



## Offensive Lyrics Policy

Even in the 1700's many considered music offensive. It's hard to believe that classical music would offend anyone, but when composers began using passages from the bible for lyrics to music that was to be played outside the church, there were major consequences to be paid. Jeremy Collier, a seventeenth-century Englishman, thought that music was "almost as dangerous as gunpowder" and might require "looking after no less than the press". In the 50's Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Little Richard were considered scandalous.

*"To conservative adults in the 50's, the new music of the day appeared to be an expression of hostile, rebellious youth. To his enthusiastic audience, Presley's spontaneous dancing was a visual counterpart to the feelings which his singing inspired" (Belz, 1969).*

*"With its black roots, its earthy, sexual or rebellious lyrics, and its exuberant acceptance by youth, rock and roll has long been under attack by the established world of adults. No other form of culture, and its artists, has met with such extensive hostility" (Martin and Segrave, 1988).*

Pop music has and always will be filled with innuendo and blatant suggestions of sex. When the Rolling Stones appeared on the Ed Sullivan show, they had to change the lyric of their song: *"Let's spend the night together"* to a milder *"Let's spend some time together"*. In the 60's the Beach Boys were admiring women who kept their boyfriends *"warm at night"*. The song *"Louie Louie"* by the Kingsmen was banned from radio Stations and their record burned because the lyrics were thought to be dirty, though unrecognizable. In fact, it was about a man going to sea and how he will miss a girl: *"Fine little girl waits for me, Catch a ship across the sea, Sail that ship about, all alone, Never know if I make it home"* and so on....

In the 70's, K.C. and the Sunshine band sang *"Do a little dance, make a little love, get down tonight"* and *"That's the way, uh huh, uh huh, I like it"*. And don't forget *"Shake, shake, shake your booty!"* That music seems pretty innocent by today's standards. The fact remains that Popular (or Pop) music continues to be filled with sexuality and rebellion.

On a side note, if you want to hear some EXTREMELY sexual lyrics, listen to some classic country music from the 70's. Conway Twitty will make you blush – *"I'd Love to Lay You Down"*, *"Heavens Just a Sin Away"*, *"Afternoon Delight"*, *"I Want to Kiss You All Over"* were just a few of the titles from the 'innocent' days of the past.

## Offensive Lyrics Policy Continued

Ok, that's enough of the history lesson. It's just a fact that a lot of popular music (past and present) is chock full of suggestive lyrics. It will therefore, always inevitably offend someone. Even when the song is innocent and contains no sexual suggestion, if it is sang suggestively, it could offend. Never has this been more the case than with today's Hip Hop/Rap/R&B music. I play Top 40 music regularly, Even with headphones, I can't understand the lyrics to most of the songs on the top 40 charts. But, I want you to know that I do my very best to screen new music as it comes out and I keep notes on the ones that I feel are questionable.

We at DJ Wes' Mobile DJ Service do not want to offend anyone by playing music that is inappropriate. We rely on our experience and common sense to determine what is and isn't appropriate. But we are not infallible. We also want to play music that will create a busy and fun dance floor. The fact is, a large percentage of people who like to dance, like to dance to top 40 music and much of that music is suggestive. Quite often guests have requested the music we play. We have a Top 200 nationally requested song list that we use as a tool that helps us with our shows. This list has the songs that people most want to dance to. It also contains songs that could offend some people. Some songs contain the words or phrases such as "*Butt*" "*Make love*" "*Bend over*", Etc. One of the raunchiest lyrics you'll ever hear is from the Grease movie soundtrack song "*Greased Lightning*". If you don't know what I am referring to, listen to the song closely (you may even own the soundtrack) or simply look up the lyrics online.

At DJ Wes' Mobile DJ Service events, all of our Top 40 songs are the **radio edits**. But you probably know as well as I do that even the radio edits push the boundaries. We try not to play music that we feel is a promotion of sex, drugs or violence. With that being said, please remember that even Steve Miller wrote the classic rock song called "*The Joker*" with the lyric "*I'm a joker, I'm a smoker, I'm a midnight toker*". This is an example of a song we *might* play. On the other hand – "*Cocaine*" by Eric Clapton is a song I *doubt* I would play.

Whenever there is a complaint or concern, we prefer that our paying client set the standard for what music is appropriate to play and what is not.

School dances bring this concern to a whole new level. Along with questionable songs, there is the issue of 'dirty dancing'. I want to make it clear that DJ Wes' Mobile DJ Service should NOT be held responsible for curtailing this activity. That responsibility lies with the chaperones.

On the next page is a place for you to list any 'No Play' songs. It is my goal to create a fun, party atmosphere without offending anyone. This can only be done through good communication. So, please take the time to list any 'No Play' songs if this issue is a concern.

Respectfully,

Wesley L. Flint  
DJ Wes' Mobile DJ Service

