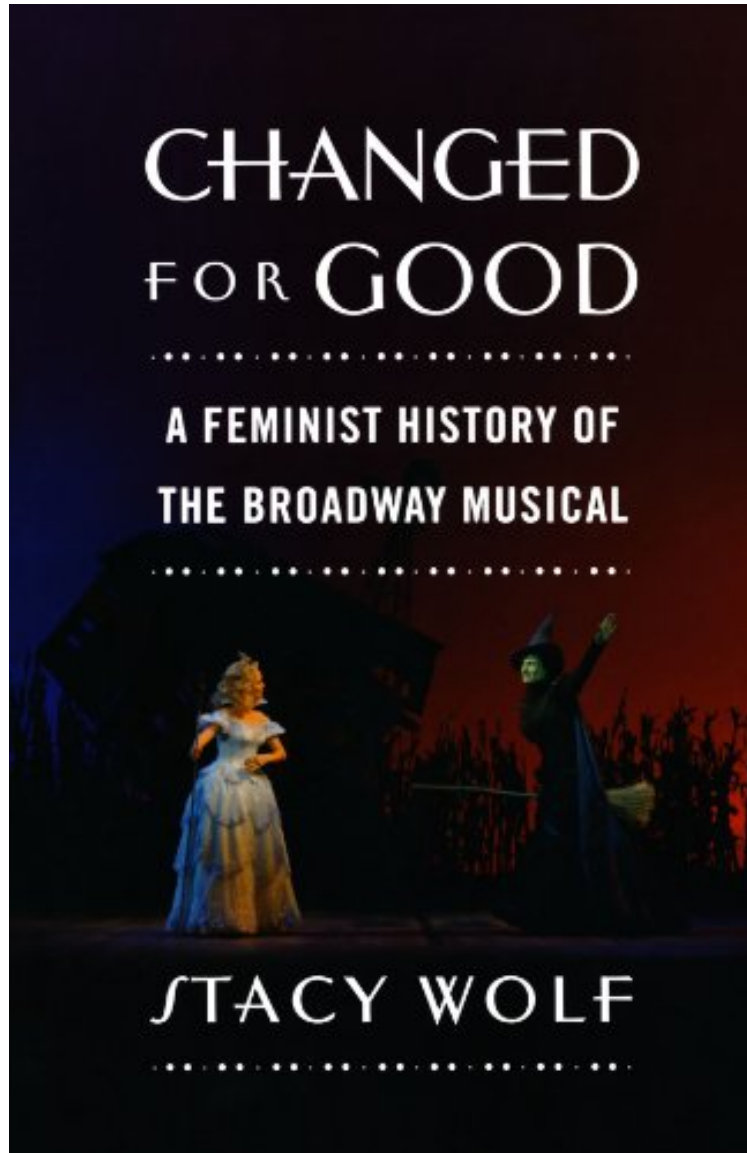


Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical

Stacy Wolf

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#631539 in Books Oxford University Press, USA 2011-07-07Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 6.10 x .90 x 9.00l, .93 #File Name: 0195378245320 pages | File size: 78.Mb

Stacy Wolf : Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A New Look at an Old FormBy jfwThis is essential reading for anyone interested in musical theatre, popular culture, and feminist and queer studies. Stacy Wolf combines a theatre critic's eye with a musicologist's ear to create a book that is at once insightful, provocative, and marvelously

entertaining. There is much to appreciate in this book, beginning with the fresh lens through which Wolf examines familiar and less familiar works of the American musical. The first five chapters explore notable musicals, applying a feminist reading while situating and scrutinizing the musicals within their historical context. There are fascinating connections accompanied by exceedingly smart (and accessible) analysis throughout, and one can almost hear Adelaide of *Guys and Dolls*, Anita of *West Side Story*, Charity Hope Valentine of *Sweet Charity*, and Cassie of *A Chorus Line* joining together to make a new and beautiful music. Most importantly, these chapters create a compelling case for the importance of the American musical as an essential component in theatre history and cultural studies. The final two chapters focus almost entirely on *Wicked*. Even non-fans of the musical will leave with a deeper understanding of the show's impact in the first decade of the 21st Century. In particular, Wolf offers an ethnography of *Wicked* fansites and online chat boards, and she forcefully shows the effects of the Internet global media on musical marketing and consumption. On a personal note, this book made me nostalgic for my own discovery of *My Fair Lady*, a cast recording my parents had long since stopped playing, and the blissful, yet solitary hours I spent listening to the record on our old HiFi. I can only imagine the pleasure of knowing that there were kids as passionate as I about Broadway shows (even if I didn't actually see one until I was well past puberty) and how this online community might share our musical theatre fantasies. I can only guess that I, too, would have been changed for good.

