# DIALOGIC FORM, HARMONIC SCHEMATA, AND EXPRESSIVE MEANING IN THE SONGS OF BROADWAY

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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This thesis addresses the matter of convention in Broadway songs of the song and dance era. Composers worked with implicit, regular procedures in the commercial aesthetic of the 1920s and 1930s New York theater industry. However, discussions of formal convention in this repertoire have not gone much beyond the identification of AABA and ABAC forms. I explore how hypermeter and conventional formal layouts act as *schemata*. Through this lens, I advocate for an in-time, listener-based approach to form, attending to the stylistically learned projections and anticipations. Later on, I unpack many of the conventional patterns underlying the ABAC form. I argue that the ABAC form provides a template for climactic musical narratives, which places climaxes near the end of the form. Lastly, I focus on AABA form where I highlight many salient conventions of the AABA form and draw historical connections to AABA forms in rock and jazz.

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To my bothers,

Forrest, Sylvan, and Justice

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

> Most debates about musical form boil down to a single question: what is normative and what is not? Indeed, the greatest challenge in the identification of a new formal type is to define the terms of normativity. What usually happens? What do we expect to happen? (Matthew BaileyShea 2004, 8)

As the above quote suggests, determining normativity is a central goal of most formal analyses. Indeed, hermenutic claims about music largely rest on whether something is normative or not. Often if something is non-normative, we say it is marked, which narrows its potential expressive meaning.[1] In this way, interpreting something as normative or not effects our understanding from both syntactic and semantic standpoints. When a composer writes a piece in a recognized style, he or she is engaging in a dialogue with the norms of that style. This is a concept that James Hepokoski calls "dialogic form.[2]" This view of form is inherently related to what Mark Evan Bonds (1991) calls a "conformational approach.[3]" By analyzing a piece in relation to a flexible set of norms, we can interpret the music with more nuance.

For a dialogic theory of form to have any power, the music in question must constitute a relatively uniform common practice of syntactical procedures with shared vernacular.[4]

[1] Hatten 1994, 36

[2] See Hepokoski and Darcy 2006 and Hepokoski 2009.

[3] Despite Hepokoski's (2009, 72) adamant assertion that dialogic form is distinct from any conformational approach, as Paul Wingfield (2008, 154) points out, Sonata Theory's arrangement of a hierarchy of default options reflects a conformational ideology as actions are interpreted as more or less normative.

[4] Monahan (2015, 17) discusses this at length.

The music considered here, around 100 songs from George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Richard Rodgers, and Jerome Kern between the years of 1920 and 1940, comes from four composers all working in Manhattan writing for Broadway musicals in a narrow time-span.[5] This thesis embarks on an investigation of the normative procedures in the two primary formal designs of this repertoire: the 32-bar ABAC and the AABA. These formal-types function as the "refrain" or "chorus" of the song and are almost always preceded by an introductory "verse." Despite verses already receiving very little analytic attention,[6] I only examine the refrains. Like the late-eighteenth-century sonata form, within these forms "options available from compositional zone to zone existed conceptually within the knowledgeable musical community as something on the order of tasteful generic advice—enabling and constraining guidelines."[7] While form in this music is often considered worthy of little note as song forms were limited and consistent,[8] thematic design interacts in complex ways with harmony, hypermeter, and other stylistically imposed conventions that demand close analytic attention.

This music, the "song-and-dance-era" Broadway song, is particularly suited to this kind of study. As we will see in the Chapter II, certain harmonic schemata and metrical designs pervade the style. Essentially, from small-scale repetition patterns and poetic and harmonic schemata to large scale thematic designs, the Broadway song relies on certain successful formulas. This is an aspect ingrained in the culture of Broadway song writing: the use of familiar devices to produce a large number of songs in a short amount of time. In

[5]I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to Michael Callahan for sharing his own (2013) corpus with me, which has greatly influenced my own.
[6]Berry 1999 is one of few.
[7]Hepokoski and Darcy (2006, 9).
[8]Forte 1995 dedicates only four pages to his chapter on form, for example.

addition to this cultural aesthetic, compositional formulas are ingrained in listeners in the form of schemata. Simply, because of this compositional practice and audience awareness, a theory that centers its attention on these recurring formulas of form, harmony, and text is particularly attractive and fitting for this style.

This era is situated just before the "Golden Age" of American musical theater (1943-1968).[9] During the golden age, forms began to expand "into complex musical scenes fulfilling specific character and plot functions."[10] However, the importance of AABA and ABAC remained in the golden age. In the era preceding the golden age—the song and dance era—the musicals were generally more casual comedies, which, as Kowalke (2013, 137) writes, "were usually little more than a thinly plotted excuse for the presentation of an array of stars, spectacle, and songs." These songs were often taken out of the context of the musical and recorded as stand-alone songs. AABA form first began to appear after the first decade of the twentieth century, immediately prior to the song and dance era. Near the end of the 1910s, 32-bar formal schemata began to take hold.[11] Thus, the songs of the 20s and 30s make for the best case study of form as the practice was largely uniform. Of the countless Broadway composers working at this time, I choose four of the best well-known composers as a representation of a common practice.

Style growth is built in to the definition of dialogic form. One main way this is achieved is through Hepokoski's concept of "deformation," which is a "stretching or distortion of a norm

[9]Kowalke (2013) considers this year span to be the golden age of musical theater in America.
[10]Ibid. 137
[11]Granziano (2013, 96)

beyond its understood limits.[12]" Hepokoski and Darcy argue that what may be a deformation, a novelty at one point in time, may integrate into the style and become a default option in itself. Both Seth Monahan (2015) and Steven Vande Moortele (2013) have drawn attention to Sonata Theory's inconsistency in this regard. For Hepokoski and Darcy, some deformations can readily be incorporated into the norms of the style while others, such as "sonata failure" remain deformations even after they have attained apparent default status.[13] Despite stylistic developments during this time,[14] I study this corpus as if it were static and not evolving. Where necessary I will point out developments.

**Broadway's Influence on Rock and Jazz**

The song-and-dance Broadway song (henceforth *Broadway song*) is situated among the primary forerunners to both rock and jazz. In the 1930s Broadway songs were quickly incorporated into the jazz scene. The many contrafacts (new songs based on the harmonies of another song) of the Bebop movement greatly attest to this. The most popular song to contrafact was of course George Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm," which now has thousands of contrafacts all under the label of "rhythm changes." However, jazz not only adopted many of Broadway songs, but many of the formal designs and harmonic schemata as well into its original compositions. AABA form is perhaps most famous as a jazz formal design. It is not difficult to imagine a lineage of AABA form (or ABAC) from the Broadway composers, as well as Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, and other black composers of the time, to later hard

[12]Hepokoski and Darcy (2006, 11)
[13]Darcy (1997) grants sonata failure deformation status despite it being a first-level default for Brucker.
[14]Graziano (2013) points out many developments in harmonic schemata in bridge sections during this time.

bop composers like Lee Morgan, Horace Silver, Hank Mobley, among many others.[15] While the sequential ordering of themes is perhaps the most essential feature of AABA form, form itself is much more than a large thematic ordering.[16] In the Broadway song, AABA form features certain conventions surrounding the relationships among the A sections. This aspect of AABA is deemphasized in the hard bop AABA. The compositional options are dictated by different conventions as well. In the Broadway song, the most common option for the 8-bar A section theme-type is the sentence. In hard bop, while the sentence remains an option, more common are "riff-based" A sections such as Bobby Timmons' "Moanin'."[17]

The Broadway song was also crucially influential to rock as well. This is most obviously the case with AABA form.[18] The AABA form dominanted much of early rock music as was especially the case with the early Beatles.[19] Trevor de Clercq (2011) highlights the relationship between this thematic ordering to many of the forms in rock music. Example I.1 replicates de Clercq's Example 4.4.34, which shows how AABA derived schemes relate to various formal functions. Also, the recently much discussed "Srdc" of rock music bears a striking resemblance to many of the sentences in Broadway songs.[20] As Jay Summach (2011) argues, the origins of rock's prechorus lies in the expansion of the Srdc.[21] Lastly, as will be

[15] This lineage need not really be "imagined," as there is much evidence supporting it. However, to my knowledge this historical thread has not been studied in much detail despite many allusions to it.

[16] BaileyShea (2003, 48) in his discussion of the sentence, advocates for a separation between the essential features of the form and the options and pitch-based material that bring the form to life.

[17] "Riff-based" is Henry Martin's (2011) term.

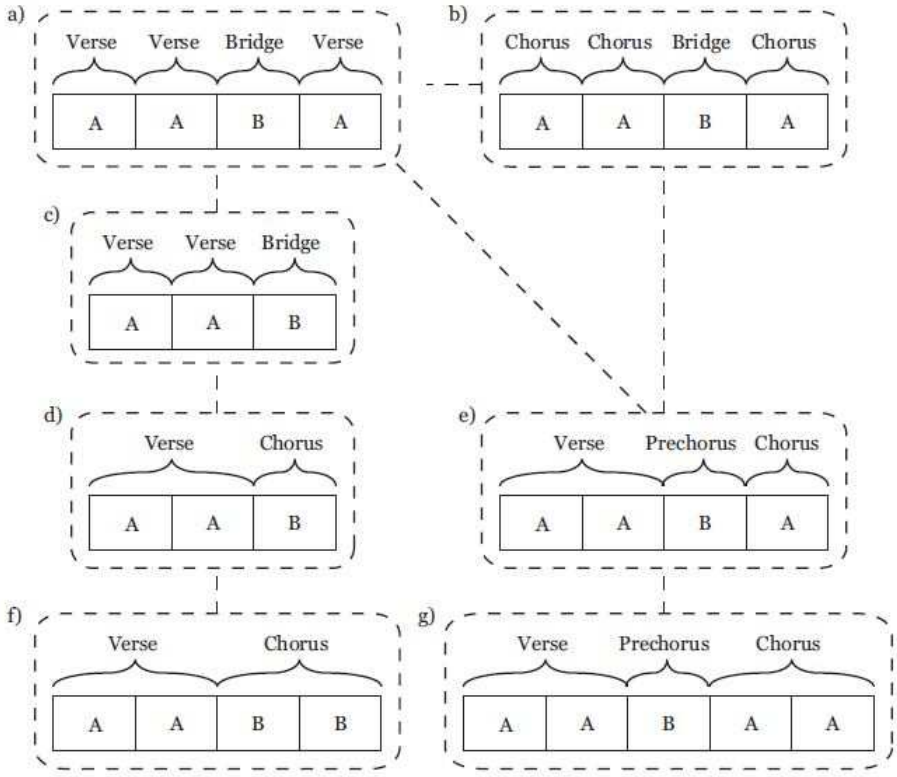
[18] John Covach (2005, 69-71) includes a brief discussion comparing and contrasting AABA forms from rock and the Tin Pan Alley.

[19] Nobile 2011

[20] This especially true of what de Clercq (2012, 186) calls the "Classic 8-bar A section." On Srdc, see also Everett (2001), Nobile (2011 and 2014), and Summach (2011).

[21] de Clercq (2012) similarly calls attention to the Srdc and its relationships to other formal functions, though his claims are not historical.

suggested in Chapter V, theme-type and harmonic schemata make the transition to rock music as well.




**Example I.1:** de Clercq's (2012) Relationships between AABA-derived schemes and section roles.

The development of these forms and schemata into these other genres is neither linear nor what Carl Dahlhaus has called circumpoler.[22] Seth Monahan (2015, 19) writes that in linear models of development "compositional devices follow a natural life span through novelty, normalcy, and finally cliché." In the circumpolar model some concepts continue to have direct influence on later generations. The linear model is an intra-genre model of development. Jazz and rock both appropriate some of the forms and conventions from Broadway composers. The traditions are clearly distinct, which means the linear model cannot apply. Here the

[22]Seth Monahan (2015, 19–20) discusses both these models of historical development in considering the significance of sonata failure in Mahler's symphonies.

circumpoler model also does not apply as the main tonal goals of the Broadway style are significantly diminished.

Despite their clear importance, Broadway songs have received very little theoretical attention. Of the few studies that have focused on this repertoire, they have largely been analytic, not theoretical.[23] In addition, these studies have mainly focused on voice-leading structure through the lens of Schenkerian analysis. One notable exception to this is Michael Callahan's (2013) "Sentential Lyric-Types in the Great American Songbook," which is arguably the most significant discussion of form in Broadway songs to date. Callahan draws attention to the frequency of sentences in the Broadway song and highlights some of the lyric strategies used in coordination with the sentence. He focuses on low-level formal units, without discussing larger forms. Due to its crucial influence on the development of other genres and its status among the many understudied repertoires, the songs of Broadway need a theory focused on compositional options, and thus done here.

### On High points and Climax

A central idea in this thesis is that Broadway songs tend to more towards climactic moments near their ends. This idea is related to James Hepokoski's (1993, 26) concept of "teleological genesis," Brad Osborn's (2013) "terminally climactic form," Mark Spicer's (2004) "accumulative form," and Frank Samarotto's (2012) "trope of expectancy/infinity." In the Broadway song, such climaxes typically involve dramatically recomposing earlier material,

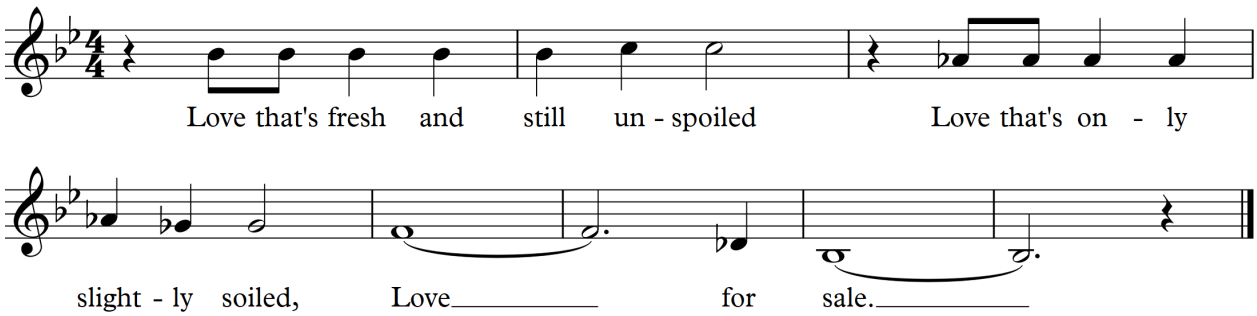
[23] These studies include Forte 1993, 1995, and 2011, Gilbert 1995, Berry 1999, Shaftel 1999, and Buchler 2009. Graziano 2013 and Ramage 2014 offer much more in the way of theorizing about this music. Graziano in particular draws attention to several important bridge schemas.

or rather an earlier rotation. A rotational form is a design that utilizes an ordered sequence of themes that is subsequently repeated in order over the course of the piece.[24] Though active on only a very small scale, AABA and ABAC forms can be seen to be in dialogue with the principle of rotation. For AABA forms, the initial $A^1$ section introduces the material which is subsequently repeated. $A^2$ then repeats, varies, or develops the material from $A^1$. Lastly, $A^3$ often (though not always) delivers the climax of the form. The B section, by definition, departs from the A material and therefore departs from the rotation principle. ABAC forms feature only two rotations. The B sections tend to end in a half cadence. Thus, the onset of the second A section sets us on the track towards the final PAC. Listeners versed in the style begin to wonder "how are we going to get there?" The drama of the song revolves around *necessary recomposition* of prior material for climactic and closing purposes.

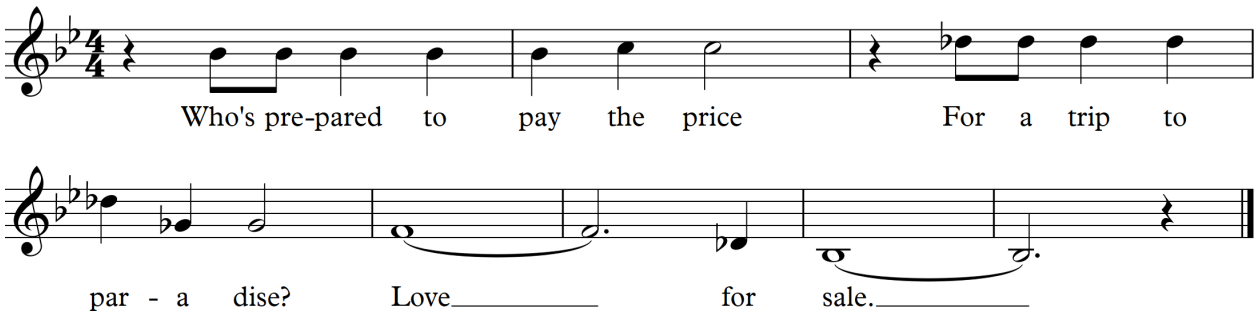
One may wonder why I invoke the concept of rotation to these small, rather straightforward thematic organizations. It is through this principle that I hope to show how the small-scale cycling through thematic ideas relates to a narrative of culmination. To illustrate this kind of climactic narrative, consider Cole Porter's 1930 "Love for Sale," set in 64-bar AABA form. Each A section is laid out as a sentence. Example I.2 shows the continuation modules for each of the A sections. Each continuation begins with fragmentation, two-bar units instead of the four-bar units from their presentations. In $A^1$, the second two-bar unit, set to the words "Love that's only slightly spoiled," moves down from the initial two-bar unit. The cadential module, set to the words "Love for Sale," falls even lower in register. In $A^2$, the

[24]The concept of rotation has taken storm in the theoretical community over the past few decades. See Hepokoski and Darcy (2006, 611–14) for an extended discussion of rotation. Other studies include Hepokoski 1993, Darcy 1997 and 2001, Rodgers 2009, and Monahan 2015, and many others.

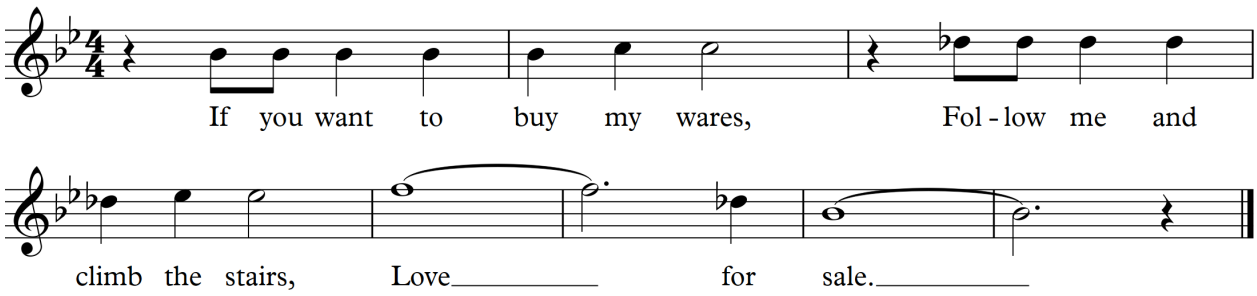
a) $A^1$ Continuation




b) $A^2$ Continuation




c) $A^3$ Continuation




**Example I.2:** Cole Porter, "Love for Sale" (1930): A process leading to climax in $A^3$.

second two-bar unit hints at an ascent before again falling to the low register. Finally, $A^3$ ascends in the second two-bar unit (a very common strategy) leading to a high point at the beginning of the cadential module and a cadence in a higher register.[25] Here, the last rotation achieves its climax through a manipulation of prior material into a melodic high point. This process first began in $A^1$ as it laid the materials for subsequent elaboration and growth in later rotations. This kind of narrative is extremely common among AABA forms, though not every AABA form utilizes this rhetorical strategy. The climactic narrative, however, is built into the very fabric of ABAC forms.

Much of the drama of these forms centers around the strategic deployment of certain techniques to deliver the climax. As listeners, we might listen for specific signals that cue the move towards climax and PAC. This is typically a process of dissolution. In ABAC forms, one option is for $A^2$ to remain the same as $A^1$ while C begins with B material before dissolving into climactic material.[26] This dissolution can also be hinted at in $A^2$ such that C does not recall any material from B. AABA forms that employ the climactic narrative concept tend to dissolve into high points in $A^3$. These *turning points* signal one process abruptly moving into other. Though thematic manipulations and high points are important in achieving the

[25]Buchler (2009) reads this ascent as an *initial ascent* to a *kopfton*, something the previous A sections were unable to accomplish. Buchler reads this song as departing from norms of the style and that the"structural departures were not simply motivated by relatively obvious concerns for text painting." Here he is referring to the lyrics "follow me and climb the stairs" set to the ascent. While "Love for Sale" is striking in many ways, especially its minor tonality, a rarity in the style, this process of ascension in $A^3$ is one of several common dramatic recompositional strategies. Thus, I read this not as a "structural departure," but rather, in dialogue with common procedures of the style.

[26]The idea of dissolving types comes Hepokoski and Darcy (2006), especially chapters IV and VI. See also BaileyShea (2003 and 2004) on dissolving continuations. This processual thinking stems from Janet Schmalfeldt's (2011) book *In the Process of Becoming*, whose central concept was highly influential long before the publication of book. William Caplin (1998) cites the book as forthcoming in his own book which preceded Schmalfeldt's by thirteen years.

climax affect, equally important is the appearance of certain harmonic schemata. Openings of sections generally feature relatively more characteristic material, which then dissolves into conventional schemata.[27]

**Thesis Summary**

I have three main goals in this thesis: to lay a Broadway-specific theoretical groundwork for a dialogic theory of form, to construct a dialogic theory of form based on close analysis of various conventions, and to demonstrate the hermeneutic potential of my theory through close analyses of songs. I address these goals in Chapters II–IV. In Chapter II, I advocate for a dynamic model of form that interprets hypermeter and conventional formal layouts as *schemata*—cognitive patterns that are learned through experiences in certain contexts. I begin the chapter by arguing that entrained listeners rely heavily on hypermeter for formal orientation. The consistency of hypermetrical practice has lead some to conflate form and meter in Broadway songs, as 32-bar forms pervade the style. The pairing of this rigid metrical scheme to the AABA and ABAC thematic schemes has important ramifications for listeners. Meter provides a solid grounding for thematic and harmonic schemata. Later in the chapter I then unpack the idea of formal function and the criteria that go into a form-functional interpretation. I argue that manipulations of thematic similarity relation, harmony, parametric state, and syntactical ordering give rise to form-functional expression.

[27]This process of characteristic material dissolving into conventional material is called "liquidation" (Caplin 1998, 11).

Chapters III and IV outline my theory of dialogic form for the Broadway song. In Chapter III, I focus on the ABAC form. I touch on theme-type, lyric structure, cadential options, harmonic schemata, and musical narrative. I note that in ABAC forms $A^1$ and B together (as well as $A^2$ and C) form a single structure with its own initiating and closing functions. I also point out *necessary recomposition* as an underlying impulse in ABAC forms, in which AC sections necessarily climax and cadence on tonic because the preceding AB section was unable to accomplish these tasks. In contrast to ABAC, each of the sections of AABA are typically functions satified by a single theme-type, an organizational scheme with its own initiating and closing functions. I highlight the complex relationships between A sections and the tendency for *dramatic recomposition*—recomposing prior material for climactic purposes.

# CHAPTER II

# A DYNAMIC MODEL OF FORM

In many ways the AABA and ABAC formal types of Broadway resemble familiar common practice procedures. As I argue in the next chapter, it is helpful to understand the ABAC as akin to the parallel period. Similarly, AABA superficially resembles rounded binary form and what Rothstein (1989, 107) has called the "quatrain." While these heuristic comparisons lend insight into the basic structuring of these formal types, they miss some important nuances. Namely, these two types are almost always thirty-two bars long. The quatrain and rounded binary themselves imply no hypermetrical organization. The frequency of the 32-bar metrical scheme has drawn a close association between the scheme and Broadway. Ignoring the thematic designs altogether, Moore (2012) refers simply to the "tin pan alley 32-bar form." The pairing of this rigid metrical scheme to the AABA and ABAC thematic schemes has important ramifications for listeners. As I will argue in this chapter, listeners couch their temporal orientation on hypermeter and harmonic/melodic schemata. Basic harmonic and thematic expectations are foregrounded in hypermetrical projection.

Whether conceived of as a generative or conformational concept, form pertains to the temporal organization of a work. A formal function is an expression of the temporality of a group. Formal function and grouping structure are typically congruent in classical music (Caplin 1998, 4). Formal functions are static objects, encompassing the entirety of the groups that express them. This notion of form is in line with the conceptual metaphor of FORM AS

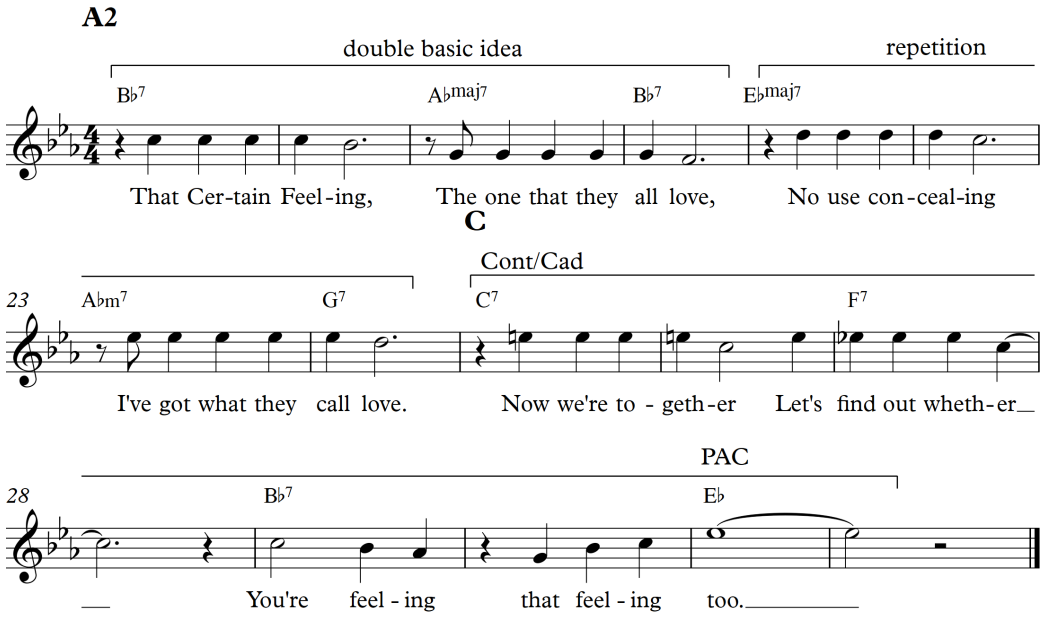
CONTAINER.[1] Countless linguistic expressions support this metaphor: "the last cadence *in* the exposition," "we're *in* the development," among many others.While formal functions are conceptually satisfying, they only go so far in modeling listener's in-time orientations and expectations. In particular, formal functions face challenges when surface disturbances that alter our modes of attending appear mid group, as occurs routinely in Broadway songs.[2]

Consider Gershwin's (1925) "That Certain Feeling." Example II.1 shows the $A^2$ and C sections (the consequent) of the ABAC form. Having heard this material before in the antecedent, listeners not only project even four-bar hypermeasures, but they actively anticipate specific melodic and harmonic material. $A^2$ clearly expresses presentation function through its four-bar double basic idea and its four-bar repetition.[3] The repetition here further intensifies the sense of initiation begun in the basic idea (Caplin 2004, 59). More importantly, though, the first part of $A^2$ poses no disruption to what I call the *retracing process*. Until m. 23, listeners are retracing the temporal model of $A^1$ without issue. In m. 23, the melody's high ascent beyond its antecedent model paired with a salient iv chord (A♭m7), redirecting the temporal flow. This gesture is an instance of what Hatten (2004, 136) has called a "rhetorical gesture," an embodied energetic shaping that disrupts the temporal flow and causes "shifts in levels of discourse." Despite the fact that repetitions tend to intensify initiating function, this rhetorical gesture radically directs our attention towards the ensuing material, bringing

[1]For information on conceptual metaphor theory, see Lakoff and Johnson 1980. For conceptual metaphor theory and music, see Zbikowski 2002 and Cox 2016.

[2]While my concern is with formal function, not voice leading structure, Forte (1995, 41) similarly points out that "In general, it is important to recognize that the components of the template form—in particular, the two-bar group and the four-bar phrase—do not delimit motions of larger span, such as long lines and harmonic progressions. In fact, more often than not, harmonic progressions override those surface groupings."

[3]See Vande Moortele (2011, 134) on "double basic ideas."




**Example II.1:** George Gershwin, "That Certain Feeling" (1925): Form-functional signs overlapping.

the retracing process to an abrupt halt. The motion from A♭m7 to G7 initiates a familiar harmonic progression. Along with hypermeter, listeners anticipate harmonic assignments at certain metrical locations.[4] This new mode of attending cuts across the meter and grouping, declaring a new formal function of sorts. Because of listener's familiarity with the 32-bar scheme, there is no doubt that the final cadence will come in m. 30 and there is little doubt that the harmonic schema now being attended to will take us there. At the beginning of the C section, the cadence is too distant from the psychological present to be actively anticipated. Instead, harmony and meter present listeners with an emerging formal function.

This reading of "That Certain Feeling" highlights a possible way that a listener might navigate the passage based on their procedural knowledge of Broadway songs. In this song, the static conception of formal function fails to capture the response of the historical listener,

[4]I use harmonic "assignments" so as not to confuse with the many connotations of harmonic functions.

versed in the types and norms of the style. In this study, I begin by examining the metrical norms of the Broadway song. The rest of the chapter details how harmonic and thematic schemata work in concert with meter to generate the expectations and anticipations of historical listeners. I close with a few remarks about how my dynamic model of form relates to other ideas of form as process.

