

The Green Sheet and Opposition to American Motion Picture Classification in the 1960s

By

Zachary Saltz

University of Kansas, Copyright 2011

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Film and Media Studies and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Chairperson Dr. John Tibbetts

Dr. Michael Baskett

Dr. Chuck Berg

Date Defended: 19 April 2011

The Thesis Committee for Zachary Saltz
certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

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Chairperson Dr. John Tibbetts

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ABSTRACT

The Green Sheet was a bulletin created by the Film Estimate Board of National Organizations, and featured the composite movie ratings of its ten member organizations, largely Protestant and represented by women. Between 1933 and 1969, the Green Sheet was offered as a service to civic, educational, and religious centers informing patrons which motion pictures contained potentially offensive and prurient content for younger viewers and families. When the Motion Picture Association of America began underwriting its costs of publication, the Green Sheet was used as a bartering device by the film industry to root out municipal censorship boards and legislative bills mandating state classification measures.

The Green Sheet underscored tensions between film industry executives such as Eric Johnston and Jack Valenti, movie theater owners, politicians, and patrons demanding more integrity in monitoring changing film content in the rapidly progressive era of the 1960s. Using a system of symbolic advisory ratings, the Green Sheet set an early precedent for the age-based types of ratings the motion picture industry would adopt in its own rating system of 1968. Through the publication of its own reviews, it provides a glimpse into how the member organizations evaluating film content justified their designated ratings and conclusions.

Largely ignored by historians of the Production Code and the ratings reforms of 1968, the Green Sheet is an instrumental part of the corporate history and makeup of the American film industry, particularly in motion picture exhibition. It provided a crucial intersection between Protestant groups, film distributors and exhibitors, and MPAA leaders eager to demonstrate their personal responsibility to ward off threats of classification. Its unclear enforcement and ambiguous advocacy underlies many of the core problems and criticisms that motion picture ratings receive today.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My sincerest thanks goes to my committee members at the University of Kansas Film and Media Studies Department, Dr. John Tibbetts, Dr. Michael Baskett, and Dr. Chuck Berg, for continually challenging me with new ideas and approaches to problems in my research.

Additional thanks goes to Ron Wilson, who helped me develop a prospectus toward the project, and aided me in devising what kinds of research questions I needed to be asking, along with which sources were available. I must also thank Lea Whittington and the staff at the Margaret Herrick Library in Beverly Hills, California, for helping me review and access many issues of the Green Sheet. Dotty Hamilton was also a source of help in providing me some excellent clues in regulation history. Stephen Vaughn not only wrote an immensely helpful book, but also informed me of some of the most helpful and relevant archives for this project. Mike Van Esler was a shoulder of support when I felt like I was the only Masters student whose thesis was draining them of life. Josh Wille and Zach Ingle asked questions that I had never considered before, and I was grateful that they listened to my own questions. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my fiancée Samantha for putting up with too many hours in the library, not enough sleep at night, an unshaven, unshowered face, and unending descriptions of the Green Sheet to confused friends and family. You remind me every day why I do this work.

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INTRODUCTION

In February 2011, in the midst of its Academy Awards campaign and a surprisingly strong showing at the American box office, the Weinstein Company announced its R-rated *The King's Speech* was to be re-edited to excise a single scene of coarse language in order to secure a lower rating of PG-13 that would ensure a broader audience. Having grossed over \$60 million, the move did not seem motivated by an urge by the Weinstein Company to compensate for any losses the prohibitive rating may have accrued for the film. In fact, the original R-rated cut was nothing if not a complete success story, earning nearly five times its modest \$12.3 million production budget. The one scene in question – when a frustrated, stutter-prone King George VI unspools a string of expletives to his speech therapist – was apparently objectionable enough to singlehandedly merit an adult rating from the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). This was not the case in Europe, where the British Board of Film Classification actually lowered its initial rating of 15-and-up to a more inclusive 12A rating. In spite of the discreet objections leveled at the Weinstein Company by its director, Tom Hooper, and its lead actor, Colin Firth, the “family-friendly” version of *The King's Speech* was re-released in over 1,000 American theaters on April 1, 2011 (after the film had grossed an additional \$70 million in a post-Oscar boost). It was accompanied by a new poster, featuring the royal family in a joyous, intimate moment, with the tagline on top: “The film that won Best Picture of the year is now the family event of the year.”

But the move was an unsuccessful one. In its first weekend, the PG-13 *King's Speech* grossed a paltry \$1.2 million, ranking 15th in the box office. The weekend prior, the R-rated

original cut had grossed \$1.6 million and ranked 13th.¹ Meanwhile, critics lampooned the Weinstein Company's maneuvering as shrewd and motivated solely by profit, and urged patrons to avoid the new cut. Online blogger Josh Tyler wrote: "Censoring this movie will not make it better. It will absolutely make it worse . . . Anyone who buys a ticket for the censored version of *The King's Speech* is sending them a loud and clear message, and that message is: I don't care if you make good movies as long as they receive the right rating." The title of Tyler's article was: "Help Save *The King's Speech* By Refusing to See It."²

The debate over *The King's Speech*'s rating reminded audiences that ratings are still a big business for the American film industry. Conventional wisdom dictates that a handful of profanity, an extra splatter of blood, and a few lingering seconds on a body part can mark the difference between success at the box office and failure. While NC-17 rated motion pictures in the 1990s such as *Henry and June* and *Showgirls* reaped minimal profit as a result of their taboo and widely misunderstood rating, the MPAA has made it well-known that it will not endorse adult-only ratings which will, in turn, endorse pornography. At the same time, the MPAA has been accused by critics of conflating its interests by attempting to sell box office tickets while simultaneously claiming to exercise responsible restraint (while observing freedom of speech) in regulating movie content. The current system of ratings is helplessly flawed, some argue, because of arbitrary and conflicting standards of what is considered permissible content for general audiences. Usually, frustrations at the rating system are expressed in questions regarding specific examples of egregious or capricious rating assignments, in the following form: "How can a motion picture like *The Bourne Ultimatum* receive a PG-13 in spite of multiple violent

¹ Amy Kaufman, "PG-13 'King's Speech' Draws Mild Business," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 April 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/apr/04/entertainment/la-et-box-office-sider-20110404> (accessed 5 April 2011).

² Josh Tyler, 27 February 2011. "Help Save The King's Speech By Refusing to See It," Cinema Blend, <http://www.cinemablend.com/new/Help-Save-The-King-s-Speech-By-Refusing-To-See-It-23385.html> (accessed 13 March 2011).

onscreen deaths occurring onscreen, while a film such as *Frost/Nixon* receives an R for two utterances of the ‘F’ word?”

In another sense, MPAA ratings matter less now than at any other time in their 43-year history. A filmmaker unhappy with the cuts he or she was forced to make in order to receive a rating mandated by its studio may release an unedited “Director’s Cut” at a later time for home exhibition without issue. Six of the top ten highest-grossing R-rated films were released after the year 2000, with the top three films (*The Passion of the Christ*, *The Matrix Reloaded*, and *The Hangover*) each released after 2003.³ Each of these three films owed much of their financial success to the very teenagers who were not permitted to see the films in the first place without a parent or guardian. Access to media has changed the landscape in which parents once systematically introduced their children to varying levels of sophisticated violence and sexuality. Now, expansion of readily accessible digital media services has forever changed how youth are exposed (intentionally and unintentionally) to content considered age-inappropriate.

This project is not a criticism of today’s rating system, nor is it a conventional history of how the motion picture industry arrived at its present-day dilemmas and frequent criticisms. It offers instead a glimpse at a historical document ignored by scholars of Hollywood regulation policy which I argue was actually instrumental in shaping the rating system as we know it today. The Green Sheet offers film scholars a glimpse into a rarely-seen arena of regulation – written justification for letter ratings. Because such justification is intentionally obscured by today’s Classification and Rating Administration (CARA) Board, the Green Sheet is one of the few surviving documents (other than correspondences from Production Code Administration and various individuals), providing clear rationale for why certain films were rated in the manner in

³ “All Time Box Office: Domestic Grosses by MPAA Rating (R),” Box Office Mojo, <http://boxofficemojo.com/alltime/domestic/mpaa.htm?page=R&p=.htm> (accessed 3 April 2011).

which they were. It undoubtedly provided one of the earliest advisory ratings codes given to the public, and laid a considerable foundation in future ratings systems adopted by the MPAA and independent rating services. Because the raters were women, this adds an additional component to the research that makes it unique, in an area of study notorious for its dearth of noteworthy female figures. Because its system of letter ratings was so widely used and resembles the 1968 ratings so closely, the Green Sheet must be considered as setting an early model for how a policy toward industry-adopted classification might have worked.

Albert Moran, in his article “Film Policy: Hollywood and Beyond,” defines policy as a “series of practices engaged in by an agency (public or private) to achieve a particular set of outcomes.” Agencies may utilize market strategies in order to manufacture product through competitive methods such as restricting competition and price fixing, but, as Moran notes, few agencies have the degree of legislative force that a state body can confer on its policy measures. Therefore, the role of motion picture agencies has often been dialectically opposed to the roles of political, legislative, and judicial bodies in power negotiations. Although opposed, this does not mean that Hollywood exists only as a private institution outside the apparatus of the state. The film industry has been profoundly affected by the activities of government departments and agencies attempting to regulate sale of product, interface with other industries, and labor negotiations. “Film policy study,” as Moran coins it, is a little-recognized field that seeks a broader, historical context in order to study the detail and operations of motion pictures as a commercial commodity. Usually animated by methodologies of cultural imperialism theory, social pluralism, and even political economy – particularly in studies of national cinemas framed in operative negotiations to the regulation-exhibition policies of the state – film policy study has

been characterized by detailed dialectical studies and passionate advocacy against state-advocated censorship.⁴

Histories of the American film industry's changing regulation policies regarding the control of motion picture content and distribution tend to fall into one of three critical and methodological approaches: Biographies and agency histories, individual case studies, and legalistic narratives. The first approach argues that it was largely individuals and single organizations that had the greatest effect on the way popular films were released and disseminated by audiences. These typically take the form of what Robert Allen and Douglas Gomery refer to as "Great Man" theory intersecting with technological determinism – that the evolutionary chain of technological (or in this case, industrial and commercial) success stories center on the "breakthroughs" of individual inventors. As Allen and Gomery conclude (1985), however, this "hero-worship" approach is limited because so long as one holds causal relationships to be the genius of a few individuals, there is not much else in the way of historical explanation that can be said.⁵ Conversely, it is *ex post facto* scholarship to ascribe every major failure of motion picture classification to one or two prominent figures.

In addition, this approach, favoring a top-down model of power distribution, ignores the interrelated and complex relationships that the film industry has traditionally shared with audiences, distributors, courts, legislatures, and scholars. In regulation histories, this approach tends to argue that the political and social utility of film censorship is altogether secondary to its economic function, and that regulating content reveals a stunning corporate agenda marked chiefly by minimizing financial risk. Jon Lewis (2000) and Stephen Vaughn (2006) offer agency

⁴ Albert Moran, "Film Policy: Hollywood and Beyond," in *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998): 365-370.

⁵ Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery, *Film History: Theory and Practice* (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 1985): 110-111.

histories which overwhelmingly emphasize the vital roles of the men who headed them during important, defining times. The primary value of these studies is the rigorous manner in which the authors examine letters of correspondence between Richard Heffner, head of the Classification and Rating Administration, and Jack Valenti, MPAA proxy.

The second approach – individual case studies – asserts that specific filmmakers and film audiences control the function of motion picture product through their interaction with, and subversion of, the industry’s regulation controls. The chief characteristic of individual case studies is their contention that regulation history can be marked by a set of “milestone” motion pictures whose widespread circulation among film audiences, however contentious at first, may have reflected larger socio-historical trends outside the industry. Leonard J. Leff and Jerald L. Simmons (1990) argue that it was individual films that altered the content and function of existing regulation policy, and that eleven “tough cases” reveal the Production Code Administration’s history with “notable authority.” To signify this, each chapter heading is also the name of a noteworthy film whose objectionable content stirred debate among Production Code personnel. Similarly, Murray Schumach’s seminal 1964 study *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor* collected humorous, but ultimately anecdotal case studies drawing on the arcane accommodations made by individual filmmakers in order to illustrate the larger fallacies of the Production Code. Newer works in individual case studies, such as Stephen Tropiano (2009), have continued this approach, but in a hybrid manner uncomfortably mixing evolving regulation patterns and popular reception of controversial films.

This approach rejects the assertion by the first method that film content is ultimately molded by the economic forces that surround post-production and distribution. On the contrary, this approach values the role of artistic expression and broader social relations between

filmmakers and audiences, underscoring the crucial role that culture played in gradually permitting greater allowances in obscene content. But this method ignores the institutional shifts inherent in Production Code and rating policy, and tends to place inordinately high value on individual filmmakers hesitant to modify their work for classification. In addition, these studies tend to verge on film criticism and incidental film histories rather than surveying broader trends in curbing content.

The last approach emphasizes the role of legislative and judiciary systems as the most powerful arbiters of how motion pictures are released, and how the industry operates. Scholars in this category, such as Ira Carmen (1966), Julian Burroughs (1971), Jane Friedman (1973) argue that in the 1960s, the film industry attempted to regulate product by means of statutory classification (dividing audiences by age) in order to forestall efforts to censor motion pictures by federal and local governments. Friedman adopts a common critical approach by scholars of American law writing in an era after the Production Code's decline maintaining that the motion picture industry's self-enforced system of regulation fundamentally abridged the rights of filmmakers to disseminate and of moviegoers to receive, communications in an unabridged form. This was a violation of First Amendment rights for filmmakers and audiences, these scholars contended. Typically legalistic narratives advocate reforms to industry policy (Friedman notes that this was not true of legalistic narratives of the 1940s and early 1950s, which usually emphasized the vertically integrated nature of the film industry amidst antitrust action).⁶

But this approach tends to avoid the internal power structures of the film industry, and assumes that only outside pressure from official bodies led to any significant operational changes. Julian Burroughs concluded that the two most significant factors leading to the

⁶ Jane Friedman, "The Motion Picture Rating System of 1968: A Constitutional Analysis of Self-Regulation by the Film Industry," *Columbia Law Review* Vol. 73, No. 2 (February 1973): 185-240.

adoption of a code of classification by the MPAA were the 1968 Supreme Court decision in *Interstate v. Dallas* and a 1967 bill introduced to congress by Margaret Chase Smith advocating for state regulation.⁷ But this ignores the significant amount of pressure from within the film industry to regulate, as well as the early efforts put forth by the MPAA (most notable of which was the Green Sheet) to police its own product on a voluntary basis. In addition, Whitney Strub observes that legalistic narratives on motion picture censorship, written from national perspectives, often “give little sense of their precise mechanics in specific locations.”⁸ While Strub is specifically referring to geographical locations, my methodology seeks to draw on a cross-section of levels of economic power, ranging from executives at the Motion Picture Association, to instrumental theater owners, to individual Green Sheet users themselves.

Each of these approaches has been legitimized by the sudden wealth of critical and popular histories of American motion pictures facing the threat of censorship from its own home in Hollywood – arriving *en masse* perhaps as a result of MPAA head Jack Valenti’s death in 2004, as well as the increased visibility to inconsistencies in CARA rating policy exposed in Kirby Dick’s 2006 documentary *This Film is Not Yet Rated* (which may have led to increased degrees of public awareness and mistrust of the MPAA in the last decade). But in evaluating the original rationale for building a studio-enforced system of classification, each of these approaches has surprisingly ignored the Green Sheet. I argue that conventional histories must be more inclusive of industry services such as the Green Sheet for providing a foundation of why classification was formally adopted in the first place – as well as how the Green Sheet’s downfall may have been prescient in examining the problems of the system today. Therefore, my

⁷ Julian C. Burroughs, Jr., “X Plus 2: The MPAA Classification System During Its First Two Years,” *Journal of the University Film Association* Vol. 23, No. 2 (1971): 44-53.

⁸ Whitney Strub, “Black and White and Banned All Over: Race, Censorship and Obscenity in Postwar Memphis.” *Journal of Social History* 40: 3 (2007): 685-715.

methodology does not strictly adhere to individuals, specific milestone films, or court cases. Instead, it uses the Green Sheet as a filtering device altering the mythological narrative of regulation history to examine how its interaction with various facets of the film industry – economic, corporate, social – enabled significant change in official policy toward classification in the 1960s.

Little literature exists that refers specifically to the Green Sheet and its use by motion picture exhibitors in the 1960s. The majority of information pertaining to the publication was located in back issues of trade periodicals such as *Variety* and *Boxoffice Magazine*. But for the most part, knowledge of the Green Sheet is limited to the individual issues published, and the various reviews which circulated through a small handful of newspapers and magazines. For today's scholars studying the industrial operations of the film industry in the 1960s, it is clear that the Green Sheet was a thinly-veiled attempt by the MPAA to regulate its product internally amid pressures to implement and enforce a comprehensible ratings system. This underscores the same criticisms that the MPAA's Classification and Rating Administration receives today – namely, that the divide between selling and regulating is a divide too great for a single institutional body to sufficiently manage autonomously.

Richard Randall, whose work on the Green Sheets is the most extensive I have yet to find, wrote on its many shortcomings in his landmark 1968 book, *Censorship of the Movies: The Social and Political Control of a Mass Medium*. The three major flaws that he concluded from his evaluation of the document were: Its limited publication, its limited pool of total films assessed, and its lack of objective analysis in its assessments. Randall's analysis bolsters the underlying truth that the MPAA was quite unwilling to dissuade potential ticket-buying patrons from the very same films it was trying to sell to audiences, therefore rendering the Green Sheet

benign and an indication of the Association's own reluctance to initiate internal classification. He writes: "For the industry, then, the Green Sheet has political and public relations utility at the same time that it is a potential economic liability."⁹ Indeed, the Green Sheet may be the very first example of industry-initiated classification we have, as well as an early indication of the well-reported flaws of the internally-driven system we see today.

The first chapter provides a brief but necessary background to the development of the Film Estimate Board of National Organization, as well as surveys from the earliest known editions of the Green Sheet. Although the MPAA quickly endorsed the service and offered to provide necessary funding to expand it, there is little evidence suggesting that the Motion Picture Association was ever fully aware of the powerful influence this tiny publication offered. More research is needed to analyze the role of the Green Sheet between 1937 and 1946, as I was unable to uncover any sufficient materials (including individual Green Sheet issues) from this time period. In the second chapter, I assess the growing importance of the Green Sheet as it is used simultaneously by censorship boards, theater owners, and the industry itself – each for the purpose of dealing the gaping holes of a regulation culture free of formal classification. My third chapter investigates the doubling of the Green Sheet's circulation in 1964, and contextualizes its reviews of films with the changing socio-cultural standards of morality. The fourth and concluding chapter sets the stage for Jack Valenti's arrival in Hollywood, and how the Green Sheet appeared to simultaneously inform *and* delay the introduction of the ratings system in 1968. I conclude the study with a rationale for why the Green Sheet should not be forgotten in today's contentious climate of movie ratings – both in film history courses evaluating the history

⁹ Richard Randall, *Censorship of the Movies: The Social and Political Control of a Mass Medium* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968): 181-184.

of motion picture classification, as well as in movie theaters themselves, when patrons decide which film are age-appropriate and which are not.

CHAPTER ONE: EARLY HISTORY OF THE FILM ESTIMATE BOARD AND THE GREEN SHEET, 1933-1960.

The earliest form of the Green Sheet, initially called the Joint Estimates of Preview Committees on Motion Pictures, arrived in the motion picture industry as a direct response to the findings of the Payne Fund Studies in the early 1930s. In 1928, six years after former postmaster general Will Hays had arrived in Hollywood to purify the reputation of the industry from vice and vulgarity, a pro-censorship group called the National Committee for Study of Social Values in Motion Pictures engineered a scholarly study of the effects of motion pictures on vulnerablyouth using grant money from the privately-funded Payne Study and Experiment Fund. Using methods of systematic psychological testing, the Payne Fund Studies broadly ascertained that movies did indeed condition children's lives and constituted a socially uncontrolled and unsupervised informal education. Rather than being an insignificant, escapist medium conducive to relaxation and frivolity, film provided clear patterns of behavior and ideas of proper conduct and reality. Most distressingly for early film reformers, the Payne Fund Studies claimed direct scientific linkage between delinquent children and the aggressive, conditioned behavior that had been molded to them through observation in movie portrayals. These findings were highly problematic in an era when 11 million children under the age of 14 went to the movies weekly.¹⁰

Although the exact degree of influence the Payne Fund studies had in enabling fiercer enforcement of the Hays Office's motion picture guidelines, historians generally agree the film industry was put on immediate alert in its initial reactions in early 1933, after its results were first published in a January edition of *McCall's* magazine. Raymond Moley notes that the uproar over the findings resulted in hundreds of letters addressed to the Hays Office, summoning a

¹⁰ Edgar Dale, *Children's Attendance at Motion Pictures* (New York: Macmillan, 1935): 73.

public response by the MPPDA (Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, later renamed Motion Picture Association of America, or MPAA).¹¹ John Sargent notes that the *New York Times* demanded legislation preventing children from seeing films in categories listed as “objectionable” by the Studies.¹² Sociological articles cited the Payne Fund Studies to examine the impact of motion pictures on parenting, and *Parents Magazine* and the American Educational Research Association each awarded it as the year’s most important research in the field of child development.

But the strongest reaction to the studies came from women’s groups, unsatisfied with the Hays Office’s Production Code, where total instances of eliminations from motion pictures had been gradually dwindling from 11,611 in 1928 to 7,367 in 1930.¹³ In 1933, *Variety* announced that 12 of the nation’s largest women’s organizations would soon “commence their first concerted perusal of the industry product.” The article boasted that the most powerful influence ever brought to bear on the national box office would represent the interests of 30 million women in 3,000 cities and towns in seeking a more streamlined and accepted method of determining which pictures were acceptable for public dissemination.¹⁴ This coalition called itself the Film Estimate Board (later the Film Estimate Board of National Organizations, or FEBNO), and its primary purpose would be “to give objective information of a film’s content and treatment, so that the reader [might] . . . exercise his responsibility in guiding the movie-going of his children.”¹⁵ *Variety* additionally reported that few organizations sought the creation of such a

¹¹ Raymond Moley, *The Hays Office* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1945): 78.

¹² John A. Sargent, Ph.D. dissertation, *Self-Regulation: The Motion Picture Production Code, 1930-1961* (University of Michigan, 1963): 59. The *Times* reported that the Payne Studies found: “In 1930 the theme in 29.6 per cent of the movies was love; 27.4 per cent was crime; and 15 per cent was sex, making a total of 72 per cent of all themes.”

¹³ *Ibid*, 54. 1930 also marked the first year of the Motion Picture Production Code, loosely enforced until the establishment of the Production Code Administration four years later, in 1934.

¹⁴ *Variety*, 10 January 1933, 1.

¹⁵ Sargent, *Self-Regulation*, 60.

reviewing service because it would require the use of an elaborate editorial system and lofty expenses – something hard to come by in the midst of the Great Depression.¹⁶

The earliest member groups included the Parents and Teachers Associations and the General Federation of Women's Clubs. In addition, the Estimate Board had a notable amount of representation from Protestant groups, such as the United Church Brotherhood (Catholic historically tended to reinforce the Motion Picture Production Code since it had been largely written by lay ministers), and even included the National Council of Jewish Women. Representatives (or "estimates," as they were referred to) would screen newly released motion pictures carrying the Production Code seal of approval, and review them for potentially harmful "adult" content in a monthly publication entitled "Joint Estimates of Preview Committees on Motion Pictures."¹⁷ Each group was asked to designate a motion picture chairperson who in turn would appoint a reviewing committee, which varied in size between 10 and 50 members each. The previewers submitted their reviews of the films to the chairperson of their individual organization. The idea was for the composite review guide to be available to church, education, and civic organizations free of charge, with the presumption that they would, in turn, pass the recommendations of the estimates along to concerned parents of movie-going children. It was independently financed outside of the MPPDA and the film industry.

Records from one of the earliest known bulletins from the Joint Estimates on Motion Pictures reveal that, by March 1936, the group consisted of only nine organizations, most of which were based in Southern California.¹⁸ Two types of age-based classifications were used

¹⁶ "Home and Kiddie Mags Will Not Publicize Air Shows for Children," *Variety*, 21 November 1933, 39.

¹⁷ In some newspaper clippings from the 1930s, the committee was referred to as the National Film Estimate Service.

