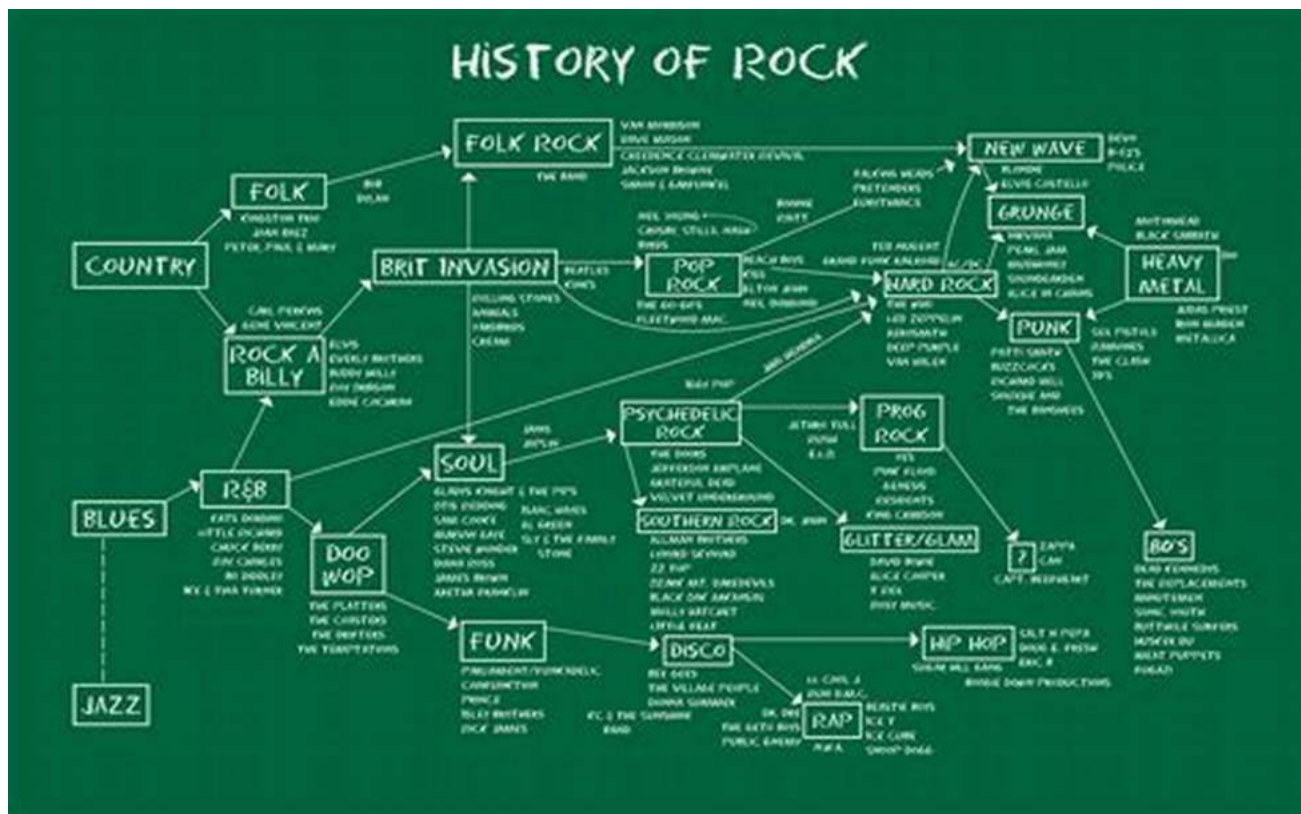


# History Of The Rock Musical From Hair To Hedwig Anthropology Series

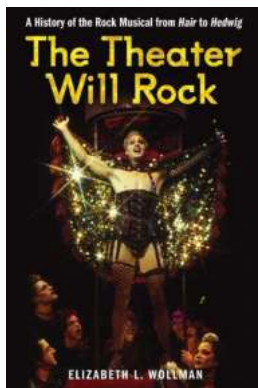


Rock music, in all its rebellious glory, has had a profound impact on various aspects of our society and culture. From the 1960s to the present day, the rock musical genre has evolved and shaped the way we perceive music and theater. In this anthropology series, we dive into the captivating history of rock musicals, exploring their development, influence, and cultural significance.

## The Emergence of "Hair": A Game-Changer in the Musical Landscape

In the late 1960s, a groundbreaking rock musical called "Hair" emerged, challenging societal norms and presenting a new era of musical storytelling. The vibrant blend of rock music and counterculture themes made it revolutionary,

leaving a lasting impact on the genre. With its progressive themes and memorable songs like "Aquarius" and "Let the Sunshine In," "Hair" became an anthem for the anti-establishment movement.



## The Theater Will Rock: A History of the Rock Musical, from Hair to Hedwig (Anthropology series) by Stephen Vider (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 797 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 290 pages



## Rock Musicals Conquer Broadway: "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "The Rocky Horror Show"

In the 1970s, rock musicals began to conquer the prestigious Broadway stage. Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Jesus Christ Superstar" took center stage, retelling the biblical story of Jesus through a rock opera lens. The production's fusion of rock music with religious storytelling sparked controversy, yet captivated audiences and paved the way for future rock musicals.

Another standout rock musical of the era was "The Rocky Horror Show" by Richard O'Brien. This cult classic combined science fiction, horror, and rock music, creating an interactive theatrical experience unlike anything seen before. With catchy tunes like "Time Warp," the show developed an intense following and inspired numerous adaptations, including the iconic film version.

