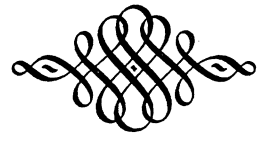
HOLLYWOOD QUARTERLY



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LAWRENCE S. KUBIE

LAWRENCE S. KUBIE'S wide professional experience includes posts in universities, hospitals, and research centers as neurologist, psychiatrist, and psychoanalyst. During the war he served as Special Consultant, Air Surgeon's Office, and Scientific Consultant, E.T.O. Among his published works is the book, *Practical Aspects of Psychoanalysis.*

INCREASINGLY, artists have concerned themselves with psychiatry. It is irrelevant to view this as good or bad, since it has been inevitable. Over the years, as art and literature gradually turned away from the presentation of history, mythology, and religion, and from moral and spiritual exhortation, they became techniques by which the artist attempted to voice his own life, his own personality. Sophistication soon led him from the obvious to the obscure, until presently he found himself struggling to express the more chaotic aspects of his personality, to wit, that in him which was neurotic. This trend long antedated the discoveries of psychoanalysis; but once psychoanalysis had appeared, with its promise of an ultimate inclusive understanding of human nature, then psychoanalysis was destined inevitably to infiltrate into art and literature. To the artist's equipment this added some half-understood and usually oversimplified formulae, some fragments of scientific knowledge, and a pseudo-technical vocabulary with which to decorate his thoughts. In due time the movies reached a similar phase. Here, however, the psychiatric invasion brought with it not merely many new opportunities but also many new problems.

To understand this it will first be necessary to consider the emotional and cultural influence of films in general. In a sense all art is an effort to live vicariously, that is, by substituting fictional experience for direct personal experience. In its potential capacity to achieve precisely this no other art form can approach the movie. The most important single fact about the film is this quasi-realism. Indeed, its unique capacity to simulate reality is so great that it regularly overwhelms the feeble capacity of the average adult to discriminate between reality and fantasy. When, as in a moving picture, something seems to occur before our very eyes, no matter how impossible and contrived it may be, we feel as though we had been eyewitnesses to life itself. "I was there, Charlie," is the feeling. It takes a critical and sophisticated mind to resist this impression, to maintain a firm hold on reality, and immediately or in swift retrospect to sort out the possible from the impossible. In the average movie audience few are capable of this. Most are extraordinarily passive, swayed by a film as a Nazi crowd was swayed by Hitler. Consequently, the subtly stylized quality of the movies may exercise a powerful formative or deforming influence on our culture, creating such tacit assumptions as that ordinary folk look as movie stars look, and behave as they behave in films, and that events really happen in that artificial fashion.

Often enough the paper-backed dime novel of our childhood was equally incredible and almost as exciting; but it

never endangered our hold on reality to a like degree. This was because reading forces the reader into a more active participation than the passive role of a spectator at a film. No matter how vivid they may be, all texts leave much to the reader's imagination; and as we read, we exercise imaginative effort of our own. This leaves certain automatic, unconscious, self-protective opportunities at the disposal of the reader, that is, to let his imagination run freely or to shut it off. On the screen, on the other hand, little or nothing is left to the imagination; and the ancient dime novel seems actually to have come to life. Under this powerful influence the sense of reality by which we humans must try to live can take a beating from which some minds may never wholly recover.

If this is true for the average adult, obviously it can be even more dangerously true for the child. The child's immature hold on reality is so insecure that it is easily shaken by the vivid and lifelike scenes with which the films confront him. If anyone doubts this, let him watch the scattering of cowering and miserable little figures among the fascinated children at a horror film, alternately peeking and covering their eyes. Then during ensuing weeks let him study their sleep and their dreams and their play, and their human relationships, and their eating and excretory functions. More often than we like to admit, we might find a reaction not unrelated to the combat neurosis of war.

It is too bad that adequate studies of this kind have not been made, because it is not necessary that the vivid and compelling pseudo-realism of the movie should be destructive. This happens only when the industry abuses its capacity to make the unreal seem real. If on the other hand it presents human beings as they are, and human events as they really occur, it can become the most significant educational implement we have ever known. Its very capacity to simulate direct experience gives to the film a unique power to educate the heart as well as the mind. In this direction its potentialities have not been realized or developed, precisely because the industry as such has never studied the effects of the instrument which it uses.

At this point let us apply these general considerations to the problem with which we started, namely, the role of psychiatry in the movies. Currently, many books and films are exploiting the widespread interest in the neurotic aspects of human nature. It is a significant innovation in our culture that people are beginning to recognize the fact that neurotic problems are universal. If the full implications of this were presented properly in films, they would help to create something quite new in everyday life. But it is not easy to do this; and script writers and directors are confronted by many technical and psychological difficulties as they venture into these new fields.

First to consider here are their own conscious and unconscious feelings, and those of audiences as well, about mental ailments. Guilt and anger and fear are deeply buried in all of us; and in everyone there is some intimation of jeopardy, however remote, from conflicting inner stresses. Yet these very internal conflicts at the same time give rise to a fearful fascination with mental disorders, and to the need to dispose of that fear in some comforting fashion.

Consequently, whenever mental frailty is portrayed in the films, whether as minor neurotic quirks or a frank insanity, a considerable part of any audience is both fascinated and terrified on levels deeper than the plot alone would stir. There is hardly a member of any audience who does not secretly identify himself with some aspect of the illness that is portrayed. Such an identification may be conscious, or it may be unconscious, or it may be partly one and partly the other. The individual may jitter with terror, or he may fail wholly to realize that he is afraid. He may just feel uncomfortable, or he may protect himself by being "bored" or by rejecting the film angrily as impossible and ridiculous. He will feel most superior and most secure, however, when he can make fun of the whole business, as when the story turns the tables on psychiatry and makes the psychiatrist appear foolish and the patient the possessor of wisdom. Then the fool becomes the wise man, mental illness becomes a mere figment of a psychiatrist's imagination, and the audience can laugh it all away. There are several such cheap and easy formulas; and I offer them gratis to all script writers. To have a popular success on your hands all you need is to make the psychiatrist into a stumblebum as in *Harvey,* or into a villain as in *Shock,* or, alternatively, to remove the sting by turning the psychiatrist into a beautiful blonde who throws her arms around you between "treatments," as in *Spellbound.* The formula is as sure-fire as Horatio Alger; but I cannot help wondering whether the movies (and the stage, too, for that matter) want permanently to remain on so infantile a plane as this.

Let us consider the problem from another angle. Could films on psychiatry retain their wide dramatic appeal if they dropped all Hollywooden and melodramatic trappings and portrayed the human spirit simply and directly? If human interest in psychopathology is as deeply rooted and as widespread as I have indicated, and if truth is at least as strange as fiction, then it ought to be possible, for example, to rewrite the *Seventh Veil* in such a way as to give it universal significance. That young pianist's neurosis would be shown to grow out of the unavoidable stresses of everyday family life, without any exceptional or melodramatic features. There would be no early orphanage, no pathological bachelor uncle, no auto wreck, nothing which would make of the patient anything special and unusual. This would not merely be more true to life; it would also carry a more inescapable appeal. Of anything which is unusual and exceptional the spectator can say always, "But this could not apply to me." It is only when neurotic character traits are seen to develop out of the humdrum yet highly charged banalities of the nursery years of every man and every woman that it becomes impossible for anyone to evade its significance for himself.

As another example consider the treatment of dreams. The dream in films has literally no relation to the dream of real life, because in their efforts to portray dreams the films have misused color, movement, sound, and confusion. Only rarely do people dream in colors, yet movie dreams are spattered with color like a child's fingerpainting or the colored comics of a Sunday supplement. Film dreams are as full of action as an old-fashioned

Western; yet with rare exceptions real dreams, on the contrary, have little active movement. For the most part they are made up of a swift succession of static flashes, not unlike old-fashioned "living pictures." Again, most dreaming is silent and visual. Sounds, voices, and words are heard only in rare staccato fragments if at all. Yet movie dreams are filled with conversations, elaborate songs and dances, and general sound effects. Finally, confusion is an essential quality of actual dreams because events which occurred at widely separated times and places are condensed into images which merge into one another, with quick shifts in locale and subtle changes in the identity of the dream figures. Incidents are left incomplete and ambiguous in meaning, and feelings may seem inappropriate to what is taking place. These are some of the sources of significant confusion in real dreams. How does the movie dream present this? It rises to heights of imaginative power which are truly impressive, and suggests this confusion just by hiding everything in clouds of hazy steam.

It would seem that even rudimentary study should make it possible for Hollywood to make better dreams than this artificial nonsense. It is far from impossible to indicate the subtle thread of significant meaning in the seeming chaos of dream imagery; and if the films are going to portray psychic processes at all, whether normal or abnormal, it would seem reasonable to demand that this be done with maturity.

More recently an additional element has complicated still further the affair between psychiatry and the film industry. Films are no longer limiting themselves to an effort to portray human suffering, that is, the internal struggles and external behavior of people with emotional or mental difficulties. They are also trying to portray the technical processes of psychiatric diagnosis and treatment. This is a further important step; and, depending upon how it is used, it too can be powerfully educative or seriously distorting. Up to the present time, with one or two notable exceptions, the films which have attempted this have been a curious hybrid of the documentary film and the worst kind of melodrama. Everything is either too quick and easy as in *Spellbound,* or too melodramatic as in *The Seventh Veil.* In other less responsible efforts they have been either ridiculous horseplay or an old-fashioned horror story. Here again it is not too much to demand that, when the films deal with universal human suffering and the struggle to alleviate it, they should not distort it.

I do not believe that there is an easy solution to any of these problems. Two steps, however, might be taken which would lead toward such a solution.

First, and most important, the film industry could establish a permanent endowment for an independent research foundation to study both the special uses of films in emotional and intellectual education and the general influence of all kinds of films on our current culture. Both would have to be studied with different age groups, drawn from different economic, educational, cultural, national, and geographical segments of the population. The impact of the films, and more particularly of the psychiatric film, on patients of various kinds would also have to be investigated. Under psychiatric leadership such investigations would

have to be carried on jointly by psychiatrists, sociologists, educators, clinical psychologists, and cultural anthropologists, with adequate statistical controls. This could not fail to help the film industry as a whole to achieve maturity and to realize its extraordinary, undeveloped potentialities. At the same time there can be little question that it would open up vast new empires of expanding markets and save large sums of money annually lost on unsuccessful films. Therefore it would seem to be good science, good citizenship, and good business to organize such a research institute as soon as possible.

My second suggestion is directed partly to the film industry, but more particularly to scientists and to scientific bodies. When he advises any industry, the scientist, and especially the psychiatrist, should always be in a position in which his objectivity and impartiality will be above suspicion. This means that he must play a role analogous to that of the expert adviser to a court of law, and never that of the hired expert whose testimony is for sale to an interested party. Consequently, the psychiatrist should never allow himself to be hired by an individual film company which is interested merely in purchasing his scientific prestige as a backing for a particular film. Indeed, it should never be the business of an individual psychiatrist acting alone to pass on any film. Instead, our national scientific associations might well set up special boards to advise Eric Johnson's office on the technical accuracy of any film which directly or indirectly depicts technical subjects and processes. Such an advisory board should not and could not act as a censor; but it could give or withhold the right to use a statement that the film had been approved by the appropriate scientific board.

Of these two suggestions, the need for an independent research institute is by far the more important and far-reaching in its implications both for the industry and for the community. The other is more a matter of common sense, common scientific decency, and social responsibility on the part of scientists themselves.

Harvey. Play, Mary C. Chase, 1945. *Shock,* 20th C-F, 1946. Director, Alfred Werker. Story, Albert De Mond. Screenplay, Eugene Ling. *Spellbound,* Vanguard-UA, 1945. Director, Alfred J. Hitchcock. Novel (*The House of Dr. Edwardes*), Francis Beeding. Screenplay, Ben Hecht. *The Seventh Veil,* Sidney Box-Ortus-Univ (Brit.), 1946. Director, Compton Bennett. Original screenplay, Muriel and Sidney Box.

Psychology and the Films

FRANKLIN FEARING

FRANKLIN FEARING is a professor of psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles, and one of the editors of the *Hollywood Quarterly*.

THE CURRENT cycle of films and radio programs in which "psychology," psychiatry, and psychopathology play leading roles raises a number of interesting practical and theoretical questions. A social psychologist professionally concerned with probing such matters is bound to wonder what, exactly, the term "psychological" has come to signify in our culture that Hollywood and the networks—notably so cautious about the new and untried—have made, in one form or another, into a standard formula. We have had the fatherly all-wise Psychiatrist (so wise!), the insane Psychiatrist, the criminal Psychiatrist, the seductive female Psychiatrist, and the philosophical-whimsical Psychiatrist. In a current film (*The Dark Mirror*) the studio has made him, with nice impartiality, into a Psychiatrist-Psychologist possessing both an M.D. and a Ph.D. degree who apparently has a "practice" (at least an office) and does research on the psychology of twins. With a truly magnificent display of professional virtuosity, including for the first time in any film the use of the Rorschach test, he solves the crime which most ten-year-olds solved in the first ten minutes of the picture. Films the plot of which hinges upon various forms of aberrant and psychopathological behavior, especially amnesia, have become run-of-the-mine. In a current radio serial which has a national audience (*One Man's Family*) a particularly omniscient psychiatrist clears up a bad case of juvenile delinquency, reorients the entire Family, and converts Father Barbour (and you know Father Barbour!) apparently in about three interviews.[1]

Dr. Kubie, a well-known psychiatrist, elsewhere in this issue of the *Quarterly* discusses this problem in the context of psychiatry.[2] It is his view that this interest is the inevitable consequence of the creative artist's attempt to "express the more chaotic aspects of his own personality, that in him which is neurotic." The "fearful fascination" which mental disorders have for the layman arises from his own internal conflicts, from which, according to Dr. Kubie, he must get relief in "some comforting fashion." Through identification with the action as portrayed in the film he gets such relief. The interest of the public in psychopathology is regarded by Dr. Kubie as an indication that people are beginning to recognize the fact that "neurotic problems are universal."

And the view that the creative artist is a neurotic, that art is a neurotic product and that it has meaning to people because in turn it satisfies *their* neurotic needs, is a neat formulation. While it may apply to a limited range of phenomena, as an all-inclusive the-

[1] As a matter of fact, if this program is a representative sample, radio does a better job in handling psychiatric material than the screen.

[2] The distinction between psychiatry and psychology need not be discussed here. The layman—more logical, perhaps, than the professionals—does not make any such distinction.

ory of creative activity and the social response to art and to the mass media in particular it seems to this writer quite inadequate. It appears doubtful if creative workers, particularly in the mass media, have turned to psychiatry simply because of their preoccupation with their own lives and chaotic personalities. Such a subjective, almost clinical, view of the sources of creative activity smacks curiously of certain nineteenth-century anthropological views—Lombroso's, for example—which made much of the supposed relationship between "genius," "insanity," and "degeneracy." Lombroso even claimed to have observed a certain similarity between the creative act and an epileptic seizure!

Without in the least minimizing the significant contribution of psychiatry to our understanding of the vast and puzzling problems of mental disorder, it may be questioned if it has yet achieved an "ultimate inclusive understanding of human nature." Freudian theory, which shapes the thinking of most psychiatrists, certainly presumes to present such a view. At many points, although not in all, that theory, imposing and all-inclusive as it is, seems inadequate to the social psychologist, the social anthropologist, and other social scientists who are concerned with human nature and human society. Much checking and testing needs to be done, especially with the use of experimental and statistical methods. The social scientist is likely to be cautious about accepting a theory which makes culture and its products—for example, art—mere by-products of conflicts between internal forces the battleground of which is a hypothetical human *psyche*. Many anthropologists and social psychologists regard Freud's social theory, based as it was on inadequate concepts of the nature and origins of human culture, as notably unsuccessful.

With a considerable beating of drums and not a little arrogance, the more ardent followers of the Freudian faith have created the impression that they had the answers to most of the problems which beset us. This is unfortunate since it comes at a time when our dear old friend, the Man on the Street, is seeking for simplistic solutions for his difficulties. It is just possible that he, as well as Hollywood and the networks, has been sold a bill of goods in a package, a *very* attractive package, which bears the label "Psychology" or, as some prefer, "Psychiatry." It seems to me necessary to distinguish between what these disciplines really have to offer when critically appraised, and what their labels symbolize to the average person.

Almost every teacher of a course in introductory psychology has had the somewhat disillusioning experience of discovering that a substantial proportion of his students have been attracted to the course not because of their interest in the science, or even because of the rumored ease with which a sagging scholastic record can be improved, but because they believe that in the study of psychology they will find something slightly glamorous, slightly dangerous but very exciting and mysterious, *and* practical. Successful businessmen "use" psychology, you know. It is hard to analyze this curious compound of superstition, awe, glamour, and hardheaded practicality, but it makes it almost impossible for the average person to approach the subject

with the same rational apathy with which he approaches such subjects as, say, chemistry, physics, or English literature.

The point is illustrated by a student who recently appeared in my office and, with a slightly aggrieved air, inquired in which course in psychology "they showed hypnotism." He had, it appeared, taken a number of courses without being exposed to that titillating topic, and it was also obvious that his patience was about exhausted. For him, hypnotism was the gimmick.[3]

It is a complex set of human needs, confusions, and anxieties which underlie this pattern of expectancies with which the layman invests the subject of psychology. The core of it may be his rather desperate need for help in a ruthlessly competitive society. He fears failure and he doubts his ability, single-handed, to cope with the future. He is uncertain of his own capacity to withstand stress and strain, and of his potentiality for success. "Psychology" has come to be a symbol of hope. And if it doesn't do all that he expected, at least he has had a chance to see how the magician does his tricks.

This, I believe, creates the interest in and demand for psychiatry or psychology in films and radio. The material which comes under these labels has in the main been used clumsily and with no real awareness of what is involved. Some films, as, for example, *Shock,* were unbelievably, inexcusably, vicious; and others were merely banal and superficial. I thoroughly agree—and I said as much in a review in an earlier issue of the *Quarterly*—with Dr. Kubie when he says that it would be sufficient if the human spirit were portrayed simply and directly without benefit of psychiatric trappings. But this has been the general purpose of dramatic portrayal down the ages. I don't believe there is any special interest in human psychopathology with the neurotic roots which Dr. Kubie assumes.

Perhaps the most important contribution which the psychological sciences can make to the mass media consists in the utilization of their techniques of research and their present body of tested principles in the study of the effects of these media. The significance of these media in our society can scarcely be exaggerated, and yet comparatively little has been done in the way of systematic research on exactly how the effects are achieved. But such investigation must be undertaken in an atmosphere free from preconceptions, which Dr. Kubie seems to support, concerning the nature of the "crowd mind." It was the now discredited writer Le Bon who originally popularized notions of this type. The dichotomy between the alleged susceptible "average" adult and the sophisticated intellectual, based on differences in capacity to hold on to "reality," is pure Le Bon.

Research in the last fifteen or twenty years has given some indication of the enormously complicated character of the factors which underlie effective communication. It has become clear that these factors can't be understood in terms of the "crowd mind," passivity, suggestibility, etc., etc. These stereotypes of crowd behavior are especially dangerous when applied to the mass media because they are based on certain question-begging assumptions

[3] I understand that in a recently released film the psychiatrist uses hypnotism.

about human nature and the human capacity to grasp "reality."

There is a danger that a similar uncritical stereotyping will occur with respect to the reactions of children to motion pictures and radio. For example, Dr. Kubie paints a rather horrible picture of "cowering and miserable little figures among the fascinated children at a horror film." Research is needed—pretty difficult research, incidentally—concerning exactly what the "cowering" signifies and its immediate and remote effects, if any. So far, there is almost no unequivocal evidence regarding specific causal relationships between motion picture experience and specific "effects" on children—good or bad. There is, however, a wealth of clichés dealing with the subject. Police chiefs—without any adequate methodology for preventing or even understanding juvenile delinquency—blame the movies; parents, completely detached from the world of the child or the adolescent and panicky regarding their own problems, blame the movies; and nice, elderly ladies with remarkably little in the way of personal experience, blame the movies for "all this sex and drinking."

Yes, research is needed. We need to know exactly what it is that the individual gets from the film or radio presentation, and what its long-run effects are. It is quite easy to say that the whole world has adopted Hollywood manners of dress and living. On being pressed, persons who make such statements offer in evidence the revolutionary effect on women's hair styles when Ginger Rogers changes her hair-do.

Dr. Kubie's suggestion for the establishment of an endowment for research in this field is excellent. I don't quite get the cogency of the necessity for "psychiatric leadership" of such research. I should, in fact, fear such leadership if it is committed to certain views of the nature of crowd responses and the relationship between art and culture. The question of methodology in such investigations would be extremely important. The specific techniques associated with psychiatry would have comparatively little application. Perhaps the most suggestive developments are the methods and concepts developed by the "field theoretical" psychologists associated with Professor Kurt Lewin. These methods have been especially fruitful in the field of group dynamics, the field most closely related to the problems at hand.

The Dark Mirror, Univ-Internat, 1946. Director, Robert Siodmak. Story, Vladimir Pozner. Screenplay, Nunnally Johnson. *Shock,* 20th C-F, 1946. Director, Alfred Werker. Story, Albert De Mond. Screenplay, Eugene Ling.

Our Film Program in Germany: I. How Far Was It a Success?

ROBERT JOSEPH

ROBERT JOSEPH served as Film Officer for Berlin and Deputy Film Officer for Germany. Between 1934 and the war, he worked in the production, distribution, and exhibition of films. In collaboration with William Castle he has published a novel, *Hero's Oak.*

FOR REASONS of its own the motion picture trade press has been waging a steady campaign of adverse criticism against the War and State Departments' film program for Occupied Areas in Europe—Germany and Austria. Reinformation and indoctrination of the German and Austrian people falls under the sponsorship and control of the Information Control Division (ICD) for Germany and the Information Control Branch (ICB) for Austria. The film trade press has been analyzing and reporting the film-distribution and exhibition policy of ICD and ICB in terms of normal and orderly business practice; and the trade press has found the methods and some of the results inefficient, inept, and inimical to the best interests of the American film industry. In short, the government handling of films, the critics say, has been a failure.

In general, four main criticisms have been leveled at ICD and ICB and, through them, at the State Department and the Army.

1) Trade papers have criticized the selection of films which are now being shown in Austria and Germany.

2) That ICD and ICB, operating under their respective Military Government organizations, have not encouraged the return of private industry, the Motion Picture Exporters' Association (MPEA), back into the two areas, is a second criticism.

3) ICD in particular, so the charge goes, has been practicing unusually inept business management in its four-power film-exchange agreements.

4) And finally, the American-made newsreel, *Welt im Film* (World in Films), does not have the quality which it should have, in the opinion of trade paper commentators.

Weekly *Variety* recently headlined one of its dispatches: "RUSSIA ECLIPSING US ON PIX IN REICH." The story was based on views expressed by Frederic Ullman, Jr., of RKO, following a European junket and a stopover in occupied areas. According to *Variety*: "American film companies are being left at the post in Germany with Russia racing down a straightaway field in utilizing pictures as a propaganda medium for their political philosophy.... Ullman stated that 'nothing but old American product was being screened and the content had no relation whatsoever to the problem of reviving the beaten and desolated German people with a democratic spirit.' "

Another *Variety* story, this time written by one of the paper's own correspondents, is headlined: "SCREWY CHOICE OF PIX FOR O'SEAS PAINTS U.S. AS RACE OF 'GANGSTERS, JITTERBUGS.' " In the body of the report, Josef Israels reported as follows: "Selection of films by State Department people has been

singularly erratic and unintelligent. Not only do they present Americans in a bad light, but they are not particularly good entertainment to begin with. They perpetuate the already rife impression that Americans are a race of gangsters and jitterbugs."

What is typical of these two *Variety* reports, and of criticisms which can be found in other trade journals saying practically the same thing, is the lack of information and knowledge which they exhibit. If Ullman and Israels had known all the facts and all the background, their reports might never have been written in their present vein. Unfortunately, the State Department and the War Department have never made fully known through publicity release or report the aims, problems, methods, and real accomplishments of their film projects. Unfortunately, too, trade papers have not taken the time and trouble to get all the facts for objective reporting. Mr. Ullman's short stay in Germany could not possibly have equipped him not only to report on what he saw, but to pass judgment on what he did not see or learn.

The fact of the matter is that the Army and the State Department in Germany and Austria have done a tremendously effective job with American films, and incidentally a pretty good business job as well. They probably could have done a lot better under special circumstances and without a few of the truckload of problems which beset them day by day. The story of what has been done, mistakes included, begins after Pearl Harbor and with the late Office of War Information. The OWI and the British Ministry of Information, working with their respective armies, established three German Committees: one in New York, a second in Washington, and the third in London. It was the job of the German Committees to create a program of reinformation and indoctrination, following German defeat, for occupied Austria and Germany. The German Committee included on its agenda all means of communication: radio, books, magazines, theater, music, newspapers, and films. In the most general terms, this information program was to assist future occupational authorities in trying to make the Germans and Austrians people with whom the rest of us might live at peace.

Naturally, the German Committees in the three cities consisted mainly of Germans and Austrians. They were, for the most part, political and religious refugees from the Third Reich, although a number of American university and British university professors and educators were also included. One must keep constantly in mind that no matter how learned and intelligent these men might have been, none of them knew (1) what Germany inside was like, or (2) what Germany would be like after defeat.

In short, the German Committees were working in partial vacuums, and no one knew that fact better than the members of the Committees themselves. Intelligence reports and whatever scraps of information could be got out of the Reich were studied minutely; but there was no over-all and comprehensive picture of what Germany and the Germans and Austria and the Austrians were really like in 1943, 1944, and 1945. In fact, the present docility and amorality of the German people and, to a degree, the Austrian people, surprised the German

Committees after V-E Day, as much as it has surprised military occupation authorities. It was generally assumed that Germans would be just as truculent and stubborn under Allied occupation as the Norwegians or Dutch or Belgians had been under the Nazis.

The German Committees established a loose working principle, one which ICD and ICB have religiously followed—that Information Control would not under any circumstances ever mean entertaining the vanquished people. This has become one of the cardinal principles of Information Control policy and operations. But, in order to attract people into theaters to see specially made and slanted informational shorts (documentaries and newsreels), it would be necessary to have some entertainment features. This is not only a basic ICD-OWI rule; as American exhibitors know, it is also a good sound house practice in this country.

So OWI and PID (British Psychological Intelligence Division) decided to divide film programs into three parts: (1) a two-reel newsreel (Germans had always had two-reel newsreels and were used to them); (2) a one-reel documentary; and (3) a suitable, carefully selected, motion picture feature. The German Committees arbitrarily selected forty as the number of features which would be stockpiled in London for eventual shipment into Germany and Austria following Nazi capitulation. In the selection of features several important elements were kept in mind: (1) after the defeat of Germany we would probably still be fighting Japan for a long time: we had to tell German audiences that the Allies were capable of fighting a two-front war of great magnitude; (2) Germans would be truculent, and we would have to remind them constantly of our military might; (3) because the war effort was an allied war effort, Allied coöperation and unity would have to be stressed in some features.

It was believed by the German Committees that the industry would release all its best and most current features, and that the selection of forty suitable features would be a relatively simple task. However, with understandably good business sense the film industry eliminated films newer than a year or two old, for two valid reasons: (1) since Europe had not had normal film business for four or five years, a film three years old or even five years old might not be dated, and there was a tremendous backlog of films which Germans had not seen; and (2) the industry preferred to market its own newer features on its own terms and under its own conditions after ICD had dissolved its control over motion picture exhibition.

The thirty-odd subjects finally selected are, I believe, about as good as the German Committees could have made under the circumstances:

The Maltese Falcon (WB, 1941)
Remember the Day (20th C-F, 1942)
Action in the North Atlantic (WB, 1943)
Seven Sweethearts (MGM, 1942)
It Happened Tomorrow (UA, 1944)
Pride and Prejudice (MGM, 1940)
All That Money Can Buy (RKO, 1941)
Madame Curie (MGM, 1944)
One Hundred Men and a Girl (Univ, 1937)
Thirty Seconds over Tokyo (MGM, 1945)

Air Force (WB, 1943)
The More the Merrier (Col, 1943)
Across the Pacific (WB, 1942)
The Human Comedy (MGM, 1943)
Abe Lincoln in Illinois (RKO, 1940)
Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet (1st Nat, 1940)
Young Tom Edison (MGM, 1940)
The Gold Rush (UA, 1942, reissue with sound)
It Started with Eve (Univ, 1941)
You Were Never Lovelier (Col, 1942)
Appointment for Love (Univ, 1941)
The Navy Comes Through (RKO, 1942)
Hold Back the Dawn (Para, 1941)
I Married a Witch (UA, 1942)
Christmas in July (Para, 1940)
Corvette K-255 (Univ, 1943)
Tales of Manhattan (20th C-F, 1942)
Shadow of a Doubt (Univ, 1943)
The Sullivans (20th C-F, 1944)
My Sister Eileen (Col, 1942)
Tom, Dick, and Harry (RKO, 1941)
Going My Way (Para, 1944)

Some of these films were withdrawn from exhibition shortly after the beginning of the ICD film operation. *Action in the North Atlantic* was withdrawn as a result of unrest in some Bavarian houses and in Bremen. German audiences refused to accept the fact that a U-boat commander would willfully run down a lifeboat, even though the occupants were Allied seamen. This extreme cruelty, documented in the Nuremberg trials, shocked them. *The Navy Comes Through, Air Force,* and *The Sullivans* were withdrawn because they extolled the martial spirit. It should be repeated that war pictures on the list were selected in New York, Washington, and London at a time when it was thought that we would be at war with Japan for years after German capitulation. War pictures, in fact, were enormously effective in July, August, September, and October of 1945 as a means of telling the Germans that America was a mighty nation, capable of fighting a two-front war. In October it was necessary to have these pictures on the program as a means of reminding German audiences that this was the might which would be turned against them if they should ever try again. One must set these films against the background of their times. Today the selected films look foolish and inept. When they were selected and first shown, they were excellent for the needs of that moment.

Corvette K-255 was withdrawn because it showed an Allied naval officer (Randolph Scott) in the dress of a German officer. It appeared that we condoned such conduct on our side while condemning it as contrary to the rules of war for the enemy. *Hold Back the Dawn* was banned because of its unfavorable picture of refugees attempting to enter the United States and because the depicted difficulty of getting into the United States made us seem unduly harsh. *The More the Merrier* and *Tom, Dick, and Harry* were withdrawn on the MPEA representative's insistence so that "parity" would be reëstablished in the exhibition of films. The argument was that because ICD had withdrawn *Air Force* (WB), *The Sullivans* (20th C-F), *The Navy Comes Through* (MGM), *Corvette K-255* (Univ), and *Hold Back the Dawn* (Para), ICD would have to reestablish balance by withdrawing *The More the Merrier,* a Columbia film, and *Tom, Dick, and Harry,* an RKO film. *Action in the North Atlantic* was

later edited to eliminate objectionable footage and returned to the program.

During the two-and-a-half year period before V-E Day, during which time the Committees were at work, there was obviously an unlimited number of factors which had to guide the OWI in its selections. A fine picture like *Grapes of Wrath,* which might be considered one of Hollywood's great films, could not have been selected for OWI and ICD aims because of the background it shows and the story it tells. Objectivity is a quality which is not characteristic of the Germans. *Gone with the Wind* is another film which might have been selected to show (1) the excellence of American color film, (2) the epic sweep of the story, and (3) the intelligent acting and direction. Yet, the Negro incidents in the picture were found objectionable. Some of the fine films which were made available to OWI for its selections underwent careful testing and study and were rejected for good and sound reasons. The criticism of Josef Israels that the selection has been "singularly erratic and unintelligent" does not make any sense.[1] On the contrary, the thirty-odd subjects finally chosen, though they are varied and contain all types of pictures, do not present the American in a bad light. Having been on the scene, having seen the effect of our films on German audiences of all types, I am inclined to discredit Mr. Israel's reporting almost in its entirety. As a result of seeing *Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet, The Maltese Falcon,* and *It Started with Eve,* to cite three widely different examples, the Germans and Austrians have not been convinced that we are a nation of gangsters and jitterbugs. If they do so consider us—and perhaps Mr. Israels is right,—then we ought to look back into the tremendously effective Goebbels propaganda machinery which emphasized that notion for twelve years, or Mr. Israels might look back into the indiscriminate distribution and exhibition of practically anything turned out in Hollywood without any form of self-censorship in what was sent abroad.[2]

The Motion Picture Export Association, that branch of the Motion Picture Producers' Association which handles foreign sales affairs, and which is headed by MPPA president Eric Johnston, has been extremely critical of the Information Control Division for its quadripartite interchange policy. The trade press has picked up this attitude, and it is echoed in its reporting. But the interchange policy alluded to is only a portion of the larger issue, the so-called business ineptness of ICD and ICB.

