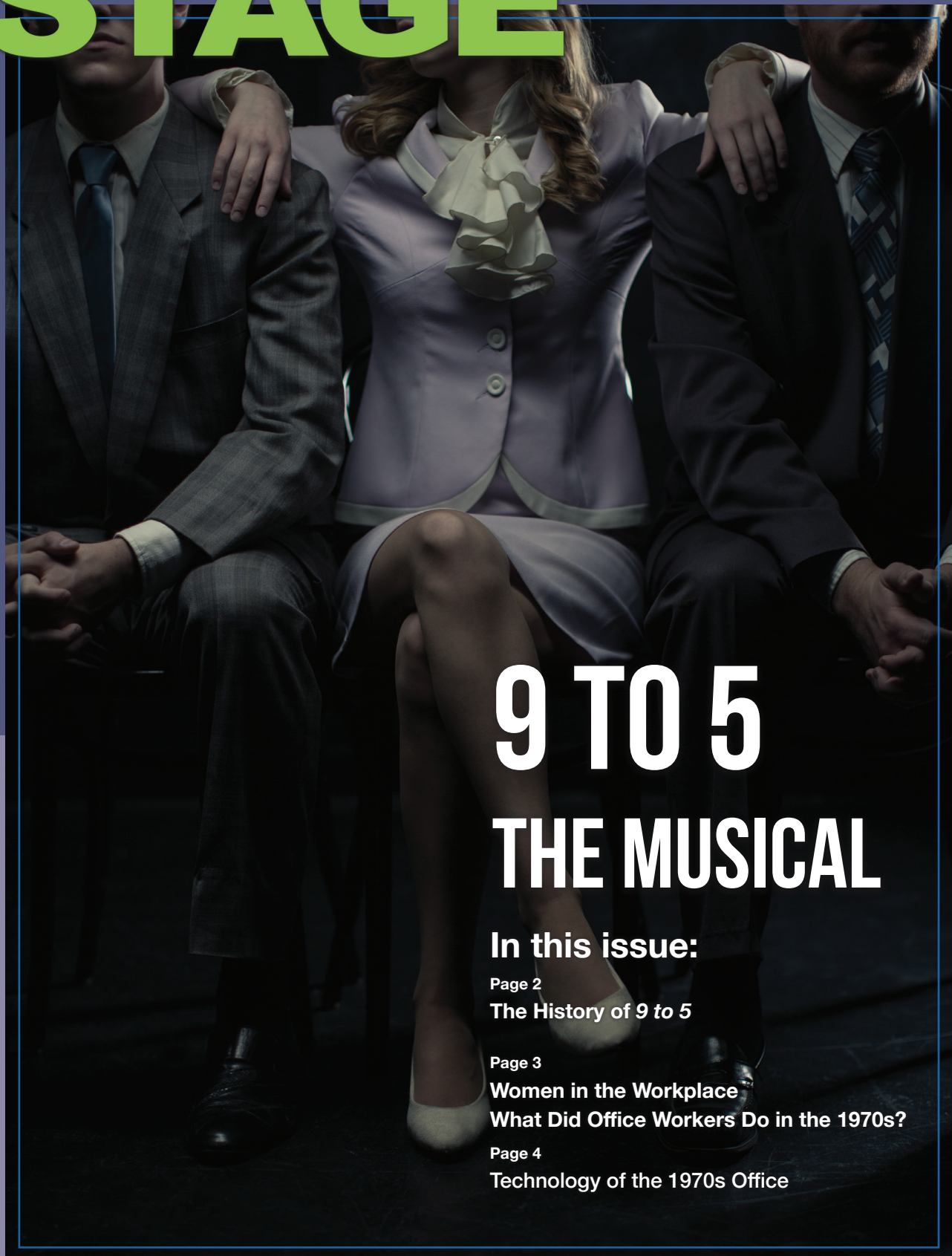


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STAGE

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9 TO 5 THE MUSICAL

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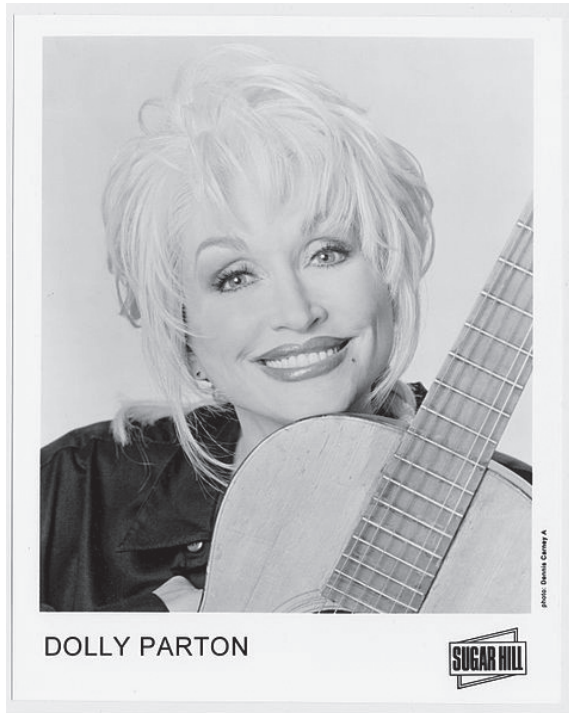
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The History of 9 to 5



The story of the musical *9 to 5* begins in 1973 when a group of female office workers in Boston got together and formed an organization called “9 to 5” to help combat sexism in the workplace. A few years after their founding, Jane Fonda was inspired by their stories and set out to get a film produced to raise awareness of the issue. Fonda insisted it be a comedy because she felt that it would make the film’s political messages more palatable to a wider audience.

