A COMPARISON OF FOUR WORKS BY TWO RECOGNIZED LEADERS OF THE
TIN PAN ALLEY STYLE

A Thesis

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Master of Music

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Thesis is to explore and compare four works by two recognized leaders of the Tin Pan Alley style. This includes the songs “They Say It’s Wonderful” and “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” by Irving Berlin, and “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” and “Wunderbar” written by Cole Porter. Through comparison and analysis I will attempt to pinpoint characteristics that made their music more appealing to the performers, the public, and everyone considered. These characteristics include aspects of rhythm, phrase structures, harmonic analysis, and performance practices.

The phrase ‘Tin Pan Alley’ was supposedly first used by Monroe Rosenfeld in 1903, in his series of articles about the area around 28th street in New York City. The sounds of the composers pounding away on cheap pianos all day were said to resemble the sound of beating on old tin pans. Tin Pan Alley actually came into being in the 1880’s, when music publishers and writers began moving to a central location in New York City. ¹ The location of Tin Pan Alley changed over the years, originating around East 14th St. near Union Square, shifting to West 28th St. around the turn of the 20th

century. Later, after World War I, it moved further uptown to around West 50th St. and Broadway.  

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DEDICATION

To my parents, who have always been my biggest fans.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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2.1 illustrates the non-symmetrical phrases at measure 34.

2.2 illustrates the second phrase ending on the first beat of measure 37.

3.1 illustrates some of the tied notes used to slow down the rhythm, and the uneven ending of phrase four at measure 37.
Irving Berlin was born Israel Baline in Mohilev, Russia May 11, 1888, he was the youngest child of Moses and Lena Baline in a large family of eight. The family immigrated to the United States in 1893, settling into New York’s lower east side. In 1907, while working as a singing waiter in Chinatown, he earned his first songwriting credit for the words to “Marie From Sunny Italy.” It was also during this time he changed his name.

By 1909, he was working as a staff lyricist on Tin Pan Alley. He soon began to compose his own music as well, but he never learned to play a piano properly or to read music. He was only able to play using the black keys. By playing in this fashion, he was at times composing using a pentatonic (five note) scale. He did utilize a transposing piano that made it possible to change keys with the shift of a lever. While composing a tune, Berlin would either sing or play it for an assistant, who would then transcribe it into musical notation. In this way he was able to produce a lifetime catalog of some 1500 songs.

In 1911, the song “Alexander’s Ragtime Band” catapulted the 23-year-old Berlin to international stardom. There has been some speculation over the years that Berlin had ‘borrowed’ the theme used in “Alexander’s Ragtime Band” from Scott Joplin’s opera “Treemonisha.” Joplin had accused Berlin of plagiarism, since Joplin had submitted it to
Seminary Music Publishers, the firm where Berlin happened to be working at the time. “Alexander’s Ragtime Band” was published before “Treemonisha,” with Joplin supposedly altering the theme in his own piece before publication.

Berlin’s Hollywood career began when the talkies began, with his song “Blue Skies” being incorporated into *The Jazz Singer* (1927). When the Depression cut down the number of musicals being presented on Broadway, Berlin moved to California in the mid-1930s and scored film musicals for various studios. Most beloved were the series of Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers films at RKO between 1935 and 1939, including *Top Hat* (1935), *Follow the Fleet* (1936) and *Carefree* (1938). Astaire would also be featured in such later Berlin-scored films as *Holiday Inn* (1942), *Blue Skies* (1946) and *Easter Parade* (1948).

Some detractors have suggested that his work was too often lacking in subtlety, but careful analysis of his seemingly simple tunes and lyrics usually shows a knowing, complex artistry hidden behind the deceptive façade. Berlin’s remarkable ear and his often underrated inventiveness in the face of rapidly changing styles led his contemporary Jerome Kern to conclude: “Irving Berlin has no place in American music; he is American music.” Berlin passed away September 22, 1989 at the age of 101.

Cole Porter's name derives from the surnames of his parents, Kate Cole and Sam Porter. Porter was born June 9th 1891. He started playing piano and violin by the time he reached age six, and composed his first songs at age 10. One of these songs, a piano piece called *Song of the Birds*, was dedicated to his mother. This song was separated into six sections, with titles like “The Young Ones Leaning to Sing” and “The Cuckoo Tells the Mother Where the Bird Is.”
He enrolled in the Worcester Academy in 1905, where he was the precocious youngster who later became class valedictorian. It was there that Porter met an important influence in his musicianship, Dr. Abercrombie. Abercrombie taught him about the relationship between words and meter, and between words and music in songs. Porter later quoted Ambercrombie by saying: "Words and music must be so inseparably wedded to each other that they are like one."

