



Protecting the Family and the Nation: the official censorship of American cinema in Ireland, 1923–1954

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In 1941, shortly after his retirement as Ireland's first Film Censor, James Montgomery contributed an article entitled 'The menace of Hollywood' to the Jesuit publication *Studies*. In the piece he wrote that while in 1922 the newly formed Irish Free State was still in danger of Anglicization, it was combating that particular influence through the educational system as it sought 'to foster a national culture' [1]. However, he considered that Hollywood films were undermining this national project:

Every evening boys and girls, from our educational institutions, crowded the Picture Houses in the cities, while in every little town—and in some remote villages—people flocked from shop and farm to the cheapest of all amusements—absorbing ideas of life, which, with few exceptions, were vulgar and sensational. Could any people for long preserve a distinct national character in [the] face of such a bombardment [2]?

Such a view was also frequently articulated by Catholic bishops during the 1920s and 1930s. They blamed the cinema for carrying alien messages of consumerism and which led to economic and social discontent. Demands for higher wages and emigration were two direct consequences of watching films, according to some bishops.

As a country with almost no indigenous fiction film industry until the 1980s, Ireland's dependence on American and British cinemas was greater than most other cultures [3]. The absence of a linguistic barrier to Anglo-American cinema, unlike in Continental Europe, contributed to this dependence. Also, Ireland's peripheral status was underpinned by policies of economic and cultural protectionism which inhibited industrial development. It was not until this policy was re-oriented towards an outward-looking internationalization in the late 1950s that Ireland became a modern European state interacting with other cultures and societies with a confidence lacking in the decades of post-colonial insecurity after independence. Indeed, from the early 1910s, nationalists and Catholics alike joined in campaigns to restrict foreign popular culture, especially the cinema, in Ireland. It was this cultural and moral protectionist policy which primarily fuelled the engagement with American cinema in Ireland from the 1910s to the 1960s.

Up until the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty British and American films entered Ireland largely unhindered. During the teens there were campaigns similar to those in Britain at the time which called for restrictions on the perceived immorality of the modern and secular themes of American films, particularly those set in urban environments. These activities culminated with Dublin Corporation appointing its own censors in 1916, but the inefficient way in which the policy was administered had little impact on the availability of foreign films. Of the almost 3000 films viewed by censors during

1917–1921, fewer than 100 were banned. The crusade, nevertheless, brought together key Catholic and Protestant activists who were hostile to popular culture. During the decade the anti-cinema campaigners also linked the struggle to that for national self-determination as they fused the moral concerns of the Catholic Church with the issue of nation-building. As one Catholic priest put it in a 1917 lecture entitled ‘Practical patriotism’, they were fighting in these campaigns for

the grand old cause of Faith and Fatherland ... Christian morality and national welfare go hand-in-hand, and that whatever is injurious to morality is also injurious to the best interests of the nation [4].

It is no surprise, therefore, to discover that at the time the Anglo-Irish Treaty was being debated by the Irish Parliament in December 1921 a conference was held to discuss the limitations of local authority film censorship and to press the independent Irish Parliament for statutory national film censorship. Under pressure from these activists, and supported by cultural nationalists, the state responded by introducing the Censorship of Films Act, 1923. Replacing local authority film censorship, the 1923 Act put in the hands of state censors ill-defined and subjective criteria for issuing certificates for the public exhibition of films. According to the Act, a certificate is not to be issued if the censor is

of the opinion that such picture or part thereof is unfit for general exhibition in public by reason of its being indecent, obscene or blasphemous or because the exhibition thereof in public would lead to inculcate principles contrary to public morality or would be otherwise subversive of public morality.

Certificates can carry conditions which limit either the place of exhibition, such as larger urban areas, or the class of persons, such as an age group, to whom a particular film can be shown. These criteria were interpreted broadly and continue to be used by film censors.

Before any film reaches Ireland it has already gone through an extensive filtering process. During the period under review here, which bookends the more restrictive activities of American film censors, it was not just script-vetting or the seal of approval from the American-Catholic Legion of Decency which determined what Irish audiences might see, but also whether it had been released, and in what version, in Britain. It seems that very few films which were banned in Britain were released in Ireland. Two such films were the Irish War of Independence film, *Irish Destiny* (George Dewhurst, Eppels’ Films; Ireland, 1926), banned for political reasons in 1926, and *The Wild One* (Laslo Benedek, Columbia; USA, 1953), about ‘irresponsible, law flouting, sadistic motor cycle riders’. Though it was banned by Film Censor Martin Brennan, a decision upheld by the Censorship of Films Appeal Board [5], it was subsequently passed with cuts when it was re-submitted to the censor with a ‘trite “crime does not pay” ending grafted on’ [6], and it was released in 1956. In this instance, the different treatment owes in part to the fact that motorcycle gangs as they were known in Britain did not exist in Ireland and, thus, the British censors’ concern with imitative behaviour was not an issue in the Irish context. However, a great many films released in Britain were never even submitted to the Irish censors. In 1950 this figure is as high as 11%. The major distributors based in London treated Ireland as another region and decided which version of a film would be submitted to the Irish censors. There is evidence from the censors themselves that cutting of films prior to submission was practised widely by distributors. For example, 423 feet was cut from Alfred Hitchcock’s *I Confess* (Warner Bros.; USA, 1953) by Warner Bros. prior to its submission in 1954 [7]. The cuts had



FIG. 1. Too hot for Ireland: scenes from Alfred Hitchcock's *I Confess* (Warner Bros., 1953) suggesting that Anne Baxter's character was in love with the priest played by Montgomery Clift were among the thousands of cuts made to Hollywood feature films by Irish censors. Photo: British Film Institute, stills, posters and designs.

been designed to suppress the love by Ruth (Anne Baxter) for Fr. Michael Logan (Montgomery Clift) both before and after her marriage (see Fig. 1). Unsatisfied, the censors demanded further cuts to the film.

The first Film Censor, James Montgomery, formulated his policy in simple biblical terms by taking the Ten Commandments as his Code [8]. The parliamentary debate on the Film Censorship Bill had encouraged such an approach while also giving it a cultural nationalist spin. William Magennis, who became the first Chairman of the Censorship of Films Appeal Board, a voluntary body of nine persons empowered under the Act to amend or uphold the Film Censor's decisions upon receipt of an appeal from a distributor, stated that

Purity of mind and sanity of outlook upon life were long ago regarded as characteristic of our people. The loose views and the vile lowering of values that belong to other races and other peoples were being forced upon our people through the popularity of the cinematograph ... [The Bill] is helping all the objects of the Gaelic League, because it is exactly like gardening. You have to attend to the pests and plagues that beset your growing vegetation as well as to cultivate the ground [9].

