The MPPDA Database

A database of the extant records of the General Correspondence files of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.

Professor Richard Maltby and Liz Milford

http://mppda.flinders.edu.au/



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Digital Humanities Australasia, March 2012

MOTION PICTURE PRODUCERS & DISTRIBUTORS OF AMERICA, INC.

28 WEST 44TH STREET

NEW YORK CITY

WILL H. HAYS
PRESIDENT

CARL E. MILLIKEN
SECRETARY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT





Other Comment

GOVERNOR DAN MOODY, of Texas: "I wish you success in your reforms designed to prevent the showing of pictures that would have an evil influence upon the young minds of America."

PHILADELPHIA BULLETIN: " . . . The new code promulgated by the producers is not rigid; there is sufficient elasticity to meet the essential requirements of every situation. But the important fact is that it indicates recognition, as a matter of business and as of vital consequence to the film industry, of the standards of morals and decency which some have appeared to think had been abandoned by society."

NEW ORLEANS ITEM: " . . . That some danger lies in a too rigid application of this or any other prohibitory code goes without question. Some masterpieces of literature have ridiculed man-made laws and moral codes, and we know of no reason why the movies should be denied the field of satire. But there is a vast difference between intelligent satire and a dangerous sentimentalization of crime and criminals such as has been seen during the past few season. . . . picture dramas of underworld life. If this new code can spare us that both art and our national standards of conduct will gain by it."

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL: "The difficulty will come, as it always has come, in applying the code to specific instances, especially those border-line situations where the code pulls the producer one way and the box office pulls him harder another. Groups of advisers within and without the industry will help the producer in these instances; if the advisers are resolute enough the code will mean something, otherwise it will be so much applesauce."

PROVIDENCE BULLETIN: " . . . All of this means that the producers have decided to protect us, whether we want to be protected or not, from pretty nearly everything. . . . We are faced by a set of rules which the producers, aided and abetted by moral forces, have imposed upon themselves. . . . Looked at hastily it would appear that the producers have proscribed their activities pretty thoroughly. Under the rules, they might find it permissible to do 'Little Women' and perhaps 'The Three Bears.'"

GRAND RAPIDS HERALD: "The production code is a bridge by which those who want to make better pictures and those who want to see them better may meet on common ground. It enunciates a further great step in that industrial self-government and responsibility which is the very essence of American progress."

ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT: "The action of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors, by which a comprehensive and elevating code of ethics has been erected for the proper control of the output of the member companies, is to be commended without reserve. . . . Individual conformity to the principles of decency in picture production was not enough. What was needed was group consciousness of responsibility and duty. Now we have this group acceptance in measurable total."

BINGHAMTON SUN: "The best thing about the new moral code of filmdom is that it is voluntary. . . . The best control is self-control. . . . The film industry, if it will, can do an infinitely better job than the government could. And the job is assuredly worth doing. In the realm of human conduct, the motion picture are one of the greatest influences in present-day life. . . ."

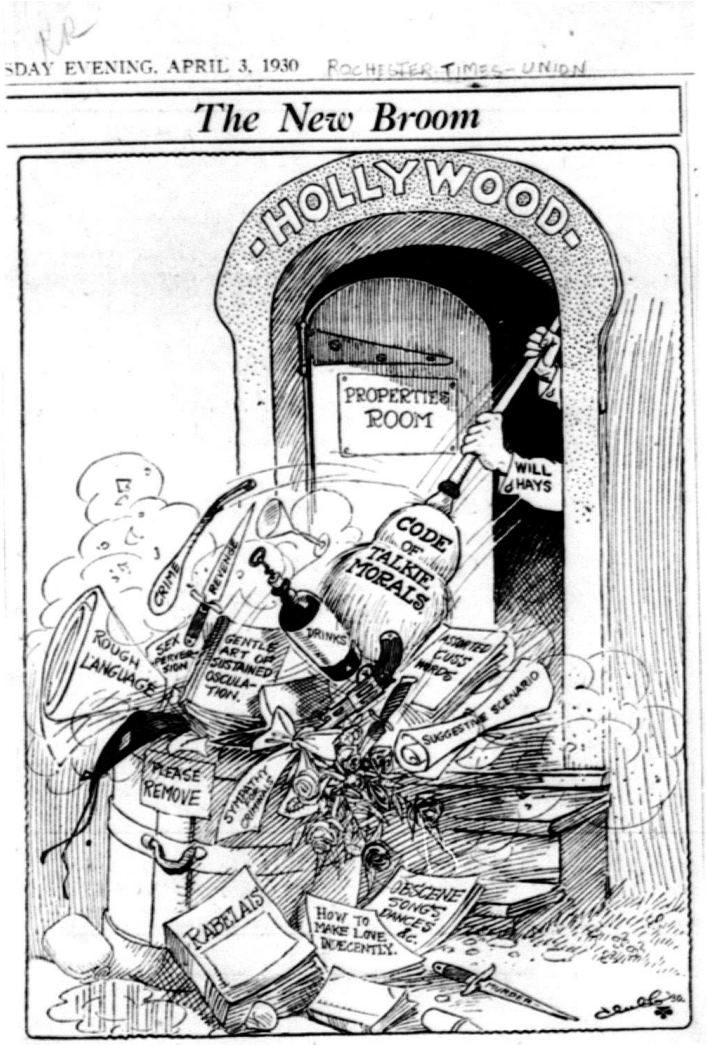
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION: "The new code will be generally applauded as a long-desired and delectable decision in the interest of high-class entertainment and will work to great profit and no loss to the film producers and distributors. For the better people of America are fed up on suave and obscenely suggestive pictures; and now that the pictures can talk they want the kind of talk they would allow in their homes and families."

CINCINNATI TIMES-STAR: "Those who want to may sneer at this code or denounce it as limiting 'freedom.' But we think pretty well of the sense of responsibility that brought it into being as the guiding rule of an institution patronized by all the school children of the country and by the youth of other lands. It sets a higher standard than that observed by legitimate drama, by the newspapers, by the novelists and talking the matter by and large—by people generally."