### Phrase Structure and Meter

Like form in the Broadway song, meter is remarkably consistent. As a consequence, meter has garnered little examination. The large-scale outer forms of these songs, with few exceptions, fit squarely into neat 16-, 32-, and 64-bar forms with clear four-bar hypermeasures. Because of this, the concept of meter as a "grid" has a certain appeal. As Love (2013) writes of jazz music, "The view of meter as a passive receptacle for rhythm does a good job of describing metrical convention and the metrical hierarchy in jazz, but it runs into trouble when taken too literally as a model for perception." Because of meter's schematized layout, metrical orientation is closely linked to form-functional orientation and harmonic expectation. Because of these close connections, the relation of tonal function and metrical accent as well as phrase rhythm are highly conventionalized.

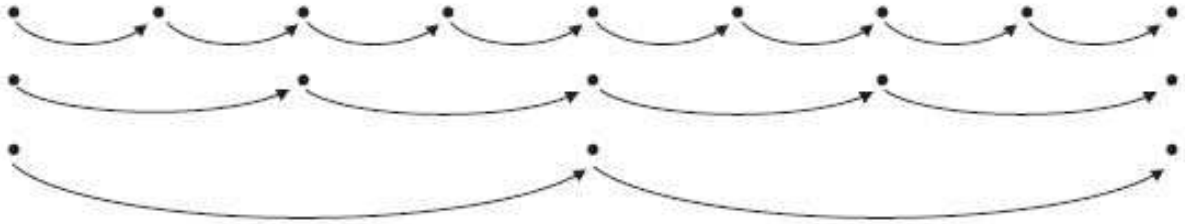
Meter is typically understood as a hierarchy of periodicities, alternating strong and weak beats.[5] Lerdahl and Jackendoff (1983) discuss this concept of meter most clearly. Though the perception of meter differs at different levels, conceptually, the metrical hierarchy is

[5]This is contrast to some historical views on meter. Riemann for instance, viewed meter as the alternation of week and strong beats respectively. Thus, in Riemann's view, the cadence always occurs on a strong beat.

continuous; any beat on a higher level exists on a lower level. Lerdahl and Jeckendoff posit three kinds of accents: phenomenal, structural, and metrical. Phenomenal accents are "any event at the musical surface that gives emphasis or stress to a moment in the musical flow" (17). A structural accent is an accent caused by "harmonic/melodic points of gravity in a phrase or section." Lastly, a metrical accent has to do with the relative metrical weight of a beat. Once a listener determines a recurring pattern, they create an accent at the anticipated moment of recurrence. This accent exists even when no event is realized. The metrical analyses of Lerdahl and Jackendoff represent only the final state.

In stark contrast to this view of meter as grid is Hasty's (1997) theory of meter as projection. Projective potential is the potential for a duration of a current event to be replicated by the event that directly follows (84). Hasty's theory focuses on the in-time processing of meter rather than the final state. Essentially, Hasty argues that listeners do not passively wait for beats, but rather they actively anticipate (project) the ensuing beat. Mirka (2009) pairs Hasty's projections with Lerdahl and Jackendoff's metrical grid with her "projective hierarchy," shown in Example II.2. In this example, we project the shortest durations while simultaneously projecting longer durations. In Hasty's writings, a projection is represented by a dotted arrow. A realized projection is represented by a solid arrow. The idea of a projective hierarchy was first advanced by Jackendoff (1991).

Mirka argues that there are two stages of metrical processing: finding meter and monitoring meter. Monitoring meter is achieved once several hierarchical metrical levels are projecting. Mirka argues that the process of finding meter involves the "parallel multuiple-



**Example II.2:** A hierarchy of projections (Mirka [2009], Example 1.12, p. 19).

choice processor," which evaluates metrical interpretations unconsciously and selects the best interpretation. Mirka's hypothetical listeners typically entrain metrical levels rather slowly, often multiple seconds. Love (2015), offering his own "cyclical model of hypermetrical perception," treats hypermeter as a schema. The dominant quadruple norm of hypermeter puts listeners in the position to actively seek out hyperdownbeats. He writes [3.1], "The most common signals for a four-bar hyperdownbeat are a new phrase or group, and a significant harmonic change. Significantly, these cues can only be recognized after they have occurred, in retrospect." This retrospective focus stems from what Jones et al. (2002, 313) have called "reactive attending." Projections relate to "anticipatory attending." In this study, I adopt Love's cyclical model.

The refrain sections of Broadway songs are typically preceded by an introductory verse, which often end with some rhetorical pause. Because of this pause, hypermetrical entrainment starts anew at the onset of the refrain. Through reactive attending, listeners locate the beginning of refrain as the hyperdownbeat. From this downbeat stems a series of hierarchical projections. At hypermetrical levels, listeners project the one-measure duration, the two-measure duration, and the subsequent hyperdownbeat four measures into the future. Depending on the tempo, this long duration is the threshold of metrical perception. Love

writes on the limits of metrical perception (2015, [3.4]), "Though the evidence is equivocal, two points seem fairly certain. First, there is some limit on the maximum perceptible metrical span, likely ten seconds or less; this limit relates to the 'psychological present,' the several-second window of sensory information directly bearing on perception, its leading edge at the true present."

As in jazz music, metrical levels above the tactus are extremely regular. Hypothetically, hypermeter in Broadway extends deeper than it does in most common-practice music. Outside of the relatively uncommon cases of phrase expansion in the final sections of songs,[6] hypermetric alterations almost never occur. Love (2013, 53) has argued that meter extends so deep in jazz that whole 32-bar forms are hypermeasures. Because of the temporal limits of the psychological present, these deeper levels of regularity are not metrical in the same sense as Love's (2015) quadruple cycle as there are no projections beyond roughly ten seconds. Thus, higher and lower embodied metrical accents cannot readily be differentiated at these supposed deeper levels of meter. Love (2013, 51) speculates that "one perceives the regularity of such time-spans through the learned skill of unconscious accumulation of smaller spans." I suspect that listeners are aware of these accumulations, even if they lie outside of the projected future.

In the Broadway song, the tactus is the lowest level of regularity. Because of this, most syncopated rhythms do not threaten the perceived meter. In performance, instrumental accompaniments provide a stable platform of metrical entrainment, which continues to realize

[6]See for example, Gershwin's (1931) "Love is Sweeping the Country" and Kern's (1939) "All the Things You Are."

projections and stimulate further projections. The subtle syncopations of the vocal line do little in the way of disrupting the entrained meter. Temperley (1999, 26) argues a similar case in rock: "we do not simply disregard, or override, melodic syncopations in our judgments of metre, indeed, syncopated rhythms often seem to reinforce the metre of a song rather than conflicting with it."

Not only are AABA and ABAC forms thematic organizations, but because they are nearly always 16, 32, or 64 bars long, these forms are just as much hypermetric schemes. In AABA, each letter represents a phrase, with a cadence in either its seventh or eighth bar. In contrast, ABAC forms typically divide into two phrases. In this genre, hypermeter is conceptually prior to other domains often considered to generate hypermeter. As Love (2011, 28) writes on jazz, "No longer can grouping and tonal structure be said to determine hypermeter, as they do in classical music. Rather, a composer might set out from the start to write a thirty-two-bar song in eight-bar sections, or intuitively follow this model, and then craft the tonal and grouping structure to fit the hypermeter." Outside of phrase expansion, there can be no metrically loose-knit phrases.

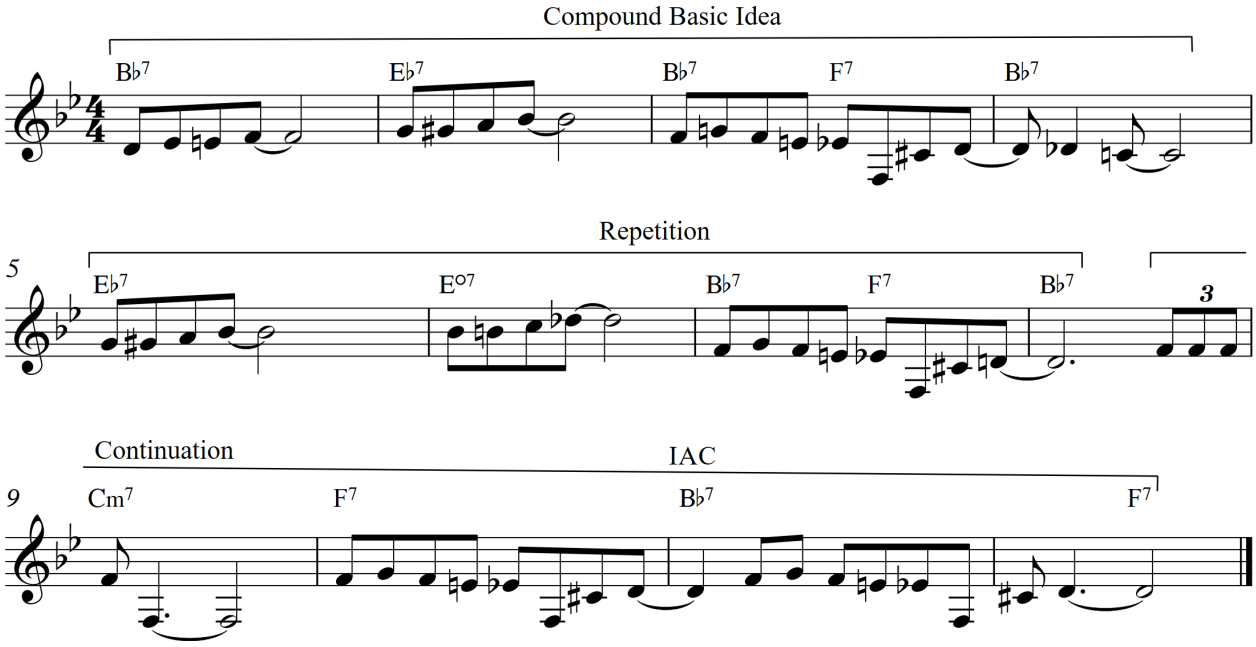
To summarize, metrical perception in the psychological present relies on reactive and anticipatory attending in a narrow time frame, around ten seconds at the most. Nonetheless, listeners may be aware of longer metrical schemata that add a larger dimension to their listening. While syncopation is a typical feature at the surface, these rhythmic disturbances do not threaten the established meter and as Temperley would argue, often support it. Some very typical metrical alterations in common-practice music such as elision (the reinterpreting

of a weak beat as a strong beat) are impossible in the refrain sections of Broadway songs. The fact that ABAC and AABA are not just thematic schemes, but are all exactly the same number of measures attests to the schematic concept of meter in these songs.

Because of these features, formal perception is closely tied to metrical perception.[7] Navigating the temporality of music relies as much on meter as it does on other dimensions we typically associate with form. The 12-bar blues is a classic example. In contrast to most formal types, the extent to which the blues constitutes a "form" is predicated entirely on a loose harmonic schema and a tight-knit metrical schema. While there are often common thematic regularities (the sentence with a "missing middle"[8]), such features are characteristic rather than defining. Example II.3 shows Thelonious Monk's "Blue Monk." To the blind listener hearing Thelonious Monk, generic expectations would likely allow the blues as a possible option. The processor actively looks for a hyperdownbeat to initiate the cycle. Through reactively attending in the opening bar, the beginning of m. 1 suits the criteria and m. 1 is selected as the cyclic downbeat. The typical schema of opening on tonic and immediately moving to IV in the second measure initiates the expectation of a blues. The return to tonic harmony in m. 3 provides further evidence that this schema is indeed what we are hearing. From this point in time, we might anticipate a motion to IV on the following hyperdownbeat in m. 5. Upon realizing the projection and the harmonic expectation, the processor projects the following hyperbeats and the expectation of tonic

[7]Ng (2012) discusses hypermetrical norms and their relationships to formal norms in the Classical style. However, the relationship is much more tight-knit in the Broadway song.

[8]The blues regularly lays out as a compound basic idea + repetition and a cadential module. Matthew Riley (2011) has used the term "sentence with missing middle" to describe sentences that omit continuation function and proceed directly to cadential function.




**Example II.3:** Thelonious Monk, "Blue Monk": generic blues layout.

return in m. 7. The realization of these expectations leads to further expectations of a cadential progression on the subsequent hyperdownbeat. The last hypermeasure sees the anticipation of the cadence in m. 11. After reactively assigning m. 1 as the cyclic downbeat and initiation of the blues schema, listeners versed in the style are likely aware the whole time of the accumulated hypermetrical organization, but in-time expectations are governed by the psychological present.

Form refers to the thematic organization and meter describes the abstraction of regular beats. The intertwining of these different modes or attending—meter and form— is most obvious at the level of the phrase. The term phrase is often used to describe two entirely separate concepts: a neutral term for grouping around four bars long (as advocated by Caplin 1998 and 2004) and a tonal motion (as suggested by Rothstein 1989). For Caplin, through the processes discussed later in this chapter, phrases express different formal functions. For

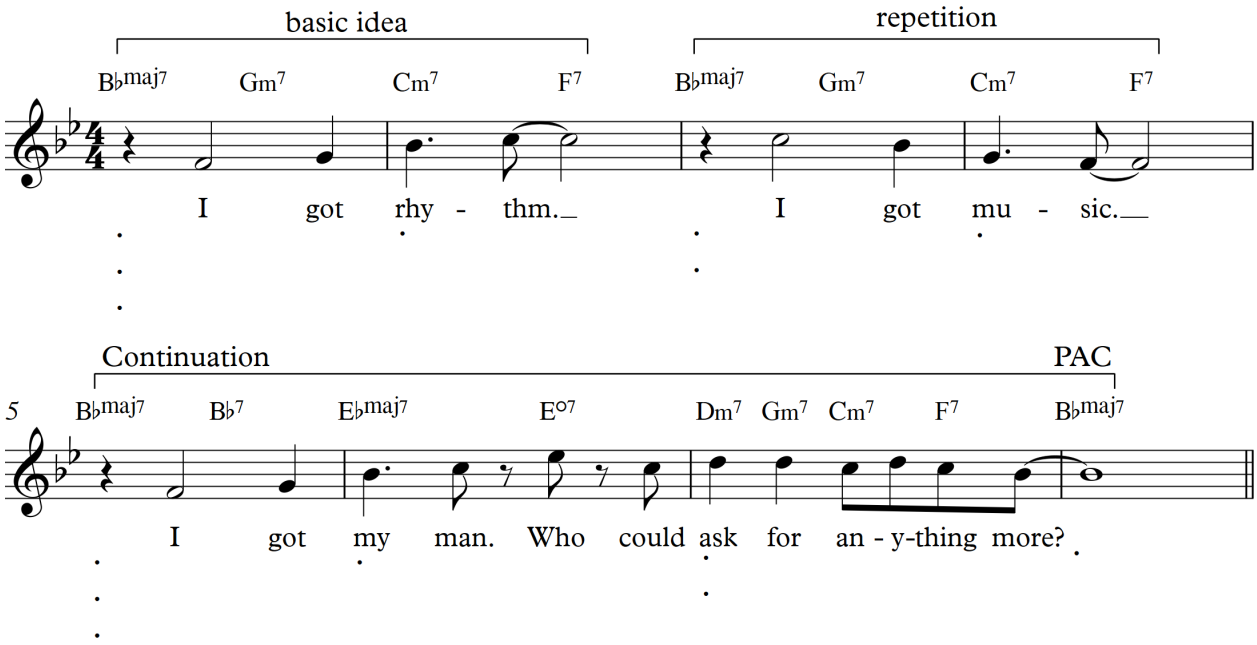
Rothstein, a phrase involves a tonal motion. Because of this definition, there is no upper limit to the potential length of a phrase, but there is a minimum length.[9] As both these definitions were devised in instrumental music, they omit text as a contributor to phrase formation.[10] In this thesis, I follow Attas (2011, 6) in defining a phrase as a "musical unit with goal-directed motion towards a clear conclusion, created through the manipulation of text, harmony, rhythm, and melodic contour" with the addition that phrases tend to end in cadence.

While phrases are structurally end-accented by the cadence, meter is beginning accented, moving between peaks of attention perceived consciously as metrical accents. Here the motions of beginning-accented meter and end-accented phrase cohere. William Rothstein (1989, 28) writes,

> Meter, at any level, moves away from and toward downbeats, and a downbeat is simultaneously the beginning of a new metrical unit. Phrases, periods, and ultimately whole pieces move toward tonal goals-that is, toward endings. The two kinds of motion—beginning-accented meter and goal-oriented phrase—coexist in a state of creative tension.

[9] Chapter 1 or his *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music*, Rothstein analyzes the first 32-bars of the Strauss' *The Blue Danube* as a single phrase.

[10] See Attas (2011) for a detailed discussion of concepts of phrase in popular music.

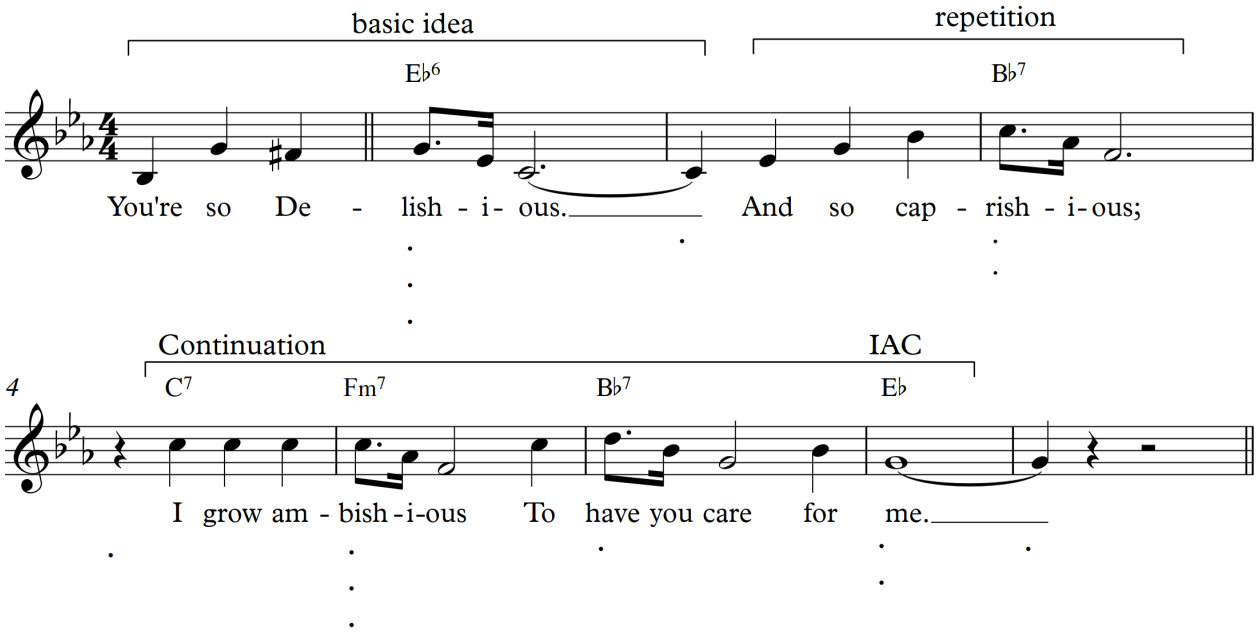



**Example II.4:** George Gershwin, "I got rhythm" (1930): Expanded cadential progression leading to a cadence in m. 8.

As he later elaborates, because these features are distinct from one another, ends of phrases often align with the ends of hypermeasures without issue.[11] Put another way, metrical accents and structural accents need not and often do not line up.

For Rothstein (1989) the goal of the motion or cadence concludes the phrase; similarly in this study, the cadence marks the end of the phrase except when cadences occur in the middle of a four-bar hypermeasure. In such cases, the phrase encompasses the entirety of the hypermeasure. This is an essential addition to keep phrase a useful formal term. For example, Examples II.4 and II.5 show two eight-bar phrases, each an eight-bar A section from an AABA form. In "I Got Rhythm," a lengthy cadential progression leads to a cadence

[11] An emphasis on structural accent has led Riemann and others to view the cadence as always occurring on a strong hypermetric beat. Riemann understands meter as the alternation of weak and strong beats. On the other hand, Schenker's notion of meter was more inline with Lerdahl and Jackendoff's views. However, Schenker believed that the hypermeter could not extend beyond the phrase boundary. Caplin (1980, 1983, and 2011) discusses 18th-century views on structural accent and metrical accent.




**Example II.5:** George Gershwin, "Delishious": cadence in m. 7.

in m. 8. In "Delishious," the phrase cadences in m. 7. Measure 8 prolongs the tonic arrival in m. 7. These are both eight-bar phrases despite the discrepancy in cadence location. The arrival of the cadence by itself does not close the phrase. Only the cadence paired with the completion of a hypermetric cycle causes closure for a phrase.

The discrepancy in cadence location for Examples II.4 and II.5 highlights a crucial difference between how cadences are treated in the Broadway song and in other repertoires. Rothstein (2008 and 2011) has drawn attention to the different ways meter and group are treated in different countries in the nineteenth-century. While Germans align grouping structure to be beginning-accented, the French and Italians align grouping to be out of phase with the meter, creating end-accented phrases. This difference results in *German hypermeter* following a **1**–2–3–4 pattern while *Franco-Italian hypermeter* follows a 2–3–4–**1** pattern. Broadway songs tend to follow what Rothstein (2008, 116) has called *neutral barring*,

which places beginnings of phrases near hyperdownbeats and places cadences on downbeats. Cadences will always fall on downbeats. The cadence in the last hyperbeat of a four-bar hypermeasure, as exemplified by Example II.4, is an extremely normative feature of German music. A much more common option in the Broadway song is to cadence in hyperbeat 3 of last four-bar hypermeasure, as demonstrated by Example II.5. I will call hyperbeat 3 cadences *semi-strong cadences* and hyperbeat 4 *weak cadences*. These labels refer only to the perceived metrical accent, not syntactical strength.

While we now know where cadences belong on the dynamic metrical grid, the cadence definition requires clarification. Blombach (1987) calls for a broad definition of cadence with applicability to many styles. On the other hand, Caplin (2004, 51) argues, "Though such an inclusive definition of cadence has its attractions, a contrary approach might ultimately prove more useful—namely, to focus on a relatively narrow, stylistically unified repertory, one in which most historians recognize cadence as a central feature." Thus, the cadence definition I use here is centered on the stylistic traits of Broadway. Forte (1995), Gilbert (1995), and Buchler (2009) have all expressed a focus on cadence in the Broadway song through their use of Schenkerian analysis.

First and foremost, a cadence is an end. Formal boundaries are prescribed by the metrical scheme, limiting the possible locations of a cadence to only the end of eight-bar sections. A cadence then is a harmonic motion that occurs in the last two measures of an eight-bar section—a necessarily rhythmic definition. Many theorists invoke the notion of cadence to high levels formal organization. Lerdahl and Jackendoff (1983, 233) posit that units closed by

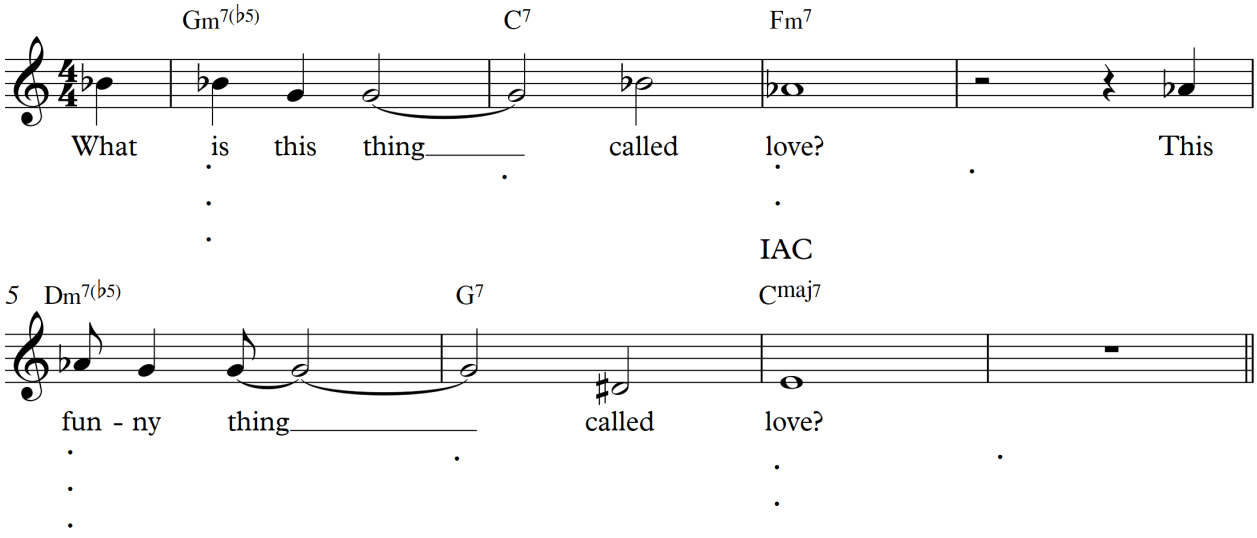
cadences (their "cadenced group") reach the highest levels of formal organization. Hepokoski and Darcy (2006) claim that in sonata form, the exposition proper is closed by the "essential expositional closure," the first acceptable PAC in the secondary key. On the other hand, cadences only close a theme or some component of a theme for Caplin (2004). My usage of cadence most closely resembles Caplin's.

Traditionally, cadence is tied closely to specific progressions, requiring certain "cadential content."[12] In the classical style, for an authentic cadence, the cadential arrival is comprised of a V–I motion. However, a V–I motion is necessary but not sufficient to be an authentic cadence. The question then becomes how to distinguish between V–I motions that are cadences and those that are not. For this, we rely on the notion of harmonic function. Nobile (2016) highlights three main usages of the term harmonic function: function as progression (how a chord moves to the next), function as category (for example, all V chords are called dominant), and function as syntax (how a chord functions in a formal unit). There are four syntactical functions: opening tonic (T), predominant (PD), dominant (D), and closing tonic (T). Traditionally, function as syntax heavily relies on function as category. Caplin (2004, 56) writes, "the harmonic content of the cadence—the cadential progression—is highly constrained." For rock music, Nobile separates function as category completely from his definition of syntactical function. As these functional harmonies are tied to formal locations, they express their function through formal context rather than chord identity. Meter plays an important role in this process.

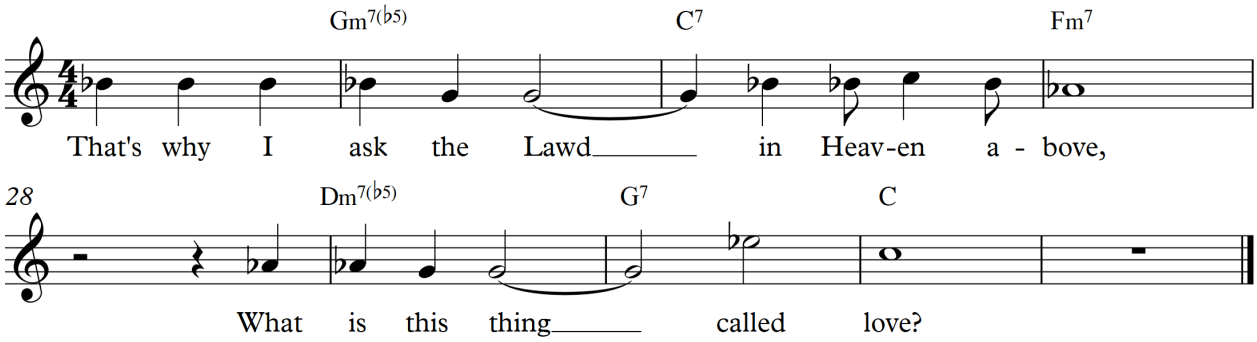
[12]See Caplin (2004).

As meter is central to the ways of attending to form, meter overtakes harmony as the primary way of articulating formal ends. While in classical music a phrase would not satisfactorily be closed without a cadence, many ABAC B sections in particular attenuate any sense of harmonic closure to the extent that not all B sections do cadence. The attenuated harmonic closure does not weaken the sense that B sections have formal closure. A sections in AABA form can pose similar theoretical issues. Example II.6 shows the opening A section to Porter's (1929) "What is This Thing Called Love." The section contains a compound basic idea (cbi) and an immediate repetition. The two harmonic progressions of these groups are categorically identical: the cbi features a ii–V–i in F minor and the repetition features a ii–V–I in C major. This A section closely resembles an A section from an ABAC form in that it comprises a cbi + repetition. The thematic configuration would suggest a kind of presentation—an initiating function. The A-as-initiating interpretation faces problems upon its repetition in the second A section. If $A^1$ remains open, than does $A^2$ end openly as well? An open A section goes against basic intuition that AABA form comprises four self contained themes and against the norm that many A sections are sentences and clearly conclude with cadences. The issue of "What is this Thing Called Love?" and many songs like it is more theoretical than practical. Only in equating harmonic closure with formal closure does "What is this Thing Called Love?" pose a problem.

With closure on $\hat{1}$, the V–I motion that ends the song is inherently stronger and is much less questionably cadential (Example II.7). The cadential gesture of the leap to a high point marks this moment as much rhetorical as it is syntactical. I do not question the validity of the cadence concept in general in the Broadway song, but rather I argue that its function




**Example II.6:** Cole Porter, "What is this thing called love," mm. 1–8: meter marking the second progression as cadential.




**Example II.7:** Cole Porter, "What is this thing called love," mm. 25–32: meter marking the second progression as cadential.

