

**History and Hollywood: *Gone with the Wind* and
A League of Their Own
Andrea Barnes: 2009-10**



Many people in today's society learn history through films that attempt to recreate the historical event, time, and place. The film's authenticity and accuracy determine the quality of the history represented in the film. Filmmakers and historians often disagree on the elements of authenticity and accuracy and they must collaborate to produce a universal definition. In addition many historians disregard a filmmaker's challenges in producing a historical film. *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* (1995), by Mark C. Carnes, reflects this conflict in the essays compiled in the book. Various authors dissected historical films, discussing historical accuracy and authenticity, but they lacked a uniformed approach to the critique. In addition, few of the authors mentioned the importance of connecting the past to the present. A successfully authentic film will recreate the historical event but also relate the story to the time in which the producer released the film.

The films *Gone with the Wind* (1939) and *A League of Their Own* (1992) connected the past to the present using various aspects of feminism and the lives of women. Each story related the women's experiences of their respective pasts to the events which shaped the women of their respective present-day. Through authenticity and accuracy, *Wind* and *League* contained elements of 1940s feminism during World War II. *Gone with the Wind* represented the trials and tribulations of a girl during the Civil War and Reconstruction but Scarlett O'Hara's endeavors prepare the female audience for their roles during World War II. Likewise, *A League of Their Own* told the story of the first girls' professional baseball league in the 1940s but the producer incorporated Third Wave Feminist elements into the film. Although *A League of Their Own* better represented its respective history than *Gone with the Wind*, both films connected the past to the present and both represented women's lives for the period in which they were made

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When producing a historical movie, filmmakers must consider authenticity and accuracy so that history is not misrepresented. Historians attempt to chronicle what happened, explain why the event occurred, and decide the significance of its meaning. In addition historians stress the different ways other academicians study the event. Because the past is speculative and imagined, history cannot be completely documented in a representative form.¹ Therefore, filmmakers and historians often disagree on the elements to historical authenticity and accuracy and they need to collaborate and provide a universal definition. For this essay, historical authenticity includes the dialogue, sets, costumes, props, and acting that help make the movie plausible and captures the period look and the spirit of the historical time. A successfully authentic film uses multiple sources to create the period look. Films often never expose the audience to other points of view, therefore, in this sense many films fail authentically. Natalie Z. Davis considers the use of paintings to help capture the period look but further explains that paintings should only suggest rather than decide the period's culture.² Davis also suggests that the use of the historical location and local inhabitants supports historical authenticity. Filmmakers lose many natural artistic phenomena, such as the natural sunlight on a tree, when using a studio set. Local inhabitants either witnessed the event firsthand or hold a distant memory that local elders passed down through stories.

While historical authenticity captures the period look, historical accuracy follows the historical plot and uses concrete historical facts verified by multiple sources. Accuracy helps the audience understand the history that the film portrays. Because accuracy does not necessarily pertain to the significance of a historical event, historians and filmmakers often disregard accuracy. In *A League of Their Own*, Racine plays Rockford in the World Series but in fact Racine played Kenosha. This example demonstrates accuracy's insignificance because this change does not hinder the understanding of the league. However also in the film the athletes play regulation baseball. Because the historical league followed softball

¹ Natalie Z. Davis, "'Any Resemblance to Persons Living or Dead': Film and the Challenge of Authenticity," *The Yale Review* 78, no.5 (1987).

² Davis, 1987.

regulations, this change alters the understanding of the women's professional league. While many accurate details are not necessary for the significance of the historical event, filmmakers must consider accuracy in order to avoid misrepresenting the history.

In one of her articles, Natalie Z. Davis contradicts herself when using the terms authentic and accurate. She states that "the stool on which the accused sits is accurate...these authentic details are nice."³ In this example, the stool would be considered a historical authenticity rather than a historical accuracy because the stool does not help the audience understand the historical plot. Although authenticity is an important element in a historical film, the audience takes away the historical facts and accuracy of the film. Therefore producers need to pay special attention to the historical plot because the audience could misunderstand the historical importance. Filmmakers should still portray the accurate facts of the plot, despite the challenges faced when considering historical accuracy.

