

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

POLITICAL SCIENCE & MUSIC 610 SENIOR PROJECT

Daniel Honeycutt

**“We Must Not Allow Chaos to Ferment as it Chooses:”
Assessing the Causes, Methods, and Effects of Music Censorship
in the Soviet Union during the Cold War**

Departments *of* Political Science and Music



14 April 2014

Daniel Honeycutt

**“We Must Not Allow Chaos to Ferment as it Chooses:”
Assessing the Causes, Methods, and Effects of Music Censorship
in the Soviet Union during the Cold War**

Submitted to the Department of Political Science of Allegheny College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

I hereby recognize and pledge to fulfill my responsibilities as defined in the Honor Code and to maintain the integrity of both myself and the College community as a whole.

Daniel Honeycutt

Approved by:

Brian Harward

Jennifer Dearden

Acknowledgments

This project would not have been possible without my readers, professors Jennifer Dearden and Brian Harward, who have graciously worked with me to make the topic fulfill the requirements for two very different majors. They have been everything I could ask for and more as teachers, academic advisers, and mentors. My junior seminar professors, Lowell Hepler and Shanna Kirschner, also did much to help lay the groundwork for this interdisciplinary comp. I must also thank Dr. John Edward Hasse for first opening my eyes to the world of music under repressive regimes during my time as an intern for the Smithsonian Institution. I owe a very sincere thanks to all of you, along with every other political science and music professor I have had at Allegheny, for preparing me to undertake a project of this magnitude.

I would not have made it through this process if it was not for the tremendous support that I have received from my friends and family along the way. To “the guys,” thanks for putting up with my stress, keeping me grounded, and reminding me that there's always next year. To my family, thanks for understanding when I would disappear into my room for days at a time while home on breaks. But more importantly, thank you for always supporting me in everything that I have ever done and am yet to do.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	6
<u>Chapter I: Literature Review.....</u>	8
A. Why Freedom of Speech Matters.....	8
B. Why censorship happens.....	11
C. How censorship is employed.....	15
D. The effects of censorship.....	16
<u>Chapter II: Background.....</u>	19
A. Communism and the Soviet Union.....	19
B. The Origins of the Cold War.....	20
C. Music in the Soviet Union, 1917-1945.....	21
1. Classical.....	22
2. Jazz.....	26
<u>Chapter III: Classical Music.....</u>	31
A. Why it was censored.....	31
B. How it was censored.....	42
C. The effects of censorship.....	45
<u>Chapter IV: Jazz.....</u>	51
A. Why it was censored.....	51
B. How it was censored.....	54
C. The effects of censorship.....	57
<u>Chapter V: Rock and Roll.....</u>	60
A. Why it was censored.....	62
B. How it was censored.....	65
C. The effects of censorship.....	67
D. The Soviet Union collapses.....	70
Conclusion.....	72
Bibliography.....	80

Abstract

This project is a descriptive study of music censorship in the Soviet Union (USSR) during the Cold War era (1945-1991). It explains and compares the Soviet government's efforts to censor and control classical music, jazz, and rock and roll, with a chapter on each genre detailing why, how, and to what effect the censorship occurred. The study emphasizes that the censorship occurred within the framework of the massive geopolitical competition of the Cold War, and finds that Soviet Union's conflict with Western capitalism was indeed a key factor in explaining the regime's cultural policies. A variety of censorship methods were used on music, ranging from authoritarian tactics, like arrests and instrument confiscation, to persuasive and administrative means, such as propaganda and bureaucratic control.

Assessing the effects of the Soviet government's censorship presents a mixed message: while it could often effectively control the music that was composed, publicly performed, and sold on records, the government could never entirely remove Western influence from music and society as a whole. Additionally, its censorship of jazz and rock helped give the genres more political power than they originally possessed via their inherent qualities. Jazz and rock are even credited with playing a significant role in dismantling the Soviet Union, since they helped bring Western culture as a whole behind the Iron Curtain.

Introduction

The quote that is used in the title of this project, “we must not allow chaos to ferment as it chooses,” comes from Vladimir Lenin, the father of Soviet Communism. As the first leader of the Soviet Union, he presided over the development of a complex, ideological, and often brutal regime that was not afraid to assert its authority over its own citizens, even at great costs to the very people it aimed to protect. Lenin and his predecessor, Joseph Stalin, lead the Soviet Union through the trials of early 20th century, where it emerged from two brutal World Wars as an immense global power. The Cold War then saw the regime engage in an expensive and dangerous nuclear arms race with the United States.

The “chaos” that Lenin was referring to here, however, does not involve a traditional battlefield. This was the social struggle that took place within the Soviet Union, where Western culture became a powerful foe against authoritarianism, and perhaps an even more effective weapon than the nuclear bomb. Lenin’s goal of overcoming chaos by defeating this political intrusion would remain out of reach for every Soviet leader that followed him.

The story of music in the Soviet Union during the Cold War era is a fascinating and important part of this cultural conflict. This project analyzes Soviet music censorship from 1945 to 1991 and asks the following questions:

- 1) Why was music censored?
- 2) How was it censored?
- 3) What effects did the censorship have?

In answering the last question, I investigate the counter-intuitive argument that the government's attempts to censor music backfired by giving it an anti-authoritarian political meaning that it

would not have had otherwise. Ultimately, was it in the best interest of the Soviet government to censor music during the Cold War?

To assess the causes, methods, and effects of music censorship, I describe the treatment of three musical genres that were popular in the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War era: classical, jazz, and rock and roll. It should be noted that this study encompasses music that is both domestic and foreign to the USSR, since the two sources are, in many ways, nearly inseparable due to the massive influence that Western ideas had on Soviet music. This rings especially true in the cases of American-born jazz and rock and roll.

The study begins with literature review that discusses the importance of free speech in fueling creativity and stabilizing society, since the study will explore a situation where that freedom is stifled. The literature review then describes the different causes, methods, and effects of censorship in general. Next, a contextual chapter explains the ideology and origins of the Soviet government and provides a brief history of Soviet music censorship before the Cold War. The case study will then begin by exploring the different justifications, methods, and effects of music censorship in the Soviet Union from 1945 to 1991 on a genre-by-genre basis. A concluding chapter then compares music censorship between the genres and asks if music censorship was a good strategy for the Soviet government to undertake.

Chapter I: Literature Review

Why Freedom of Speech Matters

The stakes of this study are evident in the importance of speech in society. Examining the freedom, or lack thereof, for everyday people to exchange ideas with their cohorts and superiors through speech and art will help explain what happened when that freedom was curbed in the Soviet Union. We can begin by looking at some of the most famous justifications for the protection of free speech in societies, which are outlined by Kent Greenawalt, a Columbia Law professor, in a paper simply titled “Free Speech Justifications.” The first of these, “truth discovery,” says that freedom of speech is important because it allows a market of ideas to form. The search for “truth” in that market ensures progress because only the ideas that are worthwhile and beneficial to society will advance (128-30).

Some of the most eloquent and famous explanations of this reasoning can be found in opinions written by U.S. Supreme Court Justices. One of these Justices, Oliver Wendell Holmes, argued for an aggressive defense of free speech in his dissenting opinion in *Abrams v. U.S.* (1919):

When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes can be safely carried out. (Ducat 786)

Holmes' ideas are shared by Justice Louis Brandeis' concurring opinion in *Whitney v. California* (1927). Speaking of America's founding fathers, he writes that

they believed that freedom to think as you will and speak as you think are means indispensable to the discovery and spread of truth; that without free speech and assembly discussion would be futile; that with them, discussion affords ordinarily adequate protection against the dissemination of noxious doctrine. (Ibid.788)

Holmes and Brandeis argue that society will automatically advance if a free marketplace of ideas is allowed to thrive. Through knowledge, communication, and logic, people will naturally reach the “truth” that they seek, and the world will always move towards perfection so long as that market is not impeded.

Numerous criticisms can be levied against the “truth discovery” argument for free speech. Greenawalt notes that markets are not nearly as perfect as many believe them to be, so it cannot be assumed that people will automatically find the truth among numerous ideas even if there is actually a single objective truth in existence (132). Basically, well-informed and logical people still often disagree, and there might not even be a right answer. Another argument that he raises, which pertains more specifically to this study, says that it is not a given fact that anything that impedes the marketplace of ideas (i.e. a government) will stifle the search for truth. In fact, a government can actually promote truth with tailored limitations of speech, as the U.S. government was able to do by regulating cigarette advertising (Ibid. 138).

A second justification for free speech in society is that it helps ensure “social stability” by providing a forum for “competing interests and desires” to be compromised. This “interest accommodation” view, as Greenawalt calls it, holds that free speech allows society to automatically reach conclusions in a similar marketplace of ideas as was discussed above. However, it has the important caveat that there is usually not a clear “right” or “wrong” answer to issues, meaning that the real value in allowing free speech lies in its ability to keep the peace

among citizen's relationships with each other and even their government (Greenawalt 141).

Numerous justifications for free speech directly involve the pitfalls of authoritarian governments that are not unlike the Soviet Union. One of these justifications is that speech can hinder abuses of authority by exposing their occurrence and deterring abuses from happening in the first place (Ibid. 142). Columbia Law professor Vincent Blasi describes this phenomenon as “checking power.” Blasi says that the impact of protests and political scandals, such as the Vietnam anti-war movement and the Watergate scandal's exposure of the Nixon Administration's dirty politics, would not have been possible without the United States Constitution's First Amendment. Blasi also says that the First Amendment's guarantees of free speech, a free press, and freedom to assemble actually keep the government from overstepping its constitutional bounds in the first place, and that this was the very intent of the Amendment's framers (527).

A citizenry without this “checking power,” he argues, may be subject to extreme hardship from their governments, which are particularly dangerous because of their “monopoly” on “legitimized violence.” Unlike a private individual or group of individuals, governments can fine, jail, and even kill if they go unchecked (Ibid. 539). Governments tend to be, after all, only accountable to themselves, and the only line of defense against its actions that citizens have is the ability to remove their leaders from office by voting, an independent court system within the governing framework, or some form of international intervention.

The theories on the importance of free speech absolutely encompass art, so they have a great bearing on music as well. Philosopher Horace Kallen writes of the necessarily free spirit of effective artists that “The maker or 'creative artist' goes his own way, independent and uncoercible, not to be tamed to society's uses, not to be harnessed in social rule.” Given this, true

creativity can only flourish under democracy, where art is subject only to a marketplace of ideas rather than oppression (Kallen 3-4).

Music in the Soviet Union certainly fits into this discussion because the Soviet people were not afforded a clear and vibrant protection similar to the First Amendment during the Cold War era. Without this, how could they hope to advance society through creating and criticizing new ideas? How could a citizen point out and hope to cure a wrong-doing by the authoritarian regime? Specifically, what happened if music was interpreted as being critical of the government or dangerous to society? Indeed, the realities of political life in the USSR exemplified just how important the freedoms of the First Amendment are. Given this importance, the next section will examine how limitations on free speech tend to be justified.

Why Censorship Happens

The numerous justifications for censorship can be divided into two categories: Social Construction and Political Repression. Under Social Construction, governments, and even everyday citizens, support censorship to uphold cultural standards, banning certain speech and actions that are feared to degrade society. With Political Repression, the very survival of the state may be perceived to be at risk, and political dissent must be silenced to maintain power.

Social Construction

The theory of social constructionism states that governments may feel a moral, ideological, or cultural responsibility to their society to protect their collective culture and institutions. Given this moral imperative, governments are compelled to stop the spread of ideas

and information that are potentially dangerous to the status quo. Law professor Steven Gey provides an invaluable explanation of the common justification for Social Constructionist censorship:

Everyone in society is “constructed” by his or her society; antisocial behavior [...] cannot effectively be controlled solely through the application of disincentives or post-behavior punishments for illegal action; therefore, factors contributing to individual socialization must be subject to government control in order for the government adequately to protect every citizen's full participation in the society's social and political life. (198)

Essentially, governments, and perhaps everyday citizens too, have an interest in censorship because society and the people in it have a circular influence on each other, and censorship is seen as an effective means of ensuring that citizens are “good” people who contribute positively to that cycle of influence.

A current example of social constructionism in a liberal democracy is the censorship of music and television on America's airwaves. In *Federal Communications Commission v. Pacifica Foundation*, 438 U.S. 726 (1978), the United States Supreme Court allowed the censorship of “obscene” language in broadcasting if the language lacks “social value,” overriding the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech. Using this court decision as justification to censor this “indecent” speech, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the American government's division responsible for regulating American broadcasting, has “defined indecency to include 'language that describes in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary standards for the broadcast medium.'” As a result, the use of certain language on the airwaves (notably the “S” and “F” words) is not allowed during most hours of the day (Ducat 855-56).

Social constructionist censorship is certainly not devoid of merit, as it is not hard to argue that not all material that is consumed in any given culture is intended for all of its potential audiences. Atkins and Mintcheva, for example, write that government officials often censor on the basis of “protecting children” and “upholding community standards.” Furthermore, governments justify censorship in this manner rather than outright argue for it because the word “censorship” is unpopular and has negative connotations (xv).

Political Repression

While social constructionist censorship in a Western democracy like the United States can certainly burden free speech, a more authoritarian version of censorship, political repression, can often manifest in non-democratic and unstable regimes. “In military dictatorships,” writes author David Tribe, “censorship is but one battery on the deck of a dreadnought. State propaganda is part of the normal documentation of government; creative artists and political opponents have more to worry about than freedom of expression” (239). Indeed, the citizens of states that lack effective democratic representation are at the whim of their government on issues of censorship. They have no say in defining and upholding “community standards.”

