

An das deutsche Volk!

Die aus der Revolution hervorgegangene Regierung, deren politische Leitung rein sozialistisch ist, setzt sich die Aufgabe, das sozialistische Programm zu verwirklichen. Sie verkündet schon jetzt mit Gesetzeskraft folgendes:

1. Der Belagerungszustand wird aufgehoben.
2. Das Vereins- und Versammlungsrecht unterliegt keiner Beschränkung, auch nicht für Beamte und Staatsarbeiter.
3. Eine Zensur findet nicht statt. Die Theaterzensur wird aufgehoben.
4. Meinungsäußerung in Wort und Schrift ist frei.
5. Die Freiheit der Religionsübung wird gewährleistet. Niemand darf zu einer religiösen Handlung gezwungen werden.
6. Für alle politischen Straftaten wird Amnestie gewährt. Die wegen solcher Straftaten anhängigen Verfahren werden niedergelegt.
7. Das Gesetz über den unterländischen Hilfsdienst wird aufgehoben, mit Ausnahme der sich auf die Zählung von Streitigkeiten beziehenden Bestimmungen.
8. Die Gefindeordnungen werden außer Kraft gesetzt. Ebenso die Ausnahmegeetze gegen die Landarbeiter.
9. Die bei Beginn des Krieges aufgehobenen Arbeiterrechtsbestimmungen werden hiermit wieder in Kraft gesetzt.

Des weiteren werden angekündigt:

Achtstündiger Maximalarbeitstag,
spätestens am 1. Januar 1919,
Ausreichende Arbeitsgelegenheit,
Unterstützung von Erwerbslosen,
Befämpfung der Wohnungsnot,

Sicherung der Volksernährung,
Geordnete Produktion,
Schutz des Eigentums Privater,
Freiheit und Sicherheit der Person.

Berlin, den 12. November 1918

Ebert Thälmann Scheidemann Landsberg Dittmann Bart

Vorstehende Bekanntmachung der neuen Regierung bringen wir hiermit zur öffentlichen Kenntnis der gesamten Bevölkerung von Breslau.

Breslau, den 14. November 1918

Der Volksrat

Philipp

Prescher

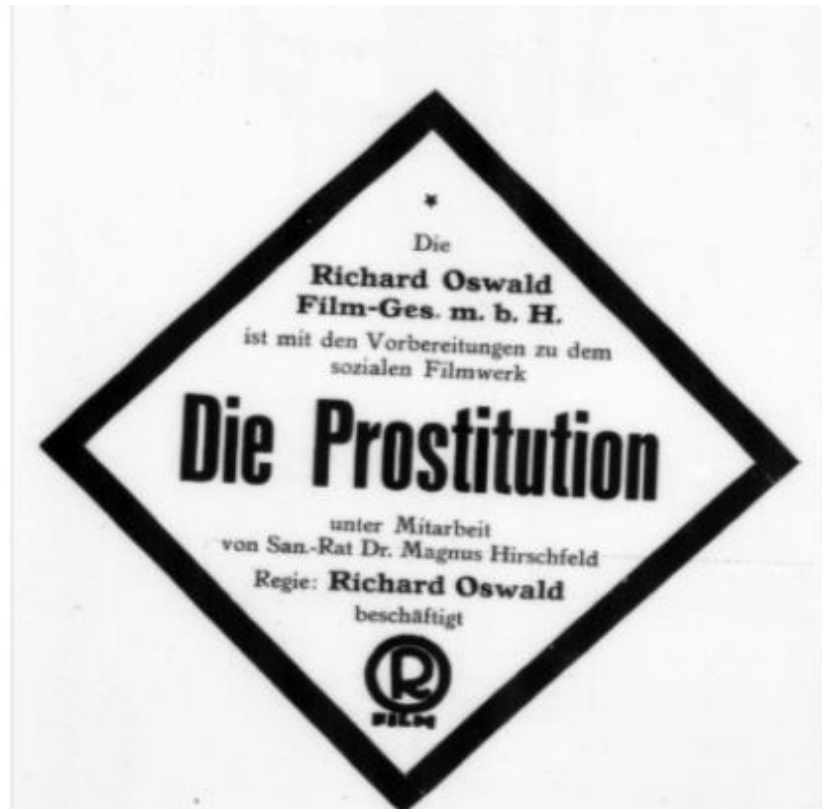
November 12, 1918

To the German People

The government that emerged from the revolution, whose political leadership is purely socialist, has set itself the task of implementing the socialist program. It hereby proclaims the following provisions, which have the force of law:

1. The state of siege is lifted.
2. The right of association and assembly is subject to no restriction, not even for civil servants and state employees.
3. **Censorship shall not take place. The censorship of theatrical productions is abolished.**
4. The expression of opinion, whether spoken or written, is free.
5. Freedom of religious practice is guaranteed. No one may be compelled to perform a religious act. [. . .]

First announcement of *Die Prostitution* —in *Der Film* no. 48 (November 30, 1918)



The Richard Oswald Film-G.m.b.H is currently busy with preparations for the social film project “The Prostitution” with the collaboration of Sanitätsrat Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld.

RUDOLF GENENNCHER

“Censorship Is Dead—Long Live Censorship!”

Originally published as “Zensur ist tot – Lang lebe die Zensur,” in *Der Kinematograph* (December 11, 1918)

Berlin Police President Eichhorn recently convened a meeting of film-industry representatives to discuss film censorship. Besides representatives of Berlin cinemas, delegates from the Rhineland also attended.

The discussion gave the impression that people were conscious of their new freedom but immediately afraid of preserving it. It became alarmingly clear that Herr von Glasenapp and the police officials could not simply carry over into the new era the authority granted to them by the old government. The reasons for this need not be examined here. The fact remains that they cling to their positions and persistently defend censorship.

It was established that Herr von Glasenapp had shown the new police administration films that he considered objectionable and harmful to the German people. Police President Eichhorn also declared that he had seen things that should not be shown to the public. Herr Zimmermann of Berlin pointed out very clearly, however, that these were isolated excerpts. Just as five or six lines in a political article may attract the public prosecutor’s attention, bring disaster upon the writer, and even send him to prison, it makes a considerable difference whether such a passage is seen within the film as a whole or merely as an isolated excerpt. Within its complete context, the passage might be entirely unobjectionable. Like a political article, a film must be judged not by isolated passages alone but as a whole.

One theme ran like a red thread through the proceedings: people have not yet freed themselves from the old system. Admittedly, it is asking a great deal of them suddenly to enjoy freedom after having felt the police fist at the back of their necks for years. Police President Eichhorn, along with nearly everyone present, fully agreed with Herr Zimmermann that censorship must no longer take place at all. Although it was stated at the beginning of the proceedings that film censorship had not yet officially been abolished, it was pointed out that the foundations of government had fundamentally changed.

It was also said that, when cinema censorship was discussed, a large proportion of the Reichstag deputies did not even know that film censorship existed. Even if one assumes that film censorship once was—or still is—necessary, it must nevertheless be emphasized that the representatives of the new government cannot impose exceptional legislation of

any kind, since they themselves fought such laws with the greatest determination. The new government will undoubtedly remain true to this principle.

People have evidently not yet learned to make proper use of freedom in film; this became apparent as the meeting continued. Producers expressed grave misgivings about freedom from censorship. Just as everyone is free to remain honest, however, a producer is free to make good or bad films. If a producer makes films that encourage crime or contain pornography, that is his affair; and if he subsequently comes into conflict with the criminal courts, that too is entirely his own affair. Freedom of production permits him to do so, but criminal law forbids it. Here Wilhelm Busch's words apply: "The good—this maxim firmly stands—is always the evil that one leaves undone."

It is a regrettable admission that people revealed so plainly that they did not know what was and was not permitted under the new freedom. Finally, as a last lifeline, Police Councilor Müder raised the question of censorship in the interests of protecting young people. Here, too, it became evident that the former censor was still governed by the old, petty-minded police mentality, which had apparently become second nature to him.

The Rhineland delegate immediately objected that here, once again, every possible means was being used to play the unrestricted schoolmaster and educator—and, by this roundabout route, to preserve film censorship. Parents are permitted to take their children into theaters, restaurants, cabarets, and other places that may be more dangerous to them than the supposedly contaminated cinema. What is permitted there must also be permitted in the cinema. Parents have the right to raise their children as they see fit, without police interference.

Herr Zimmermann recommended that special performances for young people should not be permitted at all. Instead, he called upon the film industry to create substantial films for young audiences that would be both entertaining and educational, and to make possible family performances like those offered by the theater. As a matter of principle, however, children should be admitted to cinemas only when accompanied by their parents or guardians.

The discussions concluded with the determination that censorship must no longer take place under any circumstances. If a producer has made a film and is uncertain whether it might bring the public prosecutor down upon him, a council of honor—consisting of theater owners, film distributors, producers, and a literary representative—should decide whether the film may be made available to the public. As a matter of principle, all police officials were excluded from membership in this council. If the film raises no objections, it may be released like any other film, including one that has previously been reported to the authorities. Under no circumstances, however, will a censorship certificate be issued for

it. The film will merely remain recorded in the files of the industry's council of honor, as this commission might be called. No police official may proceed against the film unless, as already mentioned, the producer becomes subject to criminal prosecution.

Legal Uncertainty

Originally published as "Rechtsunsicherheit," in *Der Film* no. 50 (December 14, 1918)

An inquiry addressed to the Minister of the Interior — Censorship in Berlin effectively abolished — Police regulations that need not be obeyed — Which law are we to follow?

The uncertainty that characterizes our present political life is nowhere more apparent than in the sphere of commercial activity. The important question of film censorship has still not been resolved, although the entire operation of an industry worth millions is profoundly affected by it. Following the discussion held at Police Headquarters last week, the Association for the Protection of Common Interests submitted an urgent petition to the Minister of the Interior. Pointing to the serious damage inflicted upon the film industry by uncertainty over the legal situation, the Association requested prompt information as to whether, in the authorities' view, film censorship continues to exist in Prussia. No reply has yet been received from the Minister of the Interior. At the same time, the Association asked all organizations in the film industry, whether affiliated with it or not, to designate two representatives each who would negotiate with the Police President, as a committee, on the censorship question.

Meanwhile, as we hear, individual organizations have taken new steps at approximately the same level within the Reich, regrettably without consulting the Association of Interests or even informing it. Thus, on Thursday, representatives of the Producers' Cartel, the Distributors' Association, the Reich Association, and the Greater Berlin Theater Owners' Association held a meeting with Minister Ernst. The minister stated that, in his personal view, censorship no longer existed and promised to clarify the matter through official bureaucratic channels as quickly as possible. Whether this personal representation was still necessary in view of the Association's urgent petition may be left an open question. In our opinion, however, it must be firmly demanded that, in matters of such fundamental importance, the Association of Interests should not be pushed aside. It can hardly

enhance the standing of the motion-picture industry with the authorities and the public if the individual associations work against one another instead of together.

