

Hollywood Cinema in the Studio-Era (TERM YR)  
**Information Sheet for Forum Post #4**

This assignment asks you to consider **either** how the Production Code mediated between the film industry and the broader culture (Option A) **or** how your film's production and its creators' work on the film relate to Hollywood production practices (Option B) **or** how the use of some particular production technology affected the film's style and its creators' work practices (Option C).

**Post #4: The Production System** (about 500-750 words)

**Due:** [Wk.11 DATE] by midnight; comments by [DATE] and replies by [DATE]

**Instructions for Assignment:**

Anchoring your discussion in a specifically cited primary source (or multiple sources, if appropriate—see below), write a post answering one of the three prompts below. If you aren't sure whether your film "works" for a particular prompt, please don't hesitate to ask me!

Option A: The Production Code: Look at the Production Code Administration file for your assigned film and find a memo or exchange of letters between censors and producers. Discuss an exchange between regulators, producers, and/or pressure groups you find interesting, making reference to Jacobs and Maltby in order to demonstrate your understanding of self-regulation as a process of negotiation. Alternately, if your film does not have a PCA file available, you may use the PCA Analysis chart to evaluate your film and write a letter to the producers. You will have to fill in, scan, and post the form to the forum, and you will have to write a letter to the producer from the perspective of a PCA official. In doing this, you must demonstrate an understanding of the stages of self-regulation.

Option B: Production Personnel: Identify a member of your film's production team—director, cinematographer, writer, producer, set designer, etc.—and recover his or her work on your film. What qualities (style of cinematography, type of script, etc.) did this member of the production bring to your film? In order to answer this question, you will first need to **(1)** find out what sort of work the crew member was known for before this film. Such information might be found in a primary-source profile (e.g. story in *American Cinematographer*), but you might need to seek out biographies or autobiographies of the crewmember or his/her collaborators, histories of the studios where he/she worked, interviews with the crew member and/or his/her collaborators. In order to **(2)** determine his/her contribution to your film, you might find a primary source account of its production through the Media History Digital Library, but you might also need to consult the AFI Catalogue's account of the production, articles or chapters on your film, etc.

**Note:** *Option B is the hardest to research, so if you want to do this one, you should consult with me and tell me which member of the crew you're interested to research.*

Option C: Production Technologies: Do some preliminary research to see what new (or relatively new) technologies are being used by your film (see the Bordwell & Thompson reading from week 4 for some possibilities). Using the MHDL, find a *technical journal* article about the technology. How does the discussion of this technology indicate how it will make the more production process more efficient (or not disrupt it too severely)? Does the article give an indication of how the technology will affect film style? Evaluate this assertion against the evidence of your film: does the technology, as deployed in a key scene, support classicism's prioritization of narrative or do values such as spectacle/ artistic motivation become dominant? Be specific in discussing your scene.