A study on the causes and effects of political repression by political scientist Jan Pierskalla argues that successful repression occurs when a regime is strongly authoritarian, and that violence and failed repression are more likely to occur under weak or semidemocratic regimes. In stable democracies, violent control is hardly ever necessary because leaders can be removed from office if they act contrary to public opinion. Pierskalla calls this the “murder in the middle” hypothesis:

In a stable autocracy, the ruler has enough power at his or her disposal to deter any public protest, while in a democracy, physical repression is not a viable option. Protest and repression should emerge only if the opposition has a low prior belief of facing a strong government. “Murder” happens in the “middle” because in semidemocracies and transitioning regimes, there is higher uncertainty about the rules of the game behavioral norms, and the capabilities of actors. (135)

Repression can successfully deter popular backlash if the government is at least perceived as being strong enough to maintain control, but widespread and sometimes successful protests can arise if the government has lost its legitimacy or perception of power, and those uprisings can result in violence. This model may help explain music censorship in the Soviet Union because the regime's perceived power and legitimacy could correlate with the nature of censorship that it employed.

An example of political repression involving music can be seen in the Soviet Union during Stalin's reign before World War II. Perhaps the most frightening period of Stalin's control is the “Great Terror” of the 1930's, where a massive attack on perceived cultural dissidents was the result of a governmental “intention to eradicate dangerous populations.” Over the course of sixteen months (July 1937-November 1938), an estimated 800,000 people were arrested and 367,000 people were shot to remove “anti-Soviet elements” (political dissidents) from the population (Shearer 285). Many musicians, especially jazz artists, were “swept up” in these purges, which will be discussed in a later section contextualizing music censorship in the USSR for the study (Starr 157).

How Censorship is Employed

Censorship can manifest in numerous ways, four of which as identified by scholars are listed below. The first and clearest censorship tactic is a direct crackdown by the state on those doing the action deemed undesirable. In this “authoritarian” method, the state intends to immediately end disturbances by removing their perpetrators from the equation and creating a chilling effect that will keep other potential dissidents from participating. Tribe explains it as such:

When particular ideas are deemed dangerous by the state or its custodians, the simplest way of dealing with them is an attack on their originators or principal exponents. By the most simplistic thinking the surest of these attacks would seem to be, in decreasing order, execution, exile, and imprisonment; and these have been the methods most favoured by dictatorships [where] [...] fear or chauvinism ensures unthinking loyalty to the regime by the bulk of the population. (277)

Indeed, this blunt and brutal censorship aims to deal with cultural issues in “the simplest way” possible: complete removal from society. Additionally, the “fear or chauvinism” that undeniably radiates from the forceful action into the general population may also silence it in the future. If a jazz musician, for example, hears about other jazz musicians simply disappearing in the middle of the night, he may become less likely to continue to play jazz. This chilling effect is another way in which authoritarian censorship can be effective from the state's perspective.

These methods of authoritarian censorship can also be extended to far less extreme ones than imprisonment and execution, such as disbanding rock and roll bands, banning certain artists from radio airplay, and generally controlling the means of art and cultural production through regulated airwaves, performance spaces, galleries, and museums. Indeed, “the most potent

weapon of control [can be] licensing.” This significantly less harsh method is referred to by Tribe as “administrative” action (285). The study will later describe how this administrative censorship is nearly inherent in the Communist dictatorship of the Soviet Union, where the state controlled publications, concert venues, conservatories, and record manufacturing, to name a few areas relating to music. However, the state having this opportunity to censor through administrative means does not mean that it always took advantage of that opportunity.

A third way that censorship can be employed is through persuasion and propaganda. While not a directly impeding force, governments and powerful individuals alike can control popular perception of speech and art by disseminating slanted information. For example, the Soviet Union published numerous journal and newspaper articles in its media to combat the spread of rock and roll by labeling the music as “decadent” and blaming it “for a myriad of social ills: juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, vandalism, and sexual assaults” (Ryback 4).

Contrary to the above methods of censorship, all of which are a function of the state, some argue that the most significant form of modern censorship actually comes from those who are separate from governments and advocate censorship for themselves and others on a moral basis. Mintcheva and Atkins explain this idea of self-censorship as such: “In the legal sense, censorship is the governmental suppression of speech. In a broader sense, it refers to private institutions or individuals doing the same thing, suppressing content they find undesirable. The difference is that the former is prohibited by the First Amendment and the latter is not” (xv).

Many writers, speakers, and artists may actually be self-censoring if they regulate their own output or the output of others because of their own beliefs in what is socially and politically acceptable and “right,” not because a government tells them to or even because of the fear of a

government telling them to. I will investigate this idea by looking for instances of self-censorship among composers and musicians in the USSR: if it occurred, was it to avoid state intervention or because of their own moral views? As far as average citizens were concerned, could they have avoided certain genres not because of their legality but because of personal morality?

The Effects of Censorship

While the possible outcomes of censorship efforts are fairly logical, it will be helpful to categorize and clarify them here, as the terms *success*, *qualified success*, *nothing*, and *backlash* will appear throughout the project. The first of these, *successful* censorship, can be simply defined as when the goals of the actor employing the censorship are met. An example of this is the FCC's effective regulation of American airwaves by forcing radio stations to play "clean" versions of songs where any lyrical content that the FCC deems to be "obscene" must be altered (Guins 126). Here, the U.S. government can curb its constitution's apparently blanket protection of "free speech" and alter the music that its citizens are exposed to. In the context of this study, Soviet censorship practices are successful if they can actually make people stop listening to the music or if the music is changed in a way that the state wants.

A *qualified success* label, which is of course similar, may be necessary for situations where censorship does somewhat hinder the popularity or power of the music but the actions remain far from able to remove it from the culture; Basically, if the state's goals are only somewhat met or the outcome of the censorship appears mixed. A relevant and telling example of this can be found in the censorship of jazz in Nazi Germany, where authoritarian control of the music was able to end access to advertised live performances (Zwerin 49).

A third outcome of censorship is simply the possibility that *nothing* will happen. In this case, the censorship is ineffective and its goals are clearly not met, but it does not really hurt the interests of the censorship's proponents to try it. A modern example can be seen in the ability of nimble internet communities to find new ways to spread information despite trademark laws. This is thanks to nimble “IP Guerrillas” who are always one step ahead of bulky yet powerful conglomerates (Atkins and Mintcheva 142-43). The conglomerates do not lose any more business because of their attempts to censor than they would already be experiencing otherwise, but they are unable to effectively reach their goals as well. The censorship is, overall, essentially pointless.

Occasions where the act of censorship itself actually creates more opposition to the goals of the censorship can be categorized as *backlash*. This is a very intriguing idea because of its counter-intuitive nature: if censorship can make states worse off, why would they censor in the first place? Tribe explains this potential effect of censorship in the context of authoritarianism: “For, by making martyrs out of those concerned, [censorship] can arouse sympathy which might otherwise have slumbered, suggest[ing] that the government has something to hide and strengthen resistance to it” (277).

Backlash essentially means that the act of censoring something makes it all the more desirable and meaningful. Could music have become a rallying cry for cultural rebellion against the Soviet state? If this backlash did in fact occur in the case study, could it have gone so far as to play a role in the downfall of the Soviet Union? That would certainly be a big claim to make. Regardless, music is an important part of any culture, and a grand cultural shift was a key reason for the regime's collapse.

Chapter II: Background

Communism and the Soviet Union

Communism, the system of governance that Russia officially adopted in 1917 upon becoming the Soviet Union (USSR), is the embodiment of Marxist ideology. Developed by philosopher Karl Marx, Marxism states that humans are destined to be free and that their freedom will only be realized once “private property and the exchange economy” are overcome. He argued that a communist society, where “social unity through consciously planned and 'directly socialized' production [...] left no room for the alienating mechanisms of the market” was the only way to create a “utopia” of equality for the human race (Walicki 12).

Although such a system may not be necessarily totalitarian, it became just that in its implementation in Russia. Indeed, “communist totalitarianism [was] the realization of a Marxist communist utopia,” where “the free market of ideas had to be liquidated as mercilessly as the free market of commodities” in order to maintain the communist system in the face of opposition. “Universal indoctrination was the surest way to collective freedom,” writes Polish historian Andrzej Walicki (7).

Walicki argues that communism faces unavoidable ideological opposition because it necessarily limits the marketplaces of merchandise and ideas. Furthermore, the only way that it could hope to survive that opposition was to keep it from reaching the public mind in the first place. Totalitarianism, “a dictatorship that not only deprives people of political and civil freedom but also aspires to control their minds and consciences,” was required to uphold this supposedly perfect system. Walicki goes on to say that totalitarian communism “could not survive the inevitable process of deideologization” (Ibid.). This means that as totalitarian restrictions were

gradually lifted out of necessity, the communist system began to crack until it could no longer stand at all. Music, as an essential part of the marketplace of ideas, would indeed play a role in this collapse.

The Origins of the Cold War

Russia as a distinct state was “built up by autocratic tsars [...] who ruled through a highly centralized regime backed by the Orthodox Church” (Barrass 11). Faith in the standing autocracies began to crumble as the ideas of Marxism became increasingly popular in the face of poor living standards for the very workers that fueled the ongoing industrial revolution of the 19th century. By the early 20th century, “the new creed of Marxism-Leninism, which promised prosperity and justice for all, had enormous attraction” in the face of widespread social and economic inequalities across an increasingly modern world (Ibid. 16).

Tsar Nicholas II's abdication in 1917 left a power vacuum in the Russian leadership that Vladimir Lenin filled by staging a coup “to seize control of the politically weak provisional government and win popular support by proclaiming utopian aspirations and promising land to the peasantry.” In what is known as the Bolshevik or October Revolution, Lenin assumed power over Russia and began to fight for “a world revolution that would eliminate capitalism,” creating the Soviet Union in the process. This “world revolution,” which was immediately at odds with the United States' capitalist society, set the two behemoth nations on an inevitable collision course (Barrass 17).

The Soviet Union and the United States were able to maintain relatively amicable relations through World War II despite the significantly harsher Stalin taking over the USSR

following Lenin's retirement in 1922 (Barrass 19). In what would be their last military cooperation for the next half-century, the western capitalist and eastern communist powers teamed up to defeat Nazi Germany after Adolf Hitler broke his non-aggression pact with Stalin and invaded the Soviet Union in 1941 (Ibid. 21). The U.S. and USSR were then able to combine their power to end the shared threat of German fascism.

It was decided in the war's aftermath that Germany would be split in half, with the USSR taking control of the East and the United States, Britain, and France gaining the West (Ibid. 37). This necessary compromise, along with the new nuclear world that followed in the wake of atomic weapons being dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, set the stage for the bipolar competition for global dominance that would shape the planet for the rest of the century: the Cold War. It is in this context that this case study in censorship will occur, as comparing the tides of musical censorship with the events of this dangerous conflict may reveal patterns in the actions of the Soviet government. Now, just one more area must be addressed: the story of music in the USSR before our time frame.

Music in the Soviet Union, 1917-1945

A brief overview of music in the Soviet Union before the Cold War will help further contextualize the case study, since it was in the pre-WWII years that the foundations of the nation's government and society were developed. A true analysis of music in the USSR in this period would certainly contribute greatly to this study, but there is simply not enough time or space to flesh it out in this project. Music censorship over the course of the entire existence of the Soviet Union should be the subject of further research.

Classical

Russian classical music before the Bolshevik Revolution was deeply tied to nationalism, and this bond only strengthened once the Soviet Union tightened cultural control and was able to frame major Russian composers as they wished. In the Soviet leadership's interpretation of Russian musical history,

[...] nineteenth-century composers belonged to the progressive [pro-communist] intelligentsia.

[The composers] Glinka, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov were turned into advocates of social and national emancipation, and Mussorgsky was called a musical populist and a protorevolutionary. Even as conservative a composer as Tchaikovsky was dragged into the progressive camp [...]

despite his noted disapproval of communism (he once wrote that "it is hard to imagine a more senseless utopia"). In the new Soviet Union, "art had to be socialist in content and nationalist in form," and the state was keen to involve itself to ensure it (Maes 5).

This treatment of the Russian composer heroes of the past framed the musical output that the state wanted from current ones. While "nobody would claim that in tsarist Russia there was no censorship of music, [...] it was after the upheavals of 1917 that the Soviet authorities imposed a really tough censorship on music. A comprehensive statute conferred unlimited powers on the music censorship authorities" (Goldstein 5). These authorities were, however, relatively lenient in what music they would allow to be performed compared to those who would later have the same roles under Stalin.

Lenin appointed Anatol Lunacharsky to lead these nationwide "artistic continuity and ideological reforms" soon after the revolution. Lunacharsky "preferred to rule by persuasion rather than by decree, confronting the dissenters, arguing his case convincingly." Musicologist

Boris Schwarz argues that he was ultimately able to succeed in “reconciling the heterogeneous demands of artists, audiences, and politicians” by persuading composers to incorporate socialist themes into their music while still affording them enough artistic license to appease them and their audiences (11-12). Lunacharsky was even able to allow experimental “avant-garde” music to be performed, “sometimes against Lenin's express wishes.” For example, a massive musical experiment was permitted in 1922 that employed factory sirens, “the foghorns of the Caspian fleet,” and numerous other sounds from the city of Baku (Sitsky 3).

