified to solve some new problems owners faced.

Paragraph 22 Quote – “The first playhouses...had followed the traditional

configurations...large rectangles with the stage at one of the narrow ends faced by orchestra seating, boxes, and two or more balconies. As times Square real estate became scarce and prohibitively expensive...Spectators were thus brought closer to the stage, and more seats could be fitted into a smaller area..." (128)

Paragraph 23 Topic Sentence – The theatre business seems to shift towards rent and lease system where the owners weren't at risk, but the producers were!

Paragraph 23 Quote – "Constructing theaters or owning long term leases on the involved little financial risk, since owners and managers had legal right to evict any production that was not bringing in a substantial profit. Only the theatrical producer who leased a playhouse for one show or for a season might lose money if the show was forced to close before turning a profit."

Paragraph 24 Topic Sentence – New entertainment businesses move into Times Square.

Paragraph 24 Quote –

Paragraph 25 Topic Sentence – Sadly well known restaurants were forced to shut down.

Paragraph 25 Quote –

Paragraph 26 Topic Sentence – In the late 1920's New York theatre district was very influential on the film industry.

Paragraph 26 Quote –

Paragraph 27 Topic Sentence – The 1929 Stock market crash resulted in the halt of Times Square progression.

Paragraph 27 Quote –