

## **‘Improper Practices’ in Great War British Cinemas**

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Analysis of the environment in which films were viewed, is essential in order to gain a fuller understanding of the British cinema experience during the Great War. The exhibition context is of particular importance during the war years, as cinema-going throughout this period was far from idyllic – in fact, British cinemas were subject to police scrutiny, and were a hub of sexual activity that the government strove to suppress. Many critics have located the reports of these activities as part of a wider ‘moral panic’ regarding the cinema and the films exhibited within, predominantly orchestrated by religious pressure groups and self-styled ‘moral crusaders’.<sup>i</sup> Lise Shapiro Sanders likens this movement to similar campaigns in the nineteenth century, arguing that, like music halls previously, this subjected the ‘cinema to censorship and ideological control in an endeavour to distribute middle-class codes of social practice to the ‘lower’ classes.’<sup>ii</sup> Yet this approach has often been based on the findings of a report by the National Council for Public Morals,<sup>iii</sup> with little investigation of the actual data supplied to the committee. Even accounts that have used some of this evidence position it as a minor component, exaggerated out of all proportion in order to satisfy the personal objectives of the moral purity campaigners.<sup>iv</sup> While there was a concerted effort throughout the Great War to highlight the perceived social ills of the cinema, I have attempted to present a more balanced account, which details the problems faced by cinemas during this period and the measures sought to improve them. Due to the extant material on this issue predominantly concentrating on London, this article covers the incidents and attempted solutions that took place in the capital’s exhibition venues.

### **Initial Concerns**

The first documented concerns about behaviour during film screenings revolved around problems of inadequate lighting, particularly in many of the ‘cinemas’ that had begun to develop from former music halls in early 1907. By 1909, several firms were attempting to introduce daylight projection, mainly to discourage pickpockets and ‘improper behaviour.’ On 30 March in that year, Scotland Yard received reports that people attending a Hammersmith cinema called ‘Gayland’ were watching ‘suggestive pictures’ and afterwards ‘were in the habit of committing immoral acts in secluded

streets in the neighbourhood.’<sup>v</sup> At the same cinema only two years previously, there were complaints about the sale of indecent postcards, but after the realisation of no evidence on the premises, the proprietors received a caution and promised not to sell postcards of any description.<sup>vi</sup> Generally, exhibitors were reluctant to improve the lighting, as they complained that it discouraged young courting couples from attending, and the project stalled for a number of years, until the BBFC’s formal establishment in 1912 and the promotion of film censorship to the political agenda.

By the start of the Great War, pressure began to originate from the ‘moral guardians’ of the nation, who started to treat films as endemic of a wider national crisis. The Educational Kinematograph Association was established in May 1914, with the express aim to ‘minimise the bad and to develop the good effects of the kinematograph.’<sup>vii</sup> A report in *The Manchester Guardian* on its formation acknowledged that ‘The bad moral effects upon many children of the sensational film, leading to an increase of cases in the children’s courts and so on, is now generally admitted.’<sup>viii</sup> A leader in the August 1916 edition of *The Church Times* entitled ‘The Child and the Cinema – A parent’s view of the growing danger’, argued that the chief methods of drawing a full house were ‘1. The dangerous, and 2. The undesirable.’<sup>ix</sup> It continued:

...if we just pause and consider the cinema in its relation to the child, we shall be forced to the conclusion that it is time to check what is undoubtedly a great and growing danger to the children of the nation.

Questions were even raised in parliament, with the Home Secretary, Herbert Samuel, asked whether, due to the ‘probable connection between the increase of juvenile delinquency and the display of objectionable cinema films,’ the admission of children to the cinema should be placed under local licensing authority jurisdiction.<sup>x</sup>

### **Government Intervention**

The pressure from these attacks led to a coordinated series of studies to ascertain the state of the nation’s cinemas. A major instigator of these activities was the London

County Council, and a letter from its Clerk to the Home Office, dated 6 December 1916, succinctly introduces the experience of watching a film in Great War Britain:

...many children in arms were noticed and babies crawling about on the floor were also observed...It is stated that the offensive habit of spitting is greatly prevalent and it is suggested that regulations should be made in regard to this.<sup>xi</sup>