A CODE TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY VALUES

IN THE PRODUCTION OF SILENT, SYNCHRONIZED AND TALKING MOTION PICTURES.

Adopted by Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc., at Hollywood, Calif., and ratified by the Board of Directors of Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., March 31, 1930.



MPPDA #1262 Reel 8, Frame 2263

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CODE OF ETHICS

FOR THE PRODUCTION OF MOTION PICTURES

As Adopted by the Industry in 1930

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE CODE

1. Motion picture producers recognize the high trust and confidence which have been placed in them by the people of the world, and they recognize their responsibility to the public because of this trust.

2. Theatrical motion pictures (that is, pictures intended for the theater as distinct from pictures intended for churches, schools, lecture halls, educational movements, social reform movements, etc.) are primarily to be regarded as entertainment. Mankind has always regarded the importance of entertainment and its value in rebuilding the bodies and souls of human beings.

3. It is recognized that there is entertainment which tends to improve the race (or at least to recreate and build human beings exhausted with the realities of life), and entertainment which tends to harm human beings, or to lower their standards of life and living.

4. Motion pictures are an important form of art expression. Art enters intimately into the lives of human beings. The art of motion pictures has the same objectives as the other arts—the presentation of human thought, emotion, and experience, in terms of an appeal to the soul through the senses.

5. In consequence of the foregoing facts the following general principles are adopted:

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

Correct standards of life shall be presented on the screen, subject only to necessary dramatic contrasts.

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



PARTICULAR APPLICATIONS

Crimes Against the Law

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

1. *Murder*
   (a) The technique of murder must be presented in a way that will not inspire imitation.
   (b) Brutal killings are not to be presented in detail.
   (c) Revenge in modern times shall not be justified.
2. *Methods of Crime* should not be explicitly presented.
   (a) Theft, robbery, safe cracking, and dynamiting of trains, mines, buildings, etc., should not be detailed in method.
   (b) Arson must be subject to the same safeguards.
   (c) The use of firearms should be restricted to essentials.
   (d) Methods of smuggling should not be presented.
3. *Illegal drug traffic* must never be presented.
4. *The use of liquor* in American life, when not required by the plot or for proper characterization, will not be shown.

Sex

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

1. *Adultery*, sometimes necessary plot material, must not be explicitly treated or justified, or presented attractively.
2. *Scenes of passion*, should not be introduced when not essential to the plot. In general, passion should be so treated that these scenes do not stimulate the lower and baser elements.





3. *Seduction or Rape.*
   (a) They should never be more than suggested, and only when essential for the plot, and even then never shown by explicit method.
   (b) They are never the proper subject for comedy.
4. *Sex perversion* or any inference of it is forbidden.
5. *White slavery* shall not be treated.
6. *Miscegenation* is forbidden.
7. *Sex hygiene* and venereal diseases are not subjects for motion picture.
8. Scenes of *actual child birth*, in fact or in silhouette, are never to be presented.
9. *Children's sex organs* are never to be exposed.

Vulgarity

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

Obscenity

Obscenity in word, gesture, reference, song, joke or by suggestion, is forbidden.

Dances

Dances which emphasize indecent movements are to be regarded as obscene.



Profanity

Pointed profanity or vulgar expressions, however used, are forbidden.

Costume

1. *Complete* nudity is never permitted. This includes nudity in fact or in silhouette, or any lecherous or licentious notice thereof by other characters in the picture.
2. *Dancing costumes* intended to permit undue exposure or indecent movements in the dance are forbidden.

Religion

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

National Feelings

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

Titles

Salacious, indecent or obscene titles shall not be used.



Repellent Subjects

The following subjects must be treated within the careful limits of good taste.

1. *Actual hangings*, or electrocutions as legal punishments for crime.
2. *Third Degree* methods.
3. *Brutalities* and possible gruesomeness.
4. *Branding* of people or animals.
5. *Apparent* cruelty to children or animals.
6. *Surgical operations.*

Uniform Interpretation of the Code

That there may be no doubt about a uniform interpretation of the code by the different producers, machinery has been set up that makes available for every producer the knowledge and experience of the entire industry, aided by the cooperation available from socially-minded groups and public leaders in the selection of the material for screen use and in the treatments of such material.

The reviewing facilities of the organization are then available to all producers in order that such changes as may seem necessary to conform to the provisions of the code may be made before the negatives are sent to the laboratory.

The leading factors in the industry through standing committees will be called upon to arbitrate where there is any doubt about interpretation and thus the common judgement of men with a common purpose will be the deciding influence.

(THE END)

MPPDA #3340 Reel 8, Frame 1779

New England Premiere—First Time Showing East of the Mississippi!

STARTS TOMORROW!

WERE THEY GUILTY? . . . A flaming human document revealing the power of true love over the green-eyed monster, jealousy . . . She held the key to failure or success, to hatred or love, to happiness or despair. The picture you will never forget!

"EX-FLAME"

Co-starring
THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS
of Youth and Romance
NEIL HAMILTON — MARION NIXON
supported by a brilliant cast

LOVERS? . . . Never before a romance like this . . . In her eyes he found passion . . . In his arms she found a tender love nothing could replace.

A modernized version of the world famous stage play and book "East Lynne."



A Liberty all-talking production



Special Added Feature!
"SEE AMERICA THIRST"
with
BESSIE LOVE - HARRY LANGDON
"SLIM" SUMMERVILLE
A cocktail of merriment . . . Universal's all-talking feature comedy of the prohibition!

BROADWAY THEATRE

LAST TIMES TODAY!
JACK OAKIE in "SEA LEGS"
and "DANGER LIGHTS"

MPPDA #645 Reel 07

THIS PICTURE APPROVED BY THE
PRODUCTION CODE ADMINISTRATION
OF THE MOTION PICTURE PRODUCERS
& DISTRIBUTORS OF AMERICA.