While Lunacharsky hoped that artistic censorship was only “needed in 'periods of transition,’” Lenin “was more realistic:”

He [...] said that “every artist takes it as his right to create freely, according to his ideal, whether it is good or not. There you have the ferment, the experimenting, the chaotic.” Yet Lenin set limits, “But of course we are Communists. We must not drop our hands into our laps and allow the chaos to ferment as it chooses. We must try consciously to guide this development and mould [*sic.*] and determine the results.” (Ibid. 19)

Lenin clearly aimed to control the interpretation of musical output of Russian composers. Some victims of this early censorship were Mikhail Glinka's (1804-1857) opera *A Life for the Tsar*; Pytor Ilyich Tchaikovsky's (1840-1893) *1812 Overture*, and other works whose performances were banned because they “failed to match the spirit of the class struggle and the ideas of the revolution” (Goldstein 5). However, this censorship is so strikingly modest compared to what would come later that it can be concluded that “at least in the early years [of the revolution], scholars and artists continued to enjoy a fair measure of intellectual freedom” (Maes 237).

As the state grew and consolidated power into bureaucratic institutions, more control began to gradually creep into all aspects of Soviet music and musical life:

The first step was the nationalization of theaters. Next it was the turn of the court orchestras in Moscow and Petrograd, private music schools, music publishers, instrument makers, libraries, archives, and concert societies. Control of the musical repertoire was vested in a special committee [...]. The conservatories were handed over [...]. In Petrograd, the curriculum was reorganized in 1925, with ideological education becoming part of the program. (Maes 241)

This far-reaching administrative control was officially stipulated in a document published by the Communist Party called *Basic Policies in the Realm of the Arts*, “which stated unequivocally that all the arts fell under the control of the state. The document also condemned the excesses of the avant-garde, and especially [avant-garde composer's] negative attitude to the art of the past” (Ibid. 242). Indeed, the Soviet avant-garde artists were among the first to confront the state’s cultural policies, since “experimentalism proved to have no propaganda value, except when it came to advertising Soviet culture to the West.” Although Lunacharsky arose as an unlikely defender of the avant-garde in a call for open artistic expression for the good of the worker, “he steadily lost ground as the twenties went on” (Ross 219-20).

Stalin's rise to power in the late 1920's began a dramatic shift in the Soviet treatment of music, with rapidly increasing governmental involvement in art and society. 1929 is often particularly remembered in Soviet history as “The Great Turning Point,” where Stalinist policies began to greatly affect the Soviet people. Although no official party statements from the year directly changed musical life, “musicians at the time certainly felt the change” (Frolova-Walker 217). Stalin's declaration that art should be “nationalist in form [and] socialist in content” reflected an increased emphasis on the requirement that art supports the State (Maes 257).

The Soviet government was able to realize a great deal of power over classical music by controlling music publication and performances, along with extensive propaganda to persuade composers and audiences to write and listen to music that fitted the state's vision of a communist utopia. Performances of certain works, like the Austrian Alban Berg's (1885-1935) famous opera *Wozzeck* and even Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* (as was mentioned above) were banned for political reasons. While they were censored for different traits - *Wozzeck* was too modernist and *1812 Overture* had too many ties to the Tsars – the commonality remains that these works did not fit the Soviet leadership's vision of a homogenous utopia (Schwarz 125).

Ultimately, “the fact that there [were] no private music publishers in the Soviet Union [meant that] all the published works of Soviet composers must conform to certain ideological demands” (Goldstein 6). Not only did repertoires of orchestras have to be approved, but all published music was in danger of censorship because of complete state control of the means of production. This administrative censorship was indeed an important tool in controlling the music that Soviet citizens wrote and heard.

Furthermore, the nation's leading communist newspaper, *Pravda*, would regularly publish articles criticizing compositions and composers who dared break away from this vision, such as an infamous 1936 article, “Chaos Instead of Music,” that criticized the famous Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich's (1906-1975) opera *Lady Macbeth* (Goldstein 5-6). Despite its 1934 premiere being hailed worldwide, Stalin saw a 1936 performance and “was angered by its discordant modernist music and surrealistic, often grotesque, portrayal of violence and sex.” The *Pravda* article called it an “attempt to create originality through cheap clowning” and said that the opera “is a game of clever ingenuity that may end very badly” (Burkholder, Grout, and

Palisca 890-91). “A complete ban on the performance of all Shostakovich compositions” was issued in the wake of this scathing attack, canceling the premiere of his Fourth Symphony. In response to the ban, “the Soviet press went on slanging Shostakovich. He was declared a formalist and a creator of 'anti-people music'” (Goldstein 5-6).

Totalitarian communism forced high art in the Soviet Union to be uniform and bleak. The government calculated that experimentalism must necessarily be contained in order to create a utopian society. Communism, by its very nature, could not allow such originality in a society that is free from a free market of ideas. As a result, “the arts [became] blanketed with conformity” (Schwarz 129). The Soviet government had controlled the development of domestic classical music through administrative and persuasive means. Classical music's censorship in the Cold War era will be discussed in the next chapter.

Jazz

While the October Revolution was underway in Russia, a unique cultural phenomenon was rapidly spreading from New Orleans to New York, and soon from London to Moscow. Jazz, as a major component of the newly developing American pop culture, was “taken for granted at home [and] became a powerful force abroad” (Starr 8). This stylistically open and American-made music, while hard to explicitly define, has features that make it the antithesis of communism:

The glory or baseness of jazz at its inception was its raucousness and utter indifference to the niceties of nineteenth-century musical etiquette. This was a music in which horn players deliberately bent notes off pitch, in which drummers played at once whole sets of noisemakers including cymbals and Chinese tom-toms, [and] in which the newly popular slide trombone was

permitted to smear notes together in guttural glissandos [...]. You could hold a toilet plunger in front of your trombone—and be praised for it! (Ibid. 9)

Jazz, a new genre that emphasized creative individuality and “appeared to the world of 1917 as aggressively anarchistic,” was all but destined to be challenged by a government that was trying to create a new society of uniformity through strict control (Ibid. 10).

New innovations in recording technology in the early 1900's, namely the mass production of phonographs and records, helped jazz quickly spread across the Atlantic and into European homes and clubs (Ibid. 15). By 1922, the first State jazz band appeared in the Soviet Union, albeit in a style that was far removed from American jazz: “The ensemble consisted of a piano, banjo, drums, xylophone, and two violins. [...] This 'jazz' [...] consisted of American popular songs accompanied by a syncopated rhythm band” (Ibid. 46-47). This lone jazz band quickly spawned numerous offshoots in the late 20's as the Soviet Union began to formulate an official policy of state-supported jazz. This support was further invigorated once a representative of the state was sent to Philadelphia to study authentic American jazz and “negro” musicians were invited to perform in Moscow (Starr 77, Frolova-Walker 174).

Not only did the music receive a warm welcome among audiences, but many Soviet musicians enjoyed it as well. “Some of us admire the element of real, genuine play that is present here [...]. The players are truly *playing*, rather than overcoming technical difficulties,” writes Nikolai Malko, a Soviet conductor, after attending an “authentic jazz band” performance in Moscow in 1926 (Frolova-Walker 174). Despite jazz appreciation being mainly limited to the upper echelons of Soviet society, the speed with which this “dance music” was able to become a standard part of the nation's musical culture is indeed quite remarkable (Starr 77).

While far from producing music that mirrored the jazz of America and even Western Europe, this early support of the music demonstrates the state's keenness to control what its citizens heard. Responding to jazz's popularity, the state decided to provide it as entertainment for the masses on its own terms rather than let foreigners affect domestic culture.

This relative freedom would, however, be lost with Stalin's rise to power, beginning with a slew of propaganda. Novelist Maxim Gorky published a 1928 essay in *Pravda*, "On the Music of the Gross," that attacked jazz as "a cause and symptom of the fall of Western civilization." In a profound moment of xenophobia, he says of the music: "Listening for a few minutes to these wails, one involuntarily imagines an orchestra of sexually driven madmen conducted by a man-stallion brandishing a huge genital member" (Starr 90). As preposterous and offensive as his argument may sound today, "Gorky's imprecations fell on receptive soil in Russia" (Ibid. 92).

Lunacharsky, the cultural policeman who was discussed above as being relatively receptive to creative music and had notably approved the state's support of jazz, had a sudden change of heart. By 1929, he argued that the fox-trot, an extremely popular jazz dance, "was nothing less than a frontal attack on Soviet culture. As such, it had to be countered with distinctly proletarian dances free of the aura of eroticism, mechanization, and narcotic stimulation" (Ibid.). This propaganda lead up to the most damning attack of all, where he state linked jazz to Wall Street and called it "a key element in the subtle [American] campaign to destroy the USSR from within" (Ibid. 93). It was not long until the state's practices reflected its new way of thinking. Students were expelled from school for admitting their love and appreciation for the music, and performing and even playing records of "foreign jazz" became illegal (Ibid. 94).

A brief respite from cultural control began in 1932 and lasted until 1936, allowing jazz to thrive in what is known as the “Red Jazz Age.” Now, “far more than ever before, the very word 'jazz' implied a carefree and exuberant attitude toward life, the very opposite of the grim Cultural Revolution” (Ibid. 108). Jazz spread further and further across Soviet high society thanks to its de facto “legitimization” in the eyes of government with the end of propaganda against it (Ibid. 113).

Stalin's new cultural purge that began in 1936, in which over one million people branded as political dissenters were murdered, inevitably involved numerous jazz musicians. They did, after all, play a foreign and free music that flew in the face of tradition and nationalism. From 1936 to 1941,

Bands were broken up or changed beyond recognition. Leaders were harassed, and arrangers were told to spurn the alien and licentious music in favor of wholesome Soviet songs. A number of jazzmen disappeared into Stalin's forced-labor camps or were shot. [...] Soviet jazz in fact fell victim to its own success. [...] Jazzmania continued to gain momentum until the entire urban population threatened to be transformed [...]. (Starr 157-58)

Jazz became so popular thanks to state support that it, ironically, became a threat to the communist mission. While the government had almost no choice but to propagate jazz itself because of the music's overwhelming popularity, this propagation made the music even more popular and powerful to the extent that it became dangerous and had to be dealt with.

The breakout of World War II marked yet another dramatic shift in the state's approval of jazz. In response to Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, the government sent jazz bands to the front lines and commissioned new patriotic and anti-fascist songs (Ibid. 182). For the sake of morale, jazz was now seen by the government as an important tool to save the nation.

It is clear that the Soviet government had consistently taken an interest in the music that was composed, performed, and listened to within its society. What differs throughout this era, from 1917 to 1945, is the degree of that interest and the state's subsequent desire to employ censorship based on the Soviet leadership, the times, and the genre. Both classical and jazz appear to have been subject to censorship via administration and propaganda. Jazz, perhaps because of the music's origins and inherent qualities, was at times subject to a more brutal authoritarian censorship under Stalin's reign than classical music ever experienced.

Chapter III: Classical Music

Why Classical Music was Censored

Just as the United States' atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked the end of World War II, they also marked the beginning of the Cold War. Stalin demanded that the Soviet Union have atomic capability as soon as possible after hearing about the awesome destructive power of “the bomb.” He reasoned that it would be necessary to produce atomic weapons to deter any potential American threat to his territories in Eastern Europe or the Russian homeland (Barrass 42). The two superpowers soon had the absurdly dangerous weapons aimed at each other as they jostled for international influence. The system that eventually evolved was one of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), where both the U.S. and USSR were effectively deterred from initiating a war against the other, since an all-out conflict would likely involve the uncontrolled use of nuclear weapons and thus kill millions of people. This was a situation that neither side wanted, since it became increasingly apparent as nuclear stockpiles grew into the thousands that nobody could ever truly win a nuclear war (Siracusa 68).

It is in this context that the Soviet arts policy was carried out. Andrey Olkhovsky, a Soviet musicologist and composer, provides an invaluable first-hand account of his experiences (until his resettlement in America in 1949) in *Music Under the Soviets*. Olkhovsky writes that the Soviet government's arts policy in the World War II era existed as a counter to the Western capitalist nations that were on the other side of the Cold War:

The first direct encounter between Soviet man and the Western world after more than twenty years of isolation, during the Second World War, showed the communists that it was still as easy as ever for the Soviet citizen to adopt the advanced ideas of the West [...]. In the West man is at least relatively free. Could such a situation be allowed in the Soviet Union? In the West the

individual can and does change his lot by any means available to him. In the Soviet Union it is dangerous to even think of such freedom. (10)

Olkhovsky then continues by discussing the tragedy of Soviet art being caught between this East versus West dichotomy:

It is this policy which has caused the present [1955] devastation of Soviet culture, particularly of art as being most susceptible to progressive influences. The essence of the policy is the counterbalancing of the Soviet Union against the West in every field and the ceaseless repetition of the idea that absolutely no elements of Western culture are usable or acceptable in the Soviet Union. Even relative freedom of thought and of the revolutionary potential of man's creative consciousness are outlawed. (Ibid.)

Olkhovsky has been quoted at length here not only because his words paint a vivid picture of the realities of artistic expression in the Soviet Union during the Cold War, but also because his claims as a primary source carry a heavy weight. Given this context of the government's absolutely anti-Western goals in the early days of the Cold War and the high stakes of the conflict, we can now hope to understand why music was censored. This chapter will detail the censorship of classical music, but the ebb and flow of the Soviet arts policy that it describes will also apply to the later chapters on jazz and rock and roll.

The Zhdanov Era (1945-1953)

Perhaps the most important time in the censorship of classical music in the Soviet Union during the Cold War began immediately following the conclusion of World War II. This period, known infamously as the Zhdanov Era, describes the Soviet government's efforts to shape their domestic arts under Stalin's postwar leadership. Stalin aimed to regain his ideological control

over the Soviet people in the aftermath of World War II, since his censorship practices had been relaxed during wartime to “regain the goodwill of intellectuals and mobilize them for wartime propaganda.” Led by its namesake Andrey Zhdanov, the Communist Party leader that assumed “responsibility for taming the arts” in the postwar period, the government cracked down on “deviant artists in the fields of literature (1946), film (1947), and finally music” in 1948 (Taruskin 2010, 8). Although Zhdanov died in 1948, “the policies he had initiated continued for at least another five years, until Stalin's death” (Schwarz 206).

