



Robert Corn-Revere Guest-Blogging About "The Mind of the Censor and the Eye of the Beholder"

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November 2, 2021

I'm delighted to report that [Robert Corn-Revere](#), one of the leading media lawyers in the country, will be guest-blogging this Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday about his new book, *The Mind of the Censor and the Eye of the Beholder: The First Amendment and the Censor's Dilemma*; the posts will start with just one of the book's subjects, Anthony Comstock, and will later turn to how his arguments are being redeployed in today's censorship debates. (The link above will take you to the Cambridge site, where you can preorder the book, which should be released Thursday; you can use the code CORN21 for a 20% discount.) Here's the publisher's summary of the book, and the jacket blurbs:

Beginning in the nineteenth century with Anthony Comstock, America's 'censor in chief,' *The Mind of the Censor and the Eye of the Beholder* explores how censors operate and why they wore out their welcome in society at large. This book explains how the same tactics were tried and eventually failed in the twentieth century, with efforts to censor music, comic books, television, and other forms of popular entertainment. The historic examples illustrate not just the mindset and tactics of censors, but why they are the ultimate counterculture warriors and why, in free societies, censors never occupy the moral high ground. This book is for anyone who wants to know more about why freedom of speech is important and how protections for free expression became part of the American identity.

'Corn-Revere's extraordinary *The Mind of the Censor and the Eye of the Beholder* offers a riveting review and astute analysis of the evolution of free expression—and censorship of free speech—in the US through the eras of Anthony Comstock, 'offensive' comic books, porn rock,

the FCC's regulation of the 'vast wasteland,' fleeting expletives, and the indecency wars of the twenty-first century. Corn-Revere brings to life the absurdities of censorship and the dangers such views pose to American liberty and democracy. This original work is informative, insightful, and often wildly entertaining.' Geoffrey R. Stone, Professor of Law, University of Chicago and author of *Sex and the Constitution* (2017)

'As a longtime student and advocate of free speech, it is a rare joy to encounter a new work that so greatly enhances my understanding and appreciation of this precious freedom, providing renewed encouragement and ammunition for continuing the never-ending efforts that are required to resist constant censorial pressures. Regardless of how much or how little you know or care about free speech when you begin this book, you will be enlightened, inspired, and galvanized by every page!' Nadine Strossen, immediate past President, American Civil Liberties Union, and author of *HATE: Why We Should Resist It with Free Speech, Not Censorship* (2018)

'Bob Corn-Revere has written a book of stunning originality and importance. By tracing the efforts at censorship in American history, Corn-Revere shows us the temptations for censorship exist in every generation. Inevitably, the censors self-righteously think that they are doing good for society by stopping harmful speech. And inevitably, in hindsight, we realize that the efforts at censorship were a huge mistake. Corn-Revere's engagingly written book provides a powerful defense of freedom of speech and of freedom of thought.' Erwin Chemerinsky, Dean and Jesse H. Choper Distinguished Professor of Law, University of California, Berkeley School of Law

'Bob Corn-Revere is my friend and I love this book. I'm not saying I love this book because Bob's my friend—he's my friend because I love this book. A lot of what's good about Bob is in this book. It tells great stories. It's smart, funny, knowledgeable, honest, freedom-loving, and works for truth, justice, and the American way. This book will prove to you that Bob is as groovy as Superman, without the stupid cape. Shit, piss, fuck, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker, tits! Read it.' Penn Jillette, the taller, louder half of Penn & Teller

'Somebody once said: 'Censorship is the strongest drive in human nature; sex is a weak second.' Everybody who wants to get a better understanding of this powerful force of human nature should read Corn-Revere's brilliant book. It's funny, well written, and is a superb guide to the mechanisms of censorship in the Land of the Free. Corn-Revere's insightful exploration and deconstruction of the censor's mind will equip the reader to see through the rhetorical fog of arguments for shutting down unpopular speech. It's the best available medicine against any pandemic of censorship.' Flemming Rose, Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute and former editor at *Jyllands-Posten*

'Philosophy, psychology, sociology, and history set the backdrop for an arresting narrative and a profound exploration of the law of free speech. The result is a thought-provoking book destined to have a long shelf life and an even longer digital one. A momentous contribution to First

Amendment literature!' Ronald K. L. Collins, co-author of *We Must Not Be Afraid to Be Free* and *The Trials of Lenny Bruce*

'We would all do well to learn about the nature of censorship, and Robert Corn-Revere's new book is a most valuable step in that direction.' Floyd Abrams, Founding Sponsor, The Floyd Abrams Institute for Free Expression at Yale Law School (from the Foreword to the book)