CERTIFICATE NO.
IIIO

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PATHÉ EXCHANGE, INC.
EXECUTIVE OFFICES
35 WEST 45TH STREET
NEW YORK

August 12, 1927

Mr. Maurice McKenzie
Motion Picture Producers and
Distributors of America
469 Fifth Avenue
New York City

Dear Mr. McKenzie:

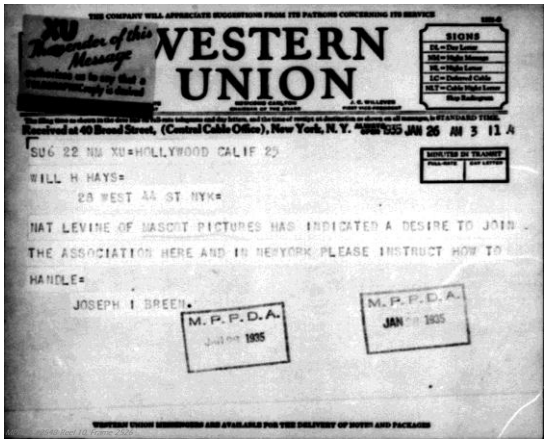
Your few lines of the 11th inst attached to letter from Mr. Fred W. Beetson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc., 6331 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, California, together with a copy of the old memo contract signed by Ben Rothwell, Frank Leon Smith and Sherman Ross, has been referred to this department.

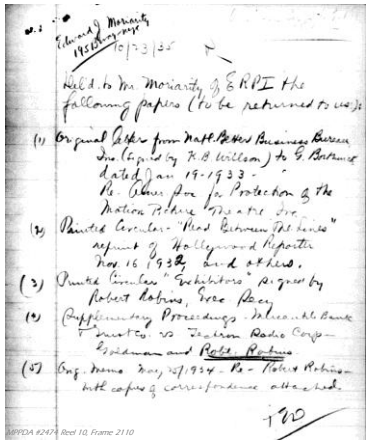
The facts in this case are:

In the first place, a memo contract was entered into by Mr. Frank Leon Smith, a continuity writer for our Serial Unit, Ben Rothwell, an agent for certain artists, and Sherman Ross, a rather unknown quantity who had become kind of a playmate of Frank Smith's, to use Ross for a minimum number of six weeks at $400.00 per week in a serial we were placing in production entitled "THE HOUSE WITHOUT A KEY". Before we had actually started production Mr. Pearson worked out an arrangement with Gene Tunney to make a serial for PATHE before he started training for the Dempsey-Tunney fight. This necessitated a change in our production plans in order to accomodate the Tunney agreement and, instead of placing "THE HOUSE WITHOUT A KEY" in production as had been planned, we placed on that production schedule the serial entitled "THE FIGHTING MARINE" and had a very clear understanding with Sherman Ross that we would use him in that serial instead of "THE HOUSE WITHOUT A KEY" in which production was not started for some three months later. Not only was Mr. Ross given a six weeks' engagement but his services were used for considerable additional time in the Tunney serial.

This action on the part of Ben Rothwell and Sherman Ross to force us to give him six weeks additional work at $400.00 per week, a figure considerably in excess, in my opinion, of his

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COMPANY




Held to Mr Moriarity of E&RPI the following papers (to be returned to us)
(1) Original Letter from Motion Picture Producers Bureau Inc (signed by W H Hellum) to E Bateman dated Jan 19-1933 - Re- Code for Protection of the Motion Picture Industry
(2) Printed Circular- "Hard Currency Situation" reprint of Hollywood Reporter Nov 16 1933 and others.
(3) Printed Circular "Exhibitors" Prepared by Robert Robins, Free Press
(4) Supplementary Proceedings - Nelson H Bunker Plaintiff vs Teleflow Radio Corporation Defendant and Robt Robins
(5) Copy memo May 29/1934 - Re - Robert Robinson with copies of correspondence attached.



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ORIGINAL

(1)

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT
of the
Proceedings
at
Conference.

PERSONNEL:

WILL H. HAYS, ESQ., Chairman,
MRS. THOMAS H. WINTER;
MESSRS. JACK L. WARNER,
E. P. SCHULBERG,
IRVING THALBERG,
JESSE L. LASKY,
SOL WURTZEL,
PAUL BERN,
MAURICE McKENZIE,
J. QUIGLEY,
CHARLES H. CHRISTIE,
CHARLES SULLIVAN,
JASON S. JOY,

FATHER LORD.

Held at the Offices of the
Association of Motion Picture Producers
5504 Hollywood Boulevard
Los Angeles, California