From time to time the trade press has intimated that the MPEA is now ready to step into Germany and Austria and take over. I have seen this report no fewer than a dozen times in almost all the many film trade publications. However, without attempting to appear as a clairvoyant, I can still say with a great deal of certainty that moving into Austria now, and into Germany in particular, is probably the last thing the MPEA wants to do. Not that this is

[1] Obviously Mr. Israels did not know that the OWI had to select an equal number of titles from each of the eight majors, irrespective of quality or other Information Control needs, in order to maintain "parity."

[2] Hollywood product was represented by Monogram Productions in Czechoslovakia for some six months, until the Czech Government and the MPEA came to terms, a situation in which the necessity for the industry's practicing self-censorship is obvious.

to be taken as an indication that the MPEA is satisfied with ICD's German operation and ICB's Austrian operation, but MPEA officials know the problems they would have to face in both countries. And if they don't, Morris Goodman, MPEA representative now in Berlin, can surely tell them. The headaches of distribution and exhibition are such at this time that no private industry organization could possibly survive or function under Army and occupation conditions. A simple example should suffice. The Army, for example, can deliver to the film exchange in Berlin newsreels and shorts printed in Munich. The cans of film can be shipped by train or truck—Army train or Army truck. Paramount or Metro or the MPEA itself, not having trucks, not having trains, not having fuel, not having the assistance of American Army personnel, not having the necessary clearances, not having Army channels, as cluttered as they may be, not having the coöperation of the RTO's (Rail Transport Officers) along the way—in short, private industry, not being part of the Army organization, would find it impossible to transport film even from one end of Munich to the other. This example might be given in a hundred different ways. MPEA is fully acquainted with these facts and realizes that the time is not ripe for private companies to move into occupied areas either singly or in concert.

ICD and ICB have not operated their respective film organizations ineptly. Percentages for operating expenses against gross revenue are around 3 to 4 per cent. No major company in business in this country can hope to compare with that record. In fact, so far as efficient operation is concerned, ICD and ICB are doing as good a job as the MPEA could do on its own, if only for the reason that German civilians working in the film operation are working for Military Government, a fact which they cannot forget. As a result, they are more honest, more eager to please, and harder working than they would be for private industry. And, the job which Lieutenant Peter van Eyck and Peter Herald, film officers for Berlin, for example, are doing for the American industry pays a first lieutenant's salary. Under normal conditions the job would pay twenty or thirty times as much.

From its own point of view, ICD and ICB are facing one phase of their task in which the MPEA might not be particularly interested. This is the denazification of German theaters and of German theater personnel. The MPEA's function is the distribution of film for profit. It is understandable that the MPEA, or any private industry organization, would not necessarily be interested in the ownership or personnel of film theaters which contract for film products. That a man was a Nazi or got his theater through illegal means is of no primary interest to the MPEA, not because the MPEA is willfully incorrect or indifferent but because denazification is not a part of the MPEA's function. However, denazification is the basis of ICD operations, and the process of denazification of all communication media and their personnel is a long and slow one.

As one phase of ICD business practice, the interchange agreement with the other three occupying powers in Germany has come in for a great deal of criticism. The industry objects primarily to the interchange agreement

with the Russians on film matters. General Robert A. McClure, Chief of the Information Control Division, reported to the industry in New York early this year on the problem of film interchange. He cited three basic reasons for exchanging films with the the other three Allies: (1) shortage of new American titles beyond the thirty-odd already cited made exchange, in order to get new titles, almost mandatory; and there was a ban on the use of German films to supplement the thin stock of available product; (2) from ICD's point of view, it was just as necessary to show *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* and OWI shorts in Russian-occupied Pomerania as it was in American-occupied Bavaria or French-occupied Westphalia; (3) interchange with the Allies (and ICD officials knew that interchange meant certain commercial advantages for the other Allies because our films would earn more for them than theirs would earn for us) would be a positive indication of American willingness to coöperate with our Allies, and could be used as a bargaining point for other much-needed commodities needed by ICD for its film program (chemicals, raw stock, projection machinery replacements, carbon arcs, etc.).

From a sound business point of view, interchange was not indicated. Russian pictures would not earn as much as American films, a fact which is now demonstrable. The Russians refused to accede to complete playoffs—which means that each picture would play throughout the Zone in all houses—because the Russians had 600 houses and the Americans had only about 250. The Russians, in fact, preferred to trade showing for showing. From the MPEA's point of view, McClure's exchange plan was bad business policy, and General McClure was aware of this fact. He was told by the MPEA that he was handling private-industry commodities and that he would have to accede to the MPEA demand that there be no interchange. He returned to Berlin, considered the facts, and put the interchange agreement into effect, driven to it by the aforementioned basic reasons.

Whereas General McClure may have operated counter to the MPEA decision that there should be no interchange, nevertheless he acted in the best interests of ICD, the United States Military Government, and the industry itself. American films are now showing in Hamburg, Brandenburg, Dresden, Baden-Baden—in short, in cities in other zones of occupation where we want the ICD message to be spread, too. If we hold that Germany must be administered as a unit—that is, make effective the substance of the Potsdam Conference,—it follows that what ICD is showing the people of Bavaria and Baden, it should show the people of Silesia, Hannover, and Westphalia. And judging by the reports from Berlin, where a city-wide interchange has been in operation since last October, ICD has been making more money for the MPEA than it would have without interchange. What the American Film Exchange in Berlin lost in showing French, Russian, and British pictures in houses in the American sector, it doubled by the showings of films in these other three Allied sectors.

The fourth criticism deals with *Welt im Film,* the Anglo-American newsreel, which is compiled in Germany (Munich) and distributed in the Amercan and British zones and shown in some theaters in the French and Russian sec-

tors of Berlin. Frederic Ullman had the following to report on the newsreel situation, according to *Weekly Variety:*

"Comparing American and Russian policy in the conquered territories, Ullman declared that U. S. Military authorities have been assisting a private German organization in getting out a weekly newsreel; but the company is underfinanced, underequipped and understaffed with the result that America is taking responsibility for a 'miserable attempt to put out a newsreel with democratic viewpoint.' Russia, on the other hand, is producing a reel in Germany that is on a par with the best shown in this country."

In only one fact is Ullman correct: the newsreel operation is understaffed. On the other counts he is wrong.

The *Welt im Film* newsreel which the RKO executive finds so bad is about 60 per cent American clips supplied by the newsreel outfits, News of the Day, Paramount News, Universal News, Pathé; and the remaining footage is supplied by four teams operating in Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, and Stuttgart. Additional footage is supplied from time to time by the Russians (on an interchange agreement) by Film Polski (also on an interchange agreement), and by *Actualités,* the French newsreel. The entire newsreel operation is under ICD control, from shooting German footage to distribution of the newsreel to theaters every week. Printing, cutting, script writing, scoring, selection of subject matter, sound effects—in short, everything that goes into *Welt im Film,*—is under the joint control of ICD and BICU (British Information Control Unit). There is no private company putting out the American-British newsreel.

The equipment for putting out the newsreel is the best in Europe: (1) Bavaria Studios and Gastelgasteig in Munich for laboratory work; and (2) the finest German newsreel cameramen are employed by ICD, subject, of course, to the usual ICD investigation and denazification controls. If one judges footage as equipment, Mr. Ullman cannot be criticizing American newsreels—or is he?

The financing of the Anglo-American newsreel is pretty good, too—the United States Treasury and the Bank of England, which may be even a little better financing than Mr. Ullman's RKO gets.

I have seen the Russian newsreel many times. I know the story behind it. I know the men who are putting it out, including a few Germans whom ICD rejected because of former party affiliations and activities. The Russian newsreel for Germany is approximately 90 per cent Russian-produced, and the rest is a compilation of German-scene clips.

On the "understaffed" charge Ullman is right. ICD could use at least four or five good newsreel experts—script writers, directors, technicians, laboratory technicians. It might be of interest to state parenthetically that following my return from Germany on a special mission for ICD and General McClure I approached the Motion Picture Producers' Association on the problem of newsreel needs. I was told that recruiting for writers and directors of this kind might best be a problem to place before the Writers and Directors' Guild. I approached the Writers' Guild on the same score. I was told that the Motion Picture Producers' Association was the proper quarter for this type of recruiting. The need for help in Germany is still there.

It is my personal belief, based on nine and a half months' experience in the field, facing the daily problems and issues which junketeers see and analyze in a day or two, that the American film operation through ICD, and the War and the State Department policy on information control in Germany, constitute the most intelligent, the most honest, and the most effective of all the operations by the four powers in Germany. I suspect that the same is true in Austria, although I cannot cite facts to support that contention.

Why is there so much misinformation and misrepresentation in the trade press on what is going on inside Germany and Austria in the motion picture field?

I cannot ascribe this situation to reportorial dishonesty, for there is no need of dishonesty. I cannot believe that there is malicious misrepresentation, because the industry is just as much involved as the government in what goes on in occupied areas. Israels and Ullman, as well as others whose views have been cited in the trade press, could not have intentionally distorted the facts, or ignored the presentation of some of the good things that were happening. I believe that both men reported the facts as they saw them; unfortunately, they did not see enough.

Why, then, are the State Department, the War Department, and ICD and ICB on the griddle? In my opinion there are two salient reasons.

First, the Office of War Information and its later successor, the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs under the State Department aegis, have never attempted to give sufficient motion picture trade-paper publicity to their programs and aims. As government bureaus and organizations, both the OWI and now the OIC feel that it would be unwise politically and tactically to employ specialists for publicity about their activities. As a result of a lack of information, trade papers have had to depend on rumor, misinformation, and unobjective reports by junketeers and others, to the detriment of the OWI and OIC and ICD and ICB operation.

And, second, there has always been a natural aversion on the part of industry, rightly or wrongly, to government intrusion into business. In the last analysis, and much against its will, ICD is in the movie business: it operates four major exchanges, it produces a newsreel, it employs hundreds of people, it keeps the same kind of books kept by any company distribution organization. In short, ICD and ICB are in business. There is a natural resentment to this encroachment. Unfortunately, the encroachment was necessary; but because of a lack of statements, announcements, interviews, handouts, or whatever else, this has been overlooked.

When the final report comes in, the industry will find, I am sure, that its interests have been well preserved. ICD and ICB have not only done an excellent job for the companies; they have done and are doing an excellent job for America. That's important, too.

Our Film Program in Germany: II. How Far Was It a Failure?

GLADWIN HILL

GLADWIN HILL, a journalistic observer of motion pictures for fifteen years, was a war correspondent for the Associated Press and later the *New York Times* in England, France, and Germany, covering the U. S. Army Air Forces, U. S. First Army, Supreme Headquarters, and the Army of Occupation. He is now the southern California correspondent of the *New York Times*.

As ONE who spent three and a half years reporting various aspects of the war in Europe, I have been invited to make some observations on our film operations. These observations can be summarized quite simply. Intermittently over that three and a half years I saw many individuals, most of them intelligent, earnest, and energetic, coping with the problems of wartime film distribution; and ultimately I saw a lot of films being exhibited. But the details are a matter of record more comprehensive than I can supply from my notes. The main queston is, What does all this activity add up to?

I think that so far the work has been a sad, although not irretrievable, failure. There is still time, I believe, to recover; but to do so, we must examine what is wrong and why.

I base this judgment on the simple process of comparing what we accomplished with what we set out to do.

What was our aim?

To purge German movies of Nazism?

To show the Germans American films?

To revive distribution of American commercial film in Germany?

The answer to all these questions is an emphatic No.

The aim of the whole conquest and occupation of Germany, it should hardly be necessary to recall, was to re-educate the German people into ways of thinking and living that would make them a world asset rather than a world liability. Along with other modes of expression such as politics, schools, literature, music, the press, and radio, motion pictures were considered a likely instrument toward this end.

The motion picture segment of our campaign involved many agencies, notably the Army, the State Department, and the OWI. They operated not just as a team, pulling generally in the same direction, but more like an Oriental acrobatic troupe, with the various members complicatedly intertwined. The State Department laid down policies that affected both the Army and the OWI; the Army was responsible for both physical facilities and some sub-policies that governed the OWI; and the OWI people had a hand in both the formation of over-all policies and the planning of physical facilities.

Reviewing this joint effort from the beginning, the first fact we come to is that, while the motion picture operation was essentially propaganda, the State Department is in rompers as far as propaganda is concerned. Any skeptics need hardly look further than their daily newspaper, but I will cite some salient illustrations related to our wartime activities.

After the liberation of France, the

OWI and associated agencies established, as a good-will medium, *Voir*—a weekly news picture magazine in French. It was an overwhelming success, popularly and financially, outselling, I believe, all the many French-produced magazines. It was quickly abandoned—although several responsible Americans offered, if the U. S. government wanted to get rid of it, to take it over privately and conform with State Department policies. Who wrote the death sentence has not been publicized, but the ultimate responsibility was the State Department's. Virtually the same tragicomedy was repeated in Berlin with our newspaper the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. It was, the last I heard, being repeated yet a third time with our Latin-American magazine *En Guardia*.

On the military side: Hitler began demonstrating more than a decade ago that words can be half of warfare. However, our armed forces, traditionally preoccupied with physical conflict, had not learned this by the end of the war. I think the majority of civilian experts in public relations and propaganda who have worked with the Army and Navy will readily corroborate this. Let me give one or two illustrations.

One of the top officers in our psychological warfare organization in Europe admitted to me that in his whole Army career he could recall only two hours of formal tutelage in the field of public relations. Item: when the Army took the radical step after V-E Day of reversing its nonfraternization policy in Germany, the officer in charge of our propaganda in Germany was not notified so that he could alter his program to conform with and complement the Army's rather momentous announcement.

With respect to motion pictures in particular, the Army's comprehension leaves a lot to be desired. Two wars have not managed to pry Army motion picture production loose from that anomalous and possessive catch-all, the Signal Corps, where it no more belongs than the Air Force did.

In London, in the fall of 1942, Major Hal Roach, a man of some reputation in the movie field, recounted to me how, in the 1920's, he had been called to Washington to go over hundreds of thousands of feet of World War service film, and found it so unorganized and incoherent as to be virtually worthless. He trusted, he said, that this had taught the Army a lesson and that we would do better this time.

To too great an extent we made the same mistakes again, and wound up looking rather shabby alongside of our supposed cinematic stepchildren, the British. I am referring now to historical film, not to the training reels, in which I understand that, thanks to Hollywood, an admirable record was made.

At one time in England there were at least three overlapping and conflicting U.S. Army motion picture agencies working around the Air Force alone. The Clark Gable unit arrived and worked for months. I asked John Lee Mahin, Gable's right-hand man, if they were making a recruiting film, a training film, a documentary, a propaganda film, or a feature picture. He could not tell me; I doubt that the Army had told him. Is it any wonder their work ended up on the shelf?

Army film-making is not our topic in this discussion, but I am trying to describe the rarefied atmosphere of understanding upon which, because of organizational dovetailing, our film

program for Germany was to a considerable degree dependent.

It is a matter of record that the OWI itself was not free from confusion and even overt schisms. Item: Robert Sherwood, after much exhortation, persuaded Mark Hanna to leave his lucrative New York agency to fill a supposedly key position in our film program in England. After months of investigation in London, Hanna concluded that under the existing setup (about which nobody apparently had bothered to advise Mr. Sherwood) the only function he could possibly fill was to escort reels in a taxi from Grosvenor Square to the Ministry of Information.

Despite such shortcomings, we nevertheless recognized that the film had a logical part in the rehabilitation of Germany and in our interim campaigns, and went to work.

We invaded North Africa. Here we were confronted with our first film distribution problem—a motley potential audience of Europeans and Africans, some of whom were helping us, some of whom had been conniving with the Nazis, and some of whom were indifferent. Our main objective was to make them happy, entertain them, solidify their support. We took in a portfolio of some thirty films, innocuous but undistinguished items like *I Married a Witch* which seemed fairly well selected for the purpose.

Nearly a year later, we invaded France. The war was a year older, we were winning, the people were not a motley Casablanca crew but our old ally which had been suffering for our cause. What did we pull out in the film line? The same repertoire of pictures we had chosen to edify the Arabs a year before.

Our next step was the conquest of Germany. What were the governmental film agencies doing, meanwhile? They were reviving film distribution in France in order to turn it back to private agencies. They were distributing American documentaries, and working with the British and the French on Allied newsreels. This work was quite meritorious. It represented an untold amount of effort and produced worthwhile results. But it did not represent much tangible progress toward our goal of helping rehabilitate the Germans; fruition was yet to come.

So far as this specific goal was concerned, there was ample reason for the film program to sag. Our whole occupation program sagged badly.

Today we are still vague about our occupation policies; we were even more uncertain then. Among those holding the reins, there were two conflicting approaches to the problem. One school of thought—broadly, the Morgenthau school—had in the back of its mind the old war-making Germany, and was preoccupied with suppressing any revival of it. The other was concerned with the wrecked, prostrate Germany that we had on our hands, and was preoccupied with getting it on a working basis. One group wanted to blow up nitrogen plants because nitrogen can be used in explosives. The other group wanted to revive nitrogen plants to make desperately needed fertilizer.

This tug of war brought our occupation program at times nearly to a standstill, and our "information" or propaganda program, including its film component, was hampered along with everything else. An aggravating factor was our general slowness, once we were confronted with the fact of a

defeated Germany, to revise some of the facile notions conceived many months before and thousands of miles away.

The SHAEF Information Control section, a joint Anglo-American organization, was originally planned to suppress all ordinary motion picture exhibition in Germany for a long period and gradually to introduce a new era of cleansed, non-Nazi films of both foreign and German origin. But within two months after V-E Day the German people were getting so restless, virtually confined to their homes, that Marshal Montgomery became worried about keeping order in the British zone. He abruptly pulled out of the joint program—with an embarrassing lack of notice to the American section—and reopened the German theaters with any available pictures that seemed harmless.

On the American side, the whole information program, along with confronting intangible uncertainties, was struggling with a mountain of technical difficulties—things like these:

Our "denazified" schoolbook program for Aachen, the first big German city we captured, was delayed for months because the book plates, laboriously prepared in the United States, were stuck by some bemused officer into a metals supply dump, so that the whole job had to be repeated.

The OWI book program for the German public was disrupted when a big shipment of books got watersoaked en route—because, an OWI official told me, Congress knocked out a $3,500 appropriation for tarpaulins.

The big Munich movie studios, whose facilities we needed urgently, stood idle for more than a month because they were inadvertently placed under the jurisdiction of the Air Force: a friend of mine had the key.

Our film distribution work itself was hampered for some time when a single courier plane would have helped greatly—while thousands of American and British planes and pilots were standing idle all over northwest Europe.

I cite all these circumstances not in proof of my assertion that our film program fell short, but as possible indications of why it did.

On proof, I will let the facts speak for themselves. A year after Germany surrendered, our principal film accomplishment, by all the accounts I have seen, was the exhibition throughout the American zone of some thirty American feature films. In general it was the same repertoire that we had shown successively to the burnoosed and fezzed denizens of North Africa and the French. I think some of the titles had been changed, but essentially it was the same portfolio: inconclusive items like *I Married a Witch* and *It Started with Eve.*

As a group of films originally selected for being noncommital, what changes were they expected to work with the considerably less than receptive Germans? That they have been of less than no value is now affirmed by some of the men most closely connected with their distribution. The *New York Times* reported from Frankfurt, July 22: "The thirty-five American films shown to Germans since the end of the war have, with only a few exceptions, had no observable effect in the political and psychological reëducation of the Germans and have, on the contrary, reduced American cultural prestige and prob-

ably damaged the future market for American films in Germany, *according to a group of Information Control Officers.*" This was formally corroborated in a Military Government report of November 17, which said the film program had served little in the reëducation of the Germans, had held Americans up to public ridicule, and had hurt the reputation of the American film industry in Germany.

How does this look alongside of our original objective of helping, through films, to rehabilitate the German people? Under these circumstances does not the squabble about what has been done to revive American *commercial* film distribution in Germany smack somewhat of fiddling while Rome burns?

To be sure, feature pictures were only one part of our program. There were also documentaries—which had not stirred a ripple among the German people up to the time I left Germany last February.

And there were Anglo-American newsreels. The ones I saw made the standard American bathing-beauty-and-dogshow nonsense look like Academy winners by comparison. Some typical sequences through which I watched a German audience sit in forbearing, bewildered silence were:

A British Army track meet in Holland.

Washington welcoming Admiral Nimitz (replete with men marching, tanks rolling, and all the military pomp we deplored when Goebbels presented it).

Military Government lieutenants applauding a Military Government captain's speech at the reopening of the Frankfurt stock exchange.

A London dog track.

Tattered German refugees swarming into Berlin from the East.

A Norwegian square-rigger sailing from Florida.

A Swedish fashion show using puppet models because of cloth shortage (indicating, propaganda-wise, either that it pays to be neutral because you end up with fashion shows, or that it doesn't pay to be neutral because you end up with insufficient cloth).

When I reproached an OWI newsreel official with this tripe, he acknowledged it was pretty poor but said that transportation troubles left them little choice of clips.

Since my last observations, Military Government reports indicate that the repertoire of documentaries has increased to fifty and has been well received and that the newsreels have improved. This is heartening, but it still comes a long way from alleviating the general vacuity of the program.

Let us give the OWI the complete benefit of the doubt, and say that these deficencies were not their fault. Regardless of whose fault they were, is that the best that two great nations can do in the realization of the vast campaign into which they had marshaled millions of men and billions of dollars? Obviously not. Obviously more or better was not done simply because people in key positions did not think it was important enough.

Since I have returned to Hollywood, I have found it widely taken for granted that the motion picture industry refrained from wholeheartedly assisting the occupation film program lest it jeopardize commercial distribution. This certainly is consistent with the feeble showing so far and with the

complaints about governmental delay in reviving commercial distribution, although I would hesitate to charge any group with such shocking stupidity and shortsightedness. But the cause is less important than the result. Even if the movie industry had matchless intentions, the result is still poor.

What should have been done? What can be done?

My personal feeling is that in the whole reëducation program, as in several other important phases of the war, we sadly underestimated the "enemy," underestimated how much there was to do, how much effort we would have to apply.

The German people had been living in a factual vacuum, or worse, for a dozen years. To my mind, the inescapable first step for us was to fill this vacuum, establish a sound knowledge of the true facts of the contemporary world, historical, sociological, and otherwise, as a foundation for any political indoctrination we hoped to do.

We all know that the Germans' minds are still twisted, that they are still addicted to shockingly distorted ideas. But the fact remains that with all this there exists among them a tremendous appetite for straight objective information about the modern world, about the United States, about our government.

The Germans may still accept false rationalizations of their plight; nevertheless, they are conscious that for a dozen years they have been hoodwinked about just what was going on, and they have a Pandora-like yearning toward the basket of truth. Even if they have no intention of swallowing the truth, they would like to taste it. That inclination is, in my opinion, our main chance of moving them back onto a constructive path.

Their quest for information is so great that ever since V-E Day there has been an active "black market" in tattered soldiers' copies of American magazines—everything from *Time* and *News Week* to *Cosmopolitan* and *Business Week*—even though these magazines are in no way banned to the Germans. Thanks to our "information" program, they are just—scarce.

In the motion picture field, I think this situation indicates an educational program for the seventy million German people at least five times as extensive as the one we organized to help educate a fighting force of fifteen million in the various techniques of war. That is a large order. But it is very small alongside what we have sunk into the war effort with very uncertain returns so far as Germany's rehabilitation is concerned.

It is, I think, an order that manifestly cannot be filled by any amount of juggling of a film crop designed, not to reëducate the Germans or anyone else, but to ring the bell at the box office in Wilkes-Barre and Omaha. Military Government partially recognized this, recommending in its November report the use of films of "genuinely fine quality" only, more documentaries (on which Pare Lorentz's new project is a start), and improved newsreels. But here again I see the inclination to oversimplify, to underestimate. How many films of "genuinely fine quality" does Hollywood turn out? A dozen a year? Hardly enough, in any case, to stock some seven hundred theaters the year round.

And this still seems like an effort to alchemize ice cream for the good citi-

zens of Wilkes-Barre into medicine for the social invalids of Frankfurt. Even if Walter Huston, Ingrid Bergman, Bette Davis have within their artistry the power of political and social education, serving them up as a nostrum to seventy million Germans—who, every man jack of them, through depravity, ignorance, apathy, or timidity *sponsored* the concentration camps—is like talking semantics to a reform-school boy who doesn't know his ABC's.

Before the Germans are fit to ruminate over the nuances of evil in *The Little Foxes,* they must be reoriented on *what evil is,* if they have to be shown the life of Christ, book by book. Those who think Germans can be reformed by a diet of Oscars have not seen starving German ex-prisoners of war turned away from *German* doorsteps because they were members of the defeated Wehrmacht. Academy award winners are rarified fare for people who don't understand the story of the Good Samaritan.

I have no delusion that you can take seventy million foreign civilians and cram a long series of educational animated cartoons and shorts into their heads, as was done with the armed forces. But there is no getting away from the fact that the Germans present a crying demand for education. And we are always boasting of the film's great educational potentialities.

Some very special and ingenious program is called for. Not having the collective knowledge of film leaders and craftsmen who met the challenge of mass education for our armed forces, I cannot suggest a detailed answer. The problem is unprecedented, and it calls for an unprecedented solution—something more radical in concept, certainly, than the elementary notion of giving the Germans some secondhand features; something transcending and superseding more efforts to peddle Betty Grable in Göttingen.

This is bad news for the budget balancers. But would they rather forgo the money for a few years, or pay it a thousandfold repairing a second abortion of German stability?

Eighteen months of precious time have, to a regrettable degree, been lost already—eighteen months during which we might have established something more than contempt and mild amusement among the Germans. But I regard this not as an excuse for tossing in the towel; rather, as reason for renewed effort.

If it is not made—by a fresh joint appraisal of the whole problem with Hollywood leaders, who are the ones who know how to make films, and the government, which happens to be running our part of Germany,—there is a possibility that ten years hence, or twenty years hence, there might not be any German film market—or any Germany.

It seems high time to call upon Hollywood to justify its pretensions to educational powers, in the face of a historic opportunity.

I Married a Witch, UA, 1942. *It Started with Eve,* Univ, 1941. *The Little Foxes,* RKO, 1941.

"But Nothing Ever Happens"

LEON MEADOW

LEON MEADOW is currently a free-lance writer. His radio experience covers fifteen years in the advertising agency field as both writer and executive, five years with the agency producing more daytime serials than any other agency. During the war he served as chief of the special features section of the OWI Overseas Radio Bureau.

JUSTIFIABLY or not, the critical air around daytime radio serials has always been stirred by much sound and fury. In the midst of this damning din and clamor the occasional small voice heard in defense of the serials has been quickly shouted down into apologetic silence. Choosing the better part of valor, let me make this clear: I am not championing soap operas *per se*. I should like only to plead here for recognition of certain qualities potential to this form of storytelling.

The leitmotif running through the criticism of daytime radio serials is the familiar wail, "But nothing ever happens!" The reinforcement, with suitable variations, is, "Why, you can miss any show for a week and pick up the story right where you left it!"

There is undoubtedly a surplus of provocation for such complaints. However, it is no more constructive or pointed than the observation that the trouble with a yellow dress is that it is yellow. When you say of daytime radio serials that "nothing ever happens," you are not extracting critical values from a set of known facts; you are actually doing no more than describing the facts themselves. To be genuinely critical, you must examine the physical structure necessary to a soap opera and move on from there. When you do so, you find a situation somewhat at variance with that represented by the blanket criticism: you find that the very nature of the soap opera endows this *medium* with rich possibilities for carrying serious, social meaning.

(WARNING TO THE AUTHOR, BY THE AUTHOR): "Social content, *per se,* is obviously determined by the character of the material and the honesty and depth applied to its treatment. It cannot be brought about or sustained artificially or mechanically. It can't be slipped in while the sponsor's back is turned."

(REPLY): "A little patience, please. There was a reason for italicizing the word *medium* a few lines above. This exploration is limited to the nature of the *medium's* potential. Any consideration of its realization is beyond the purpose of this article."

(REPLY TO THE REPLY): "Okay. Go ahead, but be careful."

Regardless of cultural attributes that stage, screen, and radio may *not* have in common, they *do* possess measurable and comparable "external" time frames. Hence, the dimension of time supplies a basis for the following analysis.

Comparisons of time frames are immediately illuminating. Feature films may average between seventy-five and one hundred minutes; plays, subtracting intermissions, have a running length of some two hours. The daytime radio serial, as we know it now, takes something like *eight weeks* to present a single, complete, story sequence. Broken down into the actual time units

consumed in telling its story, the sequence consists of forty separate episodes (five a week), each consuming some twelve minutes (without commercials). Thus, the actual playing time for an entire sequence is *eight* hours! In modern forms of communication, this dramatic marathon is equaled in length only by an *Anthony Adverse* or by the trilogy, tetralogy, and octology forms of Dos Passos, Undset, and Romains. To find competition in the field of *oral* narration, one must travel back to the more leisurely days of the Scandinavian skald, Icelandic heir to the storytelling mantle of the Minnesinger. Not since Egil Skallagrimson's eleventh-century rendition of the epic battle of Winaneath has the spoken story been accorded so thick a slice of time for its rendition!

It isn't, of course, a question of whether our soap-opera writer is in the same storytelling class with the skalds and Minnesingers of old. More to the point, the two *audiences,* by virtue of relative conditions, aren't in the same story-listening class. The complexities of modern society make it rather difficult for people to knock off work for a full-scale, eight-hour day in order to listen to a story. Moreover, to fashion an epic in which, movie-wise or play-wise, something happens every minute is more than a mere creative challenge. In terms of accomplishment, it would be a triumph defeating its own purpose. Given the necessary eight hours of leisure, no listener could realistically be expected to follow, or to assimilate, an endless crowded procession of sheer dramatic incidents. If this can't be reasonably expected of a story running eight consecutive hours, it becomes immeasurably more unreasonable to expect it when the eight-hour slab is broken into twelve-minute chunks, each separated from the next by an intermission of twenty-four hours from Monday through Friday, and by an intermission of three days from Friday to Monday.

Hence, aesthetic factors indicate a justifiable need for "braking" the action.[1] The criticism, "Nothing ever happens," when made on this score alone would certainly be out of context. Our field of relevant factors must also include, on the one hand, the commercial necessity of building and maintaining as constant an audience as possible, and on the other, the need of offering encouragement to the stray or occasional listener, so that she will not be lost to the program through mental or physical inability to keep up with a swiftly developing or changing story line. She must be bound over from previous and random listening periods by a reasonable interpretation of Macbeth's lament about the creeping page of endless tomorrows.

Because of these limitations, the development of the medium posed new craft problems for the strip-show writer, much as the decision to screen a feature film in "slow motion" would induce a new set of creative nightmares for the screen writer. With a close-packed succession of events ruled out

[1] Cf. p. 244, *Hollywood Quarterly,* January, 1945. This point of view is not without opposition, as witness Dwight Hauser's remarks in reviewing Frances Farmer Wilder's pamphlet, "The Daytime Radio Serial": "I know of one serial (I was the author)," writes Mr. Hauser, "that consistently lost rating when 'higher executives' insisted that the plot be slowed down." Granting Mr. Hauser's personal experience, this writer believes that statistics are against him and that general experience shows that far more ratings slip when the plot, in terms of added incidents, is speeded up.

as the backbone of story construction, the daytime serial writer must start with a very slowly evolving situation and control its pace by exploring the effects of the few story facets upon all characters, major and minor. Since the story line remains relatively static, the manifold excursions along extended byways of character relationships must become the so-called dynamic force.

A most competent radio producer in the strip-show field once made approximately the following elucidation of the serial form: Mr. Jones throws a rotten apple out of the window, and the downward flight of this object is interrupted by Mr. Smith's head. Now, is this simply a matter between Smith and Jones? Decidedly not. It seems that one Mrs. Robinson, who lives across the street, was at her favorite lookout, the kitchen window, and saw her friend Jones toss the fruit—with the result just noted. Now, Mrs. Robinson's daughter has become engaged, against her mother's wish, to Mr. Jones's son. To Mrs. Robinson, the ill-advised action is a clear vindication of her doubts about any Jones ever aspiring to marriage with any Robinson. Thus, an entirely new set of relationships is opened up for probing. Moreover, there were things Mrs. Robinson *didn't* see—like the little squabble that is progressing in the Jones apartment at the time of the apple heaving. For, at that moment, Mrs. Jones accuses Mr. Jones of concealing a letter from her. She is, in fact, positive that her husband was tossing the letter, and not the fruit, out of the window. Thus, the ripples in our pond spread broadly and quickly into ever-widening circles . . . moving outward long after the center, where the apple disappeared, has returned to placidity. In themselves, these moving ripples—the endless elaboration of consequences and causes developed to meet the conditions of a peculiar dramatic structure—hardly contribute to the forward movement of the story. They do, however, give the medium a high *potential* for carrying realistic social content. Obviously, the usual, restrictive influences of sponsor, agency, and censorship are no less than those encountered wherever the author's material is to a great degree beyond his control. But there is certainly no dramatic pressure hastening or forcing overt, artificial injections of "significant" content. Time makes opportunity available to the writer in copious quantities; it can, if he so wills, work in the audience's favor.

