

The *Ragtime* Closing Skit
A Musical Parody

Book and Lyrics by Doug Brook
Additional Lyrics by Anita Carey

(Based on the Saratoga Drama Group production of *Ragtime*
Book by Terrence McNally
Music by Stephen Flaherty
Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
Based on "Ragtime" by E.L. Doctorow
...none of whom would want their name on this skit)

ACT ONE
SCENE ONE

CLOSING PARTY, OCTOBER 2008

(The remains of the cast of Ragtime gathers, for ten dollars a head, to reminisce on where their lives went.)

LITTLE BOY

In 1902 Saratoga Drama Group began rehearsals for its production of Ragtime. Though Ragtime would not premiere on Broadway for another 95 years, it seemed for some reason that all the cast's days would be spent there.

PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE

THE SKIES WERE BLUE AND HAZY
WE WERE INSIDE. PRACTICING LINES

WOMEN

LA LA LA LA LA

PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE

THE ACTORS GETTING SPACEY
AUTUMN APPROACHED. PRACTICING STILL.

MEN

LA LA LA LA LA

ALL

AND THERE WAS ALL THAT MUSIC,
HAUNTING US EACH DAY AND NIGHT,
REGURGITATION
WITH NO EXPLANATION -
AND WE WERE LEARNING RAGTIME!

FATHER

Father was well off book. Very well off. His uptight attitude toward Mother, Coalhouse, and Younger Brother came from knowing he would be trapped in these walls longer than everyone else since he's directing the next production here.

MOTHER

The house on the hill in New Rochelle was only a projection. In real life, Mother and Tateh are married. But Father went through his days unaffected by this coincidental foreshadowing.

YOUNGER BROTHER

Mother's Younger Brother worked at the alliterative Father's fireworks factory. He was a genius at explosives. Did you catch all that? *He knows how to blow things up.* Just mentioning it. Might be useful information in a few hours. He was also a young man in search of something to believe in. He found it the first time he saw Evelyn Nesbit's costume.

GRANDFATHER

Grandfather had been alive since everyone spoke Greek and Latin. Also the director of the show, he was thoroughly irritated by everything.

PEOPLE OF NEW ROCHELLE

THE CAST WAS GENTLY CRAMMED IN
DRESSING ROOMS HALF ENOUGH SIZE.

MOTHER

LADIES WITH AEROSOLS

YOUNGER BROTHER

FELLOWS WITH MORE AEROSOLS

FATHER

And if you thought the stage was full already...

COALHOUSE

In the dressing rooms, men and women forgot their lines and dancing because they'd done it so many times, in so many different ways, that nobody knew anything anymore. Many of them sang music that was theirs and not like anything else in the show.

SARAH

One young woman thought Coalhouse played just for her. She must not have noticed there were 56 other people in the cast, 18 in the orchestra, a dozen backstage and in the booth, and 299 in the audience.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

Booker T. Washington was the most famous Green Room caterer in the production. Other people offered to give him money if he would cater the nights they signed up for.

MEN

LA LA LA LA LA

TATEH

In Latvia, a man wanted to shave his beard down to a mustache in time for Act Two. So he travelled to America and helped create Hollywood so he could buy a razor.
(tune of America from West Side Story:)

A SHTETL IS AMERICA
I VANT TO BE IN AMERICA

ALL

LA LA LA LA LA

HOUDINI

Harry Houdini was one immigrant who made an art of escape. Not only did he make himself disappear from large chunks of the show, but he did it to several other characters introduced in the opening number, who we barely see again.

LITTLE BOY

Warn the Duke!

HOUDINI

What did you say?

LITTLE BOY

I said warn the Duke. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand will be assassinated in Sarajevo. It will start World War I. I've told you this every night for four months! Can't you get it? Geez!

WOMEN

LA LA LA LA LA

EVELYN NESBIT

Evelyn Nesbit was involved with more male characters in the show than any other woman. This made her the most popular swinger in Vaudeville. Whee!

EMMA GOLDMAN

And although we'd already spent several weeks together, Emma Goldman knew...

ALL

THAT THERE WERE NINETY MORE DAYS TO GO!