Porter's Yale years included many adventures and many musicals, with most students knowing him for the many football fight songs he would eventually write, many of these have continued on to become Yale classics. Despite an Ivy League academic workload and social obligations, he managed to compose several full productions per year in addition to individual songs. Most of the shows for the Yale student groups were zany musicals that were always complicated and often rallied around the superiority or sexual prowess of the heterosexual Yale men. These shows were primarily intended for a college audience, although some of them charged admission when intended for a non-college crowd. It is also entirely likely that during these years, Porter’s homosexuality became a powerful and public part of his life, this being based on the well-documented gay liaisons that took place soon after college. It is also possible that the number of the aforementioned fight songs he wrote, and his sexual preference for large strong men was not entirely coincidence.

By 1919, Porter was spending time with the American divorcee Linda Thomas. The two quickly became close friends. Their financial status and social standing also made them ideal candidates for marriage -- as a business contract, not for passion. The fact that Thomas' ex-husband was abusive and that Porter was gay made the arrangement
even more palatable. Thomas was always one of Porter's best supporters and being married increased his chance of success. Porter even allowed Thomas to keep her high social status for the rest of her life. They married on December 19, 1919 and lived a happy friendship, a mostly successful public relationship, but a sexless marriage until Thomas' death in 1954.

In 1937, Porter was involved in a horse riding accident that crushed both of his legs. This was a personal tragedy for a vain man who placed an enormous value on looks for both social and sexual reasons. His vibrant energy and obsession to maintain his looks through elaborate daily rituals could not (in his opinion) compensate for such a debilitating blow at his health and his ego. He was in the hospital for months, suffering through a series of painful operations, in hopes to restore some of his mobility. After this point, he had one major production, *Kiss Me Kate*, which was based on the Shakespeare classic *Taming of the Shrew*. Porter was very skeptical of this production, but in the end he lent his talents to the show, and it became very successful, eventually spawning a moderately successful movie.

Doctors amputated Porter's injured right leg in 1958. After the amputation, Porter's creative productivity, his social power, and his happiness plummeted. He died on October 15, 1964.
Irving Berlin’s song “They Say It’s Wonderful” from the musical Annie Get Your Gun (1947) is written in verse-refrain-verse-refrain form, or ABAB. It is played “Slowly” in 4/4 time, in the key of F Major. The song is labeled mezzo piano at the beginning, with no additional dynamic markings throughout the piece. There is a two-measure intro leading into the song, which is played softly by a string section. The verse is sixteen measures long and is made up of four phrases, which are mostly stepwise or conjunct in motion with several leaps. The phrase relationships are: a a’ b a”’. The refrain is thirty-two measures long and is made up of four phrases, which are more disjunct in construction than the verse. The phrase relationships here are: a a’ b a”’. On the recording used for this analysis, the song is performed refrain-verse-refrain, with the first verse omitted. The character of Annie sings the first refrain, and the character of Frank sings the second verse-refrain.

The melody line of the verse is diatonic to the key of F, with the accompaniment utilizing added chromatic notes throughout the piece. The first phrase (m3-6) starts on the fifth scale degree ‘C’ with the contour moving down then up twice, finally ending on the
third of the tonic triad ‘A’. The phrase is harmonically analyzed as: I, vii\(^7\), ii\(^7\), bII\(^+6\)*, I\(^7\), vii\(^7\)/vii, V\(^7\). The second phrase (m7-10) is brought down a minor third, and features the exact same rhythm and intervals as the first phrase. It begins on the third scale degree ‘A’, ends on the tonic ‘F’, and is analyzed as I, ii\(^7\), V\(^7\), I, ii\(^7\), I. The first and second phrases are a downward step progression that begins on the dominant and ends on the tonic. The third phrase (m11-14) has the same rhythm as the first two, but has different intervals. It starts on the second scale degree ‘G’, ends on the fourth scale degree ‘B’, and is analyzed as: vii\(^\#7\), V\(^7\)/ii, ii\(^7\), ii\(^\#7\). The fourth phrase (m15-18) is the same as the first but ends on the tonic, giving it a more conclusive sound at the end of the phrase. The fourth phrase is also a downward step progression that begins on the dominant and ends on the tonic.