If we are going to observe our principle in action, we had better have some illustrations.

Mary Dittenfest, our heroine, is going to have a baby. This is made clear to us at the outset of the sequence, and, stripped of all superstructure, the baseline of the story concerns itself with the effect of this event on her relationships with various characters. Moreover, Mary is going to have her child soon; she is in her eighth month. Since our climax will involve the arrival of the baby, we have here a curious time phenomenon. The same situation in a picture or a play would call for compressing the last month of pregnancy into an external time frame of one or two hours. But in our radio show the event—in terms of our same time conditions—must be stretched, not compressed. The last month of Mary's pregnancy (medical advice to the contrary) must be lengthened to accom-

modate our eight weeks of story continuity.

There is a further complication: the *medium* requires a somewhat rigid dramatic construction, due, in no small part, to the need for timing the climax to coincide with the offer of a cut-glass baking dish or "genuine simulated" gold brooch by the sponsor. This timing is fixed, of course, to assure "peak" listening for the offer. In our case, then, we move into dramatic high with the arrival of Mary at the hospital the Friday preceding the last week of the sequence. Author and audience, therefore, have five more episodes to go before the newest added starter joins the fictitious human race of daytime radio.

To be completely truthful, this somewhat premature arrival at the hospital is not without purpose, for there is a nurse who is suspected—to say the most—of being a bit involved with the father of our child-to-be. And what could be more natural (indeed) than that she should be the nurse assigned to the case? Our two principals are thus brought face to face, and we are ready to come down the dramatic home stretch in a driving finish.

Let me state here that all this is not the hypothetical fancy it may appear. Much the same material was used on a rather widely acclaimed soap opera always well up in both the Hooper and the Crossly ratings.

The point lies in the manner in which the author proceeded to pace the second hand of the studio clock around to its last sweep. Sixty minutes of story-telling remained. The main actors in our drama were together against a proper background for what was happening and for the most logical exploration of their particular relationship to each other. The time had to be filled; the air was tense with that magic power which the "Medical" exerts over life and love. According to all tradition, as imposed and reinforced constantly by the strange time mechanics of the daytime radio serial, the action at this point called for attenuation.

How was this achieved? The writer did it simply by devoting a good deal more than half of those last sixty minutes to a leisurely and serious examination among patient, nurse, and doctor of the social aspects of medicine in our society!

The doctor, in the line of his duty, dropped in for a daily visit. In his presence it was impossible for the two women to air their private grievances and conflicts. The talk, most naturally, revolved around medical matters within their common realm of experience—childbirth, child care, infant mortality, *et al.* It was obvious that the author knew his subject and had come to grips with it on a level demanded by the characters involved and by those who presumably were listening. When the doctor's visit was finished, he left the scene to our principals. The three or four minutes remaining in each episode were then allotted to Mrs. D and the nurse for dealing with the emotional substance of the story.

Will Mary tell nurse Johnson that she knows all about her and Mr. Dittenfest? Well, listen in tomorrow! And while you're waiting for those final few minutes of the episode, when the story returns to its grinding advance, hark to those initial seven or eight minutes on why adequate medical care is not as broadly available as we might hope for, in this land of the highest standard of living!

Two other examples are worth mentioning, not because they are in any sense typical of the medium's average output, but because they direct attention to the potential that can be realized.

The first deals with a sequence in a show no longer on the air. (The reason may be inherent in the example.) Here the mainspring that keeps the works in motion is a poorly lighted street in a substandard section of a very large city. Two lovers, deprived by economic and social circumstance of more comfortable quarters, find this inadequate street lighting a blessing in disguise. Their clandestine romance progresses unnoticed until an evening when the girl's little sister runs out into the street and sees them. The question immediately raised is, Will she tell? But the answer is long delayed; the child stumbles in a break in the paving, injures her leg, and thereupon launches the usual chain reaction of a solidly constructed soap opera. Our own point revolves around the material used to fill out the long, long minutes until the lovers are reunited. The faulty pavement and the poor lighting are made into a *cause célèbre* by the leading character, a stout and gold-hearted woman living on the block. Using the child's accident as a spearhead in her attack, she blitzes the political aspirations of a villainous ward heeler and then goes on to broaden her victory into as devastating an exposé of corrupt municipal government as you might wish to find in your favorite progressive newspaper!

The second example is taken from one of the oldest and most successful soap operas on the air. The principal locale of this serial is purportedly a typical small midwestern city. A Hollywood movie company, complete with stars, camera, and paraphernalia, descends upon this city suddenly. Its purpose is to employ the city as a background for a film suggested by *Middletown, U.S.A.*—smoothly speaking, a cinematic glorification of the average American city. The emotional content of the sequence's plot is the usual *ersatz* fare. Gladys Queen, the Hollywood star, casts speculative glances toward a young local real-estate man hired to assist the movie director in assuring technical accuracy for his backgrounds. Gladys succeeds in turning our young hero's head, so that for a long, long time he casts discretion, and his childhood sweetheart, to the winds of grease-pot glamour.

In the end our young man sees the light and all is well. But the amazingly tenuous course of this illumination is not without other and at least comparable benefits; for in bringing forth the facts and figures on life in his city our hero is made to perform a simple and revealing dissection on some of the varied economic and social relationships which constitute our society today!

These examples show that the form of soap operas, contrary to all dramatic precept and practice, demands a loose rather than a compact structure. Since it flows naturally out of the inherent time elements, this very looseness of form is a standing invitation to valid social excursions by the competent writer.

In another sense, too, time is on the strip-show writer's side. The actual length of time taken for a sequence creates a potential for unusual impact of its content on the listener. The

writer has eight hours of playing time for accumulating dramatic detail and repeating it. The distinction between vividness of experience and its duration is drawn both popularly and by experimental psychologists in considering effective factors in the learning process. The radio serial may not have a striking advantage over other dramatic media in its potential for vividness, but its special potential for impact enhanced by *duration* cannot be denied, least of all by its most energetic detractors.

It may be useful to give examples of these two possible factors in strong dramatic impact.

A few years ago the war picture *Sahara* received a great deal of well-deserved critical and public acclaim. The treatment of the Negro soldier, portrayed by Rex Ingram, was adult, honest, and refreshing. In singling out an individual scene for our purposes, the choice is obviously the one in which the Negro and the young Texas G.I.—products of different classes as well as societies—suddenly find themselves in agreement about certain marital customs. Here we have a prime example of the vivid but brief initial impact. There is great emotional thrust to the scene, though it consumes but a tiny fraction of the picture's entire running time.

The other example is provided by a sequence from *Against the Storm,* a radio serial which was on the air some years ago and brought its writer the Peabody Award. This show, incidentally—and it may come as a surprise to nonlistening critics of radio,—developed a strong, constant antifascist point of view long before Pearl Harbor. However, the sequence we refer to was not written on this particular political level. It dealt principally with the adventures of a small boy whose parents were estranged and a softspoken, philosophical Negro (again courtesy of Rex Ingram) whom the boy's mother had employed as a companion and tutor. The Negro role was written and delineated with complete adult understanding of the minority problem; the handling of relationships between Negro and boy was exemplary.

The difference between picture and serial, aside from story content, was mainly a difference in strength of immediate impact and length of scene. In *Sahara* the impact was sharp, immediate, and forceful. In the radio show the interaction of the two characters began with no great initial dramatic force. It evolved slowly, almost imperceptibly, but it was a relationship that *kept* developing and deepening with each daily episode. In other words, the time factor was again working for the writer. Negro and boy were together in normal situations for at least two days out of each week's broadcasts. By rapid calculation based on eight weeks for the full sequence, it will be seen that at least three full hours were given to episodes involving these two persons! That is a long time to spend on *any* kind of character relationship in dramatic writing. It is ample time to make up in length of impact what it might or might not possess in sharpness. Even the most casual listener could not fail to absorb, consciously or not, a good deal of the significance contained in the relationship.

There can be no evaluation of the two factors in strict comparative terms. But we do believe that a point of view, developed from these factors, is highly

pertinent in reorienting opinion on the potential of daytime radio. In the past this has been all too completely a blanket opinion, condemning to oblivion the achievable along with the achieved. It seems only fair to point out that the admittedly minimal achievements might well undergo both quantitative and qualitative changes for the better, once a more honest appraisal of the soap opera's potential were forthcoming from writers and critics alike. In those dreary radio minutes which we characterize by saying, "Nothing ever happens," it is indeed possible for something socially important to be happening. As a first step, those concerned with the future of the medium might concentrate on upgrading the possible to the probable.

Sahara, Col, 1943.

"The Empty Noose": A Script

ARNOLD PERL

ARNOLD PERL, now writing a novel to be published by Little, Brown and Company, and a nonfiction book to be published by the Viking Press, has written radio plays for *Assignment Home, Inner Sanctum,* and *F.B.I.* His work has appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post, Collier's,* and other magazines.

[THE EMPTY NOOSE[1] was broadcast as a special program by the Columbia Broadcasting System on Wednesday, October 16, 1946, the day of the Nuremberg hangings. It was broadcast from 7:30 to 8:00 P.M., E.S.T., time normally occupied by a major commercial network program (Anacin's *Ellery Queen*), and again, October 17, from 12:30 to 1:00 A.M.

Frank Stanton, president of CBS, writes that the program had an exceptionally high rating and held the audience very well throughout the half hour. The early broadcast was carried by 78 stations; the rebroadcast, by 61. Twenty-seven of the stations carried both broadcasts. A total of 112 different stations carried one or both. The net circulation of these 112 stations, based on the number of American homes having radios in 1946, is 26,314,000, or 77.4 per cent of the total of American radio homes. It is estimated that approximately 3,000,000 persons heard the broadcasts.

There were many letters from hearers. Schools asked permission for local dramatization, and libraries requested copies for reference.

The editors regard this as a notable example of the exploitation of radio's dramatic resources in reporting a major historical event. The achievement of the Columbia Broadcasting System may well be unique—a striking dramatic commemoration of an unprecedented historical event released on the very day of the event's occurrence and broadcast during a most advantageous and expensive radio half hour. The editors wish to thank Frank Stanton for his coöperation in the *Quarterly's* publication of the script.—THE EDITORS]

THE SCRIPT

MUSIC: *A very heavy motif, slowly rhythmical, symbolizing a procession of hangings. Suddenly segues into a quiet passage suggesting the early dawn and its hush and sadness, which is the cue for* EYEWITNESS: Goering, Ribbentrop, Keitel, Kaltenbrunner, Rosenberg, Frank, Frick, Sauckel, Jodl, Streicher and Seyss-Inquart. You should have seen them die, seen all but one, who arranged it by his own schedule, walk in the early morning of a gray cold day while most of Europe slept; seen them hanged one by one in the gymnasium under the electric lights. The ghastly ten who were left walked to where the hangman waited. Like those who watched, he knew there was no payment large enough for what they had done. (*Music out*) This was not a reckoning. This was the token answer (no more than that) of the united people of America, of Britain, France, and Rus-

[1] Producer, Robert Heller. Director, John Becker. Narrator, Martin Wolfson. G.I., Will Hare. Music, Robert Stringer.

sia to those who had made a mockery of human decency, a charnel house of human culture, a spittoon of human feelings. (*Pause*) What we were doing, we felt (for each of us sprung the traps), was very little against what they had done. Yet it was something—it *meant* something. There were eleven of them, their crimes in duplicate and triplicate. Looking back over the pattern of the darkness and ruin that was their handiwork, there are five to focus upon, five who sum it up and show it whole.

MUSIC: *The Goering theme, pompous and fat, dropping behind*

EYEWITNESS: Who is this one—the first who died, flabby in blue pajamas—the fragments of glass in his mouth—who cheats again—this time the thirteen steps. He died for committing the crime of aggressive war, for committing criminal acts in the conduct of war, and for crimes against humanity. With Hitler, he was the planner, the inciter, the leader. He was a man of station who did not soil his hands with blood, he was expert at using lesser murderers as his tools. He can be remembered as the patron of the ballet—he can be remembered as the collector of fine paintings—he can be remembered with medals and natty uniforms. He can be remembered; "for his record," said the verdict, "is unique in its enormity." Hermann Wilhelm Goering. You may remember an earlier Goering—the vandal, the incendiary . . .

MUSIC: *Surges shrilly, and briefly stays with*

SOUND: *Healthy fire crackling underneath*

EYEWITNESS: That was the start of the conspiracy, thirteen years ago, the burning of the Reichstag. It is well to remember beginnings, starting points. What did you think then, when the story broke that the Communists had set fire to the Reichstag? That was the Nazi story. It wasn't true, but truth was already a casualty. There are Germans who remember that morning (*music and sound and voice fading*), the morning after the Fire.

WORKER: I was in the ball-bearing plant, in Stuttgart then, a small place—sixty men. We were talking about it when the whistle blew. We lined up in the square and the owner came to speak. He said the Reds had burned the Reichstag. Herr Hitler, the new Chancellor, said it was a plot of the Reds and the unions for revolution. He asked how many had their union cards with them. "You can tear them up," said the boss; "from now on I run the plant—I alone." Some tore up their cards and after a while went back to work, some of us joking: If the little Austrian Corporal wanted us to tear up our cards, we'd tear them up. The union was strong. We laughed and went back to work.

EYEWITNESS: As the unions died, so died their laughter—as Goering ran the show. In the hysteria created by the fire, the Communists were outlawed. In the next breath unions were declared illegal. The Nazis met a phantom revolution with a real one—trade unions were dead in Germany. Step one in the Nazi conspiracy to wage aggressive war was done. "Shackle labor first," said Goering. Six million union men were marched into the Labor Front and the Fuehrer principle was established in all factories. The battle against the working class was won before the working class knew it was a war. Labor was chained behind the chariot of Aggression, and now the

Great Conspiracy could roll. It rolled over Austria, over Poland, Belgium, France, over Europe, but first it rolled over the bodies of the German workingmen. The octopus that step by step squeezed life from the small businessman, the farmer, the professional, the secretaries of a continent, first ground into bondage the miners, steel workers, truck drivers, mechanics of Germany. (*Pause*) This was what we condemned—this prelude to aggression — with the death of Hermann Goering.

MUSIC: *Almost a dirge, behind*

G.I. VOICE: Did we finish it, this technique of fear and violence and oppression, when we condemned Goering? Did we get rid of it all—everywhere?

MUSIC: *Segues immediately into the Rosenberg motif behind*

EYEWITNESS: The next dead Nazi, to the right of Goering, an intellectual. His proudest title was Herr Doktor. Doktor Alfred Rosenberg, founder of the Nazi Party, charter member—philosopher. His were the words, the poems, the choruses that sang of Aryan supremacy. What he did can be understood, perhaps, (*fading*) by listening to a letter dated 1936.

SALESMAN: Liebe Emma: I lost the order yesterday that would have been good for 2,000 marks at least, and lost it to whom? A Czech. Why? Why do I work to sell my product (surely as good as any shoe in Europe) to be undersold and cheated by a fraudulent Czech? I was dressing tonight before the mirror when I looked at myself. (Of course you know all this, but I am telling you the way it happened.) I am six feet one-half inch, blond; I have blue eyes—and yet a runt wins over me. They are smaller than I, all of them, weaker than I, darker than I. Yet, because their brains are cunning they win out, and you, my doll, will spend the next winter with your old overcoat while they will have new furs. Yes, it is so clear—what we can do, Emma. I feel strong tonight, my doll. We shall do it, liebchen, under our glorious new banners. Thinking of you always, my doll, my love. Erich.

MUSIC: *Cheap German waltz under*

EYEWITNESS: The heat from the Reichstag fire flushed them. They grew bold, these Erichs, and guided by their master, Herr Doktor Rosenberg, they became the New Attilas, Gods of the North, blond gods sweeping the world with a cleansing sword. When the life of Jesus placed God above Hitler, and the Sermon on the Mount above *Mein Kampf,* they tore down the Cross of Mercy and put their twisted cross in its place (*music: crash and out*). They shattered the stained-glass windows and made a science of annihilation. How much pain could a Pole, say, stand before he died? How often could a Russian child be bled before she died? Seven times? Nine? A dozen? And the writings, the paintings, the poetry and sculpture of these apes? They made a urinal of the Greek Orthodox Church in Poltava: in Poland one day their tanks were stopped by a mud patch, so they paved the road with Bibles from the Warsaw library; the manuscripts of Leo Tolstoi and Tschaikowsky they used to wipe their shoes. (*Pause*) The Doktor was a writer, a thinker. He never fired a pistol, he never so much as slapped a Jew in his life. From this philosopher's chair came the words that bred violence, the myth that preached aggression.

MUSIC: *The dirge again under*

G.I. VOICE: Is it dead, this idea that one

man's better than another because he's Aryan or white or—is that dead? Or is the idea still around?

MUSIC: *Segues into Streicher theme and behind*

EYEWITNESS: The body swinging next is that of Julius Streicher: the anti-Semite, hanged for crimes against humanity, hanged for his part in the murder of six million Jews. He was the editor, just that, the editor of *Der Stuermer*. He said at the trial: "But I am just an editor." As Rosenberg was "just a philosopher" and Keitel "just a soldier," Streicher was "just an editor." In the beginning, when *Der Stuermer* first appeared, it attracted a lot of attention. (*Fading*) There was one reader, for example, a clerk in a haberdashery in Frankfurt . . . (*Music out*)

CLERK: (*Excited*) I got a copy this morning. First time I ever saw it. You know, it's juicy. It's got the best pictures—girls and cartoons—you know the Jews with the beards and long noses, they're okay—but those jokes! There's one in this issue—a lulu. There was this woman, married, see, but her husband wasn't home much. So one morning there was this knocking on the door and she wasn't wearing much, but she figured (*fading*) she'd see who was at the door anyhow. So guess who it was—

EYEWITNESS: (*Fading in and overlapping*) Then there was the one about the Jew in Garmisch on Passover night who caught a little Aryan girl and killed her and made a cake out of her blood. Remember that one? That was a hot one, too. Remember Warsaw? That was really something, wasn't it? On the front page of *Der Stuermer,* Streicher wrote it—some story! . . . Herr Streicher, for this, for your pornography, for your incitations, your lewdness, for setting an army against a defenseless people whose only crime was having been born Jewish, for this you were hanged. It is a fault of decency and justice that it does not know properly how to kill the body of Julius Streicher. But, like the others, you are dead. In your last words, Julius Streicher—"Heil Hitler!"

MUSIC: *Dirge again behind*

G.I. VOICE: Is the idea dead, too? Is it all finished, because they strung up Streicher? Or have you seen the words on the walls of buildings?

MUSIC: *Segue to Kaltenbrunner theme behind*

EYEWITNESS: Ernst Kaltenbrunner hangs beside Julius Streicher. Ernst Kaltenbrunner is dead, the Chief of the Security Police, the head of the Gestapo; the concentration-camp man is dead beside the anti-Semite. With Himmler, he raised terror to the level of science. In his defense he said he was a policeman, the guardian of the law, of private property and the state. (*Pause*) In the beginning, early, he developed the technique of Night and Fog and suddenness. (*Fading with music*) It worked wonders . . .

WOMAN: (*Young, breathless; the event has just happened*) They came in the night. It was half-past two, a quarter to three. They took papa and that was all. They told me nothing. Why? Where was he going? What had he done? Nothing.

MAN: (*In quickly; easily reassuring*) Your father was taken for questioning. Perhaps it was the income tax, or his license at the store (maybe he forgot to renew it). Are we such children we listen to old wives' tales? What was the story last week—Young Brucker, they put live coals under his armpits? You

believe that? This is the German Reich. This is 1936. Is this the Middle Ages? Have we a Spanish Inquisition? No, my dear, rest—rest and in the morning you will see.

WOMAN: In the morning I went to the Gestapo. They slapped me in the face. I never saw papa again. An urn containing his ashes came a month later, with a funeral charge of five marks.

MUSIC: *Stings and briefly under*

EYEWITNESS: The beginnings were quiet, but the business of death grew noisy. First, the rooms were made soundproof; then, the camps were removed from the cities so the shrieks of the dying would not disturb the peace. The prisoners of war were brought into the special hospital . . .

SOUND: *Glass equipment; some water boiling; a laboratory*

EYEWITNESS: For special injections of bacteria. Advanced techniques in chemical and biological warfare were first tried out on prisoners of war.

SOUND: *Scraping of teeth; a drill*

EYEWITNESS: Before the bodies were burned, the teeth must be inspected, all gold and silver fillings removed and forwarded to Warehouse D.

SOUND: *Scissors snipping hair*

EYEWITNESS: The hair of women should be cut off before disposing of the bodies in lime pits. The hair made excellent stuffing for mattresses.

SOUND: *Ripping, as of skin; flaying*

EYEWITNESS: The commandant's wife asked that the skin of all tattooed men be removed before the bodies were disposed of. Her lampshade of human skin had attracted a lot of attention and she was anxious to supply her friends with similar lampshades.

SOUND: *A pounding and pulverizing machine at work*

EYEWITNESS: In pulverizing human bones it was important to separate the bones of the skull from the body bones. The former produced the highest-grade fertilizer for cabbage, potatoes, radishes, and carrots. (*Pause*) Then there was Herr Kaltenbrunner's height machine. Killing prisoners by bullets was both wasteful and inaccurate, the order read. The height machine was recommended. A solid bar of iron was lowered over the prisoner's head. (He was told his measurements were being taken.) By a simple snap release a sharp pin in the bar can be made to penetrate the skull.

SOUND: *A snap spring and thud for the height machine*

EYEWITNESS: So. (*Then*) Simultaneous action by height machines could kill two hundred in four minutes at a cost of 60 pfennig. (*Pause*) For how many were you hanged, Ernst Kaltenbrunner? For the millions you murdered, or just the Belgian child who, because he asked a question of your men, was crucified against the barn behind the farmhouse where he lived?

MUSIC: *Dirge again behind*

G.I. VOICE: Are things that begin like that all finished? Terror that comes at nighttime and leaves the victim dead? Is that over—everywhere in the world?

MUSIC: *Segue to Keitel motif behind*

EYEWITNESS: And on the end, the other side from Goering, is Wilhelm Keitel, Field Marshal, Chief of the German High Command. Keitel was, he said, a soldier who carried out his orders. The orders said: make aggressive war against the world; and Wilhelm Keitel carried them out—in his fashion. His was the crowning conspiracy. Down the chain of command went new orders for new techniques for overrunning land

and destroying life. And Wilhelm Keitel asked, when the verdict of death by hanging was handed down, that he be shot, that he receive the honorable death of a soldier. We honored him by hanging him. Why? There are many answers, but one will do . . .

WOMAN: Our prayers had been answered. Their soldiers were coming, but their guns had been aimed beyond our town, and our buildings were still standing. We were in the woods, watching close by, when they came, fast, in their tanks and trucks, and they were speeding ahead, most of them. Maybe . . . maybe . . . we looked at each other with hope. The last group stopped suddenly in the square. And in an hour there was not a home or a shop, not even a barn, that was not burning to the ground. And then they came for us, beating the woods as for animals, rounding up our people one by one, dragging them to vans, loading them in, driving away. They did not find me. Later I saw the flames die down, I alone, and there was no town, and there will never be. About the people, my family, and my neighbors, I will never know. Ashes, everything; ashes, everybody . . .

EYEWITNESS: These were the new techniques of aggression. And when they showed the movies at Nuremburg: of the floggings of prisoners of war, of the burning of innocent civilians the German armies had captured, and the rape of homes and farms and churches, Keitel sat with his arms folded. His own orders were not news to him. And when the showing was over, he whispered something to Schacht and then he laughed. (*Pause*) Wilhelm Keitel, we hanged you. For these things we built a gallows for you.

MUSIC: *The dirge theme expanded briefly behind*

G.I. VOICE: I kept asking the questions: Did they really die?—all they stood for? You see, I've got a natural right to ask. I fought my way into Nuremburg; without me they wouldn't have got theirs this morning. (*Music out*)

G.I. VOICE: As those traps were sprung, I kept seeing something, not something I imagined, but something real—real as a German 88, to me, anyway—an *empty* noose still waiting for its final victim, waiting to choke off the last breath of the foulest thing we'll ever know—Fascism—that. Did *that thing* die? I don't know. But I don't think so. (*Sneak the Goering theme lightly*) What I'm thinking of is the beginnings of that thing, the signs that people can see in the world outside and, if they look deep enough, within themselves. In Germany there were those beginnings and they were laughed at, or they weren't recognized or fought against. Sometimes we don't want to see them; we brush them off; call them just harmless. Still, that empty noose keeps coming back when I think of a guy like Joe, up the block. A union man, Joe, going on fifty. For all I know, he's a Republican. "I don't know," Joe says to me the other day; "guess what they're calling me now—a Red," he says, "that's right, me, Joseph Nelson." Joe Nelson's no Red, but that's not the point—the point is, somebody's out to smash his union, so all the Joe Nelsons all of a sudden are Red. Is a thing like that dead, can you call it dead?—or isn't it maybe one of those small beginnings, a sign pointing up the road to bigger things? (*Segue directly to the Kaltenbrunner theme*) They died, but still I can't help seeing that empty noose

when I think of something like this, too. Last month when a vet, just out of the Army a few hours, was grabbed off a bus and his eyes were gouged with a club until he was blind. Had to get out of uniform to lose his sight. Different skin—sure. Did that idea really get snuffed out at Nuremburg? Maybe there are little offshoots coming back—scattered, separated? Are they beginnings that will stay beginnings, or peter out? Or maybe grow? (But growing, always growing?) (*Segue directly to the Streicher theme*). Or a thing like the other night, the Jews having their high holidays. Rosh Hashana they call it, and what happens? Some kids throw bricks through the synagogue window and paint KILL THE KIKES on the sidewalks outside. Couple of weeks ago; not far from here. The idea dead? How manys times do *you* hear things like: NEVER HIRE A NIGGER, CAN'T TRUST 'EM—AW, HE'S JUST A LAZY SPIC—GET OUT OF HERE, SHEENY—TAKES HIS ORDERS FROM ROME — DAGO — SQUAREHEAD — BOHUNK. Everyday talk, isn't it? Everyday beginnings—maybe? (*Segue directly to Rosenberg theme*) I get a handbill from an organization shouting this country belongs to white Protestants only. Nobody else deserves anything; no rights, no nothing. Get the scum out of here and keep them down where they belong. That kind of thing still waits to be hanged—it's still on the hangman's agenda. (*Segue to Keitel motif*) And what about the beginnings of war, not in exchanges of notes between diplomats, but in men's minds, the trigger-happy minds? Is everybody for a way of finding peace today? Or are there men walking around, men like a fellow I was listening to coming in on a train from Detroit, complaining: "What's the matter with us, anyway? Biggest, strongest country there is left, and all those pineapples piling up at Oak Ridge. What are we messing around with treaties and conferences for? Why all the talking? Why not some action?" Maybe we didn't quite hang that one, did we? Sprouting again so soon after we finished the last one. (*Music segues directly to a more positive, mounting, determined theme which continues behind*) But let's get one thing straight right here. Don't get the idea I'm talking only about America—I'm not. I mean everywhere in the world about these things, these beginnings, everywhere that people are getting kicked around. Seeds, all over, and being watered. I only talked about America because I know my country best and love it best, and I've got to see these things snuffed out here. The way I see it, that little part of all of us that's only a seed, the tiny part that hates another fellow for his race or religion, that whispers of war, and is tempted to get the quick solution whether it means violence or not, that little part of every one of us should have died with *them* at Nuremburg. So what *did* we do at Nuremburg? We stuck up a big sign and said, TRY THIS AGAIN AND THE SAME THING WILL HAPPEN. We've established a new code among human beings; every crime that contributes to aggression is a crime against humanity. Yes, we said that, and it's something new and something we can be proud of. That's number one. Then, number two: the Big Four—Britain, France, Russia, and us—got together on this thing. That's right—we agreed—first time since the war ended, we agreed on hanging the eleven of them. It shows we *can* agree on things: there are ways

and we can find them. Now—what *didn't we do* at Nuremburg? Well, that empty noose is still swinging, and it's still empty. Until it's used, until it's choked the life out of Fascism, so far as I'm concerned, this is no time, no place—there is no reason—to sit back relieved and calm. Tonight, at Nuremburg; and tomorrow, there'll still be one round coil of rope ready to be used. It's going to take a lot of self-examining, a lot of faith in what we believe in, a lot of willingness to fight for it, a lot of speaking out, for all of us, here and everywhere, before that empty noose is filled, and we can stand up and say we have won, we have conquered. (*Pause*) I think we can do it.

Hollywood's Art Machinery

MORDECAI GORELIK

MORDECAI GORELIK, stage and screen designer, was associated with the Group Theater, the Theater Guild, and other Broadway producing companies before going into film work. He is the author of *New Theatres for Old*, generally recognized as a classic study of dramatic form. He has received two Guggenheim fellowships. Mr. Gorelik recently served as stage designer and director for Biarritz American University.

IN SOME ways the Hollywood treatment of film settings casts a revealing sidelight on the general Hollywood approach to reality. The setting represents human environment, a highly important, if mute, aspect of the screen story. What happens to this part of life on its way through the camera lens? As a Broadway designer who has also worked in pictures (as film production designer),[1] I am bound to report that any attempt to bring reality to movie settings encounters stern resistance on the big lots.

Let me say at once that this is not the fault of motion picture art directors, sketch artists, or illustrators. These men—most of them—have integrity, sound taste, and great technical experience, together with the ability to turn out excellent work under pressure. Some even have that touch of genuine dramatic imagination which marks the born scene designer. In the scenic field, as in most others, Hollywood is chockfull of talent.

Why, then, do discerning film critics so often find Hollywood backgrounds inappropriate or downright phony?

The responsibility lies with the general policy of the big studios and with the department heads who enforce it.

To put it simply, the policy of glamorization extends to the setting, as it does to everything else. The studios accordingly do *not* choose their "art" department executives from among their most dramatically gifted art directors or sketch artists. On the contrary, the nod usually goes to those who have a background of "harmonious" Prix de Rome type architecture or of interior decoration in a style of overblown rococo.

Men of this sort are not usually inclined toward a vivid approach to life. Once behind an office desk, they become concerned with problems of budget and of hire and fire. At best they are no longer active creatively, and at worst they carry on a dull routine, year after year, without a single disturbing thought about the meaning of the settings to which their names are attached. In time, the buttressing of their positions becomes their main business at the studios, and their departments turn into miniature empires of mediocrity; humdrum art directors who "fit in" are viewed with approval,

[1] Production designer: a relatively new category in the field of motion picture work. The production designer's task begins with suggestions for the visual enhancement of the story. He accompanies this with sketches and rough ground plans, in a kind of visual exploration of the shooting script. This is followed by supervision of blueprints, construction, painting, set decoration, and continuity sketches. The production designer derives his authority not from the art department but from the director, and is in practice a liaison man between the director and art director. Jurisdiction over this type of work is claimed by both the Screen Art Directors' Guild and the Screen Set Designers' Union.

imaginative ones are viewed with uneasiness, and "outsiders" are warned off the lot.

This kind of setup, as is well known, exists in all departments of the big film studios; but there is a special reason why it is at its worst in the scenic field.

Of all dramatic elements the setting is perhaps least capable of being understood by the glib or untrained mind. It is certainly not understood by the average film executive, whose criteria are a natural inclination to florid bad taste in "A" pictures and a rather urgent appreciation of budget economies in "B" pictures. What the setting means to an environment, the relation of the setting to the style and originality of a given theme, the contribution of the setting as dramatic comment—all this is undreamt of in their philosophy. Film producers may have definite views, whether right or wrong, in their choice of individual writers, stars, or directors; but when it comes to the design problem, they stand in naïve awe of the art department. From that mysterious realm there issues a stream of impressively technical blueprints and models the merits of which are beyond the dispute of laymen. Realized on the sound stages, the designs have a "realism" of the era of Belasco, or else a type of *chichi* that flutters the heart of a Grand Rapids floorwalker. What more could anybody want?

