

# 1st Amendment rights upheld on Zappa's 'Prevention' LP

By Chris McCubbin  
Staff Reporter

## Frank Zappa, "Frank Zappa Meets The Mothers of Prevention," Barking Pumpkin

Frank Zappa does not want the government to tell him what to play on his records. Zappa does not want the government to tell him what he can't put on his records. Zappa does not want the government telling people not

the '60s. "Yo Cats" is a concerted effort on Zappa's part to get sued out of existence by the musician's union. Both of these cuts are as funny and nasty as anything on Zappa's classic "You Are What You Is."

But, "Porn Wars" is the album's main event.

Talk about your supergroups! This cut features the voices of U.S. senators John Danforth (R-Mo.), Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.), Paul Trible (R-Va.) Paula Hawkins (R-Fla.), J. J. Exon (D-Neb.), Slade Gorton (R-Wash.), Albert Gore (D-Tenn.), his wife, Tipper Gore, and the Rev. Jeff Ling reading the lyrics of "Golden Showers" by The Mentors. Also present are Zappa and his children Moon and Dweezil.

You might remember a couple of months ago a group of senators' wives calling themselves the Parents Music Resource Center got their husbands to hold a genuine full-fledged Senate hearing on rock'n'roll, and Zappa was a witness. What Zappa's done now is to take the recorded transcript of the hearing and use a synthesizer to turn it into an aural vision of hell. Over slow, scary, electronic music, Zappa plays over and over, at various speeds, remarks of those senators, which he obviously considers dangerous and stupid.

Sen. Hawkins, slowed down to sound like Linda Blair, intones, "Fire and chains and other objectionable tools of gratification in some twisted minds."

"I will drive my love inside you," Rev. Ling solemnly quotes, and some voice from Zappa's studio says "Yeah!"

Sen. Hollings explains what "outrageous filth" is, as an electric pig snorts in the background.

So what did Nebraska Sen. Exon

say? I'm not sure, mostly they sound alike to me. Just for the record, though, in a recent interview with Spin magazine, Zappa said, "I thought Exon was OK, a rational guy."

What Zappa's getting at with all this is that he thinks letting the government have a voice in America's aesthetic choices for any reason is leaving the door open for totalitarianism.

He stops in the middle of "Porn Wars" to explain how he feels, and to drive the point home harder he uses the most obnoxious Amos'n'Andy voice imaginable: "Les face it, peoples, ugly as ah mite be, I am yo' fuchur. Ain' tha' rite, sistah Beulah? Uh-hum. Uh, oh yeah! Tha's rite!"

Zappa's testimonials are the weakest parts of "Porn Wars." He sounds so intelligent, so calm, so sincere, such a nice man. Instead of saying, "Hey kids, take a look at what these obnoxious old squares are trying to do to your music," the whole thing comes off sounding like "St. Frank versus the Dragon Ladies."

It's pointless to try to rate this album. The songs are cute, but few are going to pay \$7.50 for them. If anyone buys "Frank Zappa Meets The Mothers of Prevention" it will be because "Porn Wars" is tremendously effective libertarian propaganda, the "Silent Scream" of rock'n'roll.

If you are an aging hippy, an old or new liberal, or just plain old-fashioned anti-establishment, buy this album. If you are made uneasy by the government poking around in your record collection, check out "Porn Wars." You'll be a lot more uneasy afterward.

Review copy courtesy of Dirt Cheap Records.

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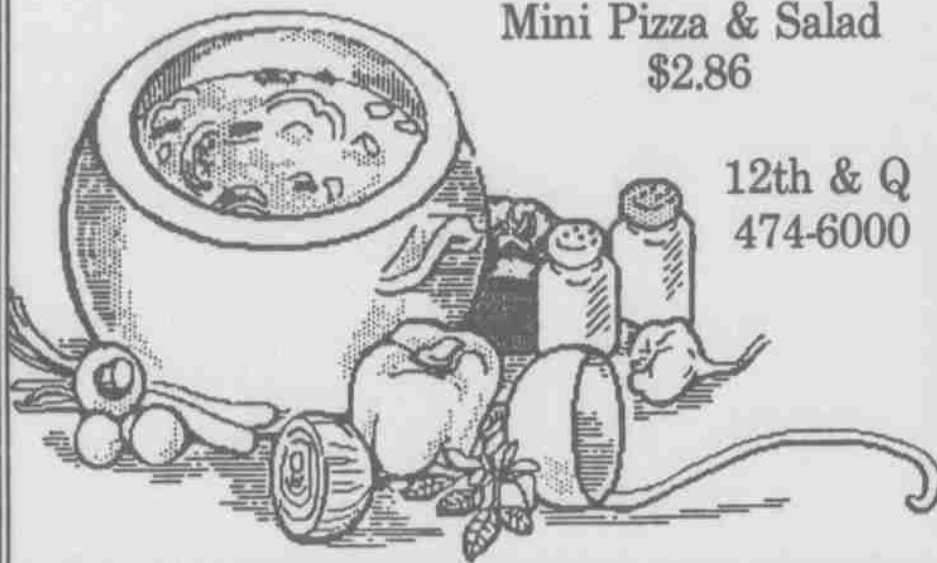
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