Zhdanov's official Communist Party publications on literature and film effectively “foreshadowed the course of events” for classical music beginning in 1948 by demonstrating that it would be “the responsibility of [Soviet] intellectuals to carry” out strict Party guidelines in their art. The literary resolution claimed that two Soviet literature journals had published “works which cultivated a non-Soviet spirit of servility before the contemporary bourgeois culture of the West” by allowing the “preaching of 'art for art's sake', [which] is harmful to the interests of the Soviet people and the Soviet State” (Ibid. 207). In Stalin's postwar Russia, art would now have to somehow further the Soviet ideal of “socialist realism.” It would not be enough for art to even be politically neutral. It is in this way that “censorship as practiced in the Soviet Union [was] a new phenomenon in the history of thought control” (Dewhirst and Farrell 2).

According to musicologist Boris Schwarz, whose *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917-1970* is a landmark book that will be used extensively in this chapter, the Zhdanov resolutions on literature, film, and music “had a twofold purpose: to correct alleged shortcomings in certain artistic fields, and to warn all potential dissidents that the Party would enforce its ideological aims. [...] Total commitment to Leninism – in Stalin's interpretation – was expected”

(208). Music historian Francis Maes adds that Western musical elements came under particularly strict scrutiny thanks to the Cold War taking center stage in the international arena. She writes that the importance of the Cold War in Stalin's calculations to censor classical music following WWII is evident in the “anti-Western sentiment [that] dominated postwar propaganda” and the subsequent targeting of “decadent Formalism” in art (Maes 308).

To the Soviets censors at this time, “Formalism” was a trait of art that contained “autonomous aestheticism,” meaning that it strayed from the “monochrome landscape” of art that “would lead to heroic greatness.” It is only when all of art was collective in nature that this perfect “monochrome landscape” of a Communist utopia could be achieved. “The picturesque and multicolored landscape, by contrast, [was] a symbol of petite bourgeois self-interest” that embodied Capitalism and could thus not be allowed in society (Maes 255). To tie this into the above discussion on literature, “art for art's sake” (pure art) was inherently Formalist and therefore dangerous. Formalism also often referred to as following “modernistic directions” in composition such as serialism and atonality, where harsh and uncomfortable sounds and rhythms are often created purposefully. However, “the term was used so loosely that [Soviet composer] Prokofiev once quipped, 'Formalism is music that people don't understand at first hearing’” (Schwarz 114-15).

The party's doctrine of Socialist Realism existed in contrast to Formalism. It was the term often used to describe the ideal Soviet art. For music, Socialist Realism meant that compositions had to be “heroic, bright, and beautiful” so as to depict the “reality” of a (supposedly) heroic, bright, and beautiful Soviet Union (Ibid). It was hailed as the path to the “great” “monochrome landscape” of art that would be fit for the perfect society that Stalin envisioned. This ideal was

indeed deeply tied to Formalism: “Socialist realism was both the consequence and the negation of avant-garde trends. It held fast to the aesthetic utopia of Russian modernism, in which art played an active role in the creation of life; at the same time, it curbed the ambitions of art” (Maes 256).

Overall, the Zhdanov Doctrine pushed for the complete control of Soviet classical music to ensure that Soviet society reflected Stalin's ideals of political and social unification against the Western capitalist threat. As such, it appears that the tenets of both the Social Construction and Political Repression justifications for censorship were invoked, with the shadow of the new Cold War hanging over it all. Until Stalin's death in 1953, the regime (led by Zhdanov) censored music in order to shape society as it saw fit and to quell potential political subversion, with extra motivation coming from the anti-Westernism of the Cold War.

The Post-Stalin Relaxation (1953-1963)

Stalin's death ushered in a new era of cultural liberalization in the Soviet Union. In the immediate aftermath, as the leaders of the Communist party jostled for power, “most [Soviet] leaders judged that they could only retain control by creating a somewhat more humane form of socialism. Even [Lavrentiy] Beria, the ruthless head of Stalin's secret police, began churning out proposals for far-reaching economic reforms, along with some political ones too” (Barrass 82). But even these proposals would not be enough to save many in the Stalin establishment, including Beria, who were arrested and executed only months after Stalin's death (Schwarz 272).

Beria's death and the relatively level-headed Nikita Khrushchev's appointment as head of the Communist Party helped remove the most dangerous aspects of Stalinism from Soviet artistic society. In literature, "a new spirit of intellectual inquisitiveness, of critical self-evaluation made itself felt" as "an oppressive weight seemed to be lifted from the minds of Soviet artists and intellectuals." A Party 1953 *Pravda* article did much to help lift this weight by claiming in a huge about-face that "one of the worst disasters for art is standardization, however high the standard may be. [...] Socialist Realism offers boundless vistas for the creative artist and the greatest freedom for the expression of his personality, for the development of diverse genres, trends, and styles." Socialist Realism now held that artists will be allowed and encouraged to be creative and individualistic so long as their work did not dabble too far into Formalism. While still imposing constraints on composers, the new interpretation of Socialist Realism allowed for much more leeway than it had in Stalin's lifetime (Schwarz 272-73).

A more formal "De-Stalinization" campaign began with Khrushchev issuing a six-hour speech to Party officials in 1956 that detailed Stalin's murderous purges. This was the first time that most Communist leaders heard about the deaths of an estimated 700,000 of Soviet citizens at the hands of a dictator who the deified. The results were traumatic for the millions of officials and eventually citizens who heard Khrushchev's claims, including the head of the Polish Communist Party who died of a heart attack after reading the text of the speech. Uprisings soon began against the communist governments of Poland and Hungary. Khrushchev's reasoning for this denunciation of Stalin was that "socialism, once purified of its Stalinist stain, would regain its vitality and enjoy the genuine support of the people [because] its achievements would help wash away the blood that had been shed in its name" (Barrass 106-7).

One of the freedoms that the De-Stalinization campaign gave Soviet composers and classical audiences was an increased access to foreign works. Many composers more closely associated with dissonant “formalist” techniques, like Arnold Schoenberg, were still not allowed to have their works performed, but hearing anything new from outside the Iron Curtain was exciting for the Soviets who “had been virtually cut off from Western music since the mid-1930's. Not only were Soviet musicians and audiences unfamiliar with music composed since that time, but an entire generation of Russians had never [heard] foreign music composed since the First World War.” A number of Western composers and conductors were invited to perform, even including the Americans Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, and Robert Shaw. Copland remarked after his visit that “I was hardly prepared [...] to discover to what degree Russian music is exclusively Russian. There is an extraordinary and all-pervasive unity of expressive ideal” (Schwarz 330-32).

There is evidence that this loosening of cultural restrictions that began with Stalin's end occurred due to the immense cultural pressures that had been building up over the previous eight years of censorship. Much of the liberalization in classical music was argued for and won by composers themselves, like Aram Khachaturian, who quickly argued in articles after Stalin's death that the current system of “tutelage” for Soviet composers was hindering natural musical development. However, the state also allowed a certain degree of relaxation to happen to appease the newly empowered Soviet artists who were no longer trapped under an iron fist. Schwarz concludes that “the Kremlin leadership must have realized that Zhdanov's methods had brought stagnation to the artistic and intellectual life of the country,” but there appears to have been more to this cultural loosening than the Party was aware of (273-75).

Khrushchev Cracks Down (1963-1964)

The previous decade of liberalization came to a sudden halt in 1963 as Khrushchev had a change of heart about his support for relatively relaxed cultural policy. While not as menacing as Stalin and Zhdanov were in the postwar era, Khrushchev gave a speech to important Party members and Soviet *intelligentsia* (national intellectuals) in March 1963 claiming that Socialist Realism meant that Soviet art could not still contain any Western ideas. This one speech essentially “dealt a fatal blow to ideological coexistence” since “the opinions he voiced became the law of the land. [...] Until his departure from the political scene in October, his speech of 8 March 1963 remained valid as a guideline for the arts” (Schwarz 417-18). It was said of the speech that “if words were deeds, surely Khrushchev would have succeeded, as Zhdanov did, at putting Soviet artists back in uniform” (Johnson and Labedz, 147-48).

Why would Khrushchev change his mind after a decade of cultural relaxation, and especially against the wishes of Soviet artists? A group of artists had even sent Khrushchev a letter pleading him to avoid a return to the Stalinism that he had done so much to reverse (Schwarz 416). It appears that Communist Party leaders had begun to worry that they in fact allowed too much liberalization to occur and that Khrushchev wanted to provide a show of force to demonstrate that he was still in control of the Soviet Union. They were worried, in particular, about “the simmering rebellion of the intelligentsia, especially among writers” (Ibid. 417). This return of censorship seems to have been politically motivated, since quelling opposition to the Soviet system was its main goal.

There is also the possibility that Khrushchev was reacting to greatly heightened Cold War tensions. The Cuban Missile Crisis, arguably the closest the world had ever come to a nuclear war, had played out just months before the March 1963 speech, in October 1962. The crisis began when the U.S. discovered Soviet missiles in Cuba that Khrushchev set up as a deterrent to American missiles in Turkey. Both countries could now destroy their enemy's capital with the push of a button. In response, American President John F. Kennedy launched a blockade of Cuba and the U.S. and Soviet militaries were put on high alert and prepared for an all-out war. The crisis was then exacerbated by an American spy plane being shot down over Cuba against Moscow's orders. Despite some close calls, including a Soviet submarine whose officers had thought the war had already begun and decided not to launch its nuclear missiles by a vote of two to one, the crisis dissolved when Khrushchev agreed to withdraw his missiles so long as the Americans removed theirs from Turkey (Barrass 138-44).

The Crisis was also helped raise tensions between the Soviet Union and its even more authoritarian Communist counterpart in China, who claimed that Khrushchev was being too easy on the West. Starr writes that

[...] tensions between the two Communist giants had been mounting for several years, and now, after Khrushchev's humiliation during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the Chinese declared openly that he had led the USSR away from true communism [...]. They ridiculed him for his soft line on the capitalist West and announced that the center of world revolution had shifted to Beijing. It was downright embarrassing for Khrushchev [...]. (273)

The embattled Soviet leader undoubtedly felt a great deal of pressure to maintain his nation's place as the leader of the international Communist movement.

Although drawing a direct connection between the crisis and the musical limits that Khrushchev imposed may be difficult, there is scholarship that links Soviet foreign affairs with domestic policy. Political scientist John A. Armstrong wrote in 1965 that “one can generalize – with at least a fair measure of probability – that *in the short run* contestants for leadership in the Soviet Union will manipulate policy issues to strengthen their domestic power positions. This manipulation [...] will, however, only last as long as the power struggle is in doubt” (Hoffman and Fleron 57). This is relevant to the Cuban Missile Crisis because of the extreme domestic unpopularity among both government elites and general citizens that Khrushchev faced for his part in nearly starting World War III and his eventual public backing down. His handling of international affairs and the Crisis in particular combined with a sluggish Soviet economy to lead to his ousting on October 14, 1964 (Barrass 145-46).

Since the 1962 Missile Crisis and its fallout were clearly contributing factors to Khrushchev's 1964 “resignation,” the 1963 crackdown fits perfectly into a period where an internal power struggle was likely occurring among the Soviet leadership. Historian Priscilla Johnson even writes that the 1963 “collision” between Communist leaders and Soviet artists occurred while “the struggle to succeed him was already going on behind the scenes.” One could argue that this power struggle influenced Khrushchev's sudden change of heart, since he wanted to maintain his stature as the legitimate head of the Soviet state in the face of a recent “string of successes” that “the liberals of both art and literature had racked up” thanks to ever-loosening cultural restrictions. But ultimately, the crackdown was “a function of political events within and without the Soviet Union – impossible to understand in terms of art and, like so much else in Soviet Russia, comprehensible, if at all, only within the framework of politics” (Johnson 1-3).

The Post-Khrushchev Era (1964-1991)

Khrushchev's removal from office marked a turning point for artistic liberties for Soviet composers, although small fluctuations in censorship still occurred. A gradual transition towards allowing increased freedom began in the immediate aftermath of his loss of power, where “it became apparent that there were disagreements within the Party hierarchy as to how much freedom the artists should be granted.” *Pravda* articles from 1964 to 1965 changed from still reinforcing Khrushchev's restrictive policies to a more accepting “Leninist” approach, where “search and experimentation, free expression, and clashes of viewpoint” would be allowed, albeit with the original principles of Socialist Realism still being enforced (Schwarz 439-42).

More Western, and even American, music began showing up in concert programs, especially for the Leningrad Symphony (which had more autonomy than its counterpart in Moscow), who performed a concert of completely American music that included George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and Samuel Barber's *Piano Concerto* in 1965 (Ibid. 443). By 1968, dissonant and Western “dodecaphonic devices [were] discussed dispassionately and professionally, without reference to 'bourgeois decadence' or equally faded Stalinist invectives” (Ibid. 460). While still not necessarily encouraged by the government, composers could now use dissonant techniques more freely than ever before.

Despite this shift towards allowing more Western ideas in art in official government statements, it should be noted that the administrative censorship apparatus and self-censorship due to previous policies did not end along with Khrushchev's time in office. This will be discussed in the following section on how the regime went about censoring classical music. Additionally, the later chapters on jazz and rock will show that this relative relaxation was in

some ways limited to only the more socially orthodox genre classical music. The chapter on rock and roll in particular will explore why and how that censorship apparatus functioned as the Soviet Union moved towards its ultimate dissolution in 1991.

