Exploring U2: Is this Rock 'n' Roll?: Essays on the Music, Work, and Influence of U2

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Role
Editor: Scott Calhoun

School or Department
English, Literature, and Modern Languages

Dates of Service
1999-

Description
Exploring U2: Is This Rock 'n' Roll? features new writing in the growing field of U2 studies. Edited by Scott Calhoun, with a foreword by Anthony DeCurtis, Exploring U2 contains selections from the 2009 inaugural gathering of "The Hype and The Feedback: A Conference Exploring The Music, Work and Influence of U2." In keeping with U2's own efforts to remove barriers that have long prevented dialogue for understanding and improving the human experience, this collection of essays examines U2 from perspectives ranging from the personal to the academic and is accessible to curious music fans, students, teachers, and scholars alike.

Four sections organize 16 essays from leading academics, music critics, clergy, and fans. From the academic disciplines of literature, music, philosophy, and theology, essays study U2's evolving use of source material in live performances, the layering of vocal effects in signature songs, the crafting of a spiritual community at live concerts, U2's success as a business brand, Bono's rhetorical presentation of Africa to the Western consumer, and readings of U2's work for irony, personhood, hope, conservatism, and cosmic-time. Official band biographer Neil McCormick considers U2 as a Dublin-shaped band, and Danielle Rhéaume tells how discovering and returning Bono's lost briefcase of lyrics for the album October propelled her along her own artistic journey.

This thoughtful and timely collection recognizes U2's music both as art and commentary on personal journeys and cultural dialogues about contemporary issues. It offers insights and critical assessments that will appeal not only to scholars and students of popular music and culture studies but to those in the fields of theology, philosophy, the performing arts, literature, and all intellectually curious fans of U2.

ISBN
9780810881570

Publication Date
2012

Publisher
Scarecrow Press

City
Lanham, MD

Comments
Class of 1995
About the Author

Dr. Calhoun is a Professor of English, teaching courses on nonfiction writing, literature, the history of English, C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, and the uses, constructions, and appreciation of narratives. He is the creator and director of The U2 Conference, a meeting of academic and popular audiences for the exploration of the music, work, and influence of U2. He edited and contributed to Exploring U2: Is This Rock 'n' Roll?, a collection of essays, and is a Series Editor with Scarecrow Press for Tempo books on rock and pop music and culture. He writes for the website @U2 and has contributed essays about U2 to Books & Culture. He has been teaching at Cedarville since 1999.

Visit Dr. Calhoun's SelectedWorks page.

Recommended Citation

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