As for the issue itself, we maintain, as previously stated, that censorship ceased to exist following the Reich government's proclamation. In the interest of orderly administration, however, we consider it necessary that the subordinate administrative authorities also be informed of this situation through the customary regulatory channels. Such an administrative measure, which should have been issued immediately, is still being awaited.

In Berlin, the head of the censorship office has responded to our urgent representations concerning this situation by arranging for police officers to be instructed, throughout Greater Berlin, until further notice not to require the presentation of censorship cards any longer. They are merely to supervise screenings and report to the police authorities any films they consider objectionable. This arrangement does not apply to the Reich as a whole; instead, it remains at the discretion of each police authority to decide how it will deal with the matter. The resulting situation does, in effect, establish freedom from censorship in Berlin—though admittedly a peculiar kind of freedom, about which one hardly knows whether to laugh or cry. Might not the 'reporting' of objectionable films by unsupervised, subordinate officials ultimately prove the greater evil? Will such reports not soon accumulate a body of material that could be used very unpleasantly against the cinema? These are conditions of uncertainty from which we must escape as quickly as possible if German cinema is once again to operate successfully.

The same deplorable situation prevails in the area of police regulations. The ban on posters and the obligation to submit the program in advance, for example, legally remain in force. Yet compliance is required only in certain police districts; in others, no one pays the slightest attention to them. Even where compliance is required, the authorities generally confine themselves to gentle warnings and do not impose penalties. The same applies to the regulation restricting screening hours. Are we not told that a number of relatively small theaters have already begun showing films in the morning—naturally to the considerable disadvantage of those proprietors who comply with the regulations?

And worst of all, the authorities, of course, retain the power to impose penalties in all these cases. Because they now exercise this power at their own discretion, a condition of legal uncertainty has arisen that is even less tolerable than the rigid restrictions that may have existed previously. Here, too, there can be only one remedy: clarity as soon as possible! Which law are we expected to obey—the old law of yesterday's regime, or the freedom brought by the Revolution? An Answer is Requested.

Film as a Means of Agitation

Published as “Der Film als Agitationsmittel,” in *Der Kinematograph* no. 628 12 (January 15, 1919)

Our entire public life is currently dominated by the agitation of political parties, worldviews, social movements, and so on. To agitation, almost any means that promised to serve its purpose has always been considered fair — so it is no wonder that its tentacles reached out toward film long ago. If film has nevertheless still been used relatively little for purposes of agitation, this is due to several different reasons.

Every act of agitation is a weapon, and every weapon in turn needs a fighter to wield it and an opponent to feel it. That film itself is excellently suited to serve as a spiritual weapon requires no discussion. But it is a child of the great mother Art — or at least it ought to be — and art is international. Any exploitation of it for political or other purposes represents, to a greater or lesser degree, an abuse or a violation of art. Still, those circles wishing to press film into service for agitational purposes would brush aside this ideal obstacle just as easily as the manufacturers do, for whom, unfortunately, today more than ever, the commercial side of the enterprise must far outweigh the artistic one.

Far more significant is another, more concrete fact that strongly hampers any unrestrained use of cinematography for agitational interests: however excellently suited film itself is for this purpose, the cinema theater is just as poorly suited for it. Tendentious films with agitational intent have indeed already been shown here too — for instance, campaigns against alcohol — but these were exceptions, pursuing goals whose value humanity agreed on almost without exception. Never, however, could the cinema become a playground for party passions. The audience is made up of people of every political persuasion, and it can rightly demand that its convictions remain untouched in a place where it seeks only diversion and intellectual stimulation. Any attempt to use film in the cinema to campaign for some party would provoke indignant protest from those of different persuasions, and might even lead to unruly scenes and disturbances. No — in politics, the cinema must remain just as neutral as any other venue devoted to the cultivation of art and entertainment: theaters, concert halls, picture galleries, and so on.

Is it, then, even desirable for cinematography to make greater use of film for agitational purposes? The answer to this question will be both yes and no, depending on whether one views it from the artistic or the commercial side. That any tendentious slant must estrange film from art is obvious. If large studios were to devote their main attention to propaganda film, the artistic ambitions of authors, directors, and performers would be substantially constrained.

And yet, given the branch's currently poor business situation, one would have to welcome it warmly if the leaders of the political parties paid greater attention to film agitation. This would, admittedly, have no effect on the business of the theater owner; the production side, however, would see a substantial increase in income and greater stability of business through the commissions to be expected. That film has not yet played a greater role in the election campaigns for the National Assembly is probably due chiefly to the unprecedented shortness of the time in which the parties had to organize their mobilization and agitation. But in the later elections to the German People's Parliament, film will indeed play its part as a means of agitation, provided the interested studios can come to an agreement with the decisive figures of the individual parties over production costs. Once one party uses film for agitational purposes, all the other parties will be forced to follow suit if they do not want to fall behind. Censorship difficulties of any kind are hardly to be expected, provided the agitation does not cross the bounds of decency and truth — and by then, censorship in its former form will hopefully also have been finally done away with. The near future will then bring us invitations to election rallies featuring film lectures.

Even though the cinema theater, as I mentioned above, is not suited as a venue for political agitation, it can nevertheless be put to use for another branch of agitation: cultural propaganda. It hardly needs pointing out that now, after the end of the most terrible and devastating war of all time, the propagation of worldviews for a better, healthier, and deeper culture must be pursued with full force. Here, too, cinema can take the place it deserves, for the whole of humanity agrees on the great goal, and it is only a matter of showing the right way. Propaganda films against war, for the establishment of the League of Nations, for the advancement of welfare and intellectual culture, and so on, will find a grateful and interested audience precisely now. Some works of this kind are already in preparation, and more will follow. Here, too, the persuasive power of film as an agitational tool will be tested, opening up for it a field of action in which it can contribute its share to the realization of humanity's ideals.



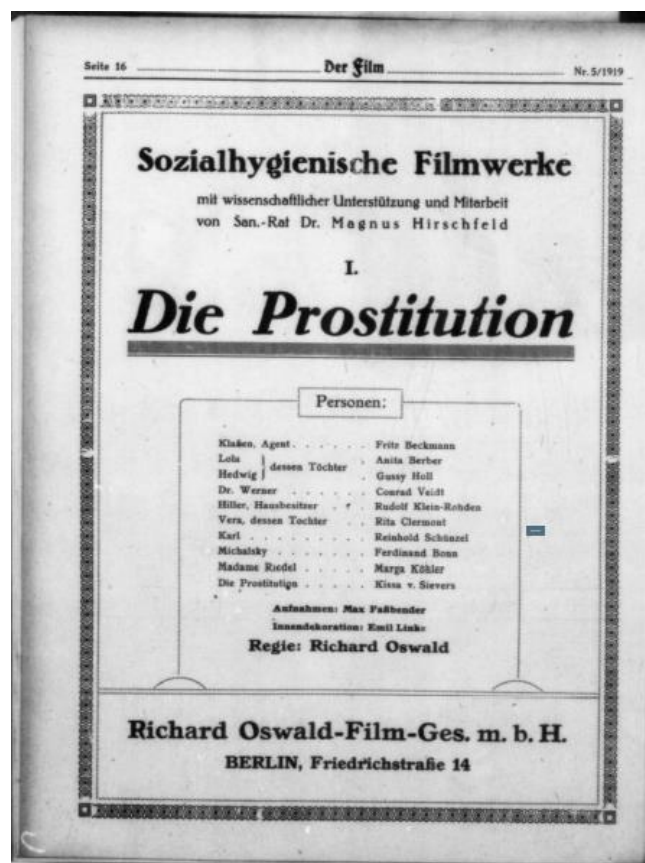
First Announcement in *Der Film* No. 45 (November 19, 1918)

OPIUM

Lichtbild-Bühne, No. 5, February 1, 1919

The film, announced long in advance, written and directed by Robert Reinert — "the action takes place in India, England, and China" — the invitation to the Marmorhaus is a lure no one can resist! Our hopes are not disappointed. At its core a well thought-out and precisely executed plot, the trappings effective down to the smallest detail, mounted at great expense, of consummate technique and never boring. At the same time it is an **"Aufklärungsfilm,"** meant to warn us urgently against the terrible consequences of that ruinous poison. Here we glimpse the dens of vice in India and China; there we see splendid Indian festivals with magnificently staged mass scenes; and elsewhere the kings of the animal world in unsurpassable naturalness. (One small error: it is the tiger, not the lion, that rules the Indian jungle regions.) The opium smoker's dream-fantasies gave the direction the chance to demonstrate the technical perfection of our apparatus in a few wonderful scenes, in which rather a lot of nude culture was indulged in. Hanna Ralph as the woman thirsting for love from "society," who, neglected by her husband, throws herself into the arms of his favorite pupil and endures dreadful torments of the soul; Eduard von Winterstein as the professor, who in truth loves his wife passionately, driven to despair by the conflict between duty and love, and who seeks oblivion in opium intoxication; Sybill

Morel as the unfortunate opium girl Sin, later as Sister Magdalena, devoted to her rescuer with an almost dog-like love; Werner Krauß as Nung-Chang, the opium-den owner cheated of his love, who takes revenge for it on every European he meets; Conrad Veidt as the professor's favorite pupil — all of them, in makeup and performance, are lifelike, superbly drawn figures that one will not easily forget. With giant films of this kind, we truly need not fear foreign competition. The film could perhaps, however, be shortened somewhat.