How Classical Music was Censored

Most Soviet classical music censorship during the Cold War appears to have been done through the “soft power” methods that were discussed during the literature review (Administration, Persuasion, and Self-Censorship) rather than through harsher Authoritarian methods. However, the fear of violent censorship certainly lingered from the purges that occurred in the 1930's. Schwarz writes of the Zhdanov era that

So demoralized was the intelligentsia, so fresh were the memories of the 1938 purges, that hardly anyone dared to disagree. Once Zhdanov's accusing statement was heard, the artists fell into line: everybody echoed the charges, defended his own position, and apologized profusely if that position was vulnerable. Those criticized by name recanted publicly; to remain silent was an admission of guilt. (205-6)

Even though artists were not specifically targeted for death by the regime at this time, a massive number of Soviet citizens in the post-war era were accused of “disloyalty” and sent to arctic work camps. Some estimations for the number of deaths in these camps ranges from 600,000 to 1.75 million people (Starr 211). Soviet composers were in no position to challenge the authority of Stalin's authoritarian state in this climate, since doing so would have risked their lives.

This chilling effect allowed Soviet leaders to rely on soft power censorship methods for classical music, one of which was the persuasive propaganda that appeared in popular Soviet newspapers and journals. The Communist Party's official newspaper, *Pravda*, was a key means

of disseminating the government's artistic standards, as it often published conference speeches made by Soviet leaders in addition to the Party's "resolutions" on the arts. Zhdanov's infamous denunciations of artistic freedom following World War II, for example, appeared here (Olkhovsky 10). These publications ensured that "Soviet intellectuals understood the message" that the state had a specific vision of how the arts should function in their society, and acting contrary to that vision was risky given the violent past under Stalin (Schwarz 208).

Propaganda alone can only do so much to ensure complete censorship, even with help from the chilling effect of the purges. To fill in the cracks that persuasion, indoctrination, and fear could not fill on their own, the Soviet government assembled a massive bureaucratic apparatus to ensure that every piece of public art and expression, including literature, film, theater, and music, was approved by loyal specialists. In order for anything to be published, like a new composition or an article of music criticism, it would have to be approved by anonymous censors "who are well-informed to know what is permissible and what is not" (Dewhirst and Farrell 98).

Actually performing a piece raised yet another hurdle for musicians since "music comes alive only when it is performed, and in order to be performed it must pass through a lengthy procedure to establish its credentials." Violinist and composer Michael Goldstein, who worked and lived in the Soviet Union, uses Dmitri Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 13* (1962) as an example of a work by a world-renowned Soviet composer that still faced administrative censorship at home. The symphony notably uses a male choir to sing works by Soviet poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko that were dedicated to Ukrainians that were slaughtered by the Nazis during World War II at Babi Yar, Kiev (Dewhirst and Farrell 100-1).

The work was hardly ever performed in the Soviet Union after its premiere in Moscow, and the state-run record company, which of course monopolized all record production, never released a recording (Ibid.). The text of the symphony was also altered by the censors to focus less on the deaths of Ukrainian Jews and more on the Soviet triumph over Fascism (Maes 368). Despite all of this, the work enjoyed wide recognition abroad and was even performed by the Moscow Philharmonic while they were on tour in America (Dewhirst and Farrell 101).

The government also relied on persuasive censorship via the administrative bureaucracy. For example, in addition to outright banning the performances of some compositions, “sometimes a censor [would say], 'Well, we don't forbid this, do as you wish, but we don't recommend it'” (Ibid). This amounts to a de facto censure of a work, minus a great amount of stature or courage held by the composer, when one considers the Soviet Union's authoritarian atmosphere. Yet another de facto censorship method occurred in the state-run conservatories, which would not teach musicians how to play works with more experimental and modernist traits (Ibid. 104-5).

The Soviet leadership also incentivized compliance with their guidelines. In one example from the height of the Zhdanov era, the Soviet composers Shostakovich and Sergei Prokofiev were awarded Stalin Prizes for “simplistic, accessible works,” which existed in a stark contrast to their more experimental wartime output (Maes 311). This simplification of many notable composers' output leads perfectly into the following discussion of the effects that censorship had on Soviet composers, music, and musical life.

The Effects of Censorship

The Soviet government's censorship of classical music achieved most of the state's goals in controlling the music that was written and performed, as well as how it was portrayed by critics. At the heart of this success was self-censorship, which was listed as a reason for censorship to occur in the literature review. It was left out of the above section here because it seems to have actually been an *effect*, rather than an explanation, of Soviet classical musical censorship. The state exerted so much influence that it could often deter undesired music from even being written. During the early days of the Zhdanov era especially, “there was no resistance but rather an effort to compromise, at least temporarily” from Soviet composers (Schwarz 216).

Tikhon Khrennikov, who Zhdanov appointed as the head of the Union of Soviet Composers and remained in that post until the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, took it upon himself to enforce the party's official stance on music, whatever that stance may have been. While Stalin remained in power, it just so happened that the stance was designed by the man who hired him. Schwarz writes that “with Zhdanov's approval, Khrennikov took the Resolution of 1948 – a spiteful and narrow-minded document – and applied its generalized invectives to Soviet and Western music of the twentieth century. Hardly anyone escaped his censure” (Schwarz 224-25).

The result of this effective musical control was a damaging stylistic stagnation of classical music that was written and performed. The prominent music historian Richard Taruskin writes that by 1948,

[...] Soviet composers were exhorted simply to copy the music of Tchaikovsky and the Mighty Five [the Russian nationalist composers that flourished in the late 1800's] [...]. The late-Stalinist imitation of the nineteenth-century classics was skillful, literal, and unbelievable. Between 1948

and 1953, the year of Stalin's death, the style of most Soviet music became virtually indistinguishable from that of the turn-of-the-century Belyayev school, itself a sodality of epigones. (Taruskin 1997, 96)

This stagnation was particularly notable within music, even more so than in the other genres of the arts, because “the censorship of music is even more ruthless” thanks to the high level of training of the censors, many of whom were conservatory graduates that could “sit down and play any composition” (Dewhirst and Farrell 103-4).

The lack of development was only exacerbated by the war against foreign composers that was waged under Stalin. During the Zhdanov era, “programs of symphonic concerts in the Soviet Union [were] usually overloaded with works by Soviet composers, especially those which conform in content to the requirements of the Party's political line.” These Soviet works included everything from “cantatas about Stalin” and “overtures and symphonies on Soviet themes” to notable past works like Shostakovich's 5th Symphony and Aram Khachaturian's *Violin Concerto*, which could “be used to demonstrate the alleged advantages of the Soviet system under which they were created” due to their sheer quality. The only breaths of fresh air from the monopoly of Soviet music in concert programs would be from works by popular Russian composers from the pre-Soviet era, like Tchaikovsky and Mussorgsky, and occasional pieces by major classical and romantic European composers like Mozart, Beethoven, and Schumann. (Olkovsky 130-31)

Performing any music with modernist techniques was not allowed at this time, especially if the music was written by a foreigner. Khrennikov specifically attacked the experimentalism of Igor Stravinsky, who was born in Russia but left after finding success elsewhere in Europe, for writing Western “formalist” music that would not be performed in the Soviet Union. Khrennikov took this denunciation a step further by saying that “one can hardly name a single important

composer of the West who is not infected with formalistic defects, subjectivism, and mysticism, and bereft of ideological principals.” Any foreign music that used modernist composition techniques was effectively banned, at least for now. However, Schwarz notes, “suffice it to say that within a dozen years, every one of the insulted composers was performed in Soviet concerts, and that quite a few were welcomed personally by Khrennikov with a show of affection and friendship” (225). The composers and their works were likely received with open arms during the post-Stalin era of cultural liberalization. It comes as no surprise that the real-world effects of the State's cultural policy fall in line with the ebb and flow of the policy itself.

Outside of the particular techniques that the censors sometimes forced composers to avoid, an incredibly important constant remained for Soviet music. This was the idea that it, along with seemingly everything that a Soviet citizen did, had to help the mission of the State in some way. Music could not afford to be apolitical, and if it was written without any political purpose a purpose had to be given to it. Michael Goldstein recounts an instance where he was asked to write a review of a new piano sonata. After writing about the technical aspects of the piece, his review was returned by the censors who wanted him to write about the composer's intent and how “the work was part of the general development of Soviet music.” Since the composer himself told Goldstein that “I simply wrote the music as I felt it; there's no need to concoct a programme for it,” Goldstein simply made up a story of political significance for the piece to get his review approved for publication. “It seems to me that the function of the censorship with regard to music publishing and periodicals is to hinder the propagation of works considered to be superfluous because they fail to fulfill any basic propagandistic purpose,” he concludes (Dewhirst and Farrell 98-99).

Challenges to Successful Censorship

In a testament to the human creative spirit, the Soviet government could never completely control musical thought and constrain new ideas from being written down and shared. If a composer wrote a piece that would likely not make it past the censors, they would often “like their literary colleagues [...] write for the 'desk drawer,' playing these compositions only in the presence of close friends.” In one qualification to Soviet censorship success, tape recordings of these pieces would sometimes be circulated among circles of prominent composers and performers to be studied and enjoyed (Dewhirst and Farrell 99).

Another way in which Soviet composers and music patrons could avoid the control of the state was through foreign radio broadcasts and cultural exchanges with foreign composers, topics which will appear again in the later chapters on jazz and rock. Goldstein writes that it was “practically impossible [to] isolate Soviet composers” for these reasons. Many Soviets could understand foreign languages and thus translate French and German broadcasts which contained new and exciting music that could never be performed in their country. And although foreign composers would sometimes not be allowed to perform certain works, they would still leave important impressions on their constrained Soviet counterparts (Ibid 103).

Yet another failure of the censorship sometimes occurred when the most gifted, influential, and popular Soviet composers wrote with techniques that would have caused the work to never be published and performed had it been written by anybody else. As Zhdanov began instituting his reforms, some younger composers who were more than happy to comply with the State's standards attacked the established heads of Soviet music, including Shostakovich, Khachaturian, and Prokofiev, for being privileged. “The critics are nothing but

flunkies in the service of the big composers,” claimed composer Ivan Dzerzhinsky (Schwarz 217). The ever-changing tides of censorship standards also allowed for new techniques to gradually work their way into pieces, so some musical developments did in fact occur. Goldstein writes that the censors “can talk about traditional boundaries which must not be overstepped, yet at the same time they cannot entirely ignore the importance of creative progress [...]. It is for this reason that Shostakovich, Khachaturian, and [Dmitri] Kabalevsky are still allowed a measure of creative freedom” (Dewhirst and Farrell 99).

There were, however, limits to this freedom, even after the Zhdanov era. Shostakovich's 13th Symphony, which was discussed earlier, illustrates this. Since performances following the 1962 premiere were not allowed, Shostakovich knew very well that even his position as the most respected Soviet composer across the world could only afford him so much creative license: “No official edict against [the symphony] was ever issued, but pressure by the Party cadres was enough to prevent further performances. *Babi Yar* was the last composition in which Shostakovich expressed a clear public message. Thereafter he confined himself to introspective works” (Maes 368). Perhaps his stature, while it could only give him so much room to write with political statements outside of the State's wishes, was still enough for the censors to let him write music that was not always inherently political.

Overall, the program by Communist Party leaders to censor and control Soviet classical music seems to have been a mostly successful endeavor from the state's perspective. Through fear, propaganda, and a massive censorship bureaucracy, the state was able to have the final say on orchestral concert programs, publications of compositions and music criticism, music education, and seemingly every other aspect of classical music's performance and enjoyment.

However, there were numerous examples the sheer power of human creativity to avoid restraint, even in the face of all of this control. Herein lies an important point: if the government never feared, or at least acknowledged, the ambitious creativity and hunger for new ideas that composers had, why would the arts policy have ever been relaxed at all? This idealistic sentiment may border on being cliché, but it seems that there is something special about artistic expression, in this case music, in that it simply cannot be held back indefinitely. This was seen in the composers enduring this censorship by simply not publishing some pieces that they knew would not survive the eye of the state. Dissenting art was still created, and although it did not always reach an audience at times of heightened scrutiny, the fact remains that the government could not censor thought itself.

Chapter IV: Jazz

Why Jazz was Censored

Jazz censorship tends to follow a similar path to classical censorship, since it usually fell under the general umbrella of culture that the Soviet leadership wanted to control. However, the reasoning, methods, and effects of censorship may be different, since the genre was considered popular music in its heyday and has many stylistic differences from classical music. One point in this chapter is that the music received an intensified version of the scrutiny that classical composer's faced for using Western ideas.

Since jazz was born in America, this should come as no surprise. The inherent qualities of the music itself, with its Western origins and style that emphasizes freedom and raucousness, make it an antithesis to the uniform and disciplined society that the Soviet government envisioned. "The youth's obsession with jazz music and its rhythmic derivatives seemed to cause cultural officials the greatest consternation," says historian Timothy Ryback. "A wailing saxophone or a thumping bass could elevate and transport the youth in a way that other decadent imports from the West could not" (10-11). With these aesthetic qualities in consideration, we can now work through the time periods that were discussed with respect to classical music and see how jazz fared throughout the varying currents of Soviet artistic censorship.

The Zhdanov Era (1945-1953)

The end of World War II was marked with the dissolution of numerous state run jazz bands and a reinvigorated attack on the music, with much of this official scrutiny occurring because of its Western ties being seen as dangerous in the new Cold War context. In the

immediate aftermath of the War, however, bands played arrangements of American music across the Soviet Union while it was still in a state of “euphoria of victory.” Bands with repertoire matching that of the famed American bandleaders Harry James, Jimmy Dorsey, and Duke Ellington played in numerous Moscow restaurants. While these bands still peppered their set lists with “waltzes, polkas, and Soviet pop tunes [...] to appease the more conservative elements of their audiences,” jazz had returned to the forefront of everyday music enjoyment in the Soviet Union (Starr 205-7).