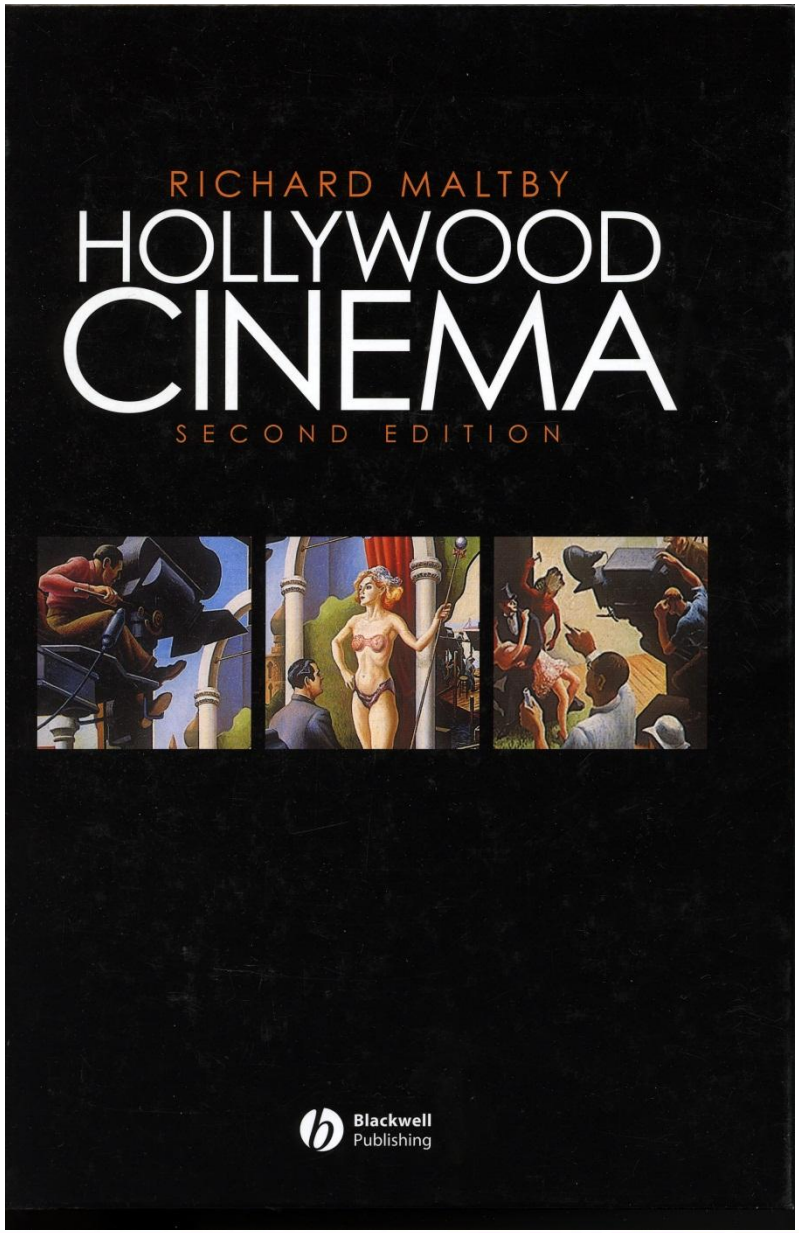
Monday, February 10th, 1930
Commencing at the hour of 1:30 o'clock P.M.

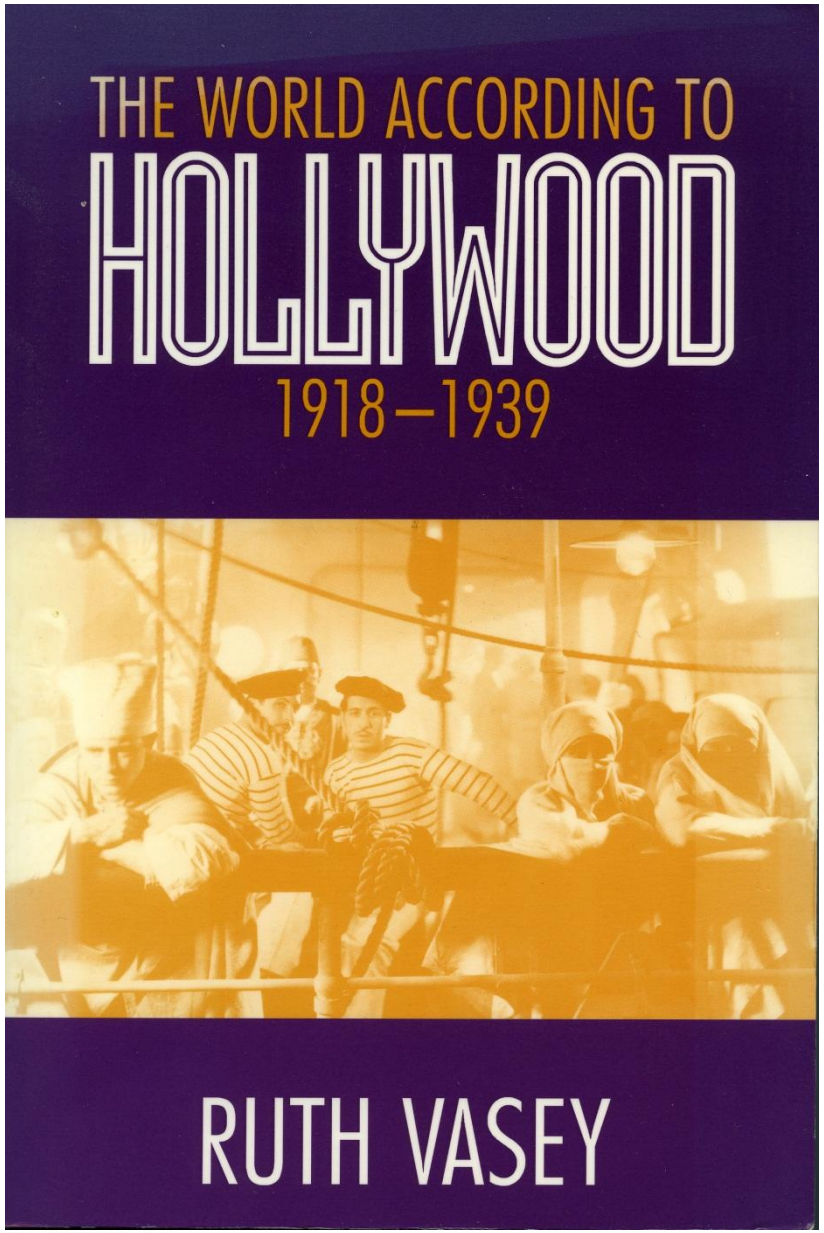
Associated Court Reporters
REPORTERS — NOTARIES
715 ASSOCIATED REALTY BUILDING
SIXTH AND OLIVE STREETS
Phone VAndike 3822

REPORTED BY Paul Lehnhardt, Jr.

BOOK 1183 PAGE 2 ET SEQ.







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MPPDA MICROFILM ARCHIVE | 1930 | REEL 8

DATE:4-7-30 DOC.NO.:X30-46 TYPE:letters TEXT:
FROM:Herron
TO:William H. Fraser and reply
SUBJECTS:The trouble in China re Harold-Lloyd's Welcome-Danger. Herron defends the traditional use of foreign villains "so long as it is done in moderation ... It is simply that when American mp interests, who possess at the present time a large percent of the film trade of the world, find themselves the screen story purveyors of the world, then a new set of rules applies."

