Reforming the Stage and Screen: Differences in the Film and Theatre Censorship Movements in Early 1930's New York

Jenna Simpson
Illinois Wesleyan University

Robert Schultz, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc

Simpson, Jenna and Schultz, Faculty Advisor, Robert, "Reforming the Stage and Screen: Differences in the Film and Theatre Censorship Movements in Early 1930's New York" (2005). John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference. 3.
https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc/2005/oralpres4/3

This is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.
©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.
REFORMING THE STAGE AND SCREEN: DIFFERENCES IN THE FILM AND THEATRE CENSORSHIP MOVEMENTS IN EARLY-1930S NEW YORK

Jenna Simpson and Robert Schultz*
History Department, Illinois Wesleyan University

Although Hollywood and Broadway shared a number of traits and talents in the early 1930s, the movements seeking to censor each medium were quite different in their ideologies, tactics, and outcomes. As this presentation will show, paternalistic attitudes about class and immigration, fears about the protection of children, the regional nature of theatre, the force of popular opinion, and the circumstances of the historical situation all played into the successes of each movement, while at the heart of these factors was a differing perception of the essential purposes of film and theatre. Together, these elements created a movie censorship drive that was concerted, powerful, and effective; they produced a stage censorship drive that was relatively weak and disorganized, taking a back seat to the efforts to reform the silver screen.