The refrain is rhythmically related to the verse, but adds dotted rhythms making it familiar sounding yet different. In the first phrase (m19-26) the melody starts on the sixth scale degree ‘D’, ends on the fifth scale degree ‘C’, and is analyzed as: ii\(^7\), ii\(^\#7\), V\(^7\), I, ii\(^\#7\), V\(^7\), I, vii\(^\#7\)/ii. The second phrase (m27-34) is the same as the first, except for the last three measures, which now travel stepwise up to join the next phrase. It begins on the sixth scale degree ‘D’, ends on the third scale degree ‘A’, and is analyzed as: ii, ii\(^\#7\), V\(^7\), I, ii\(^\#7\), V\(^7\), I, V\(^7+5\)/IV. The third phrase (m34-42) is different rhythmically and melodically, bearing some similarities to the verse, notably with the absence of the dotted rhythms. It begins on the second scale degree ‘G’, ends on the flatted seventh scale degree ‘Eb’, and is analyzed as: IV, iv, I, iii, vii\(^\#7\)/iii, V\(^7\)/iii, iii. The fourth phrase (m43-50) is similar to phrases one and two, but ends differently on the tonic, giving a conclusive sounding

* This Gb (bII+6) chord is a tritone substitute for a C dominate seventh chord.
ending to the refrain and the song. It begins on the sixth scale degree ‘D’, ends on the tonic, and is analyzed as: ii, ii<sup>7</sup>, V<sup>7</sup>, iii, V<sup>7</sup>/ii, ii, V/vi, ii, I, vi, ii, V. From this point, the song repeats back to the beginning of the verse, with the lyrics alternating between the characters of Frank and Annie. The only difference occurs at the second ending, where the song ends on the tonic I chord instead of the V chord.

“A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” (1919) was also written by Irving Berlin and is a stand-alone song with piano accompaniment that is played moderato. It is written in the key of G major and is written in verse-refrain-refrain form or ABB. The use of dynamics mimics the form of the piece, where the verse is to be played piano, and the refrains are to be played forte. There is a four measure intro that hints at rhythms that later appear in the song, and is played forte. The verse is sixteen measures long, and is made up of four phrases that are mostly diatonic, and mostly conjunct in motion. The phrase relationships are: a a’ b a’’. The refrain is thirty-two measures long and begins with a three-note intro, each with a fermata. It is made up of four phrases that are more disjunct in construction then the verse. The phrase relationships are: a b a’ c. On the recording used for this analysis, only the refrain is performed, with the last phrase being sung twice.

In the first phrase of the verse (m5-8) the melody starts on the fifth scale degree ‘D’ with the harmonic progression of I, V<sup>7</sup>/G pedal, I. The phrase is totally conjunct, and has only three accidentals in measure 6. The contour of the line moves down then up twice, ending on the third scale degree ‘B’. The second phrase (m9-12) is almost the same as the first, the only difference being that it ends on the tonic. It is conjunct also, except for the descending leap down to the tonic at the end of the phrase, and progresses I, V<sup>7</sup>, I, V<sup>7</sup>, I. The first two phrases are antecedent- consequent parallel phrases, which
also follow a downward step progression from the dominant to the tonic. The third phrase (m13-16) is harmonically more complicated, beginning on the second scale degree ‘A’ and ending on the seventh scale degree ‘F’. It is analyzed as: IV\(^{6/4}\), vii\(^{°7}\)/G pedal, I, iv/ii, V/ii, V\(^7\)/V, ii/V, V\(^7\)/V, V\(^{11}\), and ends on a half cadence with a V\(^7\) chord. It is still mostly conjunct with two leaps at the end of the phrase. The fourth phrase (m17-20) follows a downward step progression from the dominant to the tonic, and is analyzed as: I, V\(^7\), I.

The first and third phrases of the refrain are similar and share some of the same melody, with the rhythmic motion being slowed down by the use of half and whole notes. While the melody is still mostly diatonic, the harmonies become more complicated with the addition of more chromaticism. The first phrase (m21-29) starts and ends on the fifth scale degree ‘D’, and is analyzed as: V/V, V\(^{13}\), I. The second phrase (m30-37) starts and ends on the sixth scale degree ‘E’, and is analyzed as: I\(^7\), IV, iv, I, IV\(^\#\), V/V, ii/V, V/V, V, IV, V. The third phrase (m37-45) starts on the fifth scale degree ‘D’, ends on the sixth scale degree ‘E’, and is analyzed as: IV\(^9/b7\), V\(^7\)/vi, V\(^7\)/V, V\(^7\)/V, iii, V\(^7\), I, I\(^7\), IV, V\(^7\)/ii, ii. The fourth phrase (m 45-53) starts on the raised fifth scale degree ‘D\(^\#\)’, ends on the tonic ‘G’, and is analyzed as: V\(^7\)/iii, V/vi, V\(^7\)/ii, ii, ii\(^{°7}\), V\(^7\), I, bvi\(^9/b7\), IV\(^9/b7\). The song then repeats back to the beginning of the refrain and through the second ending ultimately ends on the tonic I chord.