The euphoria, however, would not last. S. Frederick Starr, whose book *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union* is the seminal work on the topic, writes that the crackdown on jazz was a part of the broader cultural policy of the Zhdanov era, where “the Soviet government withdrew into itself and suppressed all cultural phenomena that could remind its citizens of the world beyond its borders.” As the Soviet Union and United States descended into the Cold War, the larger battle between capitalism and communism came to the forefront of Soviet policy now that the German fascists were defeated (Starr 207-8).

In this context, “Soviet cultural officials were certainly convinced that their country was on the verge of being overwhelmed by 'Americanization'. As they saw it, jazz was in the vanguard of a Yankee assault that had already brought Western Europe to its knees” (Ibid. 209). As far as Stalin was concerned, “jazz was regarded as an agent for the enemy's ideology,” affirms Russian composer Victor Lebedev (Logan 229). The intense censorship of jazz, like the rest of the Zhdanov era's policies, lasted for the remainder of Stalin's reign. What really separates jazz from its classical counterpart in this time are the methods and effects of the censorship that the genre endured, which will be discussed later.

The Post-Stalin Relaxation (1953-1963)

Like Soviet classical music, jazz enjoyed a golden age of creativity and popularity after Stalin's death, riding a wave of broad cultural liberalization. As was mentioned in the previous chapter on classical music, the regime broadly changed its arts policy towards allowing more freedoms as Khrushchev stepped in as the leader of the Communist Party.

One of the influences of that change was an evolution among Soviet youth. Many young people, disillusioned with Stalin and the ideals of communism in general, began to rebel against the state like the angst-filled teenagers that they were: “the fathers wore baggy trousers, so the sons had theirs cut narrow; the fathers were careless in dress, so the sons waged a clean-cut protest; the fathers denounced the wicked West, so the sons embraced it [...]. [The youth], in short, rebelled against the officially sponsored mass culture of the Soviet Union.” By the time of Stalin's death in 1953, “a significant part of the youth population [had] seceded from Stalinist society in a flush of alcohol and cigarette smoke.” It comes as no surprise that these young cultural dissidents identified with jazz, given its inherent qualities (Starr 239-41).

The Khrushchev Crackdown (1963-1964)

Khrushchev's return to Stalinist censorship practices in 1963 may have been even more hindering to jazz than it was to classical music. Like the policy changes involving classical, the swift about-face on jazz seemed to contradict the progressive direction of artistic liberalization. As late as 1961, the Soviet government had even invited American jazz legend Benny Goodman to tour the country. His Moscow concert was attended by Khrushchev himself, who joined in on a standing ovation (Starr 270-72).

Since the explanations for this crackdown were heavily discussed in the previous chapter, it will suffice to say here that jazz suffered a similar treatment as Western compositional elements did in classical music. Khrushchev's sweeping 1963 speech that marked a reversal of Soviet arts policy included a section specifically devoted to jazz, where he claimed that much of the music "gives you a feeling of nausea and pain in the stomach" and that the music had become "divorced from life and the people's struggle." The speech gave jazz the label of containing intolerable Western ideology, a theme which was shared by music containing what he called "modern dances" and "dodecaphony" (a modern classical composition technique) (Johnson and Labedz 175).

Jazz's American elements and history only encouraged its censorship as a part of Khrushchev's larger effort to control culture. But following his resignation, jazz would only become more of an accepted reality from the Soviet government's perspective, and rock and roll gradually took its place as the rebellious music of the youth (Ibid. 292). This transition will be discussed in the following chapter.

How Jazz was Censored

The most notable difference between the censorship that classical and jazz experienced is the frighteningly authoritarian nature of the Soviet government's efforts to eliminate jazz, especially during the Zhdanov era. Here, the government tried to systematically remove jazz from society as a component of its broader effort to keep Western cultural influence at bay with forceful means in conjunction with other persuasive and administrative methods.

One aspect of the Authoritarian censorship that jazz received was the arrest of numerous jazz musicians that actually “preceded most of the ideological cleansing” as a propaganda campaign. Starr writes that “it is as if the leadership acted and then ordered the music critics to rationalize their deeds.” Even in 1946, two years before Zhdanov's 1948 decree on music was issued, numerous jazz musicians were arrested and sent to work camps where they were questioned and tortured. In one instance, an entire big band was forced off a stage and banished from the country “on the charge of having collaborated with the Germans” (Starr 214-15).

Another facet of the Authoritarian censorship that jazz experienced under Stalin was a specific targeting of instruments and musical techniques that are often used in jazz. Chords with flatted fifths and blue notes were no longer allowed in performances and recordings. Trumpets could not use Harmon mutes and had to be made with traditional rotary valves, rather than the piston valve system that had already been standard practice in the West for a long time.

Saxophones suffered a particularly brutal treatment by the regime:

One day in 1949 every saxophonist in Moscow was told to bring his instrument and identification card to the office of the State Variety Music Agency. The despicable instruments were confiscated, and the former saxophonists' identification papers were changed to remove any indication that they had ever played Adolphe Sax's invention. Tenor saxophonist Yuri Rubanov emerged from the office as a bassoonist, though he had never so much as held a bassoon [...].

The same policy was [also] implemented elsewhere in the Soviet Union. (Starr 216)

This unabashed policy was clearly aimed at jazz since saxophones are rarely used in traditional orchestras and could thus be singled out as a jazz instrument. But even classical pieces that used the instrument came under fire, like Soviet composer Sergei Prokofiev's music for the film *Lieutenant Kije*, which used a saxophone and was thus “struck from the repertoire” (Ibid.).

Numerous, softer Persuasive and Administrative censorship methods were used in addition to the Authoritarian practices of the Zhdanov era. The propaganda that criticized Western elements in classical music sometimes attacked jazz in particular. The publication *Soviet Art* criticized jazz even before Zhdanov issued his decree on music, one author for the journal claimed that jazz bands were “the place where vulgarity and banality flower” (Starr 213). The genre fit perfectly into Zhdanov's charges against classical music: “No less than modernism, however, jazz was identified as a fundamental threat to Soviet civilization” (Ibid. 221). One Soviet publication even “claimed that jazz music affected the nervous system of listeners, this preparing them to fight the wars allegedly planned by Wall Street” (Ryback 11). The ensuing tidal wave of Western culture had to be stopped, the government reasoned, to maintain society and ultimately prevail against the capitalist threat.

The administrative bureaucracy that plagued classical music was equally controlling of jazz. This controlling scheme also lasted until the eventual demise of the Soviet Union, since such power was essentially inherent in the Soviet system. The system required every musician to be registered with a local Office of Music Ensembles and distinguished “sharply between those groups authorized to play for restaurants and dances and those qualified to perform in concert. Jazz bands, quite at home in both milieus, [were] usually restricted to restaurants.” Musicians had to pass a test that focused on classical ability, even if they only played jazz. Those registered specifically as jazz musicians were paid less than others. Bands that made it through this process had to play their repertoire list for an audition. If approved, they had to stick to only performing the pieces they auditioned on (Starr 267-268). This was policed by undercover censors who regularly sat in on performances (Ryback 11).

Another similarity between jazz and classical censorship was the use of state-run bands and orchestras. The amount of control that the government exerted on these groups is evident in the experiences of the Soviet Union's main State Jazz Orchestra, which was ordered to change its name to the "State Variety Orchestra" and told not to play jazz at all (Starr 215). After the Zhdanov hysteria died down, a number of State jazz groups played in cafes that catered to a young audience in an attempt by the State to keep people from listening only to American jazz on radio broadcasts by the U.S. State Department. The goal here was to have "clean-cut young Communists to hear jazz by Soviet Musicians," rather than have the youth believe that their favorite music could only be made at a high level by unscrupulous capitalists (Starr 269).

The Effects of Jazz Censorship

As was the case with classical music, the success of the Soviet leadership's attempts to censor jazz appears to be mixed. In many respects, the government was able to accomplish its goals of controlling the music. The severe limitations that were imposed under Stalin, like banning certain instruments, composition techniques, and songs, meant that "jazz music suffered along with its musicians" (Starr 215). The quality of the music itself was notably impaired by its persecution, especially under Zhdanov. This meant that "by 1953, even the best Russian jazz lagged almost a decade behind developments in America. [...] [It] was no longer jazz at all but some strange syncopated blend of Western pop music and local sources." Isolation from American culture meant that Soviet jazz musicians especially missed out on the innovative style of bop, which featured driving rhythms and more complicated chord progressions than were common in the swing music that peaked in the 1940's (Ibid. 233).

The government could not, however, contain and control jazz or even popular culture as a whole. The music was able to quickly rebound from censorship, since the “Soviet popular songs” that the government encouraged to be created simply lacked the musical substance and authenticity that made jazz so attractive, even to those charged with implementing its censorship. Records containing American jazz were banned, but were still smuggled into the country (even by officers in the Red Army) and sold on the black market. One band that was formed from musicians sent to Siberian work camps became so popular that it extensively toured the Gulag system in 1947, performing for officers (Starr 223-25).

Scott Shane writes in *Dismantling Utopia: How Information Ended the Soviet Union* that “even before Stalin's death the allure of America was strong among sophisticated Russians.” He goes on to mention a 1952 incident described by Soviet novelist Vasily Aksyonov where a girl at a private party in Moscow asked him “the most terrifying question” while they danced to jazz records: “don't you just love the States?” (189). By the time that American composer Aaron Copland toured the USSR in 1960, seven years into the post-Stalin relaxation, he heard numerous big bands that had managed to acquire what he called an “authentic American sound” despite the devastation of the censorship that had occurred (Schwarz 332-33).

Perhaps the most important reflection of this chapter is the fact that people simply enjoyed the music. Starr writes that what Soviet officials “failed to understand [...] was that the spread of jazz was due far more to the sheer appeal of the music itself and to the peculiarly receptive conditions in the receiving countries than to any deliberate effort by the government of the United States.”. Granted, the American government only encouraged jazz's spread throughout all of Eastern Europe by organizing tours by famous jazz musicians and airing the music on radio

broadcasts from the Voice of America network in Soviet territory (Starr 209-10). Regardless, none of the American cultural diplomacy efforts (or cultural subversion, as the Soviet government would call it) would have been remotely effective if it were not for the sheer likability of the music.

Out of necessity, jazz became accepted by the state on the condition of it having a unique “Soviet style,” at least as far as the censors could tell. Following Khrushchev's removal, Soviet jazz policy became much more focused on attempting to take advantage of the music's popularity with the youth to avoid it becoming a point of contention (Schwarz 445-46). Jazz festivals were held across the Soviet bloc in 1960's, drawing large crowds in Prague, Warsaw, and even in the Communist strongholds of Moscow and Leningrad (Starr 282-84).

By now, however, the backlash to jazz censorship that the government was trying to avoid had already occurred under Stalin. Vasily Aksyonov, the Soviet novelist mentioned earlier, reported that “in Eastern Europe, jazz became more than music; it took on an ideology or, rather an anti-ideology. Jazz was a rendezvous with freedom” (Richmond 71). Indeed, “the most enduring legacy of the Stalinist campaign was entirely unintended: 'long-suffering jazz' had been transformed into a martyr, a symbolic rallying point for all those disaffected by the state” (Starr 232). The censorship undoubtedly left a lasting impression on Soviet citizens who continued to identify jazz with the West, freedom, and, thanks to the greatness of the music itself, joy. Ultimately, jazz successfully “inspired the first devotees of a Soviet subculture in the postwar era” (Stephan 198). The music was so powerful and pervasive in society that it even laid the groundwork for rock and roll to help tear down the Iron Curtain.

Chapter V – Rock and Roll

While the classical and jazz chapters mainly focused on music in the Soviet Union from 1945 until the 1960's, this chapter will explore the directions that music censorship took after the two genres became generally acknowledged to be a lasting part of Soviet society, regardless of how much experimentalism they incorporated. The genre that came under government scrutiny following jazz's acceptance was its direct descendant, rock and roll. Rock, which was even more raucous and rebellious than its father, was a powerful, and often unstoppable, force throughout the Soviet Union from its introduction in the 1950's until the Communist government's collapse in 1991.

It should be noted, as was the case with the previous chapter on jazz, that the number of scholarship on the specific topic of rock and roll in the Soviet Union is rather limited. A key resource for this chapter is Timothy Ryback's *Rock Around the Bloc*, which provides a vivid and thorough account of rock and roll's place throughout Communist Eastern Europe.

Jazz Transforms

Just as jazz began to gradually transition into relative acceptance by the government, a new Western style with a harder beat and an amplifier was following in its wake behind the Iron Curtain. In the 1950's, “Official statements [by the Communist Party] appearing on rock and roll [...] rarely distinguished between jazz and rock music. Rock and roll was considered little more than an aberrant form of jazz” (Ryback 20). However, it “gradually worked its way onto the

cultural scene, first infecting the repertoires of approved jazz ensembles, and only much later spawning unofficial rock-and-roll groups. Despite the official liberalization of jazz, rock music remained suspect, and the early purveyors of rock and roll often sought to conceal the inclusion of this music in their repertoires” (Ibid. 31).

Since jazz groups received positive audience responses from rock's driving rhythms and electric guitars, they naturally included more and more of it in their performances. In 1960, this new “dance music” dominated state-sanctioned record production and had even been slipped into a state-approved folk ensemble's performance in Tchaikovsky Hall (Ibid.). By 1973, “rock music had indeed taken over. [...] Songs of reckless desire, broken hearts, and broken lives replaced the abstract improvisations of hard bop” (Starr 293).