FILMS:

NAMES:



InfoWorld

Software Report Card

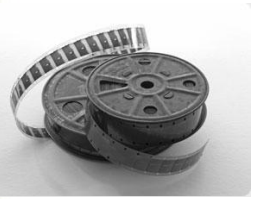
Cardbox

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Performance	☐	☐	☐	☑
Documentation	☐	☐	☐	☑
Ease of Use	☐	☐	☐	☑
Error Handling	☐	☐	☐	☑

System Requirements

- 8080, Z80 or 8085 system
- CP/M or MP/M
- 48K RAM
- 5¼- or 8-inch disk drive

Price: ***unavailable***















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FileMaker Pro - [MPPDA Copy New]

File Edit View Insert Format Records Scripts Window Help

Browse

Layout: Layout #

Record: 1

Found: 1566

Total: 3077

Unsorted

MPPDA MICROFILM ARCHIVE

Reel 10 **Year** 1932 **Index** Production Code 1932 **Doc. No.** PC32-4 **Frame** 10-0072 **To** 10-0073

Date 15/12/1932 **Type** letter

From Lord **To** Joy

Subject changes in profanity clause of PCode not particularly important by comparison to other violations but proably shouldn't be changed - sex stuff not good box office - 'the unspeakable Constance-Bennett' 'you are dealing with men who are tricky and unwilling to regard their best interest.'

Films

Names Novarro Garbo 'the unspeakable Constance-Bennett'

Additional text

DECEMBER 15, 1931

LORD to JOY

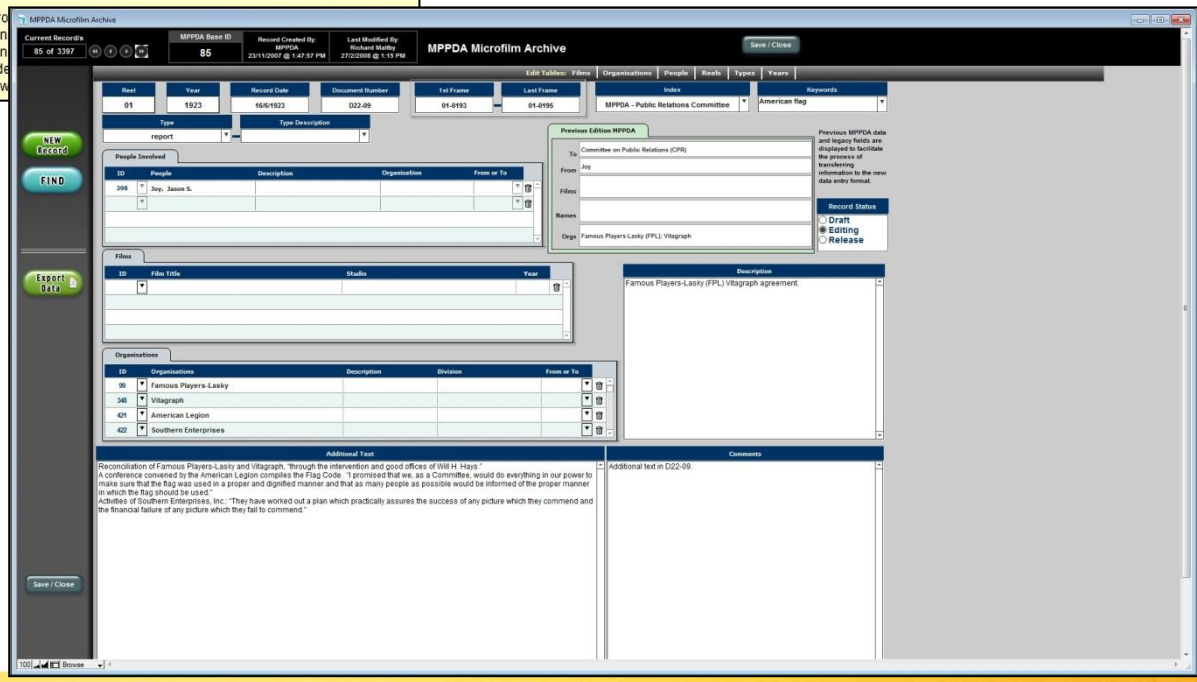
"So many important violations of the code have been going on that a little thing like a "hell" now and then seems too me a distinctly unimportant matter. I never was at all excited over "damn" or "hell" when it was needed for the context, but I would not be at all enthusiastic about putting that into writing in the Code. If you do, I am afraid "The Front Page" language and "What Price Glory" talk is going to come in under the head of "essential to the realistic presentation of the subject".

If they will cut out some of the defense of the prostitution that has been coming out lately, I shall not mind if the villain says "doggon" instead of merely "damn".

I hope you are telling your very intelligent group of producers to take a look at the fifteen box office champions of the present year. Marie Dressler gets three places among them and Greta Garbo and the unspeakable Constance Bennett get none ... I am beginning to be pretty confident of the fact that the empty theatres, the double features trying to attract a fair sized crowd, and the deplorable financial condition of the industry at present can be attributed to precisely the same element that made Earl Carroll's "Vanities" leave Broadway after a short run at a three-dollar top while the absolutely clean Ed Wynn has settled down for a grand run. You can remind them that the same smut which has choked Broadway to death is at the present minute going to choke their cinema if they don't give us more pictures like "Cimarron" and "The Connecticut Yankee" and stars like Janet Gaynor instead of sex and murder and the type of motion picture actress whose private life is a public scandal.

