

Manufacturing Rebellion, Censorship in Music

Aaron Trammell

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Abstract

As someone who actively self-identifies against the form of cinema, I sure write a lot about it. I saw Pirate Radio last Thursday and it was great!

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As someone who actively self-identifies against the form of cinema, I sure write a lot about it. I saw *Pirate Radio* last Thursday and it was great! Here's the plot: Set in 1966, a group of British DJs are forced to the high seas to broadcast rock and roll music in a country where the airwaves are increasingly censored. In this context of surveillance and control, every time a record needle set into a groove, it was **sexy**. This got me thinking about context – music is always contextualized, and I suspect that when it fits within a drab or unappealing context, it becomes less glamorous.

So flash back, forward, or sideways into any example of rebellious music. Is the music itself glamorous, or is it the context? Rebellion has always been a central concept to the mythos of rock and roll, and often contextualized within ideas of censorship. Be it issues of race, class, gender, government, geography, technology, or mobility; the history of rock is littered with examples of 'rebel' musicians overcoming whatever forces of censorship attempt to limit and control their influence. This is a history that I identify with, and a mythology which I love. I worry however, that it has been largely staged, appropriated, and contextualized, in such a way that the industries driving it remain invisible.

Now, more than ever before, it has become clear that the theme of rock and roll rebellion has become moot – even deceptive. Rebellion has never been an artistic production, instead it has always been critical – subject to the contexts and biases of music critics and anthologies. If this seems pessimistic, that is because it is a challenge; who are the true rock and roll 'rebels,' and do they still make music?

AT



<https://youtu.be/39tpRQECfDY>