The Clerk suggests that this situation was due to the war engaging the majority of the country's men, generally leaving only young, inexperienced women to police the cinemas. The official view was that these women were 'too young to be of much use in the case of panic.'<sup>xii</sup>

The government also took inadequate lighting as its starting point, although in public they presented this concern as primarily about the effects of low lighting on children's eyesight. For example, the 1 March 1917 issue of *Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly* had a one-page editorial on the subject, insisting that 'it was not uncommon to hear of children having headaches after visiting the picture theatres, and it was also not uncommon that visits to such places resulted in attacks of vomiting.'<sup>xiii</sup> In the same year on 18 July the Commissioner of Police produced a report on Cinematograph Picture Halls, which again commented on their darkness and particularly the proliferation of darkened theatre style boxes, which provided an 'easy opportunity for improper practices.'<sup>xiv</sup>

Until then, the official assumption was that these 'improper practices' were courting couples canoodling in the secrecy of the darkened halls. However, near the end of the Commissioner's report he states that cinema owners had complained that the LCC had not installed any regular cinema attendants, and that 'the "Children's Attendants"', when there are any, are often men.'<sup>xv</sup> Due to a reworking of the Entertainment tax (which had restricted adult attendance to particular times of the day), adult admission into children's matinees was allowed in 1916.

This mixture of adult males and children in the same halls prompted concerns, as a later letter from a cinema manager to the Home Office highlights:

Lady Mary St. Helier, an influential former member of the London County Council, questioned the Theatres and Music Halls Committee on 17 November 1915

about the sexual abuse of children in cinemas.<sup>xvi</sup> This prompted a request from the Commissioner of Police, Sir Edward Henry, for details regarding any incidents that had occurred in London. On 19 November 1915, James Bird wrote on behalf of the LCC to Henry, informing him about cases that had come to the Council's attention. He recounts an incident 'in which a man was convicted last July of assaulting a child in the Picture Palace, East Hill, Wandsworth...[and of] a similar offence at the Radium Picture Palace.'<sup>xvii</sup> The LCC dispatched a further letter on 23 November 1915, detailing eleven cases of child molestation that had taken place at cinemas in 1915 alone. A police report on the same issue provides several further details that I have used to elaborate on the accounts listed below, drawing directly from the statements of eight superintendents involved in these cases. The descriptions in both documents highlight the apparent leniency of many of the sentences imposed on offenders. For example:

- In April, a man aged 46 was fined £10 or two months imprisonment for indecently assaulting a 12 year old girl by placing his hand on her thigh
- At the Victoria Picture Palace, Stirling Cocksley Voules (aged 72), was alleged to have taken a 14 year-old boy, Frederick Gibbens, into the cinema before 'finally undoing the boy's trousers, [taking out] his person and [playing] with it for about five minutes'. The report concedes that the only corroboration available was that they entered and left the picture house together, as seen by the attendant, and as a result, Voules faced no charge at Westminster police station. However, the superintendent believed that Gibbens 'no doubt told the truth as to what occurred.'<sup>xviii</sup>
- 3 days later on 17 July a 35 year old man was sentenced to five months hard labour for indecently assaulting four girls, aged from 8-10 years, by placing his hand under their clothing
- On the same day a 27 year old man was sentenced to 4 months hard labour for indecently assaulting a 12 year old girl
- On 29 August a 54 year old man was charged with unlawfully assaulting a 9 year old girl, but was cleared at police court
- On 21 October a 45 year old man was sentenced to 12 months hard labour for assaulting two girls, aged 12 and 13

- And on 1 November 3 girls, two aged 7 and one aged 6, were assaulted at the Vauxhall Electric Theatre, and then taken to the man's lodgings for the same purpose. An application for an arrest warrant was in process at the time of the letter.

In two of the cases the perpetrators could not be found, and one, in which a man made use of 'an obscene gesture' before attempting to place his hand under a girl's clothing, was not proceeded with.<sup>xix</sup>

The LCC were keen to stamp out this behaviour, and took matters into their own hands. In December 1915, they introduced as a licensing requirement that a Special Children's Attendant should be present at cinemas to 'take care of and safeguard' the children attending the hall.