James F. Wilson
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. and a great overview of the history of feminism in the Broadway ...
By Customer
I am currently working on an MFA in Choreography and utilized this book as my chosen reading for a Body Politics course. I found the content provided compelling cases for thought, and a great overview of the history of feminism in the Broadway Musical. I will say, while she chooses great musicals to use as her case examples for each chapter....there are many others left out that may present a differing conclusion. Overall, I would recommend this book and found it to be helpful in my course of study.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book puts up a lot of different glances and ...
By Andrew K Edelen
This book puts up a lot of different glances and angles of the shows. Although difficult to read at points, it really makes you think.

From Adelaide in "*Guys and Dolls*" to Nina in "*In the Heights*" and Elphaba in "*Wicked*," female characters in Broadway musicals have belted and crooned their way into the American psyche. In this lively book, Stacy Wolf illuminates the women of American musical theatre - performers, creators, and characters -- from the start of the cold war to the present day, creating a new, feminist history of the genre. Moving from decade to decade, Wolf first highlights the assumptions that circulated about gender and sexuality at the time. She then looks at the leading musicals to stress the key aspects of the plays as they relate to women, and often finds overlooked moments of empowerment for female audience members. The musicals discussed here are among the most beloved in the canon-- "*West Side Story*," "*Cabaret*," "*A Chorus Line*," "*Phantom of the Opera*," and many others--with special emphasis on the blockbuster "*Wicked*." Along the way, Wolf demonstrates how the musical since the mid-1940s has actually been dominated by women--women onstage, women in the wings, and women offstage as spectators and fans.

"I found Stacy Wolf's book fascinating and surprising. It not only gave me a fresh perspective on the history of musical theatre, it revealed things to me about my own show I didn't know were there." --Stephen Schwartz
"This book is absolutely brilliant on many levels. Wolf manages, in one stroke, to place the musical's feminine fan base--long recognized but rarely valued--on the same critical plane that its gay male fan base has long occupied. This book truly defies gravity!" --Raymond Knapp, Professor of Musicology, UCLA, and author of *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* and *The American Musical and the Performance of Personal Identity*
"This beautifully written - and desperately needed - feminist history of the Broadway musical is filled with exciting insights, humor, and great affection for the American musical. It's an important and interesting book, one I will read again and again." --Elizabeth L. Wollman, Assistant Professor of Music, Baruch College, The City University of New York, and author of *The Theater Will Rock: A History of the Rock Musical, from "Hair" to "Hedwig"*
"A valuable work with a strong and captivating feminist point of view. Scholars and serious fans of theater as well as those concerned with women's issues and studies will especially enjoy its detail-filled and imaginative perspective." --Library Journal (Starred)
"Carefully researched, elegantly written, and methodologically innovative...A rewarding and thoroughly enjoyable book that should appeal to a broad range of readers, especially those interested in the intertwined histories of gender, sexuality, and popular entertainment." --The Journal of American History
"Impressively broad in scope...Wolf is a worthy champion of the feminist scholarly approach to musical theater...The book as a whole represents a microcosm of convincing overlaps between "gender and genre" (p. 20)." --Notes
"Reflect[s] a superior level of scholarship that is user-friendly and content-substantive, providing narratives that students will genuinely enjoy reading...[A] welcome addition to the ever-increasing literature on musical theater." --Journal of Music History Pedagogy
"A brave, forthright attempt to engage critically and imaginatively with aspects of American musical theatre that matter." --Text Presentation
"This book gives a fresh voice to Broadway's female writers, characters, performers, and audience members." --Journal of the Society for American Music
About the Author
Stacy Wolf is Professor of Theater and

Director of the Princeton Atelier, Lewis Center for the Arts, Princeton University.