# ABSTRACT

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| **TITLE:** | Understanding Spring Awakening: The Treatment of Adolescents in 19th Century Germany |
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**ABSTRACT:** This research explores how a play written in 1981 is still relevant enough in our world today to have been adapted into a Tony Award-winning stage musical in 2006. Initial research was conducted on the everyday lives of German teenagers, including topics of child-adult relationships, education, and childhood sexuality. By comparing various translations of the original Frank Wedekind script to the modern rock musical adapted by Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater, the question of relevance is answered, especially in terms of handling sexual education. The second part of this research was the actual application of the information in the rehearsal process and in the outcome of the performance. The use of the folk rock score is used to let the audience into the character's heads and to further the generational gap between the children and adults, highlighting the lack of understanding on either side. The adaptation of Wedekind's play includes issues initially present in the script but also the issues of rape and child abuse.