In comparing both of these pieces, we see an overall similarity as to form and phrase construction, with both songs being built around sequential patterns. They each have four measure phrases in the verse, and have the same phrase relationship, a a’ b a’’. They both also have eight-measure phrases in the refrain, but the phrase relationships here are different. In “They Say It’s Wonderful” there is a two-measure intro, and in “A
Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” there is a four-measure intro, not exactly the same number of measures, but it is symmetrical. Both these pieces are rather sparse on the dynamic markings, where “They Say It’s Wonderful” has only one, and “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” has three (if you count the repeat). Both pieces are written in 4/4 time, are composed with simple rhythms, and have no actual key changes that take place. In both pieces the tempos are on the slow side, with “They Say It’s Wonderful” being played slowly and “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” being played moderato. In both pieces the rhythms tend to be simple and conjunct in the verse, changing and becoming more complicated in the refrain, where they also tend to be more disjunct. The key signatures in both these pieces are also simple, with one accidental each. “They Say It’s Wonderful” has a Bb (the key of F major), and “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” has an F# (the key of G major). Another important similarity is that both these pieces have both the lyrics and music written by Irving Berlin.

In the verse, the first, second and fourth phrases are very similar in both pieces, with the third phrase being different. The first, second, and fourth phrases in both pieces use descending step progressions, dominant to tonic, which helps make the music immediately memorable, and creates a strong sense of tonal direction. The third phrase in each provides contrast by having the melody line move upwards instead of downwards. The first phrase in the verse of both these pieces follows the same melodic contour, start on the fifth scale degree, and then end on the third scale degree. The fourth phrase in each also follows a similar melodic contour, starts on the fifth scale degree, and ends on the tonic. Even though these phrases start and end on similar scale degrees, the harmonies in “They Say It’s Wonderful” tend to be more complex than the ones found in “A Pretty
Girl is Like a Melody.” In both pieces, the phrases in the verses are symmetrical, meaning that each phrase is exactly four measures long.

In the refrain in each of the pieces, there is a contrast created against the verse by the use of different harmonies and rhythms, notably the melody becomes more disjunct. In “They Say It’s Wonderful,” chromaticism is added to the melody line, as are dotted rhythms. The phrases here are not exactly symmetrical. The second phrase ends on beat three in measure 34, and the third phrase starts on beat four.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the non-symmetrical phrases at measure 34.

In “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody,” more half notes are added, making the melody slower and lethargic. The phrases here are also not exactly symmetrical, with the second phrase ending on the first beat of measure 37. This also throws off the third phrase in measure 45, but it does catch up at the end of the fourth phrase with the missing three beats from measure 37.

The forms of the two pieces are not exactly the same. “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” is ABB form and “They Say It’s Wonderful” is ABAB form. If we were to omit the repeats in these songs, they would then be both in verse-refrain or AB form. It would appear from these pieces that Berlin liked to follow a fairly strict form and phrase
structure. It looks like he preferred to use simple rhythms with melodies that are within
the performers’ vocal ranges. The place that he seems to be a little more daring is in his
use of non-traditional chords and chord changes. An example of this is shown in the
second phrase of the verse of “They Say It’s Wonderful” that is analyzed as I, ii⁷, V⁷, I
ii⁷, I. This indicates rather untraditional chord changes, especially I, ii⁷, I. In the fourth
phrase of the verse of “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody,” the harmonic progression is a
more traditional I, V⁷, I.

Figure 2.2 illustrates the second phrase ending on the first beat of measure 37.
CHAPTER III

THE MUSIC OF COLE PORTER

Cole Porter’s song “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” (1936) is a stand-alone piece with piano accompaniment composed in 4/4 time. It is written in the key of C major and is in verse-refrain-refrain form or ABB. There is a four-measure intro that is to be played moderato. The verse is sixteen measures long, and is made up of four phrases that are mostly diatonic, with some chromaticism. The phrase relationships are: a a’ a” b. The melody is mostly conjunct motion, but has some leaps. The refrain is thirty-two measures long and is made up of eight phrases that are mostly diatonic but are more disjunct than the verse. The phrase relationships here are: a a’ b b’ a”’ c c’ a”’’. It is marked “strictly in slow tempo,” with the intro being played mezzo forte, changing to piano at the beginning of the verse. The dynamics change once more about halfway through the refrain at measure 35 to mezzo forte. On the recording used for this analysis, only the verse is sung two times in its entirety.

