



My Fiddler: From Grodna to Broadway

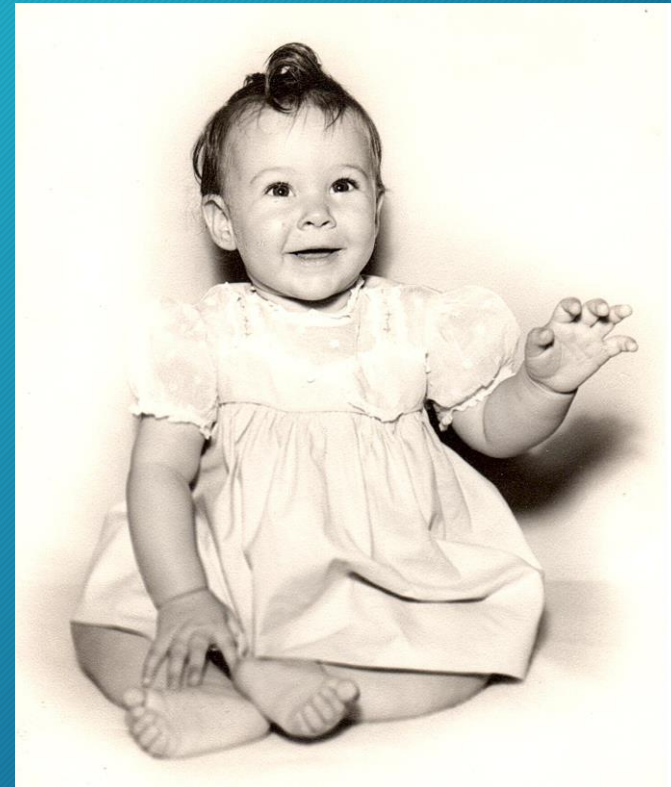
1

Presentations for the Chicago YIVO Society's
Summer Festival of Yiddish Culture
8/13/14 → 8/19/14

A Bit about Me: New Jersey Girl...

2

- Birthday = December 10, 1951
- Born at Newark's Beth Israel Hospital
- First home in the Weequahic Section
- Spent summers in the Catskills
- Moved to Livingston, NJ in 1961
- Am I a **Philip Roth** Stereotype ?



Goes off to College...

3

- Graduated from LHS in 1969
- BA 1973: St. John's College
- EdM 1975: Harvard (HGSE)
- MA 1979: SUNY-Binghamton
- MA 1981: University of Chicago



Marries Mr. Right!

4

- Married Richard Bayard Miller in 1982...
- **Lived in Chicago for 35 years...**
- In June '12, Richard accepted an offer from SUNY-Downstate Medical Center...
- **And now we live in Brooklyn 😊**

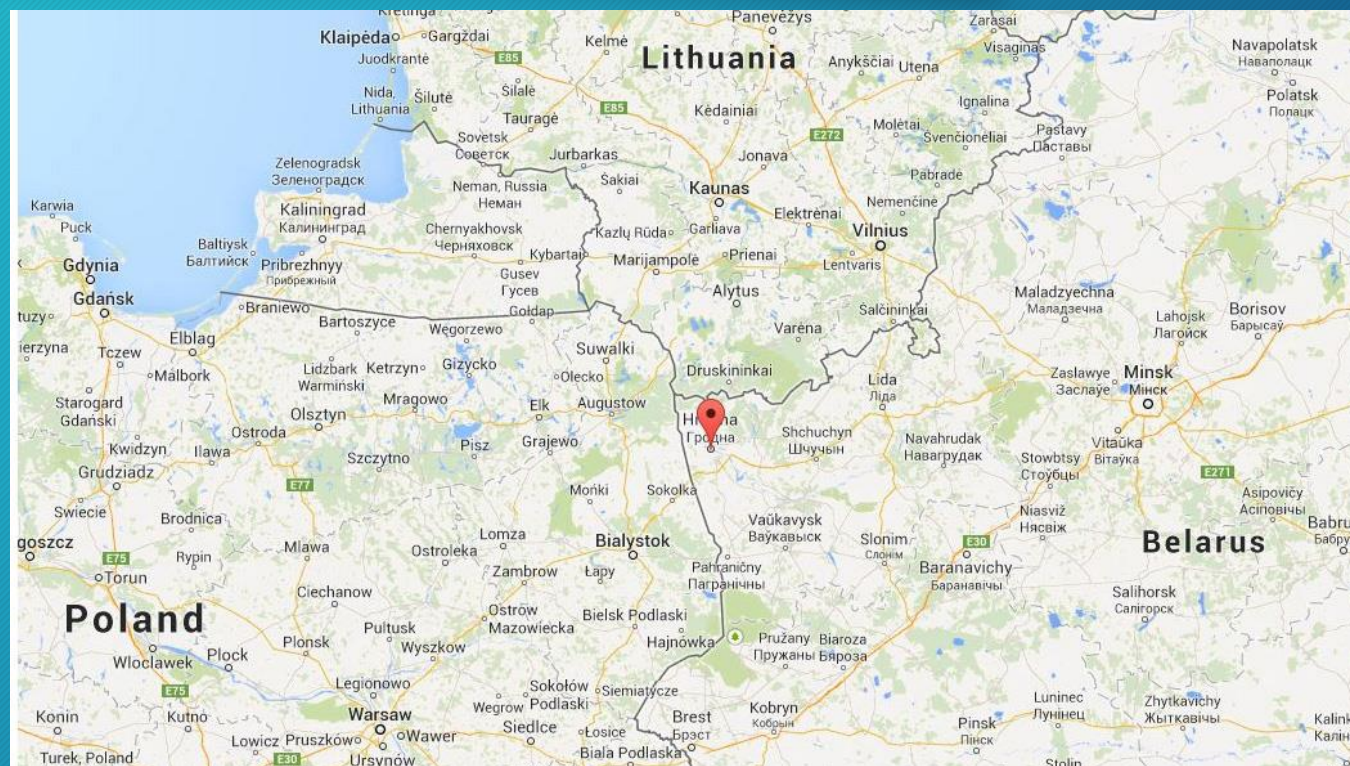


Why **Grodna** to Broadway?

5

This is Sophie Hecht from Hrodna (Belarus)

6



I was grandchild # 2...
the first daughter of Sophie's first daughter.

7



“Gramma Hecky,
where are you from?”

“I was born in Grodna,
Russia-Poland.”

“Russia-Poland...
Where is that?!?”



My traditions come from **Russia-Poland!**

8

So what are my **early** memories of *Fiddler*...?

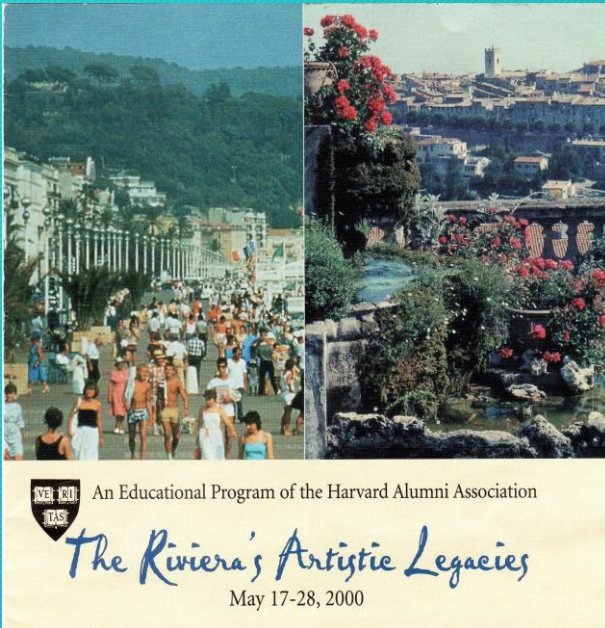
9

NONE!!! A COMPLETE BLANK!!!

- I remember when I saw *Man of La Mancha* on Broadway...
- I remember when I saw *Guernica* at MoMA...
- I remember when I saw *Funny Girl* at the Claridge Theatre in Montclair...
- But I have **no memory** of having seen *Fiddler* -- first on stage and then on screen -- although I know -- of course -- that I did...

So what are my **first** memories of *Fiddler*...?

