that the woman "really" does lack the phallus. Narcissism implies no knowledge whatsoever—rather, it signifies full investment in an illusion.

34. Ewen, Captains of Consciousness, p. 47.
35. Ibid., p. 39.
38. Irigaray, This Sex Which Is Not One, p. 177.

The Production Code

The content of motion pictures has been a subject of public controversy from the age of the peepshow (1894–1896) to the present. Early films made for Edison’s Kinetoscope, a small-screen, single-viewer, peepshow device, included relatively racy material. The peepshow provided views of exotic dancers, such as Anabelle in her Butterfly Dance and Serpentine Dance (1895), whose exposed ankles shocked the sensibilities of middle-class patrons. There were also suggestive films of female acrobats, such as a that of the woman who disrobes while on a trapeze [Trapeze Disrobing Act [1901]]. Also common were films of women whose skirts were blown upward when they walk over subway gratings [What Happened on Twenty-Third Street, New York City [1902]]. Several films were set in Chinese opium dens, where unspeakably sinister events presumably took place. Other peepshow items featured a bride who undresses for bed while her husband secretly watches her from behind a screen [The Bride Retires [France, 1902]] and a man who spies on a woman undressing in front of her window [Pull Down the Curtains, Suzie [1904]].

As more and more middle-class patrons (and women and children) began to frequent the nickelodeons in 1905–1908, both the images on the screen and the physical conditions under which films were viewed in the theaters became an issue of social concern. On December 24, 1908, in response to complaints from clergymen objecting that motion picture shows were breeding grounds for vice, the mayor of New York, George B. McClellan, ordered all the city’s nickelodeons to be closed. The motion picture industry placated its would-be city, state, and national censors by instituting a program of self-censorship. In March 1909, the Motion Picture Patents Company, an association of major motion picture producers, established its own board of censorship, which, in October 1909, became the National Board of
Censorship (whose name was changed in 1916 to the National Board of Review).

Various states established their own censorship boards in the 1910s and 1920s. In 1915, the U.S. Supreme Court found that motion pictures were not guaranteed the "free speech" protection granted to newspapers and other media under the First Amendment; it was not until 1952 that the court finally ruled that movies were a form of expression protected by the Constitution. In the interim, local and national censorship bodies reviewed the content of motion pictures. In 1922, in the wake of criticism over public scandals involving comedy star Fatty Arbuckle (who was accused of rape and murder), actor Wallace Reid (who died of a drug overdose), and director William Desmond Taylor (who was mysteriously murdered), film producers created a self-regulatory organization, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA), in an attempt to forestall external regulation. They hired Will Hays, Warren Harding's Postmaster General and former Chairman of the Republican National Committee, to clean up Hollywood. In conjunction with the MPPDA, Hays created what would subsequently be known as the "Hays Office," an organization that was charged with guaranteeing to the public that Hollywood movies would be suitable for family consumption.

With the coming of sound, studios began to use screenplays on a regular basis in the production and preproduction process. In 1927, Hays and a group of major Hollywood producers drew up a list of thirty-six specific guidelines for producers, which became known as "The Don'ts and Be Carefuls." The Hays Office also began to review screenplays informally submitted to it by several studios. However, these guidelines were not strictly enforced, and certain major studios, such as Warner Bros., did not routinely submit scripts for review.

In 1930, in response to criticism from religious organizations, a more thorough production code was drafted. Written by Martin Quigley, the [Catholic] publisher of the *Motion Picture Herald*, and Father Daniel A. Lord, S. J., the new code attempted to explain the general moral principles by which motion picture producers should be guided as well as to spell out specific directives regarding the depiction of crimes against the law, sex, dances, religion, vulgarity, "repellant" subjects, and other potentially objectionable material.