The rhythm of the verse has Porter avoiding the downbeat, which has the effect of syncopating the downbeat. This is accomplished by using an active rest on the downbeat as part of the rhythm of the melody. In the first phrase of the verse (m5-8) the melody starts on the sixth scale degree ‘A’ with the harmonic progression of vi, V, vi, iii, ii, V, iii, I. This phrase is mostly conjunct, with three leaps. The contour of the line moves down then up twice, ending on the third scale degree ‘E’. The second phrase (m9-12) is,
for the first two measures, the same as the first. The entire phrase shares the same rhythm as the first, and is evenly both conjunct and disjunct. The phrase starts on the sixth scale degree ‘A’ and it ends on the tonic ‘C’. It is analyzed as: vi, V, V\(^7\)/IV, ii, ii\(^7\), V\(^7\), I.

The third phrase (m13-16) is harmonically more complicated. It modulates to the key of E major in measure 13, and then modulates to the key of Ab major in measure 16. The phrase starts on the raised first scale degree ‘C\(^#\)’, and ends on the raised second scale degree ‘D\(^#\)’. It is mostly disjunct with some added chromaticism, and is analyzed as E: vii\(^a\)\(^7\), vii\(^7\)/ii, vi, IV, V\(^7\), vii\(^7\)/vi, vii\(^7\), IV, ii, Ab: I\(^6\). The fourth phrase (m17-20) is both conjunct and disjunct, with added chromaticism. The melody begins on the flatted third scale degree ‘Eb’, and ends on the sixth scale degree ‘A’. It starts in the key of Ab major, and then modulates back to the key of C major in measure 19. It is analyzed as Ab: V\(^7\), I, V\(^7\), C: ii\(^6\)/V, V\(^7\)/V, V\(^13\)/IV, V\(^7\), V\(^7\)+5. The phrases in the verse are symmetrical, where each phrase is exactly four measures long.

The rhythm in the refrain is slowed down more by the use of whole notes and tied notes, which has the effect of emphatically anchoring the downbeat of the measure to beat one. With this, Porter is using variances in rhythms to create a contrast to the syncopations found in the verse. The first, second, and eighth phrases are similar, and the third and fourth phrases share some of the same melody. The fifth and seventh phrases also share some similarities. The phrases here are not exactly symmetrical; with the first phrase starting on beat four of measure 21. The second, third, fifth and sixth phrases end on the second beat, and the fourth and seventh phrase end on the end of beat two.
Figure 3.1 illustrates some of the tied notes used to slow down the rhythm, and the uneven ending of phrase four at measure 37.

The first phrase of the refrain (m21-24) is diatonic, with the melody line being both conjunct and disjunct. It begins on the fifth scale degree ‘G’, ends on the tonic ‘C’, and is analyzed as: V\(^{7+}\), I, iii, IV\(^7\), V\(^7\), vi, V\(^{4/3}\)/IV. The second phrase (m25-29) is also diatonic, and is again both conjunct and disjunct. It begins and ends on the second scale degree ‘D’, and is analyzed as: ii\(^7\), V\(^7\), I, iii, V/ii, ii, V/ii, vii\(^{7/ii}\). The third phrase (m29-33) is mostly conjunct with several leaps, with some added chromaticism. It begins on the second scale degree ‘D’ ends on the tonic ‘C’, and is analyzed as: ii, V, V11, V\(^{7+5}\), vi, I, vii\(^{7/vi}\), vi. The fourth phrase (m33-37) is mostly conjunct with several leaps, and is mostly diatonic. The melody begins and ends on the sixth scale degree ‘A’, and is analyzed as: iii, vi, vii\(^{7/ii}\), V\(^9/V\), V\(^7\), vii\(^{7/ii}\), V\(^7\). The fifth phrase (m37-41) is mostly conjunct with several leaps, and is diatonic. It begins on the fifth scale degree ‘G’, ends on the sixth ‘A’, and is analyzed as: V\(^{7+}\), I, iii, IV\(^7\), V\(^7\), vi, I\(^7\), ii\(^7\). The sixth phrase (m41-45) is mostly conjunct with several leaps, and is mostly diatonic. The melody begins on the fifth scale degree ‘G’, ends on the sixth ‘A’, and is analyzed as: V\(^7\), V\(^9/IV\), V\(^7/vi\). The seventh phrase (m45-49) is mostly conjunct with several leaps, and is mostly diatonic. It begins and ends on the sixth scale degree ‘A’, and is analyzed as: vi, I, vi, ii\(^{6/5}\), I, vii\(^{7/iii}\), V\(^9\). The eighth phrase (m49-53) is mostly conjunct with several leaps, and is mostly
diatonic. It begins on the raised fifth scale degree ‘G#’, ends on the tonic ‘C’, and is analyzed as: vii*/ii, vi, ii7, iii, IV7, V7, I, IV, I, ii7, V7. The song then repeats back to the beginning of the refrain and through the second ending ultimately ends on the tonic I chord.

