

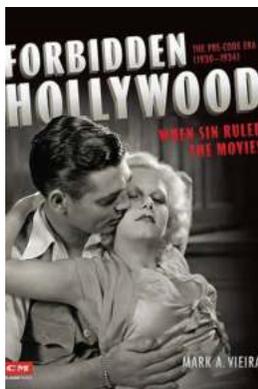
# The Pre Code Era 1930-1934: Unveiling the Golden Age of Hollywood

The Pre Code Era, spanning from 1930 to 1934, was a remarkable period in the history of Hollywood. It was a time when filmmakers were able to push the boundaries of social and moral conventions, delivering daring and provocative films that reflected the realities of the world. This era, also known as the Golden Age of Hollywood, witnessed the rise of talented actors and directors who fearlessly explored controversial themes and tested the limitations of censorship.

During this mesmerizing period, many movies were made that challenged the traditional values upheld by the conservative society. The lifting of oppressive restrictions allowed filmmakers to create stories that delved deep into the human psyche and tackled topics such as sexuality, crime, corruption, and social unrest.

## The Origins of the Pre Code Era

The Pre Code Era came into existence in response to the implementation of the Production Code in 1930. Popularly known as the Hays Code, it was a strict set of rules that dictated the content and themes depicted in films released by major studios. These regulations were designed to uphold moral decency, reflecting the moral standards of the time, but they often hindered creativity within the industry.



## Forbidden Hollywood: The Pre-Code Era (1930-1934): When Sin Ruled the Movies (Turner Classic Movies) by Mark A. Vieira (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 377719 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
X-Ray : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 269 pages



However, in the early years of the Pre Code Era, the enforcement of the Hays Code was relatively loose. This created a window of opportunity for directors and writers to push the boundaries and experiment with more provocative storytelling techniques.

## **Famous Pre Code Films**

Some of the most iconic films of all time were produced during the Pre Code Era. These films not only captivated audiences but also sparked discussions and controversies.

### **Scarface (1932)**

Directed by Howard Hawks, this crime drama portrayed the rise and fall of a notorious gangster, thinly veiling the story of Al Capone. With its gritty portrayal of criminal activities, violence, and corruption, Scarface set new standards for depicting the darker aspects of society.

### **Red Dust (1932)**

Starring Clark Gable and Jean Harlow, Red Dust explored themes of lust, adultery, and interracial relationships. In a time when such narratives were considered taboo, this film challenged societal norms head-on.

### **She Done Him Wrong (1933)**

Mae West, an iconic figure of the Pre Code Era, starred in this crime-comedy that pushed the boundaries of sexual innuendos and risqué humor. The film was a box office hit and further established West as a powerful voice in Hollywood.

## **The Impact of the Pre Code Era**

The Pre Code Era not only revolutionized the content of films but also played a significant role in nurturing talented actors, directors, and writers. Many Hollywood stars who became legendary figures owe their success to the daring roles they performed during this era.

Furthermore, the artistic freedom of the Pre Code Era led to the creation of groundbreaking cinematic techniques. Directors experimented with lighting, camera angles, and storytelling styles, paving the way for modern filmmaking techniques that are still influential to this day.

## **Challenges and the End of the Pre Code Era**

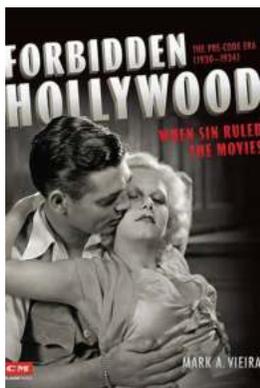
As the Pre Code Era progressed, some films faced increased scrutiny from religious and conservative groups. The controversial themes and open portrayal of sexuality drew widespread criticism. This mounting pressure eventually led to the reinforcement of stricter censorship guidelines.

In 1934, the Production Code Administration was established, marking the end of the Pre Code Era. The Production Code further tightened regulations, imposing heavy restrictions on the content of films. These restrictions remained in place until the late 1960s when the Code was finally abandoned, allowing filmmakers to once again explore more controversial and socially relevant themes.

## **In Retrospect**

The Pre Code Era, spanning from 1930 to 1934, holds a special place in the history of Hollywood. It was a time of artistic liberation when filmmakers were able to challenge societal norms and create thought-provoking content. The legacy of this era lives on through the films that dared to address controversial themes head-on, shaping the future of the film industry.