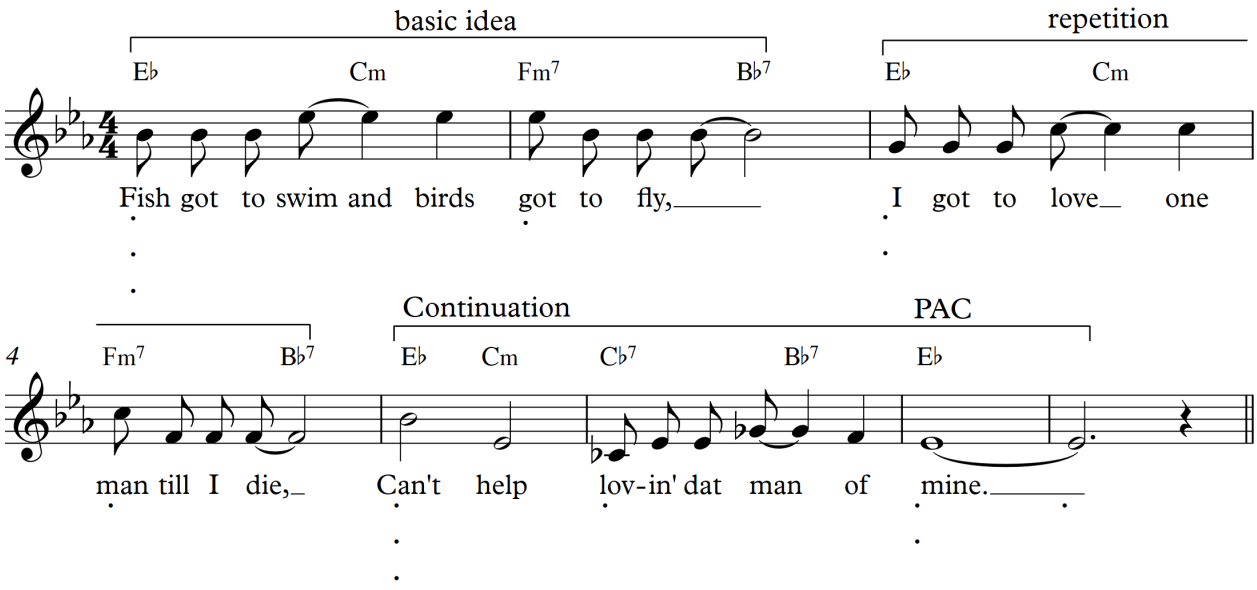
in enacting formal closure is subordinate to the closure provided by the hypermetrical cycle and listeners' knowledge or ensuing and prior material.

Cadential content for the Broadway song is similar to the progressions outlined by Caplin (1998, 23–31), but with some salient differences. The case of the root-position tonic instigating a cadential progression complicates matters. The root-position tonic is inherently

stable.[13] If we project that a cadence is ensuing within the hypermeasure based on our knowledge of where we are in the form, root position tonic chords in certain locations may be contextually unstable and point to the ensuing cadence. Nobile (2011) draws attention to this with his "cadential I": a dominant-prolonging root-position tonic. The cadential I most often occurs at the beginning of c in an Srdc structure—a phrase model comprising a statement, restatement, departure, and conclusion (Everett 2001). The arrival on this chord is not a return to tonic (a cadence), but rather it functions as a prolongation of V, similar to an inverted cadential $^{6}_{4}$. Example II.8 shows the opening A section to Kern's (1927) "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man." The phrase is constructed as a sentence. The continuation opens with a root-position tonic (indeed, the continuation uses nearly the same progression as each basic idea). The presentation of mm. 1–4 elicits continuation function in m. 5, the root-position tonic is not an arrival, but a beginning of a I–vi–ii–V cadential schema.[14] The same basic harmonic progression occurs three times: the first as an initiatory gesture, the second as a sign pointing to the continuation, and the third as a cadential figure with a ii chord tritone substitution. The pairing of the title lyrics ("Can't help lovin' dat man of mine") and the I–vi–ii–V progression secures the closing rhetoric of this hypermeasure.

Cadential progressions very often move through cycles of fourths. Table II.1 lists authentic cadential progressions generated from V-I. After ii-V-I, the progressions branch out in two directions. In the left column, the progressions continue the cycle of fourths until IV is added.

[13] See Larson's (1997) discussion of inherent and contextual stability.
[14] Nobile 2016 discusses similar progressions are expanded dominant progressions in rock music.




**Example II.8:** Jerome Kern, "Can't help lovin' dat man" (1927), mm. 1-8: Opening A section.

In the right column, we see a major-quality II-chord. The shift from a II to ii is a very salient and idiosyncratic move of the Broadway song.

While the harmonies in Table II.1 are given in simple triad form, their realizations in songs will nearly always include chordal sevenths and other extensions. Likewise, most of the harmonies in the table are subject to substitution, both from change in quality and substitution of a different root. For example, the basic ii–V–I progression can be altered in many ways. The ii chord can change quality to become II or it can be replaced with a $\flat VI^7$ through a "tritone substitution." The V chord can be replaced with a tritone substitution or the dominant-seventh chord a minor third above it (the "back door progression"). These models are not strict progressions, but rather flexible prototypes that are realized as strategic tokens. I present no table of progressions for half cadences as they are much the same with an omitted tonic at the end. Unlike the lengthy authentic progressions, half cadential

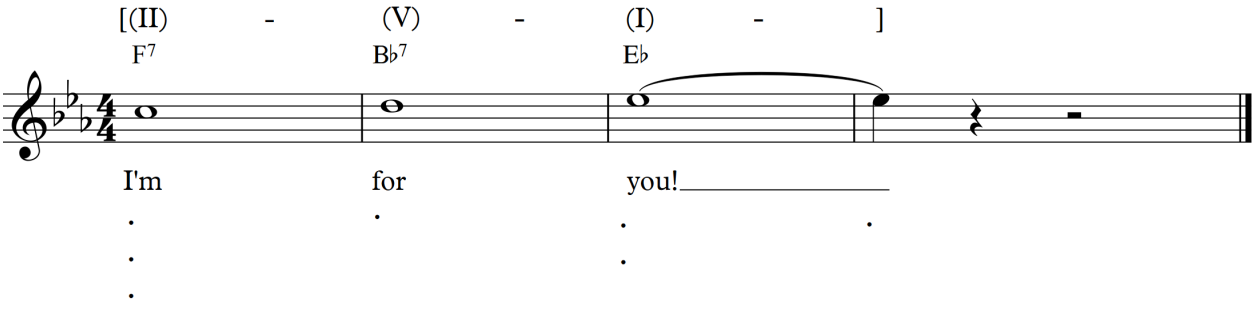
| | |
|---|---|
| V-I | |
| ii-V-I | |
| I or iii-vi-ii-V-I | II-ii-V-I |
| IV-iii-vi-ii-V-I | vi-II-ii-V-I |
| IV-iv-iii-vi-ii-V-I | IV-iii-vi-II-ii-V-I |
| I-$V^7$/IV-IV-iv-iii-vi-ii-V-I | |

**Table II.1:** Generative authentic cadential progressions.

progressions are typically quite short. The major-quality II-chords in the left column are particularly common with half cadences. Often a II chord will change quality to a ii before progressing to V.

As demonstrated by Examples II.6 and II.8, metrical/syntactical placement of a harmony helps dictate its function in a larger context. Because Broadway songs are so conventionalized, harmonic patterns line up in specific ways on the metrical grid producing harmonic schemata. In this chapter I examine schemata associated with cadences. In subsequent chapters I explore various schemata that appear throughout AABA and ABAC forms. The following schemata occupy a single four-bar hypermeasure. I notate the schemata with each unit in parenthesis representing the harmony or harmonies in each hyperbeat: [(harmony in hyperbeat 1) - (harmony in hyperbeat 2) - (harmony in hyperbeat 3) - (harmony in hyperbeat 4)].

The most common cadential schema is [(ii) - (V) - (I) - ], resulting in a semi-strong cadence. Example II.9 shows bars 28–32 of Kern's (1925) "Sunny," which feature this schema

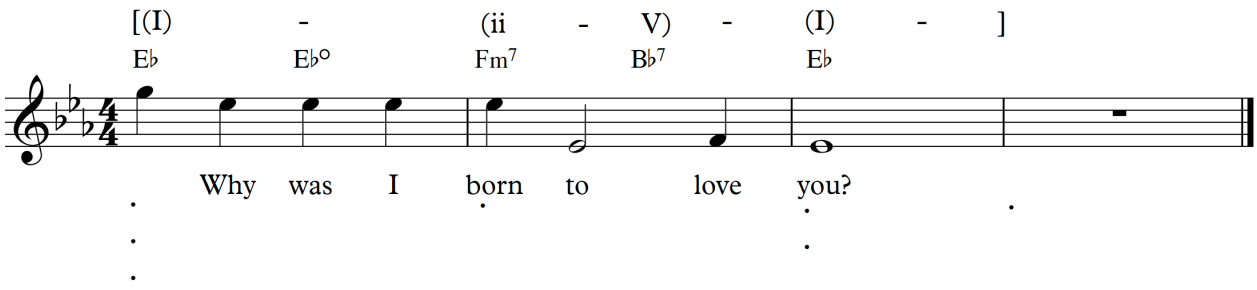



**Example II.9:** Jerome Kern, "Sunny" (1925), mm. 28-32: [(II) - (V) - (I) - ] cadential schema.

with a major II-chord: [(II) - (V) - (I) - ]. The II-chord arrives on a strong hyperbeat 1, followed by a V-chord on beat 2, and I on beat creating a semi-strong cadence.

Another prominent schema involves Nobile's cadential I. In this schema, [(I) - (ii-V) - (I) - ], the I chord on hyperbeat 1 is not the cadence. In Nobile's concept of the cadential I, the chord prolongs dominant function. He rests his case on harmonic syntax: once PD has been established, T cannot return before D. The same case cannot be made in the Broadway song; that is, this I chord is not necessarily preceded by the pre-dominant. My interpretation of this schema is based on meter. Outside of the clearly deformational case of Kern's (1925) "Who?," cadences never almost occur on hyperdownbeats. Also, because of its metrical placement, this I chord is not a stable tonic, but a cadential harmony that elicits a certain continuation. Example II.10 shows the final cadence of Kern's (1929) "Why was I born?" This passage presents a clear utterance of the [(I) - (ii-V) - (I) - ] schema. The E♭ $^{dim7}$ is a connective prolongation between the initial I- and the following ii-chord.

To summarize, with meter as the driving force behind formal orientation, harmonic syntax is tied to meter. Harmony only gains its function by nature of its metrical placement as




**Example II.10:** Jerome Kern, "Why was I born?" (1929), mm. 28-32: [(I) - (ii-V) - (I) - ] harmonic schema.

cadential content is ubiquitous throughout throughout a given song. However, problems arise when we equate harmonic closure and formal closure. Failure to convincingly cadence does not imply an unsatisfactory formal close and is certainly not ripe for hermenutic inquiry. Rather, form is bounded in the metrical and thematic scheme. When a section returns on a strong hypermetrical event, the previous section closes regardless of whether or not it closed harmonically.

### Dimensions of Form

If meter is inexorably linked to formal orientation, as I have argued, what then is the difference between form and meter? I regard form as a synthesis of the rhetorical layout of thematic material, the unfolding of harmonic/tonal processes, and energetic processes that together project temporal spaces. Form then marks the passing of time; form is a container of time. In western culture, time is conceptualized as ontological. Time can be contained; a minute *has* sixty seconds. This concept of time transfers to music—a temporal art form—through similar metaphors, such as FORM AS CONTAINER. Formal recognition comes in the form of schemata when listeners recognize the containers they are hearing.

In the Broadway song, meter provides regular structuring of these formal spaces. Formal elements then are those that delineate and signify the container to which they belong. The model I present allows for an in-time interpretation of events within larger containers by relating them to stylistic expectations. In what follows, I address the main criteria that express formal functions at different levels on the formal hierarchy (the container signifiers). I then synthesize these factors with hypermeter into my in-time approach.

Many aspects of form contribute to expressing the temporal functions of beginning, middle, and end (Caplin 2009 and Agawu 1991 and 2008), which I divide into three domains and one principle: harmony (specific prolongations and various progressions), parametric state (the energy level expressed through features such as harmonic rhythm, surface-level rhythm, and grouping size.), thematic similarity relation (the extent to which something is similar or dissimilar to prior material), and the principle of syntactical ordering. These guiding forces are operative within and above the level of the phrase, a formal unit with its own initiating function that ends in cadence.

The principle of syntactical ordering is a preference rule that governs the succession of functions. A phrase or any unit higher may skip over the middle or repeat a function, but will never flow from an end to a middle or a middle to a beginning. Syntactical ordering also dictates that formal units at or above the phrase begin with an initiating function. Leonard Ratner (1980, 39) discusses instances of a "rearrangement of functions," in which a cadence begins the phrase. Caplin (2004), following the principle of syntactical ordering, argues instead that such "cadences" are really basic ideas that display cadential content.

Genuine cases of omitted opening function result in what Caplin (1998, 111) has called "formal dissonance," when a unit opens with a medial or closing function.

For opening functions, syntactical ordering plays the largest role in functional expression. With the exception of a initial framing function, something is a beginning by nature of being at the start of something. In the Classical style, tonic prolongation plays a significant role in functional expression for beginnings as well. In the Broadway song, this is not the case. As I will examine in greater detail in the coming chapters, beginning on tonic is only the most common of several options. "That Certain Feeling," as is shown in Example II.1, is an utterance of the "reverse statement-response" schema. While thematic similarity distinguishes between opening functions such as a presentation from a compound basic idea (cbi), it does not define a group as a beginning. Instead, syntactical ordering is the main impetus for the functional expression of opening. When we hear something begin, we start with the assumption that it is a beginning. Only after hearing evidence of the contrary will we question this assumption.

Middles are subject to the most variety as far as functional expression. Within the level of the phrase (as defined here), the continuation is the only medial function.[15] For Caplin (1998), parametric state plays the most substantial role in defining the continuation, which is expressed through four common characteristics: fragmentation, increased harmonic rhythm, increased surface-level rhythm, and sequential progressions. The first three of these paint the picture of the continuation as having a forward-striving rhetorical character. Similarly,

[15]Within Caplin's (1998) eight-bar theme-types, expanded cadential progressions and consequent phrases are both closing functions, leaving the continuation as the only medial function. In Caplin's types, the continuation may proceed a presentation (sentence), an antecedent (hybrid 1), or a cbi (hybrid 3).

Harald Krebs (2015) describes the continuation as being relatively more active and unstable than the presentation (or any other initiating function). However, as some have noted, this forward-striving rhetoric is not always present in the sentence. Matthew BaileyShea (2004) has described several sentence types, some of which do not feature this same forward-striving character. In particular, BaileyShea's "dissolving third statement" and "aaba design" often offer more passive continuations. In these cases, it is thematic similarity relation that determines medial function.

In the Classical style, while continuations are relatively less stable harmonically than their preceding initiating function, there are no consistent ways in which harmony expresses medial function. Mark Richards (2011) distinguishes between continuation phrases that have separate functions for continuation and cadence, continuation phrases completely built on a cadential progression, and continuation phrases with cadential function built into the end. Most often, continuations continue the tonic prolongation begun in the initiating module, and so harmony plays a limited role in suggesting continuation function. Nobile (2016) links formal function closely to harmonic function such that a complete beginning-middle-end trajectory aligns with a "functional circuit" of harmonic functions (T–PD–D–T). In srdc structure, PD often correlates with medial formal function. This mutually informing relationship between formal function and harmonic function in rock music, which attaches prolongational areas to formal areas, is much looser in the Broadway song, as was seen with "That Certain Feeling." Instead, thematic similarity relation, parametic state, and meter (as will be discussed below) play the most important roles in expressing medial function.

In most theories of tonal form, including Caplin's and Nobile's, harmony is the defining factor in expressing closing function at the level of the phrase. For Nobile, the final D–T of the functional circuit signifies closing function. Similarly for Caplin, cadential function is cued only by the cadential progression. At higher levels, thematic similarity relation expresses closing function. For instance, the parallel period comprises an initiating function (antecedent) and a closing function (consequent). This is the same for recapitulations of small ternary forms and sonata forms.

From the lens of form functionality, beginnings, middles, and ends are expressed through various criteria at lower formal levels and increasingly rely on thematic similarity relation at higher levels. Mark Evan Bonds (1991, 27) has noted how analysts tend to analyze lower levels on the formal hierarchy with a generative approach and higher levels with a conformational one. For instance, a sonata-form recapitulation is signified by a return the primary theme, a largely thematic expression of temporality. Bonds' claim is tantamount to saying that higher levels are expressed by thematic similarity relation. Also, Caplin's (1998, 9) "formal processes" of repetition, fragmentation, extension, and expansion have form-functional ramifications at shallower levels and are not operative at higher levels. Table II.2 details which dimensions are most assertive in formal expression for functions within the phrase level. Here, I posit that functional beginnings, middles, and ends are suggested through a discourse of several dimensions. Different dimensions take over functional primacy at different moments in the form. Conflicts may arise when one dimension expresses one function while a different dimension expresses another function. Such is the case with Caplin's "continuation⇒cadence" (Richards' [2011] Cont/Cad). Fragmentation and increased surface-level rhythm (parametric

| Phrase-level | Beginning | Middle | End |
|---|---|---|---|
| Syntactical Ordering | Large | Large | Large |
| Thematic Similarity Relation | Small | Large | None |
| Parametric State | Small | Large | None |
| Harmony | Small | Small | Large |

**Table II.2:** Potential impact of different criteria on functional suggestion at the level of the phrase in the Broadway Song.

state) project a medial function while the harmony projects cadential function. Caplin argues that the initial effects of the parametric state express a medial function, which is only later realized to have cadential function. I would argue however that retrospective reinterpretation has little to do with the case of the Cont/Cad. Here there is no conflict between the initially expressed function and the affirmed function. Because of the cadential progression, cadential function is already expressed, then affirmed with a cadence. The conflict arises in the superimposition of dimensions expressing different functions.

For the eight-bar sentence in Broadway, such coinciding of fragmentation and cadential content is typical. The cadential progression begins at the onset of m. 5, where the continuation of a sentence should begin.[16] Take for example Gershwin's "Delishious," shown in Example II.5. The continuation features both fragmentation and a ii–V–I cadential progression. The parametric state intensifies through fragmentation (2-bar units become 1-bar units), expressing a formal middle while the harmony expresses a formal end through the cadential progression. In the given metrical framework, both of these features project a semi-strong cadence in m. 7.

[16]Riley (2011) describes similar sentences with "missing middles" in the music of Haydn.

Gesture is another feature that has an impact of how we attend to form, as was demonstrated with my analysis of "That Certain Feeling" at the beginning of this chapter. Caplin (2005) has suggested as much with his categories of topics and formal functions. He finds, for instance, that the Mannheim rocket tends to show up around formal beginnings. Mannheim rocket is signified by its rising gestures.[17] Marked gestures tend to carry formal implications. For instance, in the next chapter I discuss the "bookended gesture," an initiating gesture that comes back at the end to close the song. The appearance of this gesture in the last hypermeasure of the form clearly signifies closing rhetoric. Hatten's *rhetorical gesture* is particularly important in the Broadway song for drawing attention to the ensuing material. As Hatten (2004, 164) writes,

> Rhetorical gestures may also be defined as those highly marked musical events that direct our attention to some aspect of the ongoing musical discourse, perhaps dramatically redirecting our path through the form or genre.

Returning to Example II.1 for a moment, the crucial harmonic change to iv in m. 23 and the move further is pitch space is an instantiation of a rhetorical gesture. This gesture reorients our expectations of what is supposed to happen within $A^2$ and what C may have in store.

By asserting that formal beginnings tend to feature characteristic material and formal ends tend to feature conventional material in the classical style, Caplin (and Schoenberg) are suggesting that gestural types help to signify a gesture's temporality. Hatten's rhetorical

[17] Mirka (2014) considers topics to be genre synecdoches. Thus, a topic is a style or genre taken out of its original context. Mirka also does not consider gestures and motives to be topical, excluding Mannheim rocket and the sigh motive.

gesture is of most interest to me for Broadway songs. The highpoints and marked harmonies of Broadway songs carry important meaning. The points of tension redirect our attention and help to make sense of the musical narrative.

## Conclusion

The perception of form heavily relies on schemata, as I have argued throughout this chapter. The large-scale Broadway schemata—ABAC and AABA—are hierarchies of lower-level schemata. A fully expectation-based approach starting at surface-level schemata has yet to be explored in any genre. As I argue, meter is the starting place for such an approach. And no repertoire is more suited to this angle than the early Broadway songs of the 1920s and 1930s with their consistent metrical features. By laying down a consistent framework of projections, hypermeter guides our expectations of harmony, thematic similarity, parametric state, and gesture—the other dominant features that orient listeners through the temporality of music. Such an approach is necessarily predicated on stylistic competency. In the chapters that follow, I will point out important features and recurring patterns that define the early Broadway style.

# CHAPTER III

# THE ABAC

As Henry Martin (2011) has observed, ABAC forms tend to move towards a half cadence at the end of B and towards an authentic cadence at the end of C. Thus, the ABAC form can be understood profitably as a parallel period. The AB portion makes up an antecedent phrase while the following AC part constitutes the consequent phrase.[1] Moreover, the ABAC comprises two rotations of similar material. Often these rotations are sentences. The first, the *referential rotation* (AB), lays out the materials for discourse. The *climactic rotation* (AC) retraces the material of its referent and significantly departs in climactic fashion. The dramatization of this process of dissolution is a generic goal of the Broadway ABAC form. Dissolutions into climactic material often correlate with significant changes in the lyrics. In a sense, this process of dissolution is inherent to the very definition of the parallel period; to complete the generic requirement of referential material ending on a weak cadence preceding the same material ending on a strong cadence, the consequent, at some point, must adapt to fulfill its role. As a song form, however, ABAC has generic norms and goals further emphasizing the period's weak-strong impulse.

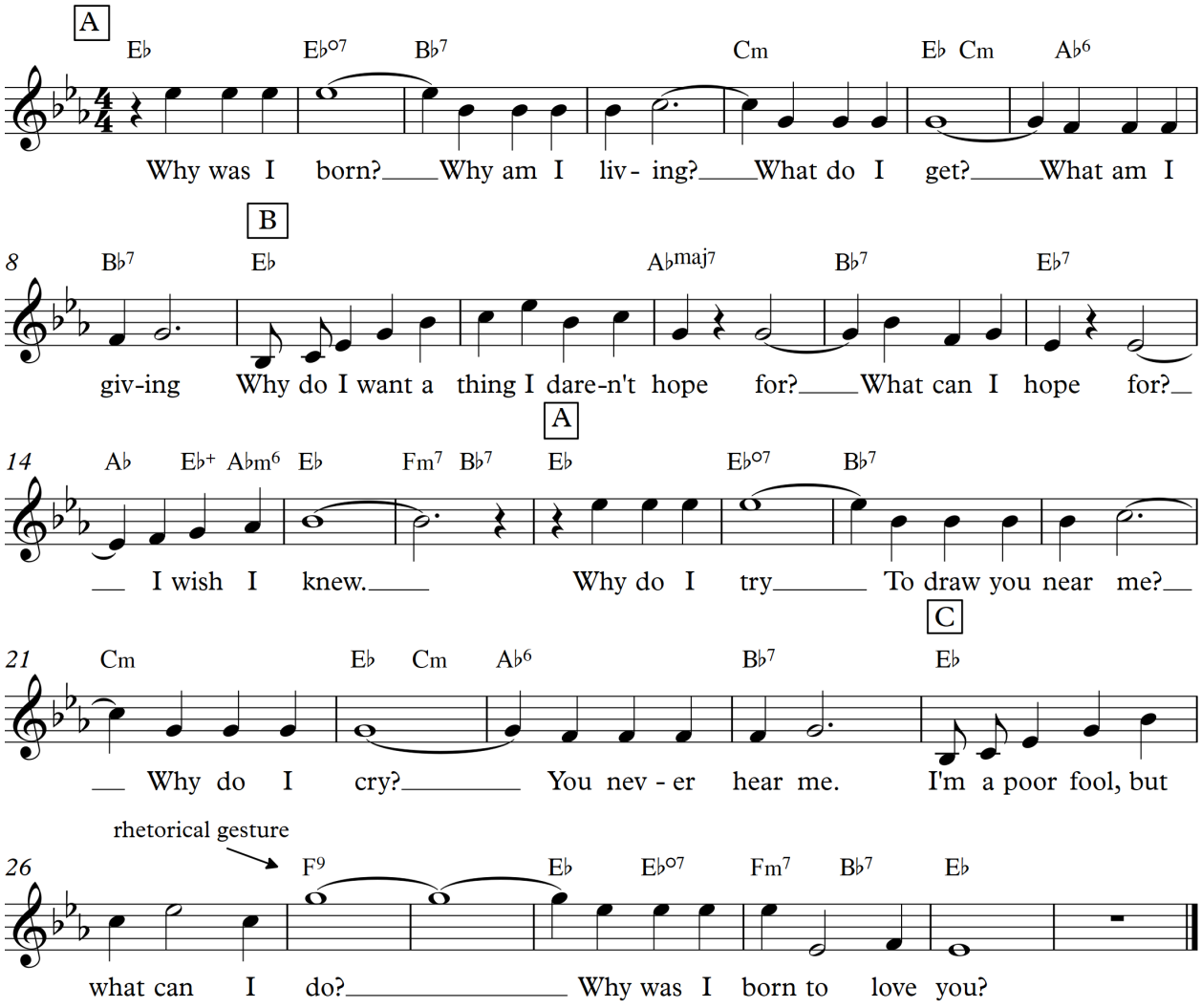
Looking briefly at a representative example can help us to understand what some of those generic norms are. Example III.1 shows Jerome Kern's (1929) "Why was I Born?" The $A^1$ section comprises a double basic idea. In this initial section, the melody passively falls nearly an octave as the protagonist contemplates existence. A medial formal function begins at the

[1]Both AB and AC parts correlate with Caplin's (1998) basic idea + contrasting idea.

onset of the B section as is promted by the lack of harmonic closure in the A section and the medial metrical position after two four-bar hypermeasures. Here, the B section abandons the manic repetitions and de-energizing fall of the A section with a faster moving, ascending gesture, finally beginning on beat 1. B maintains the contemplative mental state of the protagonist, eventually ending in a half cadence. The $A^2$ section repeats verbatim the first A both harmonically/melodically and semantically. The C section begins as B did, before dissolving into a climax. While m. 25 corresponds exactly with m. 9, m. 26 holds on to the E♭ before dramatically leaping to G in m. 27. This melodic highpoint is accompanied by a major II chord, causing a decisive shift in level of discourse and suggesting a move towards cadential function (recall chapter II). This rhetorical gesture is paired with a the setup question ("what can I do?"). The final four-bar hypermeasure reiterates the basic idea of the A sections, but pushes past the gesture's initial metric threshold to the cadence in m. 31. In these last measures we get the reveal of the song ("Why was I born to love you?").

This song is an example of what I will call the *broad-specific lyric paradigm*. The song opens with a question, several in fact. The protagonist asks "Why was I born?" The repeated reference to the first-person "I" creates a sense of intimacy between the protagonist and us, the audience.[2] The protagonist continues to ask questions over the remaining sections. The source of emotional pain remains ever elusive over the course of the song. Only in the C section do we understand the subject matter of the song—love. The broad-specific lyric paradigm maps onto the form of the ABAC. The referential rotation not only supplies the musical material, but it introduces a key lyrical idea. In the case of "Why was I born?" the

[2]BaileyShea (2014, [8])




**Example III.1:** Jerome Kern, "Why was I born?" (1929).

questions are very broad. Climactic rotations dissolve into highpoints, rhetorical gestures, and expanded cadential progressions to complete two generic goals: the completion of a narrative paradigm and the articulation of a I: PAC.

The ABAC form comprises three processes: one harmonic, one rhetorical, and one lyrical. With the view of form as a trajectory toward some goal, *tonal form* must be distinguished from *rhetorical form* and *poetic form*.[3] The tonal form of the generic ABAC is a move from I to V in the antecedent and from I to V and back to I in the consequent. Here, the antecedent proposes the initial tonic and cadences on V. The consequent secures I as tonic through a PAC. This tonal plot is often more complicated than it seems as many songs begin off-tonic or suggest a different tonic all together. The rhetorical form is the layout of thematic and expressive ideas. As Hepokoski and Darcy write,

> [rhetorical form] includes personalized factors of design and ad hoc expression: modular and textural layout, selection and arrangement of musical topics, varieties of structural punctuation, and so on. The compositional ordering of these processes produces a distinct, singular musical shape. This layout serves as the referential rotation that also guides our understanding of the ordering of modular events in the subsequent action-spaces of the [song]. (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 23)

The antecedent then lays out the materials of the song while the consequent utilizes these materials for its climactic purposes. Lastly, lyric form refers to the narrative arc of the text.

[3]The first two of these terms originate from Hepokoski and Darcy (2006, 23).

As was discussed in Chapter I, Broadway songs generally occupy lyric time rather than narrative time. Important moments in the lyric form reference action, change in pronoun, or change in subject matter.

The goals of the two rotations are three-fold. For the referential rotation, it suggests a tonic and moves to a half cadence, introduces the thematic ideas in certain order, and expresses an lyric idea. The climactic rotation then confirms a I: PAC, moves to a rhetorical climax, and resolves or emphasizes a central idea of the text. The Broadway composer must negotiate these processes of tonal form, rhetorical form, and lyric form to create a stylistic utterance. The processes are contextualized in the vectoral space of meter, each section equating to an 8-bar hypermeasure.

In this chapter, I will begin by examining many of the standard options available in each section of ABAC. Table III.1 shows some general ABAC procedures. These options range from rhyme schemes and harmonic schemata to form-functional procedures. The harmonic schemata and lyric conventions of many ABAC songs are in dialogue with the conventions of the compound AABA. As such, on occasion I will use examples from compound AABA and related forms to discuss the schemata in the following section. Following this discussion, I then highlight the main climatic techniques used in the second rotation and how they interact with the lyrics: highpoints, expanded cadential progressions, closing gestures, and phrase expansion. Through these norms and techniques, the Broadway composer negotiates the essential processes of the ABAC.