“Wunderbar” from the musical *Kiss Me Kate* was written by Cole Porter in 1949. It is written in verse-refrain-refrain or ABB form, and is in 3/4 time. It is marked “Tempo di valse (lively),” which is a lively dance tempo, and starts off in the key of D major. It is not just the “tempo di valse” and the 3/4 time that style this as a dance, but it is also Porter’s deliberate and persistent agogic stresses on beat two of alternate measures. There is a four-measure intro to be played mezzo forte, but starting at the beginning of the verse, it becomes mezzo piano. The verse is sixteen measures long, and is made up of four phrases that are mostly both diatonic and conjunct. The phrase relationships are: a a’ b c. The refrain is sixty-four measures long and is made up of eight phrases that are mostly both diatonic and disjunct. The phrase relationships are: a b a’ c’ a” b”. In this piece Porter also has a predilection for large upward and downward leaps, and with the dynamics changing more often he creates contrasts and excitement in the music. On the recording used for this analysis, the song is performed once all the way through, with the last phrase of the refrain preceding the verse. The last phrase is then repeated after the end of the refrain.

The phrases in the verse are not exactly symmetrical, with each being approximately four measures long. The melody here is based around a descending step progression from the dominant to the tonic that spans the entire verse. The first phrase (m5-8) is three measures and one beat long, and is totally conjunct and diatonic. The
melody starts on the fifth scale degree ‘A’, ends on the third degree ‘F’, and is analyzed as: I, V\(^7\), IV, I. The second phrase (m8-12) is both totally conjunct and diatonic. The melody starts on the third scale degree ‘F’, ends on the second degree ‘E’, and is analyzed as: I, V\(^7\). The third phrase (m12-16) is where the melody becomes more disjunct, but still has moments of being conjunct. It remains diatonic, with the melody starting on the second scale degree ‘E’ and ending on the seventh degree ‘C’. It is analyzed as: ii\(^7\), I\(^7\), V\(^7\)/ii. The fourth phrase (m16-22) is mostly conjunct, but adds several instances of chromaticism in measures 17-18. The phrase begins on the sixth scale degree ‘B’, ends on the tonic ‘D’, and is analyzed as: ii, I, V\(^7\), I, ii, #ii\(^\circ\), I\(^7\). The phrases he uses here are not antecedent- consequent parallel phrases, but simply eight bar contrasting phrases.

The refrain is made up of eight phrases, each not exactly symmetrical, and each approximately eight measures long. The song makes an abrupt modulation to the key of G major, which is a closely related key of D major, at the beginning of the refrain at measure 23. This measure also serves as a two beat pick up into the chorus. The rhythm in the refrain is slowed down by the use of half, dotted half, and tied notes, and also utilizes simpler harmonic progressions, with sometimes as few as two chord changes. A significant change happens in the refrain with the addition of a distinct hemiola pattern, which Porter fully exploits for contrast.

The refrain is also a large-scale downward step progression. It starts on the ‘B’ in measure 25, progressing to the ‘A’ in measure 71, and finishes on the ‘G’ at the end of the piece. The first phrase (m23-31) is mostly disjunct and diatonic. The melody starts on the third scale degree ‘B’ and ends on the tonic ‘G’, and is analyzed as: I, IV, I. The
second phrase (m31-39) is mostly conjunct with several leaps and is diatonic. The melody starts and ends on the fifth scale degree ‘D’, and is analyzed as: V7, I. The third phrase (m39-47) is exactly the same as the first phrase, including the analysis. The fourth phrase (m47-55) is exactly the same as the second phrase, including the analysis. In the fifth phrase (m55-63), the melody starts on the tonic, then shifts to the key of Eb major in measure 56, then ends on the sixth scale degree ‘C’. It is totally disjunct, diatonic to the new key, and is harmonically more complicated and interesting then the previous phrases. It is analyzed as G: I, Eb: ii7, V7, I(6), ii7, V7, I. The sixth phrase (m63-71) is totally disjunct and diatonic, with the key shifting back to G major in measure 64. The melody starts on the fifth scale degree ‘Bb’ of the key of Eb major, and ends on the second scale degree ‘A’ of the key of G major. It is analyzed as Eb: I, G: ii7, V7, I, ii7/iii, V7/iii, V.