## **The Rise of Concept Albums: "Tommy," "Quadrophenia," and "American Idiot"**

In the 1970s and beyond, the rock musical genre continued to evolve. Concept albums took center stage as artists sought to create cohesive bodies of work with narrative arcs. "Tommy" by The Who became one of the earliest and most influential concept albums, followed by their rock opera "Quadrophenia." These albums laid the foundation for a new level of storytelling within the realm of rock music.

Fast forward to the new millennium, and Green Day's "American Idiot" burst onto the scene, capturing the angst and disillusionment of a generation. This punk rock opera explores themes of political unrest, media manipulation, and the search for identity in a post-9/11 world. The album's success led to a Broadway adaptation, solidifying its place in rock musical history.

## **"Hedwig and the Angry Inch": Redefining Gender and Identity in Rock Musicals**

As the rock musical genre continued to push boundaries, John Cameron Mitchell's "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" shattered conventions and brought forth a new wave of LGBTQ+ representation on stage. This glam rock musical follows the story of Hedwig, a genderqueer rock musician, and her journey to self-acceptance. With its powerful storytelling and dynamic rock soundtrack, "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" became a cult favorite, winning multiple awards and cementing its place as a groundbreaking rock musical.

## **The Legacy of Rock Musicals: Inspiring Generations and Breaking Barriers**

From "Hair" to "Hedwig and the Angry Inch," the history of rock musicals showcases the genre's ability to challenge societal norms, ignite movements, and

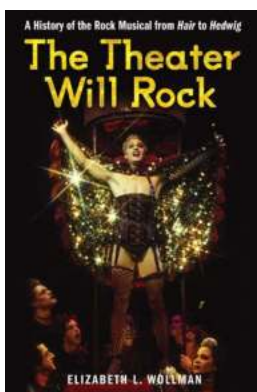
inspire generations. These musicals opened doors for artists to experiment with blending rock music and theater, resulting in boundary-pushing performances that continue to captivate audiences.

Rock musicals have become a vehicle for exploring profound themes, embracing diversity, and spreading messages of love, acceptance, and rebellion. As we look to the future, we can expect rock musicals to remain a vital part of the cultural fabric, evolving to reflect the ever-changing world we live in.

## In

The history of the rock musical genre is a rich tapestry of innovation, rebellion, and cultural impact. From the groundbreaking "Hair" to the gender-bending "Hedwig and the Angry Inch," each rock musical has left its mark on the collective consciousness of society. Through their fusion of rock music and theater, these musicals have pushed boundaries, inspired change, and provided a platform for marginalized voices.

As we continue to explore the fascinating history of rock musicals, we gain a deeper appreciation for the genre's ability to transcend time and leave a lasting impact on our cultural landscape. Let us celebrate the power of music, theater, and storytelling as we delve into the mesmerizing world of rock musicals.



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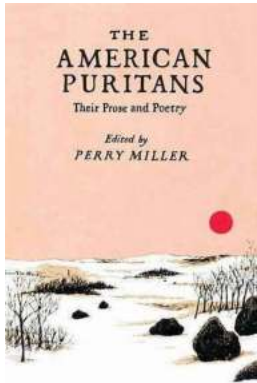


The tumultuous decade of the 1960s in America gave birth to many new ideas and forms of expression, among them the rock musical. An unlikely offspring of the performing arts, the rock musical appeared when two highly distinctive and American art forms joined onstage in New York City. *The Theater Will Rock* explores the history of the rock musical, which has since evolved to become one of the most important cultural influences on American musical theater and a major cultural export. Packed with candid commentary by members of New York's vibrant theater community, *The Theater Will Rock* traces the rock musical's evolution over nearly fifty years, in popular productions such as *Hair*, *The Who's Tommy*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Rent*, and *Mamma Mia!*---and in notable flops such as *The Capeman*. "A much-needed study of the impact of rock music on the musical theater and its resulting challenges, complexities, failures, and successes. Anyone interested in Broadway will learn a great deal from this book."

---William Everett, author of *The Musical: A Research Guide to Musical Theatre*  
"This well-written account puts the highs and lows of producing staged rock musicals in New York City into perspective and is well worth reading for the depth of insight it provides."

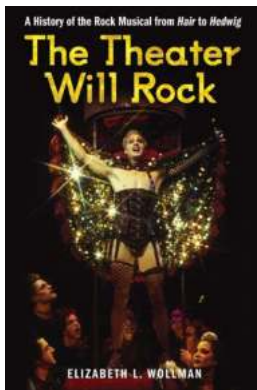
---*Studies in Musical Theatre*

Elizabeth L. Wollman is Assistant Professor of Music at Baruch College, City University of New York.



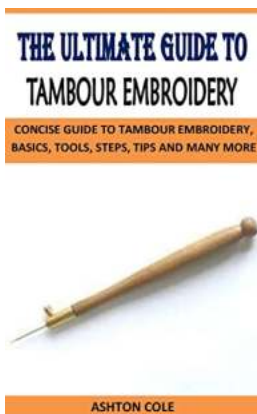
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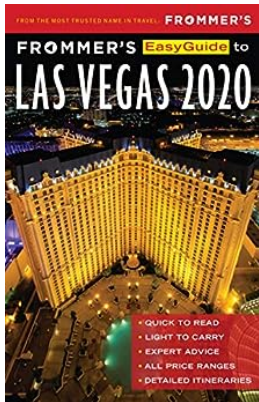
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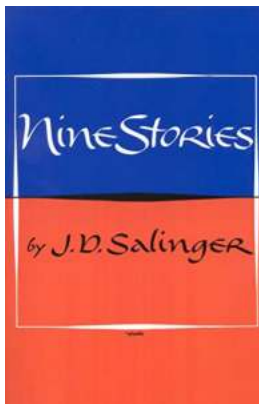
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