Such attendant shall wear a badge or other distinguishing special mark, shall be on duty during the whole time the premises are open to the public, and during such time shall have no other duty than the care of children in the hall.<sup>xx</sup>

In addition, a new condition to the licensing agreement, 'That no films be displayed which are likely to be subversive of public morality', was added in May 1916.<sup>xxi</sup> This further entrenched the perceived link between the activity in the cinema hall and the behaviour on screen.

### **Further Measures**

However, the LCC stipulations were not always strictly adhered to, and on 10 May 1916 the police received a further report on 'improper practices', the fruits of research conducted over the previous month by an investigator working for Frederick Charrington. Charrington was a social purity activist who had mounted moral crusades against the music halls,<sup>xxii</sup> and while this account was clearly designed to shock the police into action, the corroborative evidence from the earlier police findings suggest that it was not an exaggeration. Not only did the reporter discover the same 'gross immorality'<sup>xxiii</sup> being carried out by both sexes, as well as men entering

toilets with young boys, he witnessed incidents that suggested these events were not as random as they had first appeared.

He recounts an experience in the Finsbury Park cinema on 17 April, when as the lights went up for the interval, he discovered that he was sitting next to a girl of 'no more than 14 years of age.'<sup>xxiv</sup> She turned to him, and asked if he was going to buy her any chocolates. After he told her not to accept sweets from strangers, she said that all the other men buy her chocolates, although she never lets them do anything except hug and kiss her.<sup>xxv</sup> In the same cinema, while queuing for tickets, a young girl said to him 'I will pull it for 6d.' He continues, 'Within a minute or two, apparently her mother came to her and said, "I have bought transfers, we will go into the shilling seats, there is nothing doing here."<sup>xxvi</sup> It appears that there was some form of organised child prostitution occurring, to which later observations at the Carlton and Majestic cinemas on Tottenham Court Road concur:

A young lad or fellow standing sideways against the wall would place his linked hands behind him with his fingers turned outwards. I noticed this over and over again that men would come to such lads, generally with a mackintosh or overcoat on their arm, thus screening their actual movements, but it was quite easy to be absolutely sure of what was taking place, and if further evidence was required, money always passes in the course of five or ten minutes.<sup>xxvii</sup>

As well as this, at the Arena cinema in Charing Cross he saw 'a lad examine a man's private with a small electric torch, before placing it in his mouth.'<sup>xxviii</sup> It appears that in many cases, older children were instigating the activities, although it is unclear from these descriptions whether an adult was organising these practices or if they were working independently. However, further investigation revealed that some cinemas were involved:

On several occasions I have seen men give a young attendant 6d on entering a cinema, but I had no idea why this was done, until I

gave 6d to quite a young attendant at the Arena, Villers St, who at once said “Would you like to sit among boys or girls, Sir?”<sup>xxxix</sup>

In response to these concerns, R.Wiest, Superintendent in the Executive Department of the Metropolitan Police, produced a written reply on 25 May 1916. He concluded that

it is an established fact that acts of indecency take place in cinemas both by the older and younger member of the audiences, and by both sexes, but owing to the darkness such acts are not easy to detect unless a complaint is made by the person assaulted. The proportion of such cases which come to notice is *probably small as they are generally committed with the consent of both parties* [my italics].<sup>xxx</sup>

Once more, Wiest is asserting the prevalence of courting couples in the cinemas, although this statement is slightly ambiguous, and may suggest the consent between a prostitute and their client. Whatever the intention, Wiest proposed three possible solutions to the problem. Firstly, they could employ females with torches to police the rows; secondly, place lights along the sides of the rows; and thirdly, segregate men, women and children, which under the provisions of the 1909 Cinematograph Act (which stipulated that gangways, staircases and passages leading to exits should be kept clear of obstruction) would prevent contact between these groups altogether.<sup>xxxi</sup> It was the first of these options that was to prove popular, and five days after Wiest wrote his letter, the social purity group, the National Union of Women Workers of Great Britain and Ireland, contacted Sir Edward Henry, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, to agree to conduct a trial cinema patrol scheme he had suggested. After a meeting between Sir Henry and Mrs Hartwell, Chair of the NUWW on the 5 June, six women were selected to conduct these investigations, at the rate of 6d per 8-hour day. In addition, part of their remit was to report ‘any films which, in their opinion, are likely to produce pernicious impressions on children’,<sup>xxxii</sup> consolidating the similar stipulation the LCC had instigated in May that year.