Rock and roll, a genre of popular music that “combined the unrelenting beat of rhythm and blues with the milder guitar background of [American] country music” (Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca 912), was destined to become a subversive cultural phenomenon with incredible political power thanks to the culture that naturally came along with it. Across the world, “rock and roll took on a life of its own, not just as youth music, but as a way of life that youth lived, and, more important, were represented as living” (DeCurtis 119). All that the music needed to assume this status as a powerful social force in the Soviet Union was a nudge from four young Brits.

Beatlemania and the Rock Invasion

“Beatlemania” is the term often used to describe the worldwide obsession with the rock band The Beatles in the early 60's. Even those living under the controlling communism of Eastern Europe were certainly not outside of its sphere of influence. It is highly unlikely that the Fab Four were aware that their music was helping to plant the seeds of destruction for the Iron Curtain while they were at the height of their popularity in the West in 1964. Regardless, they ended up being the “backdrop for living under socialism” for many citizens of the Soviet Union:

Erich Loest, and emigre East German writer, was living in the industrial city of Leipzig when Beatlemania arrived with the vernal thaw of 1964. “And then there were the Beatles,” Loest recollected. “Suddenly they were heard everywhere and were in every hit parade, everyone talked about them and knew them, every week they produced a fresh hit, it was like a fever, it grabbed us and shook us and threw us about and made us different from what we had once been.”

(Ryback 50-51)

From what we have learned thus far, it is predictable that the flurry of Western culture that the Beatles brought behind the Iron Curtain meant that it was only a matter of time before they, and the wave of rock and roll that came with them, were subject to extensive censorship.

Why Rock was Censored

Explaining rock censorship fits with the theme thus far of the Soviet leadership's general fear of Western culture. Beatlemania brought more than just catchy love songs with “yeah, yeah, yeah” choruses to Eastern Europe, as an explosion of Western youth culture followed the sound

of the Beatles around the world. In the late 1950's and early 1960's especially, “for Soviet [youth] and their East European counterparts, Western music, be it a tango, a fox-trot or a 'rock 'n' roll,' represented just one aspect of an eclectic fascination with Western culture” (Ryback 56). Many young people's fashions followed suit and attempted to emulate those of Americans and the Beatles. Young people's hair grew longer and longer (Ibid. 50), blue jeans became a highly sought after commodity (Stephan 200), and teenagers could be seen in Red Square with guitars slung over their backs (Ryback 102).

Not all of the culture that came to Eastern Europe along with rock and roll was this harmless. Deadly and destructive riots were incited by both the music itself and police crackdowns on concerts. Drug abuse and addiction became rampant among many fans, like those in Czechoslovakia who commonly took a local hallucinogenic stimulant called Fenmetrazin before shows, along with whatever Western drugs could be found, like LSD and cocaine. These drugs were all of course illegal, but the Czech government could do little to nothing to stop their spread. This was “just one example of the government's growing inability to control social and political unrest during the late 1960's” (Ryback 72-74). When one combines the mostly harmless with the harmful aspects of youth pop culture that arrived in the Soviet Union in the 60's, “rock music in the USSR, even more than in the United States, represented [...] the quest for an individually liberating and truly popular culture” (Starr 294). This entire ideology revolved around a push for greater freedom under a government that did not allow it.

The auditory traits of the music itself helped enable this liberation. In addition to the Western culture that came with it, rock and roll's driving rhythms and shouting had a seemingly uncontrollable effect on young people that terrified the older Soviet establishment:

Observing the international hysteria unleashed by the wild rhythms and pounding beats of this “bestial music,” Soviet-bloc officials peered through the Iron Curtain at the tumult among their capitalist neighbors with a mixture of disdain and trepidation. [...] There was something ominous, deeply unsettling about music that sent masses of teenagers storming wildly through the streets.

(Ryback 20)

Rock had an effect on its listeners that scared the State, which was already fearful enough of the much tamer jazz genre: “where the individualistic jazz fan had closed his eyes and silently snapped his fingers, the Soviet rock-'n'-roller wanted his shout to rise with the general chorus. [...] The rock generation collectivized its rebellion” (Starr 294). Unlike any other kind of music, it seemed that the sounds and rhythms inherent in the rock genre created a hunger for freedom among listeners who were no longer afraid to stand up to oppression.

Rock’s complex culture of angst, rebellion, and drugs collided with the State's ideal Soviet citizen in many ways. Its origins in Britain and America combined with the music's accompanying saturation of Western culture to make its censorship all but inevitable. Such a significant foreign cultural infestation will undoubtedly face persecution under the political circumstances that rock faced in the Soviet Union. In the face of music that inspired the adoption of a free and overall Western mentality, the Soviet government tried to censor rock to achieve its goal of maintaining a “pure” culture. Scott Shane humorously sums it up as such: “in the eyes of

the [Communist] leadership, [...] Jimi Hendrix would lead inexorably to Adam Smith” (189).

The government realized that censoring rock, and thus Western culture, was an important part of trying to win the ideological side of the Cold War.

How Rock was Censored

The most overt form of censorship practiced on rock in the Soviet Union came from physically shutting down concerts and bands with brute police force. Many Eastern European governments of the Communist Bloc cracked down on rock even before the Beatles arrived. Bulgaria, for example, “launched an ambitious campaign to eradicate rock and roll from all public establishments” in 1958, where “inspectors” sat in on clubs and cafes to ensure that bands and record players were playing only approved repertoire. But after they left at midnight, all bets were off as “a flurry of jazz, boogie-woogie, bebop, and rock and roll” filled the air (Ryback 27).

East Germany launched an anti-rock campaign in 1958 as well, declaring the eradication of this “decadent” Western music and its accompanying dances a “*Kampfziel* (military target),” (Ibid. 28). After the arrival of Beatlemania in East Germany, a massive confrontation between rock fans and police broke out in Leipzig following the forced disbanding of a local rock group. Police used clubs, water cannons, and German Shepherds to disperse the rebellious youth, arresting over one hundred of them in the process (Ibid. 61). This style of censorship even continued well into the 1980's. Eric Shiraev, a Russian rock concert organizer, provides a firsthand account: “most [rock concerts] ended with the arrival of police, the detention of musicians and some spectators, and endless questioning by KGB officers” (214).

Extensive propaganda was again a key facet of the government's battle to curtail the citizenry's rabid passion for Western music. The Beatles came under particularly heavy fire from cultural writers, including Alexander Tsafsmann, a famous Soviet jazz artist who had faced persecution from his government only a decade earlier. His attack was scathing: "Tsafsmann said he could not bear to listen to 'such artistic violence.' In addition, Tsafsmann observed, 'The Beatles are already out of date.'" After the band remained as popular as ever following these attacks, the *Sovetskaia kultura* paper tried arguing that everyday Soviet citizens who enjoyed the music were "playing into the hands of Western capitalists" (Ryback 63). It was asserted by the state-controlled press that

[...] the Beatles, whose music was rooted in English folk songs, had been exploited by big business and transformed into the idols of "philistines." Despite their fabulous wealth, the Beatles had grown desperately unhappy in Western consumer society and vainly sought refuge in drugs and Eastern religion. Beatlemania itself reflected the "illnesses" of a society void of ideals. (Ibid.)

This propaganda was undoubtedly part of a concerted effort by the government to sway the public's opinion away from this incredibly popular music and Western culture as a whole.

By the nature of the Soviet Union's brand of Communism, where the only free markets existed underground and out of sight, the State also forcefully controlled all of the legal production and distribution of records and instruments. This meant that many bands were enticed to comply with the State for access to guitars, microphones, and the media, augmenting the Soviet Union's use of administrative censorship. This enticement allowed for the government to co-opt, rather than stop entirely, the popularity of rock and roll by propping up its own bands,

thus creating “a counterbalance to the growth of amateur bands in an attempt to satisfy the demands for swinging, shaking 'modern' electric guitar music” (Bright 124).

Although doing so effectively legitimized the genre in the eyes of the state, if not the eyes of onlookers, the Soviet Union was still able to usually hold sway over the music's message. Indeed, “musicians willing to cut their hair, moderate their decibel levels, and purge their repertoires of offensive Western songs, could enjoy the benefits of state sponsorship – national concert tours, appearances on radio and television, [and] recording opportunities on [a state-sponsored] record label.” These Vocal Instrumental Ensembles (VIA's) began appearing in 1966 and quickly became a fixture in the USSR (Ryback 106). VIA's were effectively an acknowledgment by the State “that ideological diatribes could not exorcise rock music from their societies;” they instead decided to “selectively accommodat[e] rock and roll into official culture” (Ibid. 130). This decision to eventually allow the rock movement to exist, albeit with significant controls, definitely draws parallels to the experiences of jazz.

The Effects of Rock Censorship

On one hand, controlling legal record production, breaking up bands, creating State-approved alternatives, and spewing out propaganda undoubtedly made it extremely hard for bands to function independently, thus the enticement of becoming a VIA (Ryback 130). The government was able to, at least on the surface, severely limit access to rock and roll and soften the music's anti-authoritarian tendencies by controlling its message. In many important ways, censorship was successful.

However, the popularity of rock could not be contained by the regime after the Beatles burst onto the world stage. Their new music, which arrived in Eastern Europe via smuggled records and a variety of cover bands, many of which would soon grow into very influential rock bands in their own right (Ibid. 57), ended up helping topple the Soviet Union according to many Russians. “The Beatles were our quiet way of rejecting 'the system' while conforming to most of its demands,” remembers Soviet President Gorbachev's interpreter (Richmond 205). They inspired a silent resistance and helped brew discontent with the state by being “impulsive, iconoclastic, and exuberant [...] role models” that were the antithesis of authority (Ryback 56).

Equally as important, the Beatles demonstrated that all of Western culture was not nearly as decadent as the Soviet press said, since State-supported “venomous reports” about the band inciting riots and being tied to capitalism did nothing to quell their popularity (Ibid. 62-63). Their influence was so extensive that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's wife told Yoko Ono, the wife of the late Beatle John Lennon, in 1987 that she and her husband were big fans of the band. Having the Soviet leader genuinely enjoy this Western music was likely a large factor in the government's eventual acceptance of rock under Gorbachev (Richmond 205-6).

Even while rock was not officially approved and allowed, an extremely vibrant underground scene still thrived. In clubs and bars, music could be made by “amateur” bands who in 1984 were estimated to outnumber official ones by 70,000 to 145 (Bright 123). The State bands also had trouble garnering an audience in the first place due to their relative tameness. By the time that the Soviet Union began to crumble, “as the rock idols prospered, their pop [VIA] counterparts, with their politically correct and innocuous themes, languished. Artificially happy

looking, most pop singers in the early days of the transformation found themselves at odds with their anxious and politically motivated audiences” (Glad and Shiraev 215).

Not only did the crackdowns on rock fail to fully succeed in eliminating Western culture; they may have actually backfired and supported subversion of the government. In one visible example, the dependence on the State that the Soviet Union attempted to create meant that many musicians could not function independently after its collapse. Many turned to the Russian mafia to support concert tours, produce records, and stay safe, along with many other sources of profit. As a result, “bribery, violence, and extortion became common characteristics of the music business” (Glad and Shiraev 220-21). If the Soviet government had allowed bands to be more independent, they would have been less likely to eventually resort to illegal means of support that made Russia a more chaotic and lawless place.

As was the case with jazz, it is quite possible that the government's act of censoring rock helped make it even politically charged. Even when rock was a novelty in the late 50's, Bulgarian writer Luben Dilov warned “that by dismissing rock and roll as primitive and decadent and by identifying rock music specifically with American youth culture, governments made rock music attractive to Soviet-bloc youth” (Ryback 26). Starr writes that the government's rejection of the rock “backfired disastrously” and that “by reinforcing the sense of generational confinement on which rock music fed, the prohibition created a vital underground rock culture” (295). Forceful crackdowns by militia who “hoped to frighten youngsters away from the Western rock music” would also sometimes instigate cultural backlash. One rock fan recalls that while being interrogated by an officer for attending a concert that “there would always be the hope that I

could get home, that I could get out of that office full of uniforms and go home and listen to the Beatles and relax” (Ibid. 64).

The Soviet Union Collapses

In a major turning point in international politics, the Berlin Wall that divided the capitalist West Germany from the Communist East fell in 1989, quickly leading to German unification. From there, it was only a matter of time before the Soviet empire crumbled in 1991. Most scholars point to a variety of factors that lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union, including but certainly not limited to a costly invasion of Afghanistan, superior American military and economic might, and inherent flaws in Communism itself that coupled with an astronomically expensive arms race to cripple the Soviet economy (Richmond xiii).

While all of these are extremely valid factors that likely contributed to the end of the Cold War, a subversive culture war was also fought beneath the surface of stockpiling nuclear weapons and proxy conflicts. This was a war where radios, microphones, and guitars were often the weapons of choice. Gorbachev, who rose through the ranks of the Communist Party to head the State in 1985, was well aware of the ongoing takeover of Soviet culture via the West. The new Soviet leader had a more positive and open-minded view of Western European and American society than any other previous man to hold his position. Thanks to his trips to the other side of the Iron Curtain, “Gorbachev came to believe that only by cooperating with the wider world would the Soviet Union manage to undo the autarky and isolationism that had blighted it for so long” (Barrass 313-14).

Seeing that Soviet society was literally dissolving around him thanks to the government's restrictive policies, Gorbachev instituted a series of reforms upon entering office. He hoped that this policy of *perestroika*, or “restructuring,” would lead to eventually democratic socialism, thus releasing the enormous built up political tension that threatened to derail the entire system while still maintaining that system in a fundamental sense. Basically, he thought that people would vote to keep the Communist party in power when its power is not forcefully asserted. The other important component of *perestroika* was Gorbachev's goal of drawing down the Cold War and normalizing diplomatic relations with the rest of the world (Ibid. 316-17).