Though such statements were characteristic of many extreme anti-cinema campaigners worldwide, in Ireland they found a ready echo in the most senior government circles. Magennis' views were not only endorsed by the then Minister for Justice, Kevin O'Higgins, but they provoked him to comment that 'Magennis has certainly provided

grounds for serious consideration ... as Film Censor' [10]. Magennis later became Chairman of the Censorship of Publications Board, a body established in 1929 which introduced draconian measures to control the availability of books and magazines and for which the Censorship of Films Act was seen as a dry run by Catholic agitators. The Publications Board banned 1841 books during its first 16 years [11], a figure which can be compared with the approximately 1750 films banned during the 17 years, 1924–1940, when Montgomery was Film Censor [12]. This figure, which contrasts with the 178 films banned by the British Board of Film Censors for the same period [13], represented a dramatic change from the much more modest numbers of films rejected by Dublin Corporation's Film Censors under the Cinematograph Act, 1909. Before the end of the first year of national film censorship, distributors were shocked to discover that many of the core elements of American cinema, including narrative resolution, were not immune from Irish censorship. They instituted a boycott of the Irish market in 1924, but in the face of united opposition from the censors and politicians they abandoned the action within 6 months. In all about 2500 films have been banned and another 10,000 films cut in Ireland since 1923.

The censors approached their task armed with the policy that 'the family was the unit of the State' and any cinematic representation which challenged this was to be either banned or cut. Noting in his first annual report that 'close on' 20% of the films submitted for a certificate were objectionable, Montgomery continued, that 'these undesirable parts dealt principally with indecent dancing', and the 'customs of the "divorcing classes" in England and America' [14]. In that year, Montgomery had banned 100 films (8% of the total). The Appeal Board made only four alterations: it passed one film without cuts and a further three with cuts. That the Board was so supportive of the Film Censor is unsurprising. From its inception to the present the Board has included one Catholic and one Protestant clergyman amongst its nine members.

Three years later in his annual report to the Minister for Justice, Montgomery wrote of his regret in not being able to discern any 'general improvement in the moral tone of the films imported' and he complained about 'the importance given to "Sex Appeal" by some producers' which led to many rejections. However, Montgomery ultimately was faced with a fundamental and irreconcilable problem unless he banned cinema completely. Though he could remove objectionable plot elements which infringed his 'family' film policy, he could not suppress the sensuousness and beauty of the image. As Walter Benjamin would remark, the photograph can turn the abject, a rubbish heap for example, into an object of aesthetic contemplation. Alert to the potential subversiveness of the image, he was concerned about Hollywood's visual and narrative excesses, but which were perhaps as important for audiences as narrative coherence. He concluded that 'incidents of little dramatic value', such as 'Cabaret orgies, semi-nude dancers, bathing pools for vulgar "new rich" revels, and bedroom and dressing room scenes', were introduced 'to pander to morbid and unhealthy tastes'. In the same report he remarked that there was 'a growing tendency to exhibit the erotic intimacies of lovers', which 'spoiled and distorted both morally and artistically' otherwise fine films. Ironically, what Montgomery found most disturbing in these scenes—a lack of reticence—was central to the voyeuristic nature of Hollywood cinema:

Such episodes give the onlooker the uncomfortable feeling of an intruder. One would not willingly witness these intimacies in real life, and even on the stage there is an amount of reticence in dealing with them, but it seems to be

reserved for the 'Peeping Tom' mentality that has evidently intruded into certain cinema studios [15].

Montgomery liberally sprinkled his reports with a familiar litany of vague, impressionistic, and moralistic complaints: Films were morbid, unhealthy, unsavoury, pornographic, vulgar, filthy, lustful, macabre, objectionable, offensive. His conclusion was that all of this 'debauchery' gave 'moral nausea' to any 'normal person'. Montgomery's 'normal person', though, was of a particular social class. He put it this way in an unfavourable contrast between theatre and cinema audiences in the draft of his report to the Minister for 1931:

I am not trying to say that the morality of the stage is superior to the 'talkies,' but it must be remembered that the stage attracts a sophisticated adult audience and that the following of the development of a play calls for the exercise of thought. We have thus the anomaly of a sophisticated and limited audience for comparatively reticent productions, and a most highly sophisticated entertainment offered indiscriminately by the Cinema to the unsophisticated masses [16].

That Montgomery did not acknowledge that much of the popular theatre shared the same classical linear narrative as cinema is a further indication of his class position. After banning *The River Pirate* (William K. Howard, Fox Film Corp.; USA, 1928), a decision upheld by the Appeal Board, Montgomery wrote:

Just think of its effect on young people; sympathy is excited for a robber and a murderer, and the officers of the law are shown in an unsympathetic light. There is an escape from prison, condoned by a warder, shown with instructive detail. I have constantly in my mind when dealing with underworld films, the memory of the crowd of children from the neighbouring slums attending the Picture House in Pearse St [17].

Montgomery was, of course, applying these elitist norms to the cinema in a paternalistic manner not dissimilar to previous campaigners against popular publications and the music hall. The poorer classes needed to be protected from such baneful influences in case they acted upon what they saw on screen. Taking a strict moral and civil law approach, he ruled that cinema needed to be cleansed of embarrassing and 'illegal' subject matter. Notwithstanding his strictures against cinema's sympathy for the criminal or transgressor prior to narrative resolution, it should be noted, though, that his operational Code could not always be extended to the Fifth Commandment, 'Thou Shalt Not Kill'. If it did, how could American cinematic genres such as the gangster film or the thriller achieve any kind of narrative resolution in Ireland?

Montgomery took the view that 'since the remarriage of divorced people is illegal' in the Irish Free State (and was constitutionally prohibited in 1937, a decision only overturned in 1995), cinematic *fictional representations* of divorce or extra-marital affairs were to be prohibited. Such was the fate of *My Husband's Wives* (Maurice Elvey, Fox Film Corp.; USA, 1924) which Montgomery deemed to be 'subversive of public morality', the all-embracing phrase from the Act regularly invoked when the three explicit statutory criteria, indecency, obscenity, and blasphemy, proved inadequate to the task. Commenting more subjectively on the content of the film, he added that 'in this picture the monkey house morality [a favourite phrase of his] begotten of such a social condition is apparent' [18]. *True as Steel* (Rupert Hughes, Goldwyn Pictures; USA, 1924) was banned for somewhat similar reasons. On a trip to New York, married