However, the 1930 code was ignored as often as it was observed. Indeed, a series of highly successful gangster films, such as *The Public Enemy* (1931), *Little Caesar* (1931), and *Scarface* (1932), in which gangsters were portrayed as tragic heroes, and popular sex comedies starring Mae West (e.g., *I'm No Angel* [1933]; *Belle of the Nineties* [1934]) and Jean Harlow (*Platinum Blonde* [1931]; *Red Dust* [1932]; *Bombshell* [1933]) prompted the Catholic Bishops of the United States to form the Legion of Decency in 1934. Insisting that industry self-regulation was not working, the legion, under the direction of Joseph I. Breen, threatened a nationwide boycott of motion pictures unless teeth were put into the 1930 code or a new code was written and strictly enforced. This threat led to the creation of the Production Code Administration (PCA), headed by Joe Breen, on July 1, 1934. The PCA was empowered by the studios to enforce the 1930 code.

The code remained in effect until the 1950s, when it was challenged by independent producer-director Otto Preminger, who successfully released two films, *The Moon Is Blue* (1953) and *The Man with the Golden Arm* (1955), without a PCA seal of approval. The PCA had objected to the use of the words "professional virgin" and "pregnant in Moon" and to the subject matter of *Golden Arm*, which dealt openly with the problem of drug addiction. The major studios, however, continued to submit scripts and finished films to the PCA for approval.

During the 1960s, controversial topics that tested the flexibility of the code became increasingly popular with Hollywood producers. In 1966, a major studio [Warner Bros.] released director Mike Nichols' screen adaptation of Edward Albee's play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Its stars, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, traded expletives back and forth that had never been heard before in first-run American theaters, including "goddam, son of a bitch, bastard, screw you, and up yours." The PCA responded with a revision of the code, expanding it to include a new category, "Suggested for Mature Audiences." In November 1968, the industry had abandoned the restrictive code for a more flexible ratings system, administered by the Motion Picture Association of America and the National Association of Theater Owners. Under the ratings system, motion pictures were "graded" in an attempt to identify the particular age group for which a film had been deemed appropriate. "G" meant that a film was suitable for general audiences of all ages, an "M" (which was subsequently changed to "PG") identified a film as suitable for mature audiences (i.e., adults) and subject to the guidance of their parents or to "parental guidance," for children. An "R" indicated that a film was restricted to adults, children younger than the age of sixteen (later changed to seventeen) were admitted only if accompanied by an adult. In the case of an "X" rating, no one younger than the age of sixteen...
[later seventeen] was admitted. After the release of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984), which contained graphic violence deemed unsuitable for children younger than age thirteen, the PG rating was modified, broken down into PG and PG-13. In 1990, a new rating—"NC-17" (no children younger than seventeen)—was introduced to distinguish "serious" films with mature themes from X-rated pornographic films.—Editor.

**The Production Code**

**Code to Govern the Making of Talking, Synchronized and Silent Motion Pictures**

Formulated by Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc., and the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.

Motion picture producers recognize the high trust and confidence which have been placed in them by the people of the world and which have made motion pictures a universal form of entertainment.

They recognize their responsibility to the public because of this trust and because entertainment and art are important influences in the life of a nation.

Hence, through regarding motion pictures primarily as entertainment without any explicit purpose of teaching or propaganda, they know that the motion picture within its own field of entertainment may be directly responsible for spiritual or moral progress, for higher types of social life, and for much correct thinking.

During the rapid transition from silent to talking pictures they have realized the necessity and the opportunity of subscribing to a Code to govern the production of talking pictures and of reacknowledging this responsibility.

On their part, they ask from the public and from public leaders a sympathetic understanding of their purposes and problems and a spirit of cooperation that will allow them the freedom and opportunity necessary to bring the motion picture to a still higher level of wholesome entertainment for all the people.

**General Principles**

1. No picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympathy of the audience shall never be thrown to the side of crime, wrong-doing, evil or sin.

2. Correct standards of life, subject only to the requirements of drama and entertainment, shall be presented.

3. Law, natural or human, shall not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation.

**Particular Applications**

I. **CRIMES AGAINST THE LAW**

These shall never be presented in such a way as to throw sympathy with the crime as against law and justice or to inspire others with a desire for imitation.

1. **Murder**
   a. The technique of murder must be presented in a way that will not inspire imitation.
   b. Brutal killings are not to be presented in detail.
   c. Revenge in modern times shall not be justified.