It may interest you to know that I wrote a letter to Louis B. Mayer protesting Ramon Novarro written up Navarro [sic] and praised Metro-Goldwyn for his type of picture. Mr. Mayer did not an up the whole episode for our paper which reaches about one hundred and fifty thousand youn

We all know the terribly hard job that you are doing, and we know that you have made decide constructive work, but I think you are dealing again and again with men who are tricky and unw



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MPPDA Browse by Year

Choose a year to browse

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Showing records **61** to **75** of **111** « 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 » Records on page: 15

RecordDate	Folder	Keywords	Subject	People	Detail
1922-08-16	uniform contract	uniform contract	Cohen argues that since the MPPDA and MPTOA have reached an impasse over the Uniform Contract, they should turn to representatives of the public to act as mediators. Letters by Hays suggest that he took the suggestion seriously, although there is no evidence that he acted upon it.	Cohen Sidney Hays Will	view
1922-08-26	uniform contract	anti-trust, arbitration	The justification for the Film Boards of Trade (Film Clubs) by the man who claims to have originated them. Includes detailed description of their operations and functions, which include battling censorship and creating favorable public opinion, especially amongst "moulders of public opinion."	Goldman Benjamin Hays Will	view
1922-09-05	civic committee		Proposal for Warner studio cooperation with the Public Relations Committee. Describes public relations progress of Committee of Twenty -- relations with press improving -- proposals for reviewing service -- Hays proposed that favorable reviews be publicized, unfavorable ones sent to MPPDA: "I need not point out that this proposal would go far toward being the antithesis of any political censorship project."	Hays Will Warner Albert	view
1922-09-12	civic committee	childrenâ€™â€™s matinees	Proposals for public relations action, arising from meeting of 08-15-1922. Involves national headquarters of affiliated organizations, and local committees. public relations reviewing plans -- aims include encouraging publication of photoplay guides in newspapers classifying films according to type of audience they would suit -- children's matinees		view
1922-09-15	civic committee	non-theatrical motion pictures	Includes resolution to commission a study on the distribution of non-theatrical films. Attached is a memorandum concerning the previewing of pictures (see D22-03)	Hanmer Lee Harriman Oliver McMahon Charles	view

MPPDA Record

Choose a year to browse

1915
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Record ID	9
IndexId	civic committee
Year	1922
Date	05/9/1922
Doc No.	X22-02
Reel	**view microfilm reel 1**
Frame Start	**view microfilm frame start 01-0024**
Frame End	**view microfilm frame end 01-0027**
Type	letter
Subject	Proposal for Warner studio cooperation with the Public Relations Committee. Describes public relations progress of Committee of Twenty -- relations with press improving -- proposals for reviewing service -- Hays proposed that favorable reviews be publicized, unfavorable ones sent to MPPDA: "I need not point out that this proposal would go far toward being the antithesis of any political censorship project."
Additional Text	"I need not point out that this proposal would go far toward being the direct antithesis of any political censorship project; any producer would be entirely at liberty to participate or withdraw from the arrangement; more than that, he would be at liberty to accept or not the suggestions made with respect to any motion picture; also, none but affirmatively favorable comment will be made public. There would be no attempt to have the several organizations viewing pictures agree upon their estimate relative to any specific picture ... each organization would send out favorable reviews simply to its own local organizations throughout the country." Organizations on committee of 20 have membership of 11m. "They are the type who will be constructive, not destructive, who believe and will help in a spirit of an honest appreciation of our difficulties and of the inestimable value of motion pictures. No other activity of this Association seems to me more important than our securing the allegiance for the industry of these large, numerous and influential groups whose cooperation we have not had sufficiently in the past."

Related People

To : Albert Warner

From : Will H. Hays
President, MPPDA

Related Organisations

MPPDA
Committee on Public Relations

MPPDA
Committee on Public Relations, Committee of Twenty

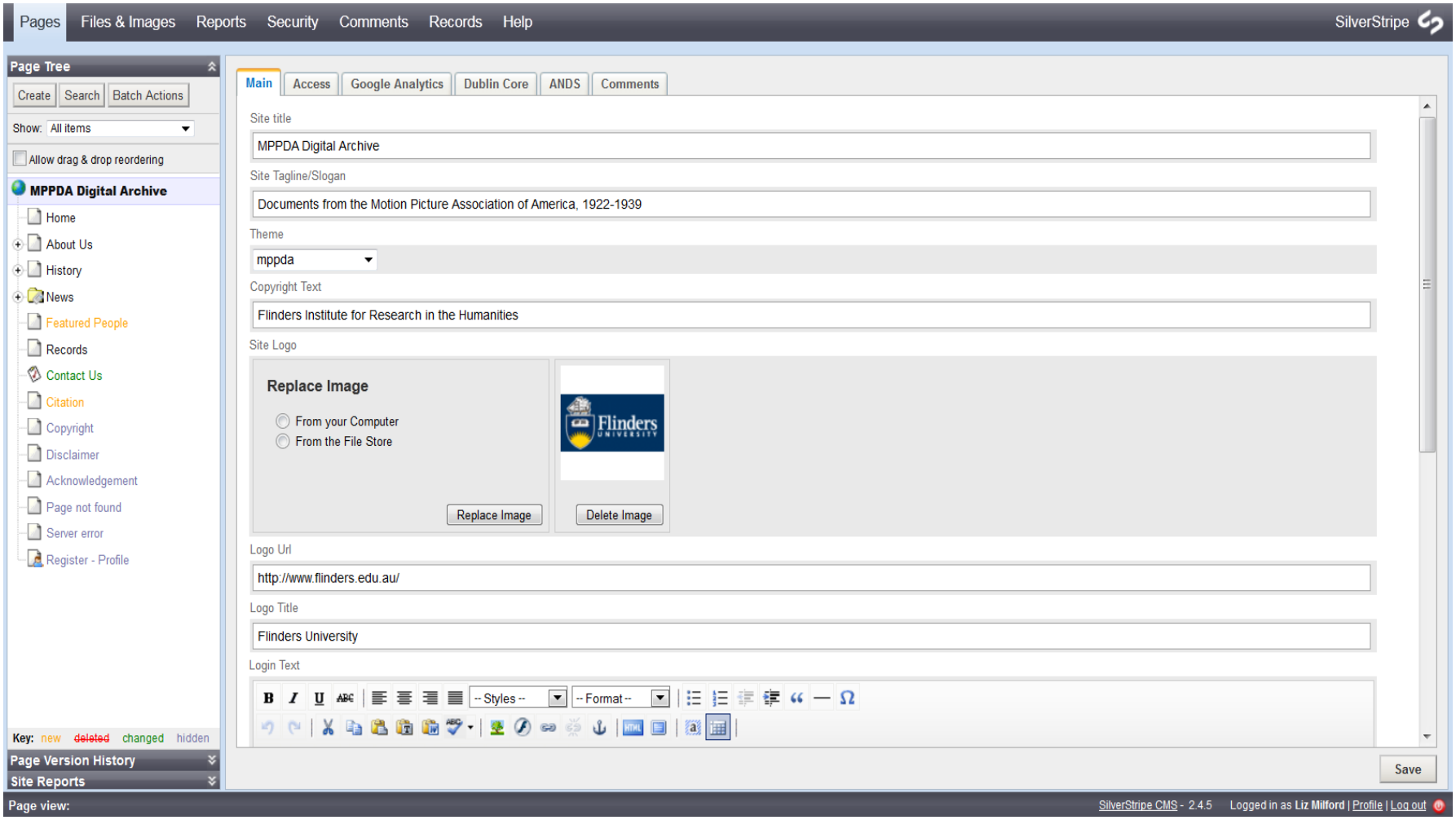
Warner Bros.