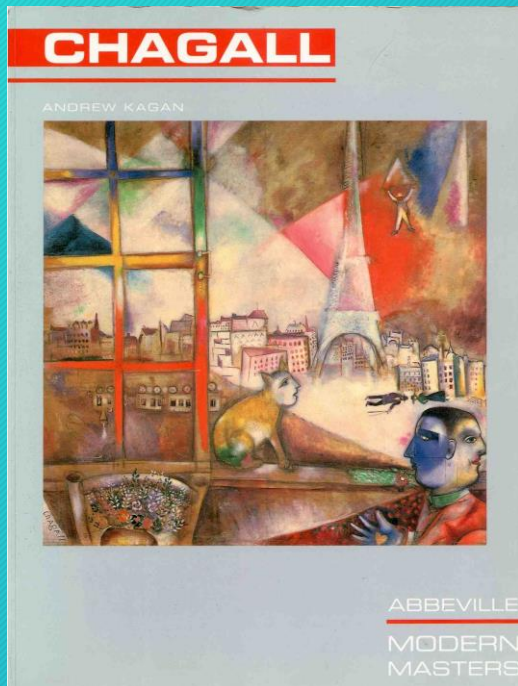
10



- In **May, 2000**, Richard & I went to France with Juanita (RB's Mom) to celebrate her 75th Birthday...
- On the afternoon of the first day, we went to the **Marc Chagall Biblical Message Museum** in Cimiez...
- I was agog...

And what do I remember...?

11



- On my way out of the Marc Chagall Biblical Message Museum, I stopped in the gift shop & bought a book by **Andrew Kagan...**
- The next morning, I got up very early & started reading it on the balcony (because RB was still asleep)...
- **And then I got to page 48...**

“OMG: It’s **THE** Fiddler on the Roof!!!”

12



“In the allegory of music, a theme Chagall repeated in the animated *The Green Musician*, appears once again his **fiddler on the roof**, that stock character preserved from the world of the shtetl **by Chagall and Sholem Aleichem.**”

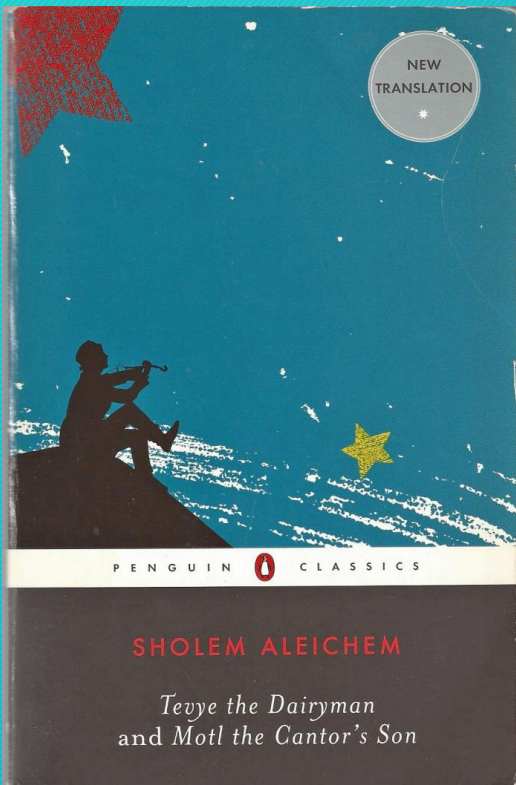
So what about **YOU**? Raise your hand if...

13

- YOU saw the **Original Broadway Production: 1964** → 1972 ?
- YOU saw the **40th Anniversary Production: 2004** → 2006 ?
- YOU saw another **stage** production after 1972:
 - On Broadway ?
 - At a Community Theatre ?
 - At a school (college, high school, other) ?
- YOU saw the **film in 1971** in a **movie theatre** ?
- YOU saw the **film after 1971** on **DVD/PPV** ?

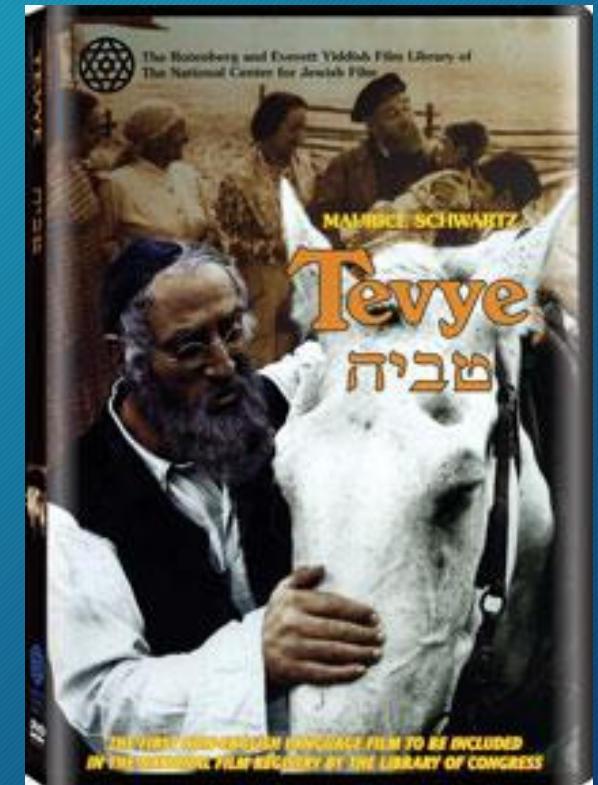
BONUS POINTS! Raise your hand if...

14



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- You have read all 8 **Tevye** stories:
 - Tevye Strikes It Rich (1894)
 - Tevye Blows a Small Fortune (1899)
 - **Today's Children** (1899)
 - **Hodel** (1904)
 - **Chava** (1905)
 - Shprintze (1907)
 - Tevye Leaves for the Land of Israel (1909)
 - **Lekh-Lekho** (1916)
- You have seen **Tevye** (1939)



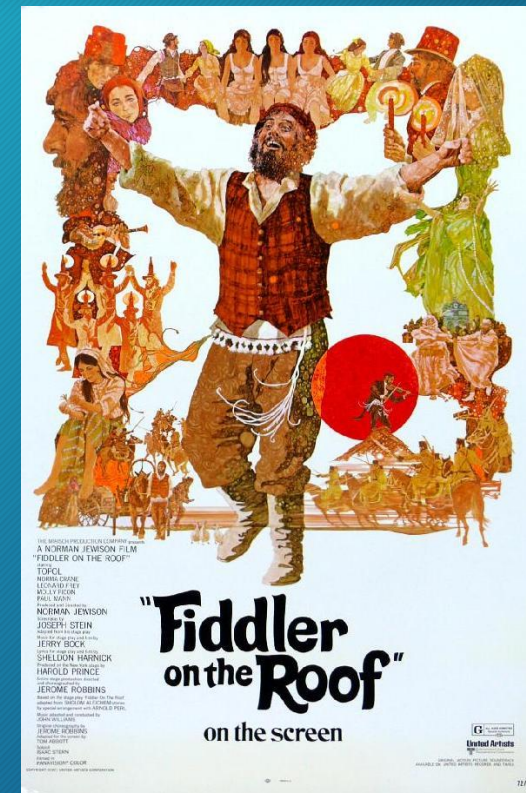
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Is there anyone here...

15



...who has **never** seen
Fiddler on the Roof
either **on stage**
or **on screen**
???



So nu: What is **my** problem?

16

“CONVENTIONAL WISDOM”

“

...*Fiddler on the Roof*,
born in the era
when fathers knew best,
had located a problem
at the heart of Sholem Aleichem's stories... ”

“Fiddling with Sholem Aleichem: A History of *Fiddler on the Roof*”

By Stephen J. Whitfield (2003)

Published in *Key Texts in American Jewish Culture* (Edited by Jack Kugelmass)

17

“

And then came *Fiddler on the Roof*
on September 22, 1964...

When it closed eight years later,
Fiddler had knocked *My Fair Lady*
off her pedestal as **Broadway's longest run...**”

To Broadway: To Life!

The Musical Theatre of Bock & Harnick

Philip Lambert (2011)

18

“

...followed by
an elaborately faithful
(and musically nearly complete)
film in 1971...

”

To Broadway: To Life!