businessman Frank Parry (Huntley Gordon) becomes infatuated with Mrs Eva Boutelle (Aileen Pringle), manageress of a cotton mill. Though their affair develops, Eva refuses to divorce her husband despite the fact that Frank is willing to divorce his wife so that they can marry. When Frank returns home, his wife (Cleo Madison) forgives him. For Montgomery, this film reeking with 'sex, conjugal infidelity and of course—divorce' had 'all the defects of the class of picture which made ... censorship a necessity' [19]. After ordering cuts to *Secrets* (Frank Borzage, Joseph M. Schenck; USA, 1923), which includes a scene of marital infidelity, he wrote: 'The moral is apparently—satisfy your passions with other women and you will be justified if you love your wife and she loves you' [20]. Montgomery was not fooled by the Hollywood formula of the wife forgiving her wayward husband in the last scene or having a transgressive relationship regularized. As he remarked when ordering cuts to *Beggar's Holiday* (Sam Newfield, Tower Productions; USA, 1934), which features a criminal who eventually goes straight for the love of a woman: 'There is the usual sop to censorship in the last reel' [21]. While the status quo is re-established by Hollywood cinema as part of narrative resolution, Montgomery sought to deny audiences the pleasure of identifying with 'illicit' activities before such narrative closures were effected. One seemingly rare exception to Montgomery's rule on divorce was the musical biography of showman Florenz Ziegfeld, played by William Powell in *The Great Ziegfeld* (Robert Z. Leonard, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corp.; USA, 1936), which was passed with cuts of 'semi-nude wriggles' and 'allusions to sex appeal'. Montgomery justified his decision to allow the representation of Ziegfeld's divorce from Anna Held (Louise Rainer) and subsequent marriage to Billie Burke (Myrna Loy) by recourse to historical fact: 'The divorce and remarriage, being *actual history*, justify my passing them [emphasis added].' He recorded that he 'couldn't ban, for instance, Napoleon's royal divorce for the same reason' [22].

Representations of 'embarrassing' matters pertaining to personal morality or procreation were forbidden on the cinema screen as they were repressed in Irish society more broadly. Cinematic exploration of such topics was judged and conditioned by Montgomery's regard to the Victorian notion of *reticence*. When he ordered cuts to *Gentlemen are Born* (Alfred E. Green, Warner Bros.; USA, 1934), he wrote that 'celebration of conception is not usual in Ireland' [23]. This theme was returned to when he extensively cut Michael Curtiz's *Four Wives* (Warner Bros.; USA, 1939) which he observed 'bulges with babies and is better fitted for the Rotunda [Maternity Hospital] than for this office'. Though he stated that 'it will dispel the cabbage myth from the child mind', by arguing that it will 'bring a blush to the cheek of the unmarried young girl sitting and holding hands with her embarrassed boyfriend in the darkest part of the cinema' [24], in effect, he acknowledged the sexual dynamics between the young courting couple who went to the cinema other than to merely watch the film. Shortly afterwards this prohibition was to extend to the prolonged and possibly most controversial decision of his tenure, the severe cutting of *Gone with the Wind* (Victor Fleming, Selznick International Pictures; USA, 1939). Amongst the cuts demanded, and acceded to, was the scene in which Melanie (Olivia de Havilland) gives birth to a baby in Atlanta assisted by Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh) [25]. Whatever his difficulties with representations of pregnant married women and of childbirth such as Melanie's, when he was faced with those of unmarried mothers his treatment was more harsh. *Reveille*, for example, a film he banned in 1924, featured 'an unmarried mother who expresses more pride than regret for her lapse' [26].

According to such Victorian moralism it followed that all references to birth control or abortion were cut, or films with such themes banned. Cecil B. DeMille's jungle

adventure *Four Frightened People* (Paramount Productions; USA, 1934) was passed only after the ‘birth control stuff’ was removed. Indeed, Montgomery noted that he ‘could easily reject this [film] for the “comic” relief of the sexy lady urging birth control in the jungle’ [27]. Another comic reference to birth control, often the only method by which British or American cinema could raise the topic in the 1930s, was cut from *South Riding* (Victor Saville, London Film Productions; GB, 1937) [28]. Michael Curtiz’s *Alias the Doctor* (First National Productions Corp., Warner Bros.; USA, 1932) was passed only after cuts were made ‘intended to get rid of the fact that Stephan [(Norman Foster)] procured [an] abortion, and to minimise his illicit intimacy’ with his girlfriend, Anna (Adrienne Dore). In keeping with Montgomery’s general instructions following the cutting of a film, the published synopsis also had to be amended in order to suppress any hint of the abortion [29]. *Ann Vickers* (John Cromwell, RKO Radio Pictures; USA, 1933) was cut for similar reasons, and in order to detach the film from its literary origins, the notorious novel of the same name which was banned by the Censorship of Publications Board, he ordered the title changed to *Ann’s Romance* [30].

Needless to say, homosexuality was also considered a taboo subject. Alert to the double meaning of the term, he ordered the ‘homosexual joke’, ‘the boys with love below the Dixie Line’, to be cut from the Al Jolson vehicle *The Singing Kid* (William Keighley, Warner Bros.; USA, 1936) [31]. Prostitutes, with or without a ‘heart of gold’, or even when showing remorse for their ‘sinful ways’, were invariably cut. Another sensitive subject, and one which violated both civil and religious law, was suicide. However, Montgomery seemed to be primarily concerned with the possibility of copycat suicide attempts. When demanding cuts to *Little Friend* (Berthold Viertel, Gaumont-British Picture Corp.; GB, 1934) he noted that ‘suicide by gas is becoming quite common owing to its ease, and I have been repeatedly recommended by the late Coroner and by the police to delete it from all films’. He went on: ‘Its appeal to a morbid and precocious child in this instance is dangerous’ [32].

Just as the films which directly or indirectly questioned the nuclear family or those which were contrary to Catholic Church dogma were curtailed, so too were all—fictional and actual—representations of the Catholic Church itself. Criticism was prohibited of the Catholic Church as an institution, ‘irreverent’ films based on the Old or New Testaments were not allowed, and representations of Church sacraments were forbidden, the latter decision having been taken on the dictat of the Archbishop of Dublin [33]. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s Montgomery ordered cut scenes in which Church sacraments were represented, including the Catholic mass in Erich von Stroheim’s *The Wedding March* (Paramount Famous Lasky Corp.; USA, 1928) [34]. Even the Shirley Temple film *The Little Colonel* (David Butler, Fox Film Corp.; USA, 1935) was not immune: ‘A joke about a sacrament will not be tolerated in this country ... there must be no allusion to baptism’ [35]. His treatment of the gangster film *Angels with Dirty Faces* (Michael Curtiz, Warner Bros.; USA, 1938) shows how sensitive Montgomery was to representations of the Catholic Church.