Of the patrols undertaken, complete reports for Miss Gray, of 30 Garden Place, Kensington, remain. They are dated between 15-21 June 1916, and focus predominately on cinemas along The Strand and Great Windmill Street. Of the ten cinemas visited, she records an indecent incident in only one, Villers Street on The Strand.

A small boy and man were fetched from gallery [sic] and confronted with each other outside. The man appeared to deny some charges, in which the small boy persisted, but the man was sent off by the managers apparently, and the small boy returned to his place.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

There are typed summaries for every other attendant, of which the most interesting are those recorded by Miss R. Fraser. At St John's Hill in Clapham, she reported that the attendants appeared anxious to keep her downstairs, and at the Palladium in Brixton Hill she observed a couple spoken to twice by the cinema manager regarding their conduct, before being asked to leave. In accordance with previous reports, she recorded 'loose girls' attending a cinema on 383-5 Brixton Road, making 'endeavours to get into conversation with any young men who may come in, by either standing near them or sitting down behind them.'<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Each patrol assessed cinemas via the following criteria:

1. Is there a children's attendant, with a badge or distinguishing mark?
2. Are children unaccompanied by adults seated separately from the rest of the audience?
3. Is the darkness such as to make it difficult or impossible to detect indecency should any take place?
4. Is the structure such as to facilitate indecency? e.g. Are there specially dark corners or galleries, boxes or other secluded places?
5. Is any particular age, sex or class of spectator noticeable?
6. General (Under this heading any observations which appear to bear on the subject and are not included under the previous questions, should be

entered. If a film of a noticeably objectionable kind is seen, its name and character should be given).<sup>xxxv</sup>

Of the 119 halls visited, they recorded only 28 as having a special children's attendant (despite this being a LCC licensing requirement as of December 1915), and only 32 provided a separate area for children. However, they reported only 28 as being difficult to detect whether indecency was taking place, and only 21 with structures that they perceived to facilitate indecency. Children were more prevalent in outer districts than in West End cinemas, and general comments included problems with ventilation and the prevalence of open back seats, which proved particularly suited for sexual acts during screenings.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

The patrol initiative failed to work, as further observations showed that men were generally not meeting children in the cinema; instead, they met them outside and then took them to the cinemas because of the relative privacy that the darkness and background noise offered. In addition, even when the police secured the identity of the men involved, it was still difficult to prosecute because 'many of the girls [had] turned 13 years of age, [and it was] sufficient enough defence for an offender to say that the girl consented.'<sup>xxxvii</sup> The 1885 Criminal Law Amendment Act had raised the age of consent from 12 to 16, but intercourse with a minor between the ages of 13 and 16 was considered as only a misdemeanour, and as can be seen by the sentences imposed on offenders, was treated lightly by the courts. In addition, prostitution in public arenas was not new - its prevalence in nineteenth century music halls led to remonstrations in Parliament<sup>xxxviii</sup> and specialist inspectors from the LCC focusing attention on female audience members.<sup>xxxix</sup> However, the approach taken by the Police towards music halls in the mid-nineteenth century was markedly different, with a greater degree of toleration because 'prostitutes were to be found in all public places...barring them from the halls would in no way contribute to solving the problem.'<sup>xl</sup> Of course, the greater concern over children in the Edwardian period and the Great War led to a closer inspection of cinema venues than music hall proprietors were used to, although the evidence suggests this increased scrutiny was ineffective.

Certainly, organised prostitution was still rife after the Government's efforts – as a letter from the Cinematograph Exhibitor's Association to the Home Secretary in January 1917 attests. The CEA claimed that there were 50,000 prostitutes in London,

of which 40,000 were of ‘alien birth’. Desperate to maintain their associates’ reputations, they argued that the reports of indecent conduct ‘were entirely without foundation’, and that instead it was the foreign prostitutes, predominately refugees from France and Belgium resulting from the war, that were the cause of these accusations. The CEA’s proposed solution was that under the National Registration Act (1915), every woman over 14 should be re-registered and provided with a card that could be marked to identify prostitutes from the rest of society, and secondly to deport all of those so marked who were not British citizens.<sup>xli</sup> However, the police disputed such claims, arguing that the 50,000 figure was greatly exaggerated and that the majority of prostitutes they dealt with were of British descent. This was not reported in the press, which instead presented the CEA’s proposal as rote.<sup>xlii</sup> Considering the CEA’s delicate position in the light of reported indecencies recorded throughout its cinemas, it is natural that they would seek to smooth over some of the more challenging facts and attempt to conceal the reality of what happened in the cinema halls. However, perhaps the most telling indication of the CEA’s position comes from evidence published that year as part of an independent report into British cinemas, conducted by the National Council of Public Morals.