The Musical Theatre of Bock & Harnick

Philip Lambert (2011)

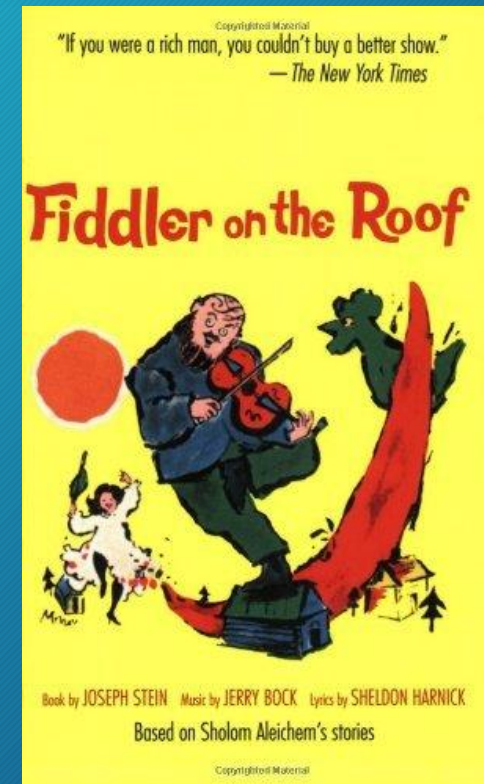
19

On 9/22/64, I was 12 years old...

20

“...*Fiddler on the Roof* [was]
born in the era
when fathers knew best...”

REALLY ? ? ?



The Anderson Family on *Father Knows Best*

21

- First Broadcast:

- October 3, 1954

- Final Broadcast:

- May 23, 1960

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Father_Knows_Best



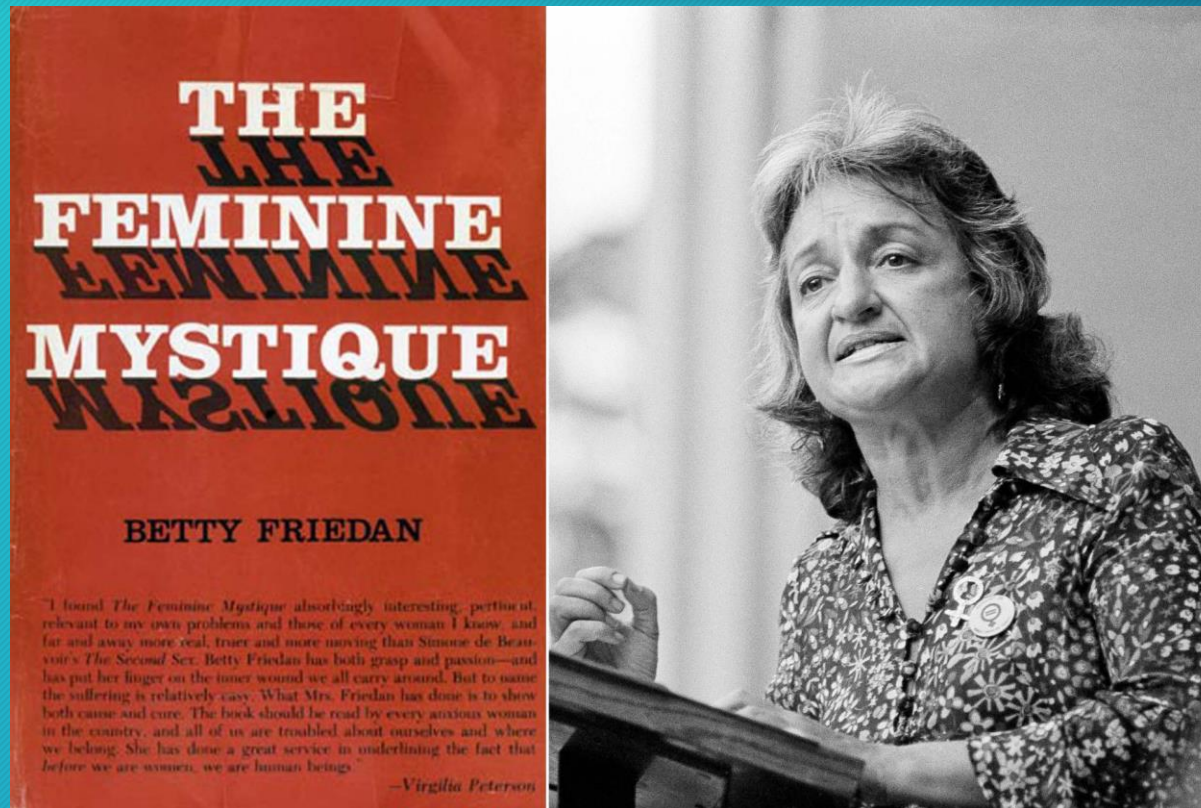
Now think about **1964**...

22

Recent fiftieth anniversary
commemorative events remind us
that by 1964,
“**the era of *Father Knows Best*”**
was long over!

February 19, 1963: Betty Friedan

23



August 28, 1963: “I Have a Dream!”

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November 22, 1963: Kennedy Assassination

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February 9, 1964: Ed Sullivan & The Beatles

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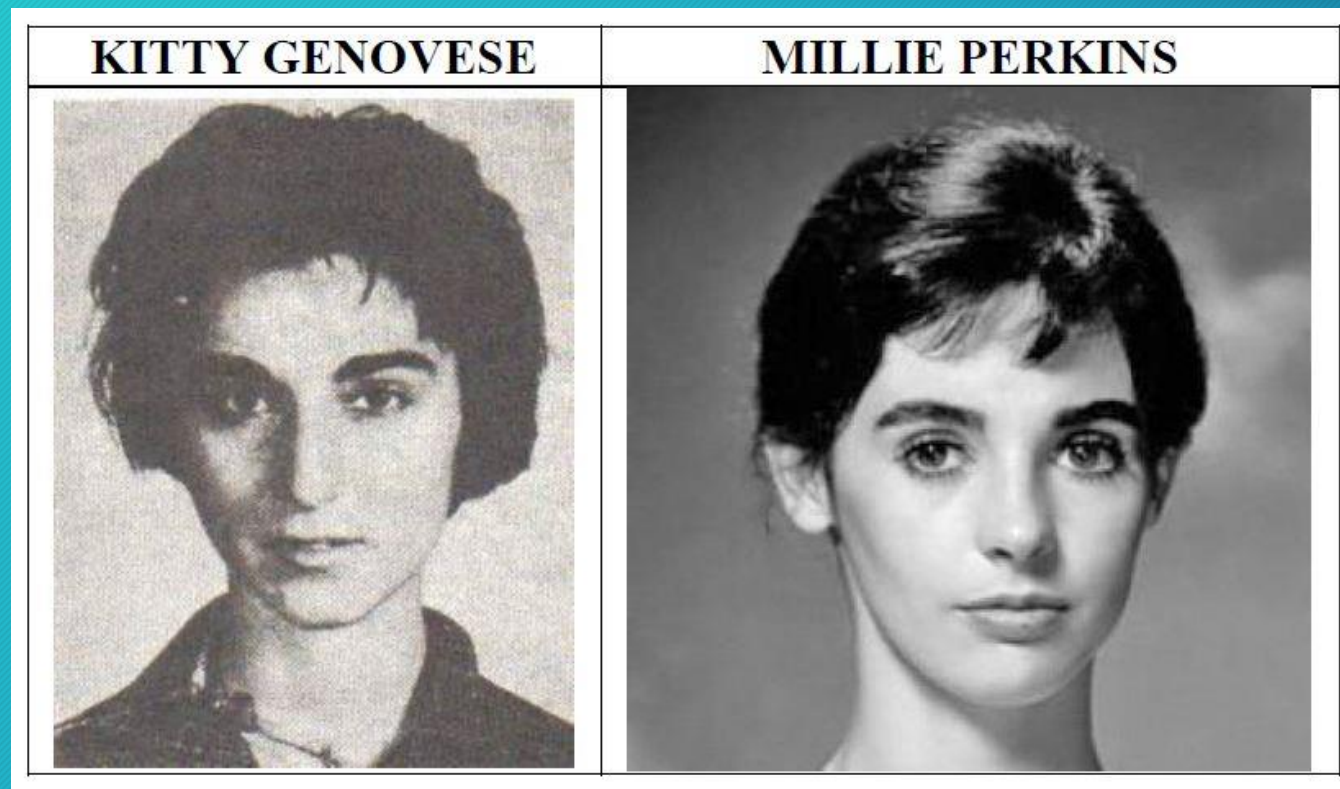