Historians themselves often contradict one another when discussing historical authenticity and accuracy in films. Historical movies contribute to our understanding of history through their authenticity and accuracy. To provide insight into this statement Mark C. Carnes compiled essays written by various historians critiquing different historical films. Carnes arranged *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* chronologically according to the film's historical time-frame rather than the film's release date. Carnes and the other writers suggested viewers should neither accept nor disregard historical films as the truth, but instead use the films for further investigation. Through the individual essays in *Past Imperfect*, Carnes intended to contribute to the ongoing investigation of historical events. The essays which "serve not as a rebuttal, but as a reply" to the history portrayed by filmmakers.⁴ However the individual authors often corrected rather than replied to the film's history and most did not consider the filmmakers' challenges in producing a historical film. With the exception

³ Natalie Z. Davis, "Movie or Monograph? A Historian/Filmmaker's Perspective," *The Public Historian* 25, no. 3, (2003).

⁴ Mark C. Carnes, editor, *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* (New York City: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1996), 10.

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of a few essays, most of the authors did not contribute to the ongoing historical conversation.

Mark C. Carnes is a professor and chairman of the department of history at Barnard College, a liberal arts college for women in New York City.⁵ He is also the executive secretary of the Society of American Historians, which encourages literary distinction in historical writing. Carnes specializes in modern American history and his other works include *The American Nation* (2008), *American Destiny: Narrative of a Nation* (2006), and *Mapping America's Past: A Historical Atlas* (1996). After *Past Imperfect*, Carnes edited *Novel History: Historians and Novelists Confront America's Past (and Each Other)* (2001) and compiled essays written by historians critiquing historical literature. In *Past Imperfect* Carnes used a majority of western historians; only two specialized in Asian history. Other specializations included zoology, humanities, American studies, English, and religion. Most of the authors published other books and biographies on historical figures. Several historians held prominent positions such as the senior editor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project, the past president of the Western History Association, and the past president of the American Historical Association.⁶

While Carnes and the other authors had experience in written history, they failed to consider the filmmakers' challenges. Film is a representative artwork rather than a written document and filmmakers must adhere to formal stylistic approaches in addition to portraying history. Stylistic approaches include the way lighting hits a costume and the way props look on set. Many of Carnes' personal biases form common themes throughout the book. Carnes specialized in modern American history and he included thirty-one essays on North American history. He also selected twenty-eight essays that occurred in the twentieth century, sixteen films that occurred in the nineteenth century, and seventeen films that occurred before the nineteenth century. Carnes underrepresented many time eras and world regions. Finally, despite his background as a professor at a college for

⁵Mark C. Carnes, 1-24-10, <http://us.macmillan.com/author/markccarnes>.

⁶Mark C. Carnes, 1-24-10, http://www.barnard.edu/faculty/profiles/carnes_m.html.

women, Carnes and the other authors included only six essays on female-protagonist films.

Among the six women's picture essays Carnes included in *Past Imperfect*, two authors failed to fully critique their films. John Patrick Diggins wrote the essay for *Rosa Luxemburg*, a story of a communist woman in Europe in the early 1900s. Diggins mostly summarized the film and never acknowledged if the story was accurate or inaccurate. However, Diggins recognized an aspect of the film makers' challenges and their attempt to insert cultural settings within the political dialogue. He believed the scene in which Luxemburg's political enemy asked her to dance represented the director's skillful insertion of societal culture. In *The Long Walk Home* Jacqueline Jones, an African American historian⁷, also summarized the Montgomery Bus Boycott film and offered minimal critiques. Jones stated that Hollywood correctly portrayed a small piece of southern history, but she only specified the taxi service as an accurate element to the film. In order to prove her argument, Jones needed to include other aspects of the film that followed the historical boycott. Jones did not prove why *The Long Walk Home* accurately resembled the boycott in the 1950s.