2. **Methods of Crime** should not be explicitly presented.
   a. Theft, robbery, safe-cracking, and dynamiting of trains, mines, building, etc., should not be detailed in method.
   b. Arson must be subject to the same safeguards.
   c. The use of firearms should be restricted to essentials.
   d. Methods of smuggling should not be presented.

3. **Illegal drug traffic** must never be presented.

4. **The use of liquor** in American life, when not required by the plot or for proper characterization, will not be shown.

II. **SEX**

The sanctity of the institution of marriage and the home shall be upheld. Pictures shall not infer that low forms of sex relationship are the accepted or common thing.

1. **Adultery**. Sometimes necessary plot material, must not be explicitly treated or justified or presented attractively.

2. **Scenes of Passion**
   a. They should not be introduced when not essential to the plot.
   b. Excessive and lustful kissing, lustful embraces, suggestive postures and gestures, are not to be shown.
   c. In general passion should so be treated that these scenes do not stimulate the lower and baser elements.
3. Seduction or Rape
   a. They should never be more than suggested, and only when essential for the plot, and even then never shown by explicit method.
   b. They are never the proper subject for comedy.
4. Sex perversion or any inference to it is forbidden.
5. White slavery shall not be treated.
6. Miscegenation (sex relationship between white and black races) is forbidden.
7. Sex Hygiene and venereal disease are not subjects for motion pictures.
8. Scenes of actual child birth, in fact or in silhouette, are never to be presented.
9. Children’s sex organs are never to be exposed.

III. VULGARITY
   The treatment of low, disgusting, unpleasant, though not necessarily evil, subjects should be subject always to the dictates of good taste and a regard for the sensibilities of the audience.

IV. OBSCENITY
   Obscenity in word, gesture, references, song, joke, or by suggestion (even when likely to be understood only by part of the audience) is forbidden.

V. PROFANITY
   Pointed profanity (this includes the words, God, Lord, Jesus, Christ—unless used reverently—Hell, S.O.B., damn, Gawd), or every other profane or vulgar expression however used, is forbidden.

VI. COSTUME
   1. Complete nudity is never permitted. This includes nudity in fact or in silhouette, or any lecherous or licentious notice thereof by other characters in the pictures.
   2. Undressing scenes should be avoided, and never used save where essential to the plot.
   3. Indecent or undue exposure is forbidden.
   4. Dancing costumes intended to permit undue exposure or indecent movements in the dance are forbidden.

VII. DANCES
   1. Dances suggesting or representing sexual actions or indecent passion are forbidden.
   2. Dances which emphasize indecent movements are to be regarded as obscene.

VIII. RELIGION
   1. No film or episode may throw ridicule on any religious faith.
   2. Ministers of religion in their character as ministers of religion should not be used as comic characters or as villains.
   3. Ceremonies of any definite religion should be carefully and respectfully handled.

IX. LOCATIONS
   The treatment of bedrooms must be governed by good taste and delicacy.

X. NATIONAL FEELINGS
   1. The use of the Flag shall be consistently respectful.
   2. The history, institutions, prominent people and citizenry of other nations shall be represented fairly.

XI. TITLES
   Salacious, indecent, or obscene titles shall not be used.

XII. REPULSIVE SUBJECTS
   The following subjects must be treated within the careful limits of good taste:
   1. Actual hangings or electrocutions as legal punishments for crime.
   2. Third degree methods.
   3. Brutality and possible gruesomeness.
   4. Branding of people or animals.
   5. Apparent cruelty to children or animals.
   6. The sale of women, or a woman selling her virtue.
   7. Surgical operations.

The Reasons Supporting Preamble of Code

1. Theatrical motion pictures, that is, pictures intended for the theatre as distinct from pictures intended for churches, schools, lecture halls, educational movements, social reform movements, etc., are primarily to be regarded as ENTERTAINMENT.
   Mankind has always recognized the importance of entertainment and its value in rebuilding the bodies and souls of human beings.
But it has always recognized that entertainment can be of a character either helpful or harmful to the human race, and in consequence has clearly distinguished between:

a. Entertainment which tends to improve the race, or at least to re-create and rebuild human beings exhausted with the realities of life; and

b. Entertainment which tends to degrade human beings, or to lower their standards of life and living.