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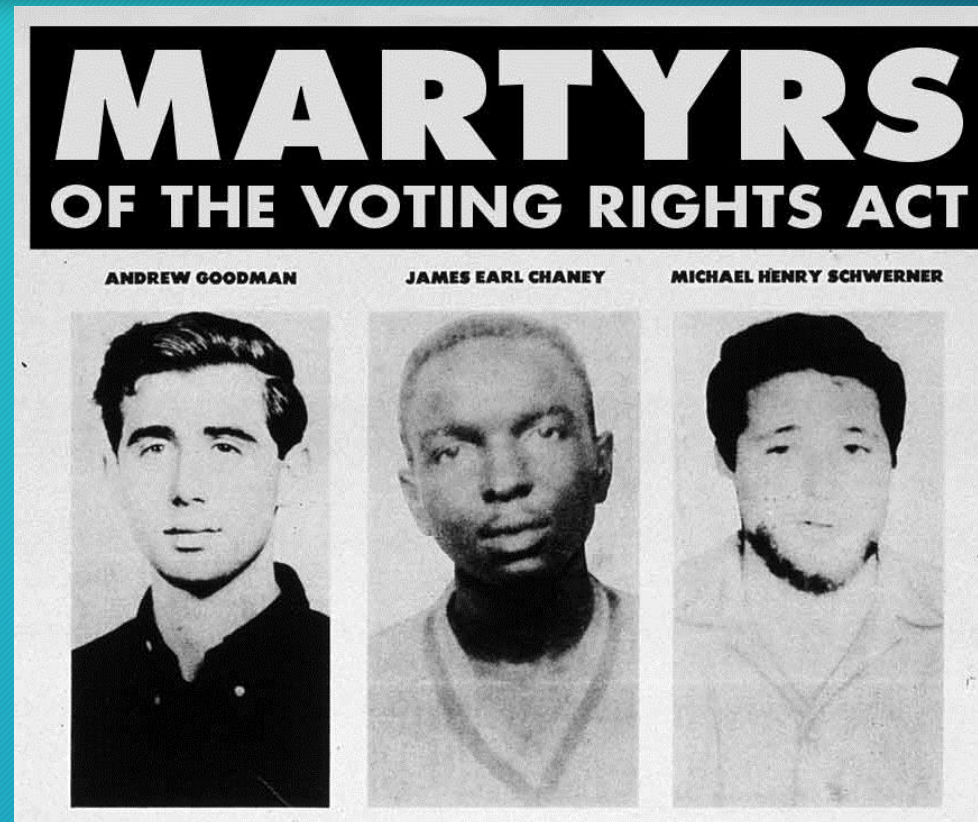
March 27, 1964: Kitty Genovese in *NYT*

27



August 4, 1964: Goodman, Chaney & Schwerner

28



August 25, 1964: Fannie Lou Hamer at DNC

29



October 1, 1964: Jack Weinberg at Berkeley

30



November 3, 1964: LBJ Defeats Goldwater

31

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times.

LATE CITY EDITION
U.S. Weather Bureau Report: Fair to pleasant;
Sunny today; clear tonight;
Fair and milder tomorrow.
Temp. Range: 63-48; yesterday: 60-49.

VOL. CXIV... No. 39,001. © 1964 by The New York Times Company
NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1964. TEN CENTS

JOHNSON SWAMPS GOLDWATER AND KENNEDY BEATS KEATING; DEMOCRATS WIN LEGISLATURE

KENNEDY EDGE 6-6

Keating's Defeat Is
Termed a 'Tragedy'
by Rockefeller

New York Vote
PRESIDENT
Johnson, Dem. 4,509,514
Goldwater, Rep. 2,089,113
11,330 of 12,429 E.D.'s rptd.

SENATOR
Kennedy, Dem. 2,479,976
Keating, Rep. 2,837,023
11,318 of 12,429 E.D.'s rptd.

By R. W. APPLE Jr.
Robert F. Kennedy was
elected to the United States
Senate from New York yester-
day in his first bid for elective
office, overwhelming Republi-
can Senator Kenneth B. Keat-
ing.
With more than 80 per cent

The Election at a Glance

President		
	Number of Votes*	Electoral Vote
Johnson	45	486
Goldwater	6	52

*Includes Dist. of Columbia

President—New York		Senator—New York	
Johnson	4,509,514	Kennedy	2,479,976
Goldwater	2,089,113	Keating	2,837,023

Includes
New York

The Senate

Newly Elected Senators		Make-up of New Senate	
Democrats	25	Democrats	65
Republicans	5	Republicans	30
In doubt	5	In doubt	5

The House

Democrats elected	261
Republicans elected	127
In doubt	47

UPSET AT ALBANY

Carlino and Mahoney
Defeated—Special
Session Expected

By LAYMOND ROBINSON
A surge of Democratic votes
swept the Republicans from
control of the State Legislature
yesterday for the first time in
more than a quarter of a cen-
tury.
The massive victory gave the
Democrats a probable working
majority of a dozen seats in
the Assembly and a half dozen
in the Senate.
Not since 1935, in the sweep
of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New
Deal, had the Democrats had
control of both the houses. Not
since 1938 had they held control
of the Senate.
Topped from their powerful
posts in stunning upsets were

