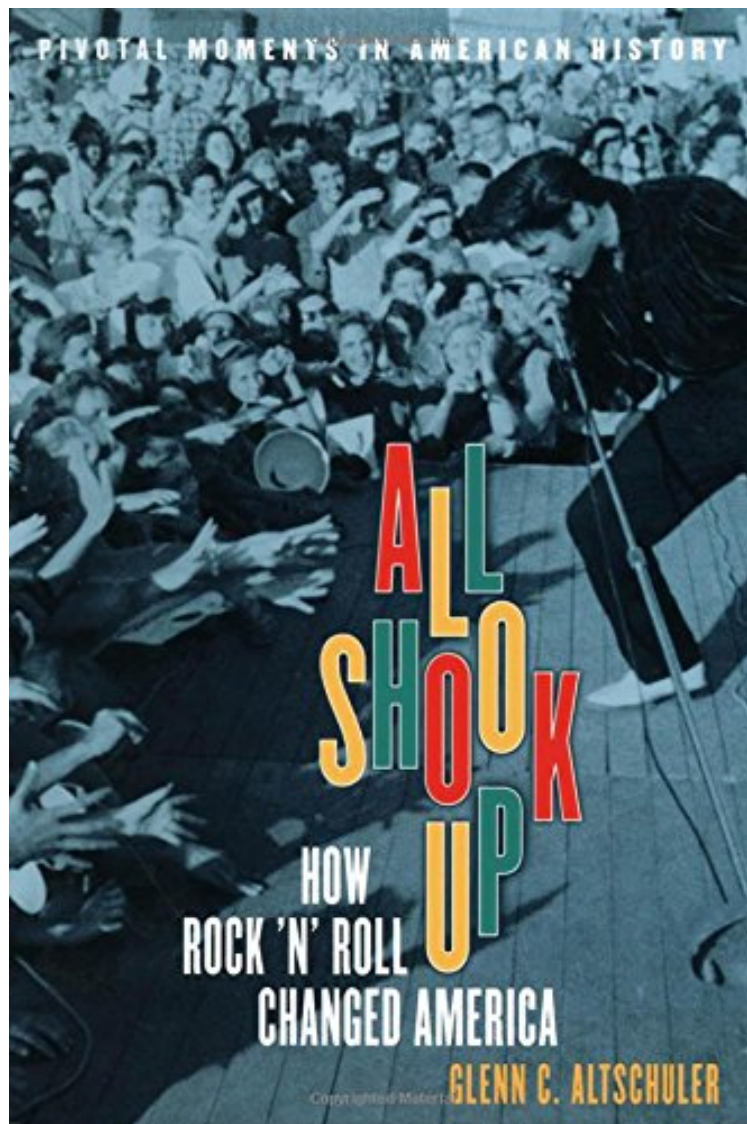


(Free download) All Shook Up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America (Pivotal Moments in American History)

All Shook Up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America (Pivotal Moments in American History)

Glenn C. Altschuler

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#100195 in Books Glenn C Altschuler 2004-12-09Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 6.10 x .80 x 9.20l, .83
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Glenn C. Altschuler : All Shook Up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America (Pivotal Moments in American History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised All Shook Up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America (Pivotal Moments in American History):

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Examining Change through the Lens of MusicBy Rebecca S

Dobrinski In *All Shook Up*, Glenn C. Altschuler examines the changing times of the 1950s through the lens of popular music. During the 1950s it seemed that nothing was truly safe from change. McCarthyism and anti-communism changed labor unions and politics. Suburban construction changed the demographics of cities. A tired seamstress on a bus changed how people used public transportation. The swivel of a man's hips and the twang of a guitar changed music forever. Altschuler focuses his chapters on rock n roll's effects on specific aspects of social culture in the 1950s. He describes how white kids listened to and danced to music performed by black artists. He also shows the different ways black artists either catered to white audiences or tried to assimilate into white culture. Coinciding with the publication of the Kinsey Report, rock n roll lyrics came under even more scrutiny, with parents and lawmakers believing that the music was responsible for teenagers' experimentation with sex. Rock n roll music was blamed for generational conflicts and teenage rebellion. Some people even linked the lure of rock n roll to communist conspiracies. However, I think Altschuler is giving too much responsibility to this single aspect of popular culture. While I believe in the power of music as well as the importance it plays in modern teenagers' search for identity, I hesitate to give music as much responsibility for social change as he does. By singling out rock n roll music and giving the genre such weight in affecting the lives of teenagers, the country should have experienced the highest rates of unmarried teenage pregnancy, a complete turn around into a communist country, high rates of incarceration and lawlessness, and a frenzied orgy in every small town. However, this did not happen in the 1950s. What did happen was that rock n roll played a role in an environment that was ripe for change. It is another item on the list that made the 1950s such a significant decade. Within the context of anti-communism, McCarthyism, the Interstate system, suburbanization, television, conspicuous consumption, the automobile, the Cold War, and technological advances, it is an important factor that would not be as significant without looking at the decade as a whole and the 1950s-1960s as an era. Music was a social lubricant and a personal identifier in many cases, but was not the catalyst for the social changes the US experienced in the 1960s. It set the groundwork for a musical revolution, but so did musical technology like the electric guitar. Altschuler defines rock n roll as strictly a teenage phenomenon, but music transcends generations. It may not have happened in every household, but I'm sure that some parents enjoyed rhythm and blues music or bought Elvis records. In his Epilogue, Altschuler chooses Bruce Springsteen as the heir apparent to the 1950s music, but then he explains that Woodstock was the natural progression for a generation that came of age on rock n roll. I fail to see the segue way between the 1950s and Woodstock or Woodstock and Springsteen. The Woodstock generation were simply too young to have been as affected by the advent of rock n roll.

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Discovered hidden meaning in song lyrics
By Ronald A. Delorenzo
Having been a teenager in the 50s, I found many sections of the book interesting. I especially enjoyed learning some of the hidden racial messages in songs I once thought to be simple love songs. I would recommend the book to anybody who lived during that time and/or who is interested in the background information of the early stars of Rock 'n' Roll and/or the politics behind the music business.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars
By THOMAS M MWOLOLOGood

The birth of rock 'n roll ignited a firestorm of controversy--one critic called it "musical riots put to a switchblade beat"--but if it generated much sound and fury, what, if anything, did it signify? As Glenn Altschuler reveals in *All Shook Up*, the rise of rock 'n roll--and the outraged reception to it--in fact can tell us a lot about the values of the United States in the 1950s, a decade that saw a great struggle for the control of popular culture. Altschuler shows, in particular, how rock's "switchblade beat" opened up wide fissures in American society along the fault-lines of family, sexuality, and race. For instance, the birth of rock coincided with the Civil Rights movement and brought "race music" into many white homes for the first time. Elvis freely credited blacks with originating the music he sang and some of the great early rockers were African American, most notably, Little Richard and Chuck Berry. In addition, rock celebrated romance and sex, rattled the reticent by pushing sexuality into the public arena, and mocked deferred gratification and the obsession with work of men in gray flannel suits. And it delighted in the separate world of the teenager and deepened the divide between the generations, helping teenagers differentiate themselves from others. Altschuler includes vivid biographical sketches of the great rock 'n rollers, including Elvis Presley, Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Buddy Holly--plus their white-bread doppelgangers such as Pat Boone. Rock 'n roll seemed to be everywhere during the decade, exhilarating, influential, and an outrage to those Americans intent on wishing away all forms of dissent and conflict. As vibrant as the music itself, *All Shook Up* reveals how rock 'n roll challenged and changed American culture and laid the foundation for the social upheaval of the sixties.