¹⁸ The nine member groups in 1936 were as follows: The National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution; the National Society of New England Women; the General Federation of Women's Clubs; the California Congress of Parents and Teachers; the National Council of Jewish Women (Los Angeles Section); the

assessing the motion picture content reviewed: *Junior Matinee* (suitable for children alone), *Family* (suitable for children accompanied by adults), and *Mature*. The estimates noted that no feature length picture was advised for children under the age of eight. 10-15 films were profiled in each issue (released twice per month by 1936), and given a full paragraph to provide a basic synopsis, critical assessment, and cast and studio listing. These reviews, all by women raters, were a compilation of each group's individual assessments, and if one group disagreed with the rating agreed upon or the description of a specific element of a given picture, it was noted in the review. In addition, the estimates divided their reviews by genre (examples being "Sophisticated Comedy" and "Melodrama and Mystery") and in each issue, awarded a handful of films the designation of "Best of the Month." The bulletin also occasionally included 2-3 short features, typically family-centered in nature. In the March 1-15 1936, edition of the Joint Estimates of Motion Pictures, the best pictures of the month included the Shirley Temple vehicle *Captain January* ("Shirley, with her clever acting, singing and dancing, her dimples and her smile, wins the heart of all"), 20th Century Fox's "Human Interest" drama *The Country Doctor* ("The story is told simply, humanly, and convincingly, with a slight thread of romance running through it which helps to maintain the human quality of the entire production") and MGM's *Robin Hood of El Dorado* (a "colorful historical picture" with "skillful and powerful direction," even though the story contained "the black thread of greed, lust and inhuman oppression.")¹⁹

Interestingly, each of these three films received different audience classifications by the estimates: *Captain January* was listed as *Family and Junior Matinee*, *The Country Doctor* was listed as *Family-Mature*, and *Robin Hood of El Dorado* was classified as *Mature*. It is important to note that the estimates did not discriminate based solely on their degree of objectionable

Women's University Club; the Southern California Council of Federated Church Women; the California Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs; and the American Legion Auxiliary.

¹⁹ "Joint Estimates of Motion Pictures," March 1-15, 1936.

material. The 1930 Production Code in its “General Principles” stated clearly that the “correct standards of life, subject only to the requirements of drama and entertainment, shall be presented” and “no picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it.”²⁰ Significantly and perhaps surprisingly, the Joint Estimates’ bulletin illustrated that the mere depiction of salacious and illicit acts did not demean a film’s emotional and qualitative impact on its viewer. On the contrary, films which contained such depictions might even be worthy of a recommendation, and an exclusionary adult classification did not necessarily infer solely irreputable and obscene content. While few actual *Adult*-classified motion pictures were named as “Best of the Month,” many were praised for individual strengths. In spite of “the seamy side of life” and “a good deal of drinking” taking place in a “travesty of criminal court procedure” in RKO’s *Criminal Lawyer* (1936), the estimates nonetheless noted that the picture “holds the attention.” Although Gaumont’s *King of the Damned* (1936) was “too harrowing for children,” its lead performance by Conrad Veidt was “uncomfortably real and pulsating to the end,” and the picture contained “realistic scenic effects and a distinct foreign flavor.” In September 1937, United Artists’ *Dead End* was billed as “thoughtful fare for mature audience” and “a page from life that everyone should see” even with its “realistically pictured” depiction of “the twisted and distorted outlook on life of the urchins of the slums.”²¹

The tolerance and open avocation of adult-oriented features such as *Robin Hood of El Dorado* and others was a far cry from the hysterical response of the Catholic Church which, in April 1934, created the Legion of Decency to monitor “vile and unwholesome” moving pictures. Requiring members to recite a pledge during church services to avoid “sensationalistic” motion

²⁰ “The 1930 Production Code.” Reprinted in Jon Lewis, *Hollywood v. Hard Core: How the Struggle over Censorship Saved the Modern Film Industry* (New York: New York University Press, 2000): 303.

²¹ “Joint Estimates of Motion Pictures,” March 1-15, 1936, December 15, 1936 – January 1, 1937, September 1-15, 1937.

pictures which were “corrupting public morals and promoting a sex mania in our land,” the Legion published its own list of approved of condemned films in magazines such as *Queen’s Work*, which followed a policy of naming five condemned films each month.²² Of course, the Production Code was a document written and endorsed by Catholics, and Gregory Black notes that the inclusion of the Church in the MPPDA’s regulatory activities was in direct response to Protestant activists supporting a Washington D.C.-based national board of censorship.²³ Nonetheless, the Legion of Decency was relentless and undaunted in its self-proscribed task of classifying film content, and many Catholics did not believe it went far enough. One Columbus priest attacked the Legion for approving the universally revered, unapologetically wholesome Academy Award-winning *Going My Way* (1944) because “the film was awash in sentimentality, and at its core was pure mush.”²⁴

It was worth remembering, of course, that classification agencies such as the Joint Estimates and the Legion of Decency only reviewed motion pictures which had received formal approval by the Studio Relations Committee of the Production Code Association (PCA) for mass exhibition. No film could be released, distributed, or exhibited without a seal without the threat of a \$25,000 fine from the MPPDA.²⁵ Nonetheless, the Legion of Decency, even in its firm Catholic roots, contained local branches in cities which condemned 43 approved studio films in

²² Frank Miller, *Censored Hollywood: Sex, Sin & Violence on Screen* (Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, Inc., 1994): 82.

²³ Gregory Black, *Hollywood Censored: Morality Codes, Catholics, and the Movies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

²⁴ Gerald Gardner, *The Censorship Papers: Movie Censorship Letters from the Hays Office, 1934-1968* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1987): 23. This comment is especially surprising considering widespread criticism of the movie that it illustrated a Catholic bias. One Baptist minister in Albany, New York, quipped after seeing it: “Why are Catholics portrayed on the screen as heroes and Protestant pastors as laughable or weak preachers?”

²⁵ Miller, *Censored Hollywood*, 79-82. Miller notes that although the PCA reviewed 98 percent of motion pictures released in the United States in the 1930s, the MPPDA controlled only 20 percent of American movie screens, which meant a fairly significant amount of non Code-approved films could be booked. Usually, these independently produced films were limited to exploitation or cautionary tales. The fact that the Joint Estimates did not contain reviews of such unmonitored, uncensored features was a vital shortcoming which would be pointed out by critics of the organization on many occasions in the years to come.

May 1934 alone (it also condemned 20 films not approved by the PCA). While the Joint Estimates never completely refrained from alerting the public when pictures of questionable moral stature were in wide release, its approach was milder. The Protestant organizations joined the Catholic Church in adopting an ecumenical pledge to condemn unwholesome pictures, but differed from the Catholics by refusing to publically blacklist individual pictures.²⁶ Instead of illustrating how potentially obscene films degraded the reputation of the industry and led to a dilapidation of the culture, the estimates drew correlations between vulgar subject matter and poor aesthetic quality. The *Mature*-rated *Forty Naughty Girls* (1937) was criticized for “doggedly blunder[ing] on according to stereotyped detective technique,” while First National’s *Snowed Under* (1936) was “an artificial little comedy treading on delicate ground at times.”²⁷

Besides occasionally uncomfortably skirting between the lines of being an objective information service and outright film criticism, the estimates often tended to be vague in its descriptions of objectionable content in a given feature. In some cases, the estimates cited specific scenes and events deemed objectionable (Warner Brothers’ 1937 *The Devil’s Saddle Legion* contained “brutality in the prison camp scenes unfit for juveniles.”) But in many circumstances, readers were forced to deduce for themselves the exact nature of the material in *Adults*-classified features. MGM’s *Sinner Take All* (1937) was given an *Adults* designation, but there was little clarification that the murder mystery was anything beyond “well-timed action, thrilling suspense, and attractive settings, as well as brusque humor.” The only subtle indications that Paramount’s *John Meade’s Woman* merited its *Adults*-only certification was that told the story of a ruthless promoter, and contained “tense scenes of destruction in the grain fields in the path of dust storms” (it may have also been bad luck that these films’ titles contained the words

²⁶ “Protestants Vote Their 22,000,000 Membership to ‘Clean Films’ Drive, But Decry Censorship, Blacklist.” *Variety*, 17 July 1934, 5.

²⁷ “Joint Estimates of Motion Pictures,” September 1-15, 1937; March 1-15, 1936.

Devil's, Sinner, and Woman, respectively.)²⁸ This contrasted sharply with the approach of the Legion of Decency, which would often times go as far as logging inventories of specific words, actions, and misdeeds clearly justifying for readers a natural response of condemnation.

On the other hand, films receiving the approved *Family* classification were not just free of vulgarity and immorality, but more often than not boasted exceptional production values, compelling screenplays, and universally strong casts. Paramount's *Lonesome Pine* (1936), an early color feature, was called "a real contribution to the cinema as an art form," contained a "brilliant cast" and had direction that was "vigorous and sustained and lift[ing] the sentimental, old-fashioned story into the realm of excellent entertainment." Another color film, Warner Brothers' *God's Country and the Woman* (1937), was praised for its "grandeur of the great Northwest" which was "shown in all their majestic beauty in delightful and delicate coloring." The James Cagney feature *Great Guy* (1937) was a "clever comedy and a pleasing romance" which was "not only extremely interesting, but highly entertaining." Such acclaim appeared to conflate the *Family* classification with outright recommendation and avocation.²⁹ Very rarely did a film's adherence to theological teachings and history play a factor in the estimates' reviews, but when it did, the effect was noticeable. In its review of Cecil De Mille's religious epic *The Crusades* (1936), the estimates agreed that the director had "captured the idealism and courage which inspired men and women with religious zeal to carry on the Crusades."³⁰

In its first decade, circulation of the Joint Estimates was limited to churches and libraries. The Los Angeles Public library, for example, claimed to have become "a central bureau of information on current motion pictures," as were the over 400 libraries that subscribed to the

²⁸ *Ibid.*, September 1-15, 1937; December 15-January 1, 1937.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, March 1-15, 1936; December 15-January 1, 1937.

³⁰ "Selecting the Family Film," *New York Times*, 16 February 1936, X9.

estimate service by the end of the 1930s.³¹ The contributing member organizations changed, as many of the groups such as the National Society of New England Women and the Women's University Club were replaced by national groups such as the National Professional Speech Arts Fraternity for Women and the American Association of University Women. The *Junior Matinee* classification was abandoned, and a new intermediate rating was established between *Family* and *Adults: Mature-Family*, which signified motion pictures for audiences over the age of 14 (it is worth noting that the MPAA did not formally adopt an intermediate rating for teenagers until the PG-13 rating was certified in 1984.)

In addition, the Film Estimate Board experimented in the mid-1940s by asking students from 26 Los Angeles-area schools participate in giving their own opinions to the suitability of new movies in release. In a few circumstances, the views of the students humorously clashed with the maternal views of the Estimate Board. Producers Releasing Corporation's *Danny Boy* (1945) was given a *Family* rating, and recommended as a "homey and unpretentious [picture] which the whole family could enjoy together." But a boy from Edison Junior High School disagreed, stating "it is not a picture that the teen age is especially interested in."³² United Artists' *Spellbound* (1945) was given an "Outstanding" designation (replacing "Best of the Month") and was glowingly praised as "a vivid, wholly absorbing film, combining psychological and murder-mystery drama." A student representative from King Junior High School wrote: "I wouldn't recommend it to my pals, but I would to my mother's friends."³³

³¹ *Ibid.*, X9.

³² "Joint Estimates of Current Motion Pictures," 15 November 1945.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1 December 1945.

For the year 1946, the PCA reviewed a total of 397 feature films, 549 short subjects, and a total of 28 imported films.³⁴ The percentage breakdown of features rated by the Legion of Decency were as follows: Class A-1 “Family” (39.64 percent); Class A-2 “Adults” (45.01 percent); Class B “objectionable in part” (15.34 percent); and Class C “condemned” (none.)³⁵ That same year, the Green Sheet reviewed only 190 feature-length, seal-approved motion pictures. 58 films received a *Family* classification (30.52 percent), 59 films received a *Mature-Family* classification (30.05 percent), and 71 features were designated as *Adult* (37.36 percent). Two motion pictures were inexplicably not given classifications, although of one of them, Fred Zinnemann’s Academy Award-winning *The Best Years of Our Lives*, it was written: “The drinking scenes are an integral part of the plot but require mature understanding, and explanation to youth of their importance to the plot’s development.”³⁶

28 motion picture classifications were disputed among the estimates. One noteworthy example was MGM’s *The Harvey Girls* (1946), which seven of the estimates agreed had “elaborate settings, excellent cast . . . while not outstanding, [it] is gay and spritely and worthwhile.” These estimates assigned *The Harvey Girls* a *Family* rating. The Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Library Association strongly disagreed, however, concluding the picture was “one of the year’s poorest musicals” and “cheap melodrama to what might have been diverting entertainment.”³⁷ They classified the film as *Adult*, indicating that subjective personal preference played a significant factor for the estimates when determining the age suitability of a given picture. Some pictures received disagreements on the basis of the

³⁴ Stephen Tropiano, *Obscene, Indecent, Immoral, and Offensive: 100+ Years of Censored, Banned, and Controversial Films* (Milwaukee, WI: Limelight Editions, 2009): 55.

³⁵ Gordon S. Watkins, *The Motion Picture in its Economic and Social Aspects* (New York: Ayer Publishing, 1970). 111.

³⁶ “Joint Estimates of Current Motion Pictures,” 15 December 1946.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 February 1946.

quality of their content rather than the rating the Estimate Board agreed on. While the estimates agreed that RKO's *Cornered* (1946) deserved an *Adult* rating, for example, they differed on the qualitative assessment of the film's meaning: Five of the organizations praised the "rugged, violent film full of messages" that could be used to arouse viewers' suspicions of Nazis compromising of national security. Four other organizations wrote that it had "too many unrelated ideas to be interesting or entertaining."³⁸ Although such disagreements were included to show transparency in the reviewing process, they were sometimes a source of confusion for readers; in 1955, for example, *The Second Greatest Sex* received four different ratings – one estimate rated it as *Adult*, two rated it as *Adults-Mature Young People*, three classified it as *Adults-Young People*, and three classified the picture as *Family*.³⁹

By the late 1940s, the headquarters of the Film Estimate Board were relocated from Los Angeles to New York City, and the MPAA began to officially underwrite its publication costs, changing the name of the bulletin to "The Green Sheet." There were early indications that the MPAA had no problem with publically referring to the Green Sheet service as one of the ways it was regulating potentially harmful and offensive content in motion pictures. In 1949, the Association boldly declared that Hollywood was turning out more films suitable for general family entertainment than ever before, and pointed to an analysis of the Joint Estimates, which had approved 200 of the 350 pictures it had reviewed for the year as appropriate for "general family patronage."⁴⁰ The MPAA was also fond of reporting the combined membership of the organizations on the Film Estimate Board, ranging from 20 million to as many as 45 million in some reports.⁴¹ 20,000 copies of the bulletin were sent out twice each month.⁴²

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 15 December 1946.

³⁹ "What's a Family Picture? The Ladies Who Rate Films Disagree on This One," *Boxoffice*, 29 October 1955, 26.

⁴⁰ Thomas M. Pryor, "By Way of Report." *New York Times*, 28 August 1949, X3.

⁴¹ *Variety*, 15 September 1954, 7.

An October 1949 issue of *Boxoffice* reported that at a New Jersey Allied convention to exhibitors, a studio executive from RKO suggested that the Green Sheet could help exhibitors book age-suitable features for children's shows. Mistakenly (but revealingly) referring to the bulletin vaguely as "the green list," no one present at the convention had ever heard of the service or the ratings it provided for films. The RKO executive was "bombarded" with questions from audience members about what kinds of films it reviewed, where to find it, how long it had been in existence, and how to properly use it. Exhibitors who complained of inquiries from mothers about the suitability of motion pictures for younger audiences agreed that if they had a better understanding of what the Green Sheet ratings were and could receive them personally, they would be happy advertise them in order to better inform patrons. The MPAA's community relations department, which now handled the costs of printing the bulletin, noted that they were not surprised exhibitors were unaware of the Green Sheet's existence, and did not provide specific information on the number of exhibitors who subscribed to the service. Ironically, Marjorie Granger Dawson, the associate director of community relations, said that the purpose of subscribing to the Green Sheet via a mailing list was to stimulate attendance.⁴³

Thus began a bizarre and rather schizophrenic relationship between the official position of the MPAA and its official sponsorship of the Green Sheet that would remain in place for the next two decades.⁴⁴ This dysfunctional relationship came as a result of unpredictable and difficult circumstances faced by Hollywood studios. The period between 1946 and 1961 was defined by two significant factors leading to a severe downward trend of audience attendance at

⁴² "Mystery? Film Rating Sheets Have Been Going 25 Years," *Boxoffice*, 1 October 1949, 16.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴⁴ By 1954, the MPAA cut down on the amount of time the estimates had to screen a picture and prepare written responses from one month to two weeks. *Boxoffice* reported that neither individual organization reports nor the Green Sheet reached exhibitors until after they had played a feature ("Film Review Date Change Hits Local Exploitation," 16 October 1954, 22).

motion pictures: The introduction of television, and fallout from the milestone 1948 *Paramount Decision*, where the Supreme Court ruled against the oligarchic vertical integration of the Hollywood studio system. During this time period, box office revenues declined by 43 percent, from \$1.7 billion in 1946 to \$955 million in 1961; worse yet, the television signal reached 90 percent of the American population by 1961.⁴⁵

To producers and distributors, the Green Sheet's open discernment between pictures appropriate for entire families and pictures for adult audiences only would mean a debilitating box office disadvantage for motion pictures not meeting the "family standard." The FEBNO had already written a letter to the congressional Juvenile Delinquency Committee, headed by Senator Estes Kefauver, expressing concern that "the mass media of communication must not confuse freedom and license," and that the industry had to exercise due responsibility for the type of material it exhibited publically.⁴⁶ Worse yet, younger audiences were increasingly becoming the most economically vital demographic of motion picture viewers. A 1957 study on audience preferences commissioned by the MPAA showed that of a typical monthly audience of 54.2 million, over half (28.1 million) were under the age of 20. 72 percent of movie audiences were under the age of 30, even though this younger demographic represented only 50 percent of the total population.⁴⁷ Fortunately, another 1957 study by the Youth Research Institute confirmed that three out of every four teenagers still preferred to pay to see motion pictures in theaters rather than watch them for free on television.⁴⁸ But to beat television, motion pictures would have to adjust to the preferences and viewing habits of youthful audiences; this would have to be

⁴⁵ Justin Wyatt, *High Concept: Movies and Marketing in Hollywood* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994): 66. Quoted in Lewis, *Hollywood v. Hard Core*, 65.

⁴⁶ "Hearings Before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency," S. Res. 62, June 15, 16, 17, and 18, 1955.

⁴⁷ Quoted in Garth Jowett, *Film: The Democratic Art* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1976): 375.

⁴⁸ "Teenagers Prefer Theatre to Seeing TV Movies Free," *Boxoffice*, 16 November 1957, 15.

reconciled with the fact that in 1957, the Green Sheet gave out twice as many *Adults Only* classifications (74) as it did *Family* ratings (39). In addition, the Legion of Decency was giving more films A-2 (*Adults*) and B (*Objectionable*) ratings than ever before, and publically noted the increased degree of material considered “suggestive.”⁴⁹

In the late 1950s, the industrial and philosophical shape of the MPAA was also changing. No longer were lay Catholic clergy in charge of monitoring motion picture content and applying rigorous use of the Production Code to each feature. By 1955, Joseph Breen was replaced by as head of the Production Code Association by Geoffrey Shurlock, a man who had not joined the PCA as a censorship activist, and did not have direct ties to Catholic censorship organizations.⁵⁰ In addition, the Code modified parts now considered antiquated. One of the most notorious of these was the previous prohibition of films dealing with miscegenation; instead of listing the subject in the section of the Code that prohibited “sex perversion” (a euphemism for homosexuality) and other types of sexual obscenity, it was moved to a new category of “special subjects that should be treated with good taste.” MPAA head Eric Johnston noted that the code was “intended to be – and has been – a flexible living document – not a dead hand laid on artistic and creative endeavor.” Prohibition against depicting drugs, prostitution, and abortion were removed (although nudity, open-mouth kissing, and venereal disease were still considered forbidden subjects). Meanwhile, Otto Preminger’s *Man with a Golden Arm* (1955) was released to the public without ever having been granted approval from the PCA. The film was booked by Loews theaters without significant incident from historically problematic censorship boards

⁴⁹ “Legion Ratings Lag Behind Reforms,” *Variety*, 14 December 1955, p. 5. The article also stated that the MPAA was in the process of preparing a “detailed picture-by-picture” breakdown of Legion ratings compared to the ratings of the Green Sheet. By the end of the decade 23% of films classified were declared suitable for adults only, while *Variety* reported that interdenominational support for the Legion of Decency was at an all-time low.

⁵⁰ Lewis, *Hollywood v. Hard Core*, p. 110. Shurlock’s tone differed from much of the previous fierce and dogmatic interpretation of the code’s application: “There is no hard and fast rule about any script . . . Each story has to be judged individually on the basis of morality and reasonable decency.” Quoted in Schumach, *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor*, 45.

(many of which the Green Sheet was eventually used to combat), was not condemned by the Legion of Decency, and received widespread acclaim by critics and audiences.⁵¹ The success of the film set a precedent affirming that circumventing the traditional methods of motion picture regulation would not lead to significant box office harm.

It became clear to observers both within the industry and outside it that simply modifying the scope and application of the Code was not the answer. A wholesale revision to the system of regulating film content was needed, MPAA critics noted, and the answer was an externally-regulated system of classification along the same lines as the Green Sheet. “Every important religious and civic organization in the nation favors voluntary classification,” wrote Murray Schumach in 1964. “Every civilized country in the world, except the United States, has some form of classification. Eventually the film industry will have to make concessions to this trend.”⁵² Indeed, the Green Sheet only one of many services using letter ratings to diagnose a motion picture’s degree of “wholesome” content matter. The British Board Film Censors divided movies into three categories: *U* (Suitable for universal viewing), *A* (more suitable for adults than children), and *X* (Forbidden to children under 16 years of age). *X* movies were a financial liability for British studios, and performed on average 20 percent less business than *U* features. It would be on the basis of this that Eric Johnston personally objected to the use of an exclusive adults-only rating.⁵³ This system of voluntary classification was nearly replicated by the U.S. Army-Air Force Motion Picture Service, which screened and rated all pictures shown to servicemen and their families; films could receive ratings of *Family*, *Mature Young People*, and

⁵¹ Frank Walsh, *Sin and Censorship: The Catholic Church and the Motion Picture Industry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996): 278-281.

⁵² Murray Schumach, *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1964): 255.

⁵³ Pro-classification advocates such as Otto Preminger argued that the MPAA should in fact model itself on the British rating system (“‘Separate Moppets from Grownups,’ Prem Advocates,” *Variety*, 11 January 1961, 7).

Mature.⁵⁴ Such categorizations crudely resembled the Green Sheet's *GA* (General Audience), *AMY* (Adults-Mature Young People), and *A* (Adult) ratings (there was also a *AMYY* designation for Adults-Mature Young People-Young People), and unless it was overtly stated, it was difficult to definitively determine which independent ratings services consulted with the Film Estimate Board, which services simply borrowed its ratings, and which services had no contact with FEBNO whatsoever.

But in the decade to follow, the Green Sheet ultimately served as the motion picture industry's chief argument against the adoption of widespread age-based classification. Although this battle was ultimately lost by 1968, when the MPAA formally adopted its present-day ratings system, understanding the motives behind the industry's simultaneous and selective support and opposition to the Green Sheet reveals the complex, ever-changing dynamics of the classification debate inside and outside of the industry. The appeal of advisory ratings, as Richard Randall points out, rested on the consideration that individual patrons served as the decision-making enabler and controller. However, the Green Sheet revealed precisely the opposite – that the MPAA in the 1960s enabled moviegoers to seek out only specific films “pure in content” while avoiding others, while doggedly advising patrons to keep governmental and external oversight over the regulatory practices of the industry to a minimum. In addition, considering methods and discrepancies of how and why the organizations that formed the Film Estimate Board classified motion pictures of the 1960s in the manner in which they did reveals many of the inherent problems of any advisory ratings system – problems which scholars such as Jon Lewis, Stephen Vaughn, and Kevin Sandler claim have not gone away a half century later.

⁵⁴ Joe Hyams, “What Should We Do About the Crisis in Morals?” *Los Angeles Times*, 26 February 1961, M8.

CHAPTER TWO: THE GREEN SHEET AS THE MPAA'S BEST-KEPT SECRET, 1960-1962.

Prior to the 1960s, the MPAA had utilized the Green Sheet service sparingly on the occasional event when the organization was called into question about its responsibility of monitoring film content. The idea that wider distribution of the Green Sheet could be used to influence politicians and censorship boards appeared to be out of the question for most of the 1950s.⁵⁵ In October 1959, in fact, the New York legislature was considering the adoption of a state-enforced mandatory classification system, but argued that if classification was to be introduced, the state had to locate an impartial agency outside of both the film industry and the federal government to rate films. When the possibility of the Green Sheet was mentioned as a source of film ratings, Eric Johnston and the MPAA immediately opposed, countering that film classification of any form, even from within the industry, would fail.⁵⁶ Publically, the industry warned that films rated for exclusively adult audiences would do little except promote censorship and intensify prurient material in pictures already designated for adults. The individual parent still was, and had always been, the best arbiter when it came to his or her children's education and upbringing. Privately, however, the MPAA worried that adult-only classifications handed out by even industry-sponsored regulation such as the Green Sheet would further dismantle the already vapid box office.