Announcing “Die Prostitution” in *Der Film* (February 1, 1919)

Private Showing (Feb 19, 1919)

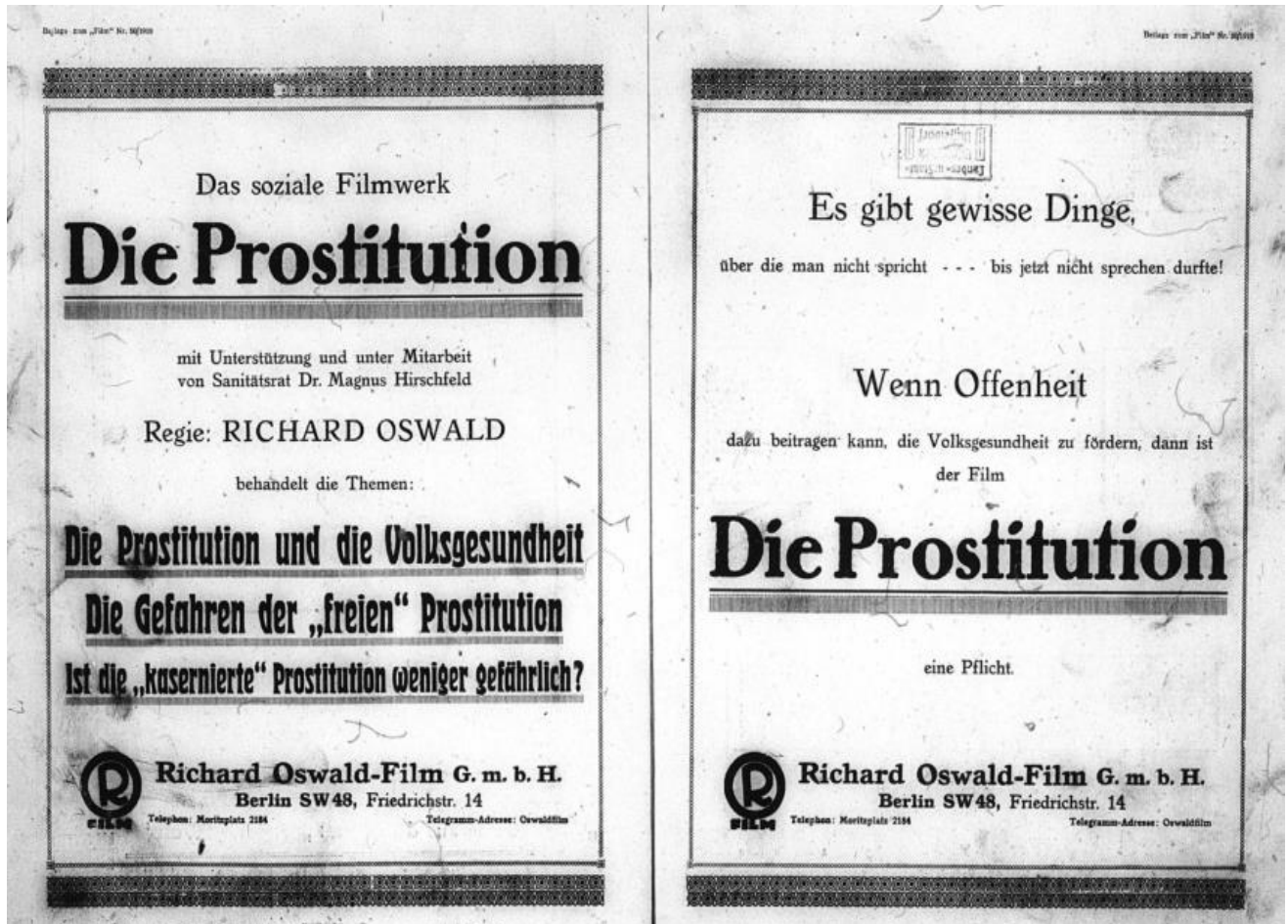
***Das gelbe Haus* (part 1 of *Die Prostitution*), in
Der Kinematograph, no. 633, February 19, 1919**

Richard Oswald showed his new film to a small circle of friends: the Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld-inspired “Tendenzfilm” *Prostitution*. Upon reading the announcement, opinions may differ as to whether—immediately after the easing of censorship—such subjects ought already to be adapted for the screen. There is reason to fear that the enemies of the cinema, in their campaign against freedom from censorship, will point to such “offensive” titles. Yet once one has seen the film, these misgivings will likely fall silent, for this is by no means a crude sensational racket-piece, but rather a serious work of significance in the campaign of enlightenment against regimented and uncontrolled prostitution. (...)

As with most of Oswald’s films, what captivates above all here are the performances. Anita Berber, as the principal representative of the prostitutes, draws an excellently lifelike type. One is astonished at how the dance artist becomes a film diva with such grace and skill. If one recalls her rather unenjoyable performance in *Das Dreimäderlhaus*, one must note with satisfaction that she has made outstanding progress in dramatic acting. Her counterpart is Gussy Holl, appearing before the camera for the first time. Surprisingly good—of a pictorial effectiveness rarely encountered in German films. In her case as well, one marvels at how the risqué cabaret diva has become a composed, serious actress. Among the female leads, Marga Köhler, as the head of the Yellow House, is an amusing figure.

The men are equally well cast: Conrad Veidt, as always, impeccable in makeup and expression; Fritz Beckmann in a Guido Herzfeld role; and Ferdinand Bonn as the “agent”—all three not exactly sympathetic figures, yet possessed of delightful comic flair. Finally, there is Reinhold Schünzel, who remains faithful to his specialty: the “good-natured boyhood friend.” This time, too, he plays the part with his customary means.

Premiere May 1, 1919, in Berlin (Marmorhaus)



The Social Film Work DIE PROSTITUTION

with the support and collaboration of

Sanitätsrat Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld

Director: RICHARD OSWALD

deals with the themes:

Prostitution and Public Health
The Dangers of "Free" Prostitution
Is "barracked" Prostitution Less
Dangerous?

There are certain things that one does not
speak of . . .

that until now could not be spoken of!

When openness can help promote public
health, then the film **PROSTITUTION** is a
duty.

Richard Oswald's "Prostitution" in *Lichtbild-Bühne* 18 (May 2, 1919)

Richard Oswald's new socio-hygienic film "Prostitution" has already been discussed in this space; but the press preview, which took place last Sunday at the Marmorhaus, deepened impressions that deserve fundamental consideration.

Magnus Hirschfeld spoke a few introductory words: clever, matter-of-fact, with the seriousness of the scientist for whom the film is a welcome tool to combat society's errors and its unconscious and malicious misjudgments about "prostitution." His contribution to this film remains unnoticeable; that works in favor of the impact of the work: the less conspicuously the aim hovers over the proceedings, the more willingly the mass of aimlessly entertainment-seeking viewers will follow it.

Richard Oswald may even dare to place this aim — guiding and demanding understanding — before the actual plot begins. He succeeds in an even greater risk: becoming symbolic in the film without appearing comic. "The World Court," before which prostitution is dragged by a "servant of justice" to answer for itself. It is a risk to place these stylized figures before the camera. The symbol demands grand gestures, and perhaps even more so: grand words. Oswald puts no lofty line of text into the plotless prologue; he simply shows the effect of a pair of classical beauties (the *Kissa* by Sievers, [used] as a powerful means of expression to make it known, a well-formed body across a range of different human types. And the director's sure, decisive hand manages, through this prologue, to create the receptive mood, to sharpen the eyes for what they must always be watching closely in the film. Then the plot begins.

It limits itself to showing causes and effects; it refrains from pointing a way out of the mire. For the Warner figure, who believes in the good in people, fails pitifully against the incorrigible harlot. But in his effort, wherever obstacles must be shown, rescue must also be shown. Above all — and this is one of the strongest scenes — there is the police bureaucracy, which leads the man who is inwardly pure by the letter of the law back out of the safe shelter into the swamp of paternal drunkenness. Perhaps the director occasionally spreads the plot too broadly into episodes; but within the episode — in the fine-grained painting of human weaknesses, in the chiseling of individual character traits, in the generous construction of the milieu — Oswald is an unsurpassed master. One could not depict more vividly or forcefully the ground on which these poisonous plants flourish: the hypocritically upstanding-bourgeois domesticity of the house-owner, whose "strictly raised" daughter runs off to a brothel under the pretext of a music lesson; the alcohol-fueled squalor of an "agent," an idler and drunk, for whom daughters are operating capital, whom he forces to yield interest through phrases like "you must obey your parents"; the broad comfort of pleasure-seeking in a brothel. All of this is done unobtrusively, without

vain sensationalism. One example of how Oswald creates new tension without distortion: Werner forces his way into the brothel to free an abducted girl. No man with a drawn revolver meets him — the tired old romanticism of the pistol has been done away with in this film. Werner frees the unfortunate girl quite literally from the arms of her (professionally employed) seducer. There is a hand-to-hand struggle, gripping in its depiction. One sees the good idea triumph, palpably — and this raw vitality strikes harder than a dead man's revolver shot.

The leading actress, a harlot by disposition and circumstance, plays out "the death of Wedekind's Lulu": "a man" strangles her in a dark hovel of a dwelling because she resists having her (worthless) purse stolen. Suspicion of the murder falls on her friend and very first seducer, a pimp portrayed more tellingly than ever before. Thus two fates are consistently resolved out of their own development.

One more word about the visuals: technically they are flawless, as befits the current standard of the German film industry. But Oswald creates the truly striking image. Old Berlin, in its picturesque reality, becomes for him the site of inner and outer degeneration. Berlin police officers, in their bureaucratic plainness — one might say impersonality — have never before been shown so startlingly true to life on film. The Berlin Tiergarten in snow, frosty, somewhat eerie in the moonlit shadows, creates the mood for the meeting of the ruined — and replaces, in a real feat of artistic awareness, seven lines of intertitle text. This is just one example of how one can economize on distracting title-cards without becoming incomprehensible.

The casting was carried out with scrupulous care, creating an ensemble of equally strong performers reaching down to the smallest — and seemingly most trivial — episode. First, the agent: a character study of the very highest order, achieved through mimic means that rank among the finest in the art of film — Fritz Beckmann. Then his daughters: Anita Berber, a harlot portrayed about as naturally and unobtrusively as one could imagine. And Gussy Holl, at times a bit tentative at first, yet with a penetrating humanity in her misfortune. Konrad Veidt, the rescuer, brings an unsentimental vitality and range of movement here that is new for him. Rudolf Klein-Rohden portrays, with strong authenticity, a hypocritical, moralizing head of household, without slipping into caricature. Rita Clermont, the hypocrite's hypocritical daughter, is weak. A standout performance comes from Reinhold Schünzel as the pimp: he continually finds new ways to bring out, vividly and plastically, the type of the idler, extortionist, and born criminal. Ferdinand Bonn plays a slave-trader with villainous busyness. In the smallest roles, Diegelmann, Emil Lind, Werner Krauß, Marga Köhler, and Kissa v. Sievers are credited — names that vouch for the best.

Die Karikatur der Filmwoche.
II. Die Prostitution



Trude, come, let us get enlightened.

KURT TUCHOLSKY

Prostitution with a Mask

First published by Ignaz Wrobel (i.e. Kurt Tucholsky) as “Die Prostitution mit der Maske,” in *Berliner Volks-Zeitung* (May 7, 1919)

The Berlin physician Magnus Hirschfeld, according to the film brochure, has provided scientific collaboration for several films. Since one of these so-called Aufklärungsfilme (sex-education films) is currently being shown in Berlin cinemas, it seems appropriate to take a closer look at it.

Since film censorship has been abolished, the major film companies have been competing with one another to spice up the usual cinematic kitsch with an ingredient that had previously been carefully removed from the pot at police headquarters before the public was allowed to consume it: sexuality.

Cinema directors, not being entirely inept, reasoned as follows: if we now embellish our dime novels with dilapidated houses, knife fights between pimps and prostitutes, seductions, and similar thrilling elements, public opinion will soon turn against us, cry scandal, and somehow put an end to our activities. What, then, is to be done? Do we not have *Aufklärungsfilme*? Do we not possess an institution that can be wonderfully abused? Bring on education! And now they educate.