### **The NCPM Report**

*The Cinema: Its Present Position and Future Possibilities*, was published in October 1917 by the National Council of Public Morals, in response to a request from the Cinematograph Trade Council to draw a line under the tarnished image of film exhibition. The CTC represented the CEA, whose chairman, A. E. Newbould, also sat on the commission, along with the CEA’s Secretary, W. Gavazzi King and various representatives of church organisations and other public bodies.<sup>xliii</sup> Charged with leading an inquiry into ‘the physical, social, moral and educational influence of the cinema, with special reference to young people’,<sup>xliiv</sup> the NCPM conducted several interviews with people directly involved in the cinema and its regulation, from the police to the general public. The report outlined the complaint that ‘darkness encourages indecency’, and that the standing areas or promenades common in several cinemas provided ‘opportunities for improper conduct’, although it was the evidence from the Chairman of the County of London Sessions, Sir Robert Wallace, which appeared to most conclusively support these claims:

[A] considerable number of cases of [sexual assault in cinema halls] have had to be tried in the last year or two. I was very much afraid...that there were a great number of cases which never came to trial because the girls or women who are the object of the assault do not care for the publicity which attends the trial.<sup>xlv</sup>

Nonetheless, the NCPM report is curious in that it held back from damning cinemas, but a close inspection of the interview transcripts suggests that this may once more be due to the CEA. The major interview, one that opens the collection of evidence and is the largest in duration and scope, was conducted with F. R. Goodwin, the Chairman of the London branch of the CEA. His answers showed a reluctance to increase the amount of light in the theatres, arguing that ‘beyond a certain amount you assist the undesirable women by giving them the opportunity to accost’, and when pressed on how his exhibitors dealt with prostitution, he asserted that if a woman changed her seat several times she would have been ejected.<sup>xlvi</sup> However, in reply to the key question, ‘Does [indecent] take place?’ he replied, ‘No, it does not take place’, and argued that the major social ill of London cinemas was ‘a lot of exproctation’.<sup>xlvii</sup> To corroborate this claim, the NCPM questioned him on the findings of the National Union of Women Workers’ deputation, and once again, Goodwin replied that ‘No instance of any act of indecency is described by the lady visitors’, before claiming that ‘When investigation is made it is usually found that the alleged misconduct is nothing more than the privileged manifestation of affection between the sexes.’<sup>xlviii</sup> The refusal by Goodwin to acknowledge key evidence, his position as the ‘key witness’ and the fact that the commission featured A. E. Newbould and W. Gavazzi King, suggests that the CEA was instrumental in dampening down any record of the prevalence of ‘indecent’ in Great War British cinemas. That the conclusion of the NCPM report was generous is unsurprising in light of the testimony given:

While this is an evil which is not easy of proof...there is no evidence that it is more prevalent in the picture house than in

other places of popular resort...[and] where it exists it can be restrained by more adequate supervision and lighting, the provision of a seat for every person admitted, the abolition of a standing room and boxes where they exist, and the provision of a special attendant to look after the children.<sup>xlix</sup>

Despite this, the announcement of the report's publication in *The Times* quoted the Lord Bishop of Birmingham's assertion that the 'moral dangers of the cinema theatre might be very grave',<sup>1</sup> yet it was suggested that this was a problem of the content of films, rather than of the theatres themselves.