⁵⁵ In March 1954, the Film Estimate Board had written a letter to the New York State legislature regarding the state's censorship law's attempt to include a new legal definition of "immorality" when it came to censoring film content. But the letter, which strongly opposed the passage of such an amendment, appeared to have little direct relation to the MPAA, and was written on behalf of the member organizations of FEBNO rather than the film industry.

⁵⁶ Fred Nift, "Adult Era and Kids a Poser," *Variety*, 21 October 1959, 13.

But in 1960, two major events occurred that illustrated clearly to Johnston and the MPAA that the Green Sheet could be used as a bartering tool to rid localities of censorship boards and delay any adoption of classification. The first event took place in Memphis, where a battle had long been waged between motion picture producers and local censors regarding film exhibition. Since its inception in 1911, the city's infamous censorship board, headed by Lloyd Binford, dictated mercilessly which films were tolerated and which were banned on the basis of the city's long-held racial tensions. Films which depicted racial equality and harmony were singled out by the all-white board as unfit for public consumption. According to Whitney Strub, race fundamentally and dramatically shaped censorship activity and local definitions of obscenity (Hal Roach's 1947 *Our Gang* comedy *Curley* was banned because it contained scenes of racially integrated schools). More so than the defamation of police and religious authority or depictions of drug or alcohol use and violence, the board was dominantly concerned by the threat of onscreen interracial sex – so much so that Binford had frequently ignored the expanding sexual frankness of 1950s American motion pictures. In the words of one board member, no legal definition of obscenity could be authoritatively defined, since it “means entirely different things to you and to us.”⁵⁷

In March 1960, Memphis theater owners were able to forestall an ordinance backed by both the censor board and city council granting the censors an increased degree of power in their ability to classify and root out local exhibitions of films. In exchange for tabling the classification ordinance, theater owners pledged to publish in all of their film advertisements the ratings given by the Green Sheet. By this point, anxious MPAA representatives had “taken pains” to illustrate to defenders of voluntarily film classification that reviewing services such as

⁵⁷ Whitney Strub, “Black and White and Banned All Over: Race, Censorship and Obscenity in Postwar Memphis.” *Journal of Social History* 40: 3 (2007): 685-715.

the Green Sheet contained enormous shortcomings and could only marginally educate the public about current, Production Code-approved films. They openly conceded that a film recommended for adults (but still permitting all audiences) would do little except pique greater juvenile interest in the film, thus defeating its own purpose. The MPAA appeared in this circumstance to completely cleanse itself of any obligation it may have had to circulate the Green Sheet in order to facilitate an environment of informed patrons.

The Memphis dilemma represented the paradox and nebulous status of the Green Sheet for exhibitors, audiences, and the MPAA: On the one hand, the censorship board had for decades wreaked havoc on theater owners and the racial equity of general public; after the classification ordinance failed, the board still purchased space in the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* listing the films they thought should be banned, and suggesting a public boycott of said films. But on the other hand, allowance of the Green Sheet was tantamount to the admission that publically disseminated classification was a viable, acceptable solution to pictures containing objectionable content. “The Green Sheet thus became, in effect,” reported *Variety*, “an instrument for censorship and classification.”⁵⁸ In the Memphis case, however, it was not the MPAA’s decision to make. The Memphis theater owners had not formally asked permission from the MPAA or FEBNO to reprint the Green Sheet ratings for its extracurricular use in city-wide theaters, as well as in the *Memphis Press-Scimitar*’s coming attractions page. If they had done so, the MPAA would likely have refused the request; Green Sheet ratings shown without the actual written reviews “perverted its function.”⁵⁹

In the end, however, the mobilization of the Green Sheet had effectively (if only temporarily) reshifted the balance of power from the Memphis censorship board to the strong

⁵⁸ “ACLU’s Activities Report to 6-30-60,” *Variety*, 21 December 1960, 15.

⁵⁹ “MPAA’s Memphis Blues,” *Daily Variety*, 30 March 1960, 4.

coalition of municipal theater owners, who, in their bargaining with the board and city council, had formed the Memphis Theatre Owners Association. Of course, the MPAA made no qualms in warning exhibitors in cities such as Memphis that distribution of the Green Sheet could lead to reduced profits. Box office receipts, in the end, would prove the ultimate verdict in whether the victory over the censorship board was worth the price of lost profits. Stated one executive: “If the box office is hurt the exhibitors will be the first to yell.”⁶⁰ But more importantly, the events in Memphis demonstrated sufficient early evidence for the MPAA that, although the battle against classification had been lost in Memphis, the war against local censorship boards adhering to grossly arbitrary “communal standards” could still be won (the episode was later dubbed “The Memphis Compromise.”) By the end of the year, the MPAA had turned the tables and was complimenting the Theater Owner’s Association for its “very constructive approach” to promoting film entertainment.⁶¹ Ironically, Memphis theater owners appeared unusually laid back in their approach to complaints over tasteless and prurient pictures. As one theater owner quipped, “If we run a picture you don’t approve of call us or write us and name the picture. Then we will have something to go on.”⁶²

The second major development of 1960 occurred two months later, in May, when the Texas Council of Motion Picture Organizations initiated its own film classification service. The semi-monthly report offered its own assessment of new releases on the basis of objectionable content in the way of vulgarity, violence, and sexuality. Like the Film Estimate Board, the Council assigned ratings to individual pictures (using the Green Sheet’s model of *Adults*, *Mature Young People*, *Young People*, and *Family*) and was assembled from organizations representing major church denominations, and like in Memphis, the ratings were carried in local papers.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶¹ “Memphis,” *Boxoffice*, 17 October 1960, SE-2.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 28 March 1960, SE-2.

Unlike the Green Sheet, however, the classifications were presented “cold” – without accompanying reviews or explanations. And most importantly unlike the Estimate Board, the Texas Council’s membership was made up not of civic groups, but of exhibitors with a vested interest in the box office performances of the very films its own service was occasionally labeling as exclusively adult (and therefore financially precarious and limited). The Texas Council was content in singling out civic and church organizations for their “puritan endeavors;” although they were very much in the minority, the Council maintained, their publicity stirred enough legislative action to merit self-regulation among exhibitors. As the MPAA had argued, the purpose of the Production Code was not to ensure all films be suitable for the entire family. But the Texas Council went further, arguing it was the “responsibility of the theatre manager to make public the age classifications recommended for the pictures he exhibits.”⁶³

This rationale differed radically from decades of the MPAA’s standard rhetoric regarding whose “responsibility” it was to monitor at what age children could be able to emotionally and intellectually discern objectionable screen content. The MPAA’s simple, logical answer was that setting arbitrary age guidelines was capricious and pointless, and it was the duty of the parent to best determine which films were age appropriate. The standpoint of MPAA head Eric Johnston, declaring that even voluntary classification was both unenforceable and counterproductive to the democratic process, was largely informed by the knowledge that theater owners in Europe would refuse to book films which had been classified as exclusively adult by European boards. Indeed, Johnston’s remarks even resembled the official standpoint of Protestant clergy, which claimed to support “the gospel that holds self-discipline in moral matters to be superior to restraint or coercion by any outside group, including the church itself.”⁶⁴ But in the assumption that it had

⁶³ Vincent Canby, “Hicksville for Self-Ratings,” *Variety*, 11 May 1960, 7.

⁶⁴ “Protestant Council Takes Stand Against Censorship,” *Boxoffice*, 6 June 1960, 7.

been protecting its exhibitors, claims that any degree of oversight was unnecessary more often than not came off as irresponsible and negligent to all “sides” of the classification battle – patrons, exhibitors and distributors, filmmakers, censorship boards, and politicians.

Aware that its opposition to classification was mounting backlash, by the end of 1960, the MPAA began to gradually utilize knowledge of the Green Sheet more readily in warding off motion picture classification bills in state legislatures. In New York and Maryland, states with historically strong censorship boards facing upcoming bills involving classification, the MPAA distributed copies of the Green Sheet to all exhibitors in the two states. A report to the Council of Motion Picture Organizations warned that initial efforts to initiate a classification system in New York would be followed accordingly in 19 separate states.⁶⁵ In October 1960, the nation’s largest movie theater trade organization, the Theater Owners of America (TOA), approached the MPAA for copies of the Green Sheet with which to supply to its service members to show state legislatures that a functioning example of the industry’s own self-regulation was firmly in place. One month later in November, TOA distributed copies of the Green Sheet alongside its monthly bulletin to its 1,000 subscribers (half of its total membership). Critically, however, TOA offered no explicit directions in its own bulletin on how members should interpret and distribute the Green Sheet ratings.⁶⁶

The move by TOA also served to help silence any critics of the Green Sheet who argued that it had not been circulated widely enough to inform the public thoroughly. This criticism did not just come from outraged citizens and crusading moralists, but by theater owners and distributors who felt as though the MPAA and the Green Sheet’s limited draw did little to protect them from public scorn and boycotts. For their own part, during the Green Sheet’s limited

⁶⁵ “Censorship Laws Loom in At Least 20 States,” *Boxoffice*, 31 October, E-6.

⁶⁶ “Urge Exhibs Flash Green Sheet When Public Sees Red Over Adult Pix Trend,” *Daily Variety*, 25 November 1960, 4.

availability, exhibitors had gone to great strides to ensure their loyalties were to their individual communities and patrons rather than motives of profit-making other corporate brethren within the film industry. In TOA's "Ten Commandments for Exhibitors," released to the public in October 1960, the very first article stated that exhibitors must use their theater to win the goodwill of the community, creating a public image of the theater as a civic institution. Another "commandment," skillfully casting blame aside from theater owners, decreed: "Thou shalt not blame all thy troubles upon the distributors even though thou hast good reason to find fault;" another commanded that all controversies should be settled through informal conference, conciliation, and negotiation rather than in a court of law.⁶⁷ In no place in this curious Ten Commandments was the MPAA mentioned. Indeed, this language contrasted the rather combative and bellicose rhetoric to the public used by the MPAA, which inferred to the public that in the battle between uptight patrons and blameless exhibitors, circulation of the Green Sheet (a "guiding light") bolstered the defenses on "the front line of battle."⁶⁸

TOA's distribution of the Green Sheet supported the argument that the MPAA was in the business of significantly broadening the readership of the bulletin. Actual MPAA numbers indicated that by the end of 1960, 23,000 copies of the Green Sheet were distributed each month; but FEBNO and MPAA executives assured that readership was much higher, basing such claims on the fact that Green Sheet ratings were posted in public places, such as schools, churches, and civic centers, as well as published in many periodicals.⁶⁹ But no data was ever released, however, indicating that no more than 23,000 patrons were able to read it during any given

⁶⁷ "Ten Commandments for Distributors," *Boxoffice*, 31 October 1960, 16. Six years later, a Georgia exhibitor modified the commandments to the chief concerns of theater owners; topping the new list of commandments was "High and blind bidding for product;" perhaps tellingly, "Need to know your patrons" was listed last.

⁶⁸ "MPAA Giving Exhibs High Sign in Classification Fight; Focus on Green Sheet as the Guiding Light," *Variety*, 28 December, 1960, 5.

⁶⁹ "Urge Exhibs Flash Green Sheet When Public Sees Red Over Adult Pix Trend," *Daily Variety*, 25 November 1960, 4.

month. It seemed unlikely the MPAA was willing to provide funding for printing on a larger scale. In a revealing exchange from 1960, the director of the Protestant National Council of Churches' Broadcasting and Film Commission expressed concern that, although it was a valuable viewing service, the costs of printing the Green Sheet for every church leader and minister would be excessive, and it would be better suited for distribution to individual homes and families.⁷⁰ This opinion further indicates the ambiguous and widely misunderstood role of the Green Sheet during the era; a December 1957 article in the *Harvard Law Review* concluded that unlike the Legion of Decency, the influence of the Film Estimate Board seemed primarily exerted on distributors and exhibitors directly rather than through the medium of general public opinion.⁷¹

In early 1961, it appeared doubtful that the Green Sheet would have the kind of desired impact nationally the MPAA had initially hoped. The Supreme Court had ruled in *Times Film Corporation v. City of Chicago* that city and state censors had the legal right to look at films before allowing them to be exhibited publically – a major defeat for the MPAA.⁷² In the New York State Assembly, the first of what would eventually become a series classification bills was filed that would require films portraying “nudity, horror, violence, brutality, sadism, juvenile delinquency, drug addiction or sexual conduct or relationships believed . . . contrary to the proper mental, ethical and moral development of children” be classified as unsuitable for young

⁷⁰ “Protestants Seeking Good Way to Support Films,” *Boxoffice*, 10 October 1960, 12. The head of the Council, Rev. Dr. S.F. Mack, voiced the opinions of many Protestant clergy and organizations when he stated his objection to legislative censorship – as well as industry-wide self-regulation – was supported on theological grounds: “We don’t want to curb censorship. Any type of censorship is obnoxious to us. We much prefer the regulation of self-choice. It is this human choice, after all, that is the basis of our religion” (quoted in William K. Zinsser, “The Bold and Risky World of ‘Adult’ Movies,” *Life Magazine*, 29 February 1960, 89.)

⁷¹ “Public Pressures and the Law: Official and Unofficial Control of the Content and Distribution of Motion Pictures and Magazines,” *Harvard Law Review* Vol. 71, No. 2 (December 1957): 326-367. 363.

⁷² Nearly all major newspapers joined the MPAA in universally condemning the Supreme Court’s decision. Interestingly, while the *New York Times* wrote that the decision was setting a precedent as dangerous as “preventing a handbill or book or newspaper from being printed,” it also wondered whether the court was simply reacting to the industry’s refusal to meet demands for classification: “One could almost say it deserves what it gets.”

audiences with the threat of legal action if not observed by exhibitors.⁷³ But in April 1961, Luigi Marano, chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee in New York (the home state of TOA President Albert Pickus), agreed to defer the state classification bill to a later session when the reaction of the film industry to the TOA's increased circulation of the Green Sheet could be sufficiently ascertained. For the time being, the MPAA and TOA could breathe a sigh of relief, especially considering that one month earlier, the lower house had passed the bill by an overwhelming majority.⁷⁴ This would not be the last time New York classification bills would be delayed as a result of the Green Sheet.

It was in localities and individual film circuits, however, where the Green Sheet found its most publicized and sustained level of success in increasing public awareness of motion picture content (whether the MPAA could personally label it a success for studios and producers was debatable). In March, the California-based Blumenfeld Theaters, headed by TOA Vice President Abe Blumenfeld, had announced its plans to adopt Green Sheet ratings for newspaper ads and lobby posters.⁷⁵ One month later, the Central States Theater Corporation, operating 65 movie theaters in Iowa and Nebraska, utilized three letter ratings from the Green Sheet (*General Audiences*, *Adults and Mature Youth*, and *Adults Only*) in its film advertisements. *Variety* warned that unless anti-classification forces could prove definitively (and quickly) that the industry's self-classification would not work, they would find themselves in a position refuting the value of a system, facilitated through the Green Sheet, that was already firmly in place and

⁷³ Bosley Crowther, "Urge to Classify," *New York Times*, 15 January 1961, 11.

⁷⁴ "TOA Let-Patron-Know Action Halts 2 Classification Bills," *Boxoffice*, 3 April 1961, 8. Another component of TOA's success in delaying a legislative vote was publically yet shrewdly calling for a "Let-the-Patron-Know" movement as well as a renewal to the original values of the Production Code. That same week, the Connecticut State Assembly announced it would not push for classification during the 1961 legislative session.

⁷⁵ "Blumenfeld Uses MPAA Ratings But to 'Classify,'" *Variety*, 8 March 1961, 18.

successfully rooting out boycotts and censorship boards in Texas, California, Nebraska, and Iowa, among others.⁷⁶

The Green Sheet played considerable role in another municipality in early 1961 – Abilene, Texas. On April 20, the Abilene City Council formally enacted one of the most radical censorship laws ever adopted in a major U.S. city. Beyond merely establishing a censorship board, severe penalties were enacted, with warnings of \$200 fines and even jail sentences for both parents who permitted their children to see what the board had deemed “objectionable” fare, as well as for the theater owners, managers, cashiers, doormen, ushers, and virtually anyone else having a hand in permitting the improper viewing of adult films by child audiences. The broad language of the ordinance not only held employees liable, but also give the board similar authority over adult books and magazines.⁷⁷

The newly formed, nine-member Abilene Review Board of Theatrical Entertainment was submitted motion pictures ten days in advance of its theatrical screening, and each feature was classified a letter rating by the board, ranging from *A* (“Acceptable for average persons”) to *E* (“Banned from public showing in Abilene; clearly obscene and offensive to public decency”). Although these ratings differed from those of the Green Sheet, *Boxoffice* reported that the Green Sheet had been “consulted” in making decisions, and perhaps as a result of the its usual glowing praise toward Hollywood studio product, none of the first 100 pictures classified at the Review Board’s initial meeting were banned or even classified as objectionable (64 received *A* – “Acceptable” ratings, while the remainder received *Bs*.) The board chairman even noted that

⁷⁶ “Classification Debate Somewhat Hazy,” *Variety*, 12 April 1961, 4.

⁷⁷ Bill Becker, “Texas Film Law Aims at Parents,” *New York Times*, 21 April 1961, p. 35; and Truman Riley, “An Abilene Exhibitor Speaks Out on Censorship Battle,” *Boxoffice*, 15 May 1961, 14. Riley, Abilene city manager of the city’s Interstate Circuit theaters, lashed out against the Abilene City Commission, labeling them “the people who deserted movies and have been glued to the television one-eyed monster for quite a few years . . . they have not progressed with the regular movie audience and grown up along with the movies . . . the grown-up movie theatre is beyond their mental development.”

things would go more smoothly at subsequent meetings after the board received further information from the Green Sheet service. The Abilene board's ambiguous complicity with the Green Sheet was also an indication that it may have feared any severe legal ramification by the MPAA testing the constitutionality of draconian city ordinance in court.⁷⁸ In Abilene the Green Sheet was used to enforce the mandate of the censorship board; in Memphis, the Green Sheet had been used to oppose it.

The censorship board's fairly benign actions in Abilene – amounting to little more than all bark with no bite – was nonetheless a call to action for the MPAA. In May 1961, while at the Cannes, France, Eric Johnston for the first time publically advocated use of the Green Sheet. During a question-and-answer period with reporters, Johnston bluntly stated that he was not opposed to voluntary classification – appearing to abruptly reverse the motion picture industry's long-standing opposition to film classification. Later that day at lunch, Johnston clarified his remarks by carefully differentiating voluntary classification (imposed by members of the industry itself on its own picture) from what he called “statutory classification” – leveled down by an outsider regulator or government body, and based on the age of each patron. As the foremost example of the type of voluntary classification of which he approved, Johnston pointed to none other than the Green Sheet as sole evidence of a workable, responsible system of classification endorsed by the motion picture industry.⁷⁹ Paul Monaco writes that this relatively small episode was the first indication of any kind that Johnston would consider dropping the Production Code in favor of voluntary classification, and represented a significant shift in official

⁷⁸ “100 Films Classified by Abilene Censors,” *Boxoffice*, 26 May 1960, 16. The Abilene board did not back down, however, when a local drive-in showed the D-rated *Never on Sunday* (1961) without publicizing the board's restrictive rating. In four showings of the film, the theater racked up 12 municipal court complaints, totaling \$2400. Ironically in its four showings – each counted as a basis for three new complaints – the film set the new local attendance record.

⁷⁹ Vincent Canby, “Johnston Relents Re Classification, Questioned by Cannes Press Mob on MPEA Slants on Festivals,” *Variety*, 17 May 1961.

MPAA acknowledgement and publicity of the Green Sheet.⁸⁰ No longer was it the problematic and insufficient document that theater owners in Memphis were told would only increase the amount of children going to adult films.

In spite of this declaration, the Green Sheet was still far from a perfect response to silence MPAA critics. Johnston had not admitted that the Green Sheet was an actual form of classification, the circulation of the Green Sheet remained fixed at approximately 23,000, and it still only reviewed films carrying seals of approval from the Production Code Administration.

The greatest amount pressure applied from external organizations was advocating that the publication include a more diverse body of motion pictures in its bulletins – namely, foreign films. Kerry Segrave notes that while the Production Code Administration was steadily granting an increased frequency of foreign features seals of approval (from 73 in 1959 to 112 in 1961), the Legion of Decency was treating foreign product more harshly. In 1960, the Legion rated 222 domestic movies and 53 foreign features. Three domestic movies (1.35 percent) and five foreign films (9.43) were given the *C* (Condemned) rating. The next year, in 1961, two of the 248 domestic films were assigned a *C* (0.81 percent), while eight of the 41 foreign features classified were condemned (19.51 percent).⁸¹ Foreign features such as *Never on Sunday*, *Two Women*, and *The Virgin Spring* encountered censorship problems the moment they arrived in the United States. In many circumstances, seal-less foreign films were blamed for the overemphasis and distortion of sex in motion pictures by religious groups and politicians. John A. Sargent points out that many foreign distributors in the United States did not attempt to get seals on the basis that foreign standards did indeed differ in respect to morality and taste, and that, in addition,

⁸⁰ Paul Monaco, *History of the American Cinema: The Sixties* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001): 58. In July 1962, PCA head Geoffrey Shurlock gave his public endorsement to the service.

⁸¹ Kerry Segrave, *Foreign Films in America: A History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2004): 152.

distributors did not want to pay the \$500 fee for PCA submission.⁸² This led one particularly zealous politician to assert, “I am most gravely concerned at the influx of foreign films that evidence a sense of moral values so remote from ours as to be completely repugnant to this historic American sense of cultural and social values.”⁸³

In December 1960, the Independent Film Importers and Distributors of America (IFIDA), headed by Michael Mayer (son of American Jewish Association representative Lillie S. Mayer) had submitted a written request to the MPAA for the Green Sheet to include a greater amount of foreign motion pictures in its reviews. The IFIDA made no apologies for the nature of its foreign product, the vast majority of which was intended for adult audiences rather than children and families. This request was denied by the MPAA, which cited that it would be too difficult to narrow down coverage to only the most important international features (this also provided evidence that the MPAA actually played a significant role in determining which films the estimates would screen and subsequently review). Mayer later attempted to launch a bulletin of his own, with special previews of IFIDA-member films from various opinion-making groups.⁸⁴

Daily Variety and Richard Randall wrote that the Green Sheet did not cover any foreign films in its reviews. This was not true. The Green Sheet was surprisingly inclusive of many feature films from abroad (albeit, only ones which carried PCA seals.) One such foreign import reviewed in September 1960 was *Fast and Sexy*, a breezy Italian feature which, in spite of its racy title, received only a rating of *A-MY* by the estimate board (“The title is misleading for a light, gay film whose broad comedy often verges on slapstick,” the review noted.) The review

⁸² Sargent, *Self-Regulation*, 200. This was the minimum cost of the PCA fee; for a foreign film produced for over \$1.5 million, the cost of submission was \$3,000.

⁸³ Kerry Segrave, *Foreign Films in America*, 152. Eric Johnston denied that foreign films in the US – of which two-thirds received PCA seals of approval – on a whole contributed to any significant public relations problems regarding adult films, and that it was actually Production Code-certified American films which had contributed to poor publicity.

⁸⁴ “MPAA Vetoes Plan For ‘Green Sheet’ Of Imported Pix,” *Variety*, 11 May 1960, 4.

emphasized the high quality of the English dubbing, but lamented that “its incongruous use of American slang tends to neutralize the Italian flavor of the acting.” In the same issue, another Italian import, *The Nights of Lucretia Borgia*, was featured and subsequently praised for its handsome costumes, high degree of swordplay, and overall excitement. However, as was sometimes a common detractor from the validity of the reviews, the salacious descriptions of events taking place in *The Nights of Lucretia Borgia* – of which it was written that “every now and then the swashbuckling adventures pause for some Borgian torture or ardent lovemaking” – was inexplicably incongruous with its rating, only an *A-MY-Y*.⁸⁵

The Green Sheet appeared to specialize in reviewing little-known international features, especially ones from the Eastern Bloc. *Circus Stars*, a 1960 documentary in the exchange program between the United States and Soviet Union, was featured, and praised for its helpful “running English commentary and blaring circus band.” Both *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Idiot*, high-profile adaptations from classic Russian novels, were turned into Soviet motion pictures in 1960 and reviewed by the Green Sheet in July. Both reviews, while notably free of concise elaboration of the storylines (or their potential ideological conceits), praised the films rather superficially for their “episodic” and “tempestuous unfinished incidents” and “notable pictorial richness,” respectively. Grigory Kozintsev’s *Don Quixote* was reviewed in March 1961 as “an endless succession of captivating pictures,” with “memorable” color and music.⁸⁶

It was not by coincidence that such films were exceptionally limited in their release, and relatively free of scintillating and objectionable material. If there was any other notable trend in the Green Sheet’s coverage of foreign films, it may have been the estimates’ impatience for complex storylines and the powerful new aesthetics of the French New Wave. Marcel Ophuls’

⁸⁵ “The Green Sheet,” September 1960.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, May 1960; July 1960; March, 1961.