Hence the MORAL IMPORTANCE of entertainment is something which has been universally recognized. It enters intimately into the lives of men and women and affects them closely; it occupies their minds and affections during leisure hours, and ultimately touches the whole of their lives. A man may be judged by his standard of entertainment as easily as by the standard of his work.

So correct entertainment raises the whole of a nation.
Wrong entertainment lowers the whole living conditions and moral ideas of a race.

Note, for example, the healthy reactions to healthful, moral sports, like baseball, golf, the unhealthy reactions to sports like cock-fighting, bull-fighting, bear baiting, etc.

Note, too, the effect on ancient nations of gladiatorial combats, the obscene plays of Roman times, etc.

2. Motion pictures are very important as art.

Though a new art, possibly a combination art, it has the same object as the other arts, the presentation of human thought, emotion, and experience, in terms of an appeal to the soul through the senses.

Here, as in entertainment:
Art enters intimately into the lives of human beings.
Art can be morally good, lifting men to higher levels. This has been done through good music, great painting, authentic fiction, poetry, drama.
Art can be morally evil in its effects. This is the case clearly enough with unclean art, indecent books, suggestive drama. The effect on the lives of men and women is obvious.

Note: It has often been argued that art in itself is immoral, neither good nor bad. This is perhaps true of the THING which is music, painting, poetry, etc. But the thing is the PRODUCT of some person's mind, and the intention of that mind was either good or bad morally when it produced the thing. Besides, the thing has its EFFECT upon those who come into contact with it. In both these ways, that is, as a product of a mind and as the cause of definite effects, it has a deep moral significance and an unmistakable moral quality.

Hence: The motion pictures, which are the most popular of modern arts for the masses, have their moral quality from the intention of the minds which produce them and from their effects on the moral lives and reactions of their audiences. This gives them a most important morality.

1. They reproduce the morality of the men who use the pictures as a medium for the expression of their ideas and ideals.

2. They affect the moral standards of those who through the screen take in these ideas and ideals.

In the case of the motion pictures, this effect may be particularly emphasized because no art has so quick and so widespread an appeal to the masses. It has become in an incredibly short period the art of the multitudes.

3. The motion picture, because of its importance as an entertainment and because of the trust placed in it by the peoples of the world, has special MORAL OBLIGATIONS.

A. Most arts appeal to the mature. This art appeals at once to every class. Immature, developed, undeveloped, law abiding, criminal. Music has its grades for different classes; so has literature and drama. This art of the motion picture, combining as it does the two fundamental appeals of looking at a picture and listening to a story, at once reaches every class of society.

B. By reason of the mobility of a film and the ease of picture distribution, and because of the possibility of duplicating positives in large quantities, this art reaches places unpenetrated by other forms of art.

C. Because of these two facts, it is difficult to produce films intended for only certain classes of people. The exhibitor's theatres are built for the masses, for the cultivated and the rude, the mature and the immature, the self-respecting and the criminal.

Films, unlike books and music, can with difficulty be confined to certain selected groups.

D. The latitude given to film material cannot, in consequence, be as wide as the latitude given to book material. In addition:

a. A book describes; a film vividly presents. One presents on a cold page, the other by apparently living people.
b. A book reaches the mind through words merely; a film reaches the eyes and ears through the reproduction of actual events.

c. The reaction of a reader to a book depends largely on the keenness of the reader’s imagination; the reaction to a film depends on the vividness of presentation. Hence many things which might be described or suggested in a book could not possibly be presented in a film.

E. This is also true when comparing the film with the newspaper.

a. Newspapers present by description, films by actual presentation.

b. Newspapers are after the fact and present things as having taken place; the film gives the events in the process of enactment and with the apparent reality of life.

