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Moral of the Story

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Jurgen: A Comedy of Justice was published in 1919 by James Branch Cabell. It's an imaginative fantasy novel that dabbles in religious themes and Arthurian legends, but it's also a satire that pokes fun at contemporary America.

Kind of funny that the book is called "A Comedy of Justice" & then this farce happens



I'm the devil and I'm in the book



Shortly after it was published, the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice seized the plates and tried to charge the publisher for "obscenity," primarily referring to double-entendres in the text, although those were by no means the only problem they had with it.

After more than 2 years, the *Jurgen* publishers were acquitted. The trial raised many concerns about whether the NYSSV, which was not a government agency, should be able to censor art — and by what metrics art should be judged.

"None the less I do still believe that *Jurgen* is, as originally labeled, "a book wherein each man will find what his nature enables him to see..." — James Branch Cabell

Obviously censorship and the role of art in society are things that are still relevant today. The moral standards by which we judge things are different but nobody's actually solved or answered any of these questions.



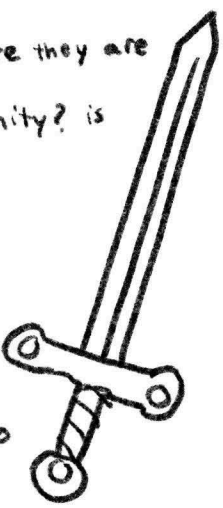
in fact, people can't even agree on what censorship is or what counts.



there are more questions here than answers. here are a few on my mind:

- who do our rules protect? who has the authority to enforce them? what does "enforcing" look like?
- who has the power to make sure they are heard? who doesn't?
- what is art? what is obscenity? is art itself worth protecting?

i'm struggling to turn this series of events into a parable that we can learn from, but maybe the point is that i don't have to. not every story has to teach us a clear moral.



— KATY HOOPER
 JURGEN COMICS CONTEST
 VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
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