From a drawing by the author

THE ROAD

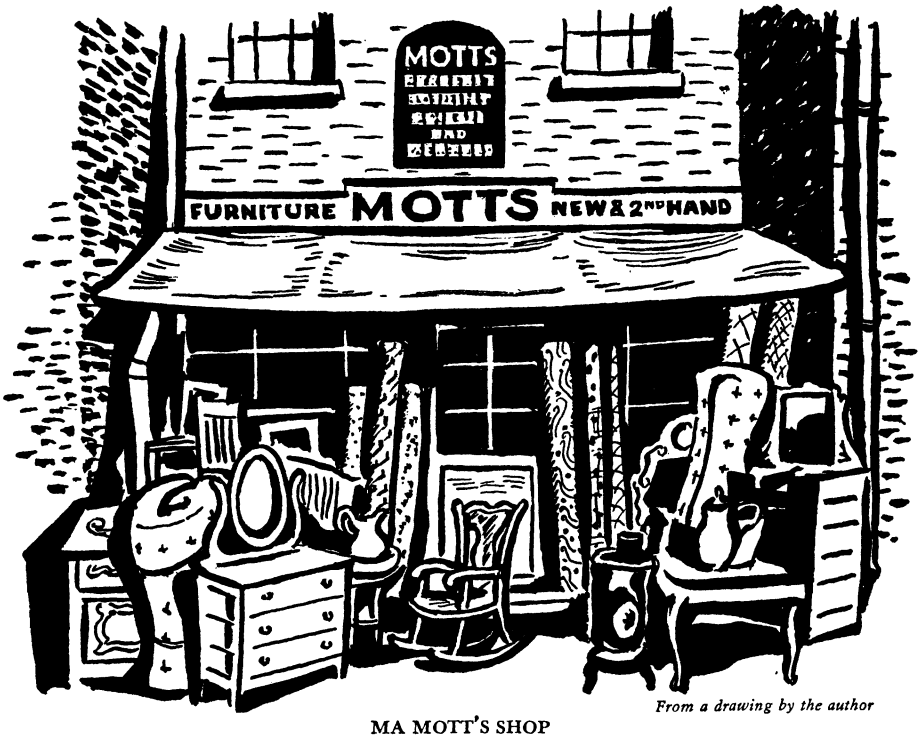
It therefore works out that the art departments on the big lots are autonomous to an amazing degree. Scripts are fed into the hopper of the art machine and emerge as film background, with a minimum of conference between the director and the art director. Indeed, any director who feels it necessary to discuss with care the why and wherefore of the settings that are

handed to him is considered something of a crackpot.

I have had talks with art department heads who have no doubt whatever that their movie settings are just what a setting should be. They want you to know that they have access to the finest collections of research books and photographs in the world. In contrast to the allegedly arty and impractical designers with stage training, the art executives find that just one style of design is appropriate for all occasions. This style they label "realism"; and they pride themselves on this "realism" even though film critics and the public are not so convinced of its reality.

In practice, Hollywood scenic thought proceeds more often in terms of clichés than in terms of reality, the research libraries notwithstanding.

Thus, for *None but the Lonely Heart* the RKO art department manager supplied a model of a London street which the director, Clifford Odets, had the courage to turn down. The model was "picturesque," and the art machine undoubtedly suffered wounded feelings when Odets declared: "This place is so pretty that I'd like to live in it myself. What I want for my action is not a relic of the good old days, but a relic of the bad old days. This street must be the villain of the story; it is the sinister primary reason for the whole dramatic chain of events."



From a drawing by the author

MA MOTT'S SHOP

The assignment was turned over to me, and I remade the street into a typical example of rattletrap slum housing. The honesty and relevance of the design have since been recognized not only by American audiences but by

English ones; on a recent visit to England I was asked by a British studio to do a similar job on one of their pictures. This enthusiasm has so far not been shared by the RKO production heads.

The street design was only the beginning of my differences with the art department; there was a struggle over every detail. When I insisted on plastering advertisements on the available walls of the street, I was told that it would ruin the "Old World atmosphere" of London. Huge hoardings have been part of the "Old-World atmosphere" of London slums since the days of Queen Victoria—but not to the eyes of the art department. Ma Mott's secondhand shop, as visualized by the art manager, had the dimensions of a warehouse filled with the leavings of Du Maurier drawing rooms. I redesigned it, emphasizing its pathetic smallness and the sordid poverty of the things on sale. Promptly there were complaints that it was harder to operate the sound booms in the narrow space and that I was slowing down production. (Incidentally, the sound boom is the usual pretext for allowing the most modest interiors to assume elephantine dimensions. Hollywood will gladly spend money to make settings look lavish, but it cannot afford the money to make settings look normal.)

From a drawing by the author

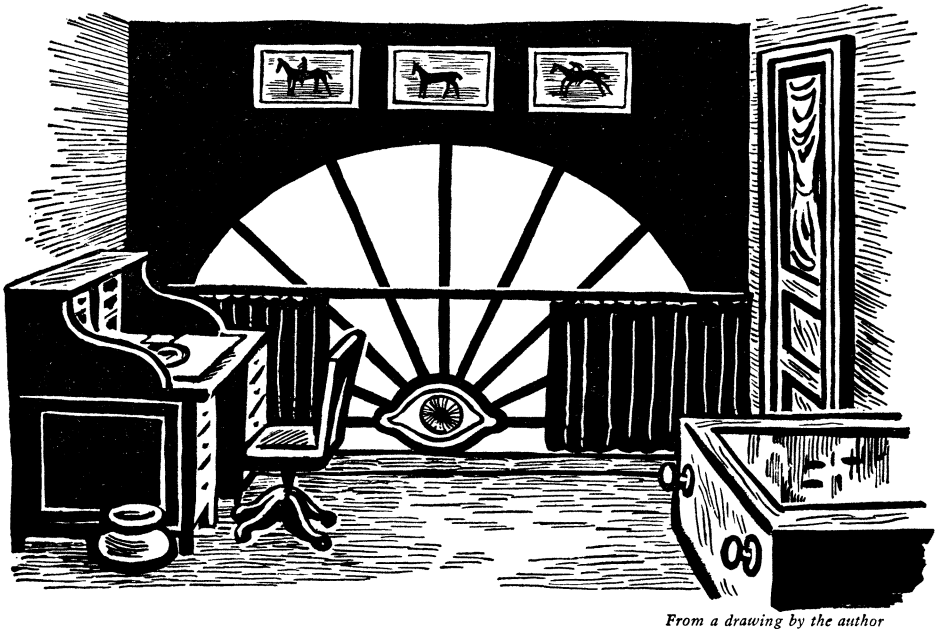
ALLEY BEHIND FUN FAIR

The habit of routine thinking has become implanted. Take the garage sequence in *Lonely Heart*. The art department submitted a blueprint of a whole garage. It seemed to the director and myself that there was no need to build all the walls; we felt that the interior of the sound stage itself was very suitable. The suggestion was greeted with irony, but in the end it was carried out with a saving of time and labor.

On another picture the same art department built a stairway that was

supposed to have been constructed by guerrilla fighters to replace the smashed stone staircase of a monastery in a forest. The RKO method was to do a perfect carpentry job with dressed lumber from the studio stockpile and then chop up the result with axes and chisels in order to denote rude construction in a fine, spanking, battleship gray all over; all texture was gone, and you couldn't tell the wood from the metal parts. It became necessary to repaint the cart with artificial wood graining in an effort to restore some of its orginal appearance.

Perhaps such incidents explain why



From a drawing by the author

OFFICE OF FUN FAIR

time-honored Hollywood style. It was my painful duty to interrupt this process and have the stairway rebuilt of logs, saplings, charred timber, old doors, and other material that any reasonable person would consider more available under the conditions of the story.

The same picture called for a peasant cart made of crude lumber. I found just the right material for it on a nearby ranch—rough boards that had lain for years in the open. The cart was built at the ranch and was brought to the studio. Next day I saw it in one of the studio alleys. It had been painted

it is almost hopeless to expect any picture to emerge from the big studios with the startling documentary quality of *The Stars Look Down* or *Open City*.

It is time to point out that Hollywood's so-called realism is nothing more than Belasco naturalism, a technique of literal reproduction which has long since proved bankrupt. It may still look like art to Hollywood art supervisors, but it was abandoned long ago by leading stage designers, who rightly consider it a superficial "snapshot" technique without selectivity, style, or dramatic content. Directors think in terms of drama, but Holly-

wood's art managers think in terms of four walls and the molding thereof—a good, "practical" consideration, but not one that adds stature or distinction to a film story.

Not only is this literal method inadequate for most themes; it is basically unrealistic as well. It is a paradox that you cannot achieve realism by means of the literal reproduction of anything. This paradox explains why the old-fashioned display mannequins with their real hair and glass eyes have no life as compared with modern display figures; but the principle is still too much for Hollywood to grasp.

I have cited some examples of studio practice in the matter of authenticity, a quality in which Hollywood considers itself expert. What of the more subtle use of the setting in achieving style or dramatic comment?

For the back alley of the Fun Fair in *Lonely Heart* the art factory offered a piece of prosaic naturalism, without regard to the fact that this alley was one of the most romantic locales in the story. Again I was obliged to redesign, curving the walls of the alley, arching it with trees, placing shadowy hoods over doors and windows. This shift toward a more poetic imagery was meaningless to the art regime.

For the beach-house sequence in *Murder, My Sweet,* Adrian Scott, the producer, and Edward Dmytryk, the director, were given sketches of typical beach houses, complete with dinettes. The rather fantastic action of the sequence was incongruous in such surroundings. At Scott's request I made changes which removed the curse of literalism from the designs and gave to the action the theatrical quality it needed. The new design was effectively carried out, but it was at least a year before the producer could reveal to the front office that I had had anything to do with that particular setting.

Scenic literalism becomes glaringly inadequate when applied to scenes of out-and-out fantasy. In such scenes fog, smoke, and vapor are hopefully expected to soften the edges of literal settings and thereby turn them into dreams. But when smoke and distortion lenses alike fail to accomplish this miracle, "outsiders" must be brought in—over the heads of the art executives. Indeed, it is becoming necessary to look to "outsiders" not only to handle dream scenes, but to handle all settings that do not fit the primitive formula of Hollywood design.

The art managers want no "outsiders" around. It is an open secret by now that stage designers who have been asked to do film work have been systematically impeded, sabotaged, and persecuted. Under pressure of the art department heads an official of the Screen Art Directors' Guild recently stated that the presence of stage designers would not be tolerated in the studios. The excuse offered for this hostility is that the stage designers "come in at the top," know nothing about the work, are merely in the way, and grab prestige to which they are not entitled.

It would be absurd to say that a stage designer has nothing to learn about films; but there is more than a little mumbo-jumbo in the assertion that he contributes nothing because film work is beyond him. Experienced stage directors, dramatists, and actors come into the studios without challenge and are permitted to carry on their duties without attacks from an intrenched group.

How would it be if the screen writers, for example, banded together to keep "outsiders" from the studios, demanding that established novelists and playwrights first serve a term of years as junior writers? What if the directors took similar action? Many good writers have turned into successful directors, and no one has insisted that they must first start "at the bottom" as dialogue or test directors. What if film producers set up similar hurdles? Men of every profession have become good film producers without being made to go to kindergarten on the movie lot. But the art department heads are still allowed to talk nonsense about "novices" and to give out that they are the high priests of some occult mystery.

The objection to "outsiders" becomes a joke when one considers that the same hostility is accorded to talented film illustrators and sketch artists, many of whom have grown up in the industry. The center of gravity of genuine creative work has already shifted toward these men; yet they, too, are "kept in their places." Again the pretext is that they know nothing of the mystery of designing for films.

What is this mystery? Surely not the art executive's creative approach to his work? That guileless "realism" presents no mystery to anybody. Is it the technical work? The art executive's initial ideas are sketched for him by sketch artists; his blueprints are drawn by draftsmen; his models are built by modelmakers; his sets are furnished by set decorators; his continuity sketches are turned out by illustrators, and his budgets are drawn up by set estimators. There is nothing mysterious about this smooth-running, competent machinery; it will work for anybody. Technical work can always be learned. The real and only mystery about a genuine artist is the power of his imagination, and that is something over which the art managers have no monopoly.

The mysterious autonomy of the art departments has no justification in creative work. To a considerable degree it has been fostered artificially. It hampers the natural evolution of a motion picture theme and it inhibits the talent of art directors, set designers, and illustrators. Rightly and properly, the art director or illustrator should be responsible to the director rather than to the art department. If that is not possible, there can be no honest objection to production designers, who occupy a liaison position of great importance to a director.

At the opposite pole of autonomy is the method of close collaboration between director and designer, from the very beginning of the work. In the Odets film some of my suggestions went into the shooting script. The chase sequence, as first written, had the gangsters' car hitting a wall. At my suggestion it hit a truck instead; this made possible a more spectacular treatment. I proposed that Mordinoy's office be placed over the entrance to the Fun Fair, and Odets made full use of the idea, turning the office into a kind of spider's web from which Mordinoy kept watch over Ada. As originally written, the bridge and embankment were separate locales; I combined them, making possible some impressive shots. These are examples of a natural and valuable collaboration. They go against the grain of the present setup in the studios.

Among the more alert directors, especially the younger men, there is a grow-

ing number who find themselves hampered by the present cut-and-dried scenic method. They would like to have dramatically minded artists work side by side with them from the script to the cutting room. The category of "production designer," which has arisen because of this need, has alarmed the art executives, since production designers are responsible primarily to the directors and are therefore "out of control." To insist on this new way of working with designers, a director or associate producer must have more pull and stamina than one generally looks for on a movie lot.

However, the story is not all told. In recent years some of the best writers in the film industry have moved into directorial and producer assignments. These men are well aware of the share of the setting in the total impact of a screen story. In time, the newer directors and producers will prove strong enough to make their wishes respected.

Even more important, the growth of independent film units is making it possible for designers to work with directors on individual films beyond the jurisdiction of the art machines. With respect to the setting—and all other aspects of production—the advent of independent companies should have a salutary effect on the future of American films.

None but the Lonely Heart, RKO, 1944. Director and screenplay, Clifford Odets. Novel, Richard Llewellyn. *The Stars Look Down,* Grafton-Loew's (British), 1940. *The Open City,* Excelsa-Minerva Films (Mayer-Burstyn), 1946 (U.S. release). *Murder, My Sweet,* RKO, 1944.

Today's Hero: A Review

JOHN HOUSEMAN

JOHN HOUSEMAN, co-founder with Orson Welles of the Mercury Theater, divides his time between producing and directing motion pictures in Hollywood and plays on Broadway. His last picture was *The Blue Dahlia.* He is currently directing a modern version of *The Beggar's Opera* with Duke Ellington music.

EVERY generation has its myth—its own particular dream in which are mirrored the preoccupations of its waking hours. In years of rich artistic activity the myth becomes absorbed into the intellectual and emotional life of its time. In a period of general anxiety and low cultural energy like the present the dream reveals itself naked and clear. Then we witness the fascinating and shocking spectacle of a nation's most pressing fears and secret desires publicly exhibited in whatever art form happens, at the moment, to be the most immediately accessible to the largest mass of its people. Today this art form is the Hollywood-made motion picture.

I have argued elsewhere against the notion that Hollywood enjoys any real free-will in the choice of its subjects. The best it can do, in the general run of its product, is to reflect as honestly and competently as it can the interests and anxieties of its hundred million customers. That this reflection is at the moment a rather frightening one can hardly be blamed on the entertainment industry. The current "tough" movie is no lurid Hollywood invention; its pattern and its characteristics coincide too closely with other symptoms of our national life. A quick examination of our daily and weekly press proves quite conclusively, whether we like it or not, that the "tough" movie, currently projected on the seventeen thousand screens of this country, presents a fairly accurate reflection of the neurotic personality of the United States of America in the year 1947.

The current American Legend, like all such myths, assumes varying forms. It shifts, changes, and feeds upon itself, grows more outrageous and fanciful, until finally it bursts of its own absurdity. Since this might be happening any day now, I believe this is the proper time to analyze the "tough" movie at the moment of its fullest and ripest development. From among the motion picture advertisements of any current big-city newspaper, a perfect specimen at once presents itself.

The Big Sleep is based on a not very recent detective story by Raymond Chandler. Its plot is complex—too complex to be understood by most of its audiences, and far too complex to be related here. In one essential respect the picture differs from the book. The latter is a narration, the unraveling of an elaborate tangle of interrelated events. The movie by its very nature is a *dramatization.* Thus its values are automatically changed. The book was cynical, hardboiled, and quick-moving—a slick, atmospheric job of detective fiction written by Chandler with a fine contempt for his characters and the sordid world they inhabit. Marlowe, in the book, is an instrument of the plot; the other characters are colorful signposts in a complicated maze. In the movie the approach is basically *ro-*

mantic. Marlowe is played by an important male star. He makes love to a rising and very lovely female star. To a hundred thousand paid customers this spells Romance, and Marlowe's exploits become the stuff of contemporary American Legend.

So let us examine him, today's Hero, this fellow who follows Heathcliffe, Mr. Rochester, Buffalo Bill, Horatio Alger, and Little Caesar into the romantic dreams of the English-speaking world. He is not young; he is somewhere in his middle thirties. He is unattached, uncared-for, and irregularly shaved. His dress is slovenly. His home is a hall bedroom, and his place of business is a hole in the wall in a rundown office building. He makes a meager living doing perilous and unpleasant work which condemns him to a solitary life. The love of women and the companionship of men are denied him. He has no discernable ideal to sustain him—neither ambition, nor loyalty, nor even a lust for wealth. His aim in life, the goal toward which he moves and the hope which sustains him, is the unraveling of obscure crimes, the final solution of which affords him little or no satisfaction. For this he receives twenty-five dollars a day (plus expenses), and he certainly earns it. His missions carry him into situations of extreme danger. He is subject to terrible physical outrages, which he suffers with dreary fortitude. He holds human life cheap, including his own. The sum of his desires appears to be a skinful of whiskey and a good sleep. In all history I doubt there has been a hero whose life was so unenviable and whose aspirations had so low a ceiling.

In the Heroine he has a worthy mate. She is by Arlen out of Hemingway, a sister under the skin to Iris March and Brett Ashley. Like those heroines of the First World Peace, she drifts through life in a hopeless, smoldering kind of way. Some obscurely disgraceful event in her past overshadows her present and inhibits her from intelligent behavior. Unlike her more vital sisters, who swept glamorously up and down the continent of Europe in Blue Trains and Hispanos, she sits moping discontentedly in her father's house. Her shady entanglements are not with members of the international fast set, but with an obscure and melancholy gangster operating in the San Fernando Valley. Like the Hero, she is utterly lacking in ideals and ambition.

At certain intervals throughout the picture, Hero and Heroine are left alone together to conduct their joyless and ill-mannered courtship. When, in the end, they get together, one wonders whether they do so under some mysterious working of the laws of natural selection or whether their merging is simply due to the fact that everyone else in the movie is dead, in irons, or on the lam.

These, then, are our protagonists. Surrounding them is a whining herd of petty chiselers, perverts, halfwits, and nymphomaniacs—poor, aimless creatures without brains, without skill, without character, without strength, without courage, without hope. Not only are they totally lacking in moral sense; they seem to have no sense of anything at all—except fear. From first to last they move through the story with one single desire—to be left alone. "We know we are no good," they seem to say, "we are sad, futile, foolish people. But our crimes are petty. We do not really hurt anybody much ex-

cept ourselves and each other. After all, this is a free country. Let us be."

In one of the current "tough" pictures, technically one of the best, the Hero, finding himself spotted by his enemies, lies in bed waiting for them to come and finish him off under the blankets. And here, I think, is the key to the nature of the present American Legend. The howls of certain critics and ladies' organizations notwithstanding, it is *not* violence and spasmodic savagery that are the outstanding features of the "tough" movie. Violence is a basic element in American life and has always been an important element in American entertainment. What is significant and repugnant about our contemporary "tough" films is their absolute lack of moral energy, their listless, fatalistic despair. In this respect they are in direct contrast to the gangster film of the 'thirties, which was characterized by a very high vitality and a strong moral sense. The vitality may have been antisocial, the moral tone may have stemmed from a false morality bred of power-hunger, lust, and greed, but at least the energy and the morality were always present; and so, consequently, was the tragic sense. The Hero (*Little Caesar, Scarface, et al.*), misguided, arrogant, and brutal though he may have been, rose triumphant, by his own will, against fearful odds. When he finally fell, he did so with a sort of tragic grandeur, paying the price of his sin. The inevitable and deeply moral lesson of the gangster picture was: crime may be profitable, glamorous, and lots of fun, but in the end you pay the price with your life! The moral of our present "tough" picture, if any can be discerned, is that life in the United States of America in the year 1947 is hardly worth living at all.

It is not by chance that so many of the successful pictures of our time, those which attract our highest professional talent and technical skill, are "Whodunits" and thrillers in which the tension is entirely external and mechanical, never organic. The "tough" movie, generally speaking, is without personal drama and therefore without personal solution or catharsis of any kind. It almost looks as if the American people, turning from the anxiety and shock of war, were afraid to face their personal problems and the painful situations of their national lfe.

One final, technical observation. For some years now the "Whodunit" has achieved a special kind of quality in its preoccupation with genuine atmosphere and realistic detail. Hitchcock started it with his English chase pictures. Since then, the tradition of carefully selected, significant realism has lent distinction to many of our American suspense pictures, e.g., *Double Indemnity, Murder, My Sweet, The House on 92nd Street,* and the Third Avenue scenes of *Lost Weekend.* In this respect, *The Big Sleep* marks a violent and deplorable retrogression. Its southern California characters wander through a fairyland of studio back lots and sound-stage exteriors as unreal as the squares and mansions inhabited by the gentry in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's British upper-class romances.

The Big Sleep, WB, 1946. Director, Howard Hawks. Screenplay, William Faulkner, Leigh Brackett, Jules Furthman. Novel, Raymond Chandler. *Little Caesar,* 1st Nat, 1930. *Scarface,* UA, 1932. *Double Indemnity,* Para, 1943. *Murder, My Sweet,* RKO, 1944. *The House on 92nd Street,* 20th C-F, 1945. *The Lost Weekend,* Para, 1945.

Prologue to the Russian Film (Part Two)

JAY LEYDA

JAY LEYDA'S book, *Kino: A History of the Cinema in Russia from 1896 to the Present Day,* is soon to be published by the Princeton University Press. This article is the second half of chapter i in the book. The first half appeared in the October issue of the *Hollywood Quarterly.*

THE FIRST showman to comprehend the future of the business that he had adopted as a temporary show idea was I. A. Gutzman. In 1903 he opened two "electric theaters" in the center of Moscow, and so successful was the experiment that by 1905 he had a practical monopoly on the new territory of Latvia, a province of the Russian Empire.[1] He relinquished his hold on Moscow after Henzel and dozens of other brave new souls moved in. Henzel's theater, the Illusion, on Moscow's Broadway, Tverskaya, found a huge, new, eager audience, and no one doubted any longer that "illusions" were a very profitable enterprise.

A thriving growth began in innumerable renovated shops which all at once put up red and blue and green placards as though 1904 were a festival year, which it certainly was not. The period 1904–1906, when occurred the first swift sweep of the film's popularity in prewar Russia, was also one of the most critical periods in Russian history. In February, 1904, the futile Russo-Japanese War began. That year, the conflicts were between armies fighting at a comfortable distance from European Russia. At home, the cinema acquired new audiences, at first from a joyous public sure that Russia would win in the East, and later from among those who wished to escape the horrible news from the Siberian and Manchurian fronts, or rather, as much of the horror in the news as the press censor allowed to be hinted at in the flag-waving editorials.

Within this one year the cinema business in Moscow had grown from such minor expressions as the tiny theater run by the Belinskaya sisters, seating twenty-four persons, with standing room for thirty, to Abramovich's magnificent palace, seating five hundred. It was in this year that Rosenwald opened his Kinophone, in the Solodnikov arcade, advertised as "Cinemotheater and display of postcards, water-color drawings and paintings," with the special added attraction of "the greatest phenomenon in the world—an armless painter!—Senor Bartogi." His was the first "electric theater" with a foyer and a barker-doorman who drew in the public with shouts and leaflets. Once the public was in, they found a less desirable attraction—a strong smell of frying coming from the kitchen next door. The otherwise well-managed performance lasted for forty-five minutes. Rosenwald paid particular attention to drawing new audiences from among the school children, whom he would approach at recess time, offering his wares as of special interest to grow-

[1] In Riga, Gutzman's two large theaters, the Crystal and the Progress, were frequented by a little boy named Sergei Mikailovich Eisenstein, accompanied not by his parents, but by his nurse because his nurse's dignity was not at stake. The boy was enchanted by the "illusions" even though he had cried on seeing them the first time.

ing boys, with the added inducement of reduced rates. On one occasion he was approached by two visitors from the country whom his barker had enticed into the theater. "We've been watching your show," they said, "and we realize that your method is to keep all those horses and men and equipment behind the screen. But what we want to know is—why do you drag them all here only to show a cannon being fired?" Country fairs had often included Chinese shadow plays, and it is easy to understand that the cinema process was bewildering. The cinema proved itself no ordinary toy by the fact that further knowledge of its tricks did not decrease its audience.

The year 1905 brought the fighting to the front door. From January's bloody massacre in St. Petersburg of the hundreds led by Father Gapon to ask work and bread of Nikolai II, to December's barricades in Moscow streets, it was, to establishments for pleasure, a year of little encouragement. The only foreign cameraman known to be in Russia during this hectic period was Félix Mesguich, now on contract to the Warwick Trading Company. The world had its eyes on Russia in its struggle with Japan and its threats of domestic trouble, and Mesguich was sent in to get pictures of the Tzar. Arriving in January, he found in St. Petersburg all the tensions of impending crisis; an attempt was made on the Tzar's life—in front of his camera. Mesguich describes subsequent events:[2]

"St. Petersburg was gripped by the uprising. We lived in a state of daily terror and in an atmosphere of inquisition. Police arrested people at random. People on the street were searched, passports were repeatedly verified. Day and night, Cossack squads guarding the Nevsky Prospekt made frequent use of their knouts. I stayed at the Hôtel de France near the Winter Palace. The hotel had been closed, but the owners, Renault Frères, permitted a few correspondents to stay. . . . The workers of the Putilov factory struck and began political action. On the twenty-second of January, about noon, a crowd swept along the Morskaya right under the windows of the Hôtel de France. My camera was hidden behind a window on the first floor. Through the black curtain it could see without being seen. Suddenly the tide of demonstrators (I was told they were close to a hundred thousand) flowed into the Prospekt, moving toward the Triumphal Arch, preceded by ikons and religious banners. They were headed toward the square in front of the Winter Palace, where strong detachments of Cossacks and artillery had been posted. A bugle sounded. A squadron of cavalry, swords unsheathed, rode down on the crowd. I heard a terrible fusillade, then the screams of the crowd, trapped by the soldiers and trying to escape. It was a frightful debacle, I heard the horses' hooves on the cobbles. Blood reddened the snow. Night fell; the strike of the electric workers threw the city into darkness; campfires were lit at the street corners. The wounded were removed in stretchers—hundreds had been killed."

Whether Mesguich safely got the film he took across the border when he left, he does not say.

That night, Isadora Duncan arrived in St. Petersburg, and was stunned by the number of black coffins passing

[2] Félix Mesguich, *Tours de manivelle* (Paris, 1933).

through the streets.[3] The following day, she danced for a brilliant audience who in their gaiety and display obstinately refused to acknowledge that any tragedy had occurred.

The only reflection of Russia in 1905 as shown in the foreign newsreels is either new titles for old scenes, such as a subject entitled *Streets of St. Petersburg before the Revolution,* in which the renter is urged to exert his "imagination as one views the scene to picture a Father Gapon leading his hordes of irreconcilables," etc., or deliberately staged events posing as newsreels, such as were produced far from Russia in the Paris studios of Pathé Frères by Ferdinand Zecca. He had discerned film material in newspaper reports of the revolution that alarmed all Europe, and staged a series of films listed in the Pathé catalogue under "Historical, Political and Topical Events": *Assassination of Grand Duke Sergius, Riot in St. Petersburg, Anti-Semitic Atrocities, Revolution in Russia,* and *Rebellion: Mutiny in Odessa.* This last was the first film treatment of the Potemkin mutiny which was to become so famous in film history.

In Russia probably no one would have had the wish to go to a cinema theater, even if these "documents" had been allowed on Russian screens. There was too much else to think about. Mavor says of this period: "The illusion of the military impregnability of the autocracy was dispelled in Manchuria, and the illusion of its benevolence was rudely shaken by the recollection of 'Bloody Sunday' and by the arrest of the workingmen in the early days of March. The failure of the Government to grapple with the industrial discontent, together with the vanishing of these illusions, acted as a signal for the general uprising of the working class."[4]

In the summer, when the war's end seemed in sight, a few new proprietors set up shop. One of these was Karl Alksne, who set up the Electrobioscope in an empty store on Strastnoi Boulevard, seating fifty, where he served as cashier and ticket-taker, announced the program, and raised and lowered the curtain.

General strikes in September and December indicated a people too sickened and angry with the mishandling of the war as well as with the severe suppression at home to give "confidence" to business. Neither the city's middle-class audience nor the peasants and poor workers in the towns and countryside were willing to give time or attention to the "illusions," so pressing were the realities around them. Too much was happening, physically and psychologically, in this time of constant social storms.

Lenin, years later, called the revolution of 1905 a dress rehearsal for the October Revolution. The year 1905 also presaged in miniature the temporary death of entertainment facilities in the face of bigger problems of the coming October.

Liberal and intellectual solidarity had so far strengthened that the Tzar and his government were willing to make any temporary concessions, just to remain secure. They consented to the formation of a representative governmental body, a Duma, which would form the lower house of the Russian parliament, the upper house of which would be the Imperial Council, partly

[3] Isadora Duncan, *My Life* (New York, 1927).

[4] Mavor, *An Economic History of Russia* (London, 1914).

elective also. As time passed, arrests and repressions were resumed, until the Social Democrats were forced to find secret ways of electioneering, since every speaker they put on the street was snapped up by the police. They discovered the advantages of the dark cinema theaters. Vsevolod Chaikovski tells of a typical incident of the 1906 elections: "Before the elections for the first Duma, I remember how, during a film showing in one of the electric theaters, a voice was heard from somewhere in the completely dark hall appealing to the audience to vote for the Social Democratic candidates. In consternation at this illegality, the theater manager ordered the lights up. In a few minutes a pale and shaking police inspector entered the theater, followed by the manager, frigid with horror. The theater was crowded and the audience, knowing the strength of its numbers, greeted his frightened search with derision. He finally beat a hasty retreat to an accompaniment of whistling and laughter, empty-handed."[5]

In May, the First Duma opened, and by July the Tzar felt powerful enough once again to dissolve it. Immediately there were expressions of distrust; Russian troops mutinied in Helsingfors, and in August a badly aimed bomb landed within a few feet of Premier Stolypin. The Tzar seesawed back and forth and made gestures of distributing land to the peasantry—gestures he didn't bother to complete at a later, safer time. Throughout 1906 and 1907 there were conflicts between Duma and Tzar, culminating in the arrest of 169 members of the First Duma, who were charged with treason, followed by the opening, in November, 1907, of a purged and packed Duma.

Under cover of the political disturbances of this period the cinema owners swarmed in from the fairs, where they had advertised "The Latest Miracle of the Twentieth Century," to the city, where similar advertising methods seemed to attract the supposedly more sophisticated city crowds. Men in other small businesses began to covet this easier money. One of them was Hechtmann, owner of a clock store, who in the fall of 1906 opened two theaters, both called the Grand Parisian Theater, at Stretenka Gate and on the Arbat. Next to his Stretenka theater was a furniture store, whose owner within a month turned it into a theater called the Grand Electro in order to compete for some of the startling profits which Hechtmann seemed to be making. Even the luxurious Hotel Metropole transformed one of its ballrooms into the Moderne Cinema.

By 1908 the exploitation of this business had become so extreme that it had to be curbed by the authorities, and measures were taken to limit the growth of the film theater. The new law read, in part: "... the electric theatres, ... in the light of their abnormal development, must not be established closer than 1,050 feet from one another.... The number of electric theaters in the city of Moscow is not to exceed a total of seventy-five."

The "legitimate" theaters took fright at this new rival and used all their political influence to have laws passed limiting the hours when electric theaters might function. They brought to the assistance of their growing eco-

[5] Vsevolod Chaikovski, *Infant Years of the Russian Cinema* (Leningrad, 1928). Chaikovski later worked as a director in "These Infant Years."

nomic problem all the resources of journalistic and editorial comment. *Moskovski Listok* reminded its readers of the great threat the cinema represented to all the arts. "Particularly," it said, "imagine what life will be when drama, performed by first-class actors, is replaced entirely by the screen, on which we see only colorless, expressionless simulation!" Although the electric theaters could begin work at any time after noon that they pleased (usually at 1:00 or 3:00 o'clock), they were obliged to close at 9:00. The position of the "legitimate" theaters became so ridiculous, in vew of their pretended scorn of the upstart attraction, that they compromised at 10:30 and capitulated at 11:00. Their final humiliation came when a few Moscow theaters included a film program as an added attraction.

The electric theaters changed their programs once a week, until competition forced some to change two or three times a week, and one theater tried to find a new program every day. An average program included two, sometimes three dramas, a "scientific" film, one or two scenics, and three or four comics and *"féeries,"* all of which lasted about thirty minutes with intermissions to clear the house—a custom that persists even today in Russian film theaters. One interesting technical distinction between the two chief items should be noted: a drama would be limited to four or eight shots, one for each change of scene, while a comedy required ten to fifteen shots, even though its total length was less. The films were as yet neither tinted nor toned, which is curious, since all French producers used one or the other coloring process in their Paris laboratories. Pathé and Gaumont probably were so sure of their Russian public that they felt no need of adding further attractions. Another explanation may be that none of the showmen or theaters were willing to pay the extra amount demanded for tinting or toning. Titles remained in French, and adaptation or change was unthought of.

