The music of Rodgers Rodgers (1902-79) is known around the world, perhaps more extensively than that of any other American composer who wrote for the musical theatre. His long and varied career had two parts. His first major success came in the mid 1920s, when he began his collaboration with Lorenz Hart. Together, they wrote some of the most popular songs of all time, including “My Funny Valentine,” “Manhattan,” “The Lady is a Tramp,” “I Could Write a Book,” “Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered” and “Spring Is Here.” Many of these tunes are still performed today by popular singers, classics in what we now call the American Songbook. The second part of his career began when he started to work with Oscar Hammerstein II. With Hammerstein, Rodgers invented a new type of storytelling in American musical theatre, in which the overall dramatic movement of the story told with music has a fresh and compelling force. A bittersweet epilogue, in which Rodgers writes his own words for his own music follows, after the death of Hammerstein. The daring Rodgers, working with his gifted collaborators, wrote some of the first Broadway shows to build a story around an antihero, to express the open expanse of the American landscape in a musical, to explore the origins and destructive nature of racism, and to treat other controversial topics. A consummate showman and a gifted businessman, Rodgers also took chances and never stopped experimenting. This is what makes him worthy of study today. We will study the historical and cultural changes in the background of twentieth century American culture as Rodgers created his work, covering his major triumphs in the musical theatre (Pal Joey, Oklahoma, South Pacific, Carousel, State Fair, The Sound of Music and more), and the life of his individual songs as they took on unique trajectories of their own. Interpretations by Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Billie Holiday, Diana Krall, Michael Bublé, duets by Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett and many others. Required research paper, midterm and final exams, small assignments and good attendance record. Students should attend the performance of South Pacific at the IU auditorium in March 2012.