Banana Peel, receiving an *Adult* rating in March 1965, was described as an “over-complicated plot” and “the flimflammy of this highly sophisticated pursuit of larceny and love goes by too fast to follow easily.” Little else in the review is fully indicative of why the feature was given an *A* rating except for the fact that the picture was portraying a jazz band player who performs swindles with his wife (with “effortless, expert performances” from Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jeanne Moreau). The 1965 “obviously allegorical” Japanese feature *Woman in the Dunes* was “beautiful and puzzling” but was also nonetheless “mysterious, ambiguous,” and “goes on and on reverberating in the memory.” Jean-Luc Godard’s *Alphaville* was a “science-fiction parable with much symbolism and surrealistic photography that is sometimes confusing” but still managed to be “often intriguing.”⁸⁷ Godard’s most famous and controversial contribution to the New Wave, *Breathless*, was never reviewed by the Estimate Board.

The fact that the MPAA appeared to turn its back on the legitimacy of the Production Code and instead turn to a coalition of largely Protestant influence led to a revolt by Catholic groups, traditionally serving as the MPAA’s staunchest allies. When the Reverend Francis J. Connell was asked if Catholics could see Class B (“Objectionable”) movies, he responded that every patron should avoid such movies so that it could induce producers to present only pictures to the public which were not objectionable.⁸⁸ But in a year when so many of the top-grossing features were adult fare were assigned harsh ratings by the Legion of Decency and the Green Sheet (including *Butterfield 8*, *Spartacus*, and *Psycho*, 1960’s second highest-grossing film), such a solution seemed helplessly behind the times. Of the 204 films reviewed by the Green Sheet in 1960, only 38 (18.6 percent) received a *Family* rating, and even this was a marked improvement from 1958, when only 28 of 241 features (11.6 percent) were classified as

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, March 1965; February 1965; December 1965.

⁸⁸ “Theologian Clarifies Question on B Pictures,” *Boxoffice*, 10 October 1960, E-1.

Family.⁸⁹ In October 1960, a letter addressed from the Vatican to the International Catholic Office for Motion Pictures urged the backing of various self-classification measures by individual film industries and, if that failed, to work toward a state-controlled classification system.⁹⁰

In December 1962, the Catholic Church finally publically joined the mounting pressure for classification, and in a sudden and rather unexpected move, openly vocalized its opposition to MPAA policy. The Roman Catholic Episcopal Committee for Motion Pictures, Radio and Television, a group consisting of five bishops, released a statement unequivocally pledging itself to support legislation for voluntarily classification. Previously the committee had publically urged the motion picture industry to fulfill a natural duty to young viewers and families by implementing a system of classification; however, in the words of the committee, “the response of the film industry to our urgings was not union.” Instead, producers and distributors had been disposed to advertise adult films to mature audiences using no categorization of screen content, relying on images and taglines to convey the storyline of a given motion picture. The bishops objected to the fact that such advertisements, considered tawdry and lewd in nature, were not distributed to an exclusive group of adult patrons, but instead to the mass public at large. Parents did not objected to the presence of adult-oriented features, the bishops pointed out, but “they do object with good reason when such films are unscrupulously exploited.” In addition, the bishops extended praise to a handful of localities and individual exhibitors for adopting their own classification services for patrons.⁹¹

⁸⁹ For the month of June 1960, the Green Sheet classified only one of the 11 films it reviewed as *Family*.

⁹⁰ “Do Adults Want Adult Films,” *Variety*, 19 October 1960, 61.

⁹¹ “Bishops Insistent on ‘Classifying’; Refute Arguments of Hollywood Labels Invite Full Censoring,” *Variety*, 5 December, 1962, 11.

But at the center of the bishops' critique of the MPAA was none other than the Green Sheet. Of the industry's irresponsible non-activity, the committee chided the MPAA for resisting a "minimal form of classification" by failing to use the Green Sheet ratings in film advertising (the industry's explanation for this refusal was that letter ratings would have no validity without the full-length reviews which accompanied the ratings in the bulletin itself.) Moreover, the committee concluded that the Green Sheet was an insufficient service because it only rated films that were granted the Production Code's seal of approval; in 1962, they noted, there had been 798 films released in New York state, but less than 200 contained PCA seals. This had directly countered a recent MPAA allegation that 90 percent of playing time in American theaters had been granted to code-approved features. "With the rapid increase of foreign and domestic films on the American scene," the committee concluded, "it is difficult for any rating service to cover even a majority of films released."⁹² Such a statement appeared to indicate precisely why any form of voluntary classification, as ideal as it was to critics of the MPAA, would be difficult to sufficiently introduce and facilitate.

Another intriguing point made Catholic committee was that for voluntary classification to work properly, the duty of selectively allowing and refusing specific motion pictures for widespread dissemination could only be entrusted to departments or agencies of "proved qualification or competence." The MPAA countered that such representation would be impossible to find, and even suggested, in a statement of subtle but striking sexism, that the only suitable personnel for such work would "inevitably" be drawn from the low ranks of the civil service.⁹³ Who, then, exactly were the raters for The Green Sheet, and from which "low ranks" of society did they come?

⁹² *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 11.

For several years, the MPAA's community relations department, headed by Margaret Twyman, insisted that women made not only the best raters, but also provided a potent source of strength for theater owners who sought to promote their theaters as focal points of community interest. Twyman put together a seven-point list concluding how the services of women's organizations could help exhibitors draw attendance and improve the climate of going to the movies in general. Included on this list were the fact that "women's groups are easily offended by bad taste in advertising and promotion gimmicks;" they "are hypersensitive to 'atmosphere,' cleanliness, and comfortable seats;" and that they "want suitable pictures for their children." Nowhere did Twyman specifically mention the Green Sheet, but there was a suggestion that if theater owners set up mailing lists to networks through which they could promote their own product and the product of women's groups, the result would be beneficial for exhibitors and patrons alike. The MPAA repeated time and time again that exhibitors should not "fool" women with trickery and phony approaches.⁹⁴

Heading the daily operations of the Green Sheet since 1958 was Marie Hamilton, an MPAA employee in the community relations department. Her office was housed in the Association's main complex in New York, and it was her duty to construct composite reviews based on the member organizations' own reports. In this role, she served as the chief liaison between members of the Film Estimate Board of National Organizations and the Motion Picture Association. Hamilton asserted that although the standards employed by each individual reviewer varied, they all had experience with families, and "after a while they develop a 'feel' for what is of interest to the persons of the various stages of development."⁹⁵ Her work often involved traveling on public lecture circuits and attending annual Show-A-Ramas for exhibitors,

⁹⁴ "Women's Groups Can be a Great Help, But They Despise Being 'Fooled,'" *Boxoffice*, 21 November 1960, 14.

⁹⁵ Randall, *Censorship of the Movies: The Social and Political Control of a Mass Medium*, 182.

keeping the general public and the industry alert to the appeal and occasional modifications to the Green Sheet.

Of all the female Green Sheet raters and members of the Film Board of National Organizations, the most recognizable was Lillie S. (Stein) Mayer, who officially served as National Motion Picture chairwoman for the American Jewish Committee. Mayer was a former film critic and painter who was married to Arthur Mayer, an independent film producer and scholar who was affectionately referred to as “The Merchant of Menace” for the low-budget films he financed that often played at the Rialto Theater in Times Square (with titles such as *Man Made Monster*, *Horror Island*, and *The Mad Doctor of Market Street*).⁹⁶ Also of note was the fact that the Mayers’ son, Michael, served as the executive director of the IFIDA, an organization which repeatedly offered its support to the Green Sheet (most notably, the 1960 appeal to the MPAA to expand coverage of the Green Sheet to foreign films). Mayer did not attempt to be covert in her personal relationship (nor her family’s) to the film industry; upon her and her husband’s fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1963, the Associated Motion Picture Advertisers (AMPA) held a 200-seat luncheon for the Mayers, with guests including Mel Gold (AMPA President), *New York Times* critic Bosley Crowther, and United Artists producer Max E. Youngstein, who called the Mayers’ “vital symbols of the very best that exists in the motion picture industry.”⁹⁷

Another noteworthy longtime member of FEBNO was Golda Elam Bader, National Chairwoman of the Protestant Motion Picture Council (PMPC). Bader was the wife of the evangelist Jesse Moren Bader, who served as the Superintendent of Evangelism for the United Christian Missionary Society, and she held an additional role as chair of the Department of

⁹⁶ “Lillie Mayer, 90, Dead; Film Critic and Painter,” *New York Times*, 26 March 1980, D22.

⁹⁷ Gene Arneel, “Arthur and Lillie Mayer’s 50th Anni,” *New York Times*, 22 May 1963, 7.

Visual Aids for the United Council of Church Women. The Protestant Motion Picture Council was founded in the 1945 under the auspices of Martin Quigley's publication *The Motion Picture Herald*, and published monthly reviews of Hollywood's latest offerings in the magazine until it was subsumed by the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCC) in 1950. Bader believed that one of the strongest aims of the PMPC was to "uphold the observance of the industry's Motion Picture Code of Ethics and Morals."⁹⁸

As Greg Linnell points out in his article "Applauding the Good and Condemning the Bad: *The Christian Herald* and Varieties of Protestant Response to Hollywood in the 1950s," the nature of PMPC's film reviews were not nearly as fervent in religious observance and damnation as one might have expected for the era. Linnell notes that unlike Catholic motion picture review services (both past and contemporary), the PMPC did not log an inventory of objectionable words or events using a tally of occurrences as the sole index of the film's overall worth; rather, a sinful act only became objectionable once it was advocated contextually by the motion picture's narrative.⁹⁹ A mere representation of life contrary to Christian values was not enough to merit a negative evaluation from the PMPC. From its inception, the PMPC utilized the audience suitability ratings supplied by the Film Estimate Board – *A*, *Y*, *F*, and the rarely used *Objectionable*; Linnell notes that the intermediate rating of *MY* was added in the mid-1950s. PMPC was one of the few member organizations of FEBNO that continued to publish its own film ratings as a separate service to *Herald* subscribers.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Golda Bader, "What the Protestant Motion Picture Council Does," *Motion Picture Herald* (July, 1956): 59.

⁹⁹ A report on the PMPC published in a May 1953 issue of the *National Council Outlook* observed: "They don't object to drinking presented 'for what it is' – as in movies like *The Lost Weekend*, or when it is a necessary part of the plot. They do, in general, object to what they describe as 'false values' in terms of drinking or other things – that one must be wealthy or glamorous to be happy, or must drink to be socially acceptable."

¹⁰⁰ Greg Linnell, "Applauding the Good and Condemning the Bad: *The Christian Herald* and Varieties of Protestant Response to Hollywood in the 1950s," *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* Vol 12 (Spring, 2006).

By the 1960s, there was one lone man who served as an estimate rater and one of the members of FEBNO. That man was William J. Sloan, representative for the American Library Association, who served as the ALA's chairman of the Motion Picture Preview Subcommittee of the Audio-Visual Committee. Sloan was supervising film librarian of the New York Public Library, and had a scholarly background, having edited the *Film Library Quarterly* beginning in 1967. Intriguingly, Sloan also served as a librarian for the circulating film library of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Sloan's relationship with the film medium was appeared to be a mostly academic one; in 1964, writing on behalf of the New York Public Library, he published an article in the *Journal of the Society of Cinematologists* entitled "The Documentary Film and the Negro," in which he argued that technological advances in *Cinéma vérité* documentaries were further enabling filmmakers to effectively treat problematic and misunderstood issues of racial integration. Sloan's most noteworthy contribution to the Green Sheet reviews was his frequent objections leveled against inferior cinematic adaptations of classic literature, particularly if episodes and events from the source text were changed. In the Green Sheet's March 1965 review of *Lord Jim*, for example, Sloan differed from the positive composite review from the other estimates, noting that "striking photography fails to compensate for mechanical and unconvincing manipulation of incidents and characters."¹⁰¹

But for most of the members of the estimate board whose names were supplied in each issue, little is known about them except for that they were women who were actively involved in civic circles and a variety of professional organizations. Juanita McGowan, a representative for the General Federation of Women's Clubs, for example, also served as a columnist in a trade journal and was active in the Baptist church's prison ministries; Lenore Whitehorn, preview editor on behalf of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, came from a strong lineage of

¹⁰¹ "The Green Sheet," March 1965.

leftists (her husband, Nathaniel, was a lawyer and friend of Jack Kerouac's, and her daughter, Laura, was a radical member of the Weather Underground). Richard Randall noted the "conspicuous absence" of Roman Catholic representation on FEBNO. But according to Marie Hamilton, Catholic interest in film rating was channeled solely through the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures (formerly the Legion of Decency), although Hamilton did note that the Office had been extended an open invitation to join FEBNO, but the Catholic Office had repeatedly turned down the offer. *Variety* indicated that the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae had once been a member of the Film Estimate Board, but because of differences in opinion, the Federation's relationship to the Green Sheet had been maintained through a "friendly but loose liaison."¹⁰²

Mayer, Bader, and Sloan are perhaps the most representative personnel of reviewers on the Film Estimate Board, since their confluence of backgrounds and critical approaches to assessing motion pictures (industrial, religious, and academic) may have illustrated some methodological differences operating on an already diverse board. But for most thoughtful readers of the Green Sheet, it remained unclear what standards the estimates used in assessing what was pure and what was objectionable. Was it not supposed to make sense that the moral beliefs and standards of the American Jewish Association were completely different than those of the Protestant Motion Picture Council? To what extent were the composite reviews of an individual motion picture entirely inclusive of every opinion shared by the ten member organizations? The fact that all of the estimates were familiar with children and families, in the words of Marie Hamilton, broadly indicated that they knew which kinds of motion pictures

¹⁰² "Catholic Girls Jar Council," *Variety*, 15 October 1955, 77. A Protestant spokesman later noted that Catholics would not join the evaluation activity of the Federation of Women's Clubs because "they did not want to be put in a position of having to constantly dissent on such strong themes as divorce, suicide, etc., and be spotlighted in this manner" ("Respecting Films, Faiths Far Apart, But Regret It," *Variety*, 5 February 1958, 72).

entertained and educated children the best. But it was adults who used the Green Sheet service, and it was the problematic explicit content of adult-oriented features which the Film Estimate board had a responsibility to inform the public of.

Since few members of the public actually saw physical copies of the Green Sheet (contrary to Garth Jowett's claim that it was read by ten million Americans), its reviews were often transmitted in crude short hand in the few civic magazines and pamphlets that carried the rating service.¹⁰³ While some of these "capsule" forms of the Green Sheet reviews provided self-explanatory evidence of objectionable content (the estimates' review of Universal's A-rated *Cape Fear* was transcribed in a July 1962 issue of *Changing Times* as simply "a psychotic sex criminal seeks revenge"), the brevity of most abridged reviews translated to confusion on readers' part about why a film had been listed as objectionable in the first place. Although Warner Brothers' 1962 feature *Chapman Report* was given an *Adult* rating, its plot was only described loosely as: "A survey reveals marital problems of four suburban wives, which are then properly resolved." Similarly, another *Adult* feature, 20th Century Fox's Peter Sellers vehicle *I Like Money* (1962), was nothing more than: "Naïve country schoolmaster becomes a worldly tycoon."¹⁰⁴ As far as readers were concerned, such unclear information about potentially unfit content might as well have belonged to *Family* or *Young People* classifications. It also placed added value on the specific classification ratings (*A*, *MY*, *Y*, *F*, and *C*), which the MPAA had of course attempted to dissuade patrons from using solely, for fear that such blanket classifications would be used in various film advertisements.

¹⁰³ Jowett, *Film: The Democratic Art*, 421.

¹⁰⁴ The capsule reviews of the Estimate Board included in *Changing Times* were published under the title "Movie Guide for Parents" and did not mention the board's relationship to the MPAA. Reviews taken from *Changing Times*, July 1962; November 1962; August 1962.

In 1961, *Time* magazine wrote: “The real trouble with movies today is not so much the choice of subject matter, since even the most sordid subject can be treated with dignity and art; the trouble is precisely their lack of art, their crass and speculative exploitation of sex.”¹⁰⁵ Likewise, in 1961, only 39 of the 189 films reviewed by the Green Sheet were rated *Family*, while 43 films were *Adult*. Indeed, a total 105 films (55.56 percent) were classified as for only adults or mature young people. Only 13 films (6.88 percent) received recommendations from the estimates (See Appendix A). In the coming years, the Motion Picture Association and its Green Sheet were forced to come to terms with the reality that new boundaries were being crossed in what type of film content could be deemed permissible for general viewing. They did so at first only reluctantly and defiantly, believing that widespread use of the Green Sheet by patrons provided a dangerous green light for classification, but would soon embraced the service, improbably enough, as an intermediate form of classification before an eventual industry-wide ratings mandate could be implemented. Meanwhile, the language used by the estimates in their reviews, however filtered and obscured it may have been by MPAA interests, nonetheless provided an unusual and interesting glimpse into how audiences of the 1960s monitored objectionable motion picture material in times of shifting social and cultural values.

¹⁰⁵ “The Big Leer,” *Time*, Vol. 77 (9 June, 1961): 55.

CHAPTER THREE: THE GREEN SHEET BECOMES A GAME CHANGER, 1963-1965.

Early 1963 witnessed the second straight year of considerable lobbying by the film industry to state legislatures to halt legislation enacting classification mandates. This was particularly true in New York, where the MPAA still housed its main offices. Negotiations had been lengthier and more complex than in the 1961-1962 session, when the Theater Owners of America announced it would help increase circulation of the Green Sheet to exhibitors in exchange for delaying classification measures. This year, the Joint Legislative Committee on Offensive and Obscene Material, considering passage of the “Marano Bill” (named for assemblyman Luigi Marano, who continued to seek four-year legislation providing classification for schoolchildren) had met extensively with Margaret Twyman and MPAA legal counsel on public panels and events held at churches and civic centers. When the Association offered the Green Sheet for the committee’s consideration, the reaction of the committee was indicative of the larger dilemma facing legislators: It was an excellent service, they contended, and if it was distributed more widely there would have been no need for a Marano Bill. But the unfortunate reality was that two factors hindered its success: Its measly distribution of roughly 25,000 copies was insufficient, and so was its policy that the Estimate Board rate exclusively Code-approved films. Before legislators agreed to forestall the Marano Bill one more year for the 1962-1963 legislative session, the MPAA would have to fix one of these problems.¹⁰⁶

The film industry chose the change the latter. On April 9, 1963, the MPAA announced that the Green Sheet would expand coverage to include films which were not granted seals of approval from the PCA. Such an action would place the Motion Picture Association on favorable ground with the IFIDA once again, and given that the box office appeal for foreign

¹⁰⁶ “MPAA’s ‘Green Sheet’ As Compromise Leverage, If Including Foreign Pix,” *Variety*, 10 April 1963, 17.

films was limited and rarely were international features a major draw for American families, the move appeared to provide the least amount of potential economic damage to the industry (even preserving the low overhead costs of printing the bulletin, at around 30,000 copies). The MPAA appeared as cordial and adaptable as possible, letting the Committee on Offensive and Obscene Material know that although it would object to any attempts by the state to add its own “recommendations” to the Green Sheet, it would wholeheartedly welcome state assistance in circulating the bulletin. This was a shrewd tactic, speculated *Variety*, since it would require the state legislature to bypass multiple bureaucratic hurdles in authorizing a new licensing division.¹⁰⁷

In addition, the Film Estimate Board agreed to change the name of its *F* (Family) rating to *GA* (General Audiences). Some exhibitors had noted that motion pictures receiving the *F* rating negatively affected the attendance of older teenagers believing that the *Family* classification signified only children’s fare. Interestingly, other exhibitors complained of precisely the opposite – that the *F* rating was a false signal for parents to send their young children indiscriminately to movie theaters unaccompanied by adults. The real underlying motivation behind the adoption of *GA* may have been to appeal to older ticket-purchasing teenagers and younger adults by obscuring the division between motion pictures designed for solely children’s entertainment and those made for a broader appeal.¹⁰⁸ But the move also illustrated how unnecessarily confusing the Estimate Board’s rating system was to unfamiliar users. Even after the elimination of the *F*, the Green Sheet still utilized *GA*, *C* (Children), *Y* (Young People), and *MY* (Mature Youth) ratings for motion pictures relatively benign in content and appropriate for all suggested school-aged audiences. The only discernable variances

¹⁰⁷ “MPAA BroadSides Proposed N.Y. Law to Classify Films,” *Variety*, 28 September 1962, 3.

¹⁰⁸ “From ‘F’ to ‘GA,’” *Boxoffice*, 15 April 1963, 19.

between the ratings were that they were differentiated according to levels of education: *Mature Young People* signified teenagers in high school, *Young People* meant children in junior high school, and *Children* meant anyone under twelve years of age.¹⁰⁹

But such distinctions were never laid out for readers of the actual bulletins themselves; the only useful information accompanying the listing of the five ratings in use after 1963 (A, MY, Y, GA, C) was a brief parenthetical italic next to *Children* reading “*unaccompanied by adults.*”¹¹⁰ This meant that even in full-length reviews published in the bulletin (as opposed to abridged capsule reviews published elsewhere), rating rationale was sometimes impossible to pinpoint. In the estimates’ review from May 1964 of Universal’s GA-rated *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, they noted that the classic children’s novel by Scott O’Dell had made “an unusual, delightful film” about a child protagonist who finds over the course of the film “inner strength that gives her heroic courage [and] also enables her to find the best in this simplest of lives.” But why did this seemingly ideal film for young audiences differ in its classification from the A-MY-Y-rated *The Chalk Garden*, reviewed in the same issue and produced by the same studio? That film had starred Hayley Mills as an “incorrigible” teenager in a story that promoted a fundamental message for youth that “the human spirit needs cultivation, care and love in order to thrive.”¹¹¹ The two films seemed remarkably similar in audience appeal and story morals, but it appeared to be the duty of Green Sheet readers to discern for themselves from the tone of each composite review why the two films merited separate classifications.

There were other inconsistencies in the rating system – perhaps a natural flaw of any advisory classification system by an “objective” body of estimates. Randall was one of the first

¹⁰⁹ Randall, *Censorship of the Movies*, 182.

¹¹⁰ After a cosmetic revision to the Green Sheet in 1967, the bulletin did carry a “Key to Symbols” guide which instructed: “Audience levels are only suggested, since individual preferences and restrictions differ widely.”