It may be interesting to mention two great sensations of this period. One was *La Vie et la Passion du Christ,* made for Pathé in 1898 by Ferdinand Zecca. This drew the attention and the wrath of the Holy Synod upon it, and over it was fought the first battle of the never-ending war between the Orthodox Church and its fresh rival. When it was first brought to Russia it was censored as a "violation of the Gospels." Re-released in 1907, it was widely circulated. Its greatest rival in popularity and sensation was *La Civilisation à travers les âges,* made in 1905 by Georges Méliès.[6] Beginning with the murder of Abel by Cain, it traced murder and inhumanity down through the ages—a forerunner of Griffith's *Intolerance.* The hysteria and fainting fits brought on by this film made it a constant object of censure but did not diminish its popularity.

In the general effort to quiet popular antigovernment feeling after the disastrous end of the Russo-Japanese War and the uprisings, all press censorship was relaxed. In April, 1906, five months after this gesture, all the instruments of government suppression returned in

[6] Although I cannot find any record of a Russian distributor for the films of Méliès, these were probably distributed illegally, like Lubin's in America. Méliès' *Voyage à la lune* (1902) was popularly shown all over Russia. The archives of NIS, The Scientific Research Institute, contain a splendid collection of Méliès' films.

fuller force than ever, and films, too, were found to need more careful watching. The reaction intensified the prerevolutionary conservatism which Mirsky has described as "an intense fear of change, and the conviction that if a stone were touched the whole edifice would fall. It was thus one of the aspects of the degeneracy of the monarchic power, and a sign of growing impotence."

The forms of film censorship were extremely primitive. Ordinarily, at the first showing of a new program the theater would be visited by the police inspector to make sure that everything was all right, and on his way out he would collect appropriate fees for his supervision. At one time Gaumont's film adaptation of Turgenyev's *Fathers and Sons* was confiscated, entailing a serious loss to Khanzhonkov, who had imported twenty prints. Later the importers introduced a system of showing to the police single copies of films that had been brought in "on approval." One subject, the French Revolution, was forbidden from the earliest days, no matter how indirectly it figured in the action of the drama. There was also a ban on any film showing the guillotine or the violent death of royalty. Even a film including the execution of Mary Stuart was confiscated. Pornographic films (called "the Paris genre") were officially declared illegal in April, 1908, and when the film theater Mephistopheles tested the law by showing a full program of the forbidden films, it was closed by the authorities. However, there was one theater which the police did not visit. This was the Patriotic Cinema Theater, organized by a reactionary, anti-Semitic group who called themselves "The Union of Russian People." The policies of the theater and its powerful backers, actually the notorious "black hundreds," were supported by the police with veiled approval in exalted quarters. In spite of this aid, the theater closed when it could not find a producer willing to film the bloody pogroms which the "Union of Russian People" was provoking in all parts of the Russian Empire.

The primitive projector illumination caused chemical explosions that injured and often maimed the operators. When electricity was adopted, these explosions were succeeded by far more harmful fires resulting from careless protection of the projection booth and the inexperience of many of the hastily hired operators. Loss of life was a frequent occurrence. In magazines and newspapers of the time one finds phrases such as "victims of cinematography" and "the dangers of living photography." This was another weapon for the press and authorities to use against the cinematograph. The medical profession also opposed the cinema when audiences were subjected to shaking and chopped prints because exhibitors were determined to squeeze dry of value every foot of film they owned. The films found another natural enemy in the clergy, who, after a newspaper had run a symposium on the subject, "May the Clergy Attend the Cinema?" categorically forbade attendance of their order.

Although the business spread, the quality and dignity of films descended, assisted downward by the press, the clergy, the doctors, and the greediness of the exhibitors, to a place on showbooth and vaudeville programs. A similar situation was occurring in

American metropolitan theaters, where, once the excitement over *The Great Train Robbery* had died down, and no new film excitement had yet appeared, the upper-class audience avoided the cinema. In a Russian trade paper of 1908, advertisements such as the following appeared:

Variety numbers available for cinema theaters.

LIVING PHENOMENA

1) Tattooed Lady—An American
2) Seventeen-Year-Old Giant—Weight: 450 lbs.
3) Amazing Lilliputian—Weight: 35 lbs.
4) Living Untamed Boa-Constrictors

This degradation was sure to affect the business. The foreign producers and the Russian distributors sought desperately to bolster their once sound investment.

Foreign companies had sent occasional cameramen into Russia to make their own catalogues more international; first to be shown on Russian screens were pictures taken by Gaumont cameramen in 1907, the Russian screening of which had far-reaching consequences. Four films, *The Third State Duma in Session, Review of the Troops by the Royal Family at Tzarskoye Selo, Review of the Troops in the Square before the Winter Palace,* and *Solemn Procession of Pilgrims at Kiev* were the first to show Russians on Russian screens. The general opinion was that "we don't look so bad on the screen after all," and the air was full of projects for the production of Russian films. The most ambitious of these was for a film adaptation of Pushkin's *Boris Godunov.* The adaptation was to consist in filming the play's production at the Moscow Art Theater, scene for scene, twenty-two scenes in all, which automatically meant twenty-two shots in all. The project was heatedly discussed with Pathé—and then dropped from view.

Pathé and Gaumont created a more favorable situation for Russian native production than they realized when they built for their own use Russian laboratories to expedite the development and printing of their Russian newsreels and scenics, as well as to prepare Russian titles for their importations. All that the Russian film industry needed now, to be born, was an energetic man to take advantage of an already favorable situation.

In the fall of 1907 all newspapers and magazines carried the following advertisement:

FIRST IN RUSSIA

*

CINEMATOGRAPHIC STUDIO
under the supervision of
the well-known photographer for
the Duma, A. O. Drankov.
Manufacture of films for cinema theaters.
Current subjects!
Russian events on the screen!
Views of cities and countryside!
New subjects every week!
By request, films can be taken in any community that so desires.

With this advertisement Russian film production announced its first cameramen, and its first producer, Alexander Drankov. Drankov's photographic past was no less splendid than his announcement implies. He had been a photo-correspondent for Russian and foreign illustrated papers, including the London *Illustrated News, L'Illustration,* and others. He occupied the honored position of official photographer for the Duma and its members.

With this announcement by Drankov, the foreign companies feared a

dangerous and perhaps ruinous competition, because the Russian press was voicing a popular demand for native films. As time passed and apparently nothing developed from Drankov's announcement, Pathé rushed into the production and distribution, in February, 1908, of the first Russian film, *Tales of the Don,* 134 meters long, consisting entirely of trick riding and scenes of camp life. Its success was unquestioned. Every audience demanded to see it over and over. Two hundred and nineteen copies were sold in less than two weeks at 74 rubles apiece. In the wake of this victory, Pathé immediately began the release of a series of twenty-one scenic films of Russan life under the general title of *Picturesque Russia;* these were greeted with less enthusiasm, however, than *Tales of the Don.*

The other major European companies were awakening to the possibilities of the Russian market; the French Théophile Pathé and the great Italian firm, Cines, both sent representatives to Moscow. Gaumont realized too late the opportunity it had missed to dominate Russian subject matter, and hurried into the arena with two stopgap films—*Rostov-on-the-Don* and *The Funeral at Vladimir of the Georgian Archimandrite Nikon*—with little more luck than the hasty attempt of a native Russian, Khanzhonkov. After two trial films, *The Opening of the Monument on the Site of the Murder of the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich* and *Views of the City of Yaroslav,* Khanzhonkov felt that the making of films entailed more risk than their distribution, and temporarily retired from the field, leaving it clear for the entrance of Drankov. Khanzhonkov's day was yet to come.

From February, 1908, on, Drankov issued a series of seventeen films, one after another, bringing him a decisive victory over all his competitors, including the all-powerful Pathé. A comparison of the titles of Drankov's series[7] with those of the Pathé series indicates Drankov's keener appreciation of the film public's—particularly the Russian public's—desire for colorful active incident and variety of setting. Drankov thus became the undisputed monarch of the Russian cinema, and he immediately assumed the position of an important personage, one, by the way, with an unusual talent for publicity. His first move was to employ the customarily quiet summer to consolidate his place in the notice of the public. On June 8 he invited himself to the wing of the Yelagin Island Palace where Premier Stolypin was living. Drankov showed his films to the assembled guests, lunched with them, filmed them afterward, and even went so far as to announce the film in the press. The Stolypin film was confiscated at once by the police, but Drankov, nowise intimidated, showed his power by having himself brought to Gachina Palace on June 20 to show his films to the Dowager Empress Marie Fyodorovna and the royal family. The Empress was so enchanted by this first sight of the cinematograph that she demanded a repetition—of those films in which she appeared. Drankov's glorious summer was capped at the International Exposition of the Cinema Industry at Ham-

[7] It may have been in connection with those first Drankov films that Victor Shklovsky recalls: "Drankov is showing in the Illusion a film-ribbon depicting a dog in the street.... Drankov is very proud. As he shows it he shouts: 'Look, look! the hair is moving. I took it myself!' " (Podenshchina.)

burg, where he showed his films and captured the usual acclaim. In August, as one result of his Hamburg success, he established connections in Paris through which his "views" were offered for sale there. Thus Drankov added to his honors that of being the first Russian to export native films.

At this point Khanzhonkov grew impatient, seeing Drankov assume all the honors and power, and began a commercial duel to the death, a duel that was being fought within the young industry in every producing country—Pathé and Gaumont in France, Vitagraph and Lubin in America, copied each other's successes, fighting just as bitter a battle as Drankov and Khanzhonkov did in Russia. The new entrant's first move was to bring to Russia a representative of Itala-Film, planning to beat Drankov with a greater variety of films than he could manage, alone, to make. Drankov's answer was to create another sensation by filming Tolstoy "himself" at the celebrations of his eightieth birthday.[8]

Since Tolstoy's excommunication from the Orthodox Church in 1901, for his subversive teaching, he had become a person who symbolized certain principles to be argued over by everyone, almost irrespective of his stature as an artist. The appearance of Tolstoy on the screen provoked a furor. This figure, glaring from the screen "like some wild beast in a zoo," couldn't possibly be Tolstoy, sympathetic papers asserted; "We have been deceived by some made-up actor." The newspapers, whether for or against Tolstoy, made the film so well known that one might suspect the hand of a modern publicity agent. Drankov proudly showed his proof, a statement from Tolstoy's wife Sofia, insisting that the film of him be shown "only on such programs as are exclusively concerned with scientific and educational material," a request which, we can be sure, was violated constantly, as the Tolstoy family had no means of checking and Drankov was after business.

Khanzhonkov's move to counter this was a failure. His two small films of *The Mountains of the Caucasus* were met by Drankov, a better showman, with three typical Drankov films of sentiment and action. But Khanzhonkov's next move was a masterstroke, leading eventually to Drankov's temporary retirement from active production.

France, at the beginning of 1908, had seen the organization of a new film company that was to advance the cinema as an industry but was to deter its entire development as an art. This company, Le Film d'Art, was organized for the purpose of presenting famous stage actors in film representations of their famous theater productions. By the fall of 1908 these films entered the world market, and Khanzhonkov contracted for their Russian distribution. The first film he imported from them was *L'Arlesienne,* "adapted for the cinema" from the play of Alphonse

[8] In *The Tragedy of Tolstoy* Alexandra Tolstoy tells about the film recording of August 28, 1908: "The precursors of every memorable event—the photographers—began to make their appearance at our house. I remember father sitting, exhausted, on the porch with his ailing leg stretched out, and mother coming in to ask him to consent to being photographed for the moving pictures. He made a grimace of pain and started to refuse, but the cameramen swore that they were not going to disturb him and would not ask him to pose. They tried to photograph him from the lawn and from the verandah, while father sat motionless, looking before him with a melancholy stare."

Daudet by his son Léon Daudet, enacted by the stars of the Odéon and the Comédie-Française, and directed by Albert Capellani. *L'Arlesienne* was received with rapture by the Russian public, swelling the film audience with new devotees from the respectable classes, who now conferred dignity and falseness upon the cinema. Khanzhonkov followed up this success with Le Film d'Art's first film, *L'Assassinat du duc de Guise,* which enjoyed an even more dazzling and snobbish success. Everyone interested in the theater attended, in order to compare Le Bargy's characterization of Henri III with Moskvin's performance in *Tzar Fyodor Ivanovich,* already in its tenth year in the Moscow Art Theater's repertoire.

Drankov was desperate when he saw that films he had not made were being applauded by a public he had never hoped to reach. He issued *A Fire in St. Petersburg,* which, in spite of an intense advertising campaign and the fact that for the first time in Russia he was employing toned film in various appropriate colors (blue for night scenes, crimson for the fire, amber for morning, etc.), could not withstand the competition of the great French actors. He even stooped so low as to reissue his earlier film, *The Moscow Rogues' Market,* with only slight reëditing, as a new film, *Creatures That Once Were Men—Gorky Characters,*—all to no avail.

Other firms were rushing in to profit in Russia. The international Eclipse-Radios-Urban made money with two films, *Catastrophe at Messina* and *The Operations of Dr. Doyen* ("5 amputations, 420 meters at the unprecedented price of ONE ruble a meter"), which regularly sent the eager audience into shrieks and fits of fainting. Gaumont brought in a hopeful innovation, the first animated cartoons to be seen in Russia, the work of Emile Cohl. The British Royal Vio brought to Russia its films of the Russo-Japanese War filmed in both camps and only now permitted by the authorities to be shown. The war films were shown on the Field of Mars, St. Petersburg, with an accompaniment of rifle and cannon sounds, etc. Drankov's position seemed really hopeless when Khanzhonkov imported a third Film d'Art, *L'Empreinte,* with Séverin, Max Dearly, and Mistinguett, who was to Europe what Mary Pickford became to America.

B. S. Likhachev sums up this period thus in his history: "From this it is clearly seen that the cinema in Russia had reached a transition to a new era. Russian film production had not gone further than a 'pompous parade' period, and the spectators were demanding dramatic films, as witness their eagerness to see *L'Arlesienne* rather than the arrivals and departures of the Swedish king."[9] Yet they had demanded Russian films, and were ready to respond immediately to any Russian film with an appearance of being dramatic. Drankov realized this and delivered a blow to his rivals by announcing a film about Stenka Razin: "arranged with the participation of at least 100 persons—artists from St. Petersburg's dramatic theaters in historical costumes with appropriate historical accessories." Advance orders poured in from all parts of the Empire, and a success was prophesied by the whole film business. This was at the end of September, 1908. A new epoch was entered. Independent Russian production was to become a fact.

[9] Likhachev, *op. cit.*

Clearing the Air

ROGER MANVELL

ROGER MANVELL, now the English correspondent for the *Hollywood Quarterly,* is the author of the Pelican Book, *Film,* soon to be published in this country. Formerly with the British Ministry of Information in the nontheatrical distribution of documentaries, and a lecturer on the dramatic arts in university adult education in Britain, he is at present Research Officer of the British Film Institute, Executive Editor of *Penguin Film Review,* a new English journal of international cinema, and film critic for a number of journals and broadcasts. He has recently toured Egypt, Palestine, Germany, France, and Czechoslovakia, lecturing on the British cinema.

THE American and British publics share the biggest cinemagoing habit in the world. Although the official audience figure for Great Britain is an average thirty millions a week, a prominent member of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association told me the other day that he estimated it as nearer forty millions. Push this up a bit further and every man, woman, child and babe-in-arms in Britain will be represented by someone occupying the weekly cinema seat.

This formidable demand for films goes back into British cinema history, when our countries shared with France and Italy the foundation of large-scale film production and exhibition after 1900. But the incidence of the last war and its aftereffects cut down British production to a nominal number of feature films from 1914 to 1928, just at the time of a rapid expansion in the exhibition branch of the industry. The Hollywood picture abhors a vacuum, and filled the gap. Today we have nearly 5,000 cinemas and 4,500,000 cinema seats for 47,000,000 people. Their demand is met by double-feature programs requiring in normal times nearly 600 features a year. After the first protective Quota Act of 1927, the British production industry began to supply 5 per cent of this demand. By 1939 it was supplying about 20 per cent, mostly in second-feature-grade product. The quality of this product, often made by unskilled and erratic personnel to accumulate quick profits under the protective quota, was low, and British audiences made no secret of their preference for the skillful and efficient showmanship of the Hollywood product. There were exceptions to the low level of the prewar British film, bright exceptions: the work of Hitchcock and Asquith, the productions of Balcon, Korda, and Wilcox, a few individual productions like Michael Powell's film of the Scottish isles, *Edge of the World.* But British films were mostly legal makeweight quota quickies hated by exhibitor and public alike, most of all by the number of conscientious British artists and technicians who too rarely got a chance to create the films they wanted.

The war gave them that break. After a short period of doubt, the quota was maintained. Most (not all) of the quota-quickie people did not survive the all-round cut necessitated by war conditions. The sixty-five sound stages available to producers in 1939 were reduced to thirty in 1942. The government requisitioned the rest for technical film production or for storage space. Studio personnel was reduced by two-thirds. Production ran only to fifty or sixty features annually during the war

years. Yet under these stringent conditions the British feature film was born. The British war films now are past history except as reminders of the birth of an individuality of style in film making of which they were the first indication on a national scale. Along with them a number of first-rate entertainment films were made which pointed ahead to present-day production styles: films like *Gaslight, Kipps, This Happy Breed, The Way to the Stars, Dead of Night,* and *Brief Encounter.*

Now let us look at the British cinema and its audience, at least a third greater in weekly turnover since 1939. It is led by the great audiences in the 360 first-run houses of the London release area, an area which accounts for some 40 per cent of the takings of Great Britain. With very little exception it sees the American and British first features before the rest of the country, the big company-owned houses of central London acting as shop windows and queue displayers for the new films. The three great circuits (Odeon and Gaumont-British, belonging to the Rank organization; Associated British Cinemas, financially linked with the American Warner Brothers) control two-thirds of these 360 houses, and their tentacles spread to the farthest parts of the country, reaching more than half the first-run theaters in the land. The independents among cinema proprietors, owning small circuits of twenty down to two theaters, take the first-feature films after the circuits have run them. They are allowed to play them concurrently with the circuits only in those places — and they are few enough — where a particular circuit has no house and therefore allows a noncompetitive run of its product. The distribution of films, both American and British, is therefore tightly controlled from headquarters as far as the chief theaters throughout Britain are concerned. Independence of program selection is known only among those few repertory theaters which specialize in showing old films. The many poorer-class houses take what they can get when the bigger theaters have finished with the product.

Only a minority of the great audiences bother much about this mechanized programming. The minority is a large enough number of people, perhaps two million of the regular sixteen or eighteen million weekly cinemagoers.[1] This hypothetical two million, spread over the country and not influential at the box office outside of London and a very few provincial towns, selects its cinema with as sharp an eye for director (and sometimes screen writer) as for star. But the commercial cinema has little use yet for minorities: their money does not begin to add up to a respectable fraction of the sum that the huge nonselective public pays in. This is the tragedy of the serious film maker and the serious public. No one has seriously tried to stage a get-together for them on a scale sufficient to meet the costs of film production.

Yet I cannot overestimate the significance of this minority of public demand in Britain. It is everywhere. It is vocal. It forms film societies which increase in number every month. It forms innumerable discussion clubs. It owns countless substandard movie projectors and gives countless substandard shows. It permeates schools, colleges, clubs, welfare organizations and institutes. The love for cinema, good cinema, exists everywhere in Britain, but

[1] Many of these attend twice a week or more.

the commercial exhibitor, barely nodding to this vocal public, turns from it to feed the mechanical habitual queue. But these people in their growing numbers keep the hearts of our more imaginative British directors high, and if their voices could penetrate to America they would gladden those who get by in Hollywood with the stuff designed to excite a humane and critical audience's reactions. There are now a number of film critics writing for the national dailies and weeklies who cater to this public and belong to it themselves. This joint honesty of approach to the cinema is of the greatest importance to the film maker. I doubt if in terms of box office it represents one-twelfth of the 12 per cent which Britain contributes to Hollywood's total income. But the artist and technician in the van of the struggle for that better cinema which will satisfy their own love of the medium should welcome this 1 per cent along with the kindred fractional minority which must exist all over America.

Most of our British audiences, though they vary from the so-called sophisticated people of the first-run London and provincial theaters to the tough audiences of the great midland and northern industrial belt (to whom Bette Davis is an unpopular enigma and sophisticated social comedy a misunderstood flop), accept films quite uncritically, only aware vaguely that last week was better than this week, and that next week, judging from the trailer, should be better than either. They are not recumbent in the cinema, as our welfare authorities who never go near the movies think. The cinema is for them a place of intense excitement and joy, a vast playground of emotions dammed up by the factory, the office, and the repressions of home life. British audiences and American must be alike in their demand for the continuous supply of artificial emotional activity. Their own lives fail to provide enough excitement in hard reality.

This is the place to dispel the feeling, current, I am told, among American film makers, that our critics slap every Hollywood picture because it comes from abroad and praise every home-produced production like an overcherished child. It is true that, especially during the midwar period, the critic welcomed and perhaps overpraised every film which seemed to reflect the new realism of the British cinema. Under bombardment, values change, and there obviously was a stiffening of general audience reaction in favor of realistic treatments and truer emotional attitudes. There was, and still is, an obvious national pride in any virtues the local product can be seen to possess when five-sixths of the screen space is allotted to Hollywood anyway. But with one accord the critics who are not mere film reporters, but are consciously doing an important job in the public service, praise the great American film when it comes along. I can remember recent critical appraisals (and what spacious appraisals) of films like *The Forgotten Village, The Ox-Bow Incident, Double Indemnity, The Southerner,* and *The Lost Weekend.* I can remember, too, the acid reception of certain recent British program pictures, the trouble over the critical cold-shouldering of *Caesar and Cleopatra,* and the watchful critical eye now being kept upon the weaknesses in the British product. The prob-

lem of the critic is the same everywhere. Many critics are intelligent university-educated men and women. They are asked to write weekly about films most of which are designed to excite the attention of emotionally immature people, the adolescents of all ages and all nations. Novels of this caliber are seldom given review space, nor are critics among the first rank of journalists called upon to adjudicate their values. The critic with a conscience seeks for the moment of illumination in the course of the average picture, the touch of cinema which invigorates the eye in the all-too-frequent dialogue sequences which push the average film narrative forward. And when it comes, he writes it up. He does not expect masterpieces every other week. But he expects good cinema.

The British critic and a section of the British public are realists, and they love the realistic element in American films. They like the shopkeeper in *The Stranger,* the bartender in *The Lost Weekend.* They like the terse idiomatic American speech of every good film from Hollywood, for it strikes the British ear with a sort of poetry, forceful and imagistic, a sharper speech than our own, a two-dimensional speech spoken in counterpoint.[2] For the most part, British scripts have none of the economy of speech of the best American, though there are signs in films like *Waterloo Road* and *The Rake's Progress* that it may come. The virtue of British films lies rather in honesty of conception and realism of treatment than in the technical efficiency of screen writing and narrative. British films seem leisurely merely because the British are, on the whole, a leisurely people. I can imagine this to be one of the problems in serving them up as entertainment for American audiences, quite apart from the old trouble of the British accent. The speed of the average Hollywood film is itself entertainment to the British householder who sits back comfortably in his seat and thinks how American all this speed is. Where will it get them? he thinks, enjoying the spectacle of their speed immensely. But this quality can hardly work in reverse except for a minority of cinemagoers in the States who may be fascinated by the spectacle of people who move more slowly and think over the implications of a situation.

The present structure of the British film-production industry favors the work of the individual artist. Films are made by a number of small units and companies, many of which distribute their product through the Rank organization but remain relatively independent in their choice of subject and style. Some of these films are directly produced by the Rank organization and are financed on a scale which demands profits from distribution abroad. (The home market is worth about £300,000 for a successful picture.) But as long as artists and technicians form production teams used to working together, teams like Archers Productions (Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), Cineguild (Anthony Havelock-Allan, Ronald Neame, and David Lean), Individual Pictures (Frank Launder and Sidney Gelliat), Charter Films (Roy and John Boulting), and the units grouped under Michael Balcon's supervision at Ealing Studios and Del Guidici's at Two Cities, the vitality which derives from

[2] I leave American readers to puzzle this one out!

individuality of style is assured. Just as the progressive work in the French cinema before the war was carried out largely by the independents, so the progressive work during the past five years in Britain has been created by these small-scale units and companies working on one to six pictures a year.

What matters in the cinema of any country is that its product should be marked by a distinction of style that is deeply rooted in the national character. Imitation by one country of the technique and style of another is a fatal plagiarism. The cinema of any country which has made a significant contribution to the history of the art has shown such a distinction of style. It is to be seen in the history of the film in America, Sweden, Germany, Russia, France. This style has now been created in the film of Britain. We are anxious to nurture it, and the greater British public is behind us though its devotion to Hollywood and Hollywood's stars remains unaltered.

Dead of Night, Ealing-Univ (Brit.), 1946. *Brief Encounter,* Coward-Cineguild (Brit.), 1946. *The Forgotten Village,* Mayer-Burstyn, 1941. *The Ox-Bow Incident,* 20th C-F, 1942. *Double Indemnity,* Para, 1943. *The Southerner,* Loew-Hakim-UA, 1945. *The Lost Weekend,* Para, 1944. *Caesar and Cleopatra,* Pascal-UA (Brit.), 1946. *The Stranger,* Internat-RKO, 1945. *Waterloo Road,* Gainsborough-GFD (Brit.), 1945. *The Rake's Progress,* Individual-Univ (Brit.), 1946

Cinema for the Few

GORDON BRIAN ANSELL

GORDON BRIAN ANSELL is in his final year at Trinity College, Cambridge, taking the degree in Biochemistry and participating actively in the Cambridge Film Society

THE FILM SOCIETY is a purely English institution born of a desire to recapture that elusive article, the film of merit, that will appear for a brief period and then vanish. Despairing of the humdrum products of the British and American studios, the serious student of the cinema and the discerning picturegoer have combined to sort the good from the bad and to show the former. The good have been so ostracized in the commercial cinema because of their low box-office value that people still exist who think that serious film making ceased with the coming of the talking picture.

Most such societies have evolved independently to show films that are of value by accepted standards of cinema technique irrespective of when and where the films were produced. Film societies are noncommercial although they tend to work on a small profit margin in order to gain and maintain the large hall equipped with both 16-mm. and 35-mm. silent and sound projectors to which each aspires. Many use cinemas, others use town halls or barns, and our society has even crossed the sacred precincts of the University Union Society. Some, utterly disgusted with the commercial product, endeavor to make their own films, often with disastrous results to their finances and with little footage to show for it. Lack of the requisite equipment and technical knowledge are, in the main, to blame. Usually, however, by diligent inquiry a supply of suitable films can be found to satisfy the most cantankerous cinematic appetite.

The Cambridge Film Society was founded in October, 1940 (although there have actually been film societies in Cambridge—as befits a prominent cultural center—from about 1930 onward), the original idea, initiative, and organization being supplied by Peter Phillips Price of Trinity College. He was aided by Michael Orrom (Trinity), who had previously given shows under the auspices of the Cambridge University Socialist Club on his own 16-mm. sound projector. From small beginnings—only a hundred persons could crowd into the tiny C.U.S.C. clubroom—the society has grown until it now has a thousand members. Shows are held in the comparatively sumptuous Arts Theater and in a smaller theater belonging to the Amateur Dramatic Club.

Even the 16-mm. shows of the early days were, when one considers the difficulties of their organization, of an extraordinarily high order. In one term three of Pabst's works—*Westfront 1918, Kamaradschaft,* and *The White Hell of Pitz Palu*—were shown, but the lack of a 35-mm. projector restricted the Society to films that have been arbitrarily considered classics by the British Film Institute and converted by it to substandard stock. When the Arts Theater Trust allowed us to use its projector *in situ,* we were able to ex-

tend our range to all available films which we thought worth showing.

But we are still restricted, in common with other societies, by licensing regulations. A large number of films are only licensed for showings for one year, after which they pass into the vaults of their owners, often never to be resurrected, and sometimes destroyed. It rests with the British Film Institute whether or not a film shall be preserved on standard or substandard stock, or both, and remain in circulation. Fortunately, some films, including *Citizen Kane, The Ox-Bow Incident,* and most modern French sound films, are relicensed yearly by the distributors. This makes it possible to show these "popular classics" at the few "repertory" cinemas that exist in this country. It is probable that the British Film Institute could not afford the printing rights for such films. The B.F.I. cannot seem to approach in scope the vast library of films that must be closeted in your American Museum of Modern Art. This was brought home to us recently when the New London Film Society showed a certain number of films from this source exclusively. Their shows were the envy of every society in the country. For example, Stroheim's *Greed* had not been shown in this country since its release in the 'twenties until the New London Film Society featured it.

It would not be correct to say that the B.F.I. is the only source and agency of films from the past. Numerous small libraries exist which specialize in films on one particular subject or group of subjects. The Association of Scientific Workers has a collection of scientific films available for hire; the Imperial Chemical Industries produce many films on medical subjects; and yet another library issues films on historical subjects.

Although this year sees the fiftieth anniversary of the public showing of films, we still find it difficult to view the cinema coherently. We divide it into "periods," silent and sound. Some among us divide the silent into pre- and post-Griffith, "German impressionist school," "Russian epic school," and so on. The "school" system is possibly the most satisfactory for the silent film, but the sound cinema is behind, around, and before us. We can say that a film is in so-and-so's style, but we cannot yet legitimately divide the sound cinema, as we know it at present, into any rigid compartments.

Most film societies are content to pick a film out and label it "good," either of its class, if it can be ascribed to a class, or as compared with the film in general.

It will be convenient at this stage to glance at two illustrative examples. At some time or other, all societies show Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin,* not only as an example of the Russian epic school, but also because it contains supreme examples of the editors' art. This film stands out both in its school and in relation to the cinema as a whole; it is a landmark in the development of an aesthetic approach. That many people regard the Russian silent technique as a mere development and enlargement of that of Griffith, illustrates the difficulty of finding anything static even in the silent period. Similarly, Welles's *Citizen Kane* has come to be regarded in this country as exceptional in several respects. It illustrates the use of the sound track to convey mood and theme, matching in quality

the far-reaching artistic merit of the visual. This film is a problem all by itself, for unlike most modern American films it has the stamp of individuality which will make it impossible to systematize for years to come.

It is the duty of the film society to draw the attention of the public to such outstanding films, to haul them forth from the obscurity of the distributors' vault and demonstrate conclusively that greatness does not date. This it has done to a remarkable degree. Even so, the audience tends to leave the show murmuring vaguely, "A great film," content to regard it as being outside the trend of general cinematic evolution. Some of the better societies therefore show series of films, including mediocre ones if necessary, in an attempt to point out the relation of films to each other. Thus one might give a series to illustrate realism in the sound cinema, including Carné's *Le Jour se lève,* Coward's *Brief Encounter,* Ford's *Grapes of Wrath, The Long Voyage Home,* and Wellman's *Ox-Bow Incident.* Printed program notes are issued indicating the varied approach to the idea in question, trying to compare technique, and pointing out nationalistic tendencies and the independent growth of one director's style. A moment's thought will make it clear that, even if the required films are available, such a project is difficult.

The film societies worked independently and often chaotically until the recent formation of the Federation of English and Welsh Film Societies, to which most of the societies subscribe. The number of societies in the British Isles is sixty-eight (and is steadily increasing), and the Federation attempts to act as a center for the mutual exchange of ideas and programs. Nationwide though the Federation may be, it has as yet had no say in the production of the commercial films, and it is extremely doubtful that it ever will, because film society membership is infinitesimally small when compared with the total herdlike cinemagoing public.

The film is not yet taken seriously by people who should know better. It should be realized, however, that many films of great "popular" appeal are considered of sufficient merit to be shown by film societies. This applies especially to the documentary film in this country, for the demand for clear, dramatic presentation of fact is common to all sections of the community and we can only applaud the production of such films. (We never tire of boasting that the documentary film is the real glory of past British film production.) The film society is not a highbrow concern; its function is to disseminate that which is good in the cinema. Only future generations will be able to say whether our choice was good, bad, or indifferent.

The Cambridge University Film Society, along with some of the others, has tried to broaden the attitude to the cinema by means other than the impersonal showing of films. It aims at a closer and more personal contact with the audience than that of the cinema manager and the box office. Experience has shown the Society that, whereas the greater proportion of members desire to see good films, few are genuinely critical and fewer still know how the film industry functions. Several eminent speakers have addressed the Society on production processes, but the audiences have been pitifully small.

The number of university students who can talk vaguely about montage and "impressionism" without the slightest notion of their implications is phenomenal; yet few will trouble to hear expert opinion. But then we are told that we function in an intellectual stratum, apparently a great source of those who have scarcely scratched the surface of knowledge while giving the impression that they have little to learn. The film society does not exist in order to supply the film industry with "intense" young men and women. In fact, the number of society members that have worked in the film industry is remarkably small. Peter Price worked for Strand Films. Michael Orrom and Frances Gysin work with Paul Rotha, who made *Worlds of Plenty* and *Land of Promise,* and Lionel Cole has spent some time with the Shell Film Unit.