Other authors responded in the form of corrections rather than reflections. Carolly Erickson offered a completely negative critique of *The Scarlet Empress* (1934). A biographer of famous persons in European history, Erickson considered the film a "gross distortion... a dark fairy tale [that] betrayed the real woman who became Catherine the Great."⁸ Erickson discussed how the historical Catherine used her lover's help, instead of her beauty and wiles as perceived in the film, to gain political loyalty. She also commented that the film's neo-Gothic sets replaced the elegant classical palaces in which Catherine actually lived. Thus Erickson merely offered corrections instead of a critical response. In another essay, *Anne of the*

⁷ Jacqueline Jones specialized in the history of African Americans, labor, women, family, and the American South; *Jacqueline Jones*, 1-24-10, <http://www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/Conference/bios/JJones.html>.

⁸ Carolly Erickson, "The Scarlet Empress," in *Past Imperfect*, ed Mark C. Carnes, (New York City: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1996), 88-89.

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Thousand Days (1969), Carnes' selected a knowledgeable writer to analyze the film. Antonia Fraser wrote *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (1992) and won the Wolfson Award for History for a book on seventeenth-century English women.⁹ Despite her academic background, Fraser seemed to correct the film by providing historical "truth" rather than offer a reply. Fraser stated that the real Anne Boleyn accepted the king's attentions from the start and in fact worked to achieve a royal marriage. According to Fraser, Anne Boleyn's rejection of Henry is far away from historical truth. Rather than analyze *Anne of the Thousand Days*, Fraser rejected the film's historical portrayal.

Historian Gerda Lerner wrote the essay for the three Joan of Arc films. Lerner represents the exception to the rebuttals and more or less correctly responded to the historical French event. She acknowledged the filmmakers' artistic challenges and applauded director Carl Theodor Dreyer's camera work with the facial close-ups to convey the intense emotion during Joan's trial. Lerner also considered the prolonged images of Joan's face with the fast-paced intercutting faces of the tormentors. This technique captured the innocence of the trapped girl. Lerner recognized Dreyer's poetic and metaphoric use of film to portray this piece of French history. In addition, Catherine Clinton represents another exception to the rebuttals and commented on the director's purpose rather than focusing on the historical inaccuracies in the *Gone with the Wind* essay. Clinton taught African American studies and history and served as president of the Southern Association for Women's History.¹⁰ Clinton recognized that the director captured the Confederate nostalgia that saturated the entire American south and that he captured the character of Rhett Butler, which resembled the soul of every soldier in the war. In addition, Scarlet O'Hara's hardships after her mother's death and family decline touched a chord with the public. Clinton commented that diaries and letters confirmed the feelings of a young woman after the Civil War. Recognizing the

⁹ Antonia Fraser, 1-24-10, <http://www.orionbooks.co.uk/8238-5/Author-Antonia-Fraser.htm>.

¹⁰ Catherine Clinton, 1-24-10, <http://www.catherineclinton.com/>.

filmmakers' challenges, Clinton touched on the film's Technicolor sets, whose stylistic approaches helped seduce the audiences.

In "Review: Visual Evidence Reconsidered: Reflections on Film and History,"¹¹ Geoffrey B. Pingree also discussed the authors' assumption that filmmakers must respond to popular taste. Because the essays included sidebars and individual pictures, Pingree believed that Carnes encouraged readers to consider the sources. He believed that these elements did not contribute to the ongoing historical conversation. However Pingree stated that the book roamed freely through history. He failed to consider the disproportional number of essays from films portraying the twentieth century compared to those films portraying histories prior to the twentieth century. Pennee Bender offered another review on *Past Imperfect* in *The Journal of American History*.¹² She agreed that the short essays contained limited analysis and welcomed a more "in depth interpretation of constructed imagery of films." Thus Bender failed to recognize Carnes' purpose, in that the essays were a reply to the movie dialogues. Carnes intended the essays to only reply to the film and suggested further exploration. A more in-depth explanation would not invite the readers to further investigate the films. Finally Robert Sobel commented that Carnes went for the big names, failed to exercise control when assigning the critiques, and even went so far to say that some of the authors' arrogance is embarrassing with their uneven quality and smugness.¹³

Catherine Clinton commented in *Past Imperfect* on *Gone with the Wind*'s historical authenticity concerning the image of women. She pointed out the scene in which the overseer took orders from Ellen O'Hara. This moment demonstrated how the mistress on a southern estate held this form of authority. Ellen was the driving force for the O'Hara family and even after her death, in his delirious state of mind, Gerald O'Hara would refer to Mrs. O'Hara for advice. Clinton also stated that Scarlett's endeavors to

¹¹ Geoffrey B. Pingree, "Review: Visual Evidence Reconsidered: Reflections on Film and History," *The Public Historian* 21, no. 2 (1999).