The seventh phrase (m71-79) is exactly the same as the first phrase, including the analysis. The eighth phrase (m79-87) is diatonic and more conjunct. It begins on the third scale degree ‘B’, and ends on the tonic ‘G’. It is analyzed as V7, I, V7. The whole refrain is repeated, and through the second ending, the song ends on the tonic I chord.

In comparing both of these pieces, we see an overall similarity as to form and phrase construction, with both songs being built around sequential patterns. They each have sixteen measure verses, made up of four measure phrases. They both also have eight phrase refrains, with the difference being the eight measure phrases in “Wunderbar” compared to the four measure phrases of “You’re a Bad Influence on Me.” The phrase relationships here are also different, and bear little resemblance to each other. Another similarity between these two pieces includes the overall form of ABB, and a four-measure intro that leads into the song and helps establish their respective keys for the
Both songs have tempos that are on the slow side, with “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” being played moderato, and the slightly faster “Wunderbar,” being played “Tempo di valse (lively).” Both songs have words and music written by Cole Porter, and are also largely diatonic with relatively few instances of chromaticism. In “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” the dynamics change twice, and in “Wunderbar” they change seven times. In “You’re a Bad Influence on Me,” the verse modulates to the key of E major, then modulates to the key of Ab major, and then modulates back to the key of C major. In “Wunderbar,” the refrain modulates to the key of G major, then modulates to the key of Eb major, and then modulates back to the key of G major. The first phrase of the verse in “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” is analyzed as: vi, V, vi, iii, ii, V, iii, I, and indicates a more traditional approach to harmonic progressions. The first phrase of the refrain in “Wunderbar” also indicates a traditional approach, and is analyzed as: I, IV, I.

The time signatures are different with “Wunderbar” being written in 3/4 time, and “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” being written in 4/4 time. In both songs, the rhythm in the refrain is slowed down by the use of half, whole and tied notes. In both of the songs, the melody is definitely more disjunct in the refrain than in the verse. The phrases in the verse of “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” are the only ones that are symmetrical, and the other phrases in both songs are not symmetrical at all. In “Wunderbar”, the third phrase of the refrain is exactly the same as the first phrase of the refrain, and the fourth phrase of the refrain is exactly the same as the second phrase of the refrain. In the refrain of “You’re a Bad Influence on Me,” the first, second, and eighth phrases are similar, and the third and fourth phrases share some of the same melody. The fifth and seventh phrases
also share some similarities. Both songs repeat back to the beginning of the refrain and through the second ending both ultimately end on the tonic I chord.

Porter was well known for his sophisticated and witty lyrics, and these songs exemplify that. A good example of that is from “You’re a Bad Influence on Me,” “For I get in such a dither when you use your famous come hither, that all thought of hame and mither seems to wither away.” This example is from “Wunderbar,” “Let us drink liebchen mein, in the moonlight benign, to the joy of our dream come true.”
CHAPTER IV
COMPARING THE MUSIC OF IRVING BERLIN AND COLE PORTER