Apart from seeing and talking about films, can we admit to any practical experience in film making? Have we, you might well ask, attempted to produce a film dispassionately, as a challenge to the murk of commercialism? Alas, little is known. The results of each enterprise must be buried in the archives of shame, for little ever braves the shimmer of a cinema screen. As in most other countries, there are a number of amateur "producers" of films here who roam the countryside with a ciné-kodak, filming this and that and stringing it together as a documentary record, but the editing is invariably bad. Making a film from a script is rare; continuity is often in abeyance altogether.

I can, however, recall a notable achievement of the Oxford University Film Society, which in 1944 filmed *A Sentimental Journey* from the novel by Sterne. Admittedly they were fortunate in having at their disposal the "props" from a London theater's production of Congreve's *Love for Love,* but, even so, having little technical equipment, they were severely handicapped when filming outdoor scenes. The final silent film was favorably received although its defects were obvious. Here was a film which no film company could make because of its complete lack of "box-office appeal"; daring experiments are becoming rare in the cinema, these days. But it is little use to regard the film society as promising great aesthetic achievements. Film making is a full-time occupation.

We at Cambridge have also attempted to make films. The Production Unit was formed in 1944 on high endeavor and one small camera. A whole term was taken up in finding a suitable script. "Suitable script" meant one that was short, needed a minimum of sets and actors, and "moved." The script that did eventually materialize was, to put it bluntly, bad, but we thought it would suffice as practice material. The subject—the thoughts and reactions of a student preparing for a tripos examination; the result—after four months of sporadic shooting, some hundreds of feet of sequences (one could not call them scenes) loosely held together. However, it was a start. Certain of us had acquired a knowledge of continuity, cutting, and lighting. Since actors and actresses were at a premium, as they still are, we used them as little as possible.

In October, 1945, three units were formed: Unit No. 1, to make a film about the ex-serviceman's return to student life; Unit No. 2, to make an instructional film on crystallographic

research under academic supervision; and Unit No. 3, to practice—for want of a better term.

Unit No. 1 began optimistically. Though the difficulty of gathering together a sufficient number of people for a whole day in term time was often insurmountable, we had 450 feet of edited film at the end of the season. Of this film, tentatively entitled *Ploughshares,* I beg to say little. In short, it is a failure and has been deliberately re-edited as a satire on the Production Unit. Even thus, it is barely passable. Yet amid all the quavering "pans" and the overlong shots one can occasionally discern a glimmer of imagination. Ability to handle the apparatus at our disposal is not enough. Creative thinking should be the driving force in amateur film making, and the Units may well founder for lack of it.

A reel from Unit No. 1, vague official promises from No. 2, and high hopes from No. 3 constitute the full sum of our production endeavor.

And what of next season? Like other societies which have been flourishing during the war years, we must not be too optimistic about an enthusiastic membership. With the gradual return to peacetime conditions, there are other attractions. A fall in membership must be combatted by an intensive recruiting drive. Our society's prestige, coupled with its acknowledged efficiency in its basic program, should guarantee a safe, if not easy, passage. Production Unit or no Production Unit, we hope for an even better season than last.

I append last year's program.

MICHAELMAS TERM, 1945

October 21. Program of documentary films.

October 28. *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, U.S.A., 1941). *Great Train Robbery* (Edwin G. Porter, U.S.A., 1903).

October 31. *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (R. Weine, Germany, 1919).

November 4. Talk: Ralph Bond (World-Wide Pictures) on "The Structure of the British Film Industry."

November 11. *Hortobagy* (G. Hoellering, Hungary, 1937), first shown in this country in 1945.

November 14. *Battleship Potemkin* (S. Eisenstein, Russia, 1925).

November 18. Program illustrating the development of the cartoon film.

November 25. *Land of Promise* (Paul Rotha, England, 1945).

November 28. *Nanook of the North* (R. Flaherty, U.S.A., 1922).

LENT TERM, 1946

January 27. *La Femme du boulanger* (France, 1936).

January 30. *The Covered Wagon* (R. Cruze, U.S.A., 1925).

February 6. Program of Ministry of Information films.

February 10. *Baltic Deputy* (Russian, sound period).

February 13. *Turksib* (Turin, Russia, 1926).

February 17. Basil Wright, introducing a program of his own films.

February 24. *Les Otages* (R. Bernard, France, 1939).

February 27. *Birth of a Nation* (D. W. Griffith, U.S.A., 1915).

March 3. Dilys Powell, film critic of the Sunday *Times,* on "The Filming of Books and Plays."

March 6. Program of Ministry of Information films.

March 10. William Alwyn, composer of film music, on "Music for Films."

Literary Works: A Question of Ownership

MORRIS E. COHN

MORRIS E. COHN is counsel for the Screen Writers Guild. His published studies of literary property include *Author's Moral Rights: Film and Radio,* in Volume I, Number 1, of the *Hollywood Quarterly.*

8th November 1623

Master Blount } Entered for their copie
Isaak Jaggard } under the hands of Master Doctor Worrall and Master Cole Warden Master William Shakspeer's Comedyes, Histories & Tragedyes soe many of the said copies as are not formerly entered to other men VIZ. . . .

—Entry in the register of the Stationers' Company for the First Folio Shakespeare

THE ESSENCE of ownership in anything is the right to exclude others. Properly invoked, all the terrifying machinery of the state—courts, sheriffs, and highway patrol—is at your disposal to keep strangers out of your car or your house and to keep unwelcome hands off your dog or your hat. In fact, if you fail to act promptly in moving squatters off your land or in reporting your stolen car, you may lose your exclusive right.

An author is a perverse kind of owner. He wants strongly not to exclude others. His works are worthless unless others use and share them. And he does not want this use to affect his ownership. He finds quickly that the task of sharing, communication, is too much for him if he is to make a profession of writing. It is an undertaking for the publisher, the motion picture or play producer, or the broadcasting studio. To get his work done the author has found that he must very often give up his ownership. Since literary works without communication are sounds in a vacuum, the history of authors' rights has been the story of an unequal struggle between the creator and his interlocutor, the business or industry which furnishes the author with the means of communicating with his audience.

From the very beginnings of the written word, author and interlocutor have been tied together. Neither can get along without the other. But the differences in their fundamental attitudes and purposes have made them an unnatural couple, each resenting the fact that the other is indispensable.

To the author's audience, the contributions of the creator and interlocutor come as an indivisible unit. It has not been possible to ask a reader to pay the author separately from the payment made to the publisher, or the movie audience to send a few postage stamps to the writers named on the screen. The gross proceeds of writing come in a lump, and the division has been left to the unequal economic power of writer and interlocutor. The law of authors' rights came in part from this struggle. It is far from being settled. Anyone who thinks that the law of authors' rights has reached the repose of perfection needs only to glance at its brief past.

The proposal for an American Authors Authority is fresh evidence of old tensions and current instability. The enthusiasm, the bitterness, the outright falsifications with which the proposal

has been received might suggest that it is a break with history and alien to the history of Anglo-Saxon copyright. A fair examination of the proposal would require perspective, measurement against the practices of the past. More important, such an examination would shed light on the present relationship between writer and proprietors, the industries which live, if not on them, then through them.

Of the unmeasured era before Gutenberg the savants report that ancient authors were sometimes hired and paid like artisans. In Roman times copyists and *librarii,* employing slave labor to duplicate manuscripts, profited from literary works usually to the exclusion of the author. For the most part, the writers' concern was to get legible copies free from error. There is almost no evidence of anything like a conception of authors' rights. The Roman jurists apparently had difficulty in understanding that a right in the literary work could be distinguished from the parchment or tablet on which it was written.

A glimmering of copyright shows up during the time when works were multiplied in monasteries. There was a considerable *exchange* of the privilege of copying manuscripts; the traffic in these privileges amounted to barter, a recognition that the right to make a copy was worth something. The author, often disdainful of money, and frequently motivated by love of God, got nothing from these exchanges except a larger audience, and no doubt he thought this was enough. A chronicle of the seventh century tells of King Diarmed's decree in favor of Abbott Finnian and against St. Colomba, who had surreptitiously made a copy of the abbot's psalter. In giving judgment the king is said to have uttered the phrase, "To every cow her calf." Although the story is now believed apocryphal, it is interesting because it shows that Adamnan, the chronicler, had a sound notion of copyright and that, inferentially, some such idea was current.

When type was made to move, many of the things men lived by could not long remain still. Institutions altered, traditions gave way, and ultimately new practices developed new rights. On the Continent, in Venice, Frankfurt, Paris, printers first put the old works on their presses. There was no trouble with the author—for example, with Gasperno of Bergamo, whose *Letters* was one of the first books printed in Paris, with Sallust, or with the translators of the Bible. But there was the well-warranted fear that the overwhelming work of editing and revising, of reconciling the many extant manuscript versions, would be stolen by another printer as soon as the first leaves came off the press. The printer therefore sought and got letters patent from the ruling authority; these gave him a monopoly on the book, usually for a period of years measured in units of seven. The motives of the issuing authority varied at different times and in different countries from control and censorship to private profit, but as a consequence letters patent of various sorts were issued: for all the works of a named writer; for all of the works of a class, such as psalms, or hymnals; for all works in Greek. These were *printers'* privileges, even though as time went on new works were included. It is true that in 1486 Sabellico, historian of the Republic of Venice, got a patent for his *Decades Rerum Venetarium,*

and in 1492 Peter of Ravenna got a monopoly for printing his *Phoenix*. But patents to authors were extremely rare.

In England the development of rights in literature shows even more clearly the preëminence of the printer and publisher. The interest of the Church in controlling the press, the interest of the Crown in preventing sedition, and no doubt other interests, all influenced the process. But most students agree that English copyright was born out of the purpose of the Anglican Church, after the Separation, and of the Crown, to impose censorship on the author, and the desire of the printers to get and keep a monopoly in printing. The books of the first English printers, Pynson and Wynkin de Worde, had the Crown's *cum privilegio* and the ecclesiastic *imprimatur*, giving the reader the assurance that the printer had successfully run the gantlet of State and Church. Whether the printer had got the consent of the author was of little concern.

Despite these hazards the printer had a good thing of it. A monopoly of a nation's reading is too profitable to be treated lightly, and the industrious printers took steps to retain it. In the reign of Philip and Mary, the Worshipful Company of Stationers was incorporated. London booksellers controlled the company, and their object was to perpetuate their monopoly. The Stationers established a system of entering in their register every book printed; with this entry as foundation, they claimed the ownership of the book. For those books which were based on a Crown patent, the Stationers' claims were valid, even if not for the reason they asserted. The Star Chamber, the tribunal which had the power summarily to enjoin piracy, enforced many of their claims. And this was enough to frighten country booksellers and others who might otherwise have had the temerity to run off an edition of a popular work. For practical purposes, entry in the Stationers' register was equivalent to copyright. Since only members had the right to operate a press or to have a work entered in the register, the monopoly was very nearly complete. The author could like it or he could lump it. It is not easy to negotiate with a monopoly.

An interesting light is thrown on the relationship between author and printer during this period by George Wither. In his *Scholler's Purgatory* he contrasts the honest stationer with the dishonest, and writes of the latter in a rage which seems modern:

"He will fawne upon authors at his first acquaintance & ring them to his hiue by the promising sounds of some good entertanment but assoone as they haue prepared the hony to his hand he driues the Bees to seek another stall. . . . If he get any written Coppy into his powre likely to be vendable, whether the author be vvilling or no he vvill publish it, & it shallbe contrived and named also according to his owne pleasure, which is the reason so many good books come forth imperfect and vvith foolish title."

In 1637, a decree of the Star Chamber codified the practice. There was one important change: no new book could be printed without the author's consent. But the decree absolutely forbade anyone to print a book before it was entered in the Stationers' register. The author then had the choice of keeping his manuscript unpublished

or taking what a stationer would give him for it. Three years later, Parliament put the provisions of the decree into its Licensing Acts, and these were extended every two years until they lapsed in 1692.

Without the force of the Licensing Acts, the Stationers began to fidget. The by-laws of the Stationers' Company show that it became necessary to remind the printers in solemn phrases to respect each other's copy and in more threatening tones to impose penalties. Warnings and penalties proved ineffective, and out of the increasing disregard for each other's privileges came the petition to Parliament for a copyright act. It is important to note that the request was made by booksellers, not authors. In 1710 there was enacted the first copyright legislation anywhere in the world.

It is clear from the foregoing that copyright and the ownership of literary material have been considered by publishers and booksellers to be their business. Brander Matthews pointed out "that the earliest person to feel the need of copyright protection should have been a printer-publisher is worthy of remark; obviously, in this case the printer-publisher stood for the author and was exactly in his position."

The great lawsuits of the eighteenth century concerning the duration of copyright at common law and under the statute—was copyright *property* or a mere privilege?—were brought by booksellers. The Stationers went so far, in one famous litigation, as to frame a collusive case in order to carry their point. They missed getting away with it by the narrowest margin. In 1838 it was Thomas Tegg, a bookseller member of Parliament, who championed the side of the booksellers against Talfourd, a writer. Laboulaye was able to say of the revisions of the copyright law which were then being considered that until that time every law concerning copyright had been made for printer and bookseller, and now *for the first time* authors were being considered. In our own country, William A. Jenner took pains to publish privately a pamphlet pointing out that the copyright law proposed in 1909 was drawn by a gathering of publishers' representatives from which writers' interests had been excluded. Objecting to the proposal to give the right of renewal to the *proprietor*, instead of the author, he said: "It is no answer to the argument to say that the author may reserve the proprietorship of his work.... Of course he can, but the author may have been improvident, or stern necessity may have induced the author's original bargain with the publisher, or the work may have contained elements of usefulness and popularity which were not at first perceived.... Authors are many and publishers are comparatively few, and the author must accept the publisher's terms unless his own renown enables him to dictate the bargain."

It is not intended to indicate that only proprietors have fought in the battle for copyright. Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, and Mark Twain are a few of the great writers who have participated. But the writer's effort to make copyright and ownership his affair has not been marked by any important success. Early printers organized the Stationers' Company, the Venetian Guild of Printers and Booksellers, the Frankfurt Book Fair, and others. Writers, fearful that joint action could not be

confined to the material aspects of their profession, have with few exceptions been reluctant to act together. In the last decade Georges Duhamel wrote against a union for writers, saying, "We are the only individuals left in the world; let us hold out to the last in our trenches." This logic is curiously like the arguments of newspaper publishers against unionization of the presses and in their defense in the antitrust prosecution of the Associated Press. The publishers contended that unionization, in the one case, and the Sherman Act, in the other, would interfere with freedom of the press. The error of the publishers' contention does not of course prove Duhamel's reasoning wrong. But that a similar argument has been used both for and against organization suggests an evaluation of its logic.

In the United States the tradition that ownership of literary materials is the concern of the proprietor remains so nearly unchanged that exceptions excite comment. The publisher is the oldest of the group of persons who stand as intermediaries between the author and his audience. If time or authors' efforts could have brought any changes, we should expect here to find the greatest advance in authors' rights. Nevertheless, Herbert A. Howell, Assistant Register of Copyrights, gives a standard form author-publisher's contract containing the following:

"The author hereby grants and assigns to the publisher . . . a work . . . and also the sole and exclusive right to publish it . . . during the full term of copyright and all renewals thereof; also all rights of serialization, dramatization, motion picture, translation, digest, abridgement, selection, anthology, mechanical, visual, sound reproducing and recording rights, including television and radio broadcast; *and the exclusive right to take out copyright thereof in his own name,* or in the name of the author, in any and all countries; and the right to obtain renewals of copyrights."

Works prepared for motion pictures are customarily sold outright. The archives of motion picture companies must surely contain mountains of screenplays, novels, short stories, reportage, screen stories, and stage plays. On purchase, these works are processed in the story departments by employed writers. If the work does not seem to the producer to meet his purposes, it is buried. That is the end of it. If a film is made, the original work suffers the same fate. Even though in either event it were profitable for the author to publish it in its original form or to rewrite it for radio, for recordings, or for any other medium, he has not the right to make any use of it whatever. Sometimes the author may be promised a share of the proceeds of any licensing of the work for another medium. But since he does not have the ownership of the work, he cannot negotiate, fix the price, or select the purchaser, nor can he, for example, decide to license it for dramatization before serialization, or vice versa. All he can do is await the pleasure of the owner and take his share of the proceeds, if and when.

The practice in radio varies greatly. Often the writer retains the ownership of his material, giving the broadcaster or advertising agency in addition to radio rights of limited duration a share of the proceeds of a licensing for another medium. Frequently the writer parts with all rights.

In the field of play production the Dramatists' Guild has achieved for playwrights an exceptional position. Copyright is not involved since performance of a play is not publication within the meaning of the law. But the basic agreement between the Dramatists' Guild and play producers permits only the licensing of performance rights, the author keeping the ownership of his work. A similar arrangement between the other authors and other interlocutors would advance the position of the writer immeasurably.

An analogous organization, the Confédération Internationale des Sociétés d'Auteurs et Compositeurs, is worth attention. In many European and South American countries, as well as in the United States, societies acting for the benefit of the composer take an assignment of performing rights for all his works, license performance, keep financial records, collect proceeds, and account to the composer. The principles of the Confederation permit the formation of similar organizations to deal with literary works, but there are few such societies in the Confederation and none in the United States. It is noteworthy that the publisher of music is admitted into these societies as a member and shares in the proceeds by as much as fifty per cent. By means of a curious reasoning the publisher is considered a disseminator but not a consumer of music. Motion picture and record producers have so far been excluded, but not without debate. From the point of view of the composer the difference between the publisher and the consumer is not a distinction in principle, since both are in different degrees devices for bringing the music to the composers' audiences. But, while not many people can read a musical score, most literary works can be prepared for consumption merely by printing, and the presence of publishers in an organization for the licensing of literary works presents an entirely different question. This may account for the fact that the Confederation has so few member societies dealing with literary works.

Into this tradition of ownership by industry comes the proposal for an American Authors Authority. The proposal recognizes, as did the sixteenth-century Stationers, that the key to the situation is the ownership of the work. The difference between being paid, no matter how much, and retaining control of the work, is immense. It is not merely a quantitative difference, as an author who has licensed motion picture or radio rights can tell you. But it is that too, a difference in the amount of money. An author who sees the motion picture of his screenplay reissued again and again and then remade for the stars of a later decade without a by-your-leave or a dime's worth of acknowledgment will tell you the difference in money between a sale and license.

The AAA, another skirmish in the ancient battle, proposes registry by authors instead of by interlocutors. It will discourage, if not altogether prevent, outright sales, so that ownership will remain in the creator notwithstanding use by the interlocutor. What the work is, the writer's politics, or his choice of licensee, is not the concern of the Authority.

Tentative plans for the organization and government of the Authority show that it is to be an instrumentality of the writing guilds now established by pro-

fessional writers. Each guild will elect delegates who will constitute the governing body. All the guilds are open union, and accordingly the services of the Authority will be available to any writer, regardless of whether or not he belongs to one of the guilds. The establishment of minimum fees and royalties, of codes of practice, of approved licensing agreements, and other such matters will probably be left to the respective guilds having jurisdiction in the several fields of professional writing, the AAA serving to clear differences and perhaps to enforce practices approved by the respective guilds. The area of regulation, details of organization, and other important problems have, at this writing, not been worked out by the various writing groups who are to be affected. Only the central problem of ownership is settled.

The proposal requests a minimum of agreement from writers. Although usual objections to group action by writers are therefore not applicable, it is worth a moment to point out that the arguments of individualism which in absolute terms condemn collective action miss the point. No one challenges the proposition that without freedom of individual expression authorship is a mockery. The question, however, is one of means. In any society, liberty of action is the fruit of restraining interference. Liberty of expression is possible only through the action of a majority which assures the speaker of freedom of utterance and of personal security from the objects of his writing. Is freedom from political restraints enough? For those to whom economic and industrial adventure is a form of personal expression, group action governing that field is a true restraint, and for them there arises the problem of weighing benefits against disadvantages. For writers, action by common consent against traffic in copyright or with literary ownership may seem to many to liberate rather than restrain. The apparent contradiction by which liberty seems to be born of self-imposed restraints is a tempting problem, but it is one which is not directly relevant here.

Perhaps the chief value of the proposal is the focus it will bring to the great questions surrounding literary property, the questions of ownership, the relation of the creator to his work, the measure of dignity and goods which society is prepared to accord to the creator and to his interlocutor. If the proposal for an American Authors Authority makes it clear that copyright and ownership have in the past been the preserve of proprietors rather than of creators, then the authors, the public, and the lawmakers may determine whether those questions deserve another kind of answer.

Notes on "The Tasks of an International Film Institute"

THE FOLLOWING are comments on Dr. Adolf Nichtenhauser's article, "The Tasks of an International Film Institute," in Vol. II, No. 1, of the *Hollywood Quarterly*. They were replies to an invitation extended by the editors to representatives of the State Department, the United Nations, UNESCO, and selected organizations and individuals for whom an international film program is a major interest. Unfortunately, the very timeliness of the article, the proofs of which were sent out just as the final preparations were being made for November's General Conference of UNESCO in Paris, prevented several persons who are most interested from preparing comments for publication.

The decisions of the Conference with respect to developing a formal film program will have been released when these notes appear. The writers' points of view, along with Dr. Nichtenhauser's article, should provide a valuable background for understanding the decisions.

Mr. William Farr, Counselor of the Mass Communication Section of UNESCO, has generously agreed to assist the editors in obtaining early information about film developments within UNESCO and has suggested that it would be especially valuable to obtain articles from delegates or advisers from a number of countries. The editors hope to publish such material in subsequent issues.—THE EDITORS

By DR. NICHTENHAUSER

ADOLF NICHTENHAUSER, M.D., has been for many years a student of film art and of the problems of producing and distributing cultural films. He received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to study the use and production of health and medical films. He is currently engaged in medical film work.

WHEN "The Tasks of an International Film Institute" was drafted, in June, 1945, and revised for publication in January, 1946, the writer, perhaps naïvely, did not anticipate the present world situation. The main stress was placed on the broad outline of a general program. Indeed, so much was it taken for granted that the reader would know of the importance of films for bringing about a better understanding among the nations that this paramount aspect was not even mentioned.

The Preamble of UNESCO's Constitution declares "that ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war"; and Article I defines as UNESCO's first function that it should "collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication, and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image."

At this juncture, to implement these

paragraphs must be the first objective of international film work. To insure "the free flow of ideas" means far more than concluding the necessary international agreements. It also means, first, that the films on "each other's ways and lives" must be found or produced, and second, that they must be brought before the people. Vital as nontheatrical circulation is, it is still far too limited to do this job alone. "Mass communication" means exactly what it says, namely, that the films be communicated to the masses. And the most important means to this end is still the theater of the masses.

This is a great and grave challenge for the theatrical film industry everywhere. Let us hope that ours will respond to it. The fact that Messrs. Eric Johnston, of the Motion Picture Association, and Donald M. Nelson, of the Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers, are members of our National Commission for UNESCO, gives the industry an opportunity of immediate action.

Washington, D.C.,
October 25, 1946

By JOHN GRIERSON

MR. GRIERSON is President, The World Today, Inc.; Chairman of the Board of International Film Associates; Author of *Grierson on Documentary.*

MANY, I am sure, will be grateful to Dr. Nichtenhauser for his comprehensive outline, for the *Hollywood Quarterly,* of the job which a United Nations film organization might do. I could wish it were not quite so comprehensive. One is reminded of Feonov's criticism of the Anglo-American proposal for a unified European economy. "They have ignored solutions to immediate needs and have handed in a grandiose theoretical scheme before taking care of present problems."

The great trick in this business of national or international organization is to relate one's high intentions to political realities: to appreciate from the beginning the *Realpolitik* of the extension of the film's uses in public enlightenment. In short, what can we expect the United Nations to do, and now, within its actual terms of reference? What Board of Control is politically likely for its film service? How fast and how far can we expect the Board to go, given the representational obligations of its members?

This job of Nichtenhauser's is an *a priori* job and, as such, valuable, if only to help us take a marker or two on the horizon. But, in the upshot, a United Nations film service will have to accommodate itself to those patent possibilities which reflect patent needs and to the political support which can be guaranteed for them.

For example, a number of the services envisaged by Dr. Nichtenhauser will be interpreted as imposing, from the international heights and academic sidelines, cultural "musts" which political reality has no reason to give a damn about. Others are likely to be construed as interfering with the "free" development of the medium in a "free and democratic society." When Dr. Nichtenhauser talks of a United Nations organization "taking charge of the international standardization of materials, equipment, and processes in the field of cultural film application," he might consult Mr. Nathan Golden of the Department of Commerce on just how much "charge" the U.S. man-

ufacturers of equipment are likely to delegate in the standardization of their products.

Incidentally, does Dr. Nichtenhauser mean to exclude the U.S.S.R. when he insists that development can't happen except in a "free and democratic society"? The phrase is unduly polarized at the present time, and we would all be sorry to see any arbitrary limit set to representation. This suggests that any United Nations body, like UNESCO, which does not yet enjoy the active participation of the U.S.S.R., may not be the correct body of control for this work. It suggests that the politically correct body is the United Nations itself so far as it does enjoy this active participation of the U.S.S.R. through the Economic and Social Council and other instruments.

I confess my instinct is against the "cultural" approach represented by my friend the Doctor. What Yahoo these days has the effrontery to tell other Yahoos what culture is? In my own experience I have found this cultural approach impotent to the ears. The universities and the departments of education, for example, have been of little or no creative account in the development of the wider uses of either radio or the film.

There are apparent exceptions. The film society movement got good after it found a basis in functional enlightenment, that is, a relationship between films and people's actual interests and actual needs. So did the scientific film society movement in the United Kingdom. So did the National Film Board and the National Film Society in Canada. So did the Museum of Modern Art under Iris Barry. But the history of the British Film Institute, as well as the history of the International Committee on Intellectual Coöperation, should be a warning of what happens when ideas have nothing below the diaphragm.

The principal issue is this. Granting that we should do these things, how can we secure the machinery for getting them in fact done; and how can we secure a continuing vitality in the working mechanism? I am scared of another big international bureaucratic establishment, lost in the mists of cultural detachment, recording and cataloguing and evaluating us all to death. I am scared, too, that we might people it with the boys and girls who, having failed to get anything done on the national home fronts, might find in this international business only a self-important asylum for their own impotence and frustrations.

On this matter of recording, cataloguing, and evaluating, a colleague writes:

"I think we will all be dead long before any of the principles for the creation of an international catalogue are defined, let alone put into operation. What is needed is to begin with the possible. I mildly suggest getting the existing publications together and making their existence known. All this 'avoidance of duplication and [creation of] balanced systems of functional coordination' is plain hoopla. What, for instance, has become of Film Center's three years of work evaluating medical films? And what, on the other hand, have Hamilton and Moffatt achieved with their medical collection in Canada? One would seem to be a dead dog, and the other a functioning film library.

"I cannot talk about international film archives when there isn't even a competent example of a national film archive in existence. All we really need at this stage is to know who's got what, and what we have to do to get it. Who in the world can find space or budget to store all the films in the world, let alone catalogue and preserve them? The Library of Congress doesn't try to do it with books, and one book takes about one-fiftieth the space of one film of equal substance. But they do circulate a card file to all their member libraries, detailing every acquisition. When John Q. Public wants a book that is in the L. of C., he can find the card for it in his local library, and his library can borrow it for him. Why not the same for films, and on an international basis right from scratch?

"I find all this encouragement of 'filmart' silly. Anyone can list in a row the jobs that need doing. Encouraging this and disseminating that is all very well, but how about one or two plain practical jobs like exposing selected educators from member nations to effective uses of the film? How about circulating some United Nations sponsored film programs which can tour the world and show educational bodies everywhere they go what the nations have to offer in film resources? What about actually getting out and organizing some finance for films themselves instead of 'advising the agencies of participating countries on how to organize and finance the use of films for educational and informational purposes'?"

My notion is to begin with first things:

1. Build a United Nations service out of the immediate, patent, and politically and financially supportable needs of the United Nations.

2. Have this United Nations service concentrate, in the second place, on those services which only an international authority can provide, e.g.:

a. An international intelligence service on films in the fields of international affairs, economics and finance, town planning, public health, technical and scientific progress, child welfare, intercultural relations, the nature of art, etc.

b. A diplomatic service for the easing down of barriers to the international exchange of films in these particular fields. (I hope it will be noted that I am talking about films that mean something to somebody somewhere.)

3. Have the nations concentrate on building up national film services as a prerequisite of international exchange—not least in America, which has so much experience to give the world in a hundred and one fields of technical, scientific, and social development.

Let us take these things one at a time.

First, what can the United Nations natively and naturally do out of its own needs? It has, in and around its operation, the United Nations administrative structure itself, the Social and Economic Council, FAO, ILO, UNESCO, etc. Each has its own group of practical interests, its own active and actual international operations. Each has its own special interest in what the film can do to reflect its problems and obtain public coöperation in its efforts.

I hear the United Nations is going to form a United Nations Film Board which will represent these various film interests, integrate them, and direct the executive film activities of all the bodies concerned. This makes a lot of sense to me.

Dr. Nichtenhauser, I think, makes a mistake when he thinks of UNESCO as the only possible begetter of what he is after. UNESCO represents just one of the many United Nations worlds of discourse and it is by no means the only one likely to develop the practical educational use of films. I can see more subjects emanating, for example, from the interests of the Economic and Social Council than from the world hunger for "literacy." This, of course, is not to diminish the importance of UNESCO, for it has special things of its very own to do. I merely emphasize that the origins of educational materials in the future are likely to be functional as well as academic and literary. One sees UNESCO as the exchanger of academic techniques and documents and of objective scientific knowledge, rather than as a cosmic umbrella for all the educational activities which the United Nations agencies will be obliged to engage in.

Let us assume, then, that we have this United Nations Film Board. I see it as developing many film services out of the public relations systems of the various instruments of the United Nations. Even more importantly, I see it as developing in each member country a National Film Council which will represent the many national instruments of film activity and film interest. I see the Board as working through these National Film Councils to obtain maximum coöperation of the national film industries and of the national educational systems of the member nations. We have heard something of this already. Again it makes obvious sense.

I am skeptical wherever and whenever there is the slightest suggestion of not working through the national industries and the national educational systems. I can only believe in building the international reality on the realities—whatever they may be—of the native scene.

There is, I know, a temptation to hope for miracles from the United Nations' authority and a temptation to think of using the United Nations' authority to put pressure on the more unprogressive local elements. But the United Nations must, this time, achieve actual and universal results, and it can only do so if it consults the machinery by which in fact films are made and shown. This need not prevent its giving important support to native movements for the development of enlightening films: by providing information on successful developments in other countries, by providing information which will excite the practical native development of film services in the various fields of public interest, and by lubricating the legislative processes which affect the international circulation of films. This is rightly emphasized in Dr. Nichtenhauser's memorandum.

In the last resort, the paradox of international film development is that the key to it is not in the United Nations at all. It is in the work done natively and by natives to build up an enlightened use of the film in the educational, social, and entertainment circles of America, England, Denmark, France, China, and the rest of them. It is in the national fields that we can best help Benoit-Lévy in the United Nations.

Although England and Canada have done something to indicate the lines on which the national development of the wider uses of the film can take place, the key to the international availabil-

ity of useful films and to the international exchange of these films lies in the United States. In a technological world, it has most to record and most to give to the peoples across the world who would benefit from the advances of technology and science.

But America has, and now, the very largest problem of *self*-organization to face if it is to use the film in fulfillment of this, its inevitable, international role. That, to my mind, is the nub of the matter. Page the universities, the foundations, the schools of anthropology, the libraries, the national associations, the churches, the municipal councils, the business groups, and the trade unions. Page the industry itself. What are they going to do about it?

The best United Nations plan in the world means nothing unless the actual forces of civic enlightenment are themselves enlightened about the enlightening uses of the film.

By HERBERT EDWARDS

MR. EDWARDS is Assistant Chief, Division of International Motion Pictures, Department of State.

THE ARTICLE by Dr. Adolf Nichtenhauser which appeared in the October, 1946, issue of the *Hollywood Quarterly,* impressed me as an extremely interesting presentation of the opportunities for such an organization. I do not know if all of Dr. Nichtenhauser's suggestions are possible of immediate fulfillment, but certainly the very listing of them should serve a useful purpose in pointing the way for such a project.

The Department of State has long recognized the important contribution that motion pictures can make in increasing international understanding. As far back as 1938, when the Division of Cultural Coöperation was established in the Department, documentary and informational films interpreting various phases of life in the United States were forwarded to the embassies and consulates abroad for noncommercial distribution in other countries.