F. Everything possible in a play is not possible in a film.

a. Because of the larger audience of the film and its consequential mixed character. Psychologically, the larger the audience, the lower the moral mass resistance to suggestion.

b. Because through light, enlargement of character, presentation, scenic emphasis, etc., the screen story is brought closer to the audience than the play.

c. The enthusiasm for and interest in the film actors and actresses, developed beyond anything of the sort in history, makes the audience largely sympathetic toward the characters they portray and the stories in which they figure. Hence the audience is more ready to confuse actor and actress and the characters they portray, and it is most receptive of the emotions and ideals presented by their favorite stars.

G. Small communities, remote from sophistication and from the hardening process which often takes place in the ethical and moral standards of groups in larger cities, are easily and readily reached by any sort of film.

H. The grandeur of mass settings, large action, spectacular features, etc., affects and arouses more intensely the emotional side of the audience.

In general, the mobility, popularity, accessibility, emotional appeal, vividness, straightforward presentation of fact in the film make for more intimate contact with a larger audience and for greater emotional appeal. Hence the larger moral responsibilities of the motion pictures.

Reasons Supporting the General Principles

1. No picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence, the sympathy of the audience should never be thrown on the side of crime, wrong-doing, evil or sin.

This is done:

1. When evil is made to appear attractive or alluring and good is made to appear unattractive.

2. When the sympathy of the audience is thrown on the side of crime, wrong-doing, evil, sin. The same thing is true of a film that would throw sympathy against goodness, honor, innocence, purity or honesty.

Note: Sympathy with a person who sins is not the same as sympathy with the sin or crime of which he is guilty. We may feel sorry for the plight of the murderer or even understand the circumstances which led him to his crime. We may not feel sympathy for the wrong which he has done.

The presentation of evil is often essential for art or fiction or drama.

This in itself is not wrong provided:

a. That evil is not presented alluringly. Even if later in the film the evil is condemned or punished, it must not be allowed to appear so attractive that the audience’s emotions are drawn to desire or approve so strongly that later the condemnation is forgotten and only the apparent joy of the sin remembered.

b. That throughout, the audience feels sure that evil is wrong and good is right.

2. Correct standards of life shall, as far as possible, be presented.

A wide knowledge of life and living is made possible through the film. When right standards are consistently presented, the motion picture exercises the most powerful influences. It builds character, develops right ideals, inculcates correct principles, and all this in the attractive story form.
If motion pictures consistently hold up for admiration high types of characters and present stories that will affect lives for the better, they can become the most powerful and natural force for the improvement of mankind.

3. Law, natural or human, shall not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation.

By natural law is understood the law which is written in the hearts of all mankind, the great underlying principles of right and justice dictated by conscience.

By human law is understood the law written by civilized nations.

1. The presentation of crimes against the law is often necessary for the carrying out of the plot. But the presentation must not throw sympathy with the crime as against the law nor with the criminal as against those who punish him.

2. The courts of the land should not be presented as unjust. This does not mean that a single court may not be represented as unjust, much less that a single court official must not be presented this way. But the court system of the country must not suffer as a result of this presentation.

Reasons Underlying Particular Applications

Preliminary:

1. Sin and evil enter into the story of human beings and hence in themselves are dramatic material.

2. In the use of this material, it must be distinguished between sin which repels by its very nature, and sins which often attract.

   a. In the first class come murder, most theft, many legal crimes, lying, hypocrisy, cruelty, etc.

   b. In the second class come sex sins, sins and crimes of apparent heroism, such as banditry, daring thefts, leadership in evil, organized crime, revenge, etc.

The first class needs far less care in treatment, as sins and crimes of this class are naturally unattractive. The audience instinctively condemns and is repelled. Hence the important objective must be to avoid the hardening of the audience, especially of those who are young and impressionable, to the thought and fact of crime. People can become accustomed even to murder, cruelty, brutality, and repellent crimes, if these are sufficiently repeated. The second class needs real care in handling, as the response of human natures to their appeal is obvious. This is treated more fully below.

3. A careful distinction can be made between films intended for general distribution, and films intended for use in theatres restricted to a limited audience. Themes and plots quite appropriate for the latter would be altogether out of place and dangerous in the former.