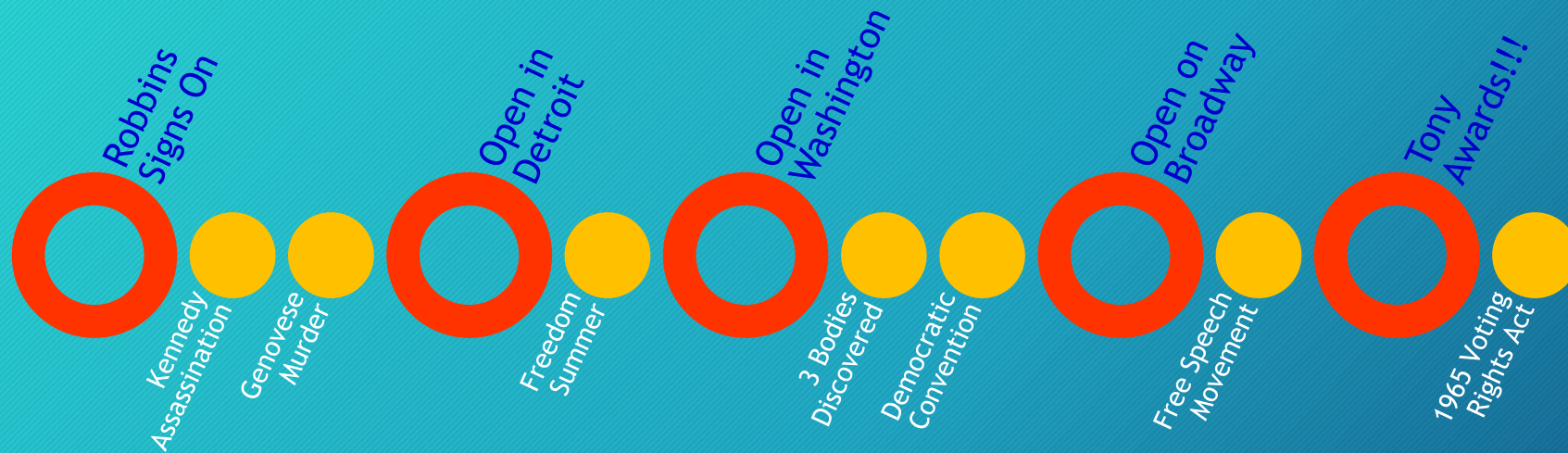


LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON
HUBERT HORATIO HUMPHREY

TURNOUT IS HEAVY

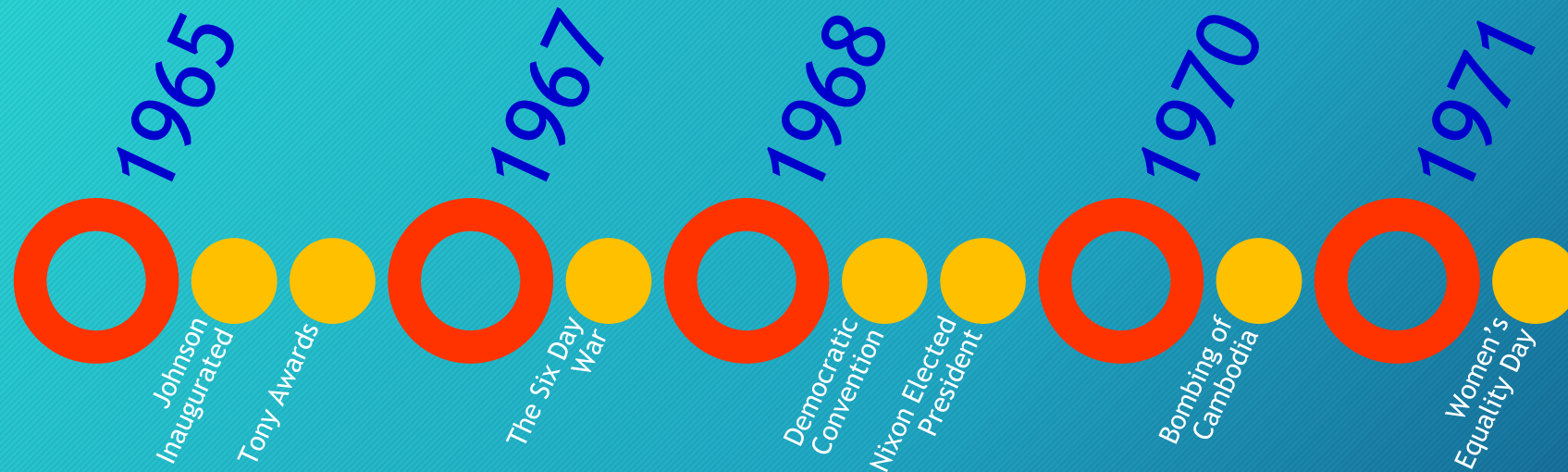
President Expected to
Get 60% of Vote,
With 44 States

By TOM WICKER
Lyndon Baines Johnson of
Texas compiled one of the
greatest landslide victories in
American history yesterday to
win a four-year term of his
own as the 36th President of
the United States.
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
of Minnesota, Mr. Johnson's
running mate on the Democratic
ticket, was carried into office
as Vice President.
Mr. Johnson's triumph, giv-
ing him the "land and clear"
national mandate he had said
he wanted, brought 44 states
and the district of Columbia,
with 488 electoral votes, into



Fiddler on the Roof in the Context of 1964

32



Now think about the years 1964 → 1971...

33

If all of this—and so much more—is true...

34

- Six Day War in Israel/War in Vietnam
- MLK/RFK Assassinations → Race Riots
- Student Protests/Anti-War Marches
- Bra Burnings/Stonewall Riot
- Nixon Elected by “Silent Majority”
- Cambodia Bombings/Deaths at Kent State

Is it still possible that this is also true...

35

Norman Jewison's
1971 film adaptation is
“elaborately faithful
(and musically **nearly** complete)”

OF COURSE NOT!

Robbins' Yente-the-Matchmaker (1964)

36

Bea Arthur in 1964:

Tall... even compared to the men!

Has lots of dialogue
& even has **her own song!**



Jewison's Yente-the-Matchmaker (1971)

37

Molly Picon in 1971:

Tiny... even compared to the women!

Minimal dialogue
(just with women)

& **no song!**



And what about Hodel & Perchik...

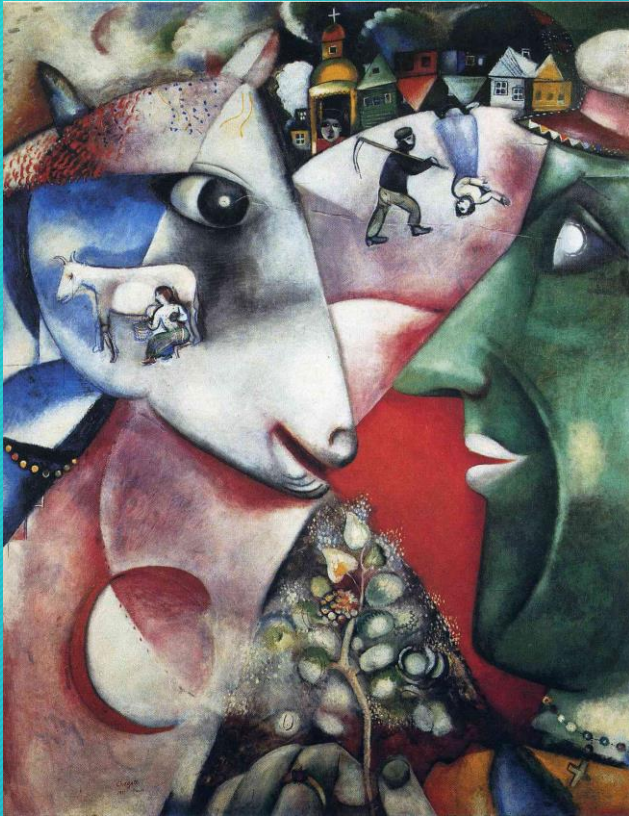
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Perchik & Hodel on Stage:
“Besides having everything,
**I know what
everything's for!**”

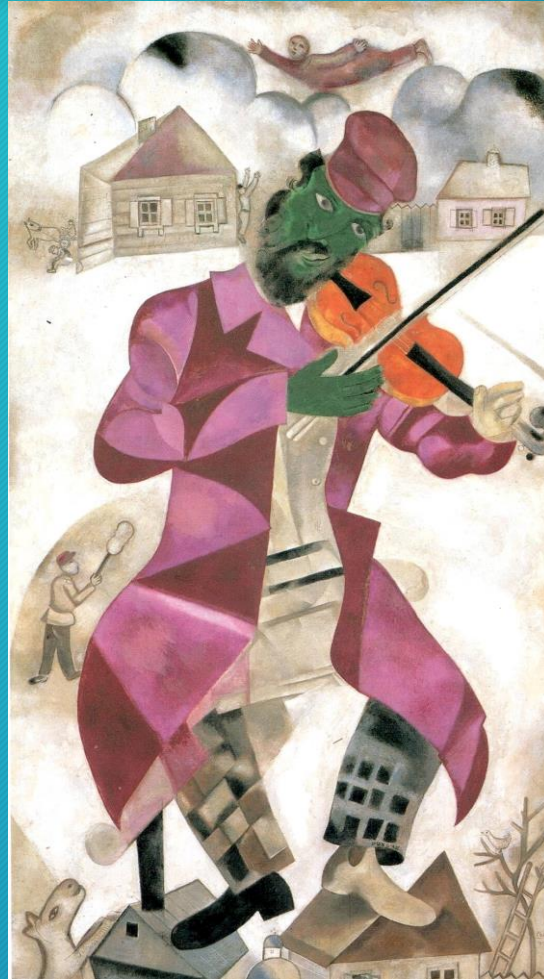


And what about Marc Chagall...

39



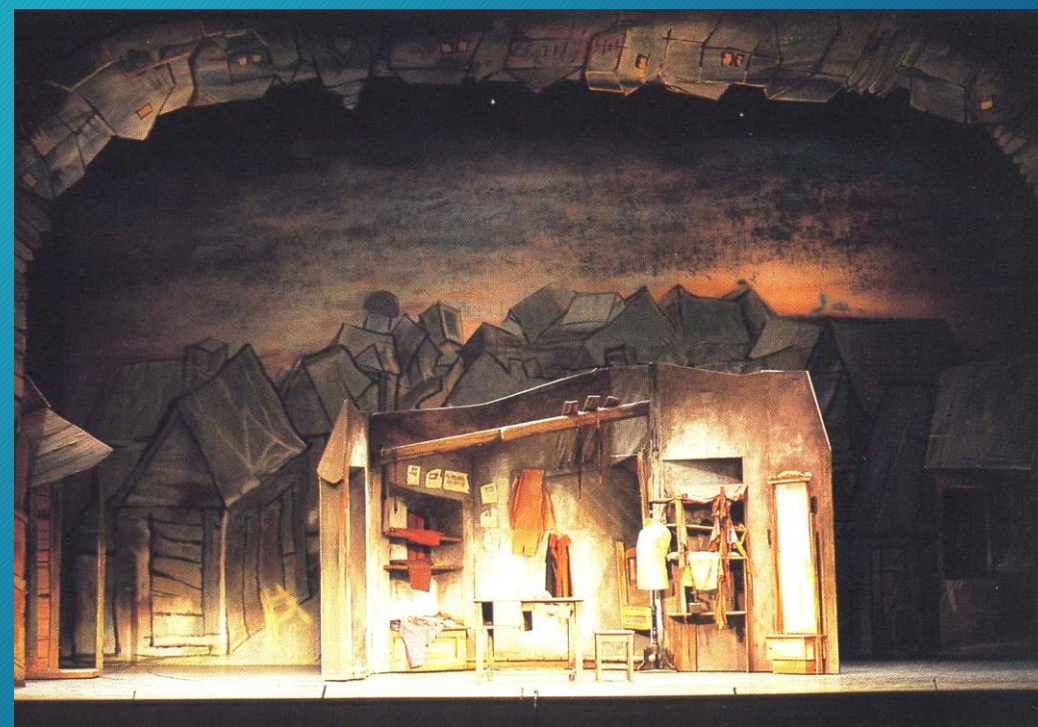
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Boris Aronson's Anatevka (1964)

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Norman Jewison's *Anatevka* (1971)

41



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What's happened to the Village?