### **Conclusions**

By the end of the Great War the CEA were not the only institution trying to forget recorded events. The police declared in a memo of 1917 that 'No complaint had been made [to them] that indecent or immoral conduct had taken place in the Cinemas (sic).'<sup>li</sup> It is unclear what exactly was classed as 'indecent', however, the tone throughout the reports discussed in this article suggests a distinction between consensual acts, prostitution and abuse. 'Indecency', as referred to in official parlance, should be equated with acts of non-consensual or solicited sex, with the authorities in the main enabling cinemas to self-regulate with regard to the behaviour of couples. Of course, cinema unions encouraged this as it made it easier for them to disregard any disreputable aspects of their business, and this sentiment was adopted wholesale in government documentation from that point forward. In fact, the Home Office would receive a report from a cinema manager in 1918, which suggested little had changed since the National Council of Public Morals' report:

I am happy to say also that the lighting was very much improved, but the evils of the lavatories without any supervision were unabated. In the Majestic and the Carlton, men were seen with lads coming out together from the same WC...The new Super Cinema Charing Cross Road...still have (sic) 25 darkened boxes which can only be used for one purpose, as it is very inconvenient to see the pictures at all.<sup>liii</sup>

Despite this, there were no further investigations into Great War cinema behaviour after May 1917. There are a number of possible reasons for this, and it seems natural to assume that the end of the Great War itself was the key factor. The deflection of official resources and purpose to other areas over the following year suggests that the problems of London's metropolitan cinemas would have failed to register as one of the main government priorities. Perhaps also the intense interest in child welfare that the war had exacerbated began to recede once the end of the conflict was in sight, and the promise of the return home of Britain's young males was on the horizon. The end of the war may have lifted the sense of urgency over the protection of children that it had engendered. Undoubtedly, the conclusions of the National Council of Public Morals' Cinema Commission also helped to dissuade moral campaigners from further investigation. As Dean Rapp argues, these campaigners could not 'ignore the eminence of the members of the Commission, its convincing evidence, and its sponsorship by a social purity group.'<sup>liii</sup>

However, what is more likely is suggested by the CEA's letter of 1917, which attempted to place the majority of the blame onto a fictitious minority, in that case foreign prostitutes. It appears that the CEA and the exhibitors they represented skilfully deflected the issue, to become a problem not of the cinema halls, but of either their audiences or the films that were exhibited. The call for the deportation of foreign prostitutes was primarily a convenient smokescreen for the reality of life in the halls, fanned by the nationalism instilled by the Great War itself. Ironically, the LCC's constant referral to the evils of individual films provided another avenue to this argument, and along with the President of the BBFC, T. P. O'Connor (with his 43 rules for excluding films that were also introduced in 1917), the films shown after this period were perceived as more damaging than the cinemas in which they were exhibited. Did cinemas rapidly clean up their act after 1917? Certainly not, but they became better at obscuring the facts, and the people who should have been ensuring their improvement instead pointed the finger of blame at easier and politically less challenging targets.

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<sup>i</sup> See Field, Audrey, *Picture Palace: A Social History of the Cinema*, Gentry Books Ltd., London 1974

