

LAW AND POPULAR  
CULTURE:  
TEXT, NOTES, AND  
QUESTIONS

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# LAW AND POPULAR CULTURE: TEXT, NOTES, AND QUESTIONS

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## *Second Edition*

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MATTHEW  BENDER

# *Dedication*

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For those willing to find law in not only their law books but also their culture.



# *Preface*

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My co-authors and I are pleased to present the Second Edition of *Law and Popular Culture: Text, Notes and Questions*. We are struck, both individually and collectively, by the immense array of contemporary law-related American popular culture, and we believe pop cultural images and portrayals influence what Americans expect from their laws, lawyers, legal institutions, and government.

The Second Edition maintains the most appreciated features of the First Edition. Each chapter begins with a list of five films which the chapter then addresses along with other works related to a given subject area. Instructors using the Second Edition might want to screen one or more of a chapter's listed films while teaching the chapter. Then, too, the Second Edition includes well over one hundred excerpts from articles by the leading law and popular culture scholars. A majority of these excerpts appeared in the First Edition, but many appear for the first time in the Second. Excerpts are reprinted in edited form and largely without footnotes, but citations accompany the excerpts, allowing readers to consult the complete articles if they are so inclined.

The Second Edition also has new features. An original chapter on "Punishment" explores the surprisingly large body of pop cultural works related to imprisonment and capital punishment. Although film remains the most prominent medium in the Second Edition, law-related imagery and portrayals in such other media as television, inexpensive fiction, children's literature, and the comics receive much greater attention in the text's notes and comments sections than was the case in the First Edition. Most subtly, the Second Edition emphasizes the reasons, forms, and ramifications of law-related popular culture, moving away to some extent from attempts either to point out the legal errors in popular culture or to teach the law using popular culture.

The authors of *Law and Popular Culture: Text, Notes, and Questions* wish to thank Jennifer A. Beszley, the loyal editor of both the First and now the Second Edition at LexisNexis, and also Tulita Papke, our own editorial assistant, whose excellent research, attention to detail, and mastery of computerized formatting greatly improved the quality of the text. My co-authors and I hope teachers and students alike will delight as much as we do in critically considering the interrelationships of law and popular culture. This is one course of study that is demanding and lots of fun as well.

David Ray Papke





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