¹¹¹ “The Green Sheet,” May 1964.

to point out that for an organization so intent on categorizing itself neutral and not dealing in film criticism, the Film Estimate Board sometimes appeared to be anything but. It is difficult to assess whether the estimates had a vested interest in promoting specific studio features, or was simply fanatical about certain production aspects of a given motion picture. Regardless, there were numerous instances where the Green Sheet appeared to surpass the boundaries of objectivity in its film reporting. In *Tiger Bay* (reviewed October 1960) Hayley Mills gave a performance “so remarkable for its talent and imagination that she easily leads even [the rest of the film’s] superior cast in her difficult role.” *Spartacus* (1960) was called technically “magnificent, as are its period detail and scenic effects. [It] is a film of heroic proportions.” Carol Reed’s direction in *Our Man in Havana* (1959) was “brilliant,” and the film – a “hilarious travesty of Secret Service methods and minds” – was praised for its “top notch cast that any director might envy,” particularly Alec Guinness, who stood at “the whimsical center of wonderfully adult satire, both witty and uproarious . . . a joy to behold.” Of Bernhard Wicki’s *The Bridge* (1959), “rarely has the waste of war been pictured as movingly as it is here.” Describing *Dr. Zhivago* (1965): “There are elements of greatness in the superb photography that produces unforgettable pictures – the vast emptiness of the Russian steppes, the shop-lines Moscow streets – this and much more is breathtakingly beautiful.”¹¹²

One of the most notable examples of this overexuberance was the review of *The Sound of Music* (1965). “From the opening moments there is enchantment for eye and ear,” began the review, and it proceeded to be ceaseless in its unilateral praise of the film. “There is a wealth of melody throughout the long picture, as the well-known, well-loved songs are sung by the children and their vivacious governess . . . The delightful production has a storybook quality, even in the closing episode of the family’s escape from the Nazis, but is saved from

¹¹² “The Green Sheet,” October 1960; December 1960; March 1960; July 1961; February 1966.

sentimentality by the vitality of the performances. Besides, who wants to find fault when there is glorious music, thrilling settings – and Julie Andrews!”¹¹³

The *Sound of Music* review appeared to imply that the estimates gave preferences to motion pictures with recognizable actors and actresses (and may have withheld critical methods of discernment for objectionable material in such films). While “preference” is a difficult and subjective quality to pinpoint, the Estimate Board did not hide its admiration for certain actors, which may have muddied its perception of the motion pictures they starred in. Brigitte Bardot was a performer whole-heartedly embraced by the Green Sheet, and in *Babette Goes to War* (1959), she “romps along innocently enough” and on the basis of her performance the film was “generally light-hearted” enough to receive an A-MY-Y rating. Elvis Presley did star in an A-rated feature, *Wild in the Country* (1961), a “long, full-to-overflowing drama” with “occasionally sordid material,” which was significantly aided by Elvis’ performance, and he “does well as a sorely tried country boy with a justifiable resentment against the world at large.”¹¹⁴

Doris Day-Rock Hudson comedies were often judged as poor in taste, but were redeemed on the basis of the star power of the leads. *Lover, Come Back* (1962) was a “risqué, frothy farce” whose “dialogue and situations are frequently in questionable taste,” but the teamwork of the lead actors proved “just right for this kind of fun-making” (additionally, the estimates praised Doris Day’s clothing: “As usual, Miss Day’s wardrobe is an added attraction.”) In the Rock Hudson-Gina Lollobrigida comic vehicle *Strange Bedfellows* (1965), “sizzling love conquers all” in a story containing “much double-entendre in wildly zany situations.” But there is little

¹¹³ “The Green Sheet,” March 1965.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, April 1960; August 1961.

criticism of such risqué scenes and behaviors because, seemingly, “the risqué bit of fluff is mounted in style, with a top-flight cast which fulfills expectations.”¹¹⁵

Although suspicious, there is little evidence indicating a correlation between films receiving high praise from the estimates and big-budget features that MPAA studios anticipated would draw a successful box office run, since the vast majority of films tended to receive some form of praise or another. This would back up IFIDA head Michael Mayer’s claim in his book *Foreign Films on American Screens* that although the Green Sheet was financially supported by the Motion Picture Association, it was apparent that there was no interference with its critical function.¹¹⁶ But this statement, like so many made about the Green Sheet in the 1960s, seems to stem from casual and empirical observation rather than scrutinized fact. Like today’s Classification and Ratings Administration, the fact that the Film Estimate Board had close ties to the MPAA lended itself naturally to questions of whether it represented the immortal conflict of interests for the film industry between selling tickets and regulating content.

There were, in fact, a handful of motion pictures that did receive harsh treatment by the estimates. 1960s films which depicted sex, violence, and alcohol – “prurient interests” – were still painted in a negative light by the Green Sheet much as they had been 30 years ago by the Joint Estimate Reports. Films which were accused of cheapening sex for sensationalism and taboo were eschewed and dismissed with A ratings. The Mamie Van Doren vehicle, *Vice Raid* (1960), was decried as “tawdry material” whose sensational aspects were “fully exploited in the brief running time of this cheap melodrama.” *Man-Trap* (1960) had an “over-packed plot” that combined “drunken revelry, sordid husband-wife relationships, and cheap sex.” *Mr. Sardonicus*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, February 1962; February 1965.

¹¹⁶ Michael F. Mayer, *Foreign Films on American Screens* (New York: Arco Publishing Company, Inc., 1965): 81. *Variety* reported in July 1967 that the content of the Green Sheet reached only about 150 newspapers.

(1961) contained “tortured maidens, a nasty business with leeches, screams in the night,” and was subsequently decried as a “tastelessly unpleasant film.”¹¹⁷

At times, there appeared to be an awareness that audiences actively seeking out corrosive or perverted material would relish in certain *A* films reviewed, in spite of the open disdain toward them from the Estimate Board. *Dr. Blood’s Coffin*, reviewed in October 1961, was a “ghoulish, overly unpleasant shocker” that contained “much gruesome detail,” but nonetheless, the estimates were forced to concede that “anyone attracted by the title of this British melodrama will not be disappointed by the horror story it tells.” Although MGM’s *Night Must Fall* (1964) was a “dreadful tale” with “some of the to-be-expected suspense weakened by vague motivation,” the British psychological thriller still had “moments of horror [which] generate excitement and tension.” And though Alfred Hitchcock’s *Psycho* (1960) received a hard *A* rating, the board expressed its unanimous acclaim, commenting that Hitchcock (a director with “mastery of the gruesome and unexpected”) had made a study in abnormal psychology which had “succession of sensational effects and shocks” and managed to “keep the eyes glued to the screen.”¹¹⁸ Intriguingly, nowhere on the bulletin itself did the estimates explicitly state that their service was to be used solely by concerned parents in families. Instead, it only offered “a guide to the selection of current entertainment films by informing the movie-goer of its content.” In this respect, the Green Sheet appeared to be little more than an innocuous, MPAA-sponsored handy guide for patrons sampling what upcoming fare would be offered at movie theaters.

In 1963, Eric Johnston died unexpectedly. According to Mark Harris, his death left the Motion Picture Association “rudderless” for the next three years, as the organization lacked the leadership of someone of national stature who was willing to take an authoritative stand one way

¹¹⁷ “The Green Sheet,” March 1960; November 1961.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, October 1961; May 1964; August 1960.

or another on the classification debate.¹¹⁹ Johnston's death left the film already ambivalent industry's sponsorship of the Green Sheet in even more unclear hands. Producer Richard Wilson had called the Green Sheet "a Johnson office baby," and it was uncertain how or if the incumbent proxy of the MPAA – whomever it may be – would choose to embrace, oppose, or rectify the official functions of the Film Estimate Board. For the immediate time, MPAA Vice-President Ralph Hetzel filled the void as Association head.

On December 17, 1963, the New York legislature's Committee on Offensive and Obscene Material announced that, for the third straight year, it would be introducing a classification bill for state representatives to vote on. The committee had found, after two days of rigorous hearings held in September, that the State Board of Regents (which licensed all films exhibited in the state) was still a valid organization, and that its efforts would be greatly aided by a rating system. This time, the amended measure was tougher and bore closer resemblance to the Abilene ordinance, with exhibitors and parents now facing misdemeanor penalties for illegally permitting a child under the age of 16 into a movie theater playing an adult-only picture, with a fine of \$50 for each unaccompanied minor.¹²⁰ Representative Luigi Marano stated that the only way the committee would accept "help" from the motion picture industry was by the MPAA agreeing to expand circulation of the Green Sheet.¹²¹ The MPAA countered by presenting evidence that, since its adoption of non Code-approved motion pictures (particularly foreign ones), the Green Sheet service had become more thorough and comprehensive. Additionally, the MPAA had altered its mailing list to cover more libraries, churches, school, and civic groups –

¹¹⁹ Mark Harris, *Pictures at a Revolution: Five Movies and the Birth of the New Hollywood* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008): 181.

¹²⁰ "Film Classification Bill Introduced by Educator," *Boxoffice*, 11 January 1964, p. E-1. From April 1, 1963 – March 31, 1964, the New York censor board licensed a total of 1,252 films (including short subjects). 671 of those films were foreign, while only 238 feature films were American. The board collected nearly \$250,000 in submission fees.

¹²¹ "Again 'Sponsoring' Bill to Classify," *Variety*, 18 December 1963, 13.

organizations reaching a larger total readership – while almost entirely eliminating individual subscribers from the list. In 1963, the Green Sheet’s total distribution had risen from 25,000 to 32,000 copies, but the community relations department had noted that because of the expenses involved in printing, postage, and keeping mailing lists updated (estimated at \$50,000 annually), its circulation could not be enlarged further.¹²²

But Marano and other New York legislators remain unconvinced. Because the MPAA still flatly refused to publish Green Sheet ratings in advertisements, as well as the fact that it was practically impossible to find in mainstream newspapers and periodicals (despite Mayer’s contention that every daily newspaper in the United States received a copy), the committee maintained that the bulletin could still only be widely disseminated through paper copies.¹²³ The community relations department long claimed that the Green Sheet reached 10 million people regularly, meaning that, for that statistic to be accurate, each single monthly issue would have to have been individually handled by over 300 people, extremely unlikely.¹²⁴ The *New York Times* estimated that if employed in good faith by the industry – meaning that its ratings would be published in advertising – the Green Sheet could serve both purposes of informing the public of age-inappropriate films, while avoiding the “obvious evils and pitfalls” of state censorship boards.¹²⁵ On the New York State Council of Protestant Church’s “Statement of Principles for 1964,” the council announced its support for legislation encouraging “responsible and reasonable” use of the mass media in educating the public of problematic film content.¹²⁶ Few theater circuits came to the defense of the industry, and the only other significant criticism leveled at the Committee’s measure came from the American Civil Liberties Union.

¹²² “N.Y. State Kid-Tag on Films Looms: Stronger Green Sheet in Opposition,” *Variety*, 16 October 1963, 3.

¹²³ Mayer, *Foreign Films on American Screens*, 81.

¹²⁴ Richard Kyle-Keith, *The High Price of Pornography* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961): 166.

¹²⁵ “Warning Signal for Films,” *New York Times*, 8 October 1963, 42.

¹²⁶ “Protestant Groups Put Censor Views on Record,” *Boxoffice*, 13 January 1964, E-1.

The MPAA remained steadfast in its opposition to publicized ratings. In retrospect, this move seemed rather shortsighted; in a few short years, the Association would publish its ratings (and on at least one occasion, the opinion of the Green Sheet) on all film advertisements, and Randall even estimated that the \$50,000 budget for the Green Sheet was “probably considerably less than the organization spends to lobby state legislatures on the classification question, and perhaps less than it spends to represent itself to the New York state legislature alone.”¹²⁷ On top of this, for the first time in decades, the movie industry was becoming profitable again – the gross income of the industry reached an all-time high of \$1 billion in 1964, with average weekly admissions numbering around 40 million and 320 proposed new movie theaters to be built.¹²⁸ And while there was an increase in small-time newspapers publishing film ratings from the Legion of Decency, such as the *Ypsilanti* [Michigan] *Press*, they appeared to have little overall effect on box office performance.¹²⁹

On February 27, 1964, the MPAA opted to double its circulation of the Green Sheet, from roughly 32,000 copies to 60,000. Beginning with its March issue, the Green Sheet would be distributed to 900 daily newspapers, every motion picture exhibitor (numbering approximately 14,000), and 13,000 branch libraries. Exhibitors were granted the opportunity to purchase bulk copies of each issue for “subdistribution” to patrons, although individual personal subscriptions were still not offered; 100 copies cost \$2.50, and 1,000 cost \$12. Single copies were still available free of charge. The MPAA did not announce the precise cost for the new Green Sheet budget, but it was believed to be “substantially over” \$50,000 annually. In addition,

¹²⁷ Randall, *Censorship of the Movies*, 184.

¹²⁸ Ralph Hetzel, “Gratitude for Boomy Outlook; But Rue New Backdoor Censors,” *Variety*, 6 January 1965, 6.

¹²⁹ “Church Picture Ratings Used in Newspaper Ads,” *Boxoffice*, 6 January 1964, C-3.

Marie Hamilton reported that the Film Estimate Board was seeking additional memberships of youth organizations.¹³⁰

In his announcement of the Green Sheet's doubling, Ralph Hetzel declared that "the answer [to the discernment of information] in our society is a free choice."¹³¹ He added: "The motion picture industry believes that the public should have the fullest possible information to help them choose the kind of film entertainment that best meets their needs." The increased circulation was immediately applauded by the Theater Owners of America, the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, and other exhibitor groups who appeared to have supported increased circulation of the Green Sheet for years as a means of protection from local authorities and censorship boards, but had only recently been able to freely express their opinions as a result of the activities in New York. Exhibitors praised the move as a service to the general public which would increase the stature of theaters as whole-hearted community institutions.¹³² One Arkansas theater owner declared that as a result of the Green Sheet's visible growth, "the honeymoon was over for television," and going to the movies would prosper once again.¹³³ A full-page color advertisement from April 1964 declared that subscription to the Green Sheet would "improve your patronage and goodwill" and instructing users to "put the Green Sheet to work for your theatre in your community!"¹³⁴

Interestingly enough, the strategy of doubling circulation backfired for the MPAA in New York. Marano made it clear to Hetzel and the MPAA from the beginning that the

¹³⁰ "Double 'Green Sheet' Circulation; Hope to Curb Classification Trend," *Variety*, 4 March 1964, 20.

¹³¹ "Film Men Step Up Anticensor Work," *New York Times*, 29 February 1964, 11.

¹³² "Green Sheet Goes National in New Distribution Plan," *Boxoffice*, 9 March 1964, p. 4. The statement by Hetzel that the motion picture industry believed the public should have had increased information was misleading, and selectively ignored any pressure placed on the MPAA by the Marano legislation, much in the same way, as John Sargent points out, that the "voluntary" adoption of the Production Code in 1930 was actually the result of excessive external pressures on the industry by Catholic reformers.

¹³³ "Family Films Promotion Urged at Ark. Meeting," *Boxoffice*, 27 April 1964, 14.

¹³⁴ Taken from *Boxoffice*, 20 April 1964, 9.

agreement to increase the Green Sheet would not foreclose the possibility of reintroduction of classification legislation. Indeed, two pending classification bills were sent back to the rules committee of the legislature. Marano criticized the Board of Regents for failing to come to a conclusive decision supporting or opposing the adoption of the state classification bills, and blasted the motion picture industry, noting that if the MPAA did not fulfill its “moral obligation” to the New York general public, the committee would consider further action. Marano certainly did not object to the MPAA’s actions; “if carried out, it is constructive,” he had noted.¹³⁵ But it did not go far enough to merit dissolving the Committee on Offensive and Obscene Material, which was voted by the state assembly to continue for another year and given \$20,000 in appropriation funds.¹³⁶ In a televised debate with MPAA legal counsel Barbara Scott broadcast to New York City residents on April 22, Marano continued to assert that it was the state’s responsibility to determine the suitability of motion pictures for children.¹³⁷

Another noteworthy instance of opposition to the Green Sheet’s increase came from Catholic film columnist William H. Mooring, motion picture editor of the *Tidings* newspaper. Mooring argued that that the move had been intended to do little more than strengthen the film industry’s resistance to classify, and questioned the bulletin’s attention to different aspects of morality. He had noted that the MPAA manipulated the ten organizations of the Film Estimate Board as “sleeping partner subsidiaries.”¹³⁸ Additionally, after a letter to the editor of the *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle* stated that if the newspaper published Green Sheet listings film classification laws would become unnecessary, the editor noted beneath it that the service

¹³⁵ “New Green Sheet Plan Step Ahead, Says Marano,” *Boxoffice*, 23 March 1964, E-1.

¹³⁶ “‘Green Sheet’ Can Help Parents’ Problem – If They Know About It,” *Variety*, 1 April 1964, 3.

¹³⁷ “Film Classification Debated on TV Show,” *Boxoffice*, 4 May 1964, 14.

¹³⁸ “Mooring Skeptical of Green Sheet Slants,” *Variety*, 1 May 1963, 17.

was unsuitable for that purpose because it did not deal with the motion pictures about which parents inquired most.¹³⁹

Fortunately for the industry, the threat of the Marano Committee soon became considerably less worrisome when the New York censorship board dissolved in July 1965 (during the same month, the Memphis censor board was declared illegal). By that point, only three state boards remained – Maryland, Kansas, and Virginia – and the Supreme Court was rapidly overturning authority from the local censors and authorities. Trans-Lux’s *A Stranger Knocks*, a controversial Danish import decried by the New York Board of Censors as immoral and described by the June 1965 edition of the Green Sheet as “extremely offensive” and containing two “unusually explicit scenes of sexual intimacies,” was granted in Appeals Court a reversal of a ban decreed by the Maryland Circuit Court.¹⁴⁰

In addition, exhibitors across the country asserted that the increase of the Green Sheet had relieved pressures from legislative and municipal censorship. Among the most notable cities where evidence exists that theater circuits distributed the bulletin widely were: Minneapolis, Albuquerque, Houston, Meriden, CT., Eugene, OR., and Sarasota, FL., where the local *Herald-Tribune* was one of the few major newspapers that published full-length reviews from Green Sheet issues. Notable periodicals including Green Sheet ratings were *Hollywood Reporter*, *Boxoffice*, and *Parents Magazine*. The fact remained, however, that the MPAA stripped any duty to personally ensure the Green Sheet’s distribution beyond its printing and mailing, and the reason had nothing to do with extra costs. It remained troublingly unclear what the effect of the increased circulation would bring; perhaps it would not be felt as much in box office losses, but it would be most palpable in the springing up of organizations with MPAA ties becoming sudden

¹³⁹ “‘Inadequacy’ Charged Against Green Sheet,” *Variety*, 14 October 1964, 15.

¹⁴⁰ “Baltimore Judge Upholds Banning of Two Films,” *Boxoffice*, July 19, 1965, E-1; “The Green Sheet,” June 1965.

proponents of industry-wide classification. Therefore, instead of negotiating with advertisers, distributors, or any members of the media, the MPAA politely ascribed the responsibility of circulating the Green Sheet upon its readers, suggested that they be the ones to extend the use of the Green Sheet by posting it on bulletin boards, reading it aloud at meetings, or devising other ways of disseminating its information – all activities not excessively public. It is also doubtful that the Green Sheet was ever actually directly distributed to newspaper editors (see Chapter Four).

Beginning with the publication's increased distribution, there appeared to be a markedly different attitude toward sexuality. Instead of explaining a plotline containing actual acts of sex, the reviews relate when motion pictures give off a sexual mood or atmosphere. Of the 1965 rock 'n' roll vehicle *Get Yourself a College Girl*, the estimates wrote: "Bedroom-centered sequences, when Nancy Sinatra, a married coed, has a lusty reunion with the husband she sees infrequently, add a sexy aura." For the Bob Hope comedy *I'll Take Sweden* (1965), the estimates concluded: "Situations and antics veer towards the risqué, with a good deal of running in and out of bedrooms and a good many off-color lines, but the farce is light and brisk, there are good-looking people and lush settings, and it goes without saying that everyone's honor is intact at the finish." In *The Man in Istanbul* (1966), the estimates agree that "Sylvia Koscina supplies the major part of the sexy interest that this type of supercharged adventure seems to demand." Milos Forman's "skilled direction" in *Loves of a Blonde* (1966) "weaves together frank lovemaking in the film's intimate scenes."¹⁴¹

While this may have appeared to be only a slight modification in tone from its reviews prior to 1964, this illustrated a couple of significant insights into how the Estimate Board approached taboo subjects. Firstly, no longer did a film actually have to contain an act of

¹⁴¹ "The Green Sheet," January 1965; August 1965; January 1966; December 1966.

obscurity in order for it to receive a prohibitive rating; objectionable content only had to be inferred, even if only present in an “aura,” in order for the film to merit a proscribed *Adult* rating. But perhaps more significantly, it appeared that films containing sex were being openly praised and lauded for their eroticism. Some films apparently “demanded” sexy interest, and in order to merit a positive review from the estimates, it was incumbent for such motion pictures to display this interest to the best of the filmmaker’s abilities. Regardless of how prohibitive the *Adult* rating could potentially represent to patrons, those were precisely the films now being recommended at the highest frequencies – a far cry from only five years earlier, when A-rated films given the “recommended” designation were virtually unheard of.

Meanwhile in Hollywood, Geoffrey Shurlock was almost single-handedly changing the face of the Production Code Administration. The man who openly opposed to being called chief censor in favor of “an elegant word for our function called self-regulation” was convinced that acceptable films could be made about any topic, however sex and violence-laden, and that the Code was concerned with treatment rather than subject matter.¹⁴² Changes to the Production Code now allowed for the depiction of homosexuality (*Advise and Consent*, *The Children’s Hour*) and relaxed objections to impure sexuality (*Lolita*, *Kiss Me, Stupid*, and *Irma La Douce*).¹⁴³ Some of the most scintillating and controversial films of the mid-1960s were the first string of James Bond films – *Dr. No* (1962), *From Russia With Love* (1964), and *Octopussy* (1965) – were each granted seals of approval by the PCA with little issue. Shurlock reportedly

¹⁴² Art Berman, “Shurlock Censors Idea He’s Censor for Films,” *Los Angeles Times*, 29 July 1963, D5.

¹⁴³ *The Children’s Hour* was described by the Green Sheet as “honestly, sympathetically, and without sensationalism prob[ing] a problem that can be understood only by adults.” The word “unnatural” is mentioned twice in the review, referring to the lesbian relationship between Shirley MacLaine and Audrey Hepburn, and MacLaine’s “agony of mind is marvelously acted as she begins to admit to herself that the child’s lying accusation of her as unnatural has at least some germ of truth” (April 1962). Homosexuality and its implications were also “most sensitively handled” in the British drama *The Leather Boys*, in spite of the film’s “considerable frankness in the dialogue and some of the situations” (January 1966).

quipped of the PCA's approval of *From Russia With Love*: "It's only a little fucking. What's all the shouting about?"¹⁴⁴

But arguably the most discernable shift in Green Sheet reviews and Production Code policy came with the release of Sidney Lumet's *The Pawnbroker* (1965), one of the first mainstream studio pictures to feature nudity. The film starred Rod Steiger as the titular character, who at one point is approached by a black prostitute who bears her breast in an effort to seduce him for a monetary exchange. At a later point of the film, a flashback is shown from a Nazi concentration camp, where the pawnbroker's wife sits nude next to an SS officer in a concrete cell. The release of the motion picture was considered a milestone in the history of the Production Code, not only for its inclusion of nudity and inferences of interracial sexual relations, but perhaps even more so as a result of its interaction with internal and external regulation bodies. Instead of declaring the film unfit for public viewing, the PCA granted *The Pawnbroker* a seal of approval (after an appeal on artistic grounds) and the Catholic Film Office revoked its *Condemned* rating of the motion picture after a mere two feet of film were cut from a single scene.¹⁴⁵ The revised Legion of Decency rating was an A-3 ("morally objectionably for adults") and marked the first time a Legion rating was altered after a film's initial run.

The "acceptable" A-3 rating seemed to fly in the face of years of Catholic and PCA policy and intolerance toward nudity. In a 1965 report on the Legion of Decency, Monsignor Little reported that "in the last two years, 34 films, of which 20 were major American productions, would have been released with scenes employing nudity had not the producers

¹⁴⁴ Miller, *Hollywood Censored*, 185.

¹⁴⁵ Even in its original "condemned" form, the Catholic Film Office could not contain its praise and even a certain degree of sympathy for *The Pawnbroker*. It was condemned not because it "was in itself obscene, but because the Legion has a principle according to which nudity, for whatever reason, will not be accepted in motion picture treatment – and this is for the common good." *Variety* later reported that the Catholic condemnation was "perhaps the mildest ever offered."

realized that they would then have been condemned.” The associate producer of *The Pawnbroker*, Ely Landou, was personally informed by Geoffrey Shurlock that nude scenes would “call forth a great amount of protest from pressure groups.” But in March 1965, the Production Code Review Board had granted a “special exemption” for the film on the grounds that it upheld a degree of realism and humanism, and was not prurient. Almost single-handedly assuring *The Pawnbroker*’s successful outcome in the Review Board’s vigorous debate was the consent of its most famous and problematic member, independent producer and filmmaker Joseph Mankiewicz, whose own 1959 feature, *Suddenly Last Summer*, had been originally refused a PCA certification.¹⁴⁶ Additionally and crucially, Landou personally promised the board that the nudity of *The Pawnbroker* would not be exploited in its advertising. Leonard Leff and Jerald Simmons astutely summed up what may have been on the minds of the six board members granting the film special exemption: “A flash of bare breasts seemed a small price to discover whether a picture with nudity could restore box office health or send Hollywood into the jaws of an angry press and public.”¹⁴⁷

The Green Sheet reviewed the film in its July 1965 issue. In its review, the estimates wrote that director Lumet was “relentless in his treatment of brutal violence and degradation, and graphic in detailing scenes of sexual indulgence.” But as the PCA and NCOMP had already declared, *The Pawnbroker* was anything but pornographic and unworthy of national exhibition. Rod Steiger’s performance as the Nazi concentration camp survivor was “powerful,” and the estimates warned that “brilliant as the picture is, and superb as is the acting of the entire cast, the general effect of the powerful film is grim and shattering.” The lone nascent hint of objection

¹⁴⁶ In February 1960, the Green Sheet warned that the *Adult*-rated *Suddenly, Last Summer* would be “shocking and revolting to some audiences,” but that it also contained performances and craftsmanship which were “undeniably absorbing.” (“The Green Sheet,” February 1960).