The two war information agencies—the Office of Inter-American Affairs and the Office of War Information—used films extensively in their overseas programs. The OIAA distributed in the other American republics 16-mm. prints recorded in both Spanish and Portuguese, and reported nontheatrical audiences of more than fifty million people in one year.

The Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information arranged for both the theatrical and the nontheatrical distribution of its documentary films, which were recorded in more than twenty languages. While it was not always possible under war conditions to make accurate reports of audience attendance, we have been told that the OWI United Newsreel was seen by almost a hundred million people a week throughout the areas in which it was distributed.

After liberation, OWI documentaries were shown in all countries through theatrical and nontheatrical channels as part of an emergency program to help satisfy the intellectual hunger of the people of Europe and Asia. We have had reports from the Far East that "in western China an average audience for an OWI movie was from 10,000 to 20,000 people—and on holidays it was not unusual to have 60,000." These films were shown outdoors at night. A novel device was worked out to accommodate the eager crowds; the films were sometimes shown on a translucent screen, thus permitting 15,000

people to see them from one side and 15,000 from the other. From Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Poland, and other countries in Europe, similar reports of an almost insatiable demand have come in. In Yugoslavia this past year *The Great Dictator* was a smash hit; the Yugoslav Army Staff Headquarters, the Officers Club, and the Military Academy requested each a special showing.

At present, the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs of the State Department (usually known as the OIC) is carrying on a documentary film operation: 16-mm. prints are made available through OIC offices, which are now set up as part of every United States embassy or legation abroad. Most of these films have been acquired, but some are made for the OIC under contract with private producers. All films are translated into some twenty languages. Even so, the current needs are by no means adequately met. The Department of State hopes to be able to work out coöperatively with private companies a greater use abroad of privately produced documentaries.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization has also recognized the importance of audiovisual materials in international education and information. Reports of the Preparatory Commission indicate that many of the activities outlined by Dr. Nichtenhauser could be incorporated in the UNESCO program. The UNESCO Preparatory Commission's report emphasized the importance of motion pictures and the other "mass media," pointing out that the chief advantages offered by these newer means of communication are their capacity to inform and influence men in the mass even before they have become fully educated. "They make the learning process easier, more attractive and less forbidding. They invest the acquisition of information and knowledge with a glow of entertainment." But the Preparatory Commission warns: "Like almost all the gifts of science, these instruments are capable of doing harm as well as good. They can be used to poison rather than enlighten the minds of men." Therefore, the Preparatory Commission concludes, UNESCO has a responsibility for seeing to it that these powerful weapons for peace are used to promote good will and mutual understanding rather than hate and aggression.

In September, 1946, the United States National Commission on UNESCO met in Washington to discuss the Preparatory Commission's reports and to work out recommendations for the United States delegation to the first UNESCO meeting in Paris in November. On the United States National Commission are individuals representing the film world, such as Mr. Eric Johnston, President of the Motion Picture Association of America, Mr. Donald Nelson, President, Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers, and Dr. Edgar Dale, Chairman of the Committee on Research and Studies of the Educational Film Library Association, and Director of the Bureau of Teaching Research, Ohio State University, as well as representatives of organizations interested in films as a medium of education, such as the National Education Association, the American Library Association, the American Council on Education, and others. Members of the United States

National Commission on UNESCO are the spokesmen for the American people and it would be through the film representatives on this Committee that concrete suggestions for the further use of cultural films in creating better international understanding could be discussed and brought to the attention of the United States delegation to UNESCO. This is the first time that an authorized body of citizens has been set up by the Department of State to advise continuously the United States delegates to an international conference.

I am afraid it may appear that I have taken advantage of the opportunity of discussing Dr. Nichtenhauser's article to present the State Department's international motion picture program. However, I believe that what we are doing is closely related to the basic principles that lie behind the proposals for an International Film Institute.

We in the State Department believe that it is impossible for any one group or any one agency to undertake all the phases of the work that needs to be done. Funds and staff are always limited, but the work to be done in international information and education is limitless. It will require all that private agencies can contribute, as well as all that government agencies both national and international can do. In this field of international understanding, planning and integration of related activities are needed, but it is relatively unimportant where the initiative comes from. Understanding leads to an ever greater need for more information and more knowledge. The opportunities for effective teamwork are great and challenging.

By RICHARD GRIFFITH

MR. GRIFFITH is Executive Director of The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

THE Report and Recommendations of the United States National Commission to UNESCO, as submitted in October to Assistant Secretary of State William Benton, constitute the most significant commentary on Dr. Nichtenhauser's proposed International Film Institute that is immediately available. These recommendations will be presented to the UNESCO conference in Paris in November by the American delegation, which will endeavor to persuade the conference to adopt them as the future policy of UNESCO. By the time these words are in print, we shall in all probability know how near or how far we are from the realization of Dr. Nichtenhauser's world-embracing proposal.

The United States Commission, in its report, urges that UNESCO bend every effort to effect an absolutely free interchange of news, radio broadcasts, and documentary and educational films between the countries of the United Nations. The Commission bases this policy upon the principle that every individual, everywhere, should be free to choose for himself what news he will read, what broadcasts he will listen to, and what films he will see. But to this principle the Report makes a dramatic exception. It states that, since large amounts of money are involved, international distribution of theatrical films may well be decided on considerations which lie outside the scope of UNESCO. In short, the interchange of fiction films will depend on economic and political grounds, not cultural grounds.

Although this is undesirable, there is no question that it is true. Not only will the film industries of the several countries compete with each other for the world market; the success or failure of their struggles will inevitably affect trade balances and rates of exchange to an extent which will involve them as instruments of national economic policy. Our American films, for example, are likely to be handled like automobiles, refrigerators, radios, or any other commercial article of export. It is not inconceivable that they will be used for political purposes as well.

It goes without saying that fiction films from any country are not merely "articles." The arts, and particularly the lively arts, can and must play a massive part in that development of international understanding, that construction of the defenses of peace in the minds of men, to which UNESCO is dedicated. But how? Is it conceivable that UNESCO could persuade the government, much less the film industry, of any country to put the cultural and educational uses of fiction films before their commercial use? I cannot imagine it. Dr. Nichtenhauser suggests that his International Institute will "press for legislation" that will "cause the participating countries" to agree to the ends of the Institute. It may press, but it is doubtful if it will cause. So long as there is economic conflict between the United Nations, the fiction film is inevitably involved with that conflict, and not until UNESCO and indeed the United Nations themselves have gained far more power over the minds of men than they now possess will they be able to persuade many of the interests involved to put cultural before commercial objectives in the making of international distribution policy.

Is there, then, any practical method which could be used ultimately to achieve the ends which Dr. Nichtenhauser proposes? There is, though a modest one. It is that UNESCO should devote its efforts to persuading government and industry to regard a certain *limited number* of films as cultural rather than commercial products, and to permit their distribution through the channels for the dissemination of educational materials which UNESCO undoubtedly will succeed in setting up. There is successful precedent for this. Classic films of the past, though produced for commercial showing, have been permitted educational release when they have grown old enough to lose their commercial value. The specialist film, produced for minority audiences, also finds it easy to achieve "cultural" rating. And UNESCO should, and probably will, attempt to induce the several film industries to produce annually a small number of fiction films aimed directly at the target of international understanding. If these films are made on limited budgets, and there are not too many of them, it is conceivable that the national industries might permit them to cross economic and political boundaries barred to films distributed for commercial reasons.

In my opinion, UNESCO should conceive its central problem to be: how many excellent fiction films can be sifted out from commercial production and fed into the educational distribution system without running afoul of trade practices or national economic policy?

The answer will come through trial and error. What is essential to remember is that no system will be successful which attempts to handle as cultural products films which have an undeniable weight in the world economic scheme. This is, of course, a minimal goal as compared with the vast concept of an International Institute legislated into being against the grain of the existing economic and political realities. But it is a goal possible of realization. Existing national agencies such as the National Board of Review, the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, the Library of Congress, the International Federation of Film Archivists, the British Film Institute, the Cinémathèque Française, the Scientific Research Institute of Moscow—all these agencies, of differing origins but of increasingly common purpose, can work through UNESCO and within their own countries toward the creation of a body of films internationally available as *educational materials* and on a strictly nontheatrical and noncommercial basis. But let us, for now, stay out of the theaters, out of the markets, and avoid crushing the new-born UNESCO in the machinery of world economics.

I have no quarrel with Dr. Nichtenhauser's blueprint. It is admirable, just such a one as any of us who promote the cultural use of motion pictures might have dreamed up. But it is a blueprint only, and it cannot be legislated into being, even as a blueprint. It must be built step by step, with due regard for our experiences with those existing channels of interchange which now enjoy a definite, if somewhat disdainful, tolerance from the powers that be.

Notes and Communications

EXPANSION OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD

WITH THIS issue the *Hollywood Quarterly* announces a reorganization and expansion of the Editorial Board which will add representatives of fields not hitherto included. At the same time, the *Quarterly* regrets to announce that John Howard Lawson has been compelled to resign because of pressure of literary work in addition to his writing for the screen.

To strengthen the Board, it has been decided that the University of California and the Hollywood Writers Mobilization shall each appoint three editors instead of two, in addition to the *ex officio* editor, the Manager of the University Press, Samuel T. Farquhar. Kenneth Macgowan—who, with Mr. Lawson, represented the Mobilization—has resigned, and has been appointed a University representative in addition to Franklin Fearing and Franklin P. Rolfe. The Mobilization has elected the following to the Board: Abe Polonsky, radio and screen writer; Irving Pichel, motion picture director and actor; and the novelists and screen writers, James Hilton and John Collier. Mr. Hilton and Mr. Collier will serve as alternates, so that they may continue their own writing and yet give the *Quarterly* the advantage of their work and their counsel.

The loss of Mr. Lawson will be deeply felt, of course, but the Mobilization and the University believe that the Editorial Board has been definitely strengthened and broadened. Among its members there are now men who practice the crafts of the director, the actor, the novelist, and the radio writer and producer.

THE EDITORS

FILM RESEARCH COMES OF AGE

THE BRITISH publication, *Documentary News Letter,* in one of its recent issues, says that Chaplin and D. W. Griffith would have been incredulous if anyone had prophesied to them a generation or so ago that people would one day be collating the data on their work to preserve a record for film students and film historians of the future. Not so Von Stroheim, *D.N.L.* is quick to add. "He directed with an eye to posterity." The studies of Chaplin, Griffith, and Von Stroheim to which *D.N.L.* refers are part of an exhaustive research project upon which the British Film Institute has embarked. The project calls for the publication of a series of pamphlets, called "Indexes," collating all the work of all the important directors. Some of the Indexes include discussions of films which the director dreamed of doing or planned to do, but which he never did because this is not the best of all possible worlds.

Each Index has a brief biography of the director, a *complete* list of his films, with dates, complete casts and credits, and annotations running anywhere from two lines to the fourteen pages on *The Birth of a Nation* which were published as a separate monograph. When

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the director is still living, the research is done in close collaboration with him, to insure both completeness and accuracy. As the director of the British Film Institute said in his foreword to the first Index (on Von Stroheim), "We are glad to publish these (Indexes) as we believe that to enable any research to see the light of day which assembles a large number of hitherto uncorrelated facts will be a valuable addition to the cultural literature dealing with the Film."

The Indexes are issued as regular supplements of the B.F.I.'s own publication, *Sight and Sound,* a quarterly review dealing with the educational and cultural aspects of the cinema. Six Indexes have thus far been published: Numbers 1, 5, and 6, compiled and annotated by the writer, cover respectively the work of Erich von Stroheim, Fritz Lang, and, in one Index, Robert Flaherty and Hans Richter; Numbers 2 and 4, prepared by Seymour Stern, are respectively Part One (1908–1915) and Part Two (*Birth of a Nation*) of what will be a five- or six-part study of D. W. Griffith; Number 3, by Theodore Huff, is the pamphlet on Charles Chaplin.

Indexes currently in process are one on Ernst Lubitsch by Theodore Huff, on Murnau by the writer and Kirk Bond, on Victor Seastrom by Charles Turner. Others to follow will include one on Abel Gance and another on Carl Dreyer, both by Kirk Bond, and one on Mauritz Stiller by Charles Turner, as well as Indexes on Dovjenko and Pudovkin by Jay Leyda. It was, incidentally, Leyda's Index on Eisenstein, appearing as an appendix to his translation of Eisenstein's *The Film Sense,* which touched off the idea of the Index series for the writer. This idea, submitted to the British Film Institute, found immediate favor and the series was on its way. In the plan for ultimately collecting all the Indexes into a book, for which it is hoped to secure either the Oxford or the Cambridge University Press as publishers, Leyda's Index on Eisenstein, though not originally written for the series, is included. For publication of the Indexes in book form, each compiler and annotator will bring his material up to date and, since the paper shortage in England has limited the length of the individual Indexes, expand his annotations where desirable.

The collection of Indexes may serve as an impetus and guide in developing film libraries. The discussion of film research in the *Documentary News Letter,* mentioned earlier, ends with the lament that, though the record of the work of great directors is being collated, the films themselves are not available. There are museums of art, libraries of books, phonograph records of music, but what is there for films? A film is not screened for you by the Library of Congress, as a book is lent. At the Museum of Modern Art you take what you can get during each season's retrospective cycle. The situation must be the same in London, to judge by *D.N.L.*'s plaintive observation (though the institution of the film club or film society is considerably more widespread in England than it is here). The Cinémathèque Française in Paris also has preserved many films, and the ciné-clubs there are as enterprising as the British ones. This is not to say that our own Museum of Modern Art has not done yeoman service in this direction. It most certainly has. But

suppose you want to see Dovjenko's *Earth,* Von Sternberg's *The Exquisite Sinner,* or another such rarity? It's just too bad for you. For now, you'll have to sublimate.

Certain films are doubtlessly no longer extant. But most are only relatively unavailable: many, because film library facilities are inadequate; some, because they are stored away by owners unaware of their significance in film history or of the growing interest in them.

If the book can help in developing effective film libraries, it will have more than justified itself. In any case, it seems to the writer that such a book will be a unique addition to libraries of film books everywhere, used as a sourcebook and reference work by film students, historians, critics, and others, for a long time to come. Should the book prove popular, it is planned to bring it up to date periodically with revised editions. Naturally, the book would contain photographs of every director dealt with, as well as stills from his major available works to illustrate his style.

This is by no means a "private party"; anyone who would like to tackle an Index is welcome. There are but two requirements: (*a*) the director chosen must be of major stature; and (*b*) the compiler must have a *thorough* knowledge of the director's work and be in a position to collaborate with the director to insure a thoroughly reliable job. Inquiries about such assignments in the United States should be addressed to the writer, Suite 904, 1600 Broadway, New York. A complete file of Indexes is kept by the Museum of Modern Art Film Library in New York, where they may be inspected. Subscriptions to the Indexes may be had from the British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1.

HERMAN G. WEINBERG

SADOUL AND FILM RESEARCH

GENTLEMEN: I found most interesting Georges Sadoul's article, "Early Film Production in England," which appeared in last April's *Hollywood Quarterly.* Such scholarship should be encouraged and the results printed. Unfortunately, there is little work of similar nature in this country, although in France and Sweden the history of the film art is taken more seriously and publishers do not shy away from scholarly research in a field which, after all, is a daily part of our lives.

The French critic is obviously a film historian who has delved deeply into the sources of cinema. However, concerning his somewhat startling conclusions that montage, the close-up, and the chase were discovered in 1900 by the English "Brighton School," I think it only reasonable to withhold judgment until the films themselves are examined or further proofs are obtained. With all due respect to M. Sadoul, he is obviously depending on enthusiastically written catalogues and other written matter of the time instead of viewing the actual films. He admits in the article that he is "presenting only hypotheses" since he had at his disposal "very few documents on the English motion picture," and that the prints of the films discussed were "lost long ago."

Sadoul also claims that, following the English, American Vitagraph pictures of 1907 used close-ups. Again he is not basing his assertion on the actual films.

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Sadoul also claims that, following the English, American Vitagraph pictures of 1907 used close-ups. Again he is not basing his assertion on the actual films.

Having recently seen many Vitagraph films of the 1907 period, I can state that I never saw a real close-up in any of them. In fact, it has been established that, although bringing to the fore many colorful personalities like Costello, Turner, Bunny, and Finch, the Vitagraph Company contributed few, if any, technical advances to the art. The phrases "foreground" and "action close to the camera" in that early period meant what is now known as the medium or full-figure shot, most of the scenes in story films of the day being photographed in long shot to cover all the action, change of angle within a scene being as yet unknown. Although it is true that some of the first 50-foot Kinetoscope novelty films of the 1890's, such as *The Sneeze* and *The Kiss,* were photographed in semiclose or close-up, the entire subject contained only this one angle. In the first decade of this century the closest position permissible in straight films was called the "French foreground" (from the early Pathé pictures). It was an unwritten law that actors were never to venture nearer the camera than a 12-foot line, which was usually marked on the floor. Today this also would be called a medium shot.

From examining hundreds of early films, talking to veteran cameramen like "Billy" Bitzer and Carl L. Gregory, and studying other evidence, it appears definite that not until the 1908–1910 period did Griffith and Bitzer, at Biograph, begin to move the camera, in dramas, close to the actor's faces, and to insert these enlargements into the "master" scene for dramatic reasons. It is an interesting and revealing fact that the French still call the close shot "plan américain" (the average close-up, not the "gros plan" or "grosse-tête"), and the Italians refer to it even today as "piano americano"!

Surprisingly enough, Georges Sadoul tries to establish the "Brighton School" as the inventor of the "chase" also. Of course, his point may depend on what is meant by the word, since harlequins and pantaloons have chased each other around the stage for centuries. At any rate, Sennett, Chaplin, and Clair, who carried the cinematic chase to its classic form, are known to have been influenced by the French comedy and trick films of the early part of the century, while it seems highly improbable that they even saw the obscure English pictures.

But Sadoul is not an exception; many other film historians have depended (not necessarily from choice) on the same sources for their information about "lost" films and often have described the pictures erroneously—as has been proved when prints have turned up or been uncovered years later. Perhaps I may make my point clearer by illustrating from my own research experience. For years my curiosity was aroused by the "advanced cinematic technique" of that early multiscene storytelling picture, *The Life of an American Fireman,* produced in 1903 by Edwin S. Porter for the Edison Company. One celebrated film historian writes that it had "cutbacks": shots of the frenzied mother and child were alternated with shots of the fire engines rushing to their rescue. The same book also mentions a final happy "close-up" with the family reunited. Another historian describes close-ups of the hoofs of the galloping horses. Two recent motion picture histories use, as full-page illustrations,

some frame enlargements from *The Life of an American Fireman* arranged so as to give further credence to the flashback and parallel-action theory. Parenthetically, it might be remarked that European writers are quick to pick up these statements, and hence we read, in connection with this one-reeler: "Pour la première fois ... les actions parallèles"; "parallelismus in der montage," etc.

Having learned that *The Life of an American Fireman* had disappeared years ago, probably in the Edison fire of 1914, I concluded that the writers were depending entirely on the description in the Edison catalogue of 1903. Yet the film remained a mystery to me. If it really contained such cinematic devices, why were these elements of expression abandoned for several years? Further, *The Great Train Robbery,* produced by Porter nearly a year later, exhibited no hint that he was aware of such advanced techniques. In fact, his telling and mounting of the story was no more advanced (except for outdoor shooting) than that of the contemporary films of the French magician, Méliès, and lacked the charm, finesse, and style of Méliès. If there were cutbacks in the early Porter film, why then was this dramatic editing device discarded until six or seven years later, when Griffith began employing it to heighten suspense in his Biograph films? If there were low-angle moving close-ups of horses' hoofs (which would have been well-nigh impossible to achieve, as the cameras of 1903 weighed over a ton!), why did we see no more of such thrilling angle shots until *Orphans of the Storm* (1921), Von Stroheim's *Foolish Wives* (1922), and the "westerns" of the 'twenties? The film itself was necessary for satisfactory answers to these questions.

While waiting for books in the New York Public Library, I often used to thumb through U.S. Copyright volumes on the open shelves near by. In a 1903 volume I found stated in black and white (under Class H—Photographs) that two copies of *The Life of an American Fireman* were received January 21, 1903. When I moved to Washington in the summer of 1941, I inquired at the Library of Congress about this and other "lost" films of the early period. As the motion picture material in the Library was not then available to the public, it took a great deal of time and persistence before I was able finally to examine, frame by frame, a copy of the Edison picture printed, for copyright storage purposes, on a paper roll instead of celluloid.

My inspection showed that there were no close-ups of horses' feet or of people, and *The Life of an American Fireman* did not even hint at the cutback! The story was told in a straightforward and primitive manner. Except for the fireman's dream of his wife's putting their child to bed, which appears in a "vision balloon" in the first scene at the firehouse, the imperiled wife and child were not shown until the camera had followed the fire engines faithfully on the long trip to the burning house! There was not even cross-cutting when the people were rescued. While the fireman carrying the wife presumably climbs down the ladder outside the window, the shot of the interior remains on the screen until, after a long pause, the fireman reënters to rescue the child. Then, on the exterior, the rescues are repeated as the fireman goes through the same actions

again! And yet, from the perusal of the catalogue, one's imagination can easily run riot with intricate and breathtaking simultaneous action.

Although Sadoul brought to light several little-known films (mostly trick films, not story pictures in which cinematic devices were used for other than novelty purposes), some of his conclusions about their technique are a little far-fetched. It is possible that all these devices—so indigenous to the cinematic art—were employed as long ago as 1900, and completely forgotten to be discovered again years later, but it seems unwise to accept all of Sadoul's "hypotheses" as fact, until more conclusive evidence is offered.

THEODORE HUFF
Assistant Professor, Motion Pictures
New York University

P.S. I have recently obtained a copy of Sadoul's *L'Invention du Cinéma.* While it is very comprehensive and I am glad to have a copy, it is a compilation and rehash of Ramsaye, Potonniée, Coissac, and others who have written about the prescreen history of the movies. He has depended again on printed material without doing original research such as Ramsaye did, for instance.

T. H.

JE CONFIRME

September 16, 1946

GENTLEMEN:

I read "J'Accuse" in the July issue of the *Quarterly* with great interest. In the course of my work with the Information Control Division, I had discussed the question of collaboration with one of the French Film Officers in Berlin. He thought that Sacha Guitry and Danielle Darrieux were classic examples of film actors who had collaborated with the Germans. Danielle Darrieux, for example, went to Berlin to make a picture which showed, among other things, the "benevolence" of the German occupation of France.

I am enclosing the newspaper reproduction of a letter written by Sacha Guitry in 1938 to the editor of the Berlin *Film Kurier,* a leading German trade paper. Herewith my own translation of it:

"Dear Editor:

"It has come to me from many sides that those in Germany and elsewhere who wish to do me harm have called me a Jew.

"I want to make it emphatically clear that this offensive story is no way true.

"I am a Catholic, as were my grandparents. My great-uncle on my father's side was the Comte de Châtre, and my great-uncle on my mother's side was Monsignor de Bonfils, Bishop of Le Mans.

"I was baptized at birth and went to school at the Holy Cross Lycée. I was given my first communion by the Dominican Friars.

"As far back as I can trace I have found it impossible to find anything in my family blood that is Jewish.

"My three marriages also confirm this declaration, which I beseech you, Sir, to make public.

"With thanks in advance, I remain,

"Sincerely

(Signed) SASCHA GUITRY"

The Editors of *Film Kurier* headed Guitry's letter "Sascha Guitry Defends Himself" and prefaced it with the following introduction:

"We asked Sascha Guitry to write us a piece for the annual edition of the *Film Kurier* in time for the German

again! And yet, from the perusal of the catalogue, one's imagination can easily run riot with intricate and breathtaking simultaneous action.

Although Sadoul brought to light several little-known films (mostly trick films, not story pictures in which cinematic devices were used for other than novelty purposes), some of his conclusions about their technique are a little far-fetched. It is possible that all these devices—so indigenous to the cinematic art—were employed as long ago as 1900, and completely forgotten to be discovered again years later, but it seems unwise to accept all of Sadoul's "hypotheses" as fact, until more conclusive evidence is offered.

THEODORE HUFF
Assistant Professor, Motion Pictures
New York University

P.S. I have recently obtained a copy of Sadoul's *L'Invention du Cinéma.* While it is very comprehensive and I am glad to have a copy, it is a compilation and rehash of Ramsaye, Potonniée, Coissac, and others who have written about the prescreen history of the movies. He has depended again on printed material without doing original research such as Ramsaye did, for instance.

T. H.

JE CONFIRME

September 16, 1946

GENTLEMEN:

I read "J'Accuse" in the July issue of the *Quarterly* with great interest. In the course of my work with the Information Control Division, I had discussed the question of collaboration with one of the French Film Officers in Berlin. He thought that Sacha Guitry and Danielle Darrieux were classic examples of film actors who had collaborated with the Germans. Danielle Darrieux, for example, went to Berlin to make a picture which showed, among other things, the "benevolence" of the German occupation of France.

I am enclosing the newspaper reproduction of a letter written by Sacha Guitry in 1938 to the editor of the Berlin *Film Kurier,* a leading German trade paper. Herewith my own translation of it:

"Dear Editor:

"It has come to me from many sides that those in Germany and elsewhere who wish to do me harm have called me a Jew.

"I want to make it emphatically clear that this offensive story is no way true.

"I am a Catholic, as were my grandparents. My great-uncle on my father's side was the Comte de Châtre, and my great-uncle on my mother's side was Monsignor de Bonfils, Bishop of Le Mans.

"I was baptized at birth and went to school at the Holy Cross Lycée. I was given my first communion by the Dominican Friars.

"As far back as I can trace I have found it impossible to find anything in my family blood that is Jewish.

"My three marriages also confirm this declaration, which I beseech you, Sir, to make public.

"With thanks in advance, I remain,

"Sincerely

(Signed) SASCHA GUITRY"

The Editors of *Film Kurier* headed Guitry's letter "Sascha Guitry Defends Himself" and prefaced it with the following introduction:

"We asked Sascha Guitry to write us a piece for the annual edition of the *Film Kurier* in time for the German

opening of his latest picture, *Champs Elysées*. Instead of the article, we received the following communication."

It seems to me that any man who goes to such lengths to deny something about his creed or ancestry gratuitously deserves the closest inspection, and that his letter is an exquisite textbook illustration of its kind.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT JOSEPH

THE CINÉMATHÈQUE FRANÇAISE

THE PURPOSE of the Cinémathèque Française (The French Film Library) is to establish, in the interests of film art and film history, a museum and archives which shall have the widest possible utilization. It was founded in 1936 by the principal nontheatrical motion picture producers. Others interested in preserving a film repertory joined them to take the necessary steps for the conservation of prints and documents relating to films and for the replacement of prints which have disappeared.

As a library, the Cinémathèque collects and preserves documents relating to films, and purchases or receives, on loan or as gifts, positive and negative prints of films. Films and documents placed in the Cinémathèque remain the property of their owners and cannot be used commercially without their express permission. It goes without saying that in practice permission to use the films is rarely refused. Usually the films handled by the Cinémathèque are old ones; as a rule, in order to avoid commercial problems, recent films are accepted only for preservation and not for circulation.

As a museum, it assumes responsibility for exhibiting film documents and for exhibiting and distributing films which have artistic or pedagogic value. As a research center, the Cinémathèque undertakes historical research programs and provides for the publication of the results.

Although the Cinémathèque receives a subvention from the state and serves somewhat as an official film library, it is, by its constitution and bylaws, a private enterprise developed by its membership. Administered by a board of directors elected by the membership at large at a general meeting, it works for its membership both in the national and international fields. In its international program the Cinémathèque has coöperated with the Film Library of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the British Film Institute, and the Reichfilmarchive—the only prewar film libraries which sought to develop international film collections. At the same time the Cinémathèque has encouraged the formation of national film libraries in other countries.

Between 1936 and 1940 the Cinémathèque participated in numerous international gatherings. The most important were the Méliès Exposition in London, the "French Retrospective" in Venice, and the "Triennial" in Milan. Under its auspices, conversations were held in Paris in 1938 with representatives of the Film Library of the Museum of Modern Art, which led to the creation of the International Federation of Film Archives with headquarters in Paris. At its last meeting in New York before the war, the Federation elected Lamarique chairman, and agreed upon Paris as headquarters of the secretariat.

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The Cinémathèque managed to bring together a collection of important silent films which includes work by Zecca, Linder, René Clair, Jean Renoir, and Duvivier. Owing to the disorganization of the film industry at that time, negatives had been forgotten. The Cinémathèque purchased its old prints of the Eclair productions from a chemical laboratory where they were about to be melted down. *Protea,* the first film with sequences, was one of the films thus rescued. During this period the Cinémathèque exhibited or sponsored the exhibition of such films as *La Fête espagnole* by Germine Dulac, *Le Chien Andalou* by Bunuel, *Le Ballet mécanique* by Leger, *La Terre* by Dovjenko, *La Nuit du saint Sylvestre* by Lupu Puck, *La Symphonie nuptiale* by Stroheim. It was able to buy and preserve *L'Ange bleu* (German version), *Loulou* by Pabst, *La Rue sans joie, L'Image* by Feyder, *Les Mystères de New York, La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc,* and *Homunculus.*

The entire program was achieved without a regular staff. With only 3,000 francs from membership dues and 20,000 to 25,000 from all other sources, the Cinémathèque was forced to rely on the assistance of volunteers.

In June, 1940, the Cinémathèque entrusted its collection to the motion picture section of the French army, and eventually saw it disappear into the service of the Germans. It then faced another sort of difficulty. Some of the membership became collaborationists and wished to use the Cinémathèque for collaborationist purposes. This situation was overcome by the loyalty of the great majority of the membership and by the courage of the directorate, which adopted the following tactics in July, 1940, which prevailed throughout the occupation:

1) Save the greatest amount of film possible.

2) Reconstruct the collection.

3) Recover the lost stocks.

4) Assume the role of protector and conservator, giving up all public manifestations, projections, or exhibitions which, in the opinion of the directorate, might be considered treasonable. (To maintain this attitude during four years under watchful enemy eyes, never to submit to pressure of any sort, would have been relatively easy if the Cinémathèque, in order to preserve its custodianship, had not been forced to maintain some semblance of being a functioning public-service organization.)

During the German occupation, the Cinémathèque's warnings of the danger of destruction by the Germans went unheeded. All plans, all requests by the Cinémathèque, to deposit its films in safety in Algiers in order to prevent the destruction of the inventory in the northern zone, were systematically rejected under the pretext that the Cinémathèque was viewed favorably by the occupying authorities, wherefore the archives would remain intact.

Eventually, in spite of obstruction, the Cinémathèque was able to save almost all of its inventory, including the entire American stock in the south zone and a considerable number of the films in the north. (This fact permitted the Americans to resume their motion picture activities in France shortly after the Liberation.)

At the end of the occupation, the Cinémathèque though not in a position immediately to resume all its activities, was so popular that it obtained

adequate funds from local town governments while waiting for the resumption of subvention by the state. During its reorganization, it encouraged the formation of film clubs throughout France, patterned after the English film societies. United into the French Federation of Cinema Clubs, they reached masses of people, guided their taste, and led to further organization of clubs throughout France. For a while, confusion, conflicts, and errors in planning made coöperation between the Cinémathèque and the cinema clubs difficult; but finally, the Federation developed a policy which made effective coöperation possible.

In February, 1945, the Cinémathèque held its first postwar exhibition, "Images du Cinéma Français." This was followed by the Cinémathèque's publication of a book, *Images du Cinéma Français,* by Nicole Vedrès. Other projects have included an exhibition of French films in Lausanne, an exhibition of animated cartoons by Paul Reynard and Ferdinand Zecca, and posters for exhibitions in Brussels, Basle, Warsaw, and London.

The Cinémathèque was officially reopened, and is today the most complete of the film libraries in continental Europe. Contacts with foreign countries were reëstablished in October. Exchanges have been made with London, New York, and the film centers in Switzerland and Belgium, which the Cinémathèque prides itself in having helped to found. Understandings have been reached with Swedish, Danish, Czech, and Polish film centers. An Italian film center was created by uniting the previously existing centers in Rome and Milan. A film center has recently been established in Austria.

Since the occupation, there has been no artistic film activity in Europe in which the Cinémathèque has not participated. At the same time, its full program in Paris has been maintained, including courses on motion picture history at the University of Paris.

In March, 1946, under the auspices of the Cinémathèque, delegates from all European film centers, with observers from the United States and the Soviet Union, met in Paris to codify the by-laws of all film libraries into a system of standard practice, particularly as effecting noncommercial distribution. The importance of the noncommercial film to public education and to technology was emphasized. It is hoped that such agreement on standard practices will lead to the rapid expansion of cinema clubs throughout Europe.

HENRI LANGLOIS

A PLAN FOR AN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF FILM STUDENTS

RECENTLY I returned from overseas service, in the course of which I had the pleasure of conducting motion picture courses at the G.I. University in Biarritz, France. The success of these film courses prompted me to draft a plan for an international exchange of film students to be administered through UNESCO. Though exchange projects have been in operation for years, they have not yet penetrated the film field.