AND THERE WAS NO COMPLAINING,
AND WE'VE GOT A BRIDGE YOU CAN BUY.
QUICK CHANGES EVERYWHERE
SET PIECES EVERYWHERE
STILL REHEARSING RAGTIME!

FATHER

Enough of that song! You want the show to go on for three hours?

EMMA GOLDMAN

Let me at those sons of bitches!

LITTLE BOY

Why is Emma so angry? Why is everyone so angry?

FATHER

Because the only people going to a Giants game this October are in act two.

MOTHER

WHAT KIND OF ACTOR
WOULD DO SUCH A THING
WHY IN GOD'S NAME
IS HALF THE CAST NOT HERE?
I'M A FOOL.

□

THEY SENT US LISTS
ALL THESE NOTES IN LISTS
EMAILS FULL OF LISTS
TRYING TO BE HELPFUL -
OH DEAR!

WHAT KIND OF ACTOR
WOULD DO WHAT I'VE DONE -
WALKED IN THE DOOR
TO SUCH CHAOS AND PAIN!

WHAT KIND OF ACTOR
DID THAT MAKE ME?

ALL

HOURS PASSING BY AND
STILL NO INTERMISSION
HOURS PASSING BY,
THE BATHROOM STILL SO DISTANT!

HOURS PASSING BY...
HOURS PASSING BY...

EMMA GOLDMAN

Let me at those sons of bitches!

FATHER

Wait, now you're Emma? Didn't you just sing as Mother?

EMMA GOLDMAN

One actor's face looks like another.

ALL (EXCEPT BRADEN)

WHERE HAVE I BEEN?
WHAT DID WE CHANGE?
CAUGHT IN THIS STRANGE
NEW BLOCKING.
BRADEN! (SHOUTED)
WHERE DO I ENTER NOW?

JUST LIKE THAT MIC
SQUEALS IN MY EAR,
I'VE COME TO FEAR

NEW BLOCKING.
BRADEN! (SHOUTED)
WHEN DO I TAKE MY BOW?

C. MICHAEL SAYS "COME HERE",
AND HE SAYS "MOVE TO THERE",
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M TO GO.
I CAN'T DANCE BUT STILL ANDREA WANTS
MY BUTT TO SHOW
NEW BLOCKING!

"MENSTRUAL SHOW," OR IS IT "MINSTREL SHOW?"
WE HAVE TO LEARN THE LYRICS, TOO!
JUST DON'T CHANGE THE WORDS,
OR WE WILL ALL BE SCREWED!

GRANDFATHER

You can have tomorrow off.

ALL

Yay!
A DAY OF PEACE.
A DAY OUTSIDE.
A DAY WITH LOVED ONES
WE HAVE LONG DENIED.
TIL A NEW DAY DAWNS
OH, LORD, I PRAY
WE'LL NEVER GET VACATION
TILL WE END THE PLAY.

LITTLE BOY

The era of Ragtime had run out, as if it had only lasted forever.

YOUNGER BROTHER

On the closing night of Ragtime, Younger Brother, Coalhouse and his men, blew up the J.P. Morgan library. Not only did this mercifully shorten the show by twenty minutes, but it blew a hole in the theatre big enough to finally build the orchestra pit and fly space we've all waited so long for.

ALL

LA LA LA LA LA

GRANDFATHER

Grandfather declared the show to finally be over. At last, peace and quiet!

EVELYN NESBIT

The passionate and beautiful Evelyn Nesbit would meet her long-lost twin sister, and she would go on to star in a double act in Chicago. Wheel!

HOUDINI

Harry Houdini was hanging upside down offstage right for five minutes one night while we kept stopping and redoing the opening number. Are you guys crazy?!? What did I do to you?

FATHER

When the Lusitania was torpedoed, Father was on board, using a ticket that Tateh had given him. Father didn't see that one coming.

ALL

WELL, NOW WE ARE OLD ENOUGH
OLDER THAN AMERICA,
AND WE DID RI-I-I-I-DUH!
UNTIL WE DI-I-I-I-IED

EMMA GOLDMAN

Let me at those sons of bitches!

ALL

ON THE WHEELS OF A DREAM.

CURTAIN