

Disclosing Music Lyrics Vs. Censorship

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Although the intolerance inherent in censorship must not be tolerated, record companies can help parents govern what their children are exposed to.

Requiring an album to bear a ratings label, akin to the PG or R for movies, is not only unwanted by artists but also is unneeded by parents. The lyrics for an album's songs can usually fit on the album cover, and they often are printed there already.

Recording companies should encourage this practice or at least make lyric sheets available free in music stores.

Musicians can continue to write whatever they please. And without having to buy and listen to the entire album and try to decipher the often garbled words, parents can simply read the lyrics. No outsiders need to prejudge the material and assign a rating.

Editor's Note: Because most albums now [at that time] sold are in small formats such as CD or audio cassette, lyrics often cannot be printed on the outside. Some CDs and cassettes offer lyrics printed on folded sheets or in booklets inside the container.