The extremely complex question of what causes prostitution, how it might be restricted or even eliminated, or how it might at least be rendered so tolerable that it does not excessively harm the body politic—this whole problem is treated, for example, roughly as follows:

In a family there are two daughters. The father is a drunkard who prostitutes his own daughters and conspires with a trafficker in girls. He succeeds with one daughter, who ends up in a brothel where she degenerates—and is finally murdered for pleasure (this scene is shown *in film*). The other daughter is kidnapped, drugged, and wakes up in the same house, but is rescued by her boyfriend.

In between there are delightful little scenes: dancing in the house. These scenes are not frightening but enticing—a staircase exists solely for the purpose of—calm yourselves, for this is madness—a scene in a lady’s room before a wide bed belonging to the most exciting things I have had the pleasure of seeing in the cinema in a long time—and quite rightly so!

And lest social hygiene be neglected! We see a few foolish statisticians opening and closing their mouths, some sleek gentlemen shown from behind listening to a speaker, and this—according to the text—is a *scientific gathering*. The speakers' words appear as intertitles and consist of platitudes that neither explain nor excuse prostitution but glorify it.

A doctor gives his name and speaks before this presentation of Mary Magdalene and the “appropriately appended truth”—but that is something he must settle with Sid and his colleagues. What concerns us here is the following:

The large film companies pursue one goal only: profit. They can achieve this goal only if they cater to the needs of the audience. The audience demands suspense and a back staircase: they provide suspense and a back staircase. The audience demands sentimentality and the triumph of virtue: they provide sentimentality and the triumph of virtue. But the audience demands that virtue triumph only *after* it has sufficiently indulged in vice. The play follows the melody: “Ugh! How beautiful!” And the film director does his best.

All these so-called Aufklärungsfilme—some of which have already been screened for adults only—are a public scandal. They have nothing, nothing, nothing to do with education or ethical purpose; they serve solely to titillate. No one reads the accompanying moral pamphlet, and when the poor victim of social circumstances is carried to the grave to the accompaniment of a harmonium, the entire audience snorts with satisfaction.

The effect is this: the vague longing of innocent young girls for a little forbidden spice is satisfied here in the most sordid manner. Decent women learn from it and believe it; clever women grin knowingly, because they know better and can supplement it with practical experience. But the whole thing is sensationalism of the worst sort, comparable to those pulp novels that, under the banner of patriotism, disseminate the usual *Rinaldo Rinaldini* fare.

The film has nothing to do with art, and even if the cinema were to hire a thousand good actors (which it does) and pay the best painters and photographers (which it does not), the result would never be a pure work of art, but always a substitute product for the theater.

These films are rubbish. In *Prostitution*, for example, the scientific collaboration of Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld—according to the brochure—did not prevent the production of a cinematographic leaflet riddled with spelling errors, and the interior of a brothel could have been portrayed just as realistically without the assistance of this Berlin scholar. What *could not* have been achieved without him, however, is this greasy mixture of

sentimentality and scientific phraseology, of crudity and ethical slogans, of pseudo-Aufklärung and detective novel.

Walking with you, Doctor, is honorable—and profitable. It brings profit. And at the same time, it undermines the genuinely educational work of the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Diseases, which performs its task with concrete facts and engaging lectures and demonstrations—usually held separately for men and women.

That is education. But these filmmakers merely throw stones into the swamp, making it gurgle, raising bubbles, swaying water lilies, igniting will-o'-the-wisps, enabling false friends of the people to earn money—and rumor has it that the doctor now also wishes to condemn homosexuality next, just what we needed.

And so, all in all, we have acquired a new vice: prostitution with a mask.

The following article responds to Tucholsky's essay above:

The "Aufklärungs"-Film

Originally published as "Der "Aufklärungs"-Film," in *Der Film* no. 20 (May 17, 1919)

Doesn't it sound like a bad joke on the "Aufklärung" epidemic, that Projektions-A.G. Union had to announce that, contrary to all reports, it is not producing a film on gonorrhea, and does not intend to produce any film dealing with this or a similar subject. "Aufklärung" — as the new common sense imagines it — came into the world in Germany as a thoroughly dangerous war profiteer. Its simple purpose was to inform young people, who needed to be educated on eugenic matters, about the harm ignorance can do to health and economic life, and to awaken understanding. As for the kind of "Aufklärungsfilm" in which this label is misused merely to present crude, sensation-mongering displays — such films, tarred with that reputation, invite protest. Even some film producers consider it improper not to publicly distance themselves from such "Aufklärungsfilme." (See Union!)

On the same subject, Ignaz Wrobel writes in the democratic *Berliner Volkszeitung* under the title "Prostitution with a Mask." The regrettable thing is that the author lets himself be carried away into a general attack on cinematography — one that deserves a sharp rebuttal. His remarks culminate in the following sentence:

"Film has nothing to do with art; if a Sunday painter or photographer takes hold of it (which happens), or if the best painters and best photographers take hold of it (which does not happen), no artistic achievement will ever emerge from it — so this remains a sorry substitute for good painting."

With this last sentence he exposes himself, since he is merely offering a preconceived opinion that overlooks the fact that Mr. Pastor, in the process, is doing an injustice to young people. The regrettable thing is that children under 16 are also forbidden entry to cinema showings, even attendance at educational screenings is not permitted. Besides, our film industry can be seen from this, that the theme "Aufklärungsfilm" harms cinema-goers. Is this occasion for us — in the flag of culture and Aufklärung — to fight this cinema business anew with cudgels, as one that is enlightened and cultured, or is this what corresponds to the unbiased normal person?



Dr. MAGNUS HIRSCHFELD

Address before the premiere of *Anders als die Andern* on May 24, 1919, in *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* vol. 19, no. (October 1919), pp. 4-6. For a reprint, see [here](#).

At the screening of the first social-hygiene film, I had explained that whoever today serves in the cause of enlightenment has not only the right but the duty to make use of film alongside the spoken and written word. What does the term "Aufklärung" (enlightenment/education) mean? The expression derives from "klären" (to clarify), which in turn comes from the Latin word *clarus* — bright/clear. Accordingly, enlightenment is the illumination of an area that, until now, has been obscured by ignorance and therefore wrongly judged, carried out by seekers of truth and proclaimers of truth. The subject that we place before your eyes and your mind today is an unusually difficult and important one. Difficult, because the degree of ignorance and prejudice that must be eliminated here is particularly high. Important, because it is a matter of freeing people from undeserved disgrace, and of redeeming humanity from a miscarriage of justice that falls into the same sorrowful chapter of cultural history in which the persecutions of witches, heretics, and

those of other faiths are recorded. And the number of those who are born different from others is considerably greater than most parents know or suspect.

In the cinematic treatment of this subject, it had to be considered whether we should limit ourselves to a purely scientific lecture on sexual intermediate stages, or whether we should show, by means of an individual's fate, what needs to be known and recognized. We chose a combination of both approaches. At the center stands the lecture of the sexual researcher. Around it is woven a simple life story which, free of all exaggeration, offers the expert only too everyday an example. The case teaches us four things: negative behavior — unwanted aversion; positive behavior — undeserved affection. Like every attraction and repulsion in nature, that of love too rests on inner laws. Thirdly, the case shows the particular nature of those from whose bodily and psychological constitution their inclinations and actions — and thus their fate — arise. And finally we see this fate itself, with its customary persecutions by the blackmailer, by society (including the family), and by the law. Under these three condemnations the protagonist of the piece then perishes, thus joining the long procession of victims who, for the sake of the same feelings, were killed or driven to death.

Whoever has recognized this injustice, committed against thousands of morally and intellectually valuable people, and has witnessed it for decades, must fight it with all the means and all the strength at his disposal. That is a moral duty.

For this reason alone, and no other, I have agreed to represent personally in film the scientific views and convictions for which I have worked in word and writing for a generation. I do this just as my great teacher Ernst Haeckel recently did in a film dedicated to his life's work — except that there it concerned animals, and here it concerns human beings. I ask that this participation not be interpreted as though I had taken on the role of an actor. The actor's noble task is to embody figures other than himself. That is not at all the case with me. Nevertheless, I am aware that whoever fights unwaveringly with intellectual weapons for human progress must accept attacks and overcome resistance. The first scholars who, after the invention of printing, had their ideas spread through print rather than, as before, by hand, were likewise fiercely attacked for it. But all that is secondary. The main thing remains that this film, which now unfolds before you for the first time, may help ensure that the procession of these victims of insufficient enlightenment grows no further, and that soon the day may come when, in this field too, science triumphs over error, justice over injustice, and human love over human hatred and human narrow-mindedness.

Latest News.

(Received after editorial deadline.)

A Paragraph Against Intellectual Freedom

In: *Der Film* no.22 (June 2, 1919)

Railroading the draft constitution through the National Assembly. Return of film censorship in its worst form. — A protest rally of all intellectual professions.

As the daily press reports, a session of the National Assembly is expected to take place in Berlin later this week, at which the constitution will be deliberated and, if possible, passed in a single day (!). Beforehand, the individual factions will take a position, in first reading, on the draft constitution as it currently stands, prepared by the constitutional committee.

Under these circumstances, hardly anyone has noticed that the constitutional committee has quietly and unanimously adopted a new Article 11, whose timeliness poses a real threat.

Article 11, which is to replace the earlier Article 32 of the government's draft, reads:

"Every German has the right to freely express his opinion within the bounds of general law and common decency, in word, writing, print, or image. No labor or employment relationship may hinder him in this right, and no one may disadvantage him for making use of this right. Censorship shall not take place. However, restrictions may be imposed by law on cinematic performances, and on the exhibition or sale of art and pictorial works in public, for the protection of public order and morality."

One has to go back to the worst days of the Metternich reaction to find a provision that represents anywhere near as monstrous a threat to intellectual freedom as this rubber-clause wording of "within the bounds of common decency." What this provision means in the hands of a skillful public prosecutor is self-evident to every expert in criminal law practice: an almost unlimited blank check to suppress, beyond the bounds already set by law, any and all free expression of opinion.

The danger thus created is so overwhelming that even the reintroduction of the old film censorship pales in significance beside it. All the more gratifying, then, that under the leadership of the United Associations of the Film Industry, all intellectually engaged professions are immediately joining together into a united and unbroken front of opposition. The Central Association of Film Distributors, as we learn, is also joining without

delay, with all means at its disposal, in resisting this new threat to our industry's standing, and is doing so under the estimable leadership of Professor Leidig and Dr. Friedmann.