**Referential Rotation**

| $\mathbf{A}^1$ | | $\mathbf{B}$ | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Presentation | | Continuation $\longrightarrow$ | Cadence |
| Harmonic Schemata | Lyric Devices | Layout | |
| **Options** | **Options** | **Options** | **Options** |
| Exact: [(I) - (V) - (I) - (V)] | Rhyming Couplet | Sentential Cont. | HC |
| Exact: [(V) - (I) - (V) - (I)] | Titular Keyword Repetition | Block Cont. | IAC |
| SR: [(I) - - (V) - ] | Pronoun Pairing | | |
| Reverse SR: [(V) - - (I) - ] | | | |
| Other Progressions | | | |

**Climactic Rotation**

| $\mathbf{A}^2$ | | $\mathbf{C}$ | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Presentation | | Continuation $\longrightarrow$ | Cadence |
| Relation to $A^1$ | | Layout | Lyric Devices |
| **Options** | | **Options** | **Options** |
| Exact Repetition | | Dissolves through rhetorical gesture | Referencing Love |
| Dissolves through rhetorical gesture | | Entirely new | Change in pronoun |

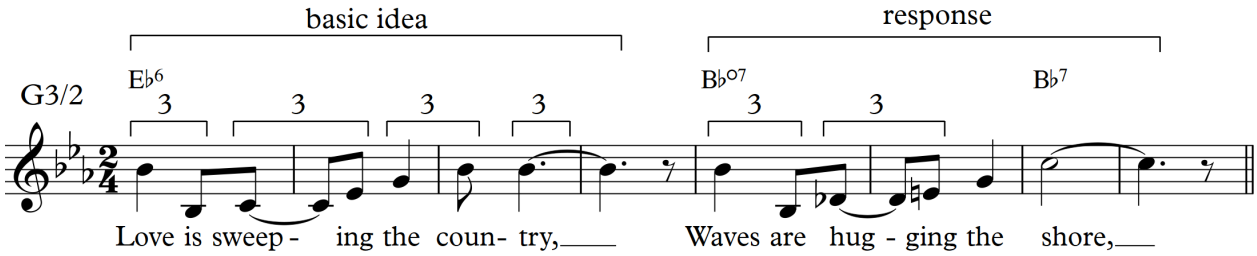
**Table III.1:** Basic ABAC options.

### The Antecedent and Referential Rotation

As previously mentioned, the antecedent phrase of the ABAC form serves three functions: one rhetorical, one tonal, and one lyrical. Rhetorically, the antecedent lays out the thematic materials to be worked out in climactic rotation. The tonal function is to realize a syntactically weak cadence, either an HC or and IAC. Lyrically, the antecedent expresses the initial idea of the song. These goals are fulfilled in the space of two eight-bar sections (the AB portion).

## $A^1$ Organization

$A^1$ expresses an initiating formal function. The thematic configurations of these eight measures are highly constrained. The most common option is the presentation: two four-bar compound (or double) basic ideas. This basic template offers a wealth of flexible options pertaining to lyric structure and affect, all while presenting the opening material of the song. Harmonically, Caplin (1998) identifies the three types of repetition: exact (prolongs the same harmony), statement-response (moves from I to V, and often returns to I), and sequential (transposed harmony and melody). Many of these same repetition types are in play in the Broadway song. Indeed, schematized harmonic progressions are active in all formal areas of the songs. These types refer only to the harmonic context of the presentation. Just as important is the nature of the melodic repetition. As discussed in chapter I, through mimetic engagement, energetic impulses through the virtual environment of pitch space, with its accompanying musical forces, and meter, listeners sympathetically listen to music

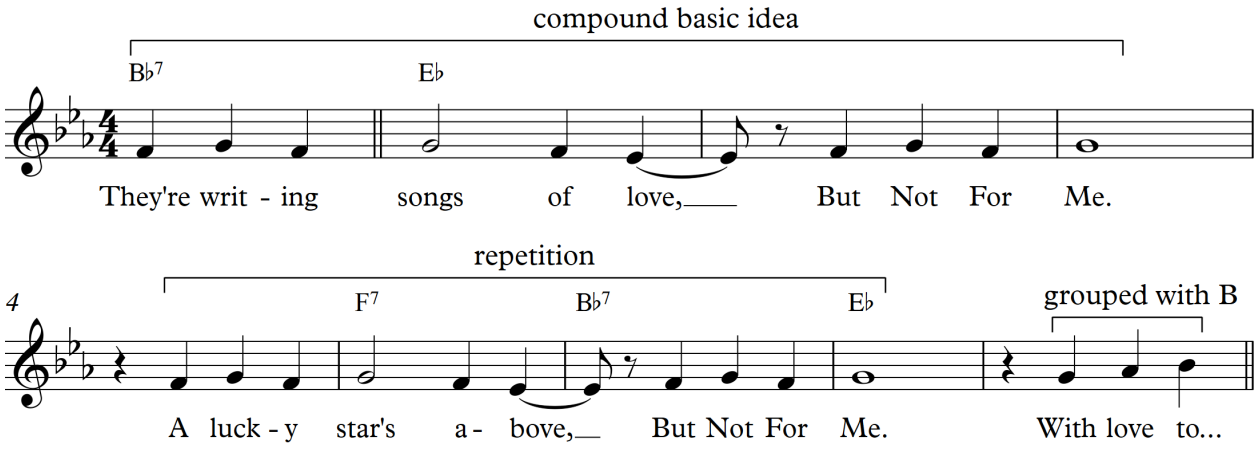



**Example III.2:** George Gershwin, "Love is Sweeping the Country" (1931), $A^1$: statement-response repetition.

through a process of embodiment. Basic oppositions such as up and down in pitch space correlate to different embodied meanings.

Consider Example III.2, which shows $A^1$ of Gershwin's (1931) "Love is Sweeping the Country." This song features a statement-response presentation module. Measures 1–4 prolong a tonic E♭6 while mm. 5–8 prolong the dominant B♭7 through an accented common-tone diminished seventh chord. Rodgers (2014, 68), in his study of Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*, relates expressive states closely to sentence reptition-types: "Sentences with statement-response and sequential repetitions typically convey ideas such as aggression, anger, and surging forward motion. Sentences with exact repetitions, on the other hand, tend to suggest stasis, monotony, and an inability or reluctance to move on." Not only does "Love is Sweeping the Country" feature a statement-response repetition, but other features of $A^1$ also suggest a sense of surging forward. The syncopated rhythm adds to the energy of the melody; the dissonance works in conjunction with the rising kinetic impulse of the melody.[4] The rising gesture in the basic idea has itself a sense of surging forward. This energetic state intensifies with the response, as the harmony grows more dissonant and the melody pushes even higher

[4]Malin (2008) similarly argues that metrical dissonance can lead to releases in energy in different musical domains. My use here differs in that metrical dissonance works in conjunction with motions in pitch space rather than the former motivating the latter.




**Example III.3:** George Gershwin, "But not for Me" (1930), $A^1$: exact repetition

in pitch space. Lyrically, the song opens with its title ("Love is Sweeping the Country"). The response states another item ("Waves are hugging the shore"). This $A^1$ functions as the beginning of what Callahan (2013, [3.10]) has called the *List without Reveal* sentential lyric-type, a variant of his *List + Reveal* (SLT1). As the title of the song suggests, the central idea concerns love. Its *expressive genre*, however, is not the love ballad.[5] Its musical features, from its fast-moving, ascending gestures to its repetition-type, suggest a love song of a different kind, one more gay and celebratory.

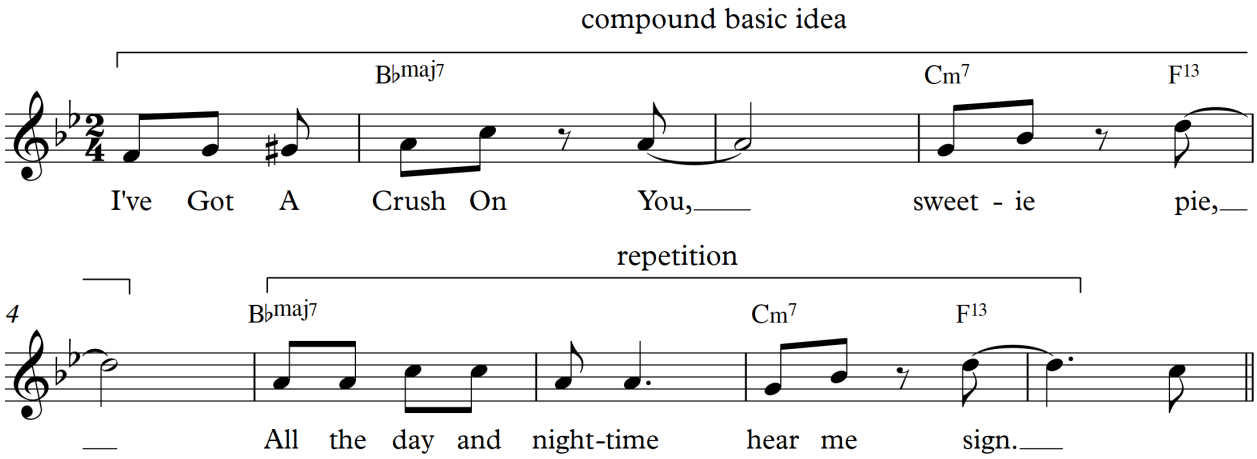
Example III.3 shows $A^1$ of Gershwin's (1930) "But not for Me," a different kind of love song. The melodies of both the cbi and the repetition are confined to three pitches. Both the cbi and repetition prolong a tonic E♭, the latter elaborated by a II-V. Immediately, Steve Rodgers' (2014) ideas about exact repetitions come to mind as they "tend to suggest stasis, monotony, and an inability or reluctance to move on." The lack of real progression in $A^1$ is closely tied to the central idea of the song. The opening cbi states "They're writing songs of

[5]See Hatten's (1994) chapter 3 on expressive genres.

love, but not for me." The exact repetition adds on "A lucky star's above, but not for me." The return to the title lyric, "but not for me" at the end of repetition further emphasizes the sense of stasis. In this way, this $A^1$ section does not look ahead to the ensuing sections. The protagonist is sadly contemplating. The most salient musical and lyrical features express this idea; the static harmony, the confined and unenergized melody, the exact repetition, and the repeat of the title lyric all contribute to the main idea of the text. From this section alone, we have a sense of the song's expressive genre: the lamenting love ballad.

These two songs, written by Gershwin only a year apart, suggest two different expressive meanings. A salient difference between these two presentation modules is the type of repetition. In "Love is Sweeping the Country," the statement-response repetition-type contributes to an energetic, forward-striving expressive state. Also, the lyrics present two items of a larger list. All of the details point to the directionality of $A^1$ in this song - i.e., the presentation looks forward to the ensuing continuation that is the B section. In "But not for Me," the exact repetition helps create a sense of calm. Paired with the lyric repetition of the title, this $A^1$ looks not forward, but inward, to a intimate and melancholic moment of introspection. From these initial sections, we can grasp the central ideas and expressive meanings of these songs. Thus, the types and schemata outlined below are not options that composers played with arbitrarily, but with the song's expressive meaning closely in mind.[6] To borrow language from Robert Hatten (1994), stylistic types gain meaning in their strategic deployment.

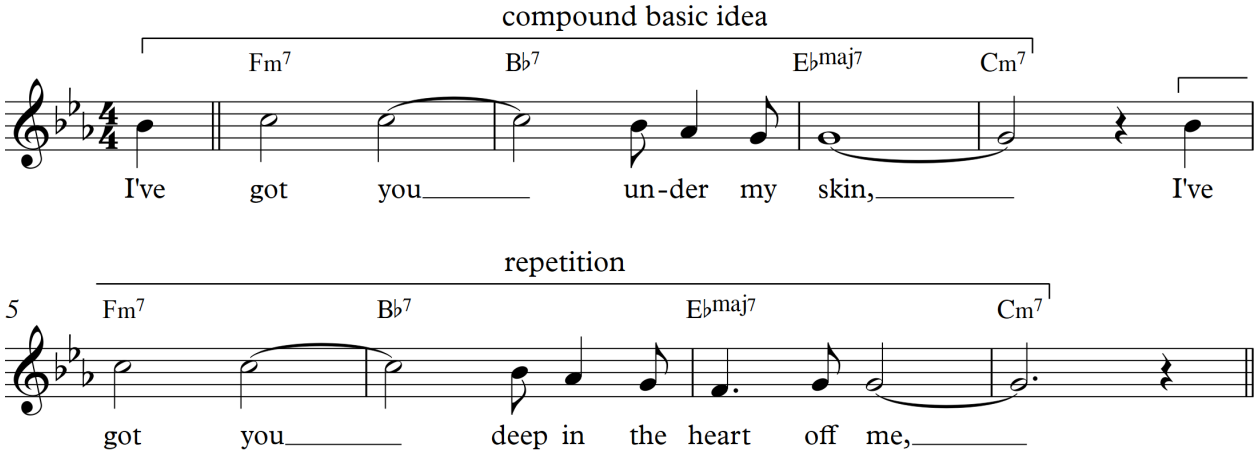
[6]Here and elsewhere when I refer to the composer's thoughts or intent I mean it metaphorically in the sense of Monahan's (2013) "fictional composer."




**Example III.4:** George Gershwin, "I've got a crush on you" (1928), $A^1$: I–V alternation.

*Exact Repetitions: The I–V Alternation.* The most common presentation-type is the presentation with exact repetition. This repetition-type refers to all repetitions whose underlying harmony is the same as the statement. A particularly common exact repetition schema is the *I-V alternation*. Gershwin's (1928) "I've Got a Crush on You" (Example III.4) utilizes this schema. The first two bars prolong tonic and bars three and four move to a neighboring V. This V is elaborated by a preceding ii (Cm7) and thus rhythmically displaced. In Rothstein's (1990) terms, the underlying duration of the V begins in m. 3. This exact progression is restated in the repetition. The I–V alternation schema is among the most common presentation harmonic schema.[7] It usually appears in simple love songs. However, the motion to V in the later part of the statement and the repetition accommodate certain rising gestures as well. As is shown in Example III.4, the motion to V coincides with a rising, tension increasing gesture.

[7]Clear examples of the I-V alternation schema include Jerome Kern's (1927) "Bill," (1927) "Why Do I Love You," (1929) "Why Was I Born?", (1936) "A Fine Romance," George Gershwin's (1926) "Maybe," (1926) "Do, Do, Do," and later in Porter's (1954) "All of You."

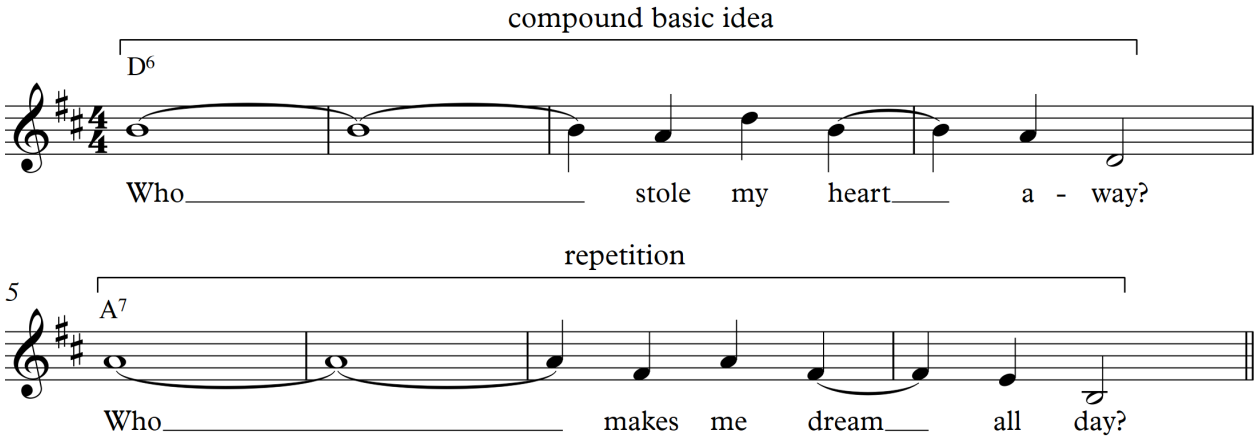



**Example III.5:** Cole Porter, "I've got you under my skin" (1936), mm. 1–8: V–I alternation.

*The V–I Alternation.* Another exact repetition schema is the *V–I alternation.* This schema opens with a V, often elaborated with a preceding ii, before moving to I in the latter portion of the both the statement and the repetition. Cole Porter's (1936) "I've Got You under My Skin" is paradigmatic, shown in Example III.5.[8] The opening three measures spell out an auxiliary cadence with the arrival of the tonic in m. 3. The move to vi prolongs the tonic from the previous measure. The same progression underlies the repetition (mm. 5–8). Because this schema moves from V to I in each of the two four-bar hypermeasures, the schema is inherently tension releasing. In the case of "I've Got You under My Skin," the contour of the melody descends and stops on the tonic arrival, releasing the tension from the harmony and the higher tessitura. The melody maintains a controlled and limited register. These features highlight the expressive potential of the V–I alternation schema.

*Statement-Response Repetitions.* In Caplin's (1998) discussion of statement-response repetitions, following Schoenberg, he includes two main progressions: the tonic statement fol-

[8]The opening eight measures of Cole Porter's "Night and Day" is another clear example of this schema.

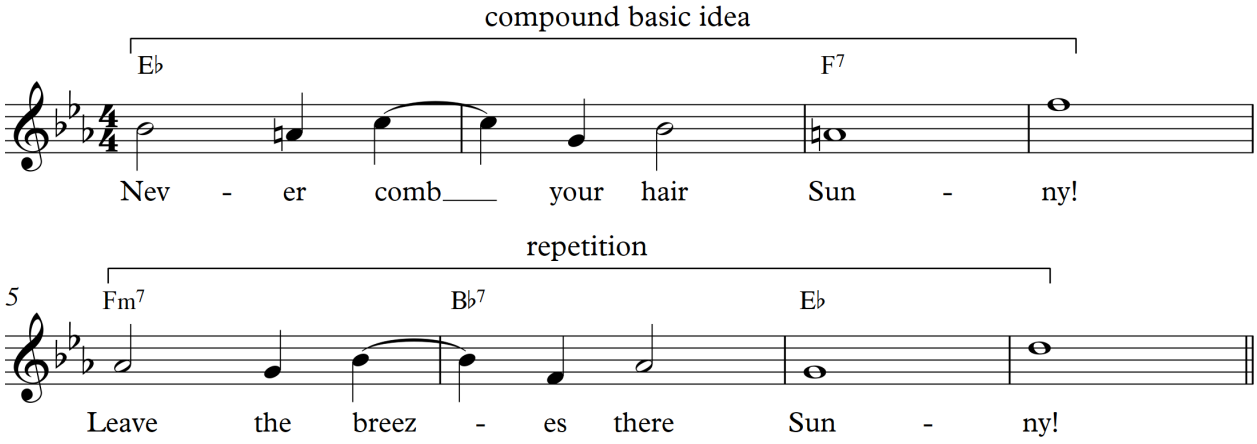



**Example III.6:** Jerome Kern, "Who" (1925), $A^1$: statement-response.

lowed by dominant statement (I, V) and a departure and return to tonic (I–V, V–I). BaileyShea (2003) distinguishes between these two, reserving "statement-response" for the former and referring to the latter as "complementary." I will adopt these same labels. Statement-response offer a more dynamic and active musical expression in contrast to the often static exact repetitions, as was demonstrated with "Love is Sweeping the Country." Example III.6 shows the opening A section of Jerome Kern's "Who," which features a statement-response repetition. "Who" has a brisk, energetic quality to it, in part from its very syncopated melody and partly from its harmonic schema.

Example III.7 shows Jerome Kern's (1925) "Sunny," which features a complementary repetition. Complementary repetitions are somewhat of a mixture between the I–V alternation and V–I alternation.[9] The move away from tonic in the initial statement prompts an energetic motion upward in pitch space. The return to the tonic in the latter half of the repetition resolves this tension. In "Sunny," the syncopations of melody release into a large

[9]For another clear example see Gershwin's "Embraceable You."

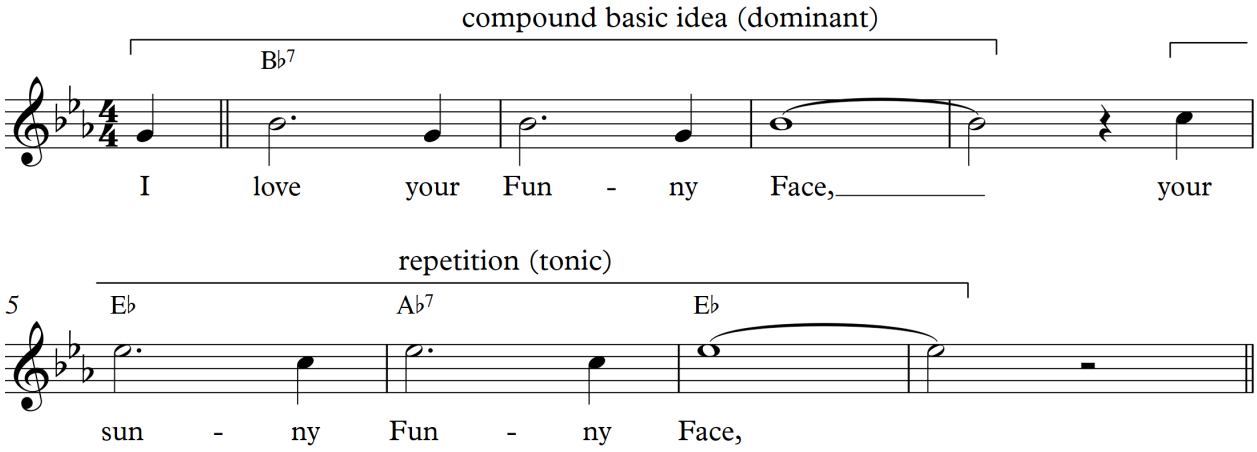



**Example III.7:** Jerome Kern, "Sunny" (1925), $A^1$: repeated head refrain.

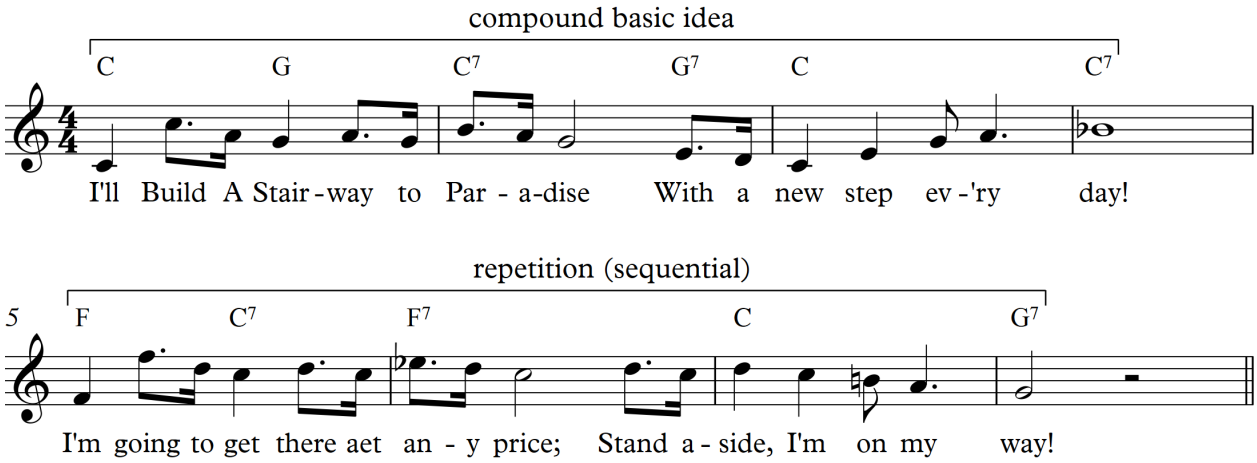
leap on the move away from tonic in the statement. While the syncopations and the leaping gesture are maintained in the repetition, the transposition down and the shift in harmonic context releases the tension begun in the initial statement.

*Reverse Statement-Response Repetitions.* Like the I-V alternation has an inverse, the statement-response schema has an inverse: the reverse statement-response (V-I). This schema has no parallel in the classical sentence. George Gershwin's (1927) "Funny Face" is paradigmatic. The opening statement prolongs the dominant B♭7. The repetition realizes an auxiliary cadence with the arrival on tonic, which is elaborated with a neighboring A♭7. Other clear examples of this schema include Kern's (1927) "Make Believe" and George Gershwin's (1925) "That Certain Feeling."

Of the three repetition-types that Caplin (1998) discusses in classical music (exact, statement-response, and sequential), the sequential repetition in the 16-bar sentence is a rarity in the Broadway song. Thus, its appearance is marked, as is the case of Gershwin's (1922) "I'll build a Stairway to Paradise." The conceptual blend of upward motion in pitch



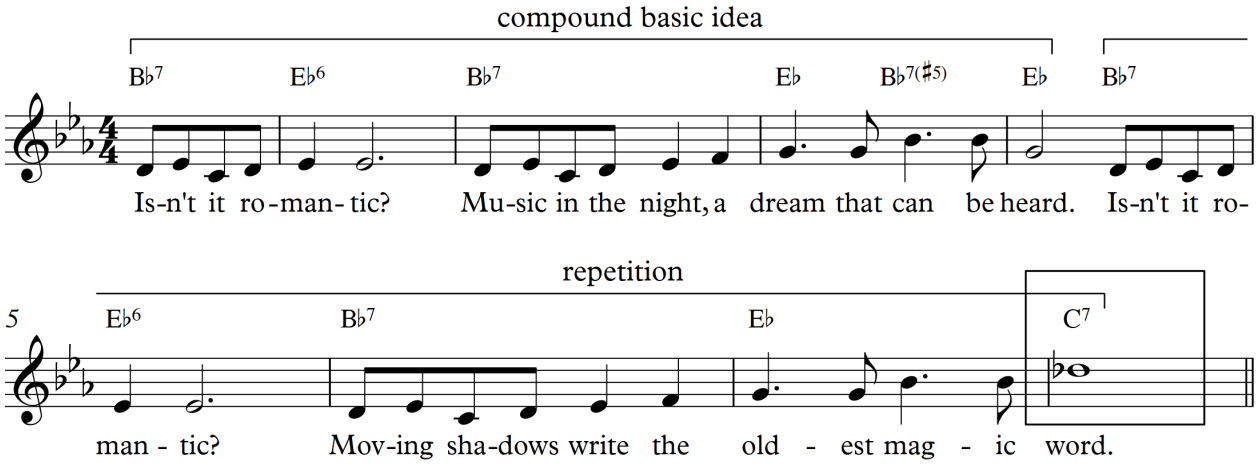

**Example III.8:** George Gershwin, "Funny Face" (1927), $A^1$: reverse statement-response.




**Example III.9:** George Gershwin, "I'll build a Stairway to Paradise" (1922), $A^1$: presentation with sequential repetition.

space and the notion of building stairs up to paradise is rather obvious in this song.[10] However, the blend extends beyond the rising gestures of the compound basic idea; the sequential repetition transposes the cbi up a perfect fourth in pitch space, as if building a stairway.

[10]See Zbikowski (2002, 77-94) on conceptual blending.




**Example III.10:** Richard Rodgers, "Isn't it Romantic?" (1932), $A^1$: progression leads into the continuation.

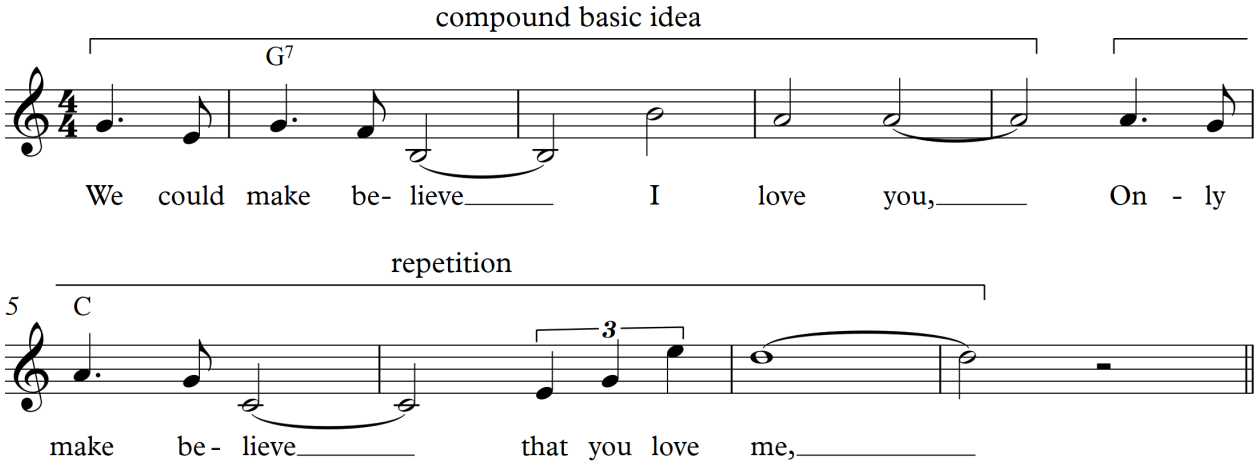
*Rhetorical Gestures and Motions Leading into B.* As expounded in the previous chapter, rhetorical gestures play a major role in formal process over the rigid grid of meter in the Broadway song. Frequently such gestures help shift our attention from $A^1$ to B. Common features of these gestures includes melodic highpoints and secondary dominants pointing to the harmony beginning the subsequent section. Richard Rodgers' (1932) "Isn't it Romantic" features such a gesture, enclosed in the box in Example III.10. "Isn't it Romantic" comprises a rather straightforward exact repetition that prolongs tonic. In m. 8, however, the melodic line dramatically leaps to the highest note of the section paired with a V7/ii. This gesture dramatically shifts our focus to the ensuing B section. This technique is particularly important in $A^2$ sections to achieve the rhetorical climax of the second rotation. In $A^1$ sections the technique is still common, appearing in such songs as Cole Porter's "You're the Top," George Gershwin's "That Certain Feeling" and "Blah-Blah-Blah," and Kern's (1920) "Whip Poor Will."