While the international diplomatic component of *perestroika* was mostly driven by the dragging Soviet economy (Ibid.), the social aspects, known as *glasnost*, which involved loosening restrictions on the media and information consumption, came out of the significant cultural shift that had been underway for decades. The earliest effects of *glasnost* were seen in a few state media articles that involved “exposés of social problems and mild criticism of official policies,” something that would have been unheard of before the Gorbachev era (Shane 38). Rock led the way in the *glasnost* era, with lyrics openly criticizing the communist system and the KGB being heard outside of underground shows for the first time in the late 1980's (Ibid. 190). By 1990, even the state press presented stories that were critical of the KGB, the Soviet secret police (Ibid. 248).

Gorbachev tried to retract the press' autonomy, but by now it was too late. The damage of allowing the relatively free spread of information had been done. Soviets were now exposed to stories of governmental corruption and extreme poverty, ending any lingering feelings of their

government's altruistic perfection (Shane 284). Once the entire system fell apart in 1991,

The Soviet world-picture had been wrecked not by tanks and bombs but by facts and opinions, by the release of information bottled up for decades. The loss of faith was at once a national experience shared by millions of people caught up in a collective discussion about themselves, and a deeply personal experience with myriad variations. (Ibid. 215-16)

This growing awareness of reality, when combined with the ever-increasing influence of Western culture, meant that Soviet people were in the midst of a fundamental ideological shift by the time of the Soviet collapse.

The confrontation between rock and roll and the Soviet establishment symbolized and even played a key role in the fight for defining Soviet society. Rock was essentially the soundtrack to the cultural struggle that raised questions of national identity from teenagers to Mikhail Gorbachev. Through radio broadcasts, underground clubs, and smuggled records, Western music continued to seep through the Iron Curtain, bringing with it a thrilling freedom of expression that simultaneously attracted Soviet youth and gave their superiors nightmares. At the end of the day, people simply enjoyed this fun and entrancing music that could instantly transport them away from their dreary, oppressed lives under Communism. The youth who were first gripped by Beatlemania and beyond would eventually become the heirs of a rapidly thawing Soviet Union than is now no longer in existence.

Conclusion

This study has covered various explanations, means, and effects of music censorship in the Soviet Union during the Cold War era, spanning from Stalin to Gorbachev and from orchestras in concert halls to electric guitars in underground clubs. It will now be helpful to summarize and synthesize the study's findings and discuss if the Soviet government may have actually been better off by not censoring music.

Why Music was Censored

The constant factor in music censorship throughout the study is the Cold War; specifically, the Soviet government's goal of keeping Western cultural influence at bay as a component of their broader push for global hegemony. In order for the Soviet Union to be the political, economic, and cultural capital of the world, they would have to at least match their Cold War opponents on the cultural battlefield. In banning and defaming ideas labeled as “formalist” and “decadent,” the government aimed to preside over a uniquely Soviet society that could thrive without Western influence. Allowing the enemy's ideas into music would acknowledge that their ideas, and thus their culture as a whole, have value. This, the Soviet leadership simply could not do.

Therefore, the reasons for Soviet music censorship seem to encompass the ideas of both social construction and political repression as the terms were discussed in the literature review. As a reminder, social construction means that a government uses censorship to support and maintain what they believe to be a morally “right” culture, while political repression entails

censoring ideas that are critical of the government to stay in power. This study showed that the Soviet government wanted to mold culture to fit their ideals, and creating this utopia under authoritarian Communism actually necessitated censoring dissenting political ideas. Western ideas could not pervade society in order for it to meet moral standards of the regime, and the political implications of those outside ideas explain why they ran contrary to this vision.

How Music was Censored

Every method of censorship that was described in the literature review (authoritarianism, administration, persuasion, and self-censorship) appeared in the study, but in different ways. Perhaps the most notable difference between how the genres were censored is the authoritarian methods of censorship, such as sending musicians off to work camps and ending concerts with police forces, that seemed to only apply to jazz and rock

The obvious distinction between the genres that could explain this difference lies in their very nature, with classical music being a “high art” genre that had long been a part of Russian culture and heritage. The Russian nationalist composers of the late 1800's and early 1900's are particularly important here, since the Soviet government wanted modern composers to emulate them to create a unique Soviet classical music. In the cases of jazz and rock, where the exciting genres of popular music (i.e. “low art”) were newly imported from the decadent West, the music and musicians did not have a rich tradition to rely on for relative protection. The value of the music itself had to be proven, and it was only once the government realized that it could not entirely remove jazz and rock from society that authoritarian censorship ended.

The administrative and persuasive censorship methods that were discussed are consistent with the Soviet bureaucracy's push for complete social control. Across every genre, the government controlled orchestras and bands, music and music criticism publishing, record and instrument production, performance venues, conservatories, and more. Propaganda was widely utilized to decry Western music and the ideas that came with it, making the government's position clear. This propaganda was also important in influencing the self-censorship of music by composers and musicians. It is, however, unclear if the self-censorship that was seen matched the term as it was described in the literature review: did Soviet artists ever decide to not create music that challenged the government's views because they agreed with the official position, or were they afraid of possible retaliation?

It may be impossible to tell for certain in a society where nearly every act of speech has political implications, but it seems highly unlikely that composers and musicians could have possibly created art completely independent of state influence. At least while Stalin was still in power, classical composers and jazz musicians must have had the cultural purges of 1930's in their minds when they acquiesced to Zhdanov's rules and concurred with the anti-Western propaganda at the time. The jazz and rock musicians who followed the government's statements probably personally knew people who had been arrested and sent to work camps. It is most likely, then, that self-censorship was the result of a chilling effect from the fear of retaliation for creating art that did not fit the government's vision, given that musicians were well-aware of what the Soviet government was capable of if its demands were not met.

**The Effects of Music Censorship:
Should the Soviet Union have Censored Music?**

The Soviet government was often able to successfully censor music so that it fit their vision. Classical pieces were only performed if they fit the government's standards of what should be allowed in the concert hall. Jazz and rock concerts were usually monitored or forced into secrecy, if they were held at all. When it had the will, the government's monopoly of power meant that it could control music by defining at will what was legal and what was not.

There are, however, many poignant caveats to the apparent effectiveness of this censorship. For one thing, the music itself suffered in quality. It proved to be hard, and sometimes impossible, for artistic creativity to thrive and for a unique popular culture to form under these oppressive conditions. During the Zhdanov era, Soviet classical music copied the state-approved Russian masters of the past instead of following and leading innovations in modern composition techniques. Jazz didn't start incorporating elements of the more advanced bebop style until long after it was the norm in America and Western Europe. It is apparent that the government could not force the creation of vibrant and unique music, as was the case with its support of only cookie-cutter classical pieces, forcefully un inventive jazz artists, and light pop acts.

This is not to say that vibrant and unique music was not created. To the contrary, the existence of meaningful music despite the government's efforts to control it is a testament to the value of art and the human spirit. As was mentioned in the literature review's discussion of the "truth discovery" theory of free speech, it can not be assumed that a government limiting speech

will actually hinder its ability to reflect reality. Soviet classical composers still wrote pieces that were critical of authoritarianism, like Shostakovich's *13th Symphony* (“Babi yar”), jazz musicians still snuck banned pieces into their repertoires, and rock bands played on in underground clubs. A large black market emerged to counter the government's administrative control, where banned records and instruments could still be bought and sold. In this sense, censorship failed to completely remove Western elements and governmental criticism from music.

We now arrive at the issue of backlash: could censorship have actually hurt the government? For classical music, drawing this connection is difficult, since the music existed in the plane of “high art” and could be controlled more effectively than the other “popular music” genres. Regardless, there does appear to have been noticeable instances of backlash to the censorship of jazz and rock. Their persecution only helped them become a stronger symbol of freedom than they already innately had based on their origins and stylistic qualities. The excitement and sheer pleasure that listeners drew from the music showed Soviet citizens that the capitalist countries that gave birth to the genres could really not be as evil as the government wanted them to think. By doing this, the music deterred the demonization of Americans while the Soviet leadership spewed out anti-Western propaganda to fight the ideological side of the Cold War. In fact, it actually demonized the Soviet government for making unpopular statements and actions against the music the people genuinely enjoyed.

Regardless, the Soviet government seemingly had no choice but to try to censor and control music. By the very nature of the Authoritarian Communist regime and the competitive international circumstances that it found itself in, the government could not allow Western music

to influence Soviet society. But the power of a free culture to spread, even under harsh circumstances, meant that their attempts to completely control music proved to be futile. People still found ways to make and listen to music, and cultural controls were always eventually loosened due to social pressure, as they were when Khrushchev launched his de-Stalinization campaign.

The USSR may have faded into the history books, but some remnants of its authoritarian Communism undoubtedly remain in Vladimir Putin's Russia. In an example of recent music censorship that grabbed international headlines, two members of the all-female Russian punk band Pussy Riot were jailed for two years for staging a performance in a Moscow cathedral. The band's entire existence is based on its criticism of the Russian government: “though Pussy Riot plays concerts and releases music videos, it's a protest collective that aims to highlight what it considers Russia's slide into authoritarianism. Punk performances are their chosen mode of dissent.” The arrests also created widespread backlash, since the “harsh punishment only served to spread the word that Russia had returned to Soviet-era oppression” (Dingfelder).

Russia's political future may be uncertain, but perhaps the most important lesson to be drawn from this study is that its composers, musicians, and all of those who appreciate the work that they do will continue to follow their passion for the music that they love, no matter what the government does.

Bibliography

- Atkins, Robert and Svetlana Mintcheva, ed. 2006. *Censoring Culture: Contemporary Threats to Free Expression*. 1st ed. New York: The New Press.
- Barrass, Gordon. S. 2009. *The Great Cold War: A Journey Through the Hall of Mirrors*. 1st ed. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Blasi, Vincent. 1977. "The Checking Value in First Amendment Theory." *American Bar Foundation Research Journal* 2 (3): 521-649.
- Bright, Terry. 1985. "The Soviet Crusade Against Pop." *Popular Music* 5: 123-48.
- Burkholder, J. Peter, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca. *A History of Western Music*. 8th ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- DeCurtis, Anthony, ed. 1992. *Present Tense: Rock & Roll and Culture*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Dewhirst, Martin and Robert Farrell, ed. 1973. *The Soviet Censorship*. 1st ed. Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press.
- Dingfelder, Sadie. 2014. "Pussy Riot is out to topple the Russian government, says 'Words Will Break Cement' author Masha Gessen." *The Washington Post*, March 6.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/express/wp/2014/03/06/masha-gessen-words-will-break-cement-pussy-riot-politics-prose/>
- Ducat, Craig R. 2013. *Constitutional Interpretation*. 10th ed. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Gey, Steven G. 1996. "The Case against Postmodern Censorship Theory." *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 145 (2): 193-297.
- Glad, Betty and Eric Shiraev, ed. 1999. *The Russian Transformation: Political, Sociological, and Psychological Aspects*. 1st ed. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Goldstein, Michael. 1983. "Protecting Music from 'Dangerous Ideas'." *Index on Censorship* 12 (1): 4-7.
- Greenawalt, Kent. 1989. "Free Speech Justifications." *Columbia Law Review* 89 (1): 119-155.
- Guins, Raiford. 2009. *Edited Clean Version: Technology and the Culture of Control*. 1st ed. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

- Hoffmann, Erik P. and Frederic J. Felton, Jr., ed. 1980. *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*. 1st ed. New York. Aldine Publishing Company.
- Johnson, Priscilla and Leopold Labedz, ed. 1965. *Khrushchev and the Arts: The Politics of Soviet Culture, 1962-1964*. 1st ed. Cambridge, MA. M.I.T. Press.
- Kallen, Horace. 1942. *Art and Freedom*. 1st ed. New York. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce.
- Logan, Wendell. 1992. "The Development of Jazz in the Former Soviet Union: An Interview with Victor Lebedev." *Black Music Research Journal* 12 (2): 227-32.
- Maes, Francis. 2002. *A History of Russian Music: From 'Kamarinskaya' to 'Babi Yar.'* (Pomerans, Pomerans Trans.). 1st ed. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Olkhovsky, Andrey. 1955. *Music Under the Soviets: The Agony of an Art*. 1st ed. New York. The Research Program on the U.S.S.R. and Praeger Publications.
- Pierskalla, Jan Henryk. 2010. "Protest, Deterrence, and Escalation: The Strategic Calculus of Government Repression." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54 (1):117-145.
- Richmond, Yale. 2003. *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain*. 1st ed. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Ryback, Timothy. 1990. *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*. 1st ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Schwarz, Boris. 1972. *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917-1970*. 1st ed. London: Barrie & Jenkins Ltd.
- Shane, Scott. 1994. *Dismantling Utopia: How Information Ended the Soviet Union*. 1st ed. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Inc.
- Shearer, David R. 2009. *Policing Stalin's Socialism: Repression and Social Order in the Soviet Union, 1924-1953*. 1st ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Siracusa, Joseph. 2008. *Nuclear Weapons: A Very Short Introduction*. 1st ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sitsky, Larry. 1994. *Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1900-1929*. 1st ed. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Starr, S. Frederick. 1994. *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union*. 2nd ed. New York: Proscenium Publishers, Inc.

Stephan, Alexander, ed. 2008. *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945*. 1st ed. New York: Berghahn Books.

Taruskin, Richard. 1997. *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays*. 1st ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Taruskin, Richard. 2010. *Oxford History of Western Music, Vol. 5: Music in the Late Twentieth Century*. 1st ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Tribe, David. 1973. *Questions of Censorship*. 1st ed. New York: St. Martin's Press.