Angels ... was passed by Montgomery only after Fr. Connolly’s (Pat O’Brien) ‘lie’ was cut from the film. At the end of the film, gangster ‘Rocky’ Sullivan (James Cagney) goes along with Fr. Connolly’s plan designed to demystify himself to his young delinquent followers, and replaces his bravado with a display of mock cowardice as he is being led to the electric chair. Afterwards, Fr. Connolly visits the ‘Dead End Kids’ and ‘lies’ to them when he says that Rocky died ‘yellow’: ‘It’s true boys, every word of it. He died like they said.’ Montgomery wrote that ‘“no motive however good can excuse a lie.” So, the priest’s lie must come out’ [36]. With such moral certainties

applied to the *fictional representation* of a priest's cinematic lie (made in the interests of 'good'), there was little chance of any criticism of the Catholic Church as an institution or of its belief systems being allowed on Irish cinema screens. Indeed *The Garden of Allah* (USA, 1927), directed and produced by Irish-born Rex Ingram, was banned by Montgomery because it features a priest who has broken his religious vows. As such, it was not, declared Montgomery, 'a desirable subject for exhibition in Ireland' [37]. a comment which reveals his casual disregard for the Censorship Act's criteria.

Montgomery's refusal to 'expose' the Church was mirrored in his reticence towards the public display of the female body. In this respect he regularly objected to representations of what he called 'semi-nude' women, which included any exposed area of the female anatomy below the neck. He was sensitive to the erotic and sensuous resonances of representations of women in various states of undress, particularly when situated within the social world of nightclubs and cabarets, and where inhibitions might be relaxed by alcohol. As a result, perhaps with the nude of classical art in mind, or realizing that minimal clothing heightens the site of fantasy and desire, he wrote that 'absolute nudity might be less offensive than this semi-nudity which in my opinion is pornographic' [38]. Therefore, chorus lines, or scenes set in the dressing rooms of the performers, were a constant source of complaint. Indeed, on issuing his list of cuts of garters, dancing and a drunken woman in *After Midnight* (Monta Bell, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures; USA, 1927), he bemoaned that 'It is almost impossible to "clean" scenes of night life and the underworld' [39]. Unsurprisingly, *Gold Diggers of 1933* (Mervyn LeRoy, Warner Bros.; USA, 1933) was closely scrutinized, with about 7 minutes cut from it [40] while the Mae West/Cary Grant film *I'm No Angel* (Wesley Ruggles, Paramount Productions; USA, 1933) was banned. Dancing, which in Montgomery's parlance was oddly called 'ballet', and was usually linked to 'semi-nudity', whether in a chorus line or a biblical epic, was allowed only if the characters were suitably dressed. Biblical films were also scrutinized to see if they were modern stories in ancient guise. After banning *The Queen of Sheba* (J. Gordon Edwards, Fox Film Corp.; USA, 1921) in 1926 he wrote that

This Biblical Ballet is evidently designed to display the figure of the Queen of Sheba [(Betty Blythe)], which it does to the greatest possible extent. There are few scenes in which she is not semi-nude. Is it desirable to allow this Hollywood 'triangle' [Sheba, Solomon and his wife, Amrath] to be shown as a picture of the story told in the Old Testament [41]?

Montgomery expressed outrage in the early sound era when a number of films appeared with more 'suggestive' dancing as their focus. After the Production Code Administration had imposed its will on the American film industry by the mid-1930s, he turned his ire on the British film industry. In his report on Alfred Goulding's *Everything is Rhythm* (Joe Rock; GB, 1936), he reiterated

Of one thing I am certain, and that is that I never will pass the indecent 'costume' of brassiere and trunks, the hula, and the rumba. This was my attitude when America spewed this dirt. Now that America has dropped it, and England is emphasising it, my attitude is unchanged [42].

The prohibition against 'semi-nude' women extended to actual beauty contests in the 1930s. *Pathé Pictorial* was told to delete shots of girls 'indecently "clad" in brassieres and trunks', even though Montgomery was well aware that such costumes were part of the shows in Dublin theatres and cine-variety houses such as the Royal. 'People may say

you can see it on the stage of the Royal, maybe they're right, but I certainly will not accept the Royal as a criterion of decency' [43]. When he was confronted with a film of an Irish beauty contest, Montgomery felt obliged to be more expansive and displayed an already anachronistic and nostalgic notion of Irish women. Such beauty contests he believed were 'pandering to exhibitionism' and were 'absolutely at variance with our women's reputation for the *old-fashioned* virtue of modesty [emphasis added]'. He acknowledged that bathing costumes could be seen at swimming baths, but the difference with the cinema was that they were life size, 'and not magnified as [they] are on the larger screen of a Picture House' [44]. Consequently, Montgomery was concerned that the technical limitations of his viewing apparatus might not reveal something which would appear on 'a larger screen and with stronger light' than he had at his disposal. In his report on *Paramount on Parade* (Dorothy Arzner *et al.*, Paramount Famous Lasky Corp.; USA, 1930) he told the renter that he was having 'mirror arcs' installed to establish whether there were any 'glimpses of semi-nudity' in the film which he was unable to detect under normal viewing conditions [45]. At times such as this Montgomery gives the impression of being like a scientist lacking a sufficiently powerful microscope with which to view films. He regularly complained about the size of the screen onto which the films he viewed were projected. On a deeper symbolic level, as already noted, he also worried about the potential for the magnified image to assume a greater power and seductiveness than reality by acknowledging the visceral nature of the cinematic image, regardless of the narrative. This point was not missed either by Magennis. While he declared that the younger generation needed to be protected from the 'veiled presentation of vice' he went on to make a most telling point which is central to understanding the nature of and the ultimate futility of film censorship. He complained that 'vice' films have a 'seductiveness of artistic treatment' which 'constitutes the danger' [46]. Like Montgomery, he realized that while censors could suppress that which infringed Catholic morality, they could not eliminate the impact of the image itself. Indeed, following the passing of the 1923 Act, *The Irish Times* observed that 'some speakers in the Dail ... seemed to think that indecency would be the Censor's chief problem'. On the contrary, the writer suggested, 'it will be his simplest problem', because the 'longdrawn out ineptness, vulgarity and triviality' of many films created 'a cumulative effect that was positively poisonous'. The *Times* concluded that it would judge the censor by his handling of such films [47]. Notwithstanding the snobbish disdain for popular culture displayed by *The Irish Times*, it was indeed right. The general tone of films which might produce an adverse cumulative effect on cinemagoers became a constant refrain amongst campaigners who called for more stringent film censorship, and the topic regularly surfaced in the Film Censors' reports. Or, put another way, the concerns of the *Times* were not so far removed from those of Magennis. The importance of the image over narrative is reinforced if we examine what is perhaps the key myth of Irish film exhibition: that the Irish are the greatest cinemagoers in the world.