*The Presentation and Rhyming Couplet.* Along with harmonic repetition-types, the presentation affords certain lyrical structures. BaileyShea (2003, 125) draws an association between sentence form and rhyming couplets, but emphasizes that the relationship is loose in German classical tradition, writing, "continuous, developmental nature of sentence expression does not easily lend itself to the metric patterns of traditional texts." Rodgers (2014, 63) makes a strong case for the correlation between rhyming couplets and basic idea and repetition of the sentence in Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*. The crucial difference between Broadway songs and repertoires explored by BaileyShea and Rodgers is the limited musical possibilities of $A^1$ sections. Whereas periodic and hybrid options are valid for couplet settings as well as sentences in German classical music, presentations are far and away the most common option to begin an ABAC form. Also, while texts are written beforehand in the classical tradition, whether as a libretto or a poem, the texts of Broadways songs are written with the musical setting of a specific form in mind. Whether the lyrics were conceived of after, prior to, or during the act of musical composition, the formal constraints of the ABAC form narrowed the possibilities of the text structure. For these reasons, as Callahan (2013) has argued, many of the main lyrical strategies of the Broadway song center around the musical sentence.

The most common musico-poetic structuring of the presentation involves rhyming couplets and emphasizing a *keyword*. A keyword is a repeated lyric freely appearing in any formal context, similar to how Stephenson (2002) defines the "refrain" in rock music. AABA and ABAC forms function as sectional refrains within songs whereas lyric refrains refer specifically to lyrical phrases that reoccur in specific formal locations. Despite obvious repetitions of

words throughout Broadway songs, the concept of lyrical refrain is less clear-cut than in rock music. For many theorists, the refrain is a repeating lyric that opens a section (head refrain) or ends one (tail refrain). For de Clercq (2012, 57-70), refrains are not solely a a lyric phenomenon. Musical elements help to define a lyrical phrase as a refrain. For the tail refrain, the lyric often falls in the last four-bar hypermeasure in a cadential progression.

The notion of a lyric refrain applies well to AABA forms as each A section may end the same way, allowing for easy lyric replication. For instance in Cole Porter's (1930) "Love for Sale" (analyzed in chapter I), each A section ends with a tail refrain ("Love for Sale"). This concept of lyric refrain applies significantly less well to ABAC forms, which require distinct conclusions between the two rotations. Because of this, I adopt the term "keyword" for important and often titular lyrics. Returning to the $A^1$ section of Richard Rodgers' "Isn't it Romantic?" (Example **??**), $A^1$ comprises a presentation with an exact repetition that leads into B with a V/ii. Both statement and repetition begin with the title line ("Isn't it Romantic?") before forming a couplet with the end rhymes of "dream that can be heard" and "oldest magic word." This presentation features both a titular keyword and a rhyming couplet. Jerome Kern's "Sunny" (Example III.7) similarly features a titular keyword. In the case of "Sunny," the keyword appears at the end of each line of text. The context of the word "Sunny" is the same for both of its appearances: the keyword is associated with an leaping gesture that ends both the statement and the repetition. In the case of "Sunny" and many other songs as well, the word ends two parallel gestures in place of where a rhyming couplet might take place.

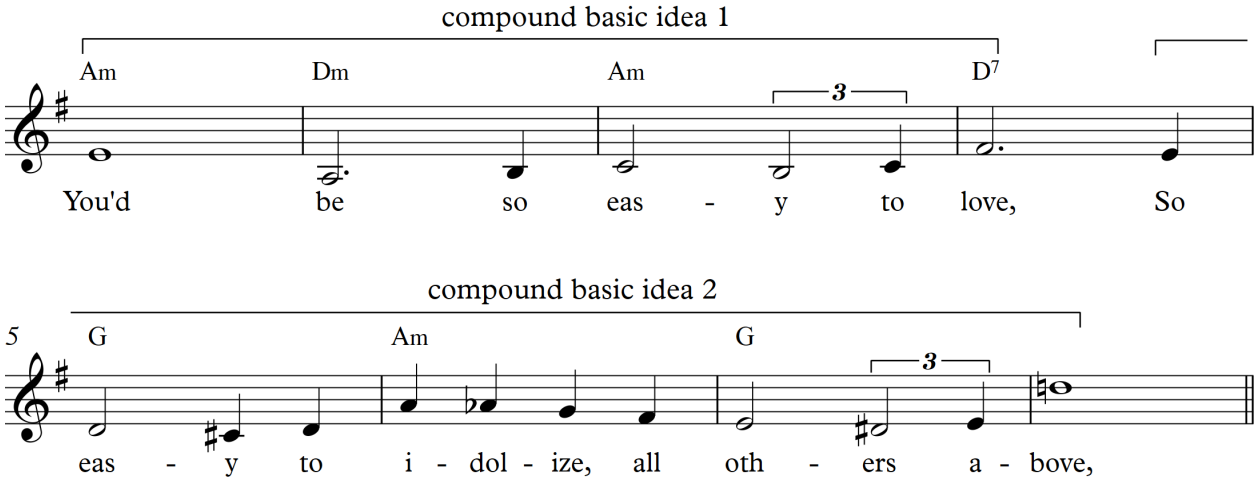



**Example III.11:** Jerome Kern, "Make Believe" (1927), $A^1$: you-me pronoun pairing in the presentation module.

Because of the form-fitting nature of musical repetition and poetic rhyme or repetition, the rhyming couplets and head refrains fit neatly into the presentation-type $A^1$ sections. Due to the common appearance of double basic ideas comprising the statement and repetition of the presentation module in $A^1$, it is not uncommon to see internal rhymes within the statement and/or repetition.[11] Other poetic schemes are common as well. One common strategy is the *pronoun pairing*, in which two paired poetic lines both end with a pronoun. A common subtext is you-me pronoun pairing, which places "you" at the end of the first line and "me" at the end of the second. The opening presentation module of Kern's (1927) "Make Believe" (Example III.11) features a you-me pronoun pairing.

The presentation is the only the normative $A^1$ strategy. Any other thematic layout in is highly marked in the style. Cole Porter's (1934) "Easy to Love" offers one such example, shown in Example III.12.[12] The song employs typical harmonic and lyric schemes. The repeated

[11] See Kern's (1927) "Why do I love you?" for a clear example.
[12] See Gershwin's "Blue Blue Blue" for another example.




**Example III.12:** Cole Porter, "Easy to Love" (1934), $A^1$: alternative layout.

ii–V motion in cbi 1 prolongs the V of a reverse statement-response realized by the tonic at the beginning of cbi 2. The first line of text ends with "to love" while the second line ends with "above," forming a rhyming couplet. In these two respects, the opening A section of "Easy to Love" is quite normative. This song is unique in its use of succession of two-bar ideas. The opening of cbi 2 utterly contrasts with the opening of cbi 1, thwarting the dialogue with a presentation. The last two bars of cbi 2, however, do closely resemble the end of cbi 1, drawing a connection to the presentation.

In sum, $A^1$ sections are consistent in their formal function. Most all $A^1$ express presentation function or another closely related thematic configuration that expresses a formal beginning. Within this rigid framework, there are numerous options for harmonic progressions and musico-poetic structure. Depending on the sentiments of the song, a composer may use different harmonic progressions to express different affects. Poetic structure is inseparable from its musical context and composers had a small number of conventional options for setting different rhyme schemes.

## B Organization

While $A^1$ presents a beginning, B comprises a continuation, presenting a medial function. B generally takes the form of either a *sentential continuation* or a *block continuation*. The former of these types comes from BaileyShea (2004), who describes a continuation that comprises an embedded short-short-long proportion. Sentential continuations always have fragmentation. Since the prevailing grouping size of $A^1$ is four bars, the B sections with sentential continuations will always begin with 2-bar units. The block continuation maintains the 4-bar grouping of $A^1$. Caplin (1998, 99) considers the maintaining of grouping size between presentation and continuation a central loosening technique in the classical sentence, which is often followed by later fragmentation. The block continuation has no opportunity to fragment after its two four-bar groupings in order to maintain the strict 32-bar metrical grid. Without fragmentation to express continuation function, thematic difference and hypermetrical location of the B section helps secure it as a medial function. With no cadence at the end of $A^1$, the shift in thematic material at a strong hypermetrical point expresses its functional departure from $A^1$. This is similar to how continuation function is expressed in BaileyShea's (2004) sentence with aaba design, in which it is the shift in thematic content that cues a shift in function.

The B section generally continues the lyrical idea presented in $A^1$. The broad-specific paradigm relies on the reveal taking place only in the last rotation. B typically elaborates central idea of the song and avoids any reveal or specific details. For example, the B section of Kern's "Why was I Born?" (analyzed at the beginning of this chapter in Example III.1)

A$^1$:
Why was I born?
Why am I living?
What do I get?
What am I getting?
B:
Why do I want a thing I darn't hope for?
What can I hope for?
I wish I knew.

**Example III.13:** Kern, "Why was I Born?" (1929), antecedent lyrics.

A$^1$:
Who Cares if the sky cares to fall in the sea?
B:
Who Cares how his history rates me?
Long as your kiss intoxicates me!

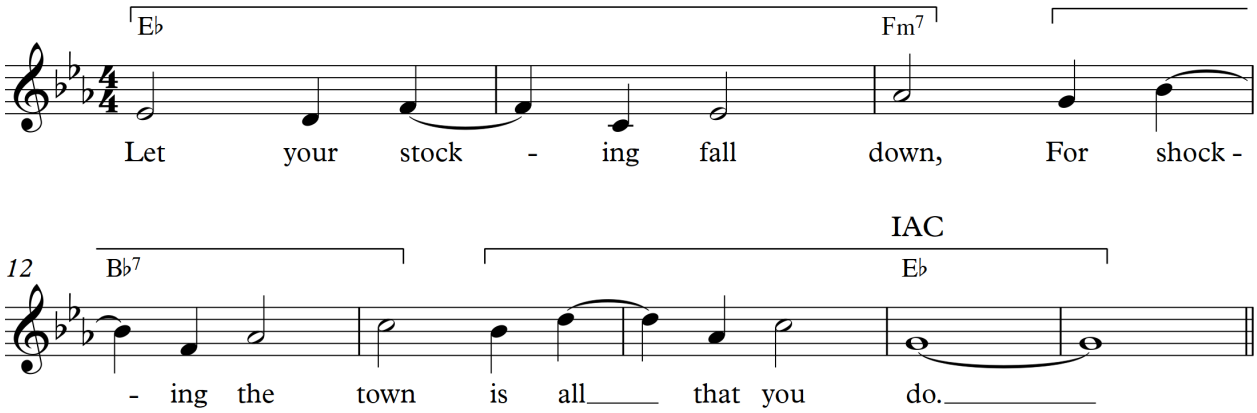
**Example III.14:** Gershwin, "Who Cares?" (1931), antecedent lyrics.

continues to ask similar questions as A$^1$, shown in Example III.13. A$^1$ asks four different contemplative questions. B responds with two more questions and adds a "I wish I knew" at the end, an inconclusive expression paired with a half cadence. The repeated "why" is never clarified until to the rhetorical gesture at the end of the second rotation.

"Why was I Born" is one of many question songs, in which the central idea of the song is expressed through repeated questions. Gershwin's (1931) "Who Cares?" offers another example of this same design, shown in Example III.14. After an initial question posed in the A section, B responds with an additional question and a short answer. Both the questions of this antecedent phrase are vague. Ultimately, the poetic trajectory of the song—the move toward love—is never in doubt, but the opening vague questions of the antecedent serve to rhetorically set up this later move. The answer at the end of the antecedent ("Long as your kiss intoxicates me") offers a hint at what is to come without satisfying a full reveal.

A[1]:
They're writing songs of love but not for me
A lucky star's above but not for me
B:
With love to lead the way
I've found more clouds of gray
Than any Russian play can guarantee

**Example III.15:** Gershwin, "But Not For Me," antecedent lyrics.

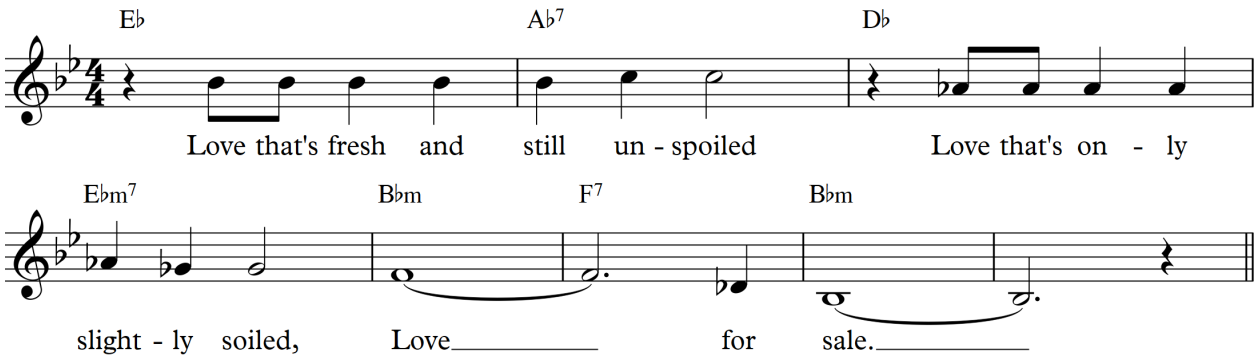



**Example III.16:** Jerome Kern, "Sunny" (1925), B: sentential continuation.

Gershwin's "But not for Me" offers an alternative to the question strategy outlined above. In "But not for me," the protagonist opens with two lines telling how love has not worked out for them and rhetorically emphasizes this sentiment by saying twice "but not for me." In the B section, the melancholy state is accentuated by the protagonist telling of how love has led to nothing but clouds of gray, a clear sign associated with sadness and depression. In "But not for me" the B section is not only a continuation in the form-functional sense of the term, but also a continuation of the poetic expression stated in the opening A section. With no clear indication of poetic finality at the end of B, the referential rotation perfectly serves its three functions of providing the poetic idea, setting up the ordering of thematic materials, and closing on a weak cadence to set up the climactic rotation.

*Sentential continuation.* Example III.16 shows the B section of Kern's "Sunny." The B section takes the same rhythm from the compound basic idea in the $A^1$ section and fragments it into two-bar units (recall Example III.7). Each two-bar unit moves successively higher in pitch space. The words "down" and "town" rhyme, but in a dissimilar way to the rhyme in the opening A section; the rhyme has moved from beat three to beat one. By ending clauses on downbeats, the B section ends each group accented, creating what Temperley (2003) has called an "end-accented phrase." These end-accented groupings help to further the sense of momentum and high energy as they lead into an imperfect authentic cadence. The syncopation and large leaps in the opening A section are paired with the similarly energetic B section, which features the same syncopation and related upward motions in pitch space.

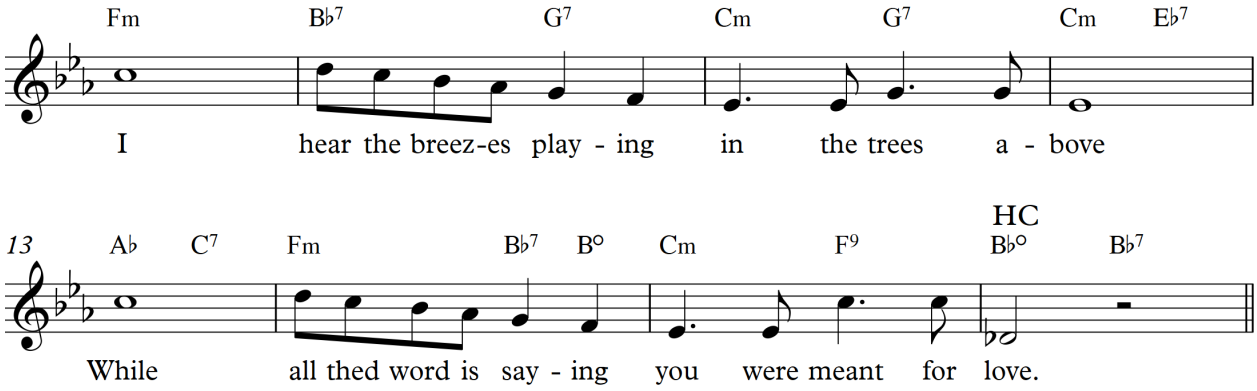
The sentential continuation is not limited to high energetic expressions. In order to satisfy the weak–strong paradigm of the ABAC form, continuations in B sections still tend to be less energetic than in C sections. Example III.17, showing Porter's "Love for Sale," features a clear sentential continuation that gradually loses energy. In "Love for Sale," the continuation breaks from the very static presentation with groupings of two measures. The second unit, instead of continuing the upward push, moves down, which leads to a very low cadential unit articulating the song's tail refrain. That this refrain is composed of much longer durations than the the beginning of the continuation speaks to the energy loss of the continuation after the initial two-bar grouping.




**Example III.17:** Cole Porter, "Love for Sale," mm. 9-16: continuation that loses energy with a descent in pitch space.

Since fragmentation is a necessary feature of sentential continuations, repetition is a common feature. Consequently, many of the lyric devices that pertain to $A^1$ sections also pertain to B sections. Procedures such as a single rhyming couplet, two rhyming couplets, emphasizing a keyword, and pronoun pairings also pertain to B sections. The rhymes in "Sunny" pushed the material forward through end-accented groupings. The rhyming couplet in "Love for Sale" redirects our attention to the cadence in the low register. By placing "unspoiled" on a rising gesture, Porter treats us with a subtle surprise as the next line of text with the same rhythm of declamation moves down instead of up, ending on "soiled." Though the sentential continuation is inherently more forward-striving than other continuation types, it should not be associated with any one particular type of song. As the most common model, it serves as the main default option, capable of numerous strategic functions with various expressive meanings.

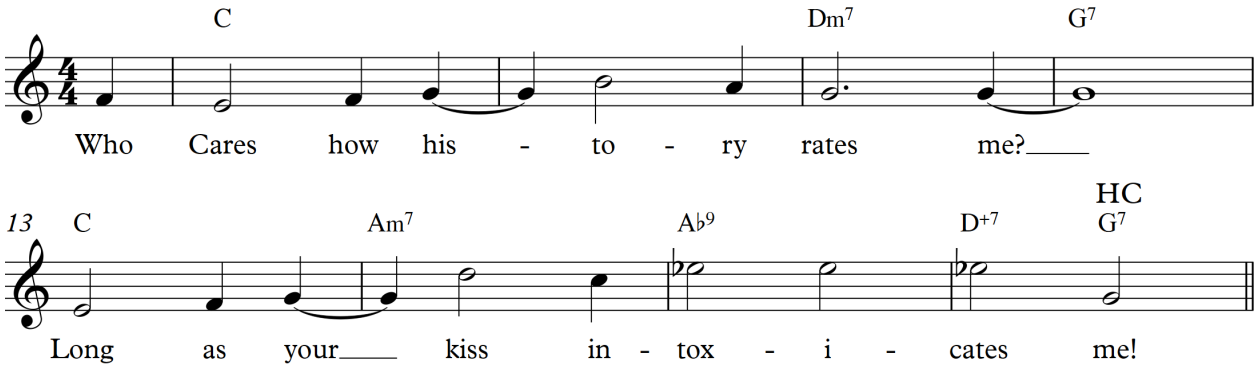
*Block continuation.* In his reading of Rodgers' "Isn't it Romantic," Michael Callahan (2013, [9.13]) analyzes the B section as a "weak continuation." He claims that the transformation from this weak continuation into the emphatic continuation of the second rotation play




**Example III.18:** Rodgers, "Isn't it Romantic?", B: Block continuation.

closely into the expressive meaning of the song. And I agree. However, I find the practice of the so-called weak continuation to be a much more common technique than Callahan suggests. As Example III.18 shows, the B section of "Isn't it Romantic" comprises two parallel four-bar groupings. Like the four-bar groupings of many A sections, this B section features a rhyming couplet. Furthermore, this outer pair of "above" and "for love" is coupled with the rhyme between "playing" and "saying" in their respective second bars of each four-bar group. The section comes to a close with what Callahan describes as a "weak half cadence." The B♭ diminished prolongs the B♭7 that proceeds it that brings the antecedent to a close.

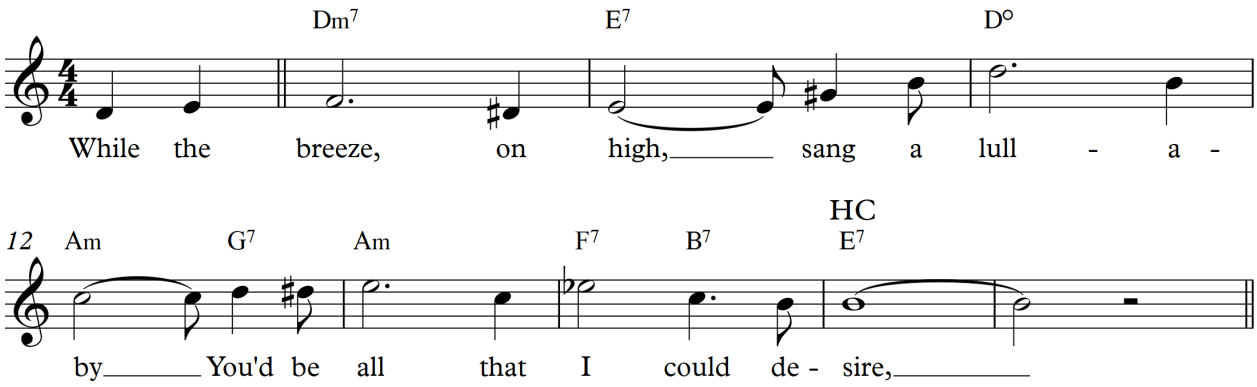
*Harmonic Progressions.* B sections vary significantly in their harmonic patterns. In rock music, Nobile (2014, 124) argues that srdc structures (the rock equivalent to a sentence) tend to move towards the predominant near the beginning of the d phrase (the portion corresponding with the continuation). In the Broadway song, no such generalization can be substantiated. While the continuation is looser knit and less predictable than the presentation, certain patterns persist. Instead of schemata that apply to entire B sections, the following patterns apply mainly to individual four-bar hypermeasures.




**Example III.19:** George Gershwin, "Who Cares?" (1931), B: [I – ii–V].

*First part of B: [I – ii–V].* B sections most often begin on tonic. Of the many songs that open this section on tonic, the most common schema is [I – ii–V]. Such a schema opens the B section of Kern's "Sunny," shown in Example III.16. The first two bars prolong tonic, before moving to ii in the third measure and V in the fourth. This schema fits both sentential and block continuations. A clear block continuation instance of this schema opens the B sections of Gershwin's "Who Cares?", shown in Example III.19. Again, tonic harmony opens the section with a ii–V motion encompassing the second half of the hypermeasure. Other instances of the schema include Kern's "Who do I love you?", "Why was I born?", and "A fine Romance." In each of these songs, the B section opens with tonic for two measures before moving towards ii or IV en route to V to close out the hypermeasure.

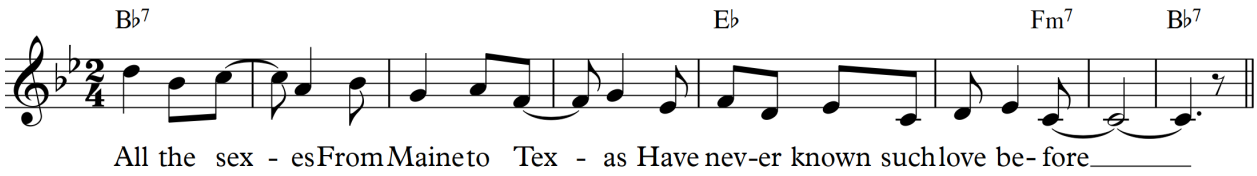
*First part of B: Neighboring Progression.* Another common schema that opens B sections is to open with a neighbor harmony. This schema draws a connection with Nobile's (2014, 124) Model 3 for srdc harmonic models, which places a neighbor at the beginning of the d phrase. [ii–V – I] is a common version of this model as it opens with a neighboring ii–V motion and returns to tonic at the end of the hypermeasure. Cole Porter's "You'd be so nice




**Example III.20:** Cole Porter, "You'd be so nice to come home to," B: Neighboring iv–V – i progression.

to come home to" features such a progressions. The B section opens with iv-chord that moves to V. The latter portion of the hypermeasure comprises a dominant elaboration and return tonic (A minor). Other clear examples of the neighboring progression include Gershwin's "That certain feeling" and "But not for me." In the case of "But not for me," a IV-chord opens the B section and precedes a return to tonic in m. 11. In "That certain feeling," a II–V progression gives way to a return to tonic in m. 11, which is followed by the tonic minor. These examples bear some resemblance to the harmonic model that Nobile describes and may function as a precursor to the srdc model.

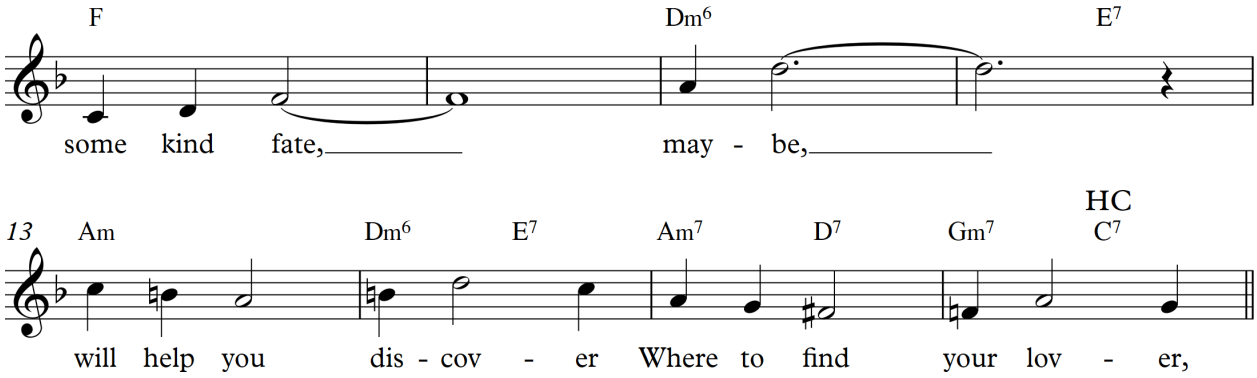
*Second part of B: [I – ii–V].* The [I – ii–V] schema is also common in the second four-bar hypermeasure of B sections to half cadence. Songs such as Kern's "A fine romance" employ this schema for both hypermeasures. Gershwin's "Who Cares?" is also in dialogue with this model (Example III.19). In m. 13, the grouping begins parallel to the beginning of the B section, starting on tonic. The move to vi prolongs this tonic, before stepping down to A♭7, the tritone substitution of II. The A♭7 gives way to a II–V progression, effecting



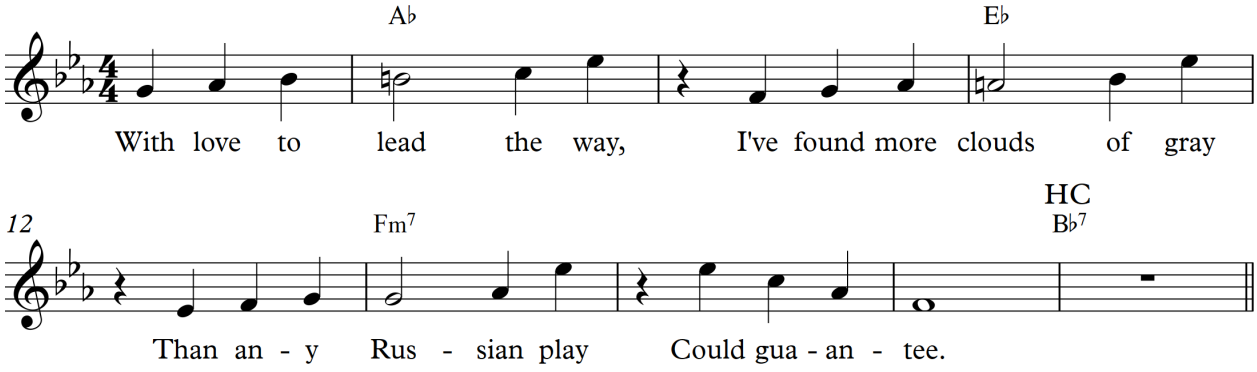

**Example III.21:** George Gershwin, "Love is Sweeping the Country," B: [I – ii–V].

half cadential closure. The basic [I – ii–V] model is elaborated via tonic elaboration and harmonic substitution. Gershwin's "Love is Sweeping the Country" (Example III.21) shows a more straight-forward example. B opens with a four-bar dominant prolongation before proceeding to an almost unadorned utterance of the [I – ii–V] schema.