Today, the films produced during the Pre Code Era are celebrated for their boldness and their contributions to cinematic art. They serve as a reminder of the rich history of American cinema and the resilience of those who fought against censorship to express their creativity.



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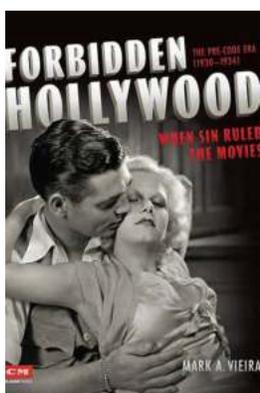
Filled with rare images and untold stories from filmmakers, exhibitors, and moviegoers, Forbidden Hollywood is the ultimate guide to a gloriously entertaining era when a lax code of censorship let sin rule the movies.

Forbidden Hollywood is a history of "pre-Code" like none other: you will eavesdrop on production conferences, read nervous telegrams from executives

to censors, and hear Americans argue about "immoral" movies. You will see decisions artfully wrought, so as to fool some of the people long enough to get films into theaters. You will read what theater managers thought of such craftiness, and hear from fans as they applauded creativity or condemned crassness. You will see how these films caused a grass-roots movement to gain control of Hollywood-and why they were "forbidden" for fifty years.

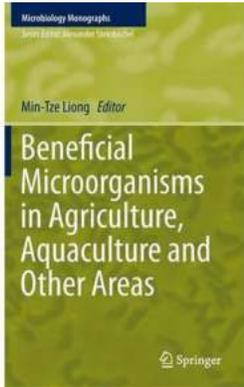
The book spotlights the twenty-two films that led to the strict new Code of 1934, including *Red-Headed Woman*, *Call Her Savage*, and *She Done Him Wrong*. You'll see Paul Muni shoot a path to power in the original *Scarface*; Barbara Stanwyck climb the corporate ladder on her own terms in *Baby Face*; and misfits seek revenge in *Freaks*.

More than 200 newly restored (and some never-before-published) photographs illustrate pivotal moments in the careers of Clara Bow, Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer, and Greta Garbo; and the pre-Code stardom of Claudette Colbert, Cary Grant, Marlene Dietrich, James Cagney, and Mae West. This is the definitive portrait of an unforgettable era in filmmaking.



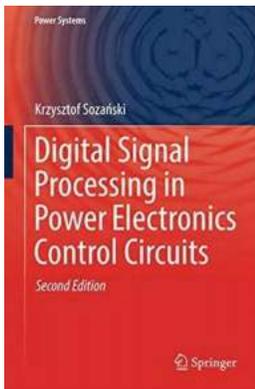
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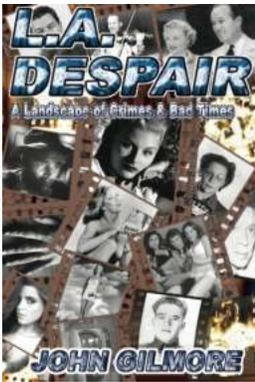
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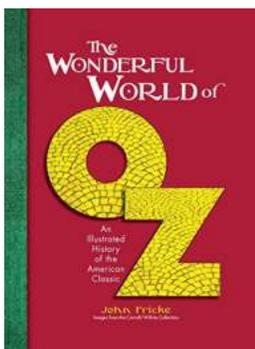
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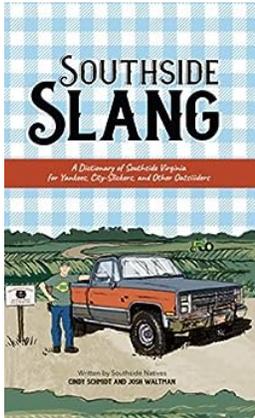
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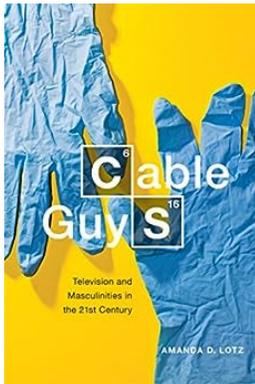
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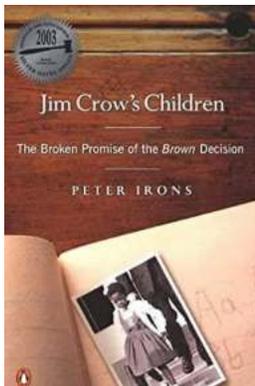
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