Note: In general the practice of using a general theatre and limiting its patronage during the showing of a certain film to "Adults Only" is not completely satisfactory and is only partially effective.

However, maturer minds may easily understand and accept without harm subject matter in plots which do younger people positive harm.

Hence: If there should be created a special type of theatre, catering exclusively to an adult audience, for plays of this character (plays with problem themes, difficult discussions and maturer treatment) it would seem to afford an outlet, which does not now exist, for pictures unsuitable for general distribution but permissible for exhibitions to a restricted audience.

I. CRIMES AGAINST THE LAW

The treatment of crimes against the law must not:

1. Teach methods of crime.

2. Inspire potential criminals with a desire for imitation.

3. Make criminals seem heroic and justified.

Revenge in modern times shall not be justified. In lands and ages of less developed civilization and moral principles, revenge may sometimes be presented. This would be the case especially in places where no law exists to cover the crime because of which revenge is committed.

Because of its evil consequences, the drug traffic should not be presented in any form. The existence of the trade should not be brought to the attention of audiences

The use of liquor should never be excessively presented even in picturing countries where its use is legal. In scenes from American life, the necessities of plot and proper characterization alone justify its use. And in this case, it should be shown with moderation.

II. SEX

Out of regard to the sanctity of marriage and the home, the triangle, that is, the love of a third party for one already married, needs careful handling,
The treatment should not throw sympathy against marriage as an institution. Scenes of passion must be treated with an honest acknowledgment of human nature and its normal reactions. Many scenes cannot be presented without arousing dangerous emotions on the part of immature, the young or the criminal classes.

Even within the limits of pure love, certain facts have been universally regarded by lawmakers as outside the limits of safe presentation.

In the case of impure love, the love which society has always regarded as wrong and which has been banned by divine law, the following are important:

1. Impure love must not be presented as attractive and beautiful.
2. It must not be the subject of comedy or farce, or treated as material for laughter.
3. It must not be presented in such a way as to arouse passion or morbid curiosity on the part of the audience.
4. It must not be made to seem right and permissible.
5. In general, it must not be detailed in method and manner.

III. VULGARITY; IV DISCINCTY; V. PROFANITY, hardly need further explanation than is contained in the Code.

VI. COSTUME

General Principles:

1. The effect of nudity or semi-nudity upon the normal man or woman, and much more upon the young and upon the immature persons, has been honestly recognized by all lawmakers and moralists.
2. Hence the fact that the nude or semi-nude body may be beautiful does not make its use in the films moral. For, in addition to its beauty, the effect of the nude or semi-nude body on the normal individual must be taken into consideration.
3. Nudity or semi-nudity used simply to put a “punch” into a picture comes under the head of immoral actions. It is immoral in its effect on the average audience.
4. Nudity can never be permitted as being necessary for the plot. Semi-nudity must not result in undue or indecent exposure.
5. Transparent or translucent materials and silhouettes are frequently more suggestive than actual exposure.

VII. DANCES

Dancing in general is recognized as an art and as a beautiful form of expressing human emotions.

But dances which suggest or represent sexual actions, whether preformed solo or with two or more, dances intended to excite the emotional reaction of an audience, dances with movement of the breasts, excessive body movements while the feet are stationary, violate decency and are wrong.

VIII. RELIGION

The reason why ministers of religion may not be comic characters or villains is simply because the attitude taken toward them may easily become the attitude taken toward religion in general. Religion is lowered in the minds of the audience because of the lowering of the audience’s respect for a minister.

IX. LOCATIONS

Certain places are so closely and thoroughly associated with sexual life or with sexual sin that their use must be carefully limited.

X. NATIONAL FEELINGS

The just rights, history, and feelings of any nation are entitled to consideration and respectful treatment.

XI. TITLES

As the title of a picture is the brand on that particular type of goods, it must conform to the ethical practices of all such honest business.

XII. REPULLENT SUBJECTS

Such subjects are occasionally necessary for the plot. Their treatment must never offend good taste or injure the sensibilities of an audience.
Edited and with an introduction by
John Belton

Movies and Mass Culture