*Second part of B: Cadential Progression.* A last common harmonic option is to build the last four-bar hypermeasure on a cadential progression. Cadential progressions are quite variable in Broadway song, as was discussed in the last chapter. As such, this option is not a specific schema with its own expectations, but rather a general strategy that accommodates many harmonic possibilities. Gershwin's "Maybe" illustrates a rather lengthy cadential progression in the second hypermeasure of B, shown in Example III.22. The second part of B opens with a iii–vi progression that quickly reverts back to iii to initiate a iii–VI–ii–V half cadential progression. The same basic impulse underlies the B section of Gershwin's "But not for me," shown in Example III.23. However, in this B section, the second four-bar hypermeasure comprises a lengthy ii-chord moving to V at the end of the hypermeasure. Despite the clear differences between these two songs, the same functional strategy is in play.




**Example III.22:** George Gershwin, "Maybe," B: iii–VI–ii–V half cadential progression.




**Example III.23:** George Gershwin, "But not for me," B: ii–V half cadential progression.

*The Cadence*. Schenkerians studying jazz have argued that an interrupted structure is the essential feature of the ABAC form. Martin (2011), McFarland (2012), and Heyer (2012) have all drawn attention to this aspect of the ABAC form. As the ABAC form constitutes a parallel period, these scholars echo Janet Schmalfeldt (1991) in relating the Schenkerian interruption to the period structure. In the Broadway song, implying an interruption is tantamount to saying that the antecedent ends with a half cadence. While the half cadence is the most common cadential option at the end of B, the imperfect authentic cadence persists as a common option as will, as it is in the classical parallel period. Though rare, the end of B sometimes includes half cadences not in the tonic key. The B section of Gershwin's

"Funny Face" ends with a V: HC to lead into the V-chord that begins the subsequent A section. Rather than the Schenkerian interrupted structure, the basis of the ABAC is its weak-to-strong impulse.

The B section schemata outlined above suggest some common B section procedures that composers would have internalized. While most A sections act in dialogue with one of the A section schemata, B sections are generally looser and more flexible. Consequently, these B section models should be considered common strategies, but are in no way prescriptive. Composers worked with their procedural knowledge of thematic layouts and harmonic models to lay down the referential rotation. The climactic rotation departs from both the melodic and harmonic material of the referential rotation at some point. The ways these points of conversion are achieved stems from a dialogue between the two rotations, an intratextual relationship. The same procedures worked with in the first rotation play into the second rotation.

**The Consequent**

With the referential rotation complete, $A^2$ launches the climactic rotation. The climactic rotation retraces the steps of the first rotation before departing on the way to a I:PAC. The departure is frequently announced by a type of gesture I will refer to as the *turning point*. The turning point often involves a melodic highpoint and/or a marked harmony. The turning point may occur nearly anywhere within the climactic rotation, but such gestures tend to occur in specific hypermetrical locations. As Hatten (2004) defines it, a gesture is

an embodied energetic impulse. For Hatten the embodied metaphors surrounding gesture come in the form of agency attribution; different gestures and melodies become personified ontological metaphors with their own intentions. Conceived in this way, the climactic rotation does not just passively move away from the material of the referential rotation, but rather is willed to depart by an agent. Thus, turning points are decisive gestures that shift our focus from the retracing process to the closing process.

The C section offers a crucial point of departure from the first rotation. If no change takes place in $A^2$, C will normally retrace B before departing towards climax and lyric resolution. $A^1$ and B set up the referent that evolves in the subsequent rotation. Because of this, B section continuations tend to have less energy than their counterparts in C. B sections not only end in weak cadences (often an HC), but they also tend to explore lower registers and feature fewer rhetorical gestures than C sections. If B is a sentential continuation, then C often closely resembles B. If B is a block continuation, then C typically comprises new material to push towards to PAC.

In the Broadway song, formal orientation is closely tied to metrical orientation, as was discussed in the previous chapter. Moreover, when listeners recognize something they perceive as a familiar pattern, they project pattern completion.[13] In the case of consequent phrases, when a listener hears the return of the $A^1$ material, they now expect the material into the future and bring certain expectations to their hearing. This is what I call the retracing process. After the turning point, the focus shifts to the remaining goal of the I:PAC and

[13]See Huron (2006).

completion of the last hypermeasure. This is what I call the closing process. Both the retracing process and the closing process are predictable, the former relying on the antecedent as a model and the latter relying on schemata. While there are typical locations for the turning point to occur, it is not always easily predictable.

As Agawu (2008, 61) writes, "A high point is a superlative moment. It may be a moment of greatest intensity, a point of extreme tension, or the site of a decisive release of tension. It usually marks a turning point in the form." The definition of high point that I will use is contextual rather than statistical; a high point need not be the highest note in the song, but rather a point that is marked in its immediate context. High points derive their meaning from the embodied responses that they elicit. In Hatten's (2004) virtual environments, high points are agential motions that strenuously push against musical gravity, creating a tension-filled embodied response. In intramodal engagement, the response is similarly tense as it takes more energy to sing higher notes.[14] A high point may cause a *shift in level of discourse* or may itself be a climax.

A marked harmonic progression can have a similar effect of shifting in the levels of discourse and often corresponds with high points. The II chord and iv chord are particularly common in this role. When the consequent suddenly departs from one of the antecedent harmonic schemata to a chromatic harmony, the result is homologous with the rhetorical gesture. While the progression alone is enough to generate such an effect, these harmonic moves generally occur with rhetorical gestures.

[14]Cox (2016)

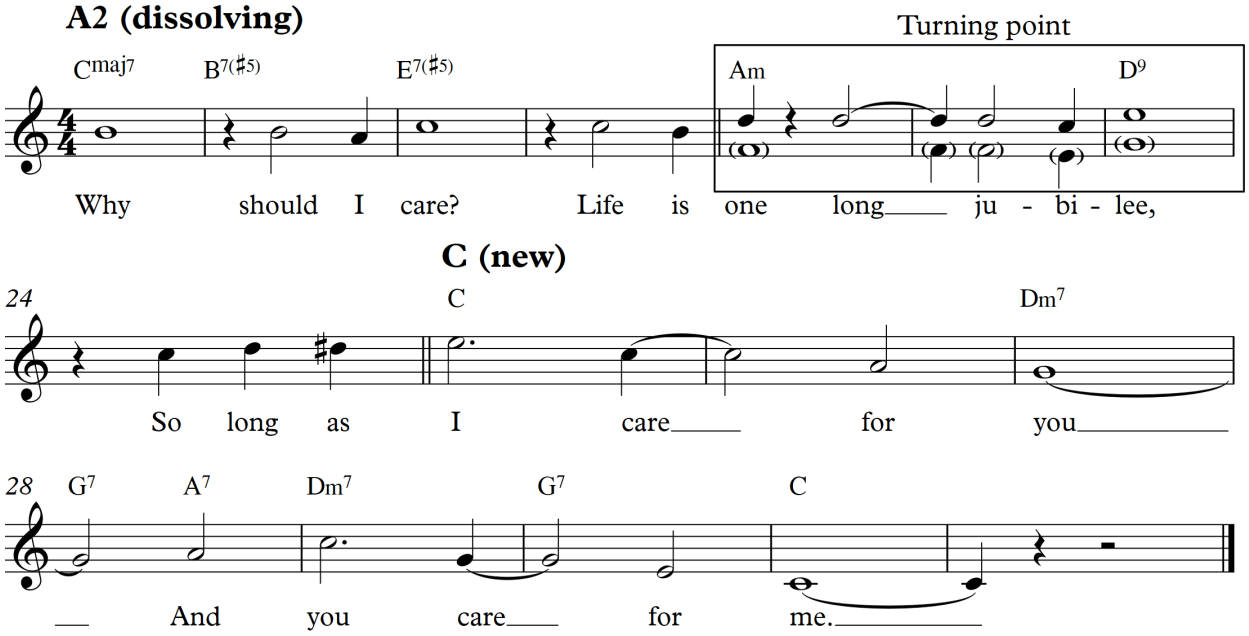
Along with the rhetorical shifts and tonal events that are important in the consequent, poetic shifts in the consequent are integral to ABAC form. Shifts from broad to specific subject matter, recapitulations of ideas, and shifts in personal address are common strategies near the end of consequent phrases. Negotiating tonal form, rhetorical form, and poetic form is the process of creating an aesthetically pleasing utterance, as was discussed at the beginning of this chapter. In what follows, I analyze the strategic function of turning points and their surrounding context and illustrate several closing schemata.

### The Dissolving $A^2$ Section: Gershwin's "Who Cares"

The most common option is to place the turning point in $A^2$, creating a *dissolving $A^2$ section.*[15] The consequent phrase of Gershwin's "Who Cares" illustrates the idea, shown in Example III.24. $A^2$ begins exactly the same as the antecedent, aside from the lyrics. In m. 21 the melody moves suddenly up from its referent in the antecedent phrase, shown by the notes in parenthesis. The melody climbs to a high E paired with a major II chord. This harmony does not precede V, as if it were functioning as V/V. Instead, its function is purely rhetorical. This gesture draws our focus away from the retracing process and toward the ensuing material.

The tension caused by the high point at the end of $A^2$ releases at the beginning of the C section with the initiation of a new four-bar hypermeasure and the high E recontextualized as the consonant third of a tonic harmony. The melody of C sheds its resemblance to

[15]The concept of a dissolving formal section comes from Hepokoski and Darcy's (2006) discussion of the transition in the late-eighteenth century sonata form.




**Example III.24:** Gershwin, "Who Cares," $A^2$ and C sections: Dissolving $A^2$.

the characteristic material of the rest of the song for the most part and sticks to more conventional longer durations. This process of characteristic material moving to conventional material relates to Schoenberg's idea of liquidation. Instead of a gradual process, this kind of transformation is instigated by the turning point and the onset of a new hypermeasure. Harmonically the C section revolves around tonic and sets up the ii–V–I cadential progression. In other words, the harmonies simplify significantly from the previous sections. The turning point is the moment of maximum tension in the entire song. After this tension resolves at the beginning of the C section, the melody effortlessly falls over an octave to cadence on middle C.

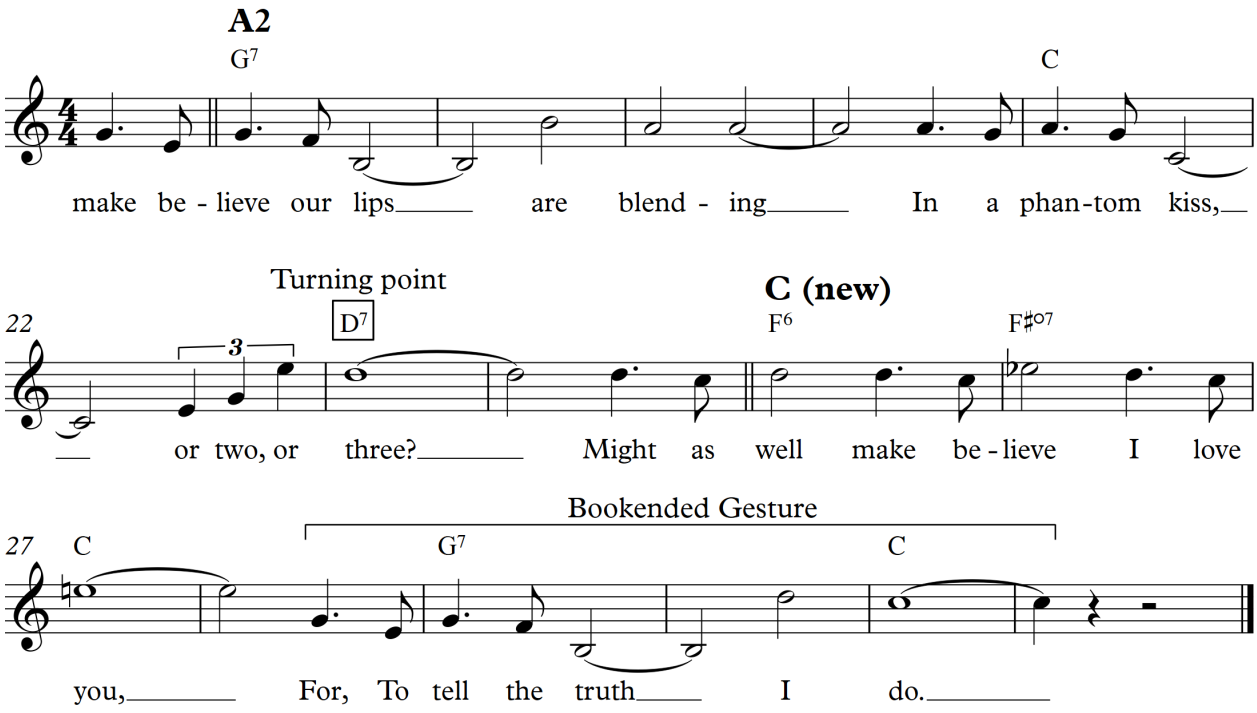
These features are mirrored in the lyrics. $A^2$ begins by continuing to ask rhetorical questions, as was happening in the referential rotation (recall Example III.14). After the turning point, the lyrics shift from the constant questions to a response of sorts. While the

first three sections of the song ask "who cares?," the C section follows this question saying "who cares... so long as I care for you and you care for me." The turning point in "Who Cares?" departs from the model of the antecedent to convey the meaning of the song: an expression of affection.

### Bookended Gestures: Kern's "Make Believe"

Kern's "Make Believe" (Example III.25) offers a similar example to "Who Cares." The consequent begins by retracing $A^1$ exactly, aside from the lyrics. The end of $A^2$ repeats the same gesture from $A^1$, but with a crucial harmonic difference. In $A^1$, there was no harmonic change after the arrival on tonic at the beginning of the second four-bar hypermeasure. In $A^2$, the harmonic move to D7 (II) is marked enough to constitute the turning point of the song. Notice that this harmonic move to D7 closely resembles the move to the D chord in "Who Cares." The function of these two harmonies is essentially the same. They are both contextually marked harmonies appearing in the same hypermetrical context. The effect of the turning point is not as salient in "Make Believe" as the melodic gesture stays the same.

After this turning point, the C section deploys entirely new material, but with a familiar harmonic layout. The harmonic progression of C is closely in dialogue with a cadential model presented in the previous chapter. The arrival on IV at the beginning of C presents the possibility of IV–iv–iii–VI–ii–V–I cadential progression. The move to F♯ diminished serves as a variant of the iv option while the tonic harmony one measure later substitutes for the iii–VI motion. The melody of C opens by an upward push resulting in a statistical high point




**Example III.25:** Kern, "Make Believe," $A^2$ and C sections.

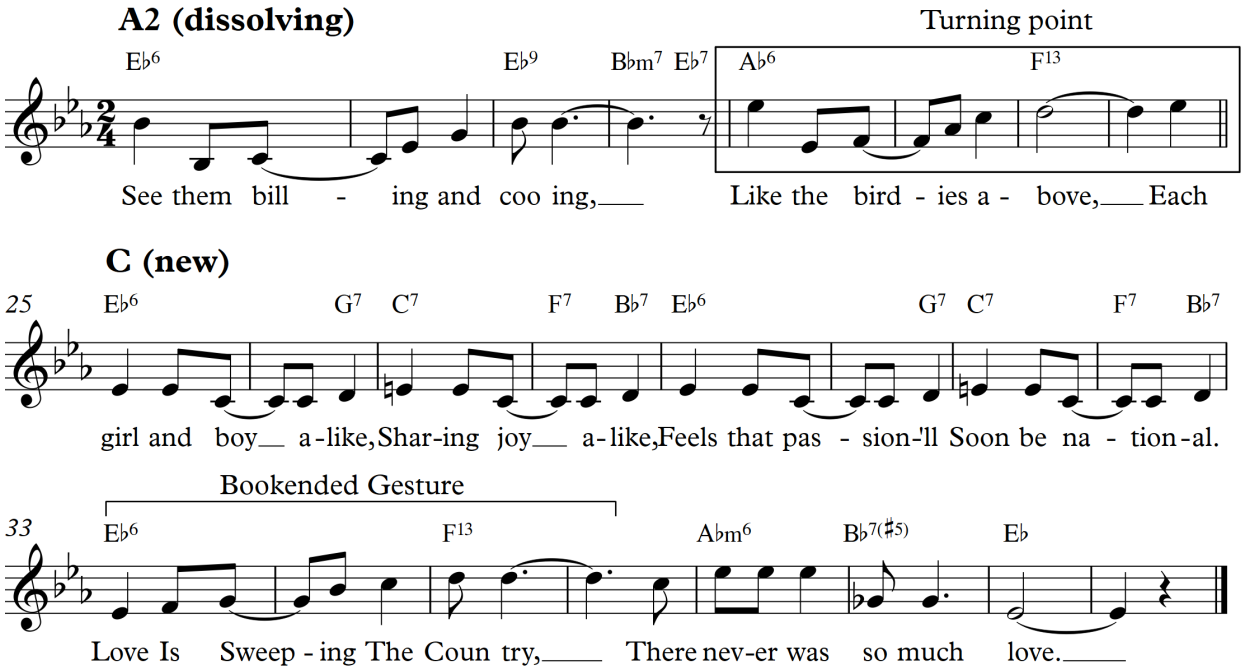
on E in m. 27. The last four-bar hypermeasure features a *bookended gesture*, a recalling of the opening gesture of a song for concluding function.[16]

The basic poetic trajectory of this song comprises the move from "we should make believe I love you" to "I actually do love you." The significant departure from the first poetic state to the second aligns with the turning point. The $A^2$ section continues the first poetic state until the turning point. The C section immediately makes this shift to the second poetic state.

### Gershwin's "Love is Sweeping the Country"

Until now, I have focused mostly on the broad-specific paradigm or related appeals to love at the end of songs. *Thesis affirmation* is another poetic strategy. Returning to a prominent

[16]Here I follow Callahan's (2013) idea of a bookended sentential lyric-type.



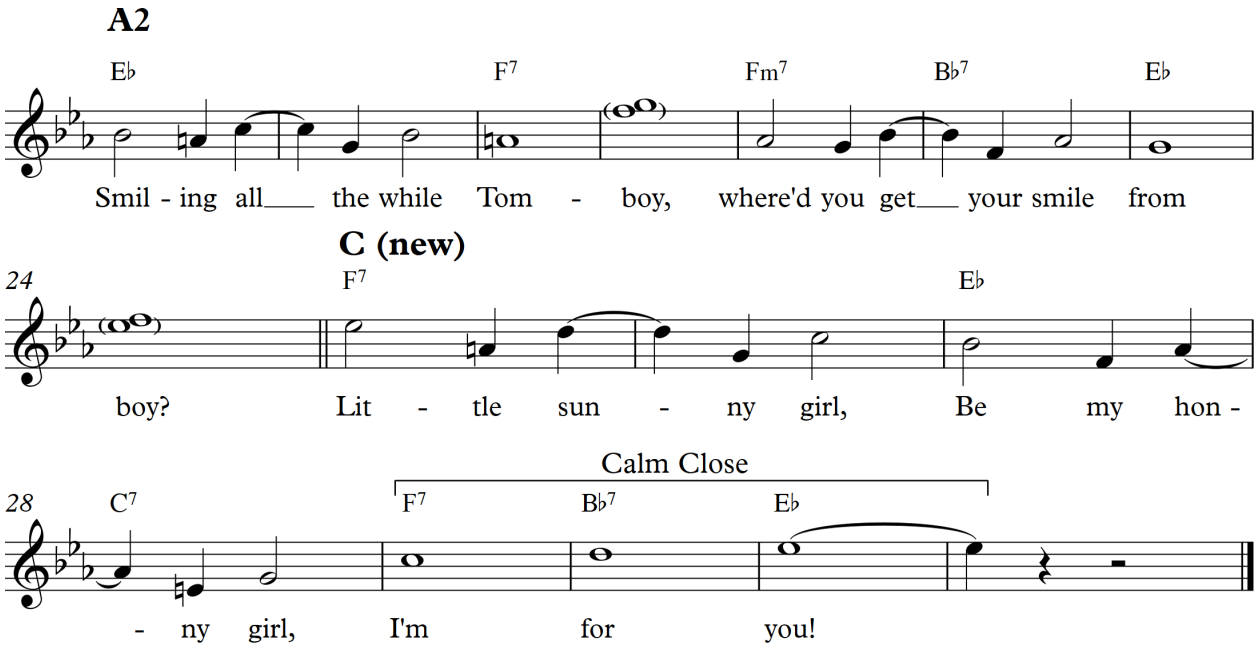

**Example III.26:** Gershwin, "Love is Sweeping the Country," $A^2$ and C sections: phrase expansion in C and bookended gesture.

idea at the end of a song lends a rounded quality and sense of finality. This lyric return often pairs with a a return of a the opening musical gesture, creating a double return. Gershwin's "Love is Sweeping the Country" demonstrates the idea, shown in Example III.26. The melody of mm. 17–20 corresponds exactly with the opening of the antecedent phrase ($A^1$ is shown in Example III.2). The move to E♭9 in m. 19 differs from the antecedent and points towards the ensuing turning point. The turning point transposes the opening gesture up a perfect fourth above its corresponding gesture in the antecedent. The turning point has a text-painting quality as it coincides with the lyrics "Like the birdies above." The turning point harmonically closes with an F13, yet another instance of the pairing of the rhetorical gesture and the II chord.

The C section opens with entirely new material, which fragments and repeats, radically extending the C section an additional eight bars. In the first eight bars of C, the text elaborates on the love that is sweeping the country ("girl and boy alike, sharing joy alike, feels that passion'll soon be national"). The boy/joy and passion'll/national rhymes help to delineate two-bar units, securing continuation function. The following eight bars begin with a return to the opening gesture paired with the titular keyword ("Love is sweeping the country"). This closing manifestation of the opening gesture most closely resembles the turning point that opened the consequent. Like the turning point, this bookended gesture redirects our attention toward the coming cadence.

### The Calm Close: Kern's "Sunny"

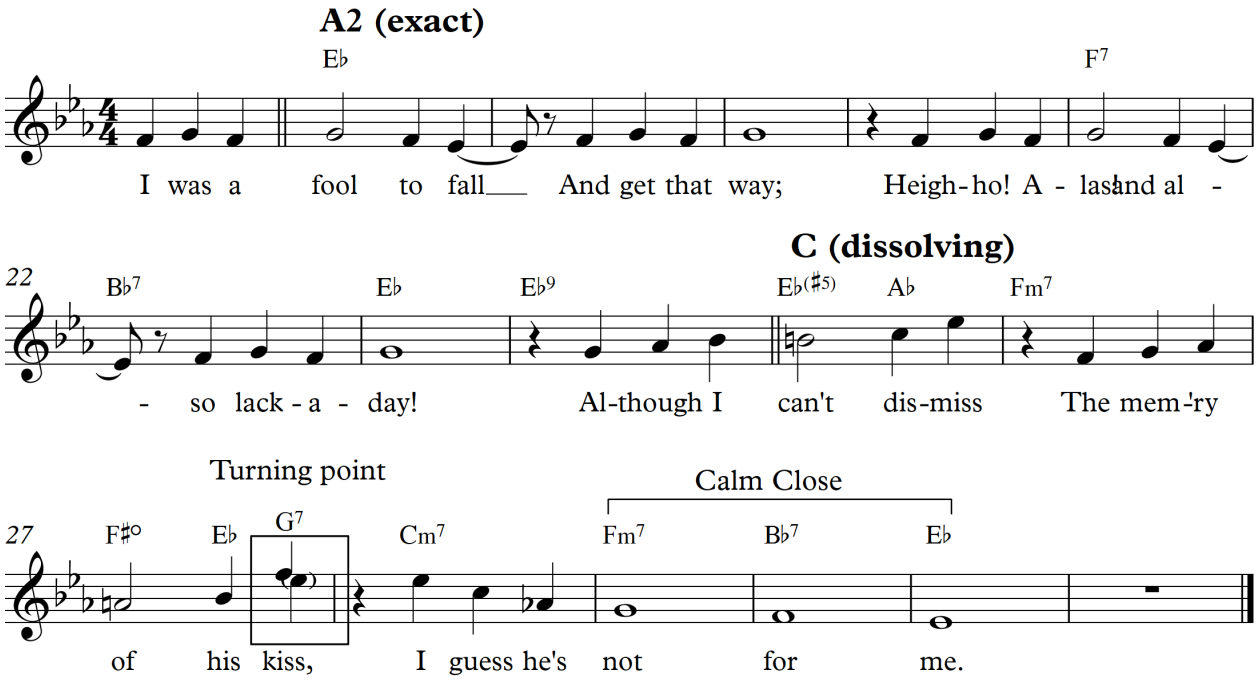
In addition to bookended gestures, the *calm close* is another option for closing gestures. In the calm close, the last four-bar hypermeasure of C is composed of entirely new material, typically longer durations. Kern's "Sunny" ends with the calm close. The $A^2$ section begins the same as the antecedent put replaces the antecedent's F with a G in m. 20. A parallel situation arises in m. 24, replacing the E♭ with an F. While there is no obvious turning point in $A^2$, perhaps only the subtle move up in register, C begins much like B but transposed much higher. After a 2+2 grouping opening the continuation, the last four-bar hypermeasure comprises entirely whole note durations. Most of "Sunny" utilizes the same two-bar rhythm. The sudden abandonment of this rhythm in favor of long note values marks this gesture as one achieved through liquidation.




**Example III.27:** Kern, "Sunny," $A^2$ and C sections: Calm close.

### Dissolving C sections: Gershwin's "But not for me"

In contrast to the previous examples, Gershwin's "But not for me" places the turning point well into the C section (Example III.28). The $A^2$ section mimics $A^1$ exactly aside from the lyrics. Likewise, C begins nearly the same as the prior B section. In the second two-bar fragment, the melody leaps up to F, signifying a major change in orientation. Like Kern's "Make Believe," the C section of "But not for me" features an expanded cadential progression beginning on IV. The progression moves IV–I–III–VI–ii–V–I, in dialogue with the model presented in the previous chapter. After the turning point in m. 27, C dissolves into a calm close. The last four-bar hypermeausure of "But not for me" in some ways is strikingly similar to the closing gesture of "Sunny." In both cases the last hypermeasure is entirely comprised of whole notes while the common ii–V–I schema overlays the structure.




**Example III.28:** Gershwin, "But not for me," $A^2$ and C sections: Dissolving C.

### Modality and Markedness

Readers may have noticed the sheer volume of major-mode songs. Indeed, the only song discussed in the minor mode was Porter's "You'd be so nice to come home to." In Broadway songs, the minor mode is stylistically marked and rarely do songs end on a minor cadence. In the case of "You'd be so nice to come home to," the antecedent secures a half cadence in A minor while the consequent cadences in C major to end the song. Kern's "Whip poor Will" features an antecedent entirely in minor and a consequent in the parallel major. The lyrics clarify that the antecedent phrase is a memory while the consequent is conceptualized in the present. Minor mode songs nearly always move to major near the end of the song. Often this move is related to the turning point of the song, causing an important shift in the song's thematic, tonal, and poetic form.

## Conclusion

The ABAC form was a widely used song form in Broadway from 1920 to 1940. While it seems to appear more frequently earlier in this period, petering off in mid-1930s, its importance should not be undervalued. The basic thematic and harmonic schemata that underlie the form serve as models for compound AABA and other songs not conforming to a standard scheme. Writing an aesthetically successful song involved negotiating rhetorical, tonal, and poetic forms. The basic impulse of the ABAC provides a perfect template for this task with an emphasis on a dramatic, end-focused telos. The referential rotation lays out the compositional materials and the climactic rotation departs from the model through a turning point en route to a I:PAC. Through this chapter I have shown the importance of how compositional options and different gestures function syntactically and their potential as musical signs conveying expressive meaning.

# CHAPTER IV

# THE AABA

AABA is the rhetorical layout of an initial section, a repetition or response, a bridge, and a reprise. AABA form circulated through different genres in the mid-1930s and onward, playing a central part in jazz and early rock music. The form is perhaps best known for its paramount place in jazz music. Jazz (broadly speaking), rock, and Broadway closely intermingle in their histories, producing a similar vocabulary of thematic designs despite their differing pitch structures. A central characteristic of the Broadway AABA form is its fluid complex of options. There is no one impulse that underlies AABA form like there is in ABAC. Instead, there are a number of compositional strategies that work within this rigid rhetorical layout. We will investigate these strategies over the course of this chapter.

The A sections in AABA form relate to each other in a variety of ways. The tendency for srdc phrase structures to underlie A sections in rock AABA form leads to a norm that A sections end with authentic cadences. Consequently, thematic transformation between A sections is atypical of rock while it is quite normal in Broadway. Securing a I: PAC in $A^3$ is the *only* cadential condition of the Broadway AABA. In Porter's "Love for Sale," $A^3$ culminated in a high climax and i: PAC while the other A sections ended in i: PAC in lower registers, as we saw in Chapter I. The dramatic recomposition that takes place in "Love for Sale" is but one of several strategies, which I will detail over the course of this chapter.

| $\mathbf{A}^1$ | | $\mathbf{A}^2$ | $\mathbf{B}$ | $\mathbf{A}^3$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Theme-type | Cadence | Relation to $A^1$ | Harmonic Schemata | Relations to previous A sections |
| **Options** | **Options** | **Options** | **Options** | **Options** |
| Sentence | HC | Consequent | IV – V motion | Exact Repetition of $A^2$ |
| Cadential Hybrid 4 | IAC | Exact Repetition | iii – V motion | Necessary Recomposition of $A^2$ |
| Other | PAC | Subverted Consequent | vi – V motion | Dramatic Recomposition |
| | | Sequential repetition | | |

**Table IV.1:** Basic AABA options.

Table IV.1 offers a preview of these strategies. The path through the AABA is largely dependent on the degree of closure at the end of each A section, achieved through gestural/melodic, harmonic, and hypermetrical closure. The cadence at the end of $A^1$ provides insight into what we should expect in $A^2$. Our expectations for $A^3$ are further based on the types of gestural maneuvers and cadences that took place in $A^1$ and $A^2$. The bridge provides contrast to the A sections, often exploring distant key areas and harmonies. As we will see, certain schemata underpin the approaches to bridge sections in achieving this tonal distance and spontonaity, much of which has been discussed by Graziano (2013). The complex of AABA options outlined here was ingrained in the procedural knowledge of composers and audiences alike. The rest of this chapter explores these options.