¹² Pennee Bender, "Review," *The Journal of American History* 83, no. 2 (1996).

¹³ Robert Sobel, "Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies," *Electronic News*, July 8, 1996, 1-22-10.

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protect her home and family were also faithful to the historical record. Reconstruction forced many young women into unfamiliar jobs and situations and Scarlett's character reflects these trials and tribulations. Therefore many critics argue that *Gone with the Wind* is a women's picture. Many Americans hail producer David O. Selznick's *Gone with the Wind* as the greatest epic film of all time. Premiering in 1939, the film became one of the first Technicolor productions, which added to the movie's splendor. Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Olivia de Havilland, and Leslie Howard starred in this picture. Based on a novel written by Margaret Mitchell, *Wind* told the story of the Civil War from a white, southern viewpoint and captured the melodrama, romance, and action in the Old South. Set in 1861 on a plantation called Tara in Georgia, the film followed Scarlett O'Hara's (Vivien Leigh) transformation from a southern belle to a dominant matriarch attempting to hold on to Tara in the wake of Reconstruction. Although many reviewers criticized the film for its historical inaccuracy and lack of authenticity, particularly among race relations, Selznick shaped the film to resemble 1930s America. Many Depression-era women related to Scarlett's endeavors, 1930s' racial relationships dominated the film, and *Gone* reflected the 1930s' attitude toward American international isolation. Selznick connected the past to the present by including many historical authenticities and accuracies to represent the 1860s as well as the 1930s. The film opens in the spring of 1861 and the audience first meets Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh) flirting with the Tarleton twins (George Reeves and Fred Crane). They inform her of the impending war with the Yankees and also of the engagement between Ashley Wilkes (Leslie Howard) and his cousin Melanie Hamilton (Olivia de Havilland). Befuddled by this announcement, Scarlett meets up with her father (Thomas Mitchell) who confirms the engagement. After further discussion, Gerald O'Hara announces the plantation Tara will someday be left to Scarlett. Later that evening Scarlett's mother (Barbara O'Neil) returns from assisting a birth. The overseer consults with her on the daily activities and Ellen O'Hara assigns the tasks to be done the next day.

The next day at the Wilkes' plantation Twelve Oaks, Scarlett flirts with every other girl's beau and eyes Captain Rhett Butler (Clark Gable) from Charleston. The men discuss the imminent war and while the other southern men dream of victory, Rhett explains that the north is better equipped than the south. During the afternoon nap, Scarlett sneaks out and finds Ashley. She confesses her love but Ashley states he will still marry Melanie. After Ashley leaves the room, Rhett reveals himself from behind a couch and promises to keep Scarlett's secret. When the other ladies wake from their naps, the official news of war excites everyone in the house. The young men (including Ashley) jump on their horses, kiss their ladies goodbye, and ride off to war. In the heat of the moment, Melanie's brother Charles asks Scarlett to marry him. Out of spite for Ashley, Scarlett accepts and they marry before he leaves for war. Charles soon dies from pneumonia rather than combat.

Scarlett is miserable not because of her husband's death but because she must wear black clothing for mourning. Her mother suggests she stay with Melanie in Savannah and Scarlett agrees. She and Melanie attend a bazaar to help raise money for the cause. Rhett Butler appears at the event and bids for Scarlett. Although she is in mourning, and to the disapproval of the other southerners, Scarlett accepts the offer. Later Rhett visits Scarlett at the house and informs her of the Battle of Gettysburg. Melanie and Scarlett wait to hear the casualty list and to their relief Ashley remains off the list. Ashley is permitted to return home for Christmas and upon his return to war he requests that Scarlett watch over Melanie.