However, should it happen that this ominous Article 11 in its present wording is pushed through, little hope remains that the reintroduction of film censorship can be prevented as well. The industry can at least be thankful to those of its members who, in the face of all warnings from experts and against all reactionary elements, have consistently and clearly pushed the artistic aspect of film work into the foreground. As a result of this, the industry associations will, under these circumstances, be most concerned with preventing and counteracting this hasty pushing-through of these restrictive provisions — insisting that, in the examination boards for films, experts in art and education for young people also have, in the first instance, a seat alongside representatives of the industry, in whose sound judgment the industry can place its trust.

Kurt Tucholsky

Aufklärungsfilme

First published (under the pseudonym Ignaz Wrobel) as “Aufklärungsfilme,” in *Weltbühne* 26 (June 19, 1919) p. 722.

It is only with the utmost reluctance that I take up this subject in your *Weltbühne*, whose pages seem to me far too valuable for it. I think far too highly of our readership to have to demonstrate to them once again how stupid and harmful these so-called Aufklärungsfilme films are—films that have not the slightest thing to do either with art or with education.

That it is not only we who consider these Aufklärungsfilme films disgracefully stupid rubbish is evident from issue no. 22 of the *Lichtbildbühne*, in which an expert from the film industry says:

I have personally been abroad on several occasions, and the comments made by foreign producers about the so-called *Kulturfilm*—or rather, the Aufklärungsfilme film—now being released are so humiliating for us German producers that one must be ashamed to be a German film producer. Foreigners do not describe these films as Aufklärungsfilme films, but rather as films that show the rather morally uncertain and immature young girl how she can set out on the road to ruin and frivolity, doing little work while nevertheless earning a great deal of money.

The foreign buyer will never be inclined to purchase such films. Foreigners also ask: “Is Germany really so terribly infected that, according to the producers who make such films, so enormous a quantity of them must be manufactured in order to cure Germany of this infection?”

Meanwhile, people form queues whenever Parvus Rehwiese has once again filmed a section of the Penal Code. The following still remain to be filmed: Section 176, paragraph 3—whoever commits indecent acts with persons under fourteen years of age ...; Section 177—rape; Section 183—public indecency; and only Section 184 is safe from the filmmaker, because the filmmaker himself comes under it: dissemination of obscene writings.

And so the people stand in line from the box office out into the street. Our warning will be of no help, and we are left with our good old saying: **To each his own.**

RICHARD OSWALD

Censorship or Self-discipline

Originally published as Zensur oder Selbstzucht, in *Der Film-Kurier* (under the first-page headline “The Battle over the Sexual Film”) no. 12 (June 19, 1919)

The reintroduction of film censorship, whether in open or disguised form, is occupying both the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly and the general public. The campaign is directed against “sex films,” and it is well known that Mr. Richard Oswald is regarded as a particularly successful producer of such films. In this connection, Mr. Oswald made the following statement to one of our correspondents, which we are pleased to publish:

“Not long ago, several film producers were gathered together. Almost all of them were outraged by the proliferation of ‘sexual films,’ and since Mr. Oswald was not present, some of these gentlemen were convinced that Mr. Oswald alone would be responsible if censorship were reintroduced.

When I heard about this, I sat down at my desk and compiled a list—a list that makes absolutely no claim to completeness. From the latest film journals, I extracted the films dealing with sexual issues, and lo and behold, I found among them some very well-known companies, including companies that had been most indignant about Mr. Oswald’s sexual films.

“Since the abolition of censorship, I have produced only two sexual films, namely *Prostitution* and *Different from the Others*, and both films had been planned long beforehand. These films contain neither naked women—not even low-cut dresses—nor anything capable of unsettling the mind of a young, innocent girl.”

Following is a small selection of the “sexual films” that other companies have either produced or announced:

Anschließend ein kleiner Auszug der jenu-
ellen Filme, welche die anderen teilweise
hergestellt, teilweise angekündigt haben:

Keimendes Leben	} Union	} „Ufa“
Moral u. Sinnlichkeit		
Seelenverkäufer	Greenbaum	
Die Verführten	} Maximfilm	
Die Liebschaften der Käte Heller		
Der Tänzer	} Eifo	
Skaven der Sinnlichkeit (Demi vierges)		
Der Kampf der Geschlechter	} Luna	
Aus eines Mannes Mädchenjahre		
Nixchen	}	
Der Liebestrank		

Der Weg, der zur Verdam- nis führt	Dekla (Helios)
Hyänen der Lust	
Totentanz	
Herr der Liebe	Neutral
Die von der Liebe leben	
Die Liebesnacht im Harem	
Gezeichnete Mädchen	
Näusliche Liebe	Rahn
Verlorene Liebe	
Die Menschen nennen es Liebe	
Das Paradies der Dirnen	Berliner Film- manufaktur
Die Hölle der Jungfrauen	
Prinz Kuckuck	Gloriafilm
Kinder der Liebe	Imperatorfilm
Der gelbe Tod	Deißfilm
Die Tochter der Pro- stituierten	Progreßfilm
Die Prostituierte	Blondfilm
Der Kampf um die Ehe	Elektrafilm
Warum das Weib am Manne und der Mann am Weibe leidet	Mandolfilm
Lu, die Kokotte	Ungar. Filme
Pervers	Deafilm
Die Nackten	B. B.-Film
Der Saal der sieben Sünden	Ambossfilm
Lili und Lili's Ehe	Altboff-Film
Nana	Jakebyfilm
Der Myrtenkranz (Die törichte Jungfrau)	Sozietätsfilm
Sündenlust	Lu Syndfilm
Der Bastard	
Das Gift im Weibe	Machtfilm
Die Büchse der Pandora	Derepyfilm
Der heilige Skarabäus	Machfilm
Freie Liebe	
Das Gelübde der Keusch- heit	Bioifop
Der Schrei nach dem Manne	Planet

The Germinating Life — Morality and Sensuality — Soul Seller — The Seduced — The Affairs of Käte Heller — The Dancer — Slaves of Sensuality (Demi-Vierges) — The Battle of the Sexes — From a Man's Girlhood Years — Nixchen — The Love Potion — The Way That Leads to Damnation — Hyenas of Lust — Dance of Death — Lord of Love — Those Who Live off Love — The Night of Love in the Harem — Marked Girls — Love for Sale — Lost Love — People Call It Love — The Paradise of the Prostitutes — The Hell of the Virgins — Prince Cuckoo — Children of Love — The Yellow Death — The Daughter of the Prostitute — The Prostitute — The Battle for Marriage — Why Women Suffer Because of Men and Men Because of Women — Perverse — The Naked Ones — Lili and Lili's Marriage — Nana — The Myrtle Wreath (The Foolish Maiden) — Sinful Pleasures — The Bastard — The Poison in the Woman — Pandora's Box — The Sacred Scarab — Free Love — The Vow of Cha — The Cry for the Man — Lu, the Cocotte — The Hall of the Seven Sins

The whole affair vividly reminds me of the old story of the thief who, in order to protect himself from his pursuers, cries, 'Stop the thief!'

My first Aufklärungsfilme, the four-part *Let There Be Light!*, were approved by the old censorship authorities 'without cuts.' *The Diary of a Lost Girl* was unjustly—indeed, absurdly—banned for nine months because of its title; then came *Prostitution* and *Different from the Others*.

In response to your question whether I favor or oppose the reintroduction of censorship, I must ask: What are its disadvantages? There is the danger that an unreasonable, reactionary censorship regime would continue to prohibit the most ridiculous things—masked balls, harmless kisses, or an act of adultery that is absolutely necessary to the situation. Such censorship must, of course, be rejected with the utmost determination.

If the film industry possesses enough self-discipline to avoid lurid enticements, conscious of its responsibility and of the fact that film reaches the broadest sections of the population, then new censorship must naturally be rejected. But if this self-discipline is lacking—if the most banal vulgarities and the vilest obscenities proliferate in film advertisements, which today look almost like the display catalogue of a brothel—then the film industry requires supervision. In that case, I wish the introduction of film censorship upon—the others. I deliberately say 'the others,' for I have nothing to fear from censorship."

Aufklärungsfilme

Originally published as “Aufklärungsfilme,” in *Westdeutsche Landeszeitung* (June 28, 1919)

Düren has now had its own “educational film”—though not without difficulties. The Kaiser-Kino had advertised *The Yellow House*, which had also been shown in Aachen, under its proper title: *Prostitution*. The police authorities went to see it, recognized it as an obscene piece of work, and banned it. The police allowed the next “educational film” (*Casanova*) to pass, but the city’s principal newspaper, the *Dürener Zeitung*, refused to accept advertisements for it. The Kaiser-Kino thereupon informed its patrons on screen that its advertisements would henceforth appear only in the *Dürener Volkszeitung* and the *Bürgerzeitung*.

The *Dürener Zeitung* comments:

“We are firmly convinced that every self-respecting newspaper will act exactly as we have done, and that every decent person will approve of our conduct. We nevertheless believe that we must not let this opportunity pass without drawing parents’ attention to the grave dangers such films pose to their children. It is truly incomprehensible how anyone could dare to exhibit films of this kind in the overwhelmingly Catholic city of Düren.”

Of interest, too, is what a Berlin correspondent writes in the *Kölnische Zeitung* about the so-called Aufklärungsfilme:

“Recently, an offspring of current fashion has been obtrusively asserting itself on the flickering screen: the so-called educational film. It claims that it wishes to instruct and enlighten, above all to present delicate subjects to the masses in what it describes as a scientific and socially beneficial manner. Delicate subjects possess a natural power of attraction, and resourceful businessmen always know how to present them in the appropriate setting. One can verify this simply by studying the titles displayed on cinema advertising columns—the films currently enjoying the greatest success: *Prostitution*, *The Sinful Mothers*, *The Ladies of the Kurfürstendamm*, and *Things One Must Not Know, Yet Knows All the Same*.

“As a rule, all these Aufklärungsfilme have a tedious plot that ends in bourgeois sentimentality. What comes in between—and what the title hints at—may well be intelligible ‘to those in the know,’ but it provides the young with no useful Aufklärung whatsoever; instead, it merely arouses their curiosity. Given the nature of metropolitan

youth, it is therefore more likely to produce an entirely different effect. The film's extraordinary freedom from censorship is bearing fruit here. When one sees the garishly colored programs for these films on advertising columns, with their enticing illustrations, one can readily imagine their effect upon the young. Considering how thoroughly today's youth is already 'enlightened' in every area, any further increment is truly superfluous."

"Erotic" Films

Originally "'Erotische' Filme," in *Film-Kurier* (June 29, 1919)

The notorious typo devil has played a nasty trick on us: apparently completely dazed by the endless discussion about "Aufklärungsfilme," he has turned the highly interesting *exotic* feature films from the Overseas Film Company, which we reported on the day before yesterday, into *erotic* films" in the headline! Yes, it is really high time that this situation changes.