### The $A^1$ Section

$A^1$ functions as the referential rotation in AABA form. Listeners form some base expectations of the rest of the song from this initial hearing. The melodies, harmonies, and lyrics of $A^1$ are much more self-contained than their ABAC form counterparts. With multiple rotations, the lyric refrain is a poetic option that further emphasizes the self-contained structuring of the A sections. The phrase structure of $A^1$ tends to function as a single phrase, most often as a sentence. $A^1$ may cohere with $A^2$ in various ways: they may form a parallel period, subvert a period expectation, or present identical phrases. Thus, $A^1$ may function in variety of ways in the context of the larger form. Nonetheless, all $A^1$ sections maintain a level of autonomy through their phrase and poetic structures. $A^1$ sections are consequently tight-

knit, expressing form-functional efficiency and are relatively diatonic. They also typically take the shape of a sentence, Caplin's (1998) "Hybrid 4," or a related thematic structuring.

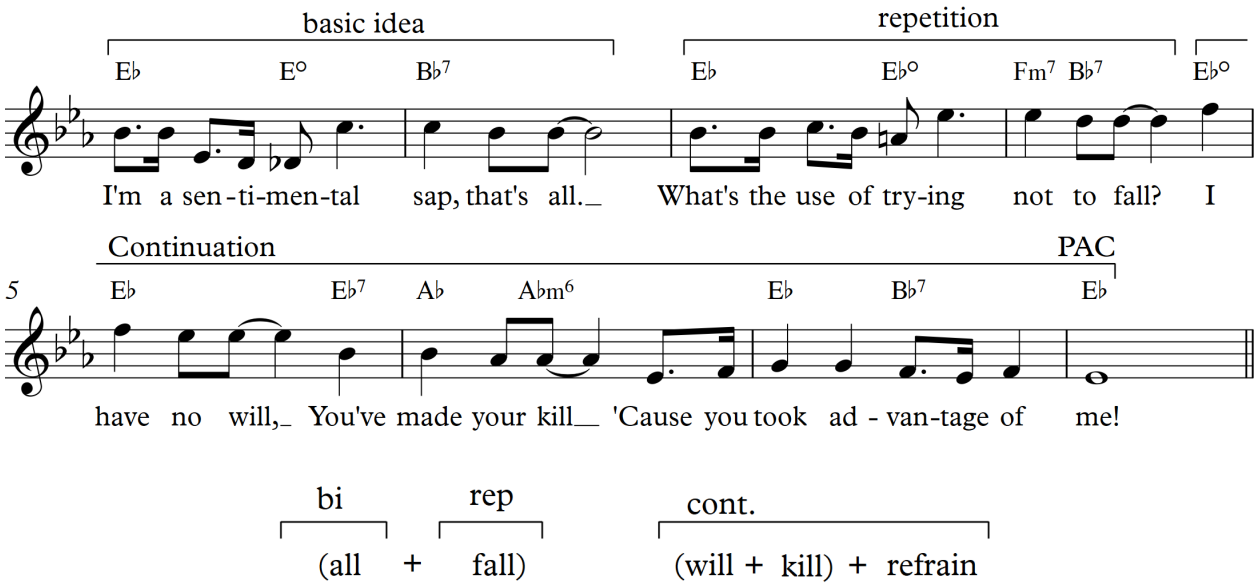
*Sentences.* In early rock music, and for the Beatles in particular, the most common formal organization is an AABA form with each A section comprising an srdc phrase structure.[1] Indeed, de Clercq's (2012, 187) "classic 8-bar A section" comprises an 8-bar srdc that ends in a PAC. The prevalence of the srdc structure in AABA forms may have its origins in Broadway songs.[2] The srdc (statement, restatement, departure, conclusion) is essentially a sentence, though without the fused medial and closing function characteristic of sentences.[3] Early rock musicians may have intuited the sentences of AABA forms, shaping their procedural knowledge and their usage of the srdc. This possible historical connection is plausible because the sentence is the primary phrase-structural option for A sections in AABA form.

The eight-bar sentences of AABA form share many similarities with their 16-bar counterparts in the AB and AC portions of the ABAC form. Example IV.1 shows $A^1$ of Richard Rodgers' "You Took Advantage of Me." The presentation closely resembles the I–V alternation schema discussed in the previous chapter. The basic idea harmonically moves from I to V. The exact repetition shares this harmonic path from I to V. Harmonic strategies for musical repetition are similar between four-bar and eight-bar presentations. Likewise, this presentation features a rhyming couplet between "all" and "fall," shown below the

[1] See Nobile 2011. Everett (2009, 141) might call this relationship a "small" srdc inside of a "large" srdc, subsuming AABA under the broader umbrella of "large" srdc.

[2] Covach (2005), among many, have linked AABA form from the songs of Gershwin and other Broadway composers to early rock music. I find it likely that phrase structure was involved in the formal transfer between these genres.

[3] Nobile (2011), Summach (2011), and de Clercq (2012) have all drawn the comparison between the sentence and srdc.




**Example IV.1:** Richards Rodgers, "You Took Advantage of Me," A[1]: Sentence structure.

example. The continuation comprises a variant of a I–V7/IV–IV–iv–iii-vi–ii–V–I cadential progression.[4] It begins on tonic before moving to IV then iv. The last two measures are made up of a cadential I progression (Nobile 2011): I–V–I. The fragmentation to one-bar groupings pairs with another rhyming couplet between "will" and "kill." The cadential I progression takes place over the titular refrain: "'Cause you took advantage of me." "You Took Advantage of Me" demonstrates that AABA shares many of the same repetition schemes and harmonic progressions with ABAC. Rhyming couplets, pronoun pairings, and keywords are common techniques across the song repertoire, regardless of the large-scale thematic design.

The sentence is both the most common option in AABA forms and the underlying impulse of each rotation in ABAC form. These forms reach a kind of fusion in compound (64-bar)

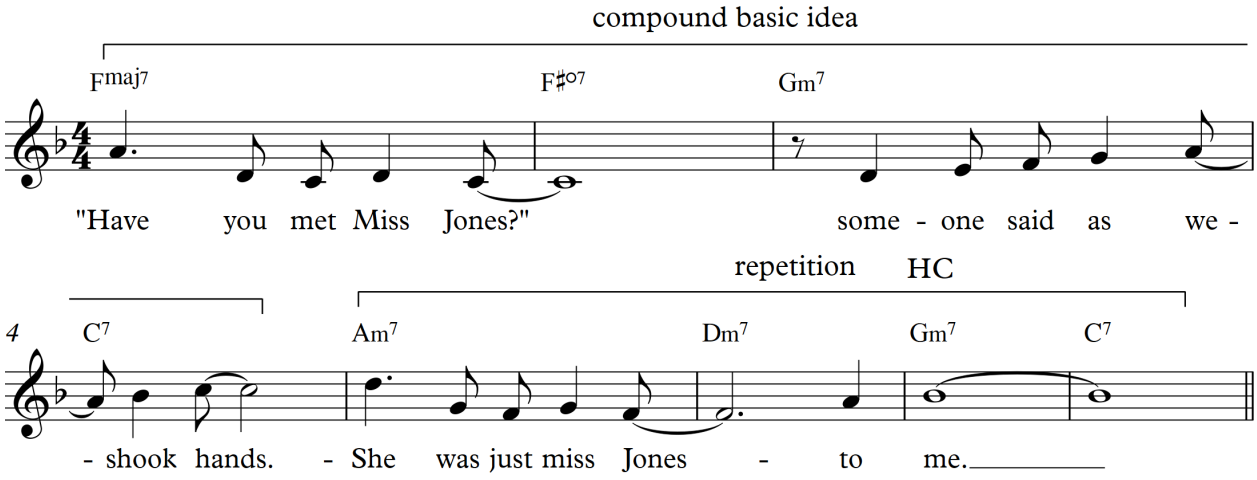
[4]The coincidence of a continuation and a cadential progression does not warrant retrospective reinterpretation, as Caplin (1998, 47) claims. The harmonic progression I–V7/IV–IV is enough to recognize the schema and elicits the cadential expectation at the end of the hypermeasure. Retrospective reinterpretation plays no part in most listener's experiences of these eight measures.

AABA. The 16-bar A sections in this larger form resemble the individual rotations of ABAC form. Indeed, compound AABA comprises an embedded ABAC form when $A^1$ and $A^2$ form a period, as will be discussed in the next section. Consequently, many of the norms that underlie ABAC form are intuited and applied in compound AABA.

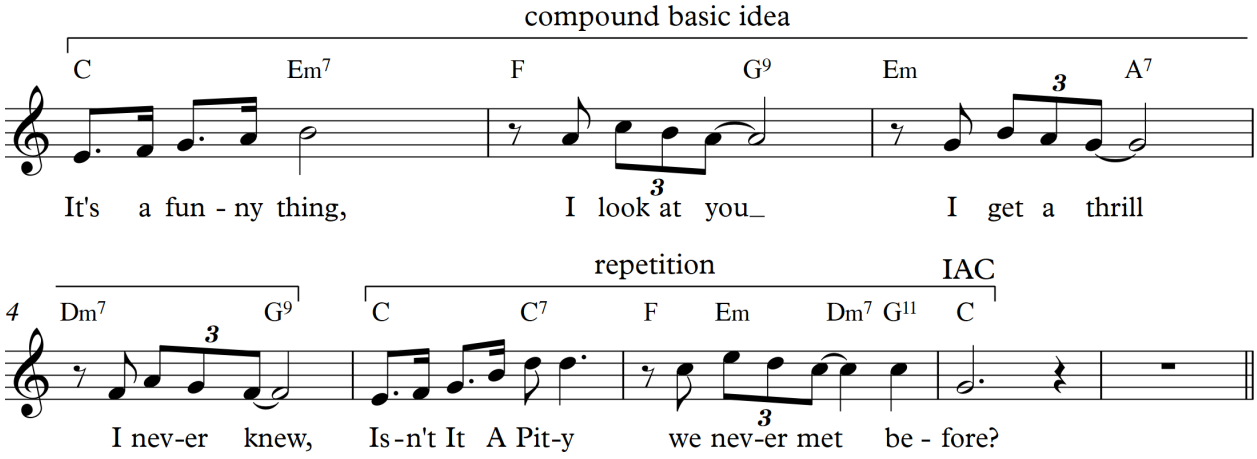
*Cadential Hybrid 4.* $A^1$ sections in AABA form are subject to much more thematic variety than their counterparts in ABAC form. While the sentence is the most common option, the *cadential hybrid 4* is a close second. Caplin's (1998, 61) "hybrid 4" comprises a compound basic idea and a consequent. This formal-type closely resembles the period, but omits the weak cadence that divides its constituents. $A^1$ of Rodgers' "Have You Met Miss Jones?" features a similar strategy (Example IV.2). The theme opens with a compound basic idea that prolongs tonic.[5] The beginning of m. 5 marks a direct parallelism with m. 1, suggesting a consequent relationship. As the hypermeasure progresses, m. 7 realizes a half cadence, essentially bringing $A^1$ to a close. This second four-bar group does not function as a consequent, however. Instead, a iii–vi–ii–V half cadential progression underlies this group. Thus, the theme can most accurately be described as a compound basic idea plus a cadential progression, or rather a cadential hybrid 4.

The cadential hybrid 4 works especially well for long tail refrains. Gershwin's "Isn't it a pity" demonstrates this idea, shown in Example IV.3. The opening four measures comprises an initial two-bar basic idea and two one-bar repetitions of m. 2. These parallelisms elicit a reinterpretation of the grouping of the opening two measures, creating a 1+1+1+1 grouping

[5]Some may point to m. 4 as a possible half cadence. The clear direction of the melody and the melodic connection between mm. 4 and 5 attenuate a sense of formal end. Unlike much of western art music, four-bar phrases are extremely rare.




**Example IV.2:** Richards Rodgers, "Have You Met Miss Jones," mm. 1–8: cadential hybrid 4.




**Example IV.3:** George Gershwin, "Isn't it a Pity?": tail refrain encompassing the repetition.

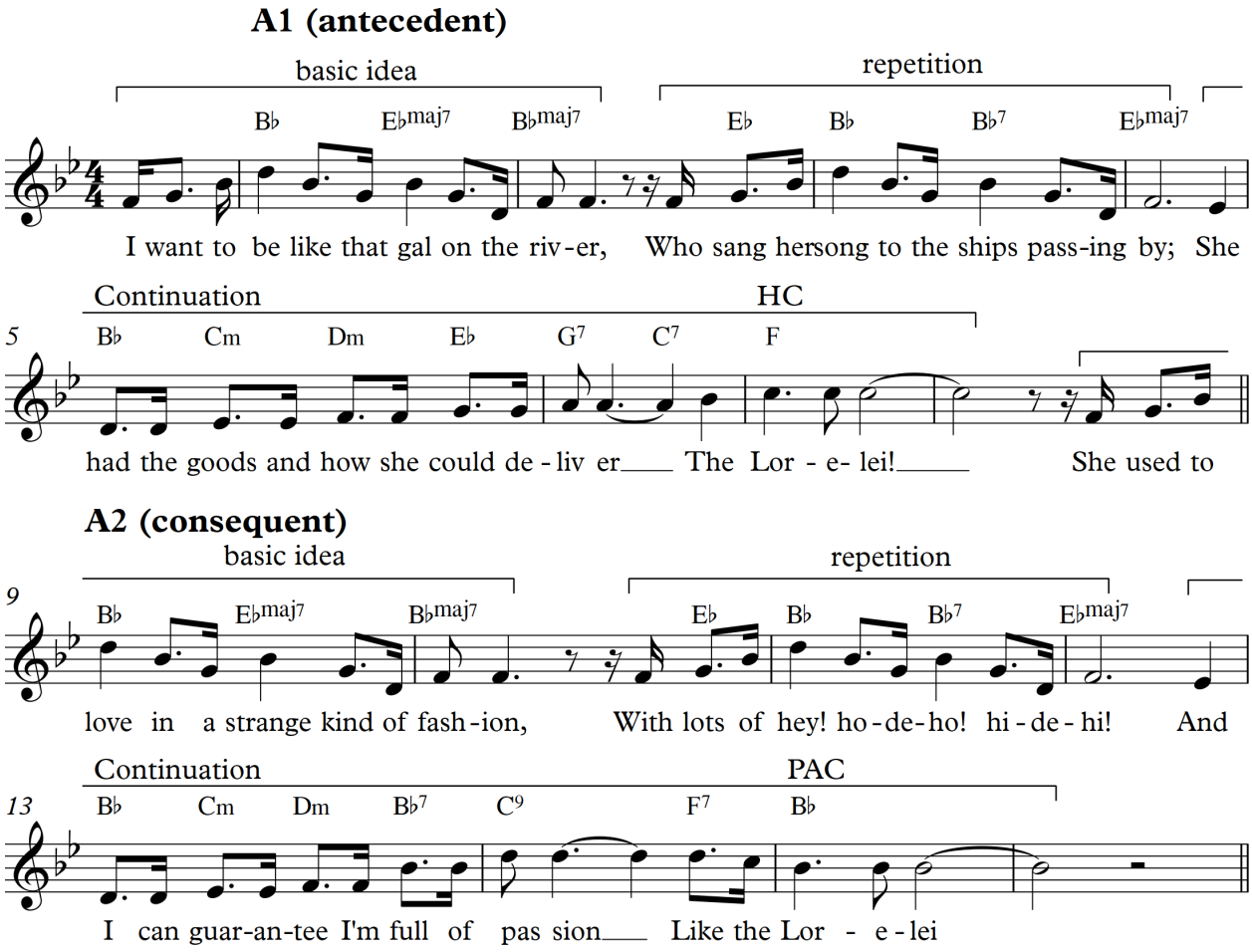
structure. The I–V alternation in mm. 1–2 and 3–4 supports a 2+2 grouping and the rhyme between "you" in m. 2 and "knew" in m. 4 further supports a sense of 2+2, creating a compound basic idea. The melodic material from mm. 1–2 is recontextualized as a cadential progression in m. 5, where the arrival of the song's refrain ("Isn't it a pity we never met before?") further clarifies the role of this material as cadential.

### $A^1$ and $A^2$ Combinations

$A^2$ sections present the second rotation of material. There is no single role of this rotation. Instead, there are several conventions that surround the relationship between $A^1$ and $A^2$. The three most common options are the period, exact repetition, and the subverted period. The period places a weak cadence (IAC or HC) and the end of $A^1$ and a strong cadence at the end of $A^2$ (PAC). A subverted period elicits periodic expectation by ending $A^1$ with a weak cadence and subverts the expectation of a strong cadence by instead ending on a weak cadence or throwing cadential closure into question all together. Exact repetitions comprise an identical relationship between $A^1$ and $A^2$; typically both sections close with a PAC. Lastly, sequential repetitions are stylistically marked in the Broadway song, appearing very rarely.[6]

*Periods.* Periods are the most common option relating $A^1$ and $A^2$, though other options are common as well. $A^2$ sections may feature substantial revisions of the last hypermeasure of $A^1$ in an HC/PAC period, such as Gershwin's "Lorelei" (Example IV.4). In this song, $A^1$ features a sentence that ends in a half cadence. $A^2$ repeats the presentation verbatim, leaps upward from its corresponding material in $A^1$, and composes out a II–V–I semi-strong cadence in m. 15. Gershwin recomposes the last hypermeasure of $A^2$ to complete the period. No such recomposition is required with IAC/PAC periods. This feature can be seen in Porter's "What is this Thing Called Love?," which alters only one note between $A^1$ and $A^2$, changing an IAC to a PAC. $A^2$ subtly rewrites mm. 2 and 7 to fit the rhyming couplet of the section. The structural transformation involves only one note change. Nobile (unpublished)

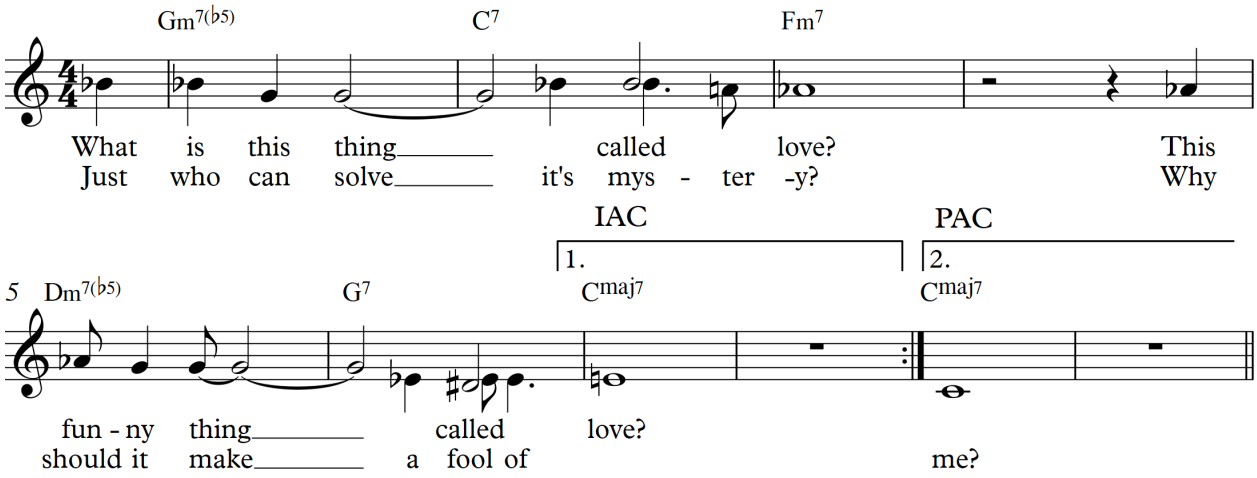
[6]Sequential repetitions do however, play a much larger role in the hard bop era in jazz.




**Example IV.4:** George Gershwin, "Lorelei," mm. 1–16: $A^1$ and $A^2$ forming a parallel period.

has observed a similar tendency in the periods of rock music. By changing only one note, composers can entirely preserve the material from the antecedent while still creating a sense of weak-to-strong.

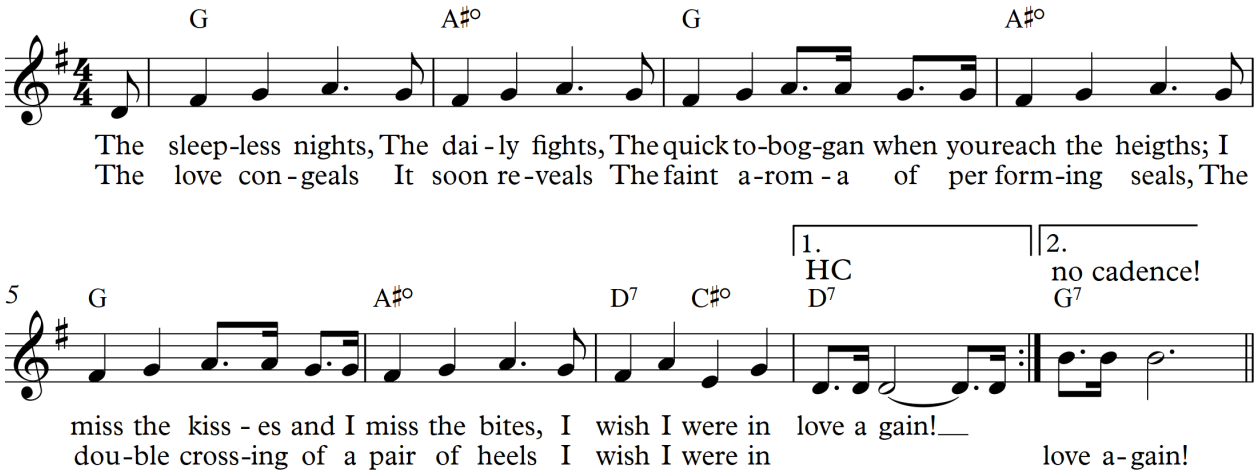
"Lorelei" and "What is this thing called love" further demonstrate how poetic devices fit the formal context. "Lorelei" features a refrain at the end of both $A^1$ and $A^2$. In $A^1$, "river" and "passing by" in the first four-bar hypermeasure pair with "deliver" and "Lorelei" in the second hypermeasure. The same strategy is used in $A^2$, pairing "fashion" and "hi-di-




**Example IV.5:** Cole Porter, "What is this Thing Called Love?" mm. 1–16: $A^1$ and $A^2$ forming a parallel period.

hi" with "passion" and "Lorelei." "What is this thing called love" features a different poetic organization. The two four-bar hypermeasures of $A^1$ both end with the keyword "thing called love." This keyword is dropped in $A^2$ and replaced by a rhyming couplet between "mystery" and "me." These poetic strategies highlight the autonomy that A sections possess. In particular, the immediate repetition of material that AABA offers allows the possibility of a refrain, a possibility not available in the ABAC.

*Subverted Periods.* Subverting the expectation of a period is a common technique. A half cadence at the end of $A^1$ instigates a period expectation. By concluding $A^2$ with another half cadence or an evaded cadence, $A^3$ is put in prime position for a dramatic recomposition of A material to fully realize a I: PAC. Richard Rodgers' "I wish I were in love again," shown in Example IV.6, is paradigmatic. $A^1$ ends with a half cadence on the refrain "I wish I were in love again," setting up period expectation. $A^2$ responds with as a consequent phrase, but alters the expected authentic cadence by changing it into V7/IV. The effect is of reorientation

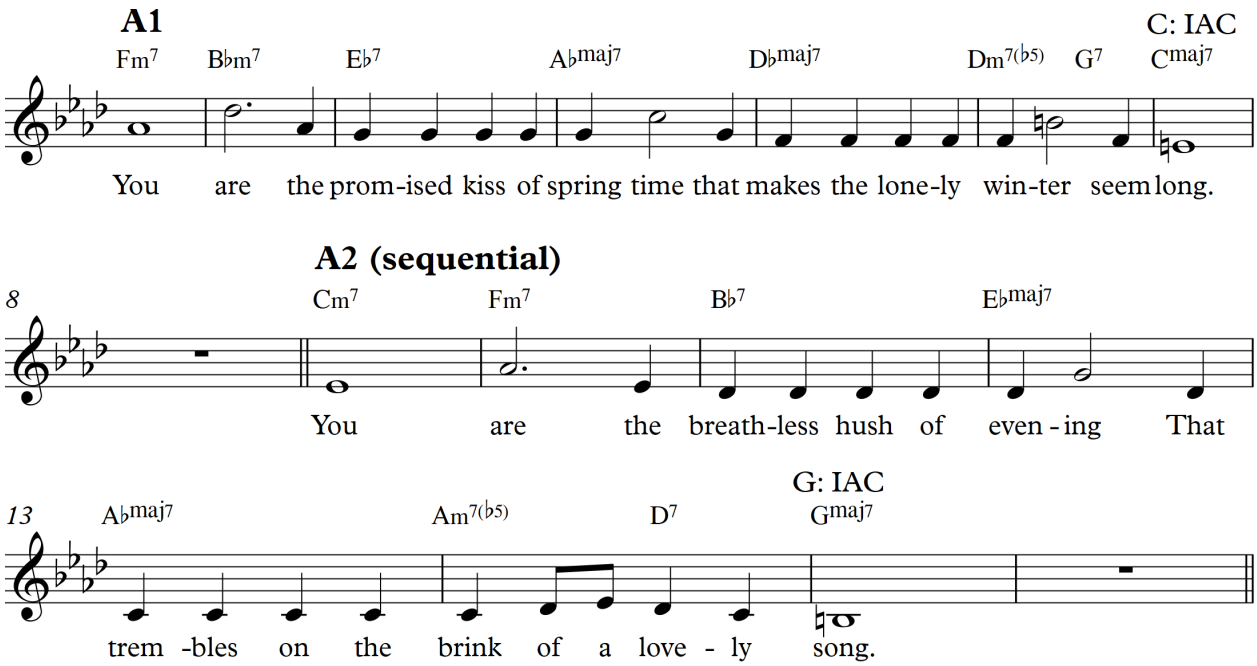



**Example IV.6:** Richard Rodgers, "I wish I were in Love again," mm. 1–16: $A^1$ and $A^2$ subverting the period expectation.

and anticipation towards the ensuing IV chord that begins the bridge. Having yet to secure a I: PAC, $A^3$ must alter prior materials in order to complete this generic task.

*Exact Repetitions.* The exact repetition category encompasses A section pairings in which both sections end with identical authentic cadences. The IAC is less indicative of a period than the HC, making the case of IAC/IAC closer to an exact repetition rather than a subverted period. While tail refrains are an option within the period and subverted period frameworks, as exemplified by "Lorelei" and "I wish I were in love again," tail refrains are most common in exact repetitions. Gershwin's "I got rhythm," Porter's "Anything goes," and Kern's "Can't help lovin' dat man" are paradigmatic.

*Sequential Repetitions.* Sequential repetitions are the rarest among the available types of repetition. Kern's "All the things you are" is perhaps the most famous example in early Broadway repertoire, largely for its fame as a jazz standard. $A^1$ comprises a lengthy circle-of-fifths progression from F to D♭. Measure 6 takes a sudden turn to cadence in C major in m.




**Example IV.7:** Jerome Kern, "All the things you are": $A^2$ as sequential repetition of $A^1$.

7; not only a syntactically weak cadence, but it is also distant from the A♭ tonality. $A^2$ is an exact repetition of $A^1$ transposed down by a perfect fourth. $A^3$ must dramatically recompose $A^1$ as a consequence of these two A sections failing to cadence in A♭. The importance of the sequential repetition lies in its influence on later jazz composers, perhaps most notably in Benny Golson's "Along Came Betty."

### The B Section

The bridge is a departure. With the tonality and thematic material sufficiently established in $A^1$ and $A^2$, B is free to explore distant tonal areas and new thematic material. The bridge can be profitably compared to the "contrasting middle" of the small ternary form that is discussed by Caplin (1998, 75), but is precisely eight measures long. Graziano (2013)

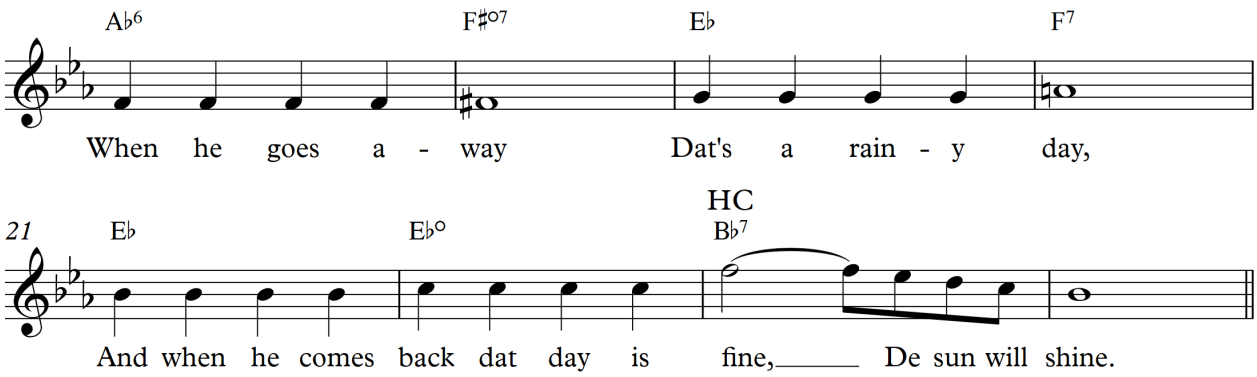
| Song | cadence in bridge |
|---|---|
| Gershwin "Delishious" | VI: HC |
| Gershwin "Lorelei" | III: PAC |
| Gershwin "Isn't it a pity" | V–IV progression ending the bridge |
| Rodgers "Have you met Miss Jones?" | questionable ♭II: IAC |
| Porter "Love for Sale" | IV: HC |
| Kern "All the things you are" | questionable ♮VI: IAC |

**Table IV.2:** Several songs that suggest a loose tonal function of the bridge.

has demonstrated ways in which composers "played" with the loose-knit organization of B sections. Graziano however, does not discuss thematic relations between groups, a key characteristic of B sections. In what follows, I outline several key thematic organizations of B sections. As Graziano has outlined some of the principle harmonic organizations of B sections, I rely on his types and pair them with thematic elements that I now consider.