Screenwriter Patricia Resnick found out that Jane Fonda was producing a film about secretaries starring Fonda, Lily Tomlin, and Dolly Parton and that it didn’t have a writer attached. Having worked with both Tomlin and Parton in other small projects, Resnick quickly signed on as the film’s screenwriter. Add in Dolly Parton’s Oscar-winning title song and an instant classic was born.

Fast-forward 28 years to the adaptation of the film into the stage musical. The show is part of a Broadway trend to adapt popular movies to the stage. Unlike most of these theatrical adaptations, *9 to 5* was written by the same team behind the original movie. In 2008, screenwriter Patricia Resnick teamed up with singer/songwriter Dolly Parton, and a new chapter in the story’s history began.

Parton had never written music for a musical before. She said, “I was kinda scared of it...I thought, ‘This is a whole different world to me. I hear these people can just eat you up alive.’ And I thought, ‘Well, I’m not one to be eaten alive without kickin’ and a-fightin’!” In the end, Parton had nothing to worry about. Her music works together flawlessly with Resnick’s updated script.

When Resnick was asked whether the script, set in 1979, is still applicable to a modern audience, she said, “You can’t sexually harass someone as obviously. We don’t call people ‘secretaries.’ Other than that, what has changed?”

In the 36 years since the film’s release, while many major strides have been made, unequal treatment of women in the workplace is still a very real problem. Luckily, organizations like “9 to 5” are still around today, working to address this issue.

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Women in the Workplace

- Throughout the 1800's, women were exploited in factory jobs because employers could pay them significantly less than men.
- During the Great Depression, companies often refused to hire married women, insisting that the few jobs that existed should be going to men.
- During World War II, while men went to war, women were allowed and encouraged to fill work positions that had traditionally been filled by men. These women were forced out of these higher-paying positions at the end of the war.
- Women who wished to work after the war were forced into jobs deemed "acceptable" for women such as office work, teaching, retail sales, nursing, and housekeeping.
- Discrimination against women in the workplace was made illegal by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, wage and employment disparities persisted.
- Sexual Harassment was not recognized as a form of illegal sex discrimination until 1980, the year the film *9 to 5* was released.
- Today, women make 79 cents for every dollar a man makes for the same job with the same qualifications. At the current rate of change, women will not make the same as men until the 2050s.
- Only 14.2% of executive positions in S&P 500 companies are filled by women and only 20 CEO positions in 500 companies are held by women. However, studies show that companies with mixed-gender boards of executives consistently outperform those without female board members.
- According to a 2015 survey, one in three women between ages of 18 and 35 have been sexually harassed in the workplace.

What Did Office Workers Do in the 1970s?



In the 1970s, the field of office work consisted of many jobs: secretaries, stenographers, typists, personal assistants, and clerks. In 2016, so much of what was done by office workers is made simpler by computers. In the 1970s, if corrections to a document were needed, it had to be retyped. If several copies of a document were necessary, an office worker couldn't just print multiple copies; he or she had to use either a mimeograph or a Xerox photocopying machine. Company correspondence couldn't all be saved in a "sent email" folder; instead carbon copies of every typed letter had to be created and filed. Although nothing compares to the convenience we have with modern-day computers, office workers in the 1970s needed a wide variety of technology to help them get the job done.

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Technology of the 1970s Office



Typewriters

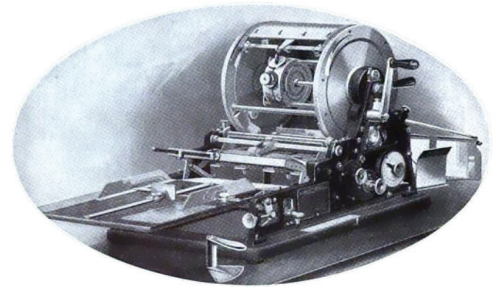
An electric typewriter of the 1970s used a metal ball with raised letters that would press ink directly onto paper with each key pressed. While the typewriter did some formatting automatically, it is nothing compared with the ease of creating an MS Word document today. Most of the formatting had to be done manually. Further, there was no backspace button. Minor mistakes could be corrected by immediately switching to a mode that typed over the mistake in white ink. Whiteout or Liquid Paper could also be used to correct minor mistakes. However, if major changes needed to be made, the entire document had to be retyped.

Carbon Paper

Carbon paper was a sheet of paper with a loose coating of ink that could be placed between two sheets of paper in the typewriter to make two simultaneous copies. This was often used so a company could maintain a copy of all outgoing correspondence.

Mimeographs and Duplicators

The mimeograph, or duplicator machine, was used when multiple copies of a document were needed. To use it, a stencil was created by typing into a special kind of stencil paper, which was wrapped around the ink-filled cylinder of the mimeograph. Once the stencil was fixed, a crank was turned that would pull paper under the stencil, creating a copy. Each stencil could only make so many copies before it started to break down and a new stencil had to be made.



Xerox Machines

Photocopy machines did come into popularity in the 1970s, but Xerox machines were not in widespread use as they are today. They were much larger, often having to occupy their own room. Since Xerox machines were not in widespread use outside of larger offices and print shops, they often required a great deal of training to operate.

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CREDITS

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