42



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Intimate? Claustrophobic? Gone!

43



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“Conventional Wisdom” is Wrong!

44

Fiddler on the Roof is **not** the same
on stage and on screen, but so what?

Tzeitel wants to marry Motel

45

Someone recently
said to me:

“Tevye’s **first** daughter
marries someone **Jewish...**”



Hodel wants to marry Perchik

46

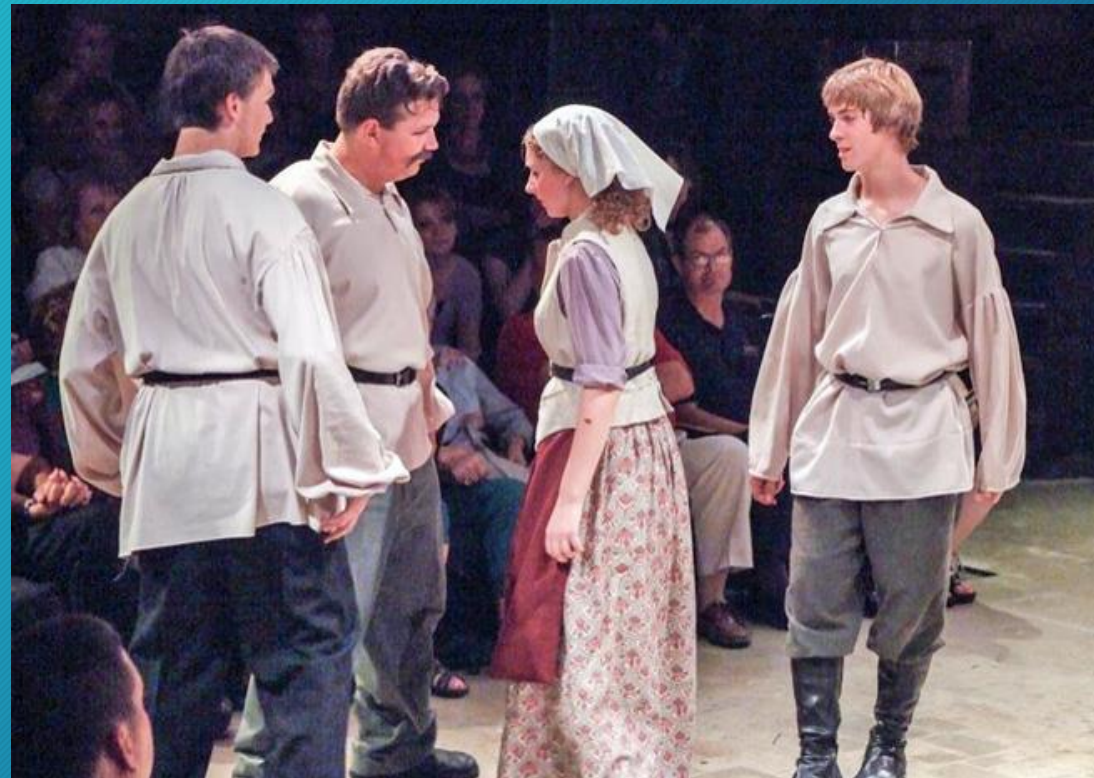
“Tevye’s
second daughter
marries someone
who doesn’t want
to be Jewish...”



Chava wants to marry Fyedka

47

“And Tevye’s
third daughter
marries someone
**who isn’t Jewish
at all!”**



And what did I say about Tzeitel?

48

“I think Tzeitel
marries
the
Bund Jew...”



And what did I say about Hodel?

49

“And Hodel
marries the
Tikkun Olam
Jew...”



And what did I say of Chava?

50

“And Chava
marries
a
mensch...”



Tradition!!! Tradition???

51





“Traditional” Foods?

52

Ocho Kandelikas

-NEW ENGLISH VERSE BY DARIA MARNALUK-HAJDANNOU

Ocho Kandelikas, a Hanukkah song in the language Ladino from the Sephardic Jewish tradition. The song says that "beautiful Hanukkah is here" and describes all the wonderful things that will happen this time of year. The song counts out the eight candles for the eight days of Hanukkah.

I've added an English verse here but if you speak Spanish you will especially enjoy this song!

The holiday of lights is here
Good friends and happiness to share
Sweets with honey for us to eat
Candles to light and friends to greet

One little candle... (etc.)
8 little candles For me

Hanukah linda sta aki
ocho candelas para mi
Una kandelika, dos kandelikas,
tres kandelikas, kuatro kandelikas,
sintju kandelikas, sysh kandelikas,
sieto kandelikas, ocho kandelikas para mi.

Muchas fiestas va fazar,
con alegrías i plazar
Una kandelika (etc.)

Los pastelikas va kumer,
con almendrikas i la miel
Una kandelika (etc.)



From DARIA'S SONGBOOK. Find more songs, coloring pages and other great musical activities at www.dariamusic.com.

ocho kandelikas



Hanukkah Oh Hanukkah
Traditional Words and Tune

Hanukkah Oh Hanukkah

Come Light the menorah

Let's have a party we'll all dance the hora

Gather 'round table we'll give you a treat

Dreidels to play with and latkes to eat.

And while we are playing the candles are burning low

One for each night they shed a sweet light

To remind us of days long ago.

One for each night they shed a sweet light

To remind us of days long ago.

Find out how great Hanukkah is with fun activities at
www.SongBooksWINEonly.wordpress.com

“Traditional” Songs?

53

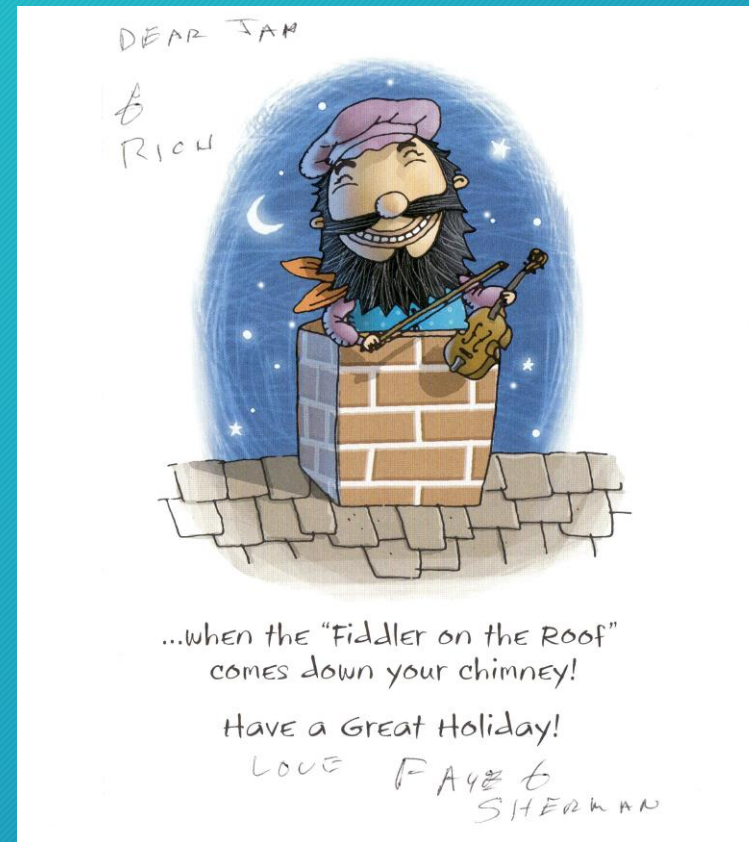


Chanukah? Hanukkah?

“Tradition” is not **an answer**,
Tradition is **a question!!!**

We have choices to make...