Both Irving Berlin and Cole Porter were in the rather small and elite club of composers who wrote both the lyrics and music for their songs. Their songs had sixteen measure verses with four phrases each. The refrains differed slightly, with Berlin favoring a consistent thirty-two-measure refrain with four phrases, and Porter preferring a thirty-two and a sixty-four-measure refrain with eight phrases each. A four-measure intro seems to be favored, except for “They Say It’s Wonderful,” which has a two-measure intro. It would appear that a two-measure intro is not enough to establish the sound of the key in the listeners’ ear, but since this song is part of a larger work the tonality has likely already been established. Three of these four pieces are in 4/4 time, with “Wunderbar” being the exception in 3/4 time. Berlin utilizes simple rhythms and lyrics with a more complicated harmony. He tends to use lyrics that are more functional and to the point which may indicate an appeal for the average person. Porter on the other hand often utilizes more complicated rhythms and more sophisticated lyrics, but has a simpler harmonic language. His lyrics tend to be on the witty and educated side, and this may indicate an appeal to the more educated individual but are still catchy enough for the average person to enjoy.
Three of the four works utilize ABB as their form, with the exception being “They Say It’s Wonderful”, which is ABAB. If we were to omit all of the repeats in these pieces, then all the songs would have the same form, AB. ABB was and is a very popular musical form, giving contrast between the AB sections, and familiarity between the BB sections. Limited overall use of dynamic markings may indicate a reliance on artist interpretation, allowing outside thoughts on what may or may not work with the audience. This also allows the conductor/ music director to tweak a performance according to audience reactions. The rhythms in these pieces tend to be more complicated and disjunct in the refrain, where there is also the addition of longer note values and dotted rhythms. This may indicate the composers’ desire to create contrast or conflict with the verse, and perhaps to give the audience something new to listen to. The longer notes and extended rhythms may indicate the desire to slow down or lengthen a phrase or a section of the piece. The composers also reuse pieces of their material, which is most evident in the refrains. Sometimes the whole phrase is repeated, and other times it may be part of a phrase or a rhythm that had been used before. This is likely due to a couple of reasons: (1) to keep an air of familiarity in the song, and (2) so the composer does not have to keep writing new music. Porter had more traditional chord changes, which may indicate his desire to have the music revolve around and resolve to the tonic. Berlin’s use of non-traditional chord changes may indicate that he was more interested in a particular sound or tone color than in following the rules of progression. Most of the time Berlin will end his phrases on a I or V, perhaps this is for the conclusive sound these chords give. In the four works studied, the melody is largely diatonic, with the added accidentals appearing mostly in the accompaniment.
In these four pieces there are limited modulations, usually just for several measures. The notable exception is Porter’s “Wunderbar,” which changes keys twice during the chorus. This may indicate that the composer felt the need to use modulation as a source of contrast, and possibly a way to paint a different tonal picture. It may also keep the voices in their proper register. In Berlin’s pieces, the phrases in the verses are symmetrical, and the phrases in the refrains are not symmetrical. In Porter’s pieces, only the verse of “You’re a Bad Influence on Me” is symmetrical. This could be this way for several reasons: (1) the way that the lyrics fit or blend with the music, (2) the desire to create contrast with the adjoining phrases, and (3) the length of the phrases the composer chose to use. In “Wunderbar,” Porter builds his melody around a descending step progression from the dominant to tonic in much the same way as Berlin does in the first, second, and fourth phrases of both his pieces. The main difference is that the step progression in “Wunderbar” spans the entire verse.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

There were thousands of songs and hundreds of composers during Tin Pan Alley’s heyday, and only a comparative handful of them achieved any success. This success could have been due to many things, notably composer recognition or familiarity with the material. It could have been also due to the way a particular song was presented to the public, and what the current trends in popular music were at the time. The style traits that were being used in popular music, including four and eight bar phrases, allowed the listeners to get used to a certain structure, which they grew to expect in other songs. The listeners may have also gotten used to a particular form, an orderly harmonic progression, and a satisfying ending on the tonic.

At least two of the songs here may have become popular due to being part of a larger work, since they had to be listened to as part of the program. People then likely told their friends about the show, the songs, or perhaps the performers. It is possible that with any of these songs, they could have been heard at a sheet music store, performed by a song plugger playing the piece on the piano and perhaps singing. Another way for a song to achieve popularity was to have the right artist to perform or record the song or show, and perhaps having it played on the radio.
On the recordings of these four songs that I had access to, not one of the artists followed the sheet music verbatim. There seems to be no pattern as to what part of the song is performed, what is not, and what may or may not be repeated. If there were a preference for what is performed more often, it would probably be the refrain. The refrain is usually made up of memorable music and lyrics, and many songs no doubt have become associated with only the refrain. Other reasons may have included time constraints in a performance, with the artist using only a section of the song. This may be especially true to the early days of recording, where the artist was limited by time constraints of three to four minutes. There also was the convention of vaudeville theatre shows, where if the audience liked a song, they would not let the performer leave the stage without repeating it. It was then possible that the performer abbreviated the song with only the refrains; which then allowed it to become instantly recognizable.

While it is not possible to examine every song or composer from the early to mid twentieth century, it is possible to understand basic styles and techniques that were popular by looking at several composers and their respective pieces. By looking at these we see a common thread running through most of these and this may indicate on a broader scale what other composers were doing at the time. Whether these composers originated an idea, such as a particular form or harmonic progression is unimportant. What is important is how these men and women were able to assimilate and combine a variety of factors from themselves and others, and create something that was totally theirs but accessible and enjoyable to everyone.
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