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http://mppda.flinders.edu.au/



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Records

Keywords

Frame Reference

(Any reel)

Year

(any)

Record Type

Advertising/publicity (3

Keyword

(any)

Organisation

(any)

Film

(any)

Person

(any)

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Documents from the Motion Picture Association of America, 1922-1939

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Records » Record #225

Record #225

Date:	13/08/1924
Record Type:	Advertising/publicity
Reel:	Reel 1
Frame Start:	1-2618
Frame End:	1-2620
Legacy ID:	225
Legacy Year:	1924
Legacy Index:	Woman to Woman

Presumably this is the kind of advertising that the Wampas are resolving not to issue. Extracts include: "A CHILD BORN OUTSIDE OF MAN'S LAW His Fate Hanging on the Caprice of a Society Butterfly ... Betty Compson as the Notorious Dancer of the Queens of Sin in the Famous Paris Underworld ... SEE THIS SHOW AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR TO SEE IF YOU HAVE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE." There is also a daring picture. The movie is Woman to Woman.

Keywords

Advertising - offensive (10) Show all keywords...

Scans


1-2618


1-2619


1-2620

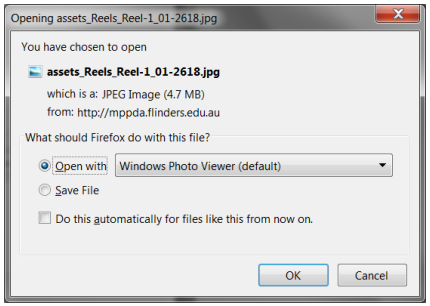
Linked Films

- Woman to Woman

^ Back To Top

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Scan #1-2618 For Record #225

View the full size scan. You can also hover over the mage to view a zoomed in version.

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Records » Record #1262

Record #1262

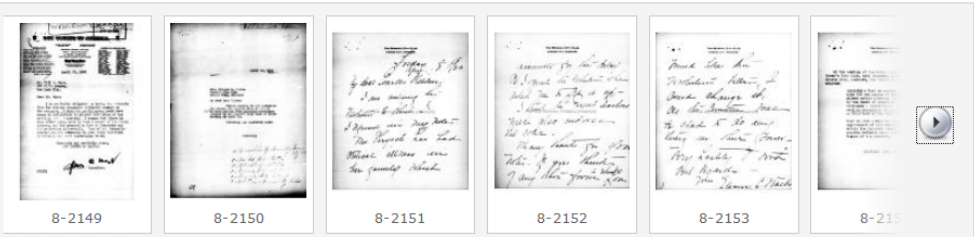
Date:	02/04/1930
Record Type:	Miscellaneous
Reel:	Reel 8
Frame Start:	8-2143
Frame End:	8-2281
Legacy ID:	1273
Legacy Year:	1930
Legacy Index:	MPPDA - Production Code

Press clippings and letters, all showing confidence in, and enthusiasm for, the new Production Code.

Keywords

There are no keywords associated with this record. Show all keywords...

Scans



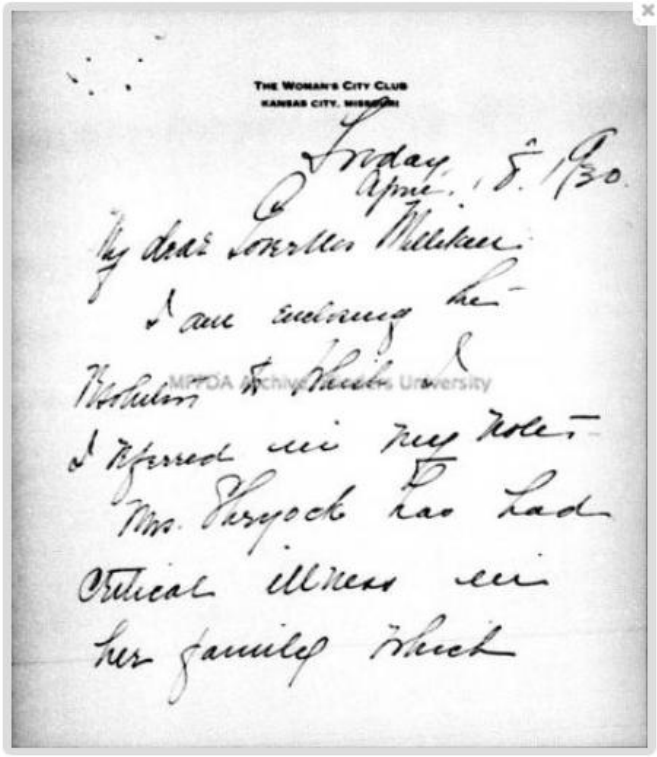
Linked Organisations

- General Federation of Women,Âôs Clubs
- International Federation of Catholic Alumni