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And I have made mine 😊

55

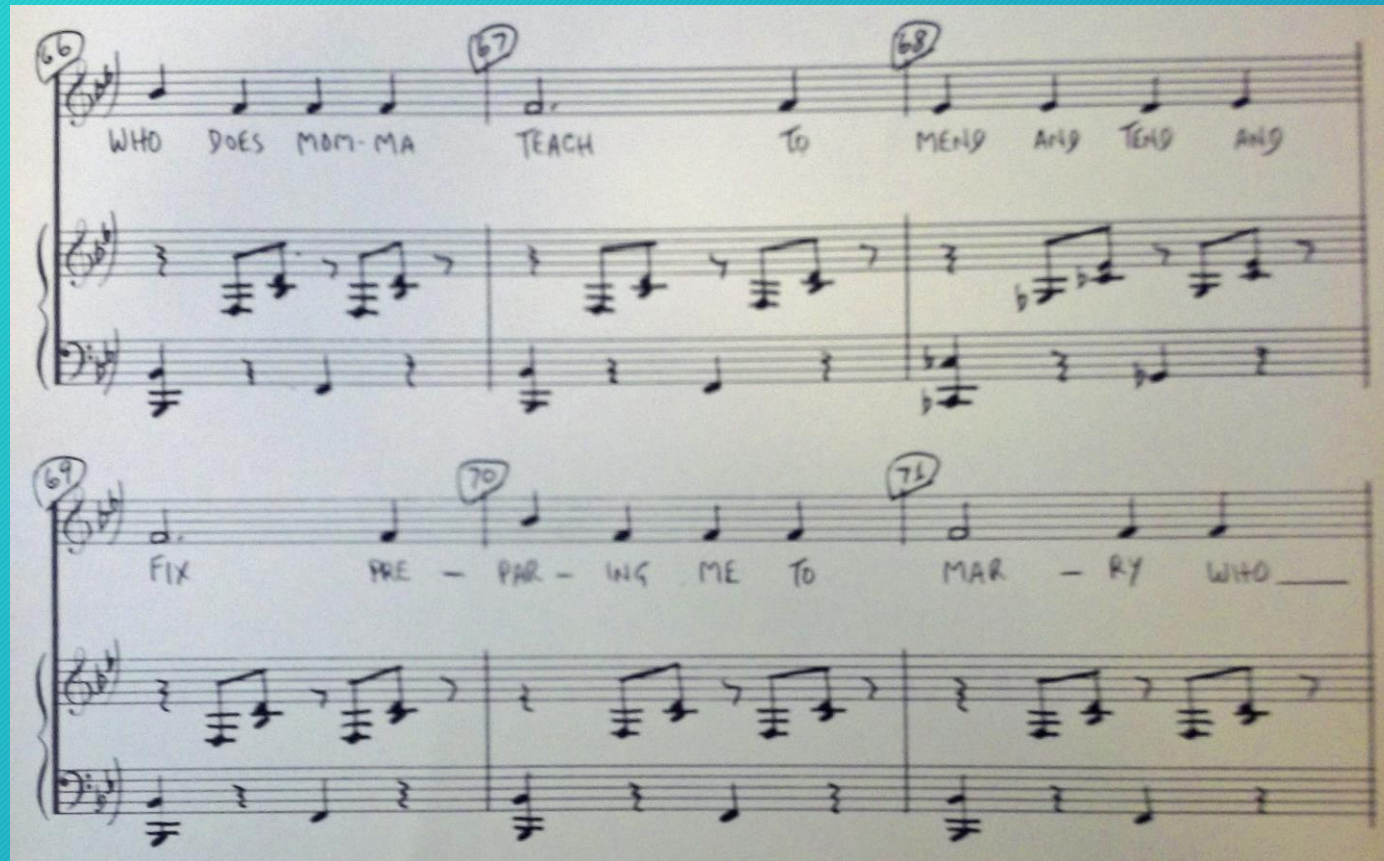
What is “tradition”?

56



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Is this “tradition”?

57



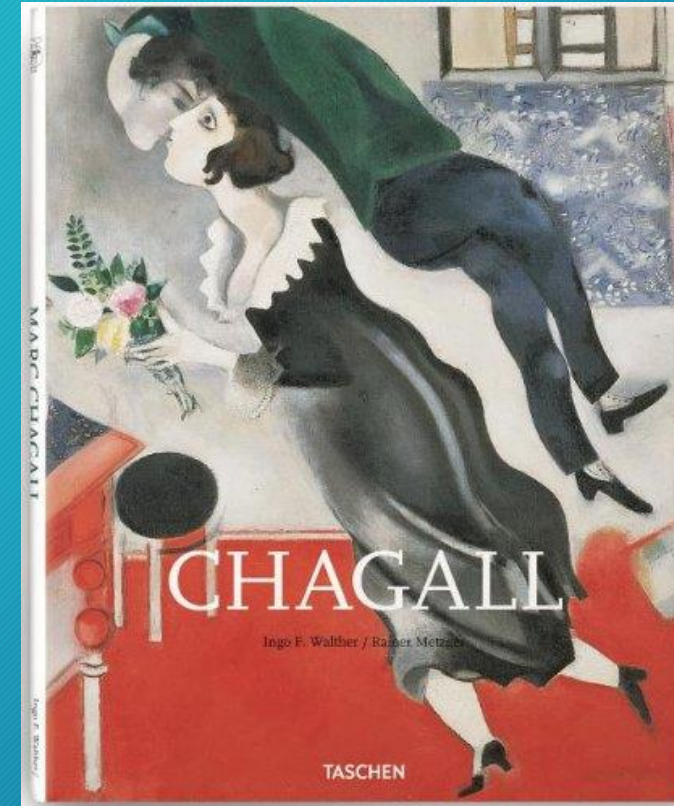
Sholom Aleichem and Olga at their wedding, May 12, 1883.



Sholom Aleichem with his entire family, which he called his "republic." Front, left to right: Numa, Emma, Sholom Aleichem with his granddaughter Tamara on his lap, Misha; back, Berkowitz, Tissa, Olga, Lyala, Michael, Maroussia. Badenweiler, 1910.

Solomon & Olga Rabinowitz

58



Marc & Bella Chagall

59



Is this “tradition”?

60



Who defines “tradition”?

61



A ruthless businesswoman
with her
own agenda?



OR



A harmless old busybody;
a gossip and a meddler?



Who makes the matches?

62



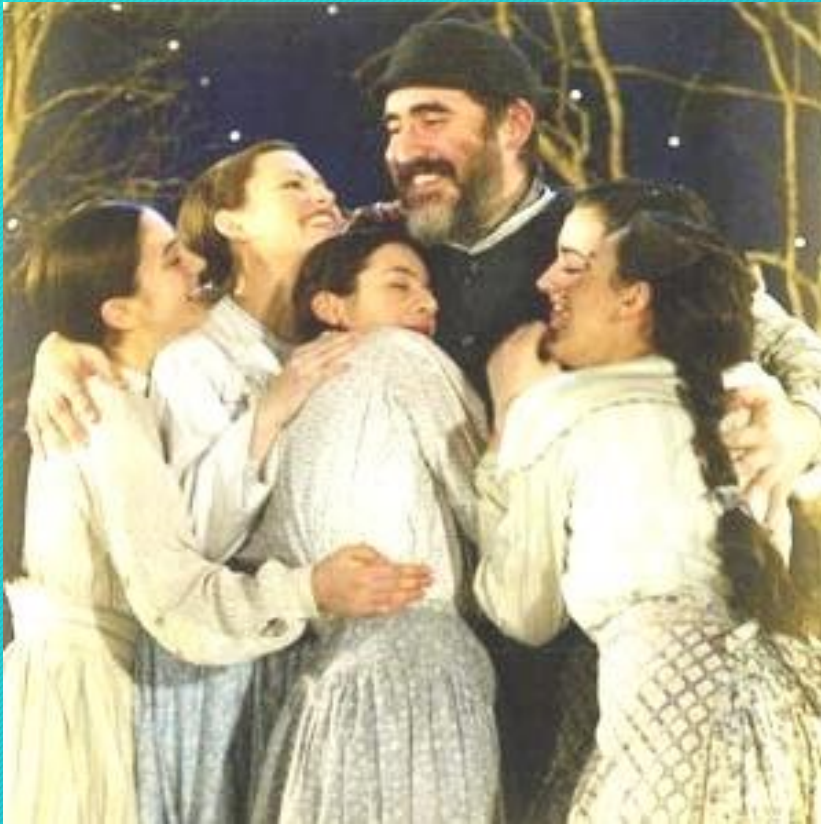
Should **we** have a choice?

