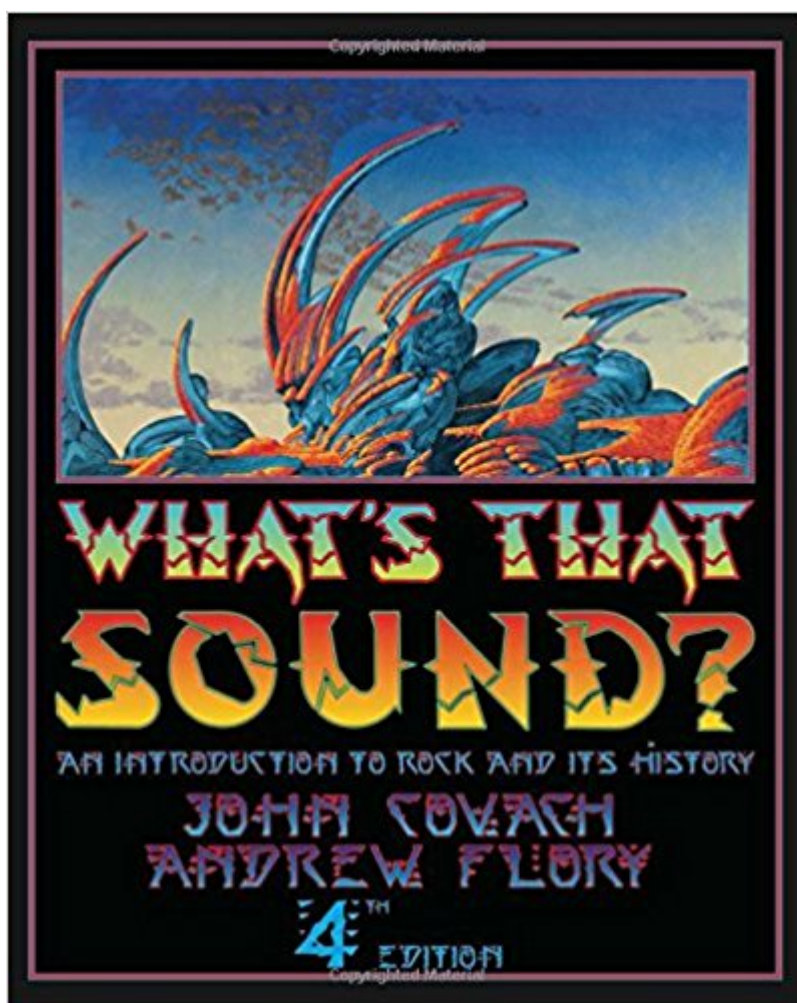


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# What's That Sound?: An Introduction To Rock And Its History (Fourth Edition)



## Synopsis

The music is front and center. The leading text in the market, *What's That Sound?* strengthens students' listening skills and deepens their understanding of rock, first and foremost, as music. New listening guides and author videos reinforce this classic strength, while also providing additional historical and cultural context that allows students to make connections between the music and the times.

## Book Information

Paperback: 640 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 4 edition (February 1, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0393937259

ISBN-13: 978-0393937251

Product Dimensions: 8.1 x 1 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 69 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,298 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Sheet Music & Scores > Forms & Genres > Popular #3 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Performing Arts > Music #8 in Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Movements & Periods

## Customer Reviews

John Covach (Professor of Music, University of Rochester and Eastman School of Music) received his Bachelor of Music (1983), Master of Music (1985), and PhD (1990) in music theory from the University of Michigan. He was also a Fulbright student in Vienna, Austria, in 1987-88. The recipient of several teaching awards and citations, Professor Covach teaches theory and analysis as well as courses in popular music. Since 1993, he has taught large lecture courses on rock at University of North Texas, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and University of Rochester, and has lectured across North America and Europe. He is coeditor of *Understanding Rock* (Oxford 1997), *American Rock and the Classical Music Tradition* (Harwood 2000), and *Institutions, Traditions, and American Popular Music* (Harwood 2000). His extensive writings on twentieth-century music, popular music, and the philosophy of music have appeared in numerous books and journals. Professor Covach also maintains an active career as a performing and recording musician. Andy Flory (Carleton College), a Motown expert, assisted John Covach at UNC

Chapel Hill in teaching one of the largest rock history courses in the world. Flory has witnessed the textbook's development from conception through two published editions and he has taught rock history to several hundred students in large lecture halls, online sections, and small sections at Carleton. He brings to this edition close consultation with Covach, classroom experience, emerging professional credentials, and youthful vigor.