The tonal form of the B section comprises a departure from the tonic in the previous section and a motion towards a half cadence or other non-tonic cadence. Bridge sections present a theme-type that concludes with this non-tonic cadence. Many songs however, offer problematic cadences or no cadence. Cadence then cannot be a defining feature of bridges. Table IV.2 offers several songs that show the variety of harmonic motions the end the bridge. While the I: HC is the most common option in the Broadway song, de Clercq (2012) and Nobile (2014) have pointed towards a more consistent tonal function of the bridge in rock's adaptation of AABA form.[7] The half cadence is the most common of many possibilities that emphasize the tonal function of the bridge: to explore distant harmonies, straying from the tonic.

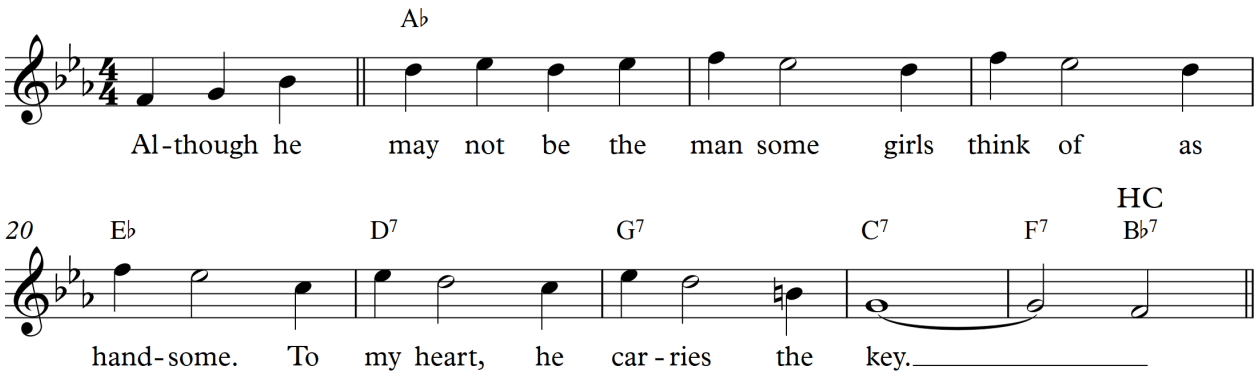
[7]A desire to show this same consistency in jazz standards and early Broadway songs has lead to some questionable interpretations. Heyer (2012) misreads a ii–V turnaround as a half cadence, attempting to show a normative $\hat{3}$–$\hat{2}$–$\hat{1}$ Schenkerian background in the jazz standard "Moten Swing."




**Example IV.8:** Jerome Kern, "Can't help Lovin' Dat Man," bridge: related progression to the classic bridge.

The most common thematic bridge layout includes a grouping of 2+2+2+2, often creating a 4+4 grouping. The layout suggests a historical connection to de Clercq's "classic bridge." The defining elements of the classic bridge are its parallel groupings and its harmonic progression. One characteristic chord progression of the classic bridge is IV–I–IV–V. Nobile (2014, 154) generalizes this motion as a predominant (IV) moving to a dominant (V). Graziano (2013) makes this same claim regarding "subdominant" bridges, which move from IV to V over the course of the section. Example IV.8 shows the bridge of Kern's "Can't help lovin' dat man." The sentential layout of this section contains a move from IV to I in mm. 17–20 and a move from I to V in mm. 21–24. The IV–I, I–V progression resembles the classic bridge and conforms to Graziano's subdominant type.

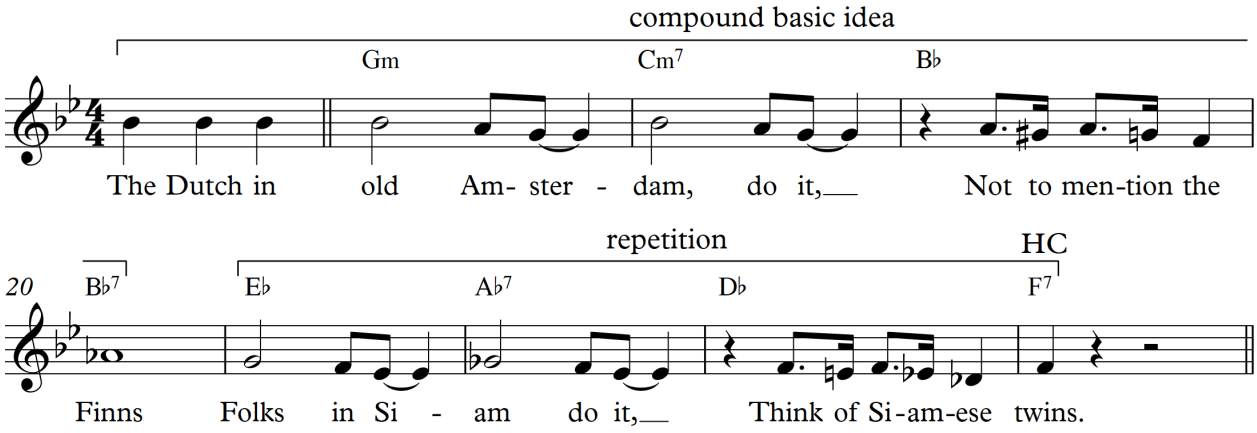
The Broadway relative of the classic bridge (its likely precursor) often elaborates its PD–D motion much more than in rock. Gershwin's "Someone to Watch Over Me" features a lengthy circle-of-fifths progression that brings the bridge to a close (Example IV.9). The bridge opens on IV and moves to I in m. 20, a displaced tonic following the IV–I of the classic bridge. The second four-bar hypermeasure of the bridge comprises a falling fifths progression




**Example IV.9:** Gershwin, "Someone To Watch Over Me," bridge: classic bridge progression with an cadential fifths progression.

leading to a half cadence in m. 24, composing out the IV–V progression over the course of the bridge. Though there are few songs that conform exactly with the classic bridge, many songs feature a harmonic motion of IV–I that ends in a half cadence, as Graziano (2013) has discussed. The frequency of this scheme suggests a likely influence to rock's classic bridges, especially since Covach (2005) has linked rock's AABA to these songs.

The second component of the classic bridge is its grouping structure. The return to IV in the second part of the classic bridge typically accompanies a melodic parallelism with the material from the initial IV. The 4+4 grouping closely resembles the block continuation discussed in the previous chapter regarding ABAC B sections. The block configuration pairs two parallel groupings: one that ends without cadence and the second that ends with a cadence (similar to the cadential hybrid 4 outlined above). These two groupings come in two main varieties: sequential and exact repetitions. Porter's "Let's do it" offers an example of the sequential option, shown in Example IV.10. The bridge begins on a vi, an option discussed by Graziano, before moving to tonic in m. 19. The tonic transforms into V7/IV to lead into a sequential repetition of the initial four measures. The bridge ends with a motion to V




**Example IV.10:** Porter, "Let's do it," bridge: sequential 4+4 thematic layout.

in m. 24. The sense of cadential closure is attenuated by its lack of harmonic preparation. Listeners familiar with the normative length of bridges may anticipate a move to $A^3$ after eight measures. The closing of a rhyming couplet, the appearance of a melodic caesura, and the arrival on dominant harmony provide closure to the section.

The motion to the subdominant at the beginning of the bridge is common; it allows the tonic that ends $A^2$ to be repurposed as V7/IV, as Graziano has argued. Graziano outlines several other harmonic strategies including beginning on the mediant, beginning on the submediant, moving through the circle of fifths, and moving to other distant key areas. There seems to be no entirely consistent harmonic strategy that underlies bridge sections beyond the impetus for distantly related harmonic motions and half cadences. Most bridges tend to feature either a 2+2+2+2, 4+4 (block), or 2+2+4 (sentential) grouping, the block being the most common. These basic grouping procedures provide a kind of regular framework while novel harmonic strategies can freely be explored.

As with all musical repetitions in the Broadway song, the many poetic options (rhyming couplet, pronoun pairing,...) apply. These poetic techniques play an important role in articulating closure, as was suggested above. In the bridge of "Can't help lovin' dat man," the two-bar repetition goes hand-in-hand with a rhyme between "away" and "day." Closure of the bridge comprises the coinciding of multiple factors: a rhyme between "fine" and "shine," dominant harmony, and hypermetrical closure. Different listeners will likely focus on different aspects of a song for formal orientation. The sense of closure felt by the completion of a rhyming couplet may play into hearing closure for some listeners. I would argue that this factor becomes especially important as the role of harmony recedes in bridge sections.

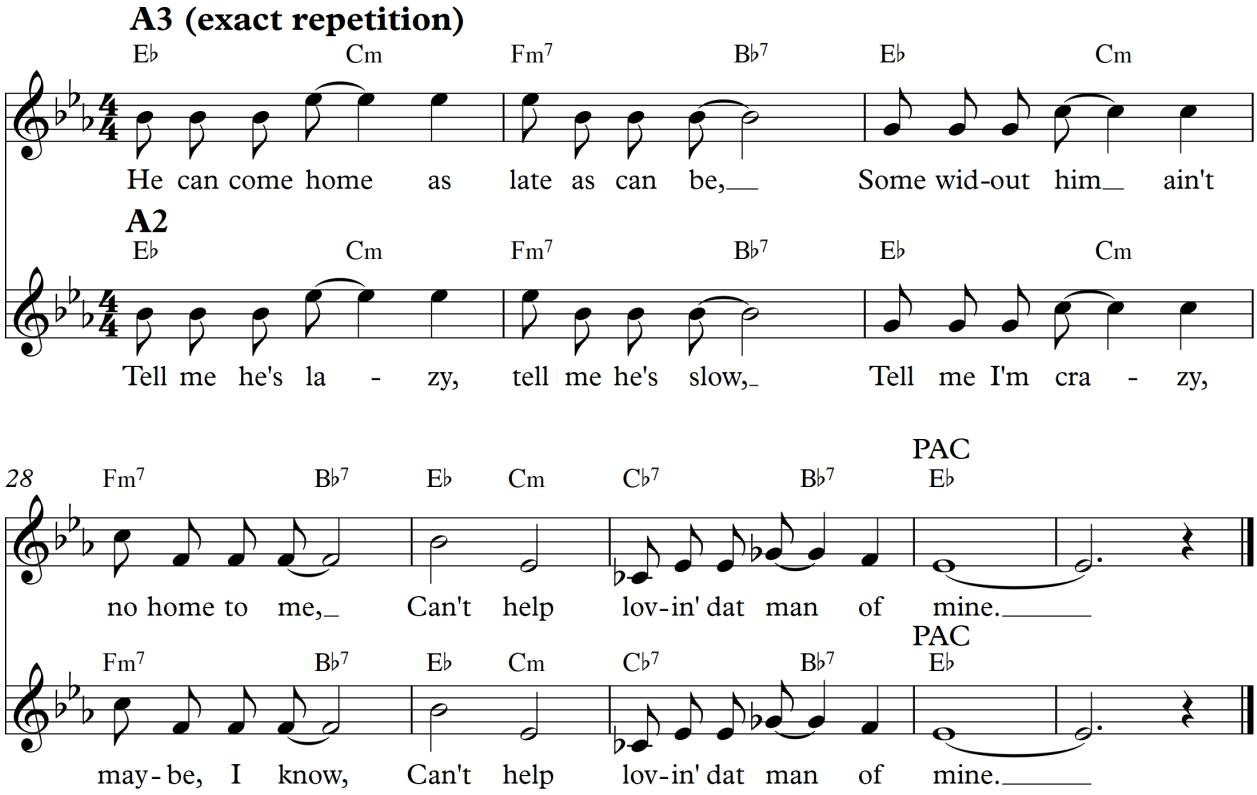
In summary, the bridge offers thematic and harmonic contrast to the surrounding A sections. Along with AABA form and the sentence, rock music may have inherited common grouping and harmonic strategies for the bridge section that eventually codified into the classic bridge.[8] Prototypical bridge grouping structures allow for a common regularity among the disarray of harmonic possibilities. As I have argued throughout this thesis, the articulation of harmonic closure is subsidiary to and often a byproduct of metrical accentuation, especially in bridge sections where cadences are often tenuous at best. The contrast provided by the bridge ushers in the return of A material.

[8]De Clercq (2012, 77) proposes three forms of the classic bridge, only one of which was discussed here.

### The $A^3$ Section

The return of A material brings a syntactical close the AABA. I argued in Chapter II that thematic similarity relation plays an increasingly important role in form-functional expression on higher levels of formal organization. Like the climactic rotation of the ABAC, $A^3$ often acts like a climactic rotation, reaching high points and rhetorically emphasizing the final PAC. As Caplin (2004) might argue, this cadence provides closure only for $A^3$, not the form as a whole. $A^3$ itself functions to close the entirety of the AABA by way of a rounding effect similar to ternary forms. As I discussed in Chapter II, thematic similarity relation takes a greater role in expressing formal function on higher levels in the formal hierarchy. There are three main $A^3$ strategies depending on the relationships between the previous A sections: exact repetition, necessary recomposition, and dramatic recomposition. Exact repetitions compose $A^3$ identically to either $A^1$ or $A^2$. This type is well suited for $A^1$ + $A^2$ period structures and $A^1$ + $A^2$ exact repetitions that end in PAC. Necessary recomposition tends to move towards high points and other climactic techniques to end with a PAC when there is no previous PAC model provided by $A^1$ or $A^2$. Lastly, dramatic recomposition applies when $A^1$ or $A^2$ ends with a PAC but $A^3$ dramatically departs by way of a turning point to reach a more climactic PAC.

*Exact Repetitions.* Exact repetitions do not alter material from one of the previous A sections, usually $A^2$. This strategy is passive in relation to the other kinds of $A^3$ and to the goals of ABAC. A tail refrain fits this model quite well; musical repetition correlates



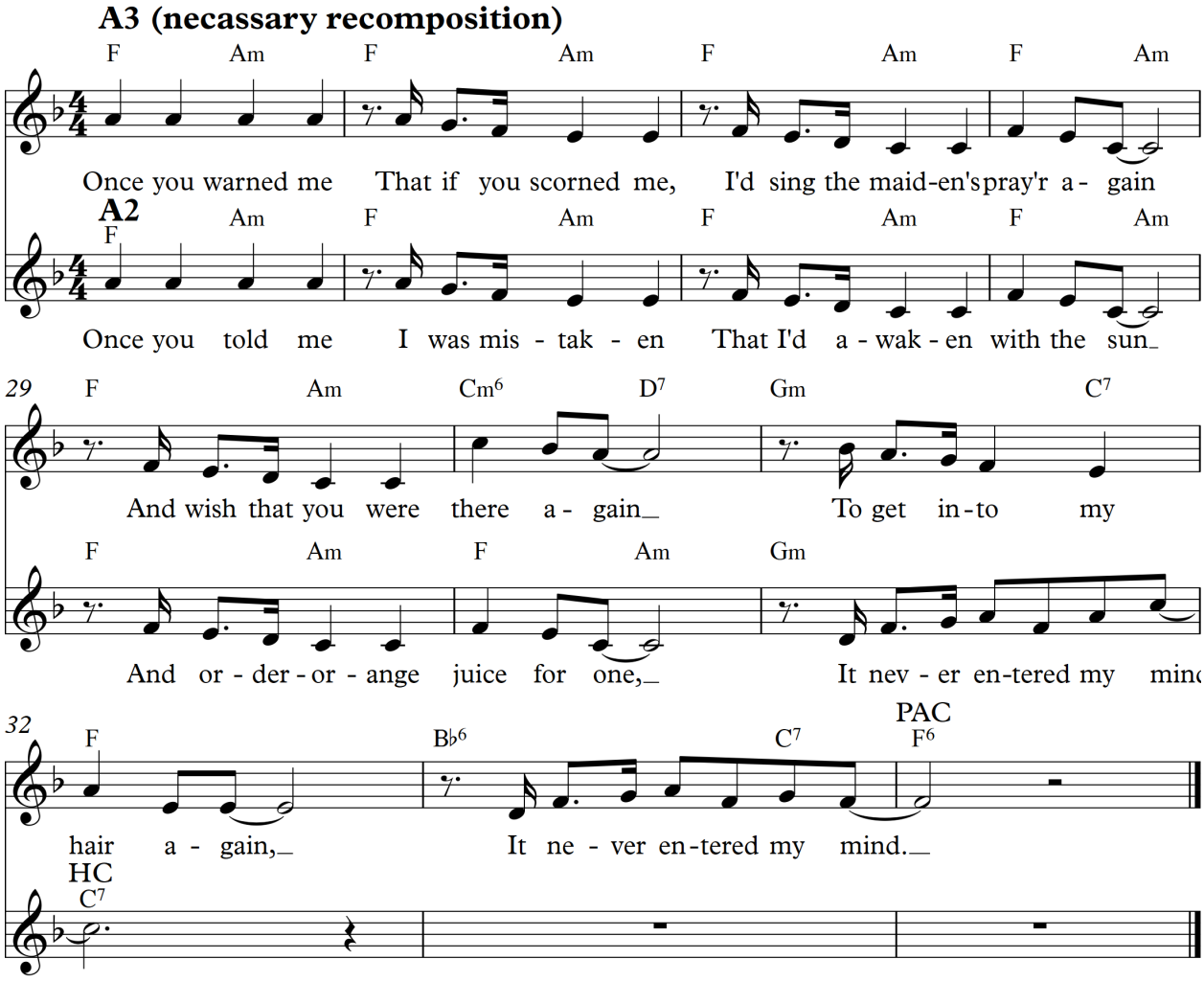

**Example IV.11:** Jerome Kern, "Can't help Lovin' Dat Man," $A^2$ and $A^3$: Exact relationship between $A^3$ and the other A sections.

with poetic repetition. Kern's "Can't help lovin' dat man" is paradigmatic. Example IV.11 compares $A^2$ (on the lower staff) with $A^3$ (on the upper staff). The melodies and harmonies are the exact same; only the lyrics differ until the refrain. Both section ends with a PAC and they both take the same path to achieve their cadences. In addition, each A section presents its own lyrical idea; each is a world all to its own.

*Necessary Recomposition.* When $A^1$ + $A^2$ form a subverted period (HC/HC) or weakly relate exactly (IAC/IAC), $A^3$ has no model to follow to reach its generic goal of the PAC. Such cases are what I call *necessary recomposition*. The referential/climactic relationship between the rotations of the ABAC necessitates a reworking of prior material. Thus, necessary recom-

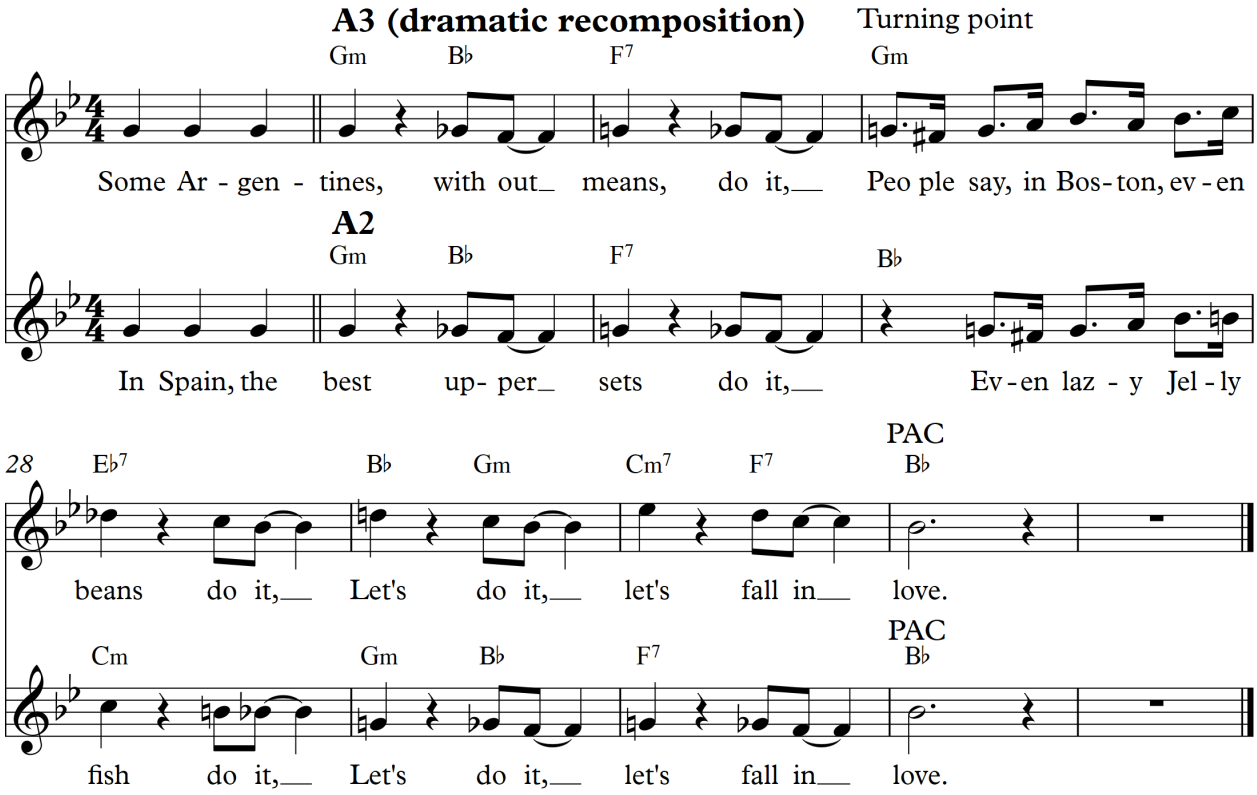
position is a shared technique between ABAC and many AABA forms. And like ABAC form, AABA forms of this variety have the tendency for turning points, high points, and related rhetorical gestures. Rodgers' "It never entered my mind" features a subverted period between $A^1$ and $A^2$, requiring a reworking of material in $A^3$ to achieve a PAC (Example IV.12). Measures 25–29 exactly retrace $A^2$ with new lyrics. Measure 30 dramatically departs from the $A^2$ model, leaping a fifth above is $A^2$ referent and harmonically setting up the ensuing ii–V–I. "It never entered my mind" features a limited register for most of the melody. The highest pitch in the previous A sections is the C5 at the end of $A^2$. This abrupt leap to match the highest pitch of any of the rotations serves as the turning point of $A^3$. The avoidance of $\hat{1}$ in m. 32 defers the PAC until m. 34, expanding the form by two bars. Necessary recomposition offers a dramatic end to song forms that lack PAC closure in their earlier rotations.

*Dramatic Recomposition.* While turning points and recomposition are a necessity for $A^3$ sections that lack a prior PAC model, many AABA forms provide PACs in early A sections. In such cases, $A^3$ most often takes the form of an exact repetition. Another option is the dramatically recompose parts of $A^3$ via a turning point. Such is the case in Porter's "Let's do it," shown in Example IV.13. $A^2$ (shown on the lower staff) completes the period between $A^1$ and $A^2$ by closing with a satisfactory PAC. $A^3$ could easily retrace $A^2$ exactly; such a strategy would fall comfortably within the norms of AABA. Instead, m. 27 opens with a gesture that begins a beat earlier than its $A^2$ counterpart. This gesture culminates in a D♭5, a note above the pitch threshold of the previous A sections. The melody continues to ascend in the following measures, culminating in a high point E♭5 in m. 30 and falling to a PAC in m. 31. $A^3$ need not have changed, but it did so for dramatic effect.




**Example IV.12:** Richard Rodgers, "It never entered my Mind," $A^2$ and $A^3$: $A^3$ as a necessary recomposition of prior A material.

The three kinds of $A^3$ sections just discussed are exhaustive; $A^3$ sections in the early Broadway AABA will generally fit one of these types. Exact repetition follows a previous model for PAC closure provided by either $A^1$ or $A^2$. Necessary and dramatic recomposition are ostensibly the same but the former arises from a lack of a PAC model while the latter departs from a model. While the AABA is less climatically inclined than the ABAC, a similar




**Example IV.13:** Cole Porter, "Let's do it," $A^2$ and $A^3$: $A^3$ as a dramatic recomposition of prior A material.

tendency underlies many AABA forms. From this perspective then, dramatic reworking of familiar material is a central impulse of Broadway songs.

## Conclusion

Though AABA as a thematic layout is quite straight forward, the name by itself does not fully capture the many strategies and options available for Gershwin, Kern, Rodgers, Porter, and others. The impulse for dramatic reworking of materials in small rotational forms is a strategy that dominated the songs of this era. Many of the same poetic practices, harmonic progressions, and theme-types from ABAC are shared with AABA. These stock

techniques likely had a significant influence on later rock music and certainly shaped jazz composition. While Covach (2005) has pointed to the AABA thematic layout as a historical connection between the early Broadway composers and rock, I further suggest that many AABA procedures made the genre migration as well. Namely, the tail refrain, the sentence (rock's srdc), and certain harmonic progression, Nobile's (2011) "cadential I" in particular, may well have their predecessors in the songs of these New York song writers. Understanding the options and possibilities that underlie AABA and ABAC is crucial for analysis and for placing this music in the broader context of 20th-century popular music.

# CHAPTER V

# CONCLUSION

An understanding of norms is essential for any analysis that situates individual pieces within a broader stylistic context. While the ii–V–I progression, AABA form, and ABAC form are well-known norms, many procedures that Broadway composers implicitly worked with have gone largely undiscussed; Chapters II, III, and IV took a glimpse into these compositional procedures. Chapter II addressed the idiosyncratic metrical and harmonic structure of these Broadway songs and suggested an in-time model of form. Chapter III tackled the rarely discussed ABAC form and the procedures and strategies that dominated that formal design. Lastly, Chapter IV highlighted some common procedures and related them to other genres that Broadway influenced. Through this process I have attempted to reconstruct the the central procedures that underlie compositonal practice in song and dance era Broadway songs, similar to the way that Robert Gjerdingen (2007) has done with scale-degree schemata in Galant era music and James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy (2006) have done for the late-eighteenth century sonata form.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the song-and-dance era, Broadway catered to the middle classes. The productions of this era primarily served as showcases for stars and songs. Geoffrey Block (1997) has argued that Broadway composers felt a tension between their commercial craft and the desire for artistic creativity. The analyses of Forte (1995) and Gilbert (1995) reflect their concept of these Broadway shows as high art. In contrast, my approach reflects the

commercial aesthetic of the song and dance era. Composers worked with implicit, regular procedures.

My approach reflects both the commercial songwriting aesthetic of Broadway and audiences' cognitive processes as they listened to Broadway songs. When a composer writes a song he or she is engaging in a dialogue with other songs and the common procedures of the style. When listeners engage with songs they attend to the patterns that they have learned. As Robert Gjerdingen (1989, 7) writes, "once distinctive features of a schema are instantiated, we actively seek out the remaining features." In Chapter II, I argued for an approach to form that relies heavily on hypermeter and schemata. A projective hierarchy provides a stable grounding for formal expectations. I argued that thematic similarity relation, harmony, and parametric state cohere to form schemata. What I called "syntactical ordering" refers to the expectation of completion when hearing schemata. By attending to the meter and schemata of Broadway songs, we get closer uncovering to how composers communicated to their listeners.

In Chapter III we saw many of the compositional options that underlie the ABAC. $A^1$ and B together form an antecedent phrase, typically a sentential one. The Broadway presentation features some of the same harmonic schemata as the classical presentation: exact repetition and statement-repetition. Other schemata occur as well including the "reverse statement-response" and specific exact repetitions involving the alternation of I and V. Poetic repetition or rhyme fits neatly with musical repetition, particularly in the presentation function. $A^1$ and B usually express a central poetic idea that tends to be broad. The consequent necessarily reworks the prior material to secure a I:PAC through a turning point. In the process, the

melodies generally move towards climactic gestures that often shift the poetic state from broad to specific or bring back a central idea. With necessary recomposition as a requirement of the ABAC form, ABAC provides a template for musical narratives.

The Broadway instantiation of the AABA form is a complex schema with many embedded possibilities. $A^1$ and $A^2$ may cohere is a number of ways: parallel periods, subverted periods, exact repetitions, and sequential repetitions. Furthermore, $A^3$ strategies largely depend on the relationship between $A^1$ and $A^2$. $A^3$ sections may be exact repetitions, necessary recompositions, or dramatic recompositions of a prior A section. These options play into affects of the songs and what they communicate. In Chapter IV, I argued that many of the theme-type, harmonic, and poetic strategies typically associated with rock music likely develop from similar procedures in Broadway. Among these procedures are the refrain (both head and tail refrains), the sentence, and the cadential I and related harmonic progressions.

Until now, the Broadway songs of the song-and-dance era have received very little theoretical attention, despite a great deal of hermeneutic work. This repertoire's principal songwriters—Gershwin, Kern, Rodgers, Porter, among others—worked with specific formulas from local-level harmonic and thematic procedures to large-scale recompositional strategies and poetic reveals. Much of this procedural knowledge was likely intuited by later composers in other genres such as jazz and rock. This music stands at a pivotal place in history, influencing a great deal of popular music that followed it. Such a music requires an approach sensitive to its social context and place in musical history. This thesis is my response to this need.

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