Fallen Girls against Morality Films

Originally published as “Gefallene Mädchen gegen die “Sittenfilme,” in *Film-Kurier* (July 4, 1919)

The public debate about “Aufklärungsfilme” is spreading ever wider and prompting reactions from sections of society that have never before made themselves heard in this way. In Dresden, fallen girls recently weighed up the pros and cons of these films and expressed their views in a letter to the press. We are reprinting this interesting document, which was published in Dresden newspapers and is a response to a statement by the Dresden Women's Association against sex education films.

“We fallen girls lament the moral decline and immorality of the “cavaliers” who spend pleasant hours with us and treat us as if we were playthings and their natural victims. Our illegitimate children cry out for vengeance. Do the ladies of society intend to remain silent about this boundless misery, watching without saying a word or taking any action? What has been shown in cinemas recently are facts taken purely from real life, and there is nothing that can be done to change them.

It is high time that these immoral activities were brought to public attention and that the most severe measures were taken against them. Young people must be warned so that they can protect themselves from such elements. At the next meeting of the Dresden Women's Association, several fallen girls will describe their experiences and the seductive arts of these so-called “cavaliers” to the ladies. –

And yet, we believe it is questionable whether “morality films” are the right means of education. Certainly, some of them do have a deterrent effect and, to a certain extent, a morally purifying effect. Just as often, however, we find films, even cleverly and wittily made ones, which, by piling up facts, seem untruthful and unnecessarily reveal obscene details, thus arousing rather than deterring and warning. It may be that the filmmakers mean well, but it is also possible that they are taking too much account of the “taste of the audience.” Let us hope that new “cinema attractions” will soon be found before too much damage is done.”

We don't know for sure whether this letter is real or fictitious. If it is real, then the “fallen girls” should be reminded that the “immoral” behavior they complain about also – sometimes – originates from their comrades, but they wisely keep quiet about that.

Anders als die Andern -- more reviews, reactions, and discussions can be found in Hirschfeld, [*Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen*](#), pp. 20-51; here pp. 20-21.

Berliner Tageblatt (July 18, 1919) p. 20

Anders als die Andern (*Different from the Others*), probably the most controversial Aufklärungsfilm currently being shown, was screened yesterday at a matinée at the Prinzeß-Theater before representatives of the scientific and literary worlds, so that the film itself might demonstrate that the attacks directed against it are indeed entirely without moral justification. In fact, if ever a sex-education film possessed an ethical character and combined a gripping plot with a powerful moral purpose, it is this one. The disturbances that occurred during the film's screening at a local theater were instigated less by outraged moral fanatics than by antisemitic and *völkisch* agitators. This is all the more regrettable because this film, directed by Richard Oswald, conducts the struggle against paragraph 175 with the greatest imaginable discretion and tact.

B.Z. am Mittag (July 18, 1919) p. 21

"Yesterday at the Prinzeß-Theater, Richard Oswald arranged a special screening before a small invited audience of an effective protest against the campaign of agitation that has recently been waged by various quarters against the film *Anders als die Andern*. The film had been denounced on the pretext that it concerned a campaign against sex-education films and that antisemitic propaganda was being employed in the process. The physicians, scholars, representatives of the authorities, and writers who attended the screening agreed that the film's unobjectionable presentation neither has nor can have an immoral effect."

Der Vorwärts (Juli 26, 1919)p. 21)

"The Aufklärungsfilme by Dr. Hirschfeld and Richard Oswald have provoked a certain amount of controversy. They may be criticized on artistic and ethical grounds; nevertheless, their authors cannot be denied the credit of having the best intentions—of wishing to expose weaknesses in our social order and thereby help to remedy them. The contrived scenes of tumult that have recently been staged during screenings of these films in various cinemas originate—as the participation of a number of members of the Young Germany movement itself demonstrates—in the same filthy cesspool from which antisemitic and anti-socialist agitation arises. They are no more a form of criticism than the laughter with which an immature section of the public greeted the early works of a poet such as Wedekind or Kokoschka.

Admittedly, one must acknowledge that some of these films appeal to immature people and others to people who have been maliciously incited, thus giving them opportunities for impassioned protest. One can readily understand that many people seek neither instruction nor art in the cinema. But it is nevertheless improper for them to disrupt such presentations and then express their prejudices in an indecent manner. Scenes of tumult and brawling can never prove the inferiority of what is being presented, but only that of the audience.”

The Institute for Sexual Science

Originally published as “Das Institut für Sexualwissenschaft,” in Film-Kurier (July 29, 1919)

Under the direction of the renowned researcher and expert in the field of sexuality and its pathological and physiological manifestations, San.-Rat Dr. Magnus **Hirschfeld**, an **“Institute for Sexual Science”** has been established in Berlin. Renowned dermatologists, psychiatrists, neurologists, and physiologists support the founder of this institute. Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld has become known in the world of film through his collaboration on several **“Aufklärungsfilme.”**

In the latest, “Different from the Others,” he even appears himself and develops his theories and ideas about homosexuality in an impressively illustrated lecture. Although the idealistic motives of such collaboration between doctors and filmmakers, focused on the well-being of their unhappy patients, were always taken into account, this type of “education” was met with intense protest from the medical community as well as from the public, and especially from educators.

Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld has now set up his own **studio for cinematographic recordings** at his new “Institute for Sexual Science.” The aim is to produce Aufklärungsfilme in the field of sexual science on a strictly scientific basis and according to the same purely factual criteria as, for example, the work of the “Medical Film Archive.” Sexology is still a very young branch of medicine, a borderline area between dermatology and neurology, but also of interest and value to physiologists and biologists. It is to be expected that this novel institute, which is unique in the world to date, will spread its hitherto little-noticed, misunderstood, and contested teachings by making use of truly objective and scientific cinematography in the form of convincing Aufklärungsfilme in all lecture halls, clinics, and among specialists and practicing physicians. The institute also plans to offer its own courses, in which cinematographic demonstrations will supplement and enliven the lectures.

The Sexual Film

First published as “Der sexuelle Film,” in *Der Vorwärts* (August 30 1919)

At the moment, the battle over film censorship and film morality is raging, and calls for help are increasingly being made to the public prosecutor, who in the past claimed to protect the good citizens.

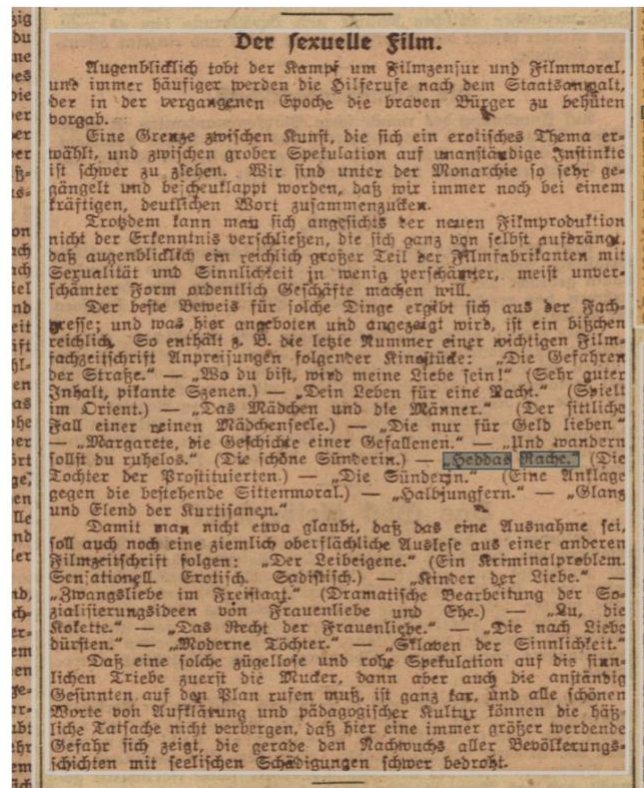
It is difficult to draw a line between art that chooses an erotic theme and crude speculation on improper indecency. We were so heavily restricted and censored under the monarchy that we still flinch at strong, explicit language.

Nevertheless, in view of new film productions, one cannot ignore the obvious conclusion that a large number of film producers currently want to do good business with sexuality and sensuality in a form that is not very modest, and in most cases quite shameless.

The best evidence for this can be found in the trade press, and what is offered and advertised here is a little excessive. For example, the latest issue of an important film magazine contains advertisements for the following movies: “The Dangers of the Street.” – “Where you are, my love will be!” (Very good content, spicy scenes.) – “Your life for one night.” (Set in the Orient.) – “The girl and the men.” (The moral downfall of a pure girl's soul.) – “Those who only love for money.” – “Margarete, the story of a fallen woman.” – “And You Shall Wander Restlessly.” (The beautiful sinner.) – “Hedda's Revenge.” (The daughter of a prostitute.) – “The Sinner.” (An indictment against the existing Moral standards.) – “Half-maids.” – “The glamour and misery of courtesans.”

Lest anyone think that this is an exception, here is a rather superficial selection from another film magazine: “The Serf.” (A crime problem. Sensational. Erotic. Sadistic.) – “Children of Love.” – “Forced Marriage in the Free State.” (Dramatic adaptation of the socialization ideas of women's love and marriage.) – “Lu, the Coquette.” – “The Right of Women's Love.” – “Those Who Thirst for Love.” – “Modern Daughters.” – “Slaves of Sensuality.”

It is quite clear that such unrestrained and crude speculation on sensual urges must first provoke the prudes, but then also those of decent disposition, and all the fine words about Aufklärung and educational culture cannot hide the ugly fact that an ever-increasing danger is emerging here, one that seriously threatens the offspring of all social classes with psychological damage.



The Organization of Self-Censorship

First published as „Der Aufbau der Selbstzensur,“ in *Der Film* Nr. 36 (September 6, 1919)

Participation of the censorship department of the Berlin Police Presidium? — Two appeal instances. — What about the control of film advertisements?

The extremely urgent question of the self-censorship of films by the industry, after long—hopefully not already too long—silence on the part of the responsible authorities, finally took a step forward on the 3rd of this month. First, the Cartel Council of the United Associations of the Film Industry dealt with the positive proposals submitted by its chairman, Professor Dr. Leidig, concerning the organization of self-censorship. The proposals read as follows:

‘The branch censorship office is a branch censor board and is exercised by personalities who, in the opinion of the Police Presidium in Berlin, have proven effective in censorship

work. It is intended that the government shall make these forces available to the branch censorship board. If this body rejects a film wholly or partially, the case shall first be reviewed by a committee composed of representatives of the film industry from the first list drawn up by the “Lichtbildbühne.”

If the two review boards are not in agreement, or if there is a public interest involved, the matter shall be referred to a large film review board, in which representatives of the film industry, the police authorities, the publishing trade, representatives of art, science, literature, theaters, etc., shall have seats and votes. This large commission shall then make the final decision.’

These preliminary proposals — though still to be worked out in detail — were subsequently presented by the Cartel Council in a discussion held immediately after its session with representatives of the Reich and state authorities, as well as the various branch organizations. [...]