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- <sup>ii</sup> Sanders, Lise Shapiro, ‘“Indecent Incentives to Vice”: Regulating Films and Audience Behaviour From the 1890s to the 1910s’, in Higson, Andrew (ed.), *Young and Innocent?: The Cinema in Britain, 1895-1930*, University of Exeter Press, Exeter 2002, p. 98
- <sup>iii</sup> National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, *The Cinema: Its Present Position and Future Possibilities*, Williams and Norgate, London 1917
- <sup>iv</sup> ‘The heightened wartime fears of those social purists who were involved in the anti-film crusade turned it into a moral panic that lasted from 1915 to the autumn of 1917.’ - Rapp, Dean, ‘Sex in the Cinema: War, Moral Panic, and the British Film Industry, 1906-1918’, in *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 34 No. 3 (Autumn 2002), p. 425
- <sup>v</sup> Letter from Scotland Yard to the Home Secretary, 30 Mar 1909, The National Archives: Public Record Office (Hereafter TNA:PRO) HO 45/24570
- <sup>vi</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>vii</sup> ‘Child and the Kinema: A New Movement for Reform’, in *The Manchester Guardian*, 28 May 1914, p. 5
- <sup>viii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>ix</sup> Anonymous Editorial, ‘The Child and the Cinema – A Parent’s View of the Growing Danger’, *The Church Times*, 25 August 1916, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>x</sup> HC Deb 23 May 1916 vol. 82 c2000W
- <sup>xi</sup> Letter from Clerk of the London County Council to the Home Office, 6 December 1916, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>xii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Anonymous Editorial, *Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly*, 1 March 1917, p. 2
- <sup>xiv</sup> Commissioner of Police Report on Cinematograph Picture Halls, 18 July 1916, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>xv</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Rapp, Dean, ‘Sex in the Cinema: War, Moral Panic, and the British Film Industry, 1906-1918’, in *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 34 No. 3 (Autumn 2002), pp. 436-7
- <sup>xvii</sup> Letter to the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis, from James Bird of the LCC, 19 November 1915, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xviii</sup> R. Wiest, Superintendent in the Executive Department, ‘Particulars of Cases in Which Children have been Indecently Assaulted or Molested at Cinematograph Halls During the Present Year’, 23 November 1915, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xix</sup> All case details taken from a letter to the Police Commissioner from the Clerk of the LCC, 23 November 1915, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>xx</sup> Memo from R. Wiest, Superintendent in the Executive Department of the Police of the Metropolis, to the LCC, 25 May 1916, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xxi</sup> Letter from James Bird, Clerk of the LCC to Commissioner of Police, 6 May 1916, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xxii</sup> Rapp, Dean, ‘Sex in the Cinema: War, Moral Panic, and the British Film Industry, 1906-1918’, in *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 34 No. 3 (Autumn 2002), pp. 438
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Inspection of Cinemas from 2 April to 10 May 1916, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Tour of Inspection of Cinemas from 2 April to 10 May 1916, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>xxix</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxx</sup> Memo from R. Wiest, Superintendent in the Executive Department of the Police of the Metropolis, to the LCC, 25 May 1916, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Letter From Sir Edward Henry to Mrs Hartwell, 6 June 1916, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Report of cinema on Villier Street, The Strand, by Miss Gray of the National Union of Women Workers, Undated (Inspections conducted between 15-21 June 1916), TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Report on Cinema Theatres by Miss R. Fraser, Undated (Between 15-21 June), TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Template questionnaire for Reports on Cinema Theatres, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Summary of Reports on Cinema Theatres, Undated (approx. 21 June 1916), TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691

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- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Letter from the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women to the Home Secretary, 8 March 1909, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Lois Rutherford, “‘Managers in a Small Way’”: The Professionalisation of Variety Artistes, 1860-1914’, in Bailey, Peter (ed.) *Music Hall: Business and Pleasure*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes 1986, p. 101
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Susan Pennybacker, “‘It was not what she said but the way that she said it’”: The London County Council and the Music Halls’, in Bailey, Peter (ed.) *Music Hall: Business and Pleasure*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes 1986, p. 127
- <sup>xl</sup> Dagmar Hoher, ‘The Composition of Music Hall Audiences, 1850-1900’, in Bailey, Peter (ed.) *Music Hall: Business and Pleasure*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes 1986, p. 74
- <sup>xli</sup> Letter from the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association to the Home Secretary, 5 January 1917, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>xlii</sup> ‘Conduct in Film Theatres’, in *The Times*, 30 January 1917, p. 5
- <sup>xliii</sup> The Lord Bishop of Birmingham was the Commission’s President. The full list of members can be found in: National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, *The Cinema: Its Present Position and Future Possibilities*, Williams and Norgate, London 1917, pp. viii-ix
- <sup>xliv</sup> National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, *The Cinema: Its Present Position and Future Possibilities*, Williams and Norgate, London 1917, p. vii
- <sup>xlv</sup> National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, p. 151
- <sup>xlvi</sup> National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, pp. 20-21
- <sup>xlvii</sup> National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, p. 12
- <sup>xlviii</sup> National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, p. xxvii
- <sup>xlix</sup> National Council of Public Morals: Cinema Commission of Inquiry, pp. xxviii-xxix
- <sup>l</sup> ‘Future of the Cinema: The Home Secretary and a State Censor’, in *The Times*, 15 December 1917, p. 3
- <sup>li</sup> Metropolitan Police memo, 23 January 1917, TNA: PRO: MEPO 2/1691
- <sup>lii</sup> Letter to Mr G. A. Aitken, of the Home Office, from Mr H. M. Chassington, of the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, 3 Oct 1918, TNA: PRO: HO 45/24570
- <sup>liii</sup> Rapp, Dean, ‘Sex in the Cinema: War, Moral Panic, and the British Film Industry, 1906-1918’, in *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 34 No. 3 (Autumn 2002), pp. 450