

Compare how far your chosen films reflect their different production contexts.

Both *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) and *Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, 1967) were produced by Warner Brothers. *Casablanca* was produced at the height of the studio era, while *Bonnie and Clyde* was produced in the period of 'new Hollywood', when the major studios were no longer vertically integrated. This essay will focus how far the films reflect filmmaking styles of the period in which they were produced, including issues of censorship and their individual production histories.

*Casablanca* reflects the studio-bound production of the classical Hollywood era, where films were produced in-house on studio lots. The final sequence in the aircraft hangar were shot in the studio and exemplify the expertise and style of Warner Bros. – the use of fog disguises the cheap studio set and Warner Bros. in particular would often use fog and smoke on sets. Depth and perspective is provided by using a miniature plane which looks like it is in the distance. Shooting on the studio lot also enabled producers and studio heads to oversee production daily. In contrast, Penn chose to shoot *Bonnie and Clyde* on location in Texas to add a realism to the film and to keep away executive producer Jack Warner so that Penn could make the film he wanted. This reflects the shift in production in the late 1960s after the end of the studio era, as New Hollywood films were often directed by auteur directors who were influenced by the French New Wave utilising location shooting to reflect the gritty realism in American cinema of this period.

Stylistically, *Casablanca* exemplifies the norms of classical filmmaking of the 1940s. The sequence where we first meet Rick is typical of the classical Hollywood style. The scene begins with an establishing shot depicting the exterior of Rick's Café, again, shot on the Warner Bros. back lot. The interior shots first establish space through tracking shots, then cut into medium close ups of characters of different ethnicities in the bar, a typical way to shoot a sequence in the classical period. The cinematography, particularly the using a combination of 3 point lighting and low key lighting, is a stylistic device common in films of the 1940s as Warner's embraced a tough, gritty style in line with the popularity of film noir crime films. We see this in the same sequence when we first meet Rick, as he sits alone in a medium close up with low key lighting used to help convey his cynicism and isolation. In contrast, *Bonnie and Clyde* reflects the changes in style in New Hollywood cinema of the late 1960s. The filmmakers were heavily influenced by the French new Wave style and approached production of the film as though they were shooting a new wave film. This is reflected in the use of location shooting in Texas, evoking the barren landscape of the great depression. This is reflected in the technological changes as cameras were becoming smaller and more mobile and not necessarily needing lots of artificial light to expose the film stock. In the opening sequence the use of an extreme close up of Bonnie's lips at the start of the scene also reflects the trend in production to defy the