“The proposals were discussed in detail. The representatives of the authorities expressed their lively interest in the matter. After a longer debate, in which the guidelines presented by Dr. Leidig met with fundamental approval, it was decided to entrust the further development of the matter to a small commission composed of representatives of the participating associations. This commission is to oversee the establishment and expansion of this body, which is intended to function within the self-administration of the film industry as an organ for the preliminary examination of films.

This commission will convene shortly and prepare the material for a new session, which is to take place as soon as possible.

In our opinion, everything now depends on what position the Reich government adopts on the question. Judging from the numerous voices in the press, it unfortunately appears as though the excessive sensationalism of the recent period is intended to continue in this area as well. It will be the task of the branch organizations to oppose these attempts with vigor.

The planned self-censorship nevertheless seems to us to reveal a gap at one point that should already now be pointed out. We miss the control over offensive film advertisements that was originally intended for it. Letters sent to us by branch organizations and respected film companies continue to demonstrate that opinions are still divided regarding the permissibility of certain advertisements.

We have already repeatedly expressed our view here that the trade press cannot simply submit itself to the arbitrary supervision of individual associations or of single experts, no matter how respected they may be. Our suggestion—to create, in joint consultation with the trade press, suitable remedies against the misuse of film advertising—should be taken into account in the establishment of self-censorship.

The Prussian Government and the Aufklärungsfilme

In: *Berliner Tageblatt* (September 24, 1919)

Abgeordneter Menzel-Stettin, a member of the Prussian State Assembly, submitted a brief inquiry to the Ministry of State asking what the government intended to do to prevent further screenings of the Aufklärungsfilme made by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld. He argued that Hirschfeld's film *Anders als die Andern* (§ 175), which was currently being shown in many cinemas and glorified homosexuality, was patently immoral and had provoked a storm of indignation among broad sections of the population. "In response, on September 9 the Minister of the Interior issued the following reply, addressed to the president of the constituent Prussian State Assembly:"

Since, following the abolition of censorship, film screenings require neither prior examination nor official authorization, the authorities had no means of prohibiting the screening of the film *Anders als die Andern* (B 175) by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld—other Aufklärungsfilme by this author are unknown to me. Intervention on the grounds that the screening had taken place would have been possible only under the general provisions of criminal law, particularly § 184 of the *Reich Criminal Code* (the dissemination of obscene writings, images, and representations). In the opinion of the responsible authorities, the film's content was not such as to justify applying the existing penal provision or initiating judicial proceedings. According to police reports, moreover, objections to the screening were raised by members of the audience only in isolated cases.

In general, it should also be noted that the present legal situation has indeed proved unsatisfactory. I am currently examining how this can best be remedied. On the one hand, everything must be done to counteract the pernicious proliferation of sex-education films; on the other, effective measures must be taken against wanton attempts to disrupt cinema performances.



The Film Censorship Practices of the District Attorney

Originally published as “Die Filmzensur-Praxis der Staatsanwalt,”
Film-Kurier (September 27, 1919)

The following case, reported to us by Gala-Film, shows the peculiar way in which our film industry is treated when it behaves loyally, even **voluntarily** submitting to police film censorship, and is “promoted” in its economically very important interests – after all, the film industry is one of the few active and largest industries in Germany today, providing a livelihood for many thousands of people:

The film “*Die Austernkur*” (The Oyster Cure), a futuristic bathing story, ran in Berlin from August 8 to 15 at the Passage Theater, Unter den Linden, directed by Soliman. On the one hand, it was very well received and, on the other, it did not cause any offense. However, to be on the safe side, the production company contacted the police headquarters to have the film censored. Here they encountered difficulties. Personal consultations with the responsible officials led to no result, as censorship for the film could not be obtained at first. Later, however, the censorship office declared that it wanted to see the film again. This happened. Then the gentlemen from the censorship office watched it again and consulted the public prosecutor’s office.

The matter dragged on for weeks, causing the company serious financial damage because it was unable to show the film. However, it accepted this damage in the expectation that it would at least receive a censorship card. Far from it: one fine day, a representative of the public prosecutor's office appeared at the company's premises and wanted to confiscate the negative. The latter was located in the copying facility and had to be handed over despite explicit protests. All references to the serious economic damage that would be caused by the confiscation of the negative were to no avail. **The negative was confiscated and taken to the public prosecutor's office.**

In the meantime, the copy at the police headquarters had also been confiscated, depriving the company of any possibility of fulfilling its numerous orders for foreign countries, especially Austria-Hungary and the Balkans, where the film had been extremely well received and where the censors had approved it without objection. The company personally presented everything to both the public prosecutor's office and the police headquarters, Department 3 (theater censorship), **without receiving the slightest concession**: the negative and the copy remain confiscated and still are today. Any expert will be able to assess the damage suffered by the company as a result. It should also be mentioned that the company had agreed from the outset to cut all allegedly offensive scenes from the film; this agreement was repeatedly confirmed to the relevant officials at the police headquarters and the public prosecutor's office. Here, too, there was not the slightest concession.

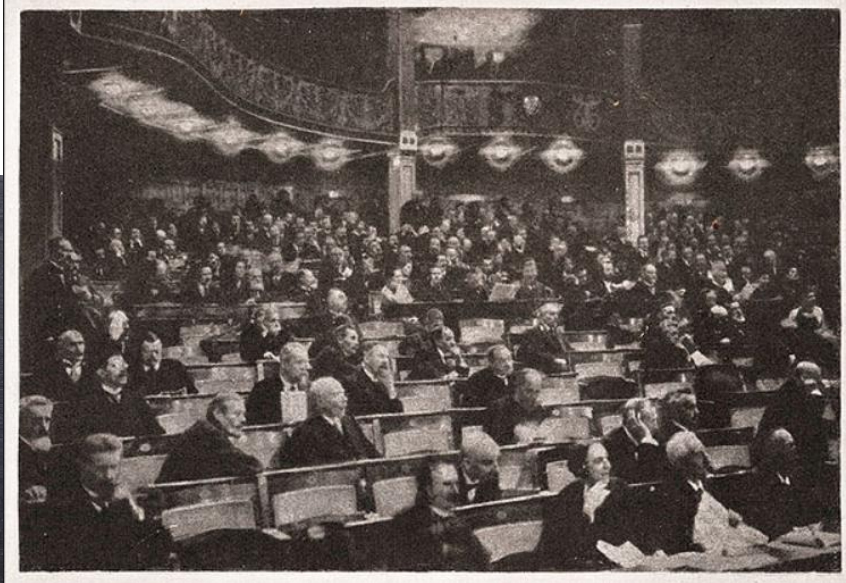
The confiscation was therefore the reward for the company's loyal and trusting behavior toward the authorities.

Debate in the National Assembly on Film Censorship

October 16, 1919

Stenographic Transcript of Proceedings of 100th Session of the Reichstag Vol. 330.
1919/20, p. 3183

The original German transcript can be found [here](#)



Otto Nuschke (1883-1957) was a member of the left-liberal DDP (*Deutsche Demokratische Partei*) and editor-in-chief of *Berliner Volks-Zeitung* (1915-1930)

Delegate Nuschke. (p. 3183)

(A) For five years the German people have been demoralized and confused. For five years the fiercest struggle has raged around us. Suddenly everything is supposed to have collapsed, and now the flames of passion are naturally rising powerfully. But these are not German phenomena; these repercussions of the war are evident throughout the entire world.

(Very true! among the German Democrats.)

It is precisely those circles that have always regarded war as a “steel bath” that might do well to examine the effects of war a little more closely.

Lively agreement on the left.)

Ladies and gentlemen, the pathological symptoms produced by the war are now becoming apparent. But it is, in my opinion, rather one-sided to claim that these pathological symptoms manifest themselves especially in film. These symptoms are of a quite general nature. We find them throughout our entire way of life—for example, in our views concerning property and in many other areas formerly regarded as untouchable—as well as in the theatre, cabaret, and the press. We have observed precisely the same effects everywhere. It has previously been generally established that such effects exist. It is, however, indeed correct that film has today come extraordinarily far ahead of the German people's aesthetic maturity. We regret it most profoundly when tasteless exploitation of certain sexual problems now spreads through so-called Aufklärungsfilm (educational film).

(Very true! among the German Democrats.)

This filmic adaptation of certain paragraphs of the Strafgesetzbuch criminal law is also highly detrimental to German industry.

(Very true! on the left.)

But one must also be just and point out that, from the very beginning, the industry itself has loudly voiced the strongest protests against this misuse of an institution of cultural value.

It therefore surprises me all the more that the film's title is indecent or risqué. Mr. Mumm has presented the House with a catalogue of films that are to be shown in Schleswig-Holstein and Bavaria. I assume in Mr. Mumm's favor that he has not seen any of these films; at least, I would like to infer this from his remarks. But I can tell him that many of these film titles are thoroughly appealing, risqué, in part even obscene, while the film itself is harmless.

(Very true! among the German Democrats.)

And—what is worst of all—boring.

(Agreement among the German Democrats.)

It is precisely for boring films that attractive titles and descriptions are invented.

(Very true! among the German Democrats.)

It is highly interesting what was recently reported in this connection in the *Weltbühne*, in particular by the following cinema advertisement, which is quite characteristic of that publication's style:

The colossal Aufklärungsfilm (educational film), prohibited for juveniles, intended only for adults, which is given a special afternoon screening because of its risqué and sensational plot, is now experiencing its premiere. Twice the audience fainted! Women who conceal the abyss, or from the countess to the prostitute! The greatest panorama of vice Hamburg has ever seen, in six acts.

(Laughter.)

I am not in a position to judge—especially not as a member of the press—how it is possible and permissible for a newspaper to accept such an advertisement.

(Very true!)

But the person who saw this film and had to review it professionally relates that the film was, much to the disappointment of everyone present, basically harmless and boring. It therefore seems to me necessary that, if one approaches the matter from the point of view of the public, one must first confront such announcements. I have already stated that the industry itself has lodged a most emphatic protest against this commercial exploitation of sexual matters.

If the Minister has now offered us the prospect that film legislation will be introduced soon, then I find some comfort in the fact that this issue will shortly receive a more general settlement—especially since, as far as I can tell from the newspaper report, the task before the Minister today is merely of a provisional nature. In the meantime, the industry has the best opportunity to create an institutional arrangement that will satisfy it: it will have to resort to self-discipline if it is not to lose even further ground in the question of self-regulation. I am, however, of the opinion that this self-regulation must not be exercised by the industry alone, but that representatives of the arts and education must also be brought in. We have Aufklärungsfilme specialists in the School of Parental Education; they too should participate and, above all, draw on their many years of practical experience concerning the education of women. In this way an initial attempt could be made to introduce proper conditions through self-regulation. Yet there is one further point we must not overlook: today the cinema is the theatre of the common man; many millions of people sit each evening with throbbing hearts and reddened cheeks before the magic spell cast over them by the cinema.