¹⁴⁷ Leonard J. Leff and Jerald L. Simmons, *The Dame in the Kimono: Hollywood, Censorship, & The Production Code from the 1920s to the 1960s* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990): 252-253.

along the grounds of prurience (as well as disagreement among the estimates) was the inclusion of an extra note at the end of the review from the General Federation of Women's Clubs: "Nudity is used to intensify the impact of an already sordid situation." But even this line implied that the bulk of the film's objectionable content derived from its narrative and context rather than mere inclusion of bare breasts. In its capsule reviews circulated to newspapers and periodicals, the Green Sheet's praise of the film was considerably lessened, and concluded with little else but a warning that the film was "graphic in its scenes of sex and violence." But its A designation looked no different from the other nudity-less *Adult* films rated by the Green Sheet that month, which included Paramount's *The Amorous Adventures of Moll Flanders*, Warner Brothers' *Brainstorm*, and Universal's *Wild Seed*.¹⁴⁸ Nudity did not warrant a special warning to potential audiences.

The Green Sheet's approval of the film was further enhanced by other Protestant groups' praise. Episcopal bishop James A. Pike hailed *The Pawnbroker* as "one of the truly significant religious (because it deals with ultimate matters) films of our time." Pike even specifically cited the nude scenes, arguing that the motion picture was "important, not despite its realism, but because of it."¹⁴⁹ It became the first film initially condemned by the Catholic Church since 1957's *Baby Doll* to have to have a major theatrical run in Albany, New York, the city home to Luigi Marano, the New York Board of Censors, and a strong population demographic of Catholics; it may not have been a complete coincidence that the state censorship board dissolved in the same week that *The Pawnbroker* was released.¹⁵⁰ It also became the first condemned film

¹⁴⁸ "The Green Sheet," July 1965.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted in Miller, *Censored Hollywood*, 98.

¹⁵⁰ Ralph Hetzel: "It is our hope that Maryland and Kansas, the two remaining states of the Union which still retain limited prior censorship, will shortly follow the lead of New York State." Quoted in "MPAA is Gratified Over No Pre-Censor in NY," *Boxoffice*, 5 July 1965, 4.

ever to play in Catholic-heavy St. Paul, Minnesota.¹⁵¹ The film was even awarded “Best American Film” by the National Council of Churches, a Protestant organization. It is worth noting, however, that the versions of *The Pawnbroker* released in these cities were shown after American-International took over domestic distribution of the film in smaller markets from Landau, and subsequently removed the instances of nudity in the film. According to *Variety*, this resulted in an additional five-to-ten thousand theatrical bookings.¹⁵² Revealingly, when Landau exhibited the film in Italy, he completely disregarded his pledge to the Review Board to not exploit the film’s nudity. Instead, using what he called the “sex pitch,” a poster prominently displaying the “negro prostitute on top of the man” was released to exhibitors, and as a result, *The Pawnbroker* took in \$1.5 million in Italy alone, half of its entire domestic grosses in the United States.¹⁵³

The MPAA did attempt to curtail what could and could not be displayed on motion picture advertisements through a subsidiary agency, the Advertising Code Administration. Established in 1930, the Advertising Code, in accordance with the regulations of the PCA, mandated that all advertising and publicity materials be voluntarily submitted to the ACA in advance of release. For 1964, the Administration proudly claimed to have reviewed 107,809 units of “advertising, publicity, and exploitation,” while disapproving or revising less than one percent of total materials submitted. But these figures were misleading; just under 96,000 of the submitted materials were still photographs, overwhelmingly tending to be benign in nature. Newspapers and magazine advertisements lay at the center of public awareness of motion picture advertising, and in 1964, 454 of the 6,328 advertisements, posters, and accessories reviewed

¹⁵¹ Leonard Leff, “Hollywood and the Holocaust: Remembering *The Pawnbroker*,” *American Jewish History* 84, No. 4 (1996): 353-376, 370.

¹⁵² *Daily Variety*, 3 August 1966, RLC.

¹⁵³ Leff, “Hollywood and the Holocaust,” 371.

were either rejected or corrected, 7.35 percent (down from 8.22 percent in 1963). Distributors of adult pictures argued that Article 3 of the advertising code – stating that “illustrations and text in advertising shall faithfully represent the pictures themselves” – enabled the display of skin, innuendo, and blunt sexuality. ACA director Michael Linden rejected these claims: “When the picture deals with a seamy side of life, our position is that the public should be so informed. But this must be done in keeping with the guiding rule of good taste.”¹⁵⁴

But for the most part, the ACA failed to prevent sexually explicit films from saturating the U.S. market. It also failed to prevent the widespread publication of risqué advertisements such as the poster for Joseph Brenner and Associates’ *The Seductress* (1965), which boldly displayed a woman leaning on a tree wearing transparent eveningwear standing in front of an outline of a man, next to the caption: “At last! A film that dares to shock you with a new kind of raw, naked power and realism!”¹⁵⁵ The film was never reviewed by the Green Sheet, one of several flesh-happy independently distributed foreign imports of the 1960s avoiding the attention of the Estimate Board and the PCA. Not long afterward, the Supreme Court ruled that “titillating” advertising could be proof that advertised material was obscene. Even Justice William O. Douglas, arguably the court’s most vocal opponent of censorship, observed that “the advertisements of our best magazines are chockfull of thighs, ankles, calves, bosoms, eyes and hair, to draw the potential buyers’ attention.”¹⁵⁶

The Green Sheet was not seen as advertisement *per se*, but it was increasingly being treated a valuable piece of public relations for the MPA that demonstrated and amplified the presence of wholesome, nonsexual pictures in theatrical release, while acknowledging (but not necessarily devaluing) the presence of objectionable content in adult pictures. Moreover, it

¹⁵⁴ “MPAA Ad Code Report Reveals Admission Gain, Rejects Drop,” July 12, 1965, *Boxoffice*, 10.

¹⁵⁵ Published in *Boxoffice*, July 19, 1965, E-7.

¹⁵⁶ “Ill ‘Winds’ Blowing,” *Boxoffice*, 4 April 1966, 3.

served as a vehicle which would, even more powerfully than advertisements, cultivate enthusiasm and interest in theatrical films, and would represent for the MPAA “a going force which the American motion picture industry must further recognize and effectively channel.”¹⁵⁷ Exhibitors took a backseat to the MPAA, and did not appear to question the seamless maneuvering of the Green Sheet from ratings service to publicity guide. Ignoring the lingering problems of limited circulation, National Allied Distributors’ executive Milton H. London reported that “today, perhaps more than ever, the awareness of the public is one of our greatest strengths, and the Green Sheet provides a positive awareness.”¹⁵⁸

There were other, smaller-scale indications by mid-1965 that the Green Sheet was becoming one of the MPAA’s more successful investments. A theater manager in Colby, Kansas, who purchased 1,000 Green Sheet issues monthly reported that a local Methodist men’s group had vocalized its support for the theater and the motion picture industry in general, and the Green Sheet “was a considerably factor in overcoming much unfavorable criticism.”¹⁵⁹ In May 1965, Filmack Studios of Chicago announced it had designed and distributed a new trailer – made on green colored film – which would inform patrons of movie theaters that the Green Sheet was available for their use.¹⁶⁰ The *New York Times* even announced in October 1965 that a coalition of the top American airline companies, including Trans World, United, and Continental, used the Estimate Board’s ratings in determining which features were selected as in-flight movies suitable for all audiences.¹⁶¹

But in many ways, excitement over the Green Sheet was short-lived, and ignored the looming reality that, while it solved the irritating presence of censorship boards, the bulletin had

¹⁵⁷ “Information, Please!” *Boxoffice*, 11 April 1966, 2.

¹⁵⁸ “Strong Plug for Green Sheet By Allied States Ass’n,” *Boxoffice*, July 12, 1965, 10.

¹⁵⁹ “Services that Serve,” *Boxoffice*, June 7, 1965, 2.

¹⁶⁰ Edward Hudson, “In-Flight Movies Picked With Care,” *New York Times*, 24 October 1965, 88.

¹⁶¹ “New Filmack Trailer Boosts Green Sheet,” *Boxoffice*, 10 May 1965, 3.

only been able to do so through the industry consenting to its own form of classification. A perfect example of this was in Dallas, where the city commission, in response to the MPAA's unwillingness to enable classification, had instituted its own age-based, variable obscenity statute that the Supreme Court would eventually strike down, citing its "vagueness" and "attending evils" (MPAA chief counsel Louis Nizer represented the plaintiff theater chain who had brought the claim to federal court).¹⁶² Unless the MPAA devised its own strategy to classify, similar statutes from individual municipalities would prosper, and the process of taking each claim to court was costly and time-consuming. For the year 1964, the Green Sheet reviewed 209 motion pictures, and found only 35 of them (16.75 percent) to be appropriate for families and general audiences; 74 pictures were classified for adults and mature youth, and an additional 45 designated for adults only. Combined, films for adults and mature youth numbered three times the total amount of films classified for families. In 1965, these figures remained practically unchanged; in two months (August and November), there had been only a total two films listed for general audiences (see Appendices B and C). The MPAA had run out of options expanding the service by the end of 1965. The Green Sheet's findings only reinforced the need to the industry to protect the interests of its theater owners and filmmakers by rooting out capricious municipal censorship, and enabling a system of classification whose power could, at the very least, definitively rest in the hands of the studios.

¹⁶² Lewis, *Hollywood v. Hard Core*, 142.

CHAPTER FOUR: DECLINE OF THE GREEN SHEET, 1966-1969

The Green Sheet's praise of *The Pawnbroker* continued a trend of the estimates which legitimized portrayals of sex and violence in the name of preserving realism and gritty emotion. In May 1965, the John Wayne World War II vehicle *In Harm's Way* was given an A rating as a result of the "siege and sex . . . portrayed in equally violent proportion," but the estimates concluded: "Scenes of adultery and rape occur, but are played down in the emphasis on the vicissitudes of war . . . The picture offers candid appraisals of vastly differing personalities under the stresses of war – which isn't new in war movies at all, but which is always dramatically valid and completely entertaining."¹⁶³ Implicit in this review of the film was the idea that an A-rated film could be "dramatically valid," "entertaining," and realistic – terms which could be applied to a growing number of adult-oriented, critically-praised, financially successful films of the mid-sixties, such as *Darling*, *Alfie*, and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* The A rating no longer represented a prohibitive moniker advising audiences to stay away from certain features, but had now morphed into a symbolic indication that the film advised would not be following the censorial mandate of an out-of-touch Code with antiquated standards of morality.

In spite of the MPAA's claims that the Green Sheet had become more thorough in its listing of an increased variety of films, its coverage still lagged behind even the increasingly-irrelevant Legion of Decency. Between the years 1964-1966, the Green Sheet reviewed only 600 films, while the Legion of Decency had reviewed 805 films in the same time period. Randall estimated that both of these figures were significantly less than that of the average state or municipal licensing boards during the three-year span.¹⁶⁴ The Production Code, meanwhile, only granted its seal of approval to 59 percent of films by 1966. In the two-year period between 1963

¹⁶³ Reprinted in "Life on Film in Victoria," *Victoria Advocate*, 18 July 1966, 7.

¹⁶⁴ Randall, *Censorship of the Movies*, 183.

and 1965, 39 films were released without seals of approval, but many were nonetheless released by distribution subsidiaries of MPAA companies.¹⁶⁵

In May 1966, Jack Valenti, a former lobbyist and advisor to President Lyndon Johnson, was appointed new head of the Motion Picture Association. In his inaugural speech before the press, Valenti boldly pronounced, “I did not take the job of president of the Motion Picture Association to preside over a feckless Code!”¹⁶⁶ Taking little time to heed the public’s urging to scrap the Code in favor of a system of classification, Valenti developed a revised “voluntary” version of the Production Code which relaxed the draconian standards that filmmakers had been historically required to meet. Films could contain unsuitable content, but would have to carry a “Suggested for Mature Audiences” label in their various advertising and publicity. As the Green Sheet later noted, this label did not indicate that a film was unsuitable for young people, but that juvenile attendance was a “matter for parental judgment.” Although in recounting his first several months as MPAA head, Valenti claimed that his first move was “to abolish the old and decaying Hays Production Code,” this simply was not the case. The 1966 “Motion Picture Code of Self-Regulation” consisted of amendments to the old Code, and still retained the PCA practices of script conferences with producers and studio executives, along with instructing writers and directors on how to get the desired ratings for their films in both preproduction and postproduction stages.¹⁶⁷ And although “voluntary” sounded promising, the Production Code and its submission fees had in fact always been considered voluntary costs for filmmakers and producers (Valenti did reduce the minimum submission fees for foreign films from \$600 to \$200.)

¹⁶⁵ Kevin Sandler, *The Naked Truth: Why Hollywood Doesn’t Make X-Rated Movies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 35.

¹⁶⁶ Quoted in Miller, *Censored Hollywood*, 200.

¹⁶⁷ Tropiano, *Obscene, Indecent, Immoral, and Offensive*, 93-94.

Valenti initially defined the voluntary classification system as consisting of five “stages”: The first stage would involve PCA consultation with distributors, and the second stage would utilize print and broadcast media to inform patrons of a given motion picture’s age-appropriate content. In the third stage, Valenti indicated that the Green Sheet would be sent out individually to newspaper editors, and the overall circulation would likely be expanded. One other difference would be that the bulletin would be circulated using first-class mail instead of third class, which the MPAA had used since the increased circulation plan of 1964. The fourth and fifth stages involved initiating diligent various campaigns to, in the words of Valenti, “constantly impress on the public our determination to inform the parent – to insist that the ‘for mature audiences’ description does not mean sex – but rather subjects and treatment that parents ought not to display for their children.”¹⁶⁸ Like his predecessors, Valenti urged parents to personally consider the merits of each MPAA film in release prior to avoiding it entirely on the basis of its content.

Beginning in 1965, reviews of the Green Sheet had been reduced to “pocket form” in releasing official capsule reviews of its feature-length rating justifications. Prior to this, the only capsule reviews taken from the Green Sheet were assembled personally from the individuals or organizations in charge of disseminating Green Sheet content for wider readership. This crude method of interpreting the composite reviews led to inconsistencies among the various publications of capsule reviews. As part of the MPAA’s new publicity blitz, Valenti claimed streamlined capsule reviews were now regularly received 142 daily newspapers as part of the Association’s “Special Film Service to All Media.” But this was actually inaccurate, since the chain of distribution began with theater owners first receiving Green Sheet bulletins, and then

¹⁶⁸ “Pix Classification Inevitable,” *Daily Variety*, 17 August 1966, 4.

being recommended by the MPAA to provide the information and descriptive material from the Special Film Service to newspapers each Thursday.¹⁶⁹

At the 1967 NATO convention (the National Association of Theater Owners, the new name of the Theater Owners of America) Valenti defended the revised code as “an arena in which the free, disciplined creator can live and work unhampered by fear,” but also referred to it as “a barrier against which the cheap and tawdry will, hopefully, shatter.”¹⁷⁰ But the new permissions within the Code did not dissuade filmmakers from the “cheap and tawdry;” it actually increased it. In addition, Warner Brother’s controversial *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* became the first experiment by the MPAA to release a major studio film to adults only. The MPAA consented to helping exhibitors ensure that no viewer under the age of 18 was allowed into theaters unless accompanied by a parent. The experiment proved a successful indication that age-based classification, even if prohibitive, did not yield the feared repercussions of smaller quantities of ticket-purchasing audiences, and the film was the third highest-grossing picture of 1966.¹⁷¹

Michelangelo Antonioni’s *Blow-Up* (1967) – refused a PCA seal and released by a non-MPAA subsidiary to immediate success, indicating the Code’s irrelevance – was reviewed favorably by the estimates, notably more hip with the times regarding foreign features. The camerawork was striking, “whether dealing with passage of enigmatic symbolism or the forthright directness of scenes of sex and semi-nudity,” and it was overall “a memorably cinematic experience.” Two of the estimates – the American Jewish Committee and the Parent Teacher Association – even opted to give the film an *A-MY* rating instead of a conventional *A*.

¹⁶⁹ “MPAA Newspaper Campaign Grows; 142 Journals Now Participating,” *Boxoffice*, 3 July 1967, 5.

¹⁷⁰ “Valenti Reports on MPAA Activities for 13 Months,” *Boxoffice*, 30 October 1967, 6.

¹⁷¹ The Green Sheet gave it an *A* rating given its hyper-realistic portrayal of “hidden hatreds, neuroses, and emotional problems.” The two films beating out *Virginia Woolf* at the 1966 box office were, revealingly, also decidedly adult-themed pictures, *Dr. Zhivago* and *Thunderball*.

Curiously, the same two organizations voted to grant two other controversial 1967 features universally thought of as “adult” in content matter – *Battle of Algiers* and *Bonnie and Clyde* – more inclusive ratings of *A-MY-Y* while the majority of the remaining estimates agreed on *A*. In addition, the American Jewish Committee felt *Barbarella* – a “sex-oriented science fiction tale” taking place in a “bizarre world of erotic situations, sadism, and nudity” – warranted nothing worse than an *A-MY* rating. These two organizations and others on the board were affirmations that such films had been made, not to be avoided by, but precisely to be seen by younger, aware audiences. A wholesale socio-cultural reimagining of what was considered tasteful and tasteless was consistently redefining what audiences wanted to see in motion pictures the 1960s. A John Wayne war film such as *The Green Berets* was accused upon its release of being helplessly out of date, was lam basted by the estimates as “studded with clichés” and presenting a “simplified, hawkish point of view that glosses over the complexities of the situation in South Viet Nam.”¹⁷²

In 1967, the format of the Green Sheet was modified in a few notable ways. The first change occurred in July when the MPAA renamed the service from “Green Sheet” to “Film Reports.” This happened as part of an effort to clarify the most vital function of the bulletin – to inform patrons of motion picture content, underscoring the contention that the MPAA had subtly attempted to obscure the estimates’ duties in explicitly classifying motion pictures rather than merely explaining their plot synopses and lead actors. In addition, each individual Green Sheet issue would not include transcriptions of its own capsule reviews used for later distribution by exhibitors and publishers. At the top of each review (full-length and capsule) the estimates inserted a “Suggested for Mature Audiences” icon next to mature-oriented fare that received had the MPAA label. The bulletin took a leaner physical form too, now easily fitting into the back pockets of patrons who wished to take copies from their local theaters. This was a far cry from

¹⁷² “Film Reports,” October 1967, December 1968; August 1968.

only seven years earlier, when the Green Sheet had the format of a cumbersome, 8 1/2 x 11 inch tri-fold.¹⁷³

The motion pictures reviewed by the estimates in the December 1967 issue of the Green Sheet revealed the extreme form even standard Hollywood fare had taken. Roger Corman's *The Trip* (screenplay by Jack Nicholson) was reviewed as a "trip into the controversial world of LSD [that] sensationally exploits the visual aspects of the experience." Starring Peter Fonda, the film depicted a TV commercial director's experimentation with LSD "as a release from his problems," and the review vividly described how his hallucinations and excursions between the real and imaginary worlds during his drug trip combined "exotic sequences with painted hippies and topless dancers, bedroom scenes with undulating bodies clothed only in psychedelic lighting, and death." These sequences were interspersed, according to the estimates, by "flashes of brilliant color in pulsating patterns and kaleidoscopic loops, and are all held together by a weird score and sound effects." Another A film reviewed in the same issue – but receiving an SMA label from the MPAA – was Paramount's *The Penthouse*, which depicted two psychopaths breaking into a penthouse of a married man and his younger mistress. "Thus begins a day of sadistic terror and blatant sex," where the man is tied up and the girl is repeatedly raped, "reducing her to their own level" by the intruders. The deliberately paced proceedings created a chilling atmosphere which "shows up the moral weakness of each character," and "it becomes questionable whether the captives or the captors are the more dissolute." In the capsule reviews, *The Penthouse* was referred to as an "English picture of sadism and perversion."¹⁷⁴ For the previous month, November, the Green Sheet did not review a single GA feature, and all but four were rated A or A-MY. For the year, only 72 of 183 pictures (39.34 percent) were rated A-MY-Y

¹⁷³ "Green Sheet Now Film Reports, Omits Former's Five Categories," *Variety*, 5 July 1967, 2.

¹⁷⁴ "Film Reports," December 1967.

or below (see Appendix D; it is worth noting that several family features rated by the Green Sheet were in fact reissues of older films such as *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Swiss Family Robinson*, and *Gone With the Wind*).

The SMA label was ineffective in dissuading filmmakers from making pictures like *The Penthouse*, and illustrated that Valenti's plan to bring new life into the decaying Code (while granting special privilege to *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* under extenuating circumstances) assigned a minimal amount of liability to the MPAA, and instead put undue pressure on exhibitors to enforce ambiguous standards. Neither the SMA nor the "mature audiences only" labels specified age limitations, again rendering the role of theater owners, as one Florida attorney aptly put it, as policemen of community morals.¹⁷⁵ *Variety* and other outlets reported of many theater owners who had been driven out of the business because of local harassment, public insult, and anonymous telephone abuse, along with the continued threat of criminal prosecution.¹⁷⁶

But beginning in May 1968, riding the heels of the Supreme Court's decision to "leave the door open" for classification systems after its ruling in Dallas (*Interstate v. Dallas*), the Washington D.C. chapter of NATO voted to provide a "suitability index" to patrons using the Green Sheet's rating service. Because it was considered "guidance classification" rather than an official ordinance – and because of NATO's close ties to the MPAA – the move appeared to face no legal threat by the film industry. It actually represented little more than what Memphis exhibitors had voted to do eight years earlier. The program debuted in the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Sunday Star*, which would publish the index in the heading of its directory, and would feature what the exhibitors considered the three most useful ratings from the Green Sheet

¹⁷⁵ "'We're Not Community Morals Cops': Plea of Florida's Theatre Owners," *Variety*, 15 May 1968, 13.

¹⁷⁶ "Main St.'s 'Consent Decrees,'" *Variety*, 22 May 1968, 7.

– *A*, *MY*, and *FA* (family audiences; eventually, the newspapers would include all of the rating symbols). The move had been fueled by unclear standards of SMA enforcement; earlier in the year, one prominent girls' school had banned its students from seeing *The Graduate* (1967), while another did the precise opposite and organized groups of students to go see it. With the new suitability index derived from the Green Sheet, the *Post* reported, exhibitors could avoid being trapped in the middle of controversy by clearly labeling the film as to audience level.¹⁷⁷ In addition, the Wometco theater circuit of Miami (a NATO member) began using a Green Sheet-informed "suitability index" in enforcing audience classification for their theaters, while staying as close to the Supreme Court guidelines of *Interstate v. Dallas* as possible.¹⁷⁸

Facing the economic success of pictures denied a seal, as well pressures from unhappy exhibitors once again (it is worth noting that NATO represented 85 percent of the nation's theaters and accounted for 95 percent of the entire domestic box office), Valenti finally offered a wholesale dissolution of the Production Code once and for all. On November 1, 1968, a new rating system went into effect. It provided four separate, age-based ratings – *G*, *M*, *R*, and *X* – although only three of them (*G*, *M*, and *R*) were eligible for a production seal from the MPAA's new rating body, the Classification and Ratings Administration (CARA). Valenti did not provide "qualifying lines" to differentiate between the ratings, and the members of CARA were instructed "consider each film on its own merits," and to make qualitative differences between films through objective and subjective criteria.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ "Washington Exhibs' 'Suitability Index'; Cue Mom 'n' Pop on Sex 'n' Violence," *Washington Post*, 1 May 1968, 25. Curiously, the Green Sheet had rated *The Graduate* as *A*, praising it as a "moving picture of the young people lonely and lost in their parents' smug, hypocritical world" but noting that "some of the dialogue and the film's unorthodox use of Christian symbols may be offensive to some viewers" (taken from "The Green Sheet, March 1968.")

¹⁷⁸ "'We're Not Community Morals Cops': Plea of Florida's Theatre Owners," *Variety*, 15 May 1968, 13.

¹⁷⁹ Lewis, *Hollywood v. Hard Core*, 150.

It seemed powerfully clear that the new rating system effectively fulfilled the role that the MPAA had once pledged the Green Sheet to serve. In the first eight months of the film industry's classification system, 260 films were rated, with most theaters displaying the ratings next to movie titles. Valenti ensured that over 200 daily newspapers were publishing explanations of the ratings, and if patron's local papers were not publishing ratings, he personally urged filmgoers to request the MPAA's own "Movie Audience Guide," a free guide with explanations of the ratings and symbols. He also asked theater owners showing films rated *G* or *M* to only show trailers suitable for younger audiences. "For the first time all essential elements of the industry [producers, distributors, and exhibitors] are all in agreement," he declared.¹⁸⁰ A study concluded that 64 percent of movie-going adults found the rating system to be "very useful" or "fairly useful" in determining which movies children should attend.¹⁸¹

In spite of this, one report from the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography in 1970 concluded, of the new system's allowance of *R* features, that "thanks to Jack Valenti, we have a condition in the motion picture industry today that literally constitutes a course of instruction in decadence, perversion, and immorality."¹⁸² Significantly that year, the National Council of Churches (along with its Catholic counterpart, the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures) issued a report that claimed the film industry had failed to sufficiently educate the public about the ratings system, and concluded that CARA should be more autonomous from the industry. One year later, the Council withdrew its support for the MPAA not only because of the growing

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 150.

