

CALL FOR PAPERS

No Place Like Home—In the Film Musical

An area of multiple panels for the 2017 Film & History Conference
Representing “Home”: The Real and Imagined Spaces of Belonging
The Hilton—Milwaukee City Center, Milwaukee, WI (USA)
November 1-5, 2017

DEADLINE for abstracts: June 1, 2017 (early decision) July 1, 2017 (general decision)

One of the most recognized lines in cinema comes to us from *The Wizard of Oz*: “There’s no place like home.” While Dorothy’s adventures primarily take place in the techni-colorful land of Oz, she ultimately returns to her sepia-toned Kansas farm, reaffirming the viewer’s faith in the plain ol’ values of home and family.

The Wizard of Oz is not the only Hollywood musical that centers its narrative around notions of home and homeland. Musicals like *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *State Fair*, *Oklahoma*, and *The Music Man* set their stories specifically in the Midwest, attempting, as Stanley Green notes “to capture the home-and-hearth spirit of the American family.” Even if the musical’s setting is the world’s largest city, it can be made to appear “no more than a slightly bigger version of one’s hometown.”

Why is this genre especially equipped for building stories and characters around representations of home and homeland? How might these films function as American propaganda? What and whose styles of music and dance are indicative of “home”? Does this American folksiness translate to musicals produced by other countries? When and why does this trend (predominant in the classical era) start to die off, or has it?

Possible topics about home/homeland in the film musical include, but are not limited to:

- marriage and/or family (*The Gay Divorcee*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Gigi*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Sound of Music*)
- frontier (*Hallelujah*, *Calamity Jane*, *The Harvey Girls*, *Annie Get Your Gun*)
- religion (*Cabin in the Sky*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Footloose*, *Sister Act*)
- biographical (*The Jolson Story*, *Coal Miner’s Daughter*, *La Bamba*, *Ray*)
- social class/issues (*Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Newsies*, *Billy Elliot*)
- wartime and/or national identity (*Thousands Cheer*, *For Me and My Gal*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *Evita*)
- LGBTQ-themed (*Cabaret*, *Yentl*, *Fame*, *Victor/Victoria*, *De-Lovely*, *Rent*)
- teen/collegiate musicals (*Babes on Broadway*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Grease!*, *High School Musical*)
- race/ethnicity (*Showboat*, *The King and I*, *Flower Drum Song*, *Fiddler on the Roof*)
- fantasy (*The Pirate*, *Brigadoon*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *The Wiz*, *Enchanted*)
- animated (*The Little Mermaid*, *Pocahontas*, *The Lion King*, *Frozen*)

Proposals for complete panels (three related presentations) are also welcome, but they must include an abstract and contact information, including an e-mail address, for each presenter. For

updates and registration information about the upcoming meeting, see the Film & History website (www.filmandhistory.org).

Please e-mail your 200-word proposal to the area chair:

Kelli Marshall
DePaul University
kellirmarshall@gmail.com