While there is evidence to suggest that Irish cinema-going in the 1990s was at a higher per capita rate than the European Union's average, such was not the case in the 1930s. The first comprehensive statistical analysis of Irish cinema-going was carried out in 1934/35 [48]. It demonstrated that while Dublin accounted for about 60% of Irish cinemas' box office income, the per capita Irish rate of cinema-going at six visits per annum was just over one-quarter Britain's rate of 22 visits per annum. Even Dublin's rate of 23 visits per annum compared unfavourably, for example, with Liverpool's 35 or Vancouver's 31. The author of the report, Thekla Beere, commented on the most

public manifestation of Irish cinema-going, the famous Dublin cinema queue, and observed, in part vindicating Montgomery's snobbery, that these queues were most likely to be for the cheapest priced seats, as the most expensive ones were outside the financial reach of working-class cinemagoers. Nevertheless, as I have suggested elsewhere [49], the importance attached to cinema-going as *the event of the week* indicates that despite the severity of film censorship, the experience of going to the cinema was central to the lives of a great many people, children and young (and courting) adults especially, in urban areas. As it is clear that the cinema's audience included large numbers of under-educated working-class people, and given the censor's strictures on imitative behaviour, it must be assumed that underlying the censor's concerns was his fear that the cinema was more important than literature for these people, and that their desire for the instantaneous flow of images, or, at best, their craving for narrative was 'unchecked' by a rational distance or an intellectual discipline.

One of the difficulties in attempting to draw some general conclusions about cinema-going is the nostalgic manner in which childhood and young adulthood is remembered by most people. Nevertheless, the cinema was a place apart, both symbolically and actually, and provided a space against which the static nature of the local experience of everyday life could be read. No greater contrast to Irish society from the 1920s to the 1950s was found than what existed on the cinema screen. Here was a world of excitement and glamour, as well as a celebration and display of consumer delights which were, for the most part, unimaginable in Ireland for large numbers of people until decades later. In short, the cinema had a vibrancy which was absent, for example, in schools where authoritarian discipline and strict teaching methods predominated. Indeed, it can be argued that American cinema helped to liberate young Irish people from the shiffling strictures of the local, and imposed, official Gaelic culture, with schools serving as the front line for the policy through the compulsory learning of the (much hated) Irish language. Also, there could not have been a greater difference between the cold, poorly lit, wooden-floored living accommodation of working-class people and the centrally heated and plush interiors of many cinemas. The cinematic experience was sensuous in a society dominated by celibate clerics and their lay counterparts such as Montgomery. The cinema itself was relatively unsupervised and warm, and in this respect at least, first-run Irish cinemas were similar to those elsewhere. As quoted above, even Montgomery recognized that part of the pleasure of cinema-going for teenagers and young adults was 'sitting and holding hands ... in the darkest part of the cinema' [50].

In the control of the cinema in Ireland, as in other areas, there was an 'imperial strategy of infantilizing the native culture' [51]. In its imperialist formulation, this policy sought to reduce, in the interests of conquest, the colonized people to an infantile state in the minds of the colonizer. Inevitably, national liberation movements seek to resist this colonizing identity. However, what is most depressing in post-independence Ireland is that the victors in the War of Independence applied this ideology to its own people. Restrictions on books, dances, music and the cinema were only the more formal processes of surveillance and protectionism which permeated the society. In cinema, the infantilizing was literally applied to the cinemagoer. Montgomery and his successors, supported by politicians and senior civil servants, during the first 40 years of film censorship certified almost all films for general audiences. That is to say, almost all films were certified or banned on the basis that even the youngest children could see them, despite the provision in the 1923 Act to issue limited certificates. Montgomery took the view that to certify a film 'fit for exhibition to Adults only would excite morbid

and unhealthy curiosity, and tend to tempt the excluded categories to evade the law'. He stated that it had not been 'judicious' to issue limited certificates 'and an effort is made to pass only such films as are considered fit for family entertainment' [52]. This Hollywood ideal, though, was to be shaken in the postwar years.

Unsurprisingly, the Irish policy threw up contradictions and anomalies. In passing *Odette* (1927) with cuts, Montgomery suggested, as he often did, that the narrative itself could be changed, even improved by his action:

It is obvious that a film which in England can be shown to adults only requires some attention in Ireland where children and young persons are admitted to all cinema theatres without restriction. It is not very clearly shown, but it certainly may be inferred that *Odette* is living in adultery with the gambler. *I don't want to emasculate the story*, but I fancy if it were suggested that she is merely a decoy and not the mistress of the gambler that the story would be just as effective. It is hardly conceivable that she could love such a brute [emphasis added] [53].

Sound cinema brought new challenges for the censors as they desperately sought to disguise their actions and maintain narrative continuity. In the silent period the cutting of an inter-title, for example, was relatively easy to achieve without the viewer necessarily realizing what had occurred. By the early sound era, as Montgomery's 1930 report illustrates, the difficulties of censorship had 'increased considerably'. In the past he had been able to delete 'objectionable scenes and subtitles, or to amend subtitles ... without spoiling continuity'. It was 'comparatively easy to preserve the main theme; as the objectionable parts were very often over statements, ... or spicy additions, which had little or no bearing on the story'. This approach was now no longer possible to the same degree: 'Dialogue and incident are now so interwoven that a film which might be salvaged by deletions under the old conditions, must be rejected.' Perhaps to disguise the extent of his bannings in 1930 and 1931, Montgomery continued in his characteristic paternalistic style: 'Total rejection in many cases is fairer to the Cinema public, than the passing of a mutilated story, besides, cuts are so obvious that they defeat the object of censorship, by exciting morbid curiosity regarding the parts eliminated.' He added that it was possible to cut out 'entire scenes of "semi-nudity," or detached songs or dances of a suggestive nature'. He pointed to the further difficulty with Sound on Disc films where it was not possible to erase the sound from the disc [54]. Ironically, his attempt to censor the excesses of Hollywood through re-editing meant that he opened up, albeit negatively, a space for fantasy. Moreover, it is a film's editing strategies rather than its screen image which can produce or signal the primal scene, or suggest that which is transgressive. Audiences attuned to this could, at the level of the imaginary, compensate, at least in part, for the censor's action.

Within a few years, though, Hollywood itself provided part of the answer with the strict regime imposed under the 'Clean Screen' campaign. During his last 5 years as Film Censor, Montgomery could report positively to the Minister on the 'continuance of the "Clean Screen" Crusade' in the USA [55]. In 1939, his last full year as Film Censor, he stated that the 'influence of the "Clean Screen" movement still prevails'. There were only 13 appeals on moral grounds compared with 23 in 1938 [56]. By the end of his term in office, therefore, Montgomery was satisfied on a number of fronts: he had comprehensively imposed his will on Irish film exhibition, gaining both the full support of the Appeal Board and the confidence of Ministers for Justice and civil servants. Indeed, he regarded his last decade in office as a 'sinecure' after seven years

of 'chaos' [57]. He had also evolved the office into one of social prestige, which is reflected in the booklet printed to commemorate his retirement at the age of 70. President Douglas Hyde led the tribute of people from all walks of life, including those with whom he had been in closest combat. Amongst those contributing to his retirement fund were exhibitors and distributors, including British Lion, MGM, Paramount, Pathé, RKO Radio, Twentieth Century-Fox, and United Artists [58]. It was hardly affection which led to this display of largesse, but, more like good politics. However, not all the censors felt they had achieved their goals.

