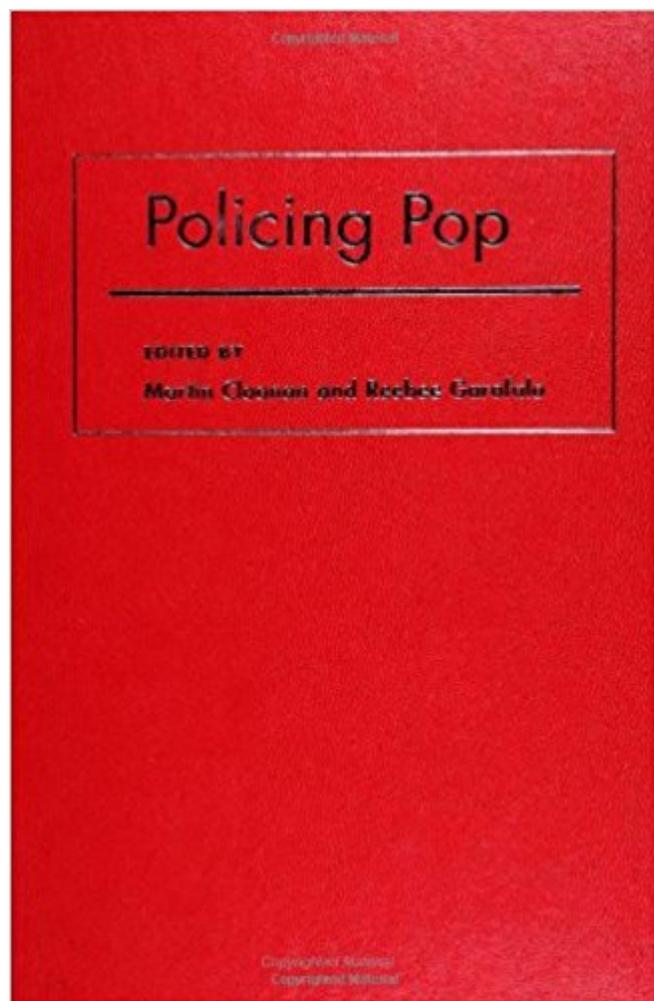


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Policing Pop (Sound Matters)



Synopsis

Fans of popular music tend to agree on one thing: popular music is a bellweather of an individual's political and cultural values. In the USA, for example, one cannot think of the counterculture apart from its music. For that reason, in virtually every country in the world, some group identifies popular music as a source of potential danger and wants to regulate it. This work looks into the many ways in which popular music and artists around the world are subjected to censorship, ranging from state control and repression to the efforts of special interest or religious groups to limit expression. The essays collected here focus on the forms of censorship as well as specific instances of how the state and other agencies have attempted to restrict the types of music produced, recorded and performed within a culture. Several show how even unsuccessful attempts to exert the power of the state can cause artists to self-censor. Others point to material that taxes even the most liberal defenders of free speech.

Book Information

Series: Sound Matters

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Temple University Press; 1 edition (January 6, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1566399904

ISBN-13: 978-1566399906

Product Dimensions: 7 x 1.2 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #728,292 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Dance #311 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Censorship #2589 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Social Services & Welfare

Customer Reviews

"All in all, Policing Pop takes the reader on quite a ride. Its contributing authors include, among others, musicologists, sociologists, and law professors who offer intellectually rewarding insights and eloquent arguments for the political and cultural importance of popular music, something with which even young people would agree, if they could be enticed to read them."-Popular Music and Society "Policing Pop works well as a collection that reinforces the common themes of music

regulation and practice, and is an effective teaching text for popular music and cultural studies."-Perfect Beat "This fascinating, albeit at times disturbing, read will make you nod in agreement or sigh in disbelief at the measures people have taken to control popular music."-Multicultural Review "Music censorship! What censorship? Policing Pop introduces the reader to the underlying mechanisms of music censorship and its effects on individuals and society in different parts of the world. Policing Pop will inspire and challenge further dissemination and the unveiling of appalling cases as well as concealed causes for censorship in this hitherto disregarded area of academic research."-Marie Korpe, Executive Director, Freemuse (Freedom of Musical Expression), The World Forum on Music & Censorship "Policing Pop not only provides a fascinating survey of the ways in which pop has been censored and restricted, it also makes an eloquent argument for the political and social importance of popular music. This book serves as a rich reminder of how songs can make the powerful nervous and the powerless bold."-John Street, University of East Anglia

The sounds of surveillance --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

While "Policing Pop" does provide some insight into the behind the scenes policing/censoring that occurs at record labels, overall the book is pretty weak. Cloonan's "definition" of what actually constitutes policing/censorship is at best subjective. The pieces dealing with the internet and future of online music feel dated. The book attempts to tackle censorship on a global scale, but would be better served if it had focused on a single region. After reading the book you come away with a vague feeling about the nature of censorship and policing in various countries in relation to pop music. Because of this, a great deal of the conclusions are over generalized so that they apply globally. There must be better books out there.

The censorship of music is an enormous subject, and to cover the entire world in less than 250 pages requires a great deal of selectivity. Nevertheless, this is an excellent introduction to the subject for the general reader. As might be expected it has a strong American bias, but it includes both Eastern Europe and China. If there is one major criticism to be made of the book it is that it lacks an index. There is also little in the way of background; for a project such as this, some historical context is surely necessary. Although there are three sections, broadly speaking there are two types of censorship discussed herein: the political and the regulation of obscenity. There is of course a certain amount of overlap, sometimes a great deal, but one should always draw a

distinction between records or any art form produced principally to shock or offend non-fans, and those which genuinely have something to say.

Policing Pop opens with a very recent account of censorship in America, relating to our "post-9/11" world. The book goes through many great points on the censorship of music. The insight Martin Cloonan gives allows the reader to understand the current climate of music censorship here and abroad. Unlike the other review of this book on , I do not feel this book to be "weak" or weak for that matter. I would recommend this book to anyone with a love for the freedom of speech through music.

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