

Hollywood Comparison

The Big Five Studios:

Warner Bros, Paramount, RKO, MGM, 20thC Fox - Produced and distributed films and owned theatre chains.









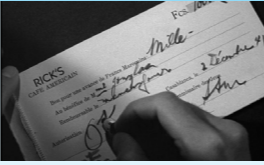


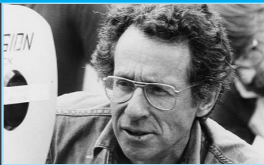
The Little Three Studios:

Universal, Columbia and United Artists – Produced and distributed films but did not own theatre chains.

The Hollywood Studio System, 1930-1960: Key Points:

- Factory-like production. Key personnel (including stars) are on contract. Each studio develops a 'house style'.
- Studios develop formulas/sets of conventions governing narrative and film grammar, including continuity 'invisible' editing and closed narratives with one main plot with a limited number of sub-plots.
- Film is the key leisure activity, attracting mass audiences – 1946 is the peak of cinema-going in the USA with more than 90 million weekly box-office receipts.
- Censorship: All scripts must adhere to the Production Code – a set of rules governing filmmaking in the USA.

Casablanca and Bonnie and Clyde:

Comparison	Casablanca (Curtiz, 1942)	Bonnie and Clyde (Penn, 1967)
Film form and aesthetics	 <p>Classical Hollywood style and narrative – use of the 180 degree rule and continuity editing. Use of low-key lighting and smoke to create a noir-like aesthetic. Max Steiner's score, including 'As Time Goes By' adds to the nostalgic, romantic aesthetic.</p>	 <p>More experimental – merges French New Wave and Classical Hollywood. Opening shot an E.C.U instead of the usual establishing long-shot. Death scenes use slow-motion and rapid edits. The bluegrass soundtrack evokes Texas during the 1930s.</p>
Representations	 <p>Rick is the world-weary, older tough-guy. Ilsa is more emotional and shot in a soft-light to accentuate her femininity. The multicultural cast represents the different ethnic groups living in French colony Morocco at the time.</p>	 <p>Bonnie and Clyde reflects the younger, rebellious counter-culture. Bonnie is active - at the start of the film she is restless and seeks adventure. Clyde is de-masculinised to an extent – he is impotent.</p>
Institutional contexts	 <p>Shot on Warner's studio lot. Executive producer Jack Warner and producer Hal. B. Wallis oversee production. Bogart is on contract at Warners and develops his tough-guy persona in previous Warners' films such as The Maltese Falcon (1941).</p>	 <p>Director Arthur Penn deliberately shoots on location to get away from executive producer Jack Warner. Warner hates the film demonstrating how he is now out-of-touch with changing youth tastes. The film harks back to Warner's gangster films of the 1930s.</p>
Cultural contexts	 <p>A classic Hollywood film – epitomises Hollywood at the peak of collaborative studio filmmaking. Made at a time where Hollywood was joining in the war effort making patriotic films.</p>	 <p>1967; a key year in the start of New Hollywood – more experimental Hollywood films, influenced by French New Wave and aimed at younger audiences.</p>
Social, political and historical contexts	 <p>Takes place in the 4 days leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbour and America's entry into World War Two – Rick's cheque is dated 2nd December, 1941. A propaganda film to convince Americans they must make personal sacrifices and enter the war effort.</p>	 <p>The violent deaths of Bonnie and Clyde relate to the graphic images of the war in Vietnam screened daily on television and the late 1960s as an era of unrest. The characters of Bonnie and Clyde reflect young rebels distrustful of authority.</p>
Auteur	 <p>Collaborative studio filmmaking. Key personnel include, director Curtiz, producer Hal.B.Wallis, composer Max Steiner and cinematographer Arthur Edeson. Curtiz directed over 100 films at Warners – an efficient and commercial director.</p>	 <p>Producer and star Warren Beatty hired director Arthur Penn. Penn's auteur trademarks included on-location shooting, small production teams and an interest in American culture.</p>