¹⁸¹ Jowett, *Film: The Democratic Art*, 442.

¹⁸² Charles H. Keating, Jr., *The Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography* (New York: Bantam Books, 1970): 612.

number of unsuitable films for children, but also as a result of “the clearly unrealistic ratings being handed out.”¹⁸³

In addition, Stephen Tropiano and Stephen Farber observed that the *X* rating created a rather unexpected bone of contention for the industry. The MPAA did not grant seals to pornography, but this did not stop the *X* from being associated with it. Since the *X* was not copyrighted, independent distributors of pornography could self-impose the rating to enhance the reputation of its features – hence, the beginning of “triple-*X*” rated features. In spite of this, a handful of studio motion pictures – most notably, the Best Picture-winning *Midnight Cowboy* – were granted the rating. CARA gave only 25 films *X* ratings in 1969, its inaugural year. Unlike the significant Green Sheet trend of overwhelmingly high numbers of adult and mature youth fare released by MPAA studios, the first year of CARA ratings in 1969 inexplicably proved the opposite: Of the approximately 435 films rated by CARA, over 300 of them received *G* and *M* ratings.¹⁸⁴ In its exclusion of adult features circumventing CARA, the Motion Picture Association deceived the public into believing, from these statistics, that the industry was almost exclusively comprised of family-friendly fare. The opinion by CARA chairman Eugene Dougherty that “no serious film-makers would want to go beyond the limits of the *R*” was proven quickly incorrect in the next decade by the sudden onslaught of profitable (and unabashedly pornographic) *X*-rated features.¹⁸⁵

Such viewpoints derived from extreme and isolated pockets of society, Valenti countered. Maintaining that all sides of the classification debate had uniformly embraced the new rating system in apparent synergistic glee, the Green Sheet became for the motion picture industry, at best, obsolete. At worse, the Green Sheet service was actually harmful to the 1968 ratings

¹⁸³ “Film-Rating Fiasco,” *America* Vol. 124 (May 29, 1971): 557.

¹⁸⁴ Tropiano, *Obscene, Indecent, Immoral, and Offensive*, 94.

¹⁸⁵ Quoted in Stephen Farber, *The Movie Ratings Game* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1972): 51.

system, since the Estimate Board's ratings did not always perfectly align with those of the MPAA and therefore appeared to be in conflict. Two notable examples of this were seen in the December 1968 edition of the Green Sheet, where the G-rated motion pictures *The Subject Was Roses* and *The Impossible Years* ("a farcical examination of today's teenagers") were each inexplicably assigned *A-MY* ratings by the estimates. But somewhat surprisingly, later discrepancies actually showed that, when compared to one another, the MPAA classifications were harsher than the Green Sheet ratings. In the same issue from September 1969, *Alice's Restaurant* (following a "commune in Massachussetts that welcomes wandering hippies who sing, dance, make love and smoke pot in an uncommitted life that is funny and sad") and *Lock Up Your Daughters* (a "bawdy story" of "three sex-starved English sailors") received *R* ratings from the MPAA, while only receiving *A-MY* designations from the estimates. Also in the same issue were reviews of the *X*-rated features *The Best House in London* and *Medium Cool*. Because the Green Sheet's *Adult* rating did not designate between motion pictures where no one under 16 was admitted (*X*) and where no one under 16 was admitted without a parent or guardian (*R*), the blanket *A* rating given to both films did not adequately convey that either film contained notably more objectionable content than other *A*-rated fare in the issue. Perhaps illustrative of this very problem, *Medium Cool* was not given a rating by the estimates.¹⁸⁶

The continued circulation of the Green Sheet was creating another unforeseen problem. Religious groups (largely Protestant) unhappy that the MPAA was willing to curb its standards of decency in releasing *R* and *X*-rated features were eager to vocalize their discontent with the film industry. In March 1969, the Christians United for Responsible Entertainment (CURE) made headlines by collecting 45,000 signatures in 30 states from citizens displaying an

¹⁸⁶ "Film Reports," December 1968; September 1969. The fact that at the bottom of the Green Sheet were two boxes illustrating both how to use the Green Sheet rating system and how to use the MPAA's classifications did not help ease confusion.

“expression of concern” against motion picture and television entertainment. They publically denounced the new ratings system, and stated that they did not critically assess the content of movies based on their own judgment, but by what the Green Sheet said. CURE also sought the elimination of the A rating, but did advocate using the Green Sheet to rate television programming. Although the grassroots effort appeared to have little effect on the industry or the 1968 ratings, it did serve as a reminder that skeptical church groups distancing themselves from the “sadism and violence” of Hollywood features used the active Green Sheet service to disrupt the powerful and sweeping uniformity of the new system.¹⁸⁷ Even individual issues now advertised on its back page a listing newspapers, magazines, and organization publications which carried reviews and stories guiding moviegoers, and suggested the services in *Consumer Reports*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*, among others. There was no explicit mention that these publications drew on either MPAA or Green Sheet ratings.

The Green Sheet continued to be published through 1969 until, on November 18, 1969, the MPAA announced that the bulletin would be discontinued after its December issue. A survey conducted by the Association observed that the ratings system had proven to be a more useful and easily accessible guide to parents and younger audiences. But more importantly, the MPAA had been “reminded daily” that the Green Sheet and other sources of film information derailed the authority of the new classification system, and in their public remarks, the Association’s community relations department stressed that there was no additional need for a service that had already been so seamlessly implemented by the industry. In spite of this, Ralph Hetzel called the decision to end its publication “regretful,” and noted that the Green Sheet had been in existence for 45 years. The fact that this statement was incorrect (FEBNO had existed

¹⁸⁷ McCandlish Phillips, “Housewives Lead Drive on ‘Objectionable’ TV Fare,” *New York Times*, 31 March 1969, 33.

for only 35 years) was a telling reminder that for many years, the only regret the motion picture industry had with the Green Sheet was that it still continued to underwrite its costs.¹⁸⁸

The next month, *Variety* announced that the National Council of Churches had picked up where the Green Sheet had left off by publishing the first edition of a new Protestant movie reviewing service entitled “Film Information.” In charge of the new service (and filling the role of editor previously held by Marie Hamilton) was Rev. James M. Wall, editor of the *Christian Advocate*. Reviews were compiled from church leaders, teachers, and critics claimed to have been actively involved in the film medium in some capacity, and 20,000 sample copies were distributed across Protestant church channels. Annual subscription to the service cost \$4. Although reviews were written in a “Christian perspective,” the service contained echoes of its predecessor by making no gripes about the “nудie” pictures it featured. Wall believed that although the creativity of filmmakers had become enhanced, the freedom to explore risqué subject matter came with ambivalence, and the “nудie” film had begun to pose, becoming more sophisticated in tone and pretending to deal with serious issues. “There is no clear line between the exploitation film and the picture that has serious artistic motives,” he said.¹⁸⁹

In spite of the perceived onslaught of adult fare, the Green Sheet designated only 35 pictures as *Adult* for 1969 out of the 168 total films reviewed (20.83 percent), indicating that as the MPAA had adapted to permit unprecedented levels of sex and violence, the Estimate Board’s standards too had become gradually relaxed. Five of the *A* films from the first nine months of

¹⁸⁸ A.H. Weiler, “End of Film Reports,” *New York Times*, 20 November 1969, 58.

¹⁸⁹ “Partly Moving Into Gap of Green Sheet That Was, Protestants Launch ‘Letter,’” *Variety*, 24 December 1969, 18. Wall had noted, as far back as 1965, that “the church’s error in the past has been an attempt to force moralistic judgments on artistic efforts.” Of Paul Mazursky’s couple-swapping romp *Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice*, “Film Information” called the film “quite moral” and asserted that the “several adulterous bouts, which in the tradition of the sex comedy, come through as much more fun than the virtuous ending.”

1969 had been given only M ratings by the MPAA (two additional A films were also X-rated).¹⁹⁰ Similarly, five films rated R by the MPAA were given designations of A-MY-Y in 1969; the two statistics seem to balance out and indicate that, for the most part, the MPAA and the Green Sheet were mostly compatible in their application of adult-oriented ratings (see Appendix E).¹⁹¹ But one crucial difference was that the estimates surveyed clearly exploitative fare – pictures which the Motion Picture Association attempted for the most part to distance itself from in its ratings.

And therein lay the dilemma for the industry's rating system after the decline of the Green Sheet. How could the new ratings adequately convey which films were not to be seen by families if CARA's "voluntary" rating service only included features willing to pay submission fees? Why would producers of motion pictures go out of their way in preventing prohibitive ratings from being assigned in an era when it had been persistently proven that the most financially successful films contained varying degrees profanity, violence, and sexuality?

¹⁹⁰ The five films receiving A and M ratings, respectively, were *Doctor Glas*, *A Fine Pair*, *Fraulein Doktor*, *Heaven With a Gun*, and *Twisted Nerve*.

¹⁹¹ The five films receiving A-MY and R ratings, respectively, were *Alice's Restaurant*, *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *A Matter of Days*, *The Sergeant*, and interestingly, *Easy Rider*.

CONCLUSION

Incidentally, 1969 may have actually represented the all-around best year for the Green Sheet. No one could deny that however irrelevant and seldom used the bulletin had become, it was only being used for the purposes for which it had originally been intended; the Motion Picture Industry's sudden "laissez-faire" approach to its circulation freed it of its proscription to be a marketable replacement for classification. No longer was it a publicity stunt by the MPAA attempting to shrewdly persuade patrons that the industry was responsible, while simultaneously answering the call from theater owners seeking help dissuading local censor boards from boycotts and legal action. While the MPAA shied away from associating with exploitation and "nudies," thus permanently rendering the new X rating as ill-defined, ambiguous, problematic (was it pornographic or not?), the 1969 Green Sheet's coverage of soft-core features revealed precisely what its task should have been all-along: Informing patrons of the objectionable content of films not covered by official MPAA (or Production Code) classification.

On top of that, such films were even praised in a roundabout way, on the basis that if patrons purchased tickets to see them, they ought to have been entitled to the salacious content they wanted. There was no moral condescension in the Green Sheet's review of the X-rated (A rated by the estimates) *The Killing of Sister George*. The estimates plainly revealed that the movie – a "study of three Lesbians [that] conveys both comedy and pathos – culminated in an "erotic scene that is shockingly explicit." Such clear delineation – the kind of concise rating justification CARA failed to provide – left little doubt to the imagination which segment of the movie-going populace the movie was for, in spite of the fact that other features rated A may have been less objectionable. The manner in which the MPAA advocated use of the letter ratings – in

advertisements, billboards, theater lobbies, etc. – was interestingly a complete reversal of the way it had flatly rebuked attempts to advertise Green Sheet ratings without the estimates’ explanations.¹⁹²

The Green Sheet offered a unique opportunity to glimpse the inner-workings of self-regulation in the motion picture industry, and offered clear evidence clarifying which criteria rendered prohibitive adult ratings. It was true that the raters of the Green Sheet were not members of CARA, as the industry’s raters are today. But unlike the present-day system of classification, reports stating specific instances of objectionable motion picture content were laid out clearly for consumption by the general public and all movie audiences. While the paid CARA members of today are kept anonymous by the industry and therefore not subject to public scrutiny over a given motion picture’s rating, each volunteer member of the Film Estimate Board was forced to answer to her constituency if and when there were objections to the Green Sheet’s rating of a specific film. It was surmised that the Estimate Board contained the opinions and judgments of over two hundred individual raters compiled from the ten diverse member organizations. The Production Code Administration employed only five raters, and CARA employs anywhere from eight to thirteen. True, the movie rating qualifications of the Green Sheet reviewers were considered suspicious by critics of the service such as Richard Randall; but CARA has yet to rectify this mitigating factor. The only bond between today’s CARA members is the “common prerequisite experience of parenthood;” whether CARA members are the parents of children under 17 years of age is information that cannot be ascertained publically.¹⁹³

¹⁹² “Film Reports,” February 1969.

¹⁹³ “The Movie Rating System: Its History, How It Works, and Its Enduing Value.” Published by the Classification and Ratings Administration, Motion Picture Association of America, http://www.filmratings.com/filmRating_Cara/downloads/pdf/about/cara_about_voluntary_movie_rating.pdf, (accessed 15 March 2011).

Filmmakers and producers were not subject to pay a fee to have their film classified, nor were they instructed which segments of their film to edit in order to receive a less prohibitive rating (as Kevin Sandler notes, such segments are usually arbitrary and chosen for reasons even the filmmakers find puzzling). The *A* rating of the Green Sheet was rarely monitored by box office cashiers and theater managers; while this might be a criticism that its service was unworkable, it actually embodied the same rhetoric used by Eric Johnston and Jack Valenti that parents – not the industry or exhibitors – were solely responsible for their child’s viewing habits. Attempting to enforce advisory ratings devalues the fundamental purpose of the classification system, and has done little to an industry plagued with minors routinely downloading illegal *R* rated motion pictures on the internet. Additionally, exhibitor and retail enforcement of adult-classified material has been distressingly varied. The Federal Trade Commission revealed that 54 percent of underage shoppers were able to buy *R* rated DVDs in 2009, and in 2010, one-third of underage patrons were able to purchase tickets to *R* rated films.¹⁹⁴

So this naturally begs the question, is the Green Sheet a viable answer to the much-publicized pitfalls of today’s motion picture rating system? The answer to this is yes, so long as the industry steers clear of asserting its influence over a voluntary group of diverse film raters. Virtually all corporations and organizations in the United States are monitored by external boards of review. The goods produced by companies in nearly all major industries (food, health care, automobile) are subject to rigorous standards by federal departments ensuring maintenance of the public good. Corporate executives and accountants, such as those from the Enron Corporation, were put on trial after deceiving stockholders by fraudulently reporting distorted

¹⁹⁴ “FTC Undercover Shopper Survey on Enforcement of Entertainment Ratings Finds Compliance Worst for Retailers of Music CDs and the Highest Among Video Game Sellers.” Federal Trade Commission, 20 April 2010. <http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2011/04/violentkidsent.shtm> (accessed 20 April 2011).

annual revenues in order to lure investors. Harsh criticism was leveled at Moody's and other credit rating agencies after it was revealed before the financial collapse of late 2008 that they had given Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae's "A1" investment grades, although no legal action has yet to take place. The MPAA rating system exercises self-regulation, which is apparently sufficient enough (in the industry's eyes) to render the industry immune from external reviews and federal oversight.

Reintroduction of a Green Sheet or Green Sheet-like estimate service from an external review board as a replacement for the failing rating system of *G*, *PG*, *PG-13*, *R*, and the spectacularly failed *NC-17* would not entirely absolve the MPAA from the kind of oversight the film industry's rating system needs. It would, however, reinstall public confidence in advisory systems free of the conflicting business interests. Much like the online services provided by independent rating services such as IMDB, Kids-In-Mind, and Focus on the Family's "Plugged In Online," it could provide patrons with informative plot synopses and instances of objectionable content, while relaxing and limiting enforcement of ratings to diligent parents. Problems of limited circulation would be curtailed by online distribution, and would free exhibitors of responsibilities to enforce ratings by disallowing sales. Truly, Johnston and Valenti's vision of the parent serving as arbiter of appropriate content would come into fruition. As the Green Sheet model suggested for exhibitors in the 1960s – and if the Green Sheet has any relevance for scholars and industry personnel today – there is evidence that it may fill a crucial void for consumers of film product to have a reliable, objective, content analysis as the basis for determining which motion pictures truly suit younger audiences the best.

Appendix A: Green Sheet Reviews, 1961

January 1961

Cimarron	A-MY-Y
Desert Attack	A-MY-Y
Esther and the King	A-MY
Exodus	A-MY-Y
The Facts of Life	A
The Grass is Greener	A-MY
The Great Imposter	A-MY-Y
Legions of the Nile	A-MY
101 Dalmations*	F-C
The Plunderers	A-MY
Sword of Sherwood Forest	F-C
Tess of the Storm Country	A-MY-Y
Upstairs and Downstairs	A-MY
Wackiest Ship in the Army*	F
Where the Boys Are	A-MY

February 1961

Blueprint for Robbery	A-MY
Cry for Happy	A-MY
Dondi	F
A Fever in the Blood	A-MY
Five Guns to Tombstone	A-MY-Y
Flaming Star	A-MY-Y
Frontier Uprising	A-MY-Y
Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come	F
The Marriage-Go-Round	A
Operation Bottleneck	A-MY
Pepe	F
Where the Boys Are	A-MY
Wizard of Baghdad	F

March 1961

Carthage in Flames	A-MY-Y
Circle of Deception	A
Don Quixote	A-MY-Y
Foxhole in Cairo	A-MY
Gold of the Seven Saints	A-MY
Gorgo	A-MY-Y
The Long Rope	A-MY
The Millionairess	A-MY
The Misfits	A
Passport to China	A-MY-Y
The Sins of Rachel Cade	A
Tomboy and the Champ	F
Underworld, USA	A
The White Warrior	A-MY-Y

April 1961

The Absent-Minded Professor	F-C
All in a Night's Work	A-MY
The Canadians	A-MY-Y
Curse of the Werewolf	A
Days of Thrills and Laughter	F

Go Naked in the World	A
The Hoodlum Priest	A-MY
One-Eyed Jacks	A
Police Dog Story	A-MY-Y
A Raisin in the Sun*	A-MY-Y
Sanctuary	A
The Secret Partner	A-MY-Y
Serengeti Shall Not Die	F
Sniper's Range	A-MY
Terror of the Tongs	A
The Trapp Family Singers	F
Wings of Chance	F

May 1961

All Hands on Deck	A-MY-Y
Atlantis, The Lost Continent	A-MY
The Green Helmet	A-MY-Y
The Fiercest Heart	A-MY
Misty*	F-C
Ole Rex	F-C
Operation Eichmann	A
Portrait of a Mobster	A
Posse From Hell	A-MY
The Right Approach	A
Ring of Fire	A-MY
Romanoff and Juliet	A-MY-Y
The Secret Ways	A-MY
Stop Me Before I Kill	A
Tunes of Glory*	A-MY
Two Loves	A
The Young Savages	A-MY

June 1961

Angel Baby	A
The Big Show	A-MY-Y
Ferry to Hong Kong	A-MY-Y
Five Golden Hours	A-MY
The Gambler Wore a Gun	A-MY-Y
Gidget Goes Hawaiian	A-MY-Y
Homicidal	A
The Last Sunset	A-MY
League of Gentlemen	A-MY
Mad Dog Call	A
Master of the World	F
Mein Kampf	A-MY
The Parent Trap	F
Parrish	A-MY
The Pleasure of His Company*	A-MY-Y
Return to Peyton Place	A-MY
The Shadow of the Cat	A-MY-Y
The Silent Call	F
The Snake Woman	A-MY
Trouble in the Sky	A-MY-Y
Warrior Empress	A-MY

July 1961

A Matter of Morals	A
Battle of Bloody Beach	A-MY
The Big Gamble	A-MY-Y
Bimbo the Great	F
Blast of Silence	A
The Bridge	A-MY
The Explosive Generation	A-MY
The Fabulous World of Jules Verne	F
The Greengage Summer	A
The Guns of Navarone*	A-MY-Y
The Last Time I Saw Archie	A-MY-Y
Love in a Goldfish Bowl	A-MY
The Most Dangerous Man Alive	A
On the Double	A-MY-Y
The Pharaoh's Woman	A-MY
The Revolt of the Slaves	A
Snow White & the Three Stooges	F
The Steel Claw	A-MY
Tammy Tell Me True	F

August 1961

Ada	A
By Love Possessed	A
Come September	A-MY
Fanny*	A-MY
Fate of a Man	A-MY
Francis of Assisi	F
Goodbye Again	A
The Ladies Man	F
The Magic Boy	F-C
The Minotaur	A-MY
Morgan the Pirate	A-MY
The Naked Edge	A-MY-Y
Nikki, Wild Dog of the North	F
Twenty Thousand Eyes	A-MY
Two Rode Together	A-MY
Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea	F
Wild in the Country	A

September 1961

Alakazam the Great	F
Brainwashed	A-MY
Breakfast at Tiffany's	A
The Honeymoon Machine	A-MY-Y
Invasion Quartet	A-MY-Y
Marines Let's Go	A-MY
Queen of the Pirates	A-MY-Y
Scream of Fear	A-MY
Secret of Monte Cristo	F
Summer and Smoke	A
Thief of Baghdad	F
When the Clock Strikes	A-MY-Y

October 1961

Back Street	A
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Bridge to the Sun*	A-MY-Y
Claudelle English	A
Dr. Blood's Coffin	A
Everything's Ducky	F
Greyfriars Bobby*	F-C
The Pit and the Pendulum	A-MY
A Thunder of Drums	A-MY
The Trunk	A
A Weekend With Lulu	A-MY
The Young Doctors*	A-MY

November 1961

Blood and Roses	A-MY
The Deadly Companions	A-MY
The Devil at 4 O'Clock	A-MY
The Great War	A-MY
The Hustler	A
Man-Trap	A
Mr. Sardonicus	A
Mysterious Island	F
The Purple Hills	A-MY-Y
The Secret of Deep Harbor	A
The Sergeant Was a Lady	A-MY
Three on a Spree	A-MY-Y
Valley of the Dragons	A-MY-Y

December 1961

Bachelor in Paradise	A-MY
Blue Hawaii	A-MY-Y
The Boy Who Caught a Crook	F
The Comancheros	A-MY-Y
Judgment at Nuremberg	A-MY
King of Kings	A-MY-Y
Lad, A Dog	F-C
The Mask	A-MY
Paris Blues	A
Pirates of Tortuga	A-MY-Y
The Second Time Around	F
Seven Women from Hell	A
Splendor in the Grass	A
Susan Slade	A
Teenage Millionaire	Y
Town Without Pity	A
Twinkly and Shine*	F
Two Little Bears	F-C
West Side Story*	A-MY
Wonders of Aladdin	A-MY-Y

Total Films Reviewed	189
Total "A"	43 (22.75%)
Total "A-MY"	62 (32.81%)
Total "A-MY-Y"	45 (23.81%)
Total "F"/"C"	39 (20.63%)

Total Recommended	13 (6.88%)
(Films Receiving *)	

Appendix B: Green Sheet Reviews, 1964**January**

Captain America	A-MY
The Ceremony	A
High and Low	A-MY
Kings of the Sun	GA
Love With the Proper Stranger	A-MY
Move Over Darling	A
The Prize	A-MY
Pyro	A
Soldier in the Rain	A-MY
Sunday in New York	A
Twice Told Tales	A-MY-Y
The Victors	A-MY
Who's Been Sleeping in My Bed	A-MY
Who's Minding the Shore	GA

February

Act One	A-MY-Y
The Cardinal	A-MY
Children of the Damned	A-MY-Y
Comedy of Terrors	A-MY-Y
The Eyes of Annie Jones	A-MY
Four for Texas	A-MY
Hallelujah The Hills	A-MY
It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World	A-MY-Y
Ladybug, Ladybug	A-MY
Mail Order Bride	A-MY-Y
Man in the Middle	A-MY
The Misadventures of Merlin Jones	GA
One Man's Way	A-MY-Y
Palm Springs Weekend	A-MY
Point of Order!	A-MY
The Raiders	GA
Seven Days in May	A-MY-Y
Strait-Jacket	A-MY
Surf Party	A-MY

March

And Suddenly It's Murder	A-MY
Bandits on the Wind	A-MY-Y
The Brass Bottle	GA
Dark Purpose	A-MY
Dead Ringer	A
Dr. Crippen	A
Dr Strangelove	A-MY
A Global Affair	A-MY
Hide and Seek	A-MY-Y
The L-Shaped Room	A
Man's Favorite Sport?	A-MY
Peace to Him Who Enters	A-MY
The Pink Panther	A-MY
Shock Treatment	A
The Strangler	A

Tom Jones A-MY

April

America America	A-MY
Becket	A-MY
The Easy Life	A
Flight From Ashiya	A-MY-Y
From Russia With Love	A-MY
He Rides Tall	A-MY
The Incredible Mr. Limpet	GA-C
Kissin' Cousins	A-MY
Paris When It Sizzles	A-MY
The Prodigal Sons	A-MY
The Servant	A
The 7 Faces of Dr. Lao	GA
Stray Dog	A-MY
The Swingin' Maiden	GA
They All Died Laughing	A
Tiara Tahiti	A-MY
Young and Willing	A

May

The Best Man	A-MY
The Chalk Garden	A-MY-Y
The Crimson Blade	A-MY-Y
The Curse of the Living Corpse	A-MY
Devil Ship Pirates	A-MY-Y
Dimka	GA
The Dream Maker	GA
The Fall of the Roman Empire	A-MY-Y
For Those Who Think Young	A-MY
The Horror of Party Beach	A-MY
Island of the Blue Dolphins	GA
Law of the Lawless	A-MY-Y
Muscle Beach Party	A-MY
Night Must Fall	A
Son of Captain Blood	GA
The Third Secret	A-MY
A Tiger Walks	GA
The World of Henry Orient	A-MY