Linked People

- Rita C McGoldrick, Public relations, International Film Foundation, International Federation of Catholic Alumni
- James C. Egbert, Columbia University
- Senator Robert Wagner

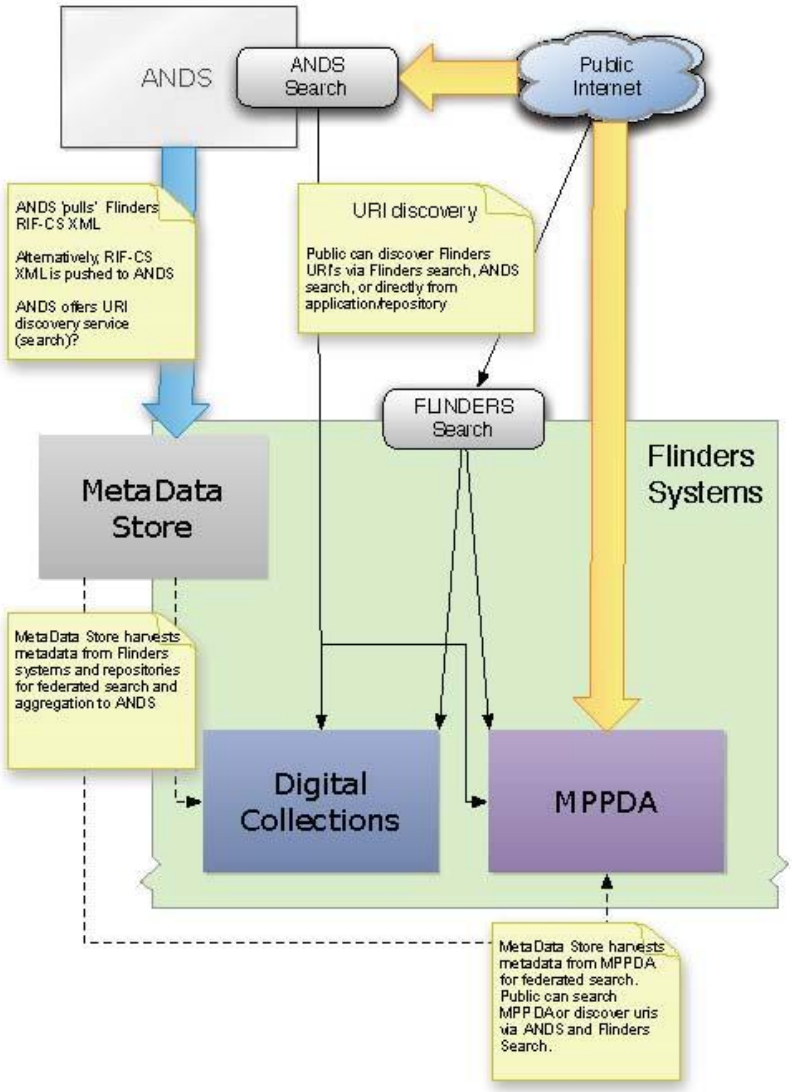
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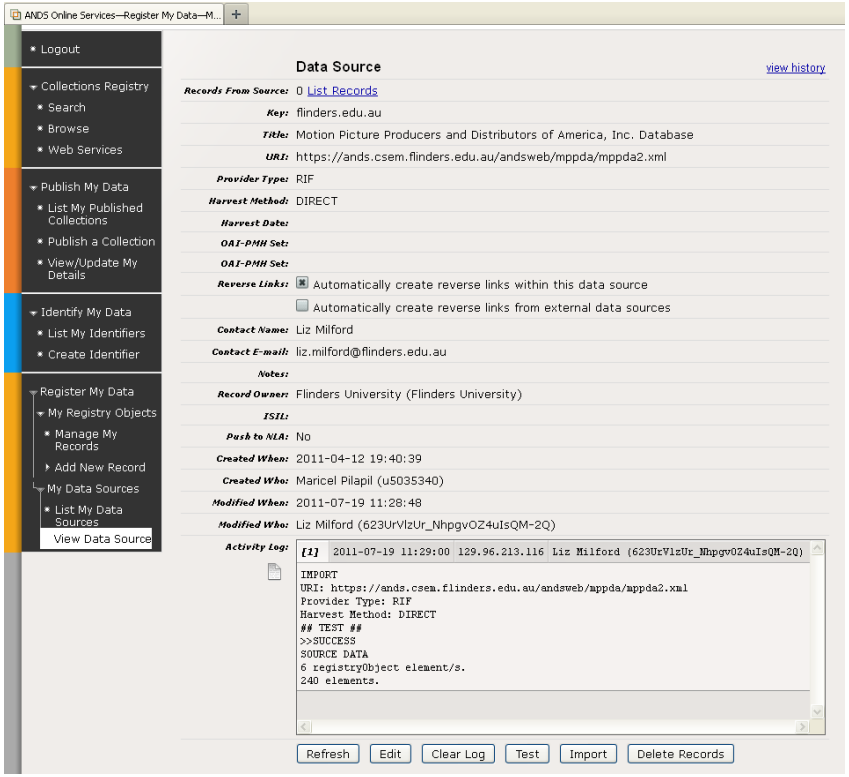


Scan #8-2151 For Record #1262

View the full size scan. You can also hover over the image to view a zoomed in version.

Flinders Metadata Aggregation and Discovery Model






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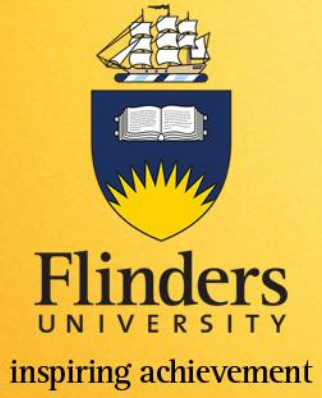
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