

Abstract

In this paper I analyze the development of musical theatre through the social issues which pervaded society before and which continue to influence our society today.

This thesis explores the link between the musicals of the times and concurrent problems such as the world wars, economic depression and racism.

Choosing to base this analysis on the social problems of the United States, I tried to highlight the origins and development of the musical theatre art form by combining the influences which may have existed in humanity during the creation of each work.

This paper includes research from books, journals, encyclopedias, and websites which together show similar results, that all things in life travel cycles, and that tendencies and patterns in society will unlikely change fundamentally, although it is hoped that the society will nonetheless evolve for the better. Perhaps the most powerful phenomena which will help people to escape from their sociological problems are music and theatre.

Keywords: Musicals, Society, Culture.