At a series of conferences in London and Paris these proposals were received most enthusiastically and accepted in principle by the British Film Institute,[1] the Association of Cine-Tech-

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adequate funds from local town governments while waiting for the resumption of subvention by the state. During its reorganization, it encouraged the formation of film clubs throughout France, patterned after the English film societies. United into the French Federation of Cinema Clubs, they reached masses of people, guided their taste, and led to further organization of clubs throughout France. For a while, confusion, conflicts, and errors in planning made coöperation between the Cinémathèque and the cinema clubs difficult; but finally, the Federation developed a policy which made effective coöperation possible.

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nicians,[2] the Cinémathèque Française,[3] the Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographique,[4] and the Syndicat des Techniciens de la Production Cinématographique.[5] The Soviet cultural attaché in Paris also expressed great interest, but preferred to withhold official comment until the plan had assumed concrete form.

Tentatively, the proposals called for a continuous yearly rotation of film students to England, France, America, and the U.S.S.R. Small groups of not more than twenty students, democratically chosen by the participating nations, would be rotated for a three-month period of film study in each of the four countries.

In London the British Film Institute would prepare the curriculum in cooperation with other necessary bodies. Specialists selected from the Association of Cine-Technicians would form the staff of guest lecturers. The same procedure would be followed by the Cinémathèque Française and the Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographique in Paris, coördinating with the French Film Unions, which would lend the professional teachers. In the Soviet Union, the Moscow State Institute of Cinematography would be equipped to handle a similar program.

The students would be afforded an opportunity to view and examine the actual techniques of film making in the respective industries, in order to acquaint them both with the practical conditions of film production peculiar to each country and with its history in film theory and aesthetics. Thus the young students would return to their own national films with a new and lively understanding of their medium set in a widened cultural background. Inevitably, this continuous reciprocal stimulus would kindle higher artistic standards in the crafts themselves.

The problems of a language barrier are practically nonexistent since many French and Soviet film masters speak English quite fluently, including Eisenstein and Pudovkin. Whenever it is requisite, competent interpreters can be employed. This method was exercised successfully with the American soldier-students at the Institut des Hautes Etudes in Paris.

Naturally, the plan is in an embryonic stage. Above all, it needs the sponsorship of a competent American organization and the coöperation and advice of the Hollywood film industry and the film guilds. The Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences or the Hollywood Writers Mobilization or the University of California, Los Angeles, might be the logical sponsors.

Once the American sponsorship is set, it will be essential to outline a definite plan of action acceptable to the English, French, and Soviet bodies. This, in turn, would be submitted through each country's representative to the UNESCO conference for ratification. Preliminary inquiries in London indicate that UNESCO would look most favorably upon such a project. Through its offices the vital administrative machinery could be put into effective operation. Arrangements for monetary grants could be worked out on a basis similar to that of former exchange plans; that is, participating nations would agree to assume respon-

[2] The English Film Trade Union.

[3] The French National Film Library and Film Research Center.

[4] The French School of Advanced Film Studies.

[5] The French Film Trade Union.

sibility for maintenance of exchange students during the period of stay in their country.

Obviously, the potential ramifications of the plan are enormous. If these initial experiments succeed, students from all nations affiliated with UN can soon thereafter join the rotation program. The plan would give added impetus to the establishment of other contemplated international schemes such as film libraries, film research centers, technicians' forums, studies on world film theory, and expanded cinema festivals. All of them, of course, aid immeasurably in furthering international good-will. Concurrently, it serves the purpose of molding future film craftsmen and, through them, encouraging the quality and progress of cinema everywhere.

That this program is practical and even urgently necessary now in the shrinking distances of our atomic world is attested to by the recent statements of William Wyler, Garson Kanin, Frank Capra, Charles Boyer, and Jay Leyda. In one form or another they have all voiced a plea for a deeper international understanding in our present-day films. What better means to accomplish this end than through personal contact?

Sir Oliver Bell, Director of the British Film Institute, best sums up those sentiments in these words: "It goes without saying that the British Film Institute would be wholeheartedly behind such a project.... In the cinema, mankind has an unparalleled agency for the promotion of international understanding and good-will between nations, without which no international political organization can be effective. We believe that, more and more, it will come to be used as an instrument in that direction by the United Nations, and few things can conduce more to that end than that in each producing company there should be a group who have had the privilege of studying in other countries.... In short, of being informed with a spirit of international understanding themselves. Such a spirit will inevitably be reflected in the films on which they work."

HERBERT F. MARGOLIS

"CITIZENS ARE MADE . . ."

Citizens Are Made, Not Born, a radio script by Leon Meadow, which appeared in Vol. II, No. 1, of the *Hollywood Quarterly,* was broadcast November 14, 1946, at 7:00 P.M., as the first show of ABC's *World Security Workshop.*

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Book Reviews

THE CREATOR AS CRITIC

The Art of the Motion Picture. By JEAN BENOIT-LÉVY. Translated by Theodore R. Jaeckel. New York: Coward-McCann. 1946

IT IS significant that the *Poetics* was written by Aristotle and not by Aeschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides. Treatises on the arts are written by critics, rarely by artists themselves. Some writers have successfully alternated between the creative and the analytical function. Henry James was able to view his own creative processes objectively enough to write *The Art of the Novel.* George Meredith, in *The Origin and Use of the Comic Spirit,* wrote penetratingly of the viewpoint which informed his own writing. Generally, the intuitive approach of the artist seems to preclude the objectivity necessary to analyze and describe the aesthetic principles or even the techniques of his work.

This is conspicuously true of films. Pudovkin and Eisenstein have been articulate, but the creators of films in the western European and American form have said very little to define that form or its techniques. Major contributions toward the definition and description of the film aesthetic have been made by such scholars and critics as Mortimer J. Adler in *Art and Prudence,* or Allardyce Nicoll in *Film and Theatre,* or Gilbert Seldes in *The Seven Lively Arts* and many articles.

The Art of the Motion Picture, by Jean Benoit-Lévy, is therefore a welcome and important addition to the slim literature about films by their creators. Benoit-Lévy's book, however, is only incidentally about the *art* of the motion picture. It might better have been called "Motion Picture Categories" or, to use M. Benoit-Lévy's own term, "Genres." A glance at the list of chapter headings indicates the subject matter: "The Film in the Classroom"; "The Educational Film"; "The Promotional Film"; "The Film of Life"; "The Informational Film"; "Poetry, Fancy, and Comedy"; "The Art of the Dramatic Film." In each of these chapters the author writes objectively and descriptively of the varied forms of motion pictures and the uses to which they are put. He has practiced all these forms, and it is in his accounts of his own creative attack on the problems presented by each form that he reveals most about the art concerning which he writes. To the lay reader the book may contain much information of interest, but to the film worker the intellectual content of M. Benoit-Lévy's book will do very little to increase his knowledge of the medium in which he is working. The most important thing about the book is the attitude the author reveals toward his work. He says: ". . . the public cannot be won over just because the rules of art have been observed. Talent, technique, all the basic elements necessary to the artist, are lifeless if he himself is not imbued with a burning zeal which he transmits to his work. This faith which possesses him is as essential to his creative powers

as it is to his physical existence." Next in importance is the standpoint from which he writes, which is, to use his own term, that of a "film author." Jean Renoir once said: "I am not a director in the American sense of the word. I am a writer who uses film as his medium." M. Benoit-Lévy discusses his work as such a writer, one who conceives or finds ideas which he expresses in film. He predicates a mastery of the techniques involved, and though he mentions them by name he unfortunately adds little to our knowledge. He does, on the other hand, bring before us, as Stanislavsky did in *My Life in Art,* a self-portrait of a widely informed, warmly human artist with a profound sense of responsibility toward society and toward the medium by which he, as an artist, interprets the society in which he lives. Thus by increasing our knowledge of the processes by which an artist works, he cannot help increasing our understanding of the art he practices with such distinction. In the final summing up, his title is more apt than it seems to be when the book is being read.

IRVING PICHEL

RADIO MUSIC AS A BUSINESS

Music in Radio Broadcasting. Edited by Gilbert Chase. New York: McGraw-Hill. 1946

FOR THOSE who plan to embark on a musical career in the field of radio, Gilbert Chase's book will serve as a valuable guide and manual. Ten men well known in the profession have contributed chapters on a variety of subjects, from the techniques of composing, conducting, or arranging for radio to problems of production, continuity, and legal rights.

In the introductory chapter, Samuel Chotzinoff sounds a note of warning that amateur and professional alike might well heed. It is this: both technical knowledge and good taste are indispensable tools for the radio musician, but the latter is the more important. It is implied that the mere acquisition of technical skills will avail the aspiring composer, producer, or interpreter nothing unless he either possesses the capacity for discriminating choice or seeks to acquire it. By what means good taste may be inculcated in those who do not naturally possess it is a question Chotzinoff leaves unanswered, but it is obvious that an ever-widening acquaintance with music of all styles and epochs will inevitably lead to a sharpening of one's critical faculties.

The remainder of Chotzinoff's contribution is essentially thumbnail history of the broadcasting of serious music in America, with brief reference to the problems inherent in the production of radio operas and the creation of radio symphony orchestras. Merely touched upon is the controversial issue of sustaining versus commercially sponsored programs. As might be expected in a book issued under the aegis of the NBC, Chotzinoff defends commercial sponsorship as "the ultimate test of popularity." No one will deny that the American system of radio has fostered the mass consumption of art music, but one wonders whether a noncommercial, federally operated radio might not have achieved as much, and more, while sparing the listener the torment of practically continuous advertising from dawn to midnight.

The requirements imposed upon a musical program builder, including

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The requirements imposed upon a musical program builder, including

ability to read unfamiliar scores, to rearrange instrumentation, and to grapple with problems of timing, is discussed in chapter two by Ernest La Prade. Of primary concern to the program builder is audience appeal, which must be considered with a view to the function of the program (education, light or serious entertainment) and the type of audience addressed. To La Prade the principle of unity plus variety is basic in all program building. One member of the radio audience hereby notes that this principle is often noticeable by its absence, or by resulting in a unity of mediocrity. I suppose that a program consisting entirely of the old warhorses of the nineteenth century is unified, but I would prefer less consistency and more of the unfamiliar and modern. This section of the book contains valuable information concerning the actual procedures used at NBC in preparing a musical program for performance. For the neophyte's benefit, La Prade also lists the available sources of printed music, as well as the bread and meat of so many radio hours, recordings.

Covering much the same ground, but more thoroughly, Edwin Dunham explains the duties and qualifications of a program director, and gives many practical hints concerning rehearsal procedures, microphone techniques, etc. Radio composer Morris Mamorsky warns that a member of his profession cannot be a prima donna, for he must meet demands that differ widely from those of the concert hall. As in the movies, a radio composer has only a limited time for composition and rehearsals; he must subordinate his music to the story, and write with economy of means, for the orchestra at his disposal is never very large. Music in a script show is part of a blend—a servant, albeit an indispensable one, to another art. There is an obvious parallel between the function of music in radio drama and the cinema, but radio productions are in many respects more spontaneous and immediate. In a broadcast play, for example, music may help to create or sustain a mood *for the actors themselves,* whereas the score in a movie is dubbed in long after the actors' stint is finished. Mamorsky concludes with a detailed exposition of compositional techniques for the script program. To my knowledge, these professional "secrets" are printed here for the first time.

An old hand at radio conducting, Dr. Frank Black treats of the special factors, including microphone placing and orchestral seating arrangements, that must be taken into account in his branch of the profession. It is clear that the radio conductor should be a man of broad training, for he usually helps to plan the programs and sometimes composes incidental and background music for radio plays. Tom Bennett can do no more than touch upon the varied and complex problems that beset the radio arranger (to treat them thoroughly would fill a pair of thick volumes), but he does enumerate a few general principles. Credit is given to Ferde Grofe for creating the orchestra that is "peculiarly indigenous to radio." Centering around a group of saxaphone players who double in wood winds, it plays popular or light music in a free style unsuitable for dancing.

Approaching the subject from the opposite direction, David Hall analyzes

a special kind of script writing, continuity for a musical program. Here the writer must be a combination of journalist, musician, and psychologist—especially the last, for he must blend his commentary perfectly with the mood of the program. It is obvious that popular or salon music demands brief, chatty comments, whereas symphony or opera may allow more extensive remarks of a serious nature. *N.B.:* Hall's exposition of the music script writer's problems is succinct and well written, whereas the musicians contributing to the book are somewhat more at home with notes than with words.

One of the matters that complicate musical broadcasting is the law and practice of copyright. In distinguishing between works in the public domain and those protected by statutory copyright, or by common law (unpublished compositions), Thomas Belviso makes the law so clear that even such as I can understand. The networks have long made use of music research specialists for the benefit of their script writers, but only recently have they hired trained musicologists like Gilbert Chase to supervise educational or historical programs of unusual music. "The science of musical research, with special emphasis on historical investigation," as the editor defines musicology, thus finds a place in radio also. If, under the threat of FM competition, this type of serious public-service program flourishes, the broadcasters may begin to require extensive musicological training of their program directors.

Also looking more to the future is Herbert Graf's final chapter, on concert music and opera in television. What will people see on a television screen when a symphony orchestra is playing? Shall it be the picture obtained from a single point of vantage, as in the concert hall, or will the television camera adopt movie techniques and wander from one player to another, or even illustrate a composition in the manner of Disney's *Fantasia?* Will television audiences stand for the obesity and hammy acting of a great many opera singers, or will a new, pulchritudinous crop who act naturally come to the fore? These are a few of the questions that come to mind after reading Mr. Graf, who in closing refers to the need for original television operas written expressly for the new medium. Let us hope that the leaders of television will be more generous than the radio networks in commissioning new works. Considering the flourishing state of radio's finances, it is inexcusable that American composers of serious music have not been hired more often to write music especially for radio performance. Perhaps this will come about when all those who desire to hear more contemporary art music make their wishes known to the broadcasters.

It is fitting that radio's chief stock-in-trade should be the object of investigation in this book, the first of its kind. Based on Gilbert Chase's orientation course in Columbia University Extension, it will open many eyes to the opportunities in radio for the educated musician, and will especially stimulate those whose hearts are set upon a musical career but who have hesitated because the profession seems to afford so little promise of stability and adequate financial reward.

WALTER RUBSAMEN

THE FIRST FREEDOM AND RADIO

The First Freedom. By MORRIS L. ERNST. New York: Macmillan, 1946

"RADIO," says Mr. Ernst, "is a government monopoly." That is the essential difference between radio and the two other forms of communication he discusses—movies and the press,—and it rises from the physical conditions of our current form of broadcasting. This form, Amplitude Modulation, operates in a portion of the spectrum which can conveniently carry only a limited number of transmissions at any given moment; the number is in the neighborhood of one thousand. Technological changes, particularly in the direction of Frequency Modulation and the new Time Pulse system, will multiply the number of simultaneous broadcasts by varying coefficients. Mr. Ernst therefore seems to run the risk of obsolescence. His whole book is an analysis of monopoly and near-monopoly in "the marketplace of thought"; but radio is today on the threshold of as vast a change as that brought about by the invention of movable types. Potentially radio can now enter into a period of diversity, with so many frequencies available that monopoly cannot exist.

But FM will not in itself create diversity; it will only offer a golden opportunity which will be lost if we do not act courageously and promptly. Nor is it safe to wait five or ten years for FM to arrive at a strong position in the field. So Mr. Ernst's inquiry is relevant; in his own words, he wants to know whether, "taking the engineering limitations into account . . . the market of the air is as free and open as science permits and government can arrange." His answer is No. But it does maintain one freedom. Although the government has to "police the air waves" and issue licenses, it has no control over program content, except that implied in the basic act which empowers the Federal Communications Commission to issue licenses on the basis of "public interest, convenience and necessity."

Of some 900 commercial AM stations now in operation, 730 are affiliated with one of the four big networks; these networks own 14 of the country's 24 "clear-channel" stations;[1] network profits are great (from 84 to 190 per cent return on the value of the property in 1943—before taxes, of course), and the four chains take half of the industry's gross, the other half being divided among the 900 stations; unaffiliated stations are at a great disadvantage (income is fifteen times as great on the average for affiliates), and affiliated stations suffer from network practices which "force" them to take certain programs and prevent them from taking others. Such, in brief, is Ernst's description of the broadcasting picture, and his record of coercive and exclusive measures, now discontinued by FCC order, is impressive.

The book is really a mathematical argument, since absolute monopoly is represented by the figure 1 and absolute diversity would be a radio station for every individual in the country, say 140,000,000. So some other sets of figures should be remarked. The four

[1] There are twenty-four Class I-A clear-channel stations which have a wave length completely to themselves at night and power of 50,000 watts. These reach an average area of 150 miles in the daytime and 700 miles at night, but have been heard as far as 2,000 miles away. These are the elite, the grantees having the widest access to the public. (P. 128.)

networks derive 97 per cent of their income from 144 advertisers—half of it from 11 advertisers represented by a dozen advertising agencies.

Radio time is bought chiefly by sponsors in four fields of manufacture: automotive, drugs and cosmetics, packaged foods, tobacco. In 353 cities there was only one station, and in 111 of these the station was associated with the only newspaper publisher there.

The results of concentration, according to Ernst, are: falling off in the number of sustaining (educational, public service, minority-interest) programs; absence of regional and local originations (the networks are concentrated in New York, with Hollywood prominent and Chicago third in importance); continuance of programs, such as soap operas, in spite of social criticism; lack of local independent selection (or rejection) of programs; elimination of noncommercial subscription broadcasting (transmitted on the air, but scrambled, and receivable only on instruments for which a monthly fee is paid); excessive cost of radio time, excluding smaller advertisers; excessive selling price of stations, which really represents a payment for the franchise, that is, for the air which is not owned by the station.

Finally, Ernst maintains that the four-power monopoly chokes off the flow of information and discussion. There was a time when radio had to fight the news organizations for the right to broadcast news; the fight now is within radio itself. The code under which it works forbids the sale of time for the presentation of controversial issues and for the solicitation of memberships. Ernst points out that "these two clauses have been a cloak under which to hide discrimination against labor, coöperative, consumer and minority group programs." These selections of the code have recently been brushed aside; ABC and some small stations have openly made themselves available to controversial broadcasts on commercial time and the FCC has not endorsed the rigid stand of the other broadcasters.

So far as the social effect of near-monopoly goes, this is the most important point Ernst makes about programs; and regrettably he gives it scant treatment. The code was used as a cloak; behind it some manufacturers propagandized for their ideas and in it the voice of the CIO was muffled. But the principle of the code is that you cannot let the rich and the powerful use radio, particularly the entertainment that radio offers, as a vehicle for influencing public opinion. If you do, the power to create public opinion will gravitate into the hands of eleven or at best fifty advertisers—or any small group. Instead of proposing simple means of enforcing the principle, Ernst rather airily suggests that the networks are being "educated to get away from a code concept which holds that there is a separate distinct set of ideas known as 'controversy.'" Once commercial time is sold to the sponsor to advertise his economic ideas, not his cigarettes or his condensed milk, you have no principle left to guarantee any fair representation of the opposition, unless the opposition has as much money; and oppositions of all sorts usually begin without a surplus for advertising. In his zeal for getting rid of a dirty situation, Ernst has thrown the baby out with the bath. I think that even soap opera is safer.

The radio section includes a discus-

sion of the potentialities of television (and of the danger that it, too, may be dominated by a few groups), and also discusses facsimile. These two items connect radio with the movies on one side and the press on the other. They emphasize the fact that control of thought is a single problem. And I hope that those interested in Ernst's analysis of radio will not neglect the other sections of his important book.

GILBERT SELDES

THE WARNER BROTHERS PRESENT

Okay for Sound. Edited by FREDERIC M. THRASHER. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce. 1946

EVERY new film book is a welcome event. *Okay for Sound,* edited by Frederic M. Thrasher, Professor of Education at New York University, represents the latest history of sound in motion pictures. Popular in tone, de luxe in format, the book synopsizes the stories of several successful sound pictures (mostly Warner's), illustrates the mechanics of sound reproduction (featuring Warner technicians), explains the cultural and social values of movies (emphasizing Warner films), and finally suggests the educational, commercial, and military use of sound film. All this material has been crammed into 249 pages of pictures with legends and 50 pages of text.

The pictures are entertaining, a potpourri of nostalgic, humorous, informative, and historical photographs gathered mainly from the files of Warner Brothers. They evoke memories of half-forgotten films and present a vivid panorama of the march of the movies not unlike the recent streamlined *Pictorial History of the Movies* by Deems Taylor, Marceline Peterson, and Bryant Hale. But the legends often unintentionally make the pictures absurd. Page 156 shows a New York street set with a chorus of men and women. The legend reads: "*42nd Street* provided laughter and song and a heart throb for Americans caught in the grip of the great depression." Page 157 shows a group of Warner players on the observation platform of a train. The legend informs us: "Travelling across the country in the midst of a bank holiday, Warner executives and stars were forced to raid box office cash boxes to keep the caravan running. Nobody had any money but everyone was optimistic for the first time since the depression struck the nation." Page 128 displays a still of Victor McLaglen in *The Informer.* Its legend says: "Victor McLaglen's open mouth signifies the dramatic use of sound, and the visual pattern implicit in the postures of his assailants represents the artistry which went into *The Informer.*"

For the filmgoer who has even a nodding acquaintance with the literature on movies, the text of *Okay for Sound* has limited interest. Its interpretation of the social and cultural aspects of movies is slight; its history of the development of sound yields no more than can be found in other books on the subject. But as biography the book draws an ingenious picture of the role of the Warner Brothers ("Four Men with Faith") in the development of sound pictures: ".... the big companies would never admit that sound had commercial possibilities. Sam's [Warner] imagination was fired. He went to New York to see for himself, came back completely sold.... Harry [Warner]

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sat through the first number on the program, completely inscrutable. When an orchestra appeared and music filled the small projection room, Harry couldn't contain himself any longer. 'That's the answer to sound pictures,' he exclaimed. 'No wonder this thing hasn't taken hold. It hasn't been done with showmanship.' . . . The original hope that the sound motion picture would have international and educational impact, which was a motivating factor in the Warner development of sound on screen, is a demonstrable reality in the kindergartens, grade and high schools, and colleges of the United States and other countries." Teeming with such choice details, the book cannot avoid raising the question: "Did the producers underwrite it?"

Like those other biographies of producers—*The Life and Adventures of Carl Laemmle,* by John Drinkwater; *Behind the Screen,* by Samuel Goldwyn; *The House That Shadows Built,* by Will Irwin; *Upton Sinclair Presents William Fox,* by Upton Sinclair,—*Okay for Sound* is at best an adulatory chronicle of the struggles and success of the Warner Brothers. Such books do little to serve readers seeking knowledge about films.

LEWIS JACOBS

A BOOKLIST

The Motion Picture: A Selected Booklist. Published by The American Library Association and Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc. 1946

THIS helpful brochure aims to assist the student of the screen, the researcher, and the casual delver in selecting books on the movies. The thumbnail summaries of each book's subject and treatment are penetrating and informative. There are, however, some glaring omissions in the list: *Film Technique,* by V. I. Pudovkin; *Film,* by Rudolf Arnheim; *The Cinema as a Graphic Art,* by V. Nilsen; *Money Behind the Screen,* by F. D. Klingender and Stuart Legg; *Cinema,* by C. A. Lejeune; *The Photoplay,* by Hugo Munsterberg; and *Film Music,* by Kurt London. All these are works of primary importance and should have been included even if it necessitated the omission of some titles the chief value of which is their nostalgic gossip.

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LEWIS JACOBS

Report from the Editors

IN THE first issue of the *Hollywood Quarterly,* published in October, 1945, the editors suggested that the magazine would attempt to present "the record of research and exploration in motion pictures and radio in order to provide a basis for evaluation of economic, social, aesthetic, educational, and technological trends."

At the end of the first year, the editors turned back to that hopeful pronouncement, rereading it in the light of practical editorial experience. While not disposed to underestimate the value of the *Quarterly* or its growing influence, the editors agreed that its future value and influence would be enhanced by a candid review of what had been accomplished. The purpose of such a survey is both critical and constructive. It is designed to serve as a realistic basis for the formulation of future policy.

In considering the content of the magazine, it is essential to take account of the audience to which it is addressed. The *Hollywood Quarterly*'s readers and subscribers are largely drawn from three groups: (1) artists and craftsmen professionally concerned with motion picture and radio production; (2) scholars and students whose work in the arts or social sciences requires responsible information regarding these media of communication; and (3) members of the general public whose interest goes beyond the passive receptivity of the darkened theater or the half-heard program to a recognition that film and radio perform a creative and social function which demands public consideration.

In order that both the readers and the editors of the *Quarterly* may be able to see the first year of the magazine in perspective, we asked Sylvia Jarrico, our assistant editor, to give us a statistical picture of our subscribers and prepare a content analysis of the material printed. In her summary a certain amount of criticism is to be found in both figures and comment:

MEMORANDUM TO THE EDITORS

Who are the subscribers?—A geographical answer first, given in terms of percentages of the subscribers listed at the end of the first year:

	Per cent
Western and Pacific Coast States... (Southern California—52.0%)	58.6
Northeastern and Atlantic Coast States ..... (Metropolitan NewYork—15.7%)	22.1
North-Central States ..... (Chicago—1.8%)	7.5
Southern States..... (Washington, D. C.—3.1%)	8.0
Foreign countries	3.8

It is not at all difficult to make a geographical analysis of the subscribers; every address appears neatly on the subscription cards. It is quite another problem to make an analysis of the occupations and agencies represented by the subscribers. We have managed, however, to identify more than two-thirds of the subscribers. Of these two-thirds, the following are the percentages of professionals concerned with motion pictures and with radio:

	Per cent
Motion pictures	38.4
Radio	9.8
	48.2

The three-tenths per cent of subscribers who work primarily in the theater are not included here. Unfortunately, the many musicians who subscribe are not separately tabulated, but have been assigned to the field in which they primarily work.

These are the 10 per cent of our subscribers who are directly concerned with education—the application of the mass media to educational methods, vocational education, or the academic study of the mass media as communication:

	Per cent
University faculty	6.9
Educators and teachers	1.5
Educational organizations	1.0
Audiovisual education organizations	0.6
	10.0

The 17.8 per cent of subscribers below are grouped to represent the general interested community which appreciates the social importance of the mass media:

	Per cent
Professionals (not educators)	10.0
Businessmen	1.9
Political and civic organizations	1.1
Labor organizations	0.8
Government and military	4.0
	17.8

Of course, there are libraries among our subscribers:

	Per cent
College and university libraries	10.2
Other libraries	7.0
	17.2

Surprisingly large in itself, the number of subscribing libraries represents a far larger number of readers. If we group with the libraries the educational, political, civic, labor, military, and governmental organizations listed above, we find that at least a quarter (24.7 per cent) of our subscriptions are available to groups of considerable size. In addition, 6.3 per cent go to newspapers, magazines, and publishers.

The following is a summary of the occupations and agencies among the two-thirds of the subscribers who have been identified:

	Per cent
Mass media	48.2
Theater	0.3
Education	10.0
General interested community	17.8
Libraries	17.2
Publications and publishers	6.3
	99.8

The distribution of the subscribers is wide both geographically and occupationally. Geographically they range over twenty countries and all the continents—from Nebraska to Egypt and from Chile to Denmark and India by way either of New Zealand or of Paris. Occupationally they range from ministers of education to mine, mill, and smelter workers.

What fields are covered in the first year of the Quarterly?—An over-all answer first, in terms of the general fields of inquiry of the *Quarterly:*

	Per cent
Motion pictures	64.8
(Music, 8.5 per cent)	
Radio	21.6
(Music, 2.0 per cent)	
Television	2.2
Book reviews	11.4
	100.0

The emphasis on motion pictures at the expense of radio and television is somewhat less among the book reviews:

	Per cent
Motion pictures	37.7
Radio	21.1
Television	1.8
Theater, social science, biography, photography	39.5
	100.1

Geographical coverage of the articles and communications.—Although 5.6 per cent of the articles and communications could not be coaxed into geographical categories, the tabulation of the others under such categories reveals the degree of emphasis on the mass media in the United States and the extent to which the *Quar-*

terly reflected developments in the mass media elsewhere.

	Per cent
United States	84.7
France	5.6
Russia	2.8
Britain	1.4

Wartime coverage (19.4 per cent).—The record of the wartime experience of the mass media is one of the special characteristics of the first year of the *Quarterly*. Nineteen and four-tenths per cent of all the articles and communications were based on the wartime experience. Among the articles and communications within the fields of motion pictures and radio, the percentages of wartime coverage were:

	Per cent
Motion pictures	41.1
Radio	13.3

Coverage of current major production (46 per cent).—The motion picture articles tabulated as based on current industrial experience dealt with current films, their music, film research data, acting, directing, writing, the producing community, and animation. The radio articles in this category dealt with current radio programs, the music, radio research, and the control of radio content.

	Per cent
Motion pictures	41.1
Radio	60.0

The 60 per cent for radio is deceptively large since only 20 per cent of the total material on radio dealt directly with the characteristics of the medium itself or with its day-to-day product.

Other coverage (34 per cent).—Of the articles and communications about motion pictures, 37.5 per cent dealt with film history, technology, film libraries, film education, foreign production, or educational, abstract, and documentary film.

Of the articles and communications about radio, 26.7 per cent dealt with its educational uses.

The following table summarizes the coverage of all the articles and communications, and the coverage within the articles and communications about motion pictures and radio.

	All articles and communications	Articles and communications about motion pictures	Articles and communications about radio
	Per cent	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Wartime coverage	19.4	21.4	13.3
Coverage of current major production	45.7	41.1	60.0
Other coverage (educational, aesthetic, technological, etc.)	34.8	37.5	26.4
	99.9	100.0	100.0

The foregoing forms a framework for comparison between the editorial purpose announced at the beginning and the content during a year's publication. Has the magazine offered a "record of research and exploration in motion pictures and radio"? Obviously it has not done so in a complete or systematic manner. The material on radio was inadequate in terms of number of articles as compared with the stress that has been placed on motion picture problems. In each category there was too little material dealing directly with major production—the motion pictures that reach more than a hundred million Americans weekly and a rapidly increasing world audience, and the radio entertainment and information that forms a more or less continuous accompaniment to contemporary home life.

How successful has the *Quarterly* been in providing "a basis for evaluation of economic, social, aesthetic, educational, and technological trends"? It may be proper and desirable that 54.2 per cent of the total content was relevant to this purpose. But the 19.4 per cent of material relating to war experience dealt with the special use of motion pictures and radio by the armed forces, and the remaining 34.8 per cent, so far as films and broadcasts themselves were considered, dealt with production designed solely for educational or aesthetic purposes. While the importance of these fields must be fully recognized, it may not be amiss to point out that their relationship to major motion picture production and large-scale broadcasting has not been sufficiently stressed, and that this relationship is a determining factor in the further development of experimental and educational services.

The bibliographies which appeared as a supplement to Volume I of the *Quarterly* and which will be published as a regular yearly feature, represented a vital contribution to "the record of research and exploration" in the mass media. Examination of the bibliographies offers a suggestive commentary on the problem that faces the editors. There are few books or articles which apply mature aesthetic or social criteria to the industrial production of motion pictures and radio.

Is it too much to hope that the *Quarterly,* representing the collaboration of craftsmen with practical experience in motion pictures and radio, and scholars possessing techniques of research and analysis, may gradually meet the need for serious evaluation of the issues that affect these industries?

The postwar development of American motion pictures and radio indicates a growing interest in world markets. The control of these media of communication is becoming a major question of national policy and international relationships. During the past year, the *Quarterly* dealt with film production in three other countries: England, France, and the Soviet Union. These countries represent the major national film industries today. But the material on the whole lacks the lively national awareness that correspondence from the country itself could give. Other centers of production were not dealt with at all. It would be of special value to hear from our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, the editors have drawn up a restatement of general policy and a plan covering the material that they hope to publish during the coming year. Since the fulfillment of the plan depends on the work of contributors and the support of readers, it is herewith submitted to contributors and readers for discussion and comment, which will be printed in coming issues.

General Policy

The *Hollywood Quarterly* seeks to provide systematic information concerning trends and perspectives in motion pictures, radio, and television. It will explore these fields of communication as arts and industries, stimulating the application of techniques of scholarship and research, and thus developing closer coöperation between craftsmen involved in production and scholars and students who are concerned with the creative process and its social influence.

In order to implement this policy, the following will be regular features:

1. A review of the quarter's motion pictures, with emphasis on the significant films and general trends.

2. A review of the quarter's broadcasting, with emphasis on important achievements and over-all tendencies.

3. A half-yearly review of music in film and radio, emphasizing its relationship to the whole field of music and noting special achievements.

4. Regular correspondence with foreign countries, giving as complete coverage as can be obtained of international developments.

5. Frequent publication of scripts (radio and motion picture) or parts of scripts, selected primarily from material that reaches the widest audience and exerts the most far-reaching influence, and accompanied by notes and commentary by authors, directors, or producers.