63



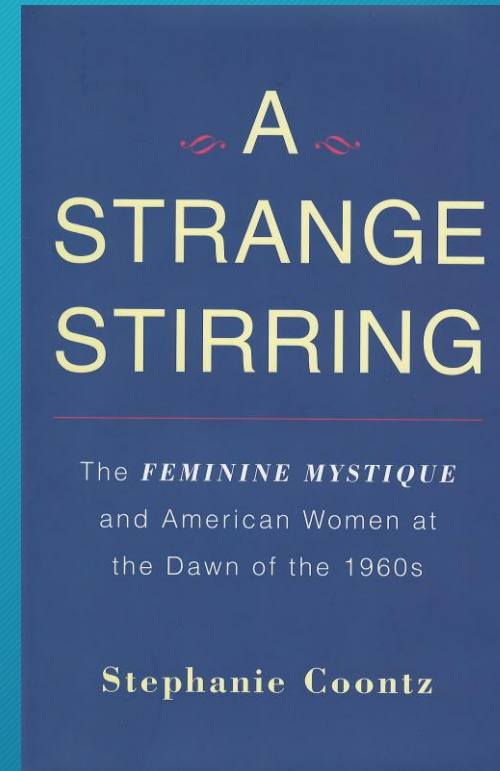
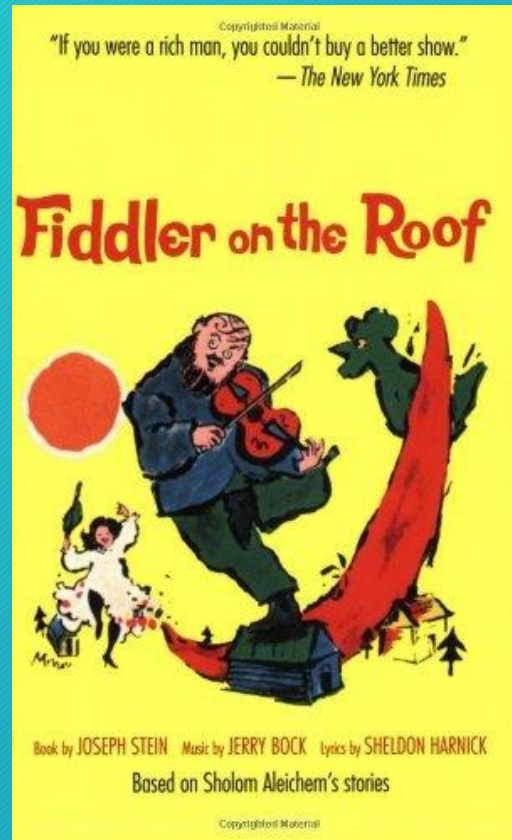
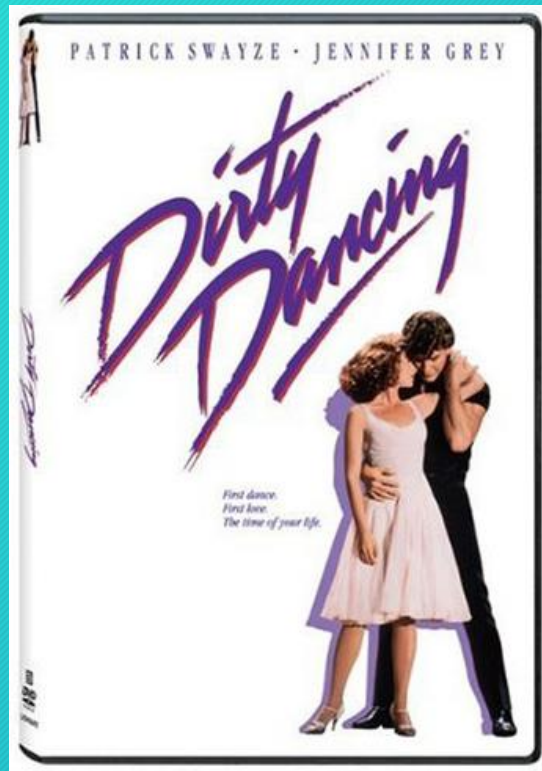
Who decides **who** is a Jew?

64



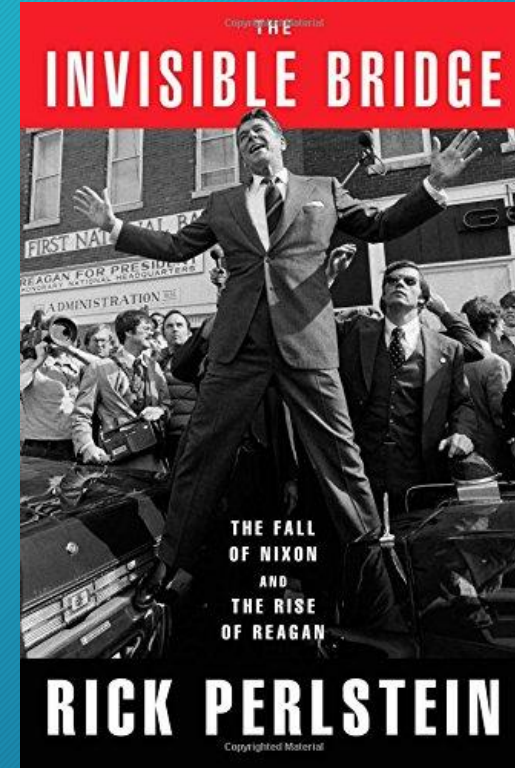
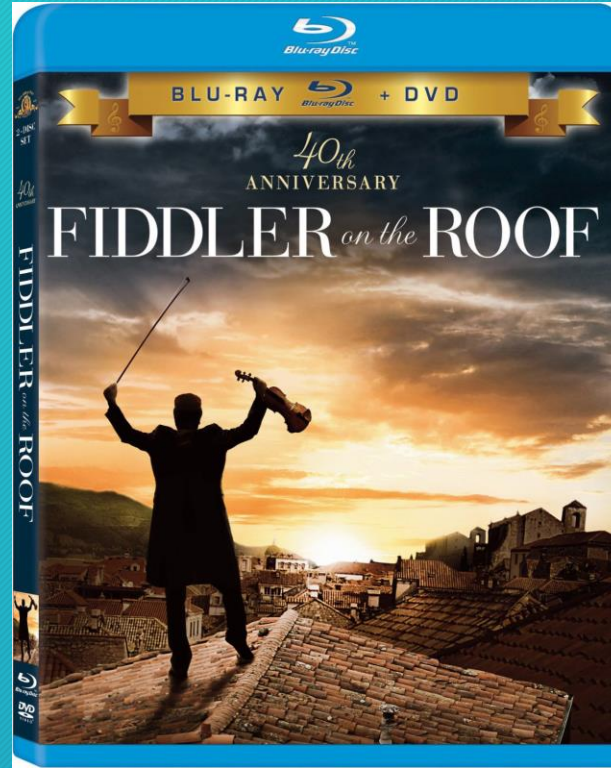
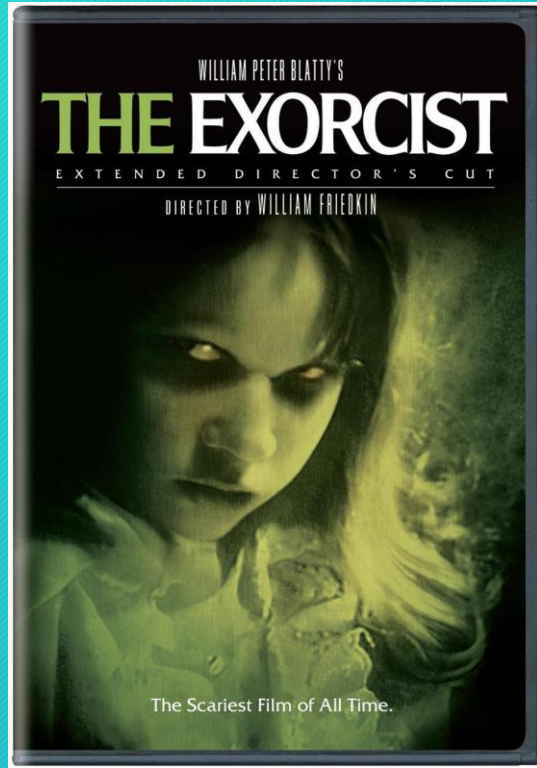
We have a choice!

65



Choose Robbins: "Women Are People, Too!"

66



Choose Jewison: “That ‘thing’ isn’t my daughter!”

67



CHOICES! And I have made mine 😊

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