June

Advance to the Rear	A-MY-Y
Black Like Me	A
The Carpetbaggers	A
A Distant Trumpet	A-MY-Y
The Evil of Frankenstein	A-MY
FBI Code 98	A-MY-Y
The Grant Olympics	GA
La Bonne Soupe	A
Lade in a Cage	A
Never Put It In Writing	GA
Nightmare	A-MY
The Organizer	A-MY
Psyche 59	A
The Quick Gun	A-MY-Y

Rhino	GA	I'd Rather Be Rich	A-MY-Y
Tamahine	A-MY	The Killers	A
The Thin Red Line	A-MY	Mafioso	A
The Three Lives of Thomasina	GA	MGM's Big Parade of Comedy	GA
Viva Las Vegas	A-MY-Y	Nothing But the Best	A
Voice of the Hurricane	A-MY-Y	Roustabout	A-MY-Y
Zulu	A-MY-Y	The Visit	A
		Walk a Tightrope	A-MY
		Yano	GA
<u>July</u>		<u>October</u>	
Bedtime Story	A-MY	Apache Rifles	A-MY-Y
Ensign Pulver	A-MY-Y	Cartouche	A-MY-Y
Gladiators 7	A-MY-Y	Fail-Safe	A-MY
The Golden Arrow	GA	Guns at Batasi	A-MY-Y
Good Neighbor Sam	A-MY	Harakiri	A
Hey There Its Yogi Berra	GA-C	Kisses For My President	A-MY
Honeymoon Hotel	A	Lilith	A
Masque of the Red Death	A-MY	The Lively Set	A-MY-Y
The Night Watch	A-MY	Los Tarantos	A-MY
Rikisha Man	A-MY-Y	Lock of Ginger Coffey	A-MY
Ring of Treason	A-MY-Y	Mary Poppins	GA-C
Robinson Crusoe of Mars	GA	Murder Most Foul	A-MY-Y
633 Squadron	A-MY-Y	Night Train to Paris	A-MY-Y
That Man From Rio	A-MY-Y	One Potato Two Potato	A-MY
The Unsinkable Molly Brown	A-MY-Y	Ride the Wild Surf	GA
What a Way to Go	A-MY	Topkapi	A-MY
Wild and Wonderful	A-MY-Y	Where Love Has Gone	A
Woman of Straw	A-MY	Witchcraft	A-MY-Y
		The Young Lovers	A-MY
<u>August</u>		<u>November</u>	
Bullet for a Badman	A-MY-Y	A House is Not Home	A
Circus World	GA	The Americanization of Emily	A
Crazy Desire	A	Earth Dies Screaming	A-MY-Y
Horror of It All	A-MY-Y	The Finest Hours	A-MY-Y
The Long Ships	A-MY	First Men in the Moon	GA
Looking for Love	A-MY-Y	Kitten With a Whip	A
Marnie	A-MY	Nutty Naughty Chateau	A
McHale's Navy	GA	Of Human Bondage	A
Moon-Spinners	GA	Only One New York	GA
New Interns	A-MY	Outrage	A
Night of the Iguana	A	Ready for the People	A-MY
The Patsy	GA	Rio Conchos	A
Robin and the Seven Hoods	A-MY	Secret Invasion	A-MY
The Seventh Dawn	A-MY	Send Me No Flowers	A-MY
A Shot in the Dark	A	The Soft Skin	A
Stage to Thunder Rock	A-MY-Y	Youngblood Hawke	A
This Madding Crowd	A		
<u>September</u>		<u>December</u>	
A Hard Day's Night	A-MY-Y	Bebo's Girl	A-MY
Behold a Pale Horse	A-MY	Emil and the Detectives	GA-C
Bikini Beach	MY	Four Days in November	A-MY-Y
Devil Doll	A-MY	Goodbye Charlie	A
Fate is the Hunter	A-MY-Y	Invitation to a Gunfighter	A-MY-Y
Flipper's New Adventure	GA-C	Joy House	A
Girl With Green Eyes	A		
Gold for the Caesars	A-MY		

Moro Witch Doctor	A-MY
Murder Ahoy	A-MY-Y
My Fair Lady	A-MY-Y
Pajama Party	A-MY
The Pumpkin Eater	A
Santa Claus Conquers the Martians	C
Seven Surprises	GA
Sex and the Single Girl	A
Sing and Swing	A-MY-Y
The Tattooed Police Horse	GA-C
Your Cheatin' Heart	A-MY-Y
Total Films Reviewed	209
Total "A"	45 (21.53%)
Total "A-MY"	74 (35.41%)
Total "A-MY-Y"	54 (25.84%)
Total "F"/"GA" /"C"	35(16.75%)
Total "MY"	1 (0.05%)

Appendix C: Green Sheet Reviews, 1965**January**

Baby the Rain Must Fall	A-MY
A Boy Ten Feet Tall	GA
Dear Heart	A-MY
Disorderly Orderly	GA
Father Goose	A-MY-Y
Get Yourself a College Girl	A-MY
The Guns of August	A-MY-Y
Goldfinger	A-MY
Inheritance	A-MY
Rattle of a Simple Man	A
Séance on a Wet Afternoon	A-MY
The Terrace	A
36 Hours	A-MY-Y
Those Callows	GA

February

A Woman is a Woman	A
Bay of the Angels	A
Code 7 Victim 5	A-MY-Y
Dear Brigitte	GA
Night Walker	A-MY
Outlaws is Coming	GA-C
The Pleasure Seekers	A
Quick Before It Melts	A-MY
Taggart	A-MY
The Umbrellas of Cherbourg	A-MY
Woman in the Dunes	A
World Without Sin	GA
Zorba the Greek	A

March

Andy	A-MY
Banana Peel	A
Bus Riley's Back in Town	A
Cheyenne Autumn	A-MY-Y
Crack in the World	A-MY-Y
Girl Happy	A-MY
Hush Hush Sweet Charlotte	A-MY
Nothing But a Man	A-MY
Raiders From Beneath the Sea	A
The Rounders	A-MY
Signpost to Murder	A-MY
Strange Bedfellows	A
Sylvia	A
The Truth About Spring	GA
Two on a Guillotine	A-MY-Y
Yellow Rolls Royce	A-MY

April

The Cavern	A-MY
East of Sudan	A-MY-Y
Fort Courageous	A
Greatest Story Ever Told	A-MY-Y

The Guide	A-MY
How to Murder Your Wife	A
None But the Brave	A-MY
Operation Snafu	A-MY
The Train	A-MY-Y
Young Cassidy	A-MY
Young Firy	A

May

Beach Blanket Bingo	MY
The Bus	A-MY-Y
Curse of the Fly	A-MY
Devils of Darkness	A-MY
Die Die My Darling	A
Ferry Cross the Mersey	A-MY-Y
Git	GA
In Harm's Way	A
Nobody Waved Goodbye	A-MY-Y
Operation Crossbow	A-MY
Satan Bug	A-MY-Y
Shenandoah	A-MY-Y
Sword of Ali Baby	GA
Von Ryan's Express	A-MY-Y
War Party	A-MY-Y
Zebra in the Kitchen	GA

June

A Stranger Knocks	A
Battle of the Villa Fiorita	A-MY
Cat Ballou	A-MY-Y
Digaka	A-MY
Dr. Terror's House of Horrors	A-MY
Fluffy	GA
The Fool Killer	A-MY
Genghis Khan	A-MY
Girls on the Beach	MY
Hercules, Samson and Ulysses	A-MY
He Who Must Die	A-MY
I Saw What You Did	A-MY
Masquerade	A-MY-Y
Mirage	A-MY-Y
The Naked Brigade	A-MY
Once a Thief	A-MY
The Overcoat	A-MY
Sallah	A-MY-Y
Synanon	A

July

A High Wind in Jamaica	A-MY
The Amorous Adventures of Moll Flanders	A
The Art of Love	A-MY
Black Spurs	A-MY
Brainstorm	A
The Gunfighters of Casa Grande	A-MY
McHale's Navy Joins the Air Force	GA

The Monkey's Uncle	GA	Murieta	A-MY
Morituri	A-MY	The Railroad Man	A-MY
The Pawnbroker	A	Rapture	A
The Secret of Magic Island	GA-C	Revenge of the Gladiators	A-MY-Y
She	A-MY-Y	Rotten to the Core	A-MY
Symphony For a Massacre	A-MY	Sergeant Deadhead	A-MY-Y
Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines	GA	The Skull	A-MY
Up From the Beach	A-MY-Y	Space Flight 1C-1	A-MY-Y
		Treasure of Silver Lake	GA
		Weekend at Dunkirk	A-MY
		Wild on the Beach	Y
<u>August</u>		<u>November</u>	
A Very Special Favor	A	The Agony and the Ecstasy	A-MY-Y
The Bounty Killer	A-MY	Beach Ball	MY
The Collector	A	The Cincinnati Kid	A
Eva	A	The Hill	A-MY
The Glory Guys	A-MY-Y	The Little Nuns	GA
The Great Sioux Massacre	A-MY-Y	The Little Ones	A-MY
The Hallelujah Trail	GA	The Loved One	A
Harlow	A	Marriage on the Rocks	A
Harvey Middleman, Fireman	A-MY	Mickey One	A-MY
I'll Take Sweden	A-MY	The Nanny	A-MY
The Ipcress File	A-MY	Seven Slaves Against the World	A-MY-Y
The Sandpiper	A	Situation Hopeless – But Not Serious	A-MY
The Secret of Blood Island	A-MY	Son of a Gunfighter	A-MY
Ski Party	A-MY-Y	That Darn Cat	GA
The Sons of Katie Elder	A-MY-Y	The War Lord	A-MY
War-Gods of the Deep	GA	You Must Be Joking	A-MY-Y
		<u>December</u>	
<u>September</u>		Alphaville	A-MY
Agent 8¾	A-MY	Bunny Lake is Missing	A-MY
Arizona Raiders	A-MY-Y	The Eleanor Roosevelt Story	GA
Casanova 70	A	The Great Race	GA
Dark Intruder	A-MY-Y	King Rat	A-MY
The Family Jewels	GA-C	Never Too Late	A-MY
How to Stuff a Wild Bikini	MY-Y	A Patch of Blue	A-MY
The Knack	A	Pinocchio in Outer Space	GA
Love and Kisses	A-MY-Y	A Rage to Live	A
The Reward	A-MY	Red Line 7000	A-MY
Ship of Fools	A-MY	Return From the Ashes	A-MY
Swinger's Paradise	GA-C	The Return of Mr. Moto	A-MY-Y
That Funny Feeling	A-MY-Y	Sands of the Kalahari	A-MY
These Are the Damned	A-MY	The Secret of My Success	A-MY
The Third Day	A-MY	Time of Indifference	A
Town Tamer	A-MY-Y	Winter A-Go-Go	A-MY
What's New Pussycat?	A		
		Total Films Reviewed	173
<u>October</u>		Total "A"	28 (16.18%)
The Bedford Incident	A-MY	Total "A-MY"	76 (43.93%)
Billie	GA	Total "A-MY-Y"	39 (22.54%)
Darling	A	Total "F"/"C"	28 (16.18%)
Greed in the Sun	A	Other	2 (1.16%)
Having a Wild Weekend	A-MY		
Help!	GA		
Laurel and Hardy's Laughing Twenties	GA		

Appendix D: Green Sheet Reviews, 1967**January**

After the Fox	A-MY-Y
Chushingura	A-MY-Y
Counterfeit Constable	GA
The Devil's Own	A-MY
El Dorado	A-MY-Y
Funeral in Berlin	A-MY
Is Paris Burning?	A-MY-Y
Kiss the Girls and Make Them Die	A-MY
The Poppy is Also a Flower	A-MY-Y
The Quare Fellow	A-MY
The Quiller Memorandum	A-MY
Rage	A-MY
The Venetian Affair	A-MY

February

A Man for All Seasons	A-MY-Y
The Deadly Affair	A-MY
The Defector	A-MY
Do You Keep a Lion at Home?	GA-C
The Game is Over	A
Journey to the Beginning of Time	C
Monkeys, Go Home!	GA
Murderers' Row	A-MY
Nashville Rebel	A-MY
The Sand Pebbles	A-MY
The Spy With a Cold Nose	A-MY
Tobruk	A-MY-Y
Warning Shot	A-MY

March

The Busy Body	A-MY
Come Spy With Me	A-MY-Y
Deadlier Than the Male	A
The Deadly Bees	A-MY
A Fistful of Dollars	A-MY
Goal!	GA
Grand Prix	A-MY
Gunfight in Abilene	A-MY
The Night of the Generals	A-MY
Oh Dead, Poor Dad, Mamma's	
Hung You in the Closet and I'm	
Feelin' So Sad	A
One Million Years B.C.	A-MY-Y
Prehistoric Woman	A-MY
Red Tomahawk	A-MY-Y
Trunk to Cairo	A-MY-Y
Walk in the Shadow	A-MY

April

Adventures of Bullwhip Griffin	GA
Doctor, You've Got to Be Kidding!	A
Easy Come, Easy Go	A-MY-Y
Falstaff	A-MY-Y

First to Fight	A-MY-Y
La Guerre East Finie	A
Hombre	A-MY
Hotel	A-MY
How to Succeed in Business	
Without Really Trying	A-MY-Y
Hurry Sundown	A
Naked Among the Wolves	A-MY
Persona	A
The Reluctant Astronaut	GA
Three Bites of the Apple	A-MY
The 25 th Hour	A-MY-Y
Welcome to Hard Times	A

May

Boudu Saved from Drowning	A-MY
Brightly of the Grand Canyon	GA
Caprice	A-MY
Chuka	A-MY
Double Trouble	A-MY-Y
The Hired Killer	A-MY
In Like Flint	A-MY-Y
The Last Challenge	A-MY
The Persecution and	
Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat	
as Performed By the Inmates of the	
Asylum of Charenton Under the	
Direction of the Marquis de Sade	A
The Taming of the Shrew	A-MY
Thoroughly Modern Millie	A-MY-Y
A Time for Burning	A-MY-Y
Up the Down Staircase	A-MY
The War Game	A-MY
Wild, Wild Planet	A-MY
The Young Warriors	A-MY

June

Accident	A
Africa – Texas Style!	GA
The Caper of the Golden Bulls	A-MY-Y
Casino Royale	A-MY
C'mon, Let's Live a Little	Y
A Countess from Hong Kong	A-MY
Eight on the Lam	GA
The Fastest Guitar Alive	GA
The Flim-Flam Man	A-MY-Y
The Jokers	A-MY-Y
The King of Hearts	A-MY
A King's Story	GA
The Sailor from Gibraltar	A
Triple Cross	A-MY
Two for the Road	A
Valley of Mystery	A-MY
La Vie de Chateau	A-MY

July

Barefoot in the Park	A-MY
Divorce American Style	A
The Family Way	A-MY
Fort Utah	A-MY-Y
The Gnome-Mobile	GA-C
Good Times	GA
A Guide for the Married Man	A
Gunn	A-MY
The Honey Pot	A-MY
In the Heat of the Night	A-MY
Made in Italy	A-MY
The Perils of Pauline	GA
Privilege	A-MY
Tammy and the Millionaire	GA
Those Fantastic Flying People	GA
To Sir With Love	A-MY-Y
The War Wagon	A-MY-Y
The Way West	A-MY-Y

August

Banning	A-MY
The Big Mouth	GA
The Dirty Dozen	A-MY
Don't Make Waves	A
For a Few Dollars More	A
The Girl and the General	A-MY
King's Pirate	A-MY-Y
The Long Duel	A-MY-Y
Luv	A
A Midsummer Night's Dream	GA
The Ride to Hangman's Tree	A-MY
Sullivan's Empire	GA
The Thief of Paris	A
The Whisperers	A-MY
Woman Times Seven	A
You Only Live Twice	A-MY

September

Beach Red	A
The Bobo	A
Enter Laughing	A-MY-Y
Fathom	A-MY
Gentle Giant	GA
The Happiest Millionaire	GA
The Hawks and the Sparrows	A-MY
The Naked Runner	A-MY
Palaces of a Queen	GA
A Rose for Everyone	A
Rough Night in Jericho	A-MY
St. Valentine's Day Massacre	A-MY
The Sea Pirate	A-MY-Y
The Spirit is Willing	A-MY-Y
The Upper Hand	A-MY
Who's Minding the Mint?	A-MY-Y
Young Americans	GA

October

Blow-Up	A
Bonnie and Clyde	A
The Climax	A
Eye of the Devil	A-MY
Games	A-MY
Jack of Diamonds	A-MY-Y
The Love-Ins	A-MY
Passages from James Joyce's	
Finnegan's Wake	A-MY
Point Blank	A
Ski on the Wild Side	GA
Tarzan and the Great River	GA
The Tiger Makes Out	A-MY
The Viking Queen	A
Wait Until Dark	A-MY

November

The Day the Fish Came Out	A-MY
Gone With the Wind	A-MY-Y
Hostile Guns	A-MY
Hour of the Gun	A-MY
How I Won the War	A-MY
A Maiden For a Prince	A
More Than a Miracle	A-MY-Y
The Olive Trees of Justice	A-MY
Our Mother's House	A-MY
Robbery	A-MY-Y
The Sucker	A-MY-Y
Tony Rome	A
Two Weeks in September	A

December

Battle of Algiers	A-MY
Camelot	A-MY-Y
Charlie the Lonesome Cougar	GA-C
The Comedians	A
Cool Hand Luke	A
Far From the Madding Crowd	A-MY-Y
The Fearless Vampire Killers, or: Pardon Me, But Your Teeth are in	
My Neck	A-MY-Y
Further Perils of Laurel and Hardy	GA
The Incident	A-MY
The Jungle Book	GA
Kill a Dragon	A-MY
The Penthouse	A
Rosie!	A-MY-Y
The Trip	A
Waterhole No. 3	A

Total Films Reviewed	183
Total "A"	35 (19.13%)
Total "A-MY"	76 (41.53%)
Total "A-MY-Y"	42 (22.95%)
Total "F"/"C"	30 (16.39%)

**Appendix E: Comparisons Between
MPAA and Green Sheet Ratings,
December 1968 – September 1969**

Films Receiving “X” Ratings From MPAA

The Best House in London	A	Sep 69
If	A	Mar 69
The Killing of Sister George	A	Feb 69
Medium Cool	No Rating	Sep 69

Films Reviewed 4
Total “A” 3 (75.00%)

Films Receiving “R” Ratings From MPAA

100 Rifles	A	Apr 69
3 Into 2 Won't Go	A	Aug 69
Alice's Restaurant	A-MY	Sep 69
Candy	A	Feb 69
Castle Keep	A	Sep 69
Changes	A-MY	Apr 69
Easy Rider	A-MY	Sep 69
Goodbye, Columbus	A	May 69
Hard Contract	A	Jun 69
Joanna	A	Jan 69
Justine	A	Sep 69
Lady in Cement	A-MY	Jan 69
Last Summer	A	Sep 69
Lock Up Your Daughters	A-MY	Sep 69
The Magus	A	Jan 69
A Matter of Days	A-MY	Jul 69
The Night of the Following Day	A	Mar 69
Riot	A	Mar 69
The Sergeant	A-MY	Mar 69
Staircase	A	Aug 69
That Cold Day in the Park	A	Aug 69
Three in the Attic	A	Feb 69
The Touchables	A	Jan 69
Where's It At	A	Jun 69

Films Reviewed 24
Total “A” 17 (70.83%)
Total “A-MY” 7 (29.17%)

Films Receiving “M” Ratings From MPAA

The April Fools	A-MY	Jul 69
The Assassination Bureau	A-MY	Apr 69
Before Winter Comes	A-MY	Mar 69
Better a Widow	A-MY	Mar 69
The Bridge at Remagen	A-MY	Aug 69
The Brotherhood	A-MY	Jan 69
Buona Sera, Mrs. Campbell	A-MY	Jan 69

The Chairman	A-MY	Aug 69
Che!	A-MY	Jul 69
Daddy's Gone A-Hunting	A-MY	Sep 69
Death of a Gunfighter	A-MY	Jul 69
Death Rides a Horse	A-MY	Sep 69
The Desperados	A-MY	Jul 69
Doctor Glas	A	Jun 69
Eye of the Cat	A-MY	Aug 69
A Fine Pair	A	Jun 69
The First Time	A-MY	May 69
Fraulein Doktor	A	Jun 69
Hannibal Brooks	A-MY-Y	Apr 69
Heaven With a Gun	A	Apr 69
How to Commit Marriage	A-MY	Sep 69
The Lost Man	A-MY	Jul 69
The Love God?	A-MY	Aug 69
The Loves of Isadora	A-MY	Jun 69
Mackenna's Gold	A-MY	Aug 69
The Mad Room	A-MY	May 69
Marry Me! Marry Me!	A-MY	Sep 69
Mayerling	A-MY	Mar 69
Me, Natalie	A-MY	Sep 69
Midas Run	A-MY	Jul 69
The Model Shop	A-MY	Feb 69
A Nice Girl Like Me	A-MY	Aug 69
The Night They Raided Minsky's	A-MY	Jan 69
Number One	A-MY	Sep 69
Once Upon a Time in The West	A-MY	Jul 69
Otley	A-MY	Mar 69
Pendulum	A-MY	Feb 69
Popi	A-MY	Jun 69
Play Dirty	A-MY	Mar 69
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie	A-MY	Apr 69
Sam Whiskey	A-MY	Mar 69
Secret World	A-MY	Sep 69
Sinful Davey	A-MY	Apr 69
Skidoo	A-MY	Feb 69
The Southern Star	A-MY-Y	Jun 69
Thank You All Very Much	A-MY	Aug 69
Twisted Nerve	A	Mar 69
Uptight	A-MY	Jan 69
What Ever Happened to Aunt Alice?	A-MY	Sep 69
Where Eagles Dare	A-MY-Y	Mar 69
Winning	A-MY	
The Wrecking Crew	A-MY	Mar 69

Films Reviewed 52
Total “A” 5 (9.62%)
Total “A-MY” 44 (84.62%)
Total “A-MY-Y” 3 (5.76%)

Films Receiving "G" Ratings From MPAA

The 1000 Plane Raid	A-MY-Y	Jul 69
Angel in My Pocket	GA	Feb 69
The Boys of Paul Street	A-MY-Y	Jun 69
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang	GA-C	Jan 69
Don't Look Now	GA	Apr 69
The Extraordinary Seaman	GA	Feb 69
Ghosts – Italian Style	A-MY	Feb 69
The Green Slime	A-MY-Y	May 69
Guns of the Magnificent Seven	A-MY	May 69
The Guru	A-MY-Y	Apr 69
Head	A-MY-Y	Jan 69
Hell in the Pacific	A-MY-Y	Feb 69
Hello Down There	GA-C	May 69
House of Cards	A-MY	Jan 69
If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium	A-MY-Y	May 69
The Impossible Years	A-MY	Dec 68
The Incredible Journey	GA-C	May 69
Kenner	A-MY-Y	May 69
Krakatoa, East of Java	GA	Jul 69
The Love Bug	GA-C	May 69
The Maltese Bippy	A-MY-Y	Aug 69
My Side of the Mountain	GA	Apr 69
Oliver!	GA	Feb 69
Peter Pan	GA	May 69
Rascal	GA	Jul 69
Ring of Bright Water	GA	Jun 69
Salesman	A-MY	Apr 69
The Sea Gull	A-MY	Apr 69
The Shoes of the Fisherman	A-MY-Y	Jan 69

Smith!	GA	May 69
The Stalking Moon	A-MY	Feb 69
Submarine X-1	GA	Feb 69
The Subject War Roses	A-MY	Dec 68
Support Your Local Sheriff	A-MY-Y	Apr 69
Sweet Charity	A-MY	May 69
Swiss Family Robinson	GA	Mar 69
Those Daring Young Men In Their Jaunty Jalopies	GA	Jul 69
The Trouble With Girls	A-MY-Y	Jul 69
True Grit	A-MY-Y	Jul 69
The Wanderer	A-MY-Y	Jun 69
Where's Jack?	A-MY-Y	Jun 69
Yellow Submarine	GA-C	Dec 68
You Only Live Once	A-MY	Aug 69

Films Reviewed	43
Total "A-MY"	10 (23.26%)
Total "A-MY-Y"	15 (34.88%)
Total "GA"	13 (30.23%)
Total GA-C	5 (11.63%)

Total Films Reviewed	123
Total "A"	25 (20.33%)
Total "A-MY"	61 (49.59%)
Total "A-MY-Y"	18 (14.63%)
Total "GA"/"C"	18 (14.63%)
No Rating	1 (0.81%)

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