Writing in 1944 of his experience of Irish film censorship and cinema generally, William Magennis declared that cinema, 'in its portentous range of influence', had become 'a sinister rival of the Universal [Roman Catholic] Church', with an 'ideology [which] is a degraded paganism' [59]. His rhetorical flourishes display not so much the success of Irish film censorship in stemming the secularist and materialist tide of Anglo-American social and cultural influences through the cinema but despair at the impossibility of achieving the Catholic and nationalist ideological purity which he, Montgomery and other censors were seeking to realize. Despite the suppression of films dealing sympathetically with non-traditional sexuality or urban *mores*, for most cinema-goers the pleasure of going to the cinema and enjoying even truncated films continued to override the strictures about the cinema's alleged pernicious influence which emanated from lay and religious anti-cinema agitators. Montgomery, unlike Magennis' more crude Catholic nationalism, sought to appeal to a high art constituency, but his conclusions were no less pessimistic and anti-democratic as regards the cinema's audience, which echo the Frankfurt School's complaints about the baneful effects of mass culture:

Most arts appeal to the mature; the art of the Cinema appeals to every class—mature, immature, developed, undeveloped, law-abiding, criminal. Music has its grades for different classes; so have literature and [...] drama. The art of the cinema—combining, as it does, the two fundamental appeals of looking at a picture and listening to a story—at once reaches every class of society. By reason of the mobility of a film, the ease of picture distribution, and the possibility of duplicating pictures in large quantities, this art reaches places unpenetrated by other forms of art. Because of these two facts, it is difficult to produce films for a certain class of people. The cinema theatres are built for the masses—the cultured and the rude, the young and the mature. Films, unlike books and music, can with difficulty be confined to certain selected groups [60].

If Montgomery and Magennis could write at the end of their long censorship careers in such tones, there was little chance that the tide of challenging films in the postwar period could be held back indefinitely. Nevertheless, Montgomery's successor as Official Film Censor, Richard Hayes, who held the post until 1954, continued the policies of his predecessor. While the 'Clean Cinema' movement was to be swept aside in the USA and Europe in the 1950s, it was to be more than another two decades before some of the adult films were released without mutilation in Ireland. Hayes slotted seamlessly into Montgomery's position, but as themes such as adultery and sexual promiscuity more frequently became the subject-matter of both European and American cinemas, the distance grew between what Irish audiences could see and what was available to their British and American counterparts.

In an interview with *The Bell*, a liberal literary journal, Hayes said in comments which

could easily be attributed to Montgomery, that he did not maintain that 'crime and sordid themes should be banned in the Cinema no more than they should be in the theatre'. But, he declared, 'evil must not be presented in the guise of good, and when presented must not tend to be debasing or subversive'. Explicitly registering Montgomery and Magennis' concerns about the image, he explained that it was the visuals rather than dialogue which were most frequently cut. Top of his agenda in this regard were 'lascivious dances' of which he remarked there was an 'appalling spate' in most of the big American musicals [61]. Bearing in mind Irish people's attitude to divorce, he also said that 'one has got to be very careful not to allow any light or frivolous treatment of marriage to appear on the screen'. He told the interviewer that he had been criticized 'in several quarters' for permitting films dealing with divorce even though these had treated it seriously. He also pointed out that since these films illustrated a life so far removed from that in Ireland they were 'on an almost entirely different plane'. Such apparent liberalism was, of course, tempered by Hayes' manicheanism and provincialism.

I say it emphatically, each film in which divorce is a feature ought to be judged by one standard alone: Is it an incentive to Divorce or does it condone it—ennoble it in any way? If it does either of these things, then it is not a film for the Irish public [62].

Hayes reported that shortly before he had ordered the distributor to change the title of the social comedy *I Want a Divorce* (Ralph Murphy, Paramount Pictures; USA, 1940) to *The Tragedy of Divorce* [63]. He also changed Lloyd Bacon's *Honeymoon for Three* (Warner Bros.; USA, 1941) to *Easy to Love* [64], and *Married Bachelor* to *A Bachelor Looks at Marriage* [65]. As in Montgomery's era, Hayes usually reserved the greatest opprobrium for representations of extra-marital affairs, irrespective as to whether there was a divorce or not. As regards representations of illegitimacy, like divorce, it was 'a matter of presentation and approach', cutting or banning it if it was 'frivolous' [66].

Hayes' cuts were a similar repertoire to that of Montgomery's, with all forms of 'lascivious' dancing cut. The Conga song and dance were cut from Busby Berkeley's *Strike up the Band* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corp.; USA, 1940) [67]; the Can-Can, the Rhumba, the boogie-woogie, and the jitterbug were also cut from films. 'Semi-nude girls' continued to be cut, including those in the popular *Road* movies series, at least four of which were cut. In a repeat of Montgomery's infringement of the 1923 Act, Hayes demanded that 'stage-Irish' elements be deleted. Two subjects definitely banned were abortion and birth control. Hayes, a medical doctor, also continued his predecessor's policy of suppressing anything to do with pregnancy, childbirth or sexual assault. Ida Lupino's 'unsavoury' *film noir*, *Outrage* (Filmmakers; USA, 1950), was banned because it dealt with 'a criminal assault on a girl and its psychological effects on her', Hayes' euphemistic reference to rape and the trauma associated with it. He added prescriptively that it was 'not a subject for a film' [68]. The ban was upheld after appeal [69]. Religious topics were treated with the same deference as previously. He banned, for example, the Powell/Pressburger film *Black Narcissus* (GFD/The Archers; GB, 1946), though the Appeal Board later passed it. Needless to say, Hayes and his successors had considerable difficulties with the adaptations of the plays of Tennessee Williams. At least eight of the adaptations of Williams' plays were banned by Irish censors during the 1950s and 1960s. Nevertheless, Elia Kazan's version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Charles K. Feldman/Elia Kazan; USA, 1951) and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

(Richard Brooks, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; USA, 1958) were both released in Ireland, albeit in severely truncated versions.