(Very true!)

The duty lies in using this fact in the proper direction, by using the cinema for dissemination not merely for entertainment and education but for all sorts of other purposes as well. For I believe that there can be no doubt that modern humanity possesses in cinematography one of the greatest inventions of modern times. It is indeed the most excellent means of instruction and Aufklärung. When I utter here the somewhat ill-reputed word “Aufklärung,” I do not mean the kind of anatomical instruction presented by film during the war. At that time, for lack of knowledge of popular psychology, millions were needlessly wasted and Sisyphean work done. I have been told that, for example, in Switzerland, when the well-known *Möwe* film was shown, Swiss people were horrified by what one dared to communicate to the public in Germany by means of film. But when I speak of Aufklärungsfilme, I think of films planned from a serious medical perspective, of the two exemplary films on “Medical Weekly” reported by Dr. Bernstein, and I believe that films in all areas of domestic public education can have an extraordinarily beneficial effect, and that the training of auxiliary workers in such instruction can also be carried out through film. Instructional films are already in use in various Länder. In the Prussian Ministry of Science, Art, and Public Education, a film and photographic department has been established, and Bavaria has even taken the lead by founding a state film academy. I may also remind you that it was our late colleague Liszt who made film useful for the study of criminology, and what, in the.....in the field of medicine, which could scarcely dispense with the film of the natural sciences, it would be quite wrong if we were to allow ourselves to be drawn, through the sometimes excessive misuse of those modern achievements, into condemning the cinema in principle. But this is certainly the central question under discussion today: my preliminary speaker reminded us that film can no longer be eradicated. I would merely like to welcome the fact that this recognition is gaining ground on all sides of the chamber—that this is truly an extraordinarily serious matter.

I expect extraordinarily little from censorship and from the police, not to say: nothing. An improvement can only be achieved through the raising of education as a whole, through education toward good taste. Good taste cannot be commanded, cannot be legislated into being, but must be cultivated through upbringing. That is the task of all educators of the people, and one should welcome even the smallest means toward this in a positive sense. The increase in Title 14, Chapter 7a, from 100,000 to 500,000 marks for promoting public education and public health initiatives—especially those directed toward young people—therefore meets with our wholehearted approval. But it is merely a drop in the ocean, and our efforts must be directed toward all those whose concern is the welfare of the young.

[. . .]

BERTOLT BRECHT

From the Theater World

First published as „Aus dem Theaterleben,“ in *Der Volkswille* (Augsburg) (November 7, 1919)

If the cinemas are allowed to keep showing such filth as they are now, then soon no one will go to the theater anymore. At the very moment when republican freedom dawned upon the film people, they suddenly discovered their compassion for poor girls and their duty to open the Republic's eyes. Thus the so-called *Aufklärungsfilm* was born.

The product itself was nothing new, since it had always been profitable. Only the police—never exactly on friendly terms with brothels—had previously prohibited this kind of “education.” But now it earned enormous sums of money, and everyone was eager to be “enlightened” about the fate of the *Gefallene* (“fallen woman”), whose lot, though pitiable, was portrayed as all the more glamorous because of it.

In these films, the career of a fallen woman begins in a cramped, poorly furnished sewing room and proceeds through glittering nightclubs, where the poor girls, exhausted from dancing, stagger drunkenly on the knees of intoxicated, wealthy, and depraved gentlemen, only to end up in luxurious brothels furnished like those in the film *The Jewels of the Duchess* (*Die Brillanten der Herzogin*). Once on this path, there is no stopping. Society and the police alike push these unfortunate victims of male desire ever further downward—into cheerful halls of mirrors.

The young girls sitting in the cinema, usually beside the young man who has paid for their ticket, are instructed that every attempt by a woman once “fallen” to resist only drives her lower, and that every desperate effort to climb back up again is futile and merely sinks her deeper into misery. Every employer is supposedly consumed by male desire and plies his stenographer with wine; there is no possibility of resistance.

If the derailed young woman has a child, the poor little creature goes hungry, and to save it the unhappy mother does not take it to a foundling home. Instead, sacrificing herself, she enters a brothel—accompanied, of course, by the solemn strains of a harmonium, which thankfully can scarcely be heard over the moved sobbing in the auditorium.

Young women are thus tempted by the fantastic pleasures that supposedly exist in the world, while at the same time catching fearful glimpses, behind the walls of disreputable houses, of the mirrored salons from *The Jewels of the Duchess*. Young men, on the other

hand, are delighted to see “how easy it is,” what distinguished gentlemen are capable of, and how slight the risk is—provided one is as devilishly clever as the rake on the screen.

Thus everyone gets what they want: business flourishes, prostitution is increasingly practiced “by request,” and freedom, we are told, is the best of all possible conditions.

Lichtspielgesetz (Motion Picture Act) — May 12, 1920

Quoted from *dokumentarchiv* (<http://documentarchiv.de/wr/1920/lichtspielgesetz.html>)

The Constituent German National Assembly has enacted the following law, which is hereby promulgated following the consent of the Reichsrat:

Examination of Image Strips (Bildstreifen, i.e.. Films)

§ 1

[1] Films may be publicly shown or brought into circulation domestically or abroad for the purpose of public screening, only if they have been approved by the official examination boards (§§ 8, 13). Screenings in clubs, associations, and other closed societies are treated as equivalent to public screenings of films. Approval is not required for the screening of films used exclusively for scientific or artistic purposes in public educational and research institutions, or those recognized as public.

[2] Approval of a film strip is granted upon application. It must be refused if the examination shows that the screening of a film strip is likely to endanger public order and safety, offend religious sensibilities, have a brutalizing or demoralizing effect, or endanger Germany's reputation or its relations with foreign states. Approval may not be refused on account of a political, social, religious, ethical, or ideological tendency as such. Approval may not be refused for reasons lying outside the content of the film strip.

[3] Films for which the grounds for refusal of approval apply only to part of the depicted events shall be approved if the objected-to portions are cut from the positive prints intended for screening and handed over to the examination board, and if the examination board is also given assurance that the objected-to portions will not be distributed.

§ 3

[1] Films to which young persons under the age of eighteen are to be admitted require special approval.

[2] In addition to the films prohibited under § 1, paragraph 2, all films must be excluded from screenings for young persons if there is reason to fear that they may have a harmful

effect on the moral, intellectual, or physical development of young people, or may overstimulate their imagination.

§ 17

Films that were produced and are already in circulation before this Act comes into force must be presented to an examination office (§ 8) within one year after this Act attains legal force. After expiry of this period, the provisions of this Act also apply to the screening of these films. Until these films have been examined by the examination offices, their approval is subject to authorization by the individual local police authority or by the regional office previously responsible. They may only be approved if no objections under §§ 1, 3 stand in the way.

§ 18

[1] Whoever, in violation of the provisions of this Act, intentionally screens films or parts thereof that have been prohibited by the competent authorities, not been approved, or whose approval has been revoked, or intentionally puts them into circulation domestically or abroad for the purpose of public screening, shall be punished with imprisonment of up to two years and with a fine of up to one hundred thousand Marks, or with one of these penalties. If the offender acts negligently, he shall be punished with a fine of up to ten thousand Marks.

§ 20

[1] In addition to the penalty, confiscation of the film strip may be ordered, regardless of whether it belongs to the convicted person or not. If prosecution or conviction of a specific person is not feasible, confiscation of the film strip may be ordered independently.

[2] Furthermore, insofar as the offender acted intentionally, the guilty person may be prohibited from carrying on the trade for up to three months, and, in the case of repeated relapse, permanently.

Berlin, 12 May 1920.

The President of the Reich

Ebert

The Reich Minister of the Interior

Koch

CODA 1929

§ 184.

Public Prosecutor or Film Censorship?

In *Der Deutsche Film*, no. 15 (October 7, 1929)

Rather belatedly, the public prosecutor's office has turned its attention to the offensive images in "Aufklärungsfilme." The wave of outrage currently sweeping through the whole Reich had already passed its peak before the first seizure of films under Paragraph 184 of the Criminal Code — for distributing obscene images — actually took place. The Berlin public prosecutor's office, at least, now seems all the more determined to pursue this matter vigorously going forward. As *Film* has learned, a well-known senior prosecutor recently remarked, on the occasion of a test screening at the Berlin censorship office, that he would seize even those films approved by the new censorship board if he found them in any way objectionable.

Article 117 of the Reich Constitution, as is well known, provides for the establishment of a censorship body for cinema screenings. Such film censorship already existed up to November 8, 1918, and — particularly under the exceptional conditions of wartime — exercised truly severe control. However, the censorship certificate issued by the censorship office of the Berlin Police Headquarters had one virtue: a film bearing this "passport" was safe from seizure by the public prosecutor. It amounted, in effect, to an insurance policy against the prosecutor.

If the public prosecutor now abandons this position with respect to the new censorship board, one is entitled to ask: what, then, is the point of censorship at all? Surely censorship — carried out by literary and artistic experts and educators, as the German film industry itself proposes — is meant precisely to prevent the emergence of artistic and legal disputes in each individual case. It should therefore come as no surprise that film industry figures are demanding that the forthcoming Reich Censorship Law include, under all circumstances, a clear and unambiguous provision stating:

"No prosecution or seizure of films shall take place, provided the films have undergone the censorship review prescribed by this law, have been approved, and are distributed and shown in unaltered form."

Without such a clear-cut provision, censorship as a whole is unacceptable to the film industry. The entire film certification process would in fact amount to nothing more than a dubious reassurance. The very harm censorship is meant to guard against — the enormous damage caused by the seizure of entire print runs or even the negative itself — is not prevented merely by the existence of a censorship body, as the prosecutor's own remarks demonstrate. It is up to the parties involved to find a wording that removes any concerns about excessive formalization.

It is equally important that regulations be issued — ideally in the law itself, or failing that in the implementing regulations soon to be enacted — specifying how proof is to be furnished that a film is distributed in no form other than the censored one.

Film in German Economic Propaganda

At a recent conference of the Reich Central Office for Homeland Service (*Reichszentrale für Heimatdienst*), attended by representatives of Reich and state authorities as well as the relevant trade press and business associations, consideration was given to the means and opportunities for increasing and improving the domestic population's understanding of the importance of foreign trade and the restoration of economic relations. Discussion also turned to how best to give the general public a picture of the necessity of work, national prosperity, and so on. Not only the most prominent representatives of our industry and commerce, but also official representatives of the Reich Finance Ministry and other Reich and state authorities, spoke out primarily in favor of film as the best means of public education. It was suggested that, alongside efforts through written propaganda and the spoken word, film — as the most vivid and important educational medium — should be placed at the forefront of these efforts.