Some people say rock music is just noise, which is an easy assumption without considering its evolution. John Covach's *What's that Sound? An Introduction to Rock and its History* 2nd Edition explores the history of the rock music genre from its roots to where it is today, while exploring many of the genres that have developed from it. Covach has earned a Bachelor of Music, a Master of Music, a Ph.D. in music theory, earned several teaching citations and awards, and has authored many textbooks, articles, and journals. These credentials make him an excellent subject matter expert. Rock music, with a reputation of pushing society's boundaries, has changed throughout its history and continues to do so. The book introduces the reader to a world of music prior to rock and roll and provides an elementary lesson in the composition of rock music. From that point, it proceeds in a chronological order through time to the late 1990's offering period specific examples of songs while emphasizing the influences of new music as it develops. Styles discussed include: early rock, British rock, Motown, Psychedelia, Disco, Punk, Rap, and Heavy Metal just to name a few. Though I do not like all styles discussed, after reading the book I definitely have a greater appreciation for the artistic value and history of all forms of music. The emergence of the rock genre originally targeted teenagers following WWII, and centered on themes important to them such as romance and dancing. As it progressed, so did the themes of the music to target politics, drugs, sex, violence, discrimination, and even societal norms. The focus of music would change from dancing, to the listening experience with the hippie aesthetic, and ultimately seemingly to merge the two. Prior to reading the textbook, I had no idea what the hippie aesthetic was or how it even related to music. But, I now understand the important impact it had on the development of rock and the composition of the music. Covach explained how the evolution of music formats from AM to FM radio fundamentally changed music, then yet again with the introduction of video and MTV. It was clear to me that rock music had evolved, and with digital formats; it still continues to do so today. What we consider to be controversial or rebellious certainly changes with time. Though extremely popular among the younger crowd, many people had issues with the sexually suggestive movements of Elvis and Madonna, yet their success only proves there was a market for the music at different times. Something as controversial as drug use led to gatherings such as the acid tests

and culminated in large concerts such as the Monterey Pop Festival and ultimately, Woodstock. I now understand that the vulgar and explicit lyrics of Rap music were often directly related to culture and the treatment of that demographic. Through reading the book, I gained a better understanding of how society pushed against rock, causing rock to push back against society. Most textbooks are dry and difficult to read, but I found this one to be easy and informative. I would recommend this book to anyone who has a love for rock or those that just appreciate the history and how music can move not only your body, but society as well. Movements such as Rock the Vote, Live Aid, Band Aid, and many other charitable acts can directly be attributed to Rock and roll. Though it might not always conform to what society views as being appropriate, it's clear that rock and roll will continue to change in form, and function.

I am in a class with the author of the text. He is very good and the book is well written and clear. I like a text with white space. Not jammed page after page with 10 point text.

Like others who reviewed, I also purchased this for a class. It's a good read - it basically provides a brief background on the culture and society of each decade before delving into various artists and the evolution of different genres. Most of the info can be found on the chapter outlines from the study guide website of the first edition of the book. The editions are similar and they both go into the early 2000s (I think early Eminem is probably the last artist they have). However, in the updated version, there are some interesting "Backstage passes" that give some interesting tidbits on concerts of major bands, and an interesting photo insert. As a music fan, most of the book was not new since it's pretty general, but it is nice to have all the info in one compact volume (It's kind of cool to have a book with all the major artists in the past hundred years).

excellent book and class, a lot of fun for college credit!

For school, great book

Wow, we received a practically brand new book for our rental and saved a good chunk of cash over buying new. Thanks for having this option!

I took an online course from a local community class over two summers ago, and did ALOT of reading from this book. At first, I worried that I wouldn't understand the technical jargon related to

music (I was an elementary education major; the summer course was called "History of Rock n Roll"). But the book is very clear in their definitions of musical terms (if a little stiff). However, I do feel that I learned so much about the history of music and how today's music has been influenced by those artists and musicians of the past. It's a very wordy tome, but if you are interested in the history of rock music, it's definitely worth the money.

Received product exactly as described and in a timely manner.

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