The genres which caused distributors and censors alike the most difficulty in the 1940s and 1950s were *film noir* and the hard-boiled/crime films, with their often powerful themes of transgressive behaviour, their erotically charged *femmes fatales*, and their brutal physical assaults on both men and women. In a comment after his banning of *The Big Sleep* (Howard Hawks, Warner Bros; USA, 1946), and which was repeated about other such films, Hayes wrote that 'the entire atmosphere' of this 'thoroughly immoral film' was 'sordid'. There were many 'suggestive situations, and not a little double-meaning dialogue' [70]. These sentiments were echoed in his report to the Appeal Board on Michael Curtiz's *Mildred Pierce* (Warner Bros.; USA, 1945):

This is a sordid, unsavoury picture. The sanctity of marriage is treated as a joke and moral considerations of any kind are ignored. Seductive situations, dubious dialogue, murder and an accommodating husband are minor features of this film [71].

Hayes' (deliberate?) misreading of *Mildred Pierce* (the husband is far from 'accommodating' of his wife's behaviour) is further evidence of the combination of the idealization of women and of misogyny which permeate the censors' reports. Curtiz's *Casablanca* (Warner Bros.; USA, 1942) had been banned under the Emergency Powers Order when it was first submitted as it was deemed to infringe Irish neutrality during the war. When re-submitted to the censor in June 1945 after the EPO was lifted, Hayes passed it with cuts [72] designed to ensure that the relationship between Rick (Humphrey Bogart) and Ilse (Ingrid Bergman) while they were in Paris together did not constitute a love affair. The censor seems to have approached the film as Ilse being a married woman, even though when she was in Paris with Rick she believed she was a widow. Thus, part of the key scene set in Rick's office in *Casablanca* when she comes to see him to beg him for the letters of transit that would allow herself and her husband, Victor Laslo, to escape from the city was cut. After Rick refuses to hand over the letters even when she pulls a gun on him, and he tells her she'd be doing him a favour if she shot him, Ilse breaks down. In the section of the scene cut by the censor she embraces him and says: 'The day you left Paris. If you knew what I went through. If you knew how much I loved you, how much I still love you.' They kiss. The second major cut effected by Hayes was in the film's denouement at the airport. It appears until then that Rick will use the two letters of transit to go away with Ilse, but he surprises Laslo and the French Chief of Police, Louis, by forcing the policeman to fill out the letters in Ilse's and Laslo's names. Ilse protests, 'No, Richard, no, I, I', as she is torn by her conflicting emotions. Hayes demanded a cut from this moment right through Rick's less-than-convincing explanation as to why he is sending them away, that she could end up in a concentration camp, and her painful response to him. With these scenes cut, Hayes succeeded in suppressing the most important narrative element of the film.

Though Billy Wilder's *Sunset Boulevard* (Paramount; USA, 1950) was also banned by Hayes, in this instance, and perhaps reflecting Irish society's slow awakening from its protectionist slumber, the Appeal Board disagreed and recommended the issuing of a certificate subject to one cut of the affair between ex-film-star Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson) and young screen writer Joe Gillis (William Holden) [73]. The Board also took a similarly lenient view of Charles Vidor's *Gilda* (Columbia; USA, 1946) after Hayes had submitted a damning report on the film. This is 'a sinister unpleasant film', he wrote, and noted that the cuts he wished to make would be so 'drastic' that it 'would

leave the picture meaningless' [74]. The Board approved the issuing of a certificate for the film subject to the cutting of Rita Hayworth singing two songs, including her sexy, exhibitionist rendition of 'Put the Blame on Mame'. The superficial reading of the scene by the censors failed to appreciate the ironic nature of the song and its performance, with the visual and the aural textures undercutting its voyeurism. Another key *noir* film, Fritz Lang's *Scarlet Street* (Universal; USA, 1945), was banned by both Hayes and the Appeal Board in 1945 and, like many other films of this era, it was not re-submitted until the 1960s, when it was passed with cuts [75].

One of the most daring and popular *noir* films was Tay Garnett's adaptation of James A. Cain's controversial novel *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; USA, 1946). After banning the film, a decision upheld by the Appeal Board, Hayes wrote that it presents 'the usual triangle—but in this case without a relieving feature'. Finding it 'a base, sordid picture into which moral considerations of any kind do not even faintly enter', he refused a certificate even for adult audiences [76]. When it was re-submitted for a certificate in 1962, Censor Liam O'Hora realized the still-powerful impact of the relationship between Cora (Lana Turner) and Frank (John Garfield) and, though he passed it with cuts, he recorded that he had been 'particularly careful' about the film and doubted the validity of passing it at all.

The cuts that O'Hora demanded included the first major scene in which Cora acknowledges her attraction to Frank and, after a feeble 'Please don't', kisses him. The cuts sought to deny the passionate intensity of the relationship between the lovers which leads them to plan the murder of her husband, the elderly and tedious Nick (Cecil Kellaway). Despite the cuts, what remained more than indicated the dynamism between the two. For example, the first shots of Cora, that of her legs, and then her whole body, as she attracts Frank's attention in the diner, are seen from Frank's point of view, and were left intact by the censor. The subsequent close up of her eyes, and, more generally, her flirtatious manner, indicates clearly her own interest in him. This scene alone signals what is to follow. Nevertheless, O'Hora advised the distributor that he 'may have to delete entirely the Cora-Frank episodes' which follow their first kiss, even though these scenes are crucial to the central plot element, the killing of Nick, and in which their motivation, love for each other, is explored [77].

The change from *noir* to the repressed circular narrative that ultimately reinforces the status quo in *Brief Encounter* (David Lean, Cineguild; GB, 1945) could not be greater and might be thought to have been acceptable to Hayes. At least in the end the wife (Celia Johnson) goes back to her husband and her putative lover (Trevor Howard), with whom she has only symbolically consummated the 'affair', leaves for Africa. But the censor was not impressed by this apparent sop to censorship in the last reel, nor it would seem were the Appeal Board who upheld the decision:

This film dealing with the entanglement of a married man and married woman has numerous seductive and indelicate situations. The woman lies to her husband regarding her intrigue. Moral considerations are completely ignored right through the picture and only circumstances part them at the end. At the end, too, the woman hesitates about suicide, and the pair part with regret and without remorse. The intriguing pair as presented tend to arouse a certain sympathy in their amorous relationship [78].

The film was re-submitted for a certificate in January 1962 and was passed without cuts [79]. O'Hora, at least, understood the difference between the sterile and repressed middle-class English sexuality between Johnson and Howard, on the one hand, and the

erotic charge between Americans Turner and Garfield, on the other, which he tried to tone down before passing it. The difference between these two films, perhaps, may help explain why in Ireland, as elsewhere, American cinema is more popular than its British counterpart.

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NOTES

- [1] James Montgomery, The menace of Hollywood, *Studies*, 31 (December 1942), p. 420.
- [2] Ibid.
- [3] The history of indigenous Irish film production and of representations of the Irish in British and American cinemas may be found in Kevin Rockett, Luke Gibbons, John Hill, *Cinema and Ireland* (London, 1987; 1988).
- [4] *Irish Catholic*, 17 February 1917, p. 6.
- [5] Film Censor Martin Brennan's report to the Censorship of Films Appeal Board. The Board upheld the ban on 27 April 1954.
- [6] *The Irish Times*, 5 February 1956, p. 6.
- [7] Warner Bros. Dublin office to Miss Gleeson, Film Censor's office, letter dated 18 July 1956. While distributors were acutely aware of what would pass the Irish censors, the decision by them to cut films prior to submission was also fuelled by financial considerations. Under the 1923 Act, the office of Film Censor is self-financing. Since its inception, censorship costs have been paid for by charging a set amount per foot of film viewed, irrespective of whether a film is banned, cut, or passed uncut. At present, it costs between £700 and £1000, depending on the length, for a feature film to be censored.
- [8] Cited, Thomas P. Gallagher, in Fr. S.J. Richard Devane, ed., *Irish Cinema Handbook* (Dublin, 1943), p. 93.
- [9] *Dail Debates*, 3, 10 May 1923, col. 762.
- [10] Ibid.
- [11] Michael Adams, *Censorship: the Irish experience* (Alabama, 1968), p. 243. This book is the most comprehensive account of the censorship of publications in Ireland.
- [12] Official Film Censor's Annual Reports, 1924–1940. There are some contradictions and overlaps in the reports, but this slightly cautious figure is net of Montgomery's decisions being reversed by the Appeal Board.
- [13] James C. Robertson, *The British Board of Films Censors: film censorship in Britain, 1896–1950* (London, 1985), pp. 186–188. In fact, 186 films were banned during this period, but eight of these were approved with cuts within a year of being banned. Of the 186 films banned, 95 were banned during the years 1931–1934 inclusive. The Irish censors banned 585 films during the same 4 years.
- [14] Report of Official Film Censor to the Minister for Justice for the period 1 November 1923–31 October 1924, dated 13 November 1925, p. 2.
- [15] Report of Official Film Censor to the Minister for Justice for the Year 1927, dated 18 January 1928, p. 2.
- [16] Hand-written draft of Report of Official Film Censor to the Minister for Justice for the Year 1931, dated 11 January 1932. The typed report is dated 14 January 1932, but does not include this section.
- [17] Censor's decision, 1 November 1928.
- [18] Censor's decision, 10 February 1925.
- [19] Censor's decision, 12 December 1924.

- [20] Censor's decision, 1 September 1924.
- [21] Censor's decision, 31 October 1934.
- [22] Censor's decision, 7 November 1936.
- [23] Censor's decision, 14 February 1935.
- [24] Censor's decision, 21 May 1940.
- [25] Censor's decision, 28 May 1940.
- [26] Censor's decision, 4 November 1924.
- [27] Censor's decision, 28 May 1934.
- [28] Censor's decision, 16 June 1938.
- [29] Censor's decision, 6 June 1932.
- [30] Censor's decision, 26 April 1934.
- [31] Censor's decision, 6 July 1936.
- [32] Censor's decision, 8 August 1934.
- [33] The comment was made in the course of the censor's report (6 November 1937) on a documentary by Pathé about the religious order, the Holy Ghost Fathers.
- [34] Censor's decision, 30 October 1929.
- [35] Censor's decision, 24 June 1935.
- [36] Censor's decision, 27 January 1939.
- [37] Censor's decision, 22 May 1928.
- [38] He made this comment in the course of his decision to cut *I Am Suzanne* (Rowland V. Lee, Fox Film Corp.; USA, 1933) on 9 June 1934.
- [39] Censor's decision, 4 January 1928.
- [40] Censor's decision, 4 August 1933.
- [41] Censor's decision, 24 June 1926.
- [42] Censor's decision, 2 July 1936.
- [43] Censor's decision, 22 June 1936.
- [44] Censor's decision, 1 August 1933.
- [45] Censor's decision, 6 October 1930.
- [46] *Dail Debates*, 3, 10 May 1923, col. 755.
- [47] Editorial, A censor of films, *The Irish Times*, 11 May 1923, p. 4.
- [48] T. J. Beere, Cinema statistics in Saorstát Éireann, *Journal of the Statistical and Social Enquiry Society of Ireland*, 89th session, 1935–1936.
- [49] Stars get in your eyes, *Framework*, 25; Aspects of the Los Angelesation of Ireland, *Irish Communications Review*, 1 (1991).
- [50] Censor's decision, 21 May 1940.
- [51] Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: the literature of the modern nation* (London, 1996), p. 103.
- [52] James Montgomery, Film censorship in the Irish Free State, unpublished, 9 December 1936, p. 2.
- [53] Censor's decision, 26 January 1928.
- [54] Report of Official Film Censor to the Minister for Justice for the Year 1930, from Official Film Censor to the Minister for Justice, dated 14 January 1931.
- [55] Report of Official Film Censor to the Minister for Justice for the Year 1937, dated 12 January 1938.
- [56] Report of Official Film Censor to the Minister for Justice for the Year 1939, dated 10 January 1940.
- [57] Quoted, Gallagher, *Irish Cinema Handbook* (Dublin, 1943), pp. 94–95.
- [58] There is a copy of the booklet in the National Library of Ireland.
- [59] Professor William Magennis, The cinema as a social factor, *Studies*, 33, March 1944, p. 5.
- [60] Montgomery, *Menace* (1942), p. 427. Montgomery assumes a stable, linear and a particular class-determined reading of novels and music, which, of course, is a position that can be challenged.
- [61] The Bellman, *The Bell*, 3 (2), November 1941, p. 108.
- [62] *The Bell* (1941), p. 113.
- [63] Censor's decision, 3 July 1941.
- [64] Censor's decision, 1 May 1941.
- [65] Censor's decision, 27 November 1941.
- [66] *The Bell* (1941), p. 113.
- [67] Censor's decision, 17 December 1940.

- [68] Censor's report to Appeal Board. Censor's decision, 28 November 1951.
- [69] The Board upheld the ban on 15 January 1952.
- [70] Censor's report to Appeal Board. The ban was upheld by the Appeal Board on 12 November 1946.
- [71] Censor's report to Appeal Board. The ban was upheld by the Board on 11 June 1946.
- [72] Censor's decision, 15 June 1945.
- [73] Appeal Board decision on 4 July 1950.
- [74] Film Censor's report to Appeal Board, 25 June 1946.
- [75] Censor's decision, 23 January 1962.
- [76] Film Censor's report to Appeal Board. Appeal Board upheld ban on 28 May 1946.
- [77] Censor's decision, 14 February 1962.
- [78] Film Censor's report to Appeal Board, 9 April 1946.
- [79] The certificate was issued on 4 January 1962.

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