In the upcoming months, Scarlett and Melanie volunteer at the hospital in Atlanta. Melanie is pregnant and soon is confined to her bed. Scarlett becomes disgusted with the dying soldiers. She attempts to return home to Tara, but a doctor convinces her to stay for Melanie's sake. Soon the Yankees threaten to enter Atlanta just as Melanie goes in to labor. Because the doctor is preoccupied with the wounded soldiers, Scarlett and her servant Prissy bring the baby themselves. Scarlett then sends for Rhett and a carriage and she, Rhett, Prissy, Melanie, and the baby flee the burning Atlanta. Halfway to Tara, Rhett decides to enlist in the army, leaving

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Scarlett to make the rest of the journey home. The group returns only to find Twelve Oaks destroyed and although Tara remains standing, Scarlett's mother has died and the Yankees have taken everything. With no food or clothing Scarlett declares "as God as my witness, I'll never be hungry again"¹⁴ and the movie breaks for intermission.

The second half of the movie opens in Tara while Scarlett and her sisters pick cotton and face extreme poverty. A Yankee deserter walks into the house and Scarlett shoots him. She and Melanie find money on the dead soldier. Soon Gerald O'Hara runs in the house and declares the end of the war and Ashley returns home. However troubled times are far from over. Jonas Wilkerson, the former overseer, and northern carpetbaggers raised the taxes on Tara to \$300. Wilkerson soon appears at the front door, offering to buy the land but Scarlett refuses and while her father chases after the Yankee, he falls off his horse and dies. Scarlett decides to ask Rhett for money and Mammy (Hattie McDaniel) sews Scarlett a new dress from green velvet curtains. Rhett is in jail and informs her that the Yankees have tied up his money. Discouraged, Scarlett leaves the jailhouse and sees Frank Kennedy. Frank tells Scarlett of his store and the money he has earned. In order to secure the money for Tara, Scarlett marries Frank. Scarlett soon starts up a lumber business and hires Ashley as a partner. On her way to the mill one day, inhabitants of the shantytown jump her wagon but Big Sam, a former Tara servant, rescues her. That night Frank, Ashley, and other men raid the Shantytown; Ashley is wounded and Frank is killed. Rhett appears at Scarlett's house after the funeral. He confesses his love for her and asks for her hand in marriage. Scarlett agrees and the two honeymoon in New Orleans. Scarlett has a baby girl nicknamed Bonnie, but Scarlett declares she does not want any more children and her marriage turns sour. In an innocent embrace with Ashley, relatives catch Scarlett in his arms and rumors spread. However Melanie, true to her friend, dismisses the accusations. Rhett takes Bonnie to London but the child yearns to return home. Upon his return, Scarlett announces her pregnancy and hurls herself

¹⁴ *Gone with the Wind*, DVD, directed by Victor Fleming, 1939, Burbank, CA: Selznick International Pictures, 2004.

at Rhett, falling down the stairs. Because of this incident, Rhett blames himself for the miscarriage. Misfortune strikes the family again as Bonnie falls off her pony, breaking her neck, and dies. Melanie has to convince Rhett to bury his daughter. She falls ill as well and on her deathbed she requests that Scarlett look after Ashley and her son. Realizing she could never mean anything to Ashley, Scarlett runs home only to find Rhett packing. As he leaves Scarlett wonders what she will do and Rhett replies “frankly my dear I don’t give a damn.”¹⁵ Heartbroken, Scarlett decides she will return to Tara to try to win back Rhett.

Producer David O. Selznick included many historical authenticities to create the period look of the Old South during the course of the Civil War. Selznick hired Atlanta historian Wilbur Kurtz to counsel on manners, dress, garments, ambience, black accents, and weaponry. He found artillery units that represented the cannons of the period, field pieces with 1862 stamped on the muzzles, and several metal artillery buckets of the period.¹⁶ Kurtz’s guidance on rural southern architecture proved his most valuable influence. Kurtz was a professional illustrator, specialized in architectural renderings, and painted historical murals of Atlanta.¹⁷ Kurtz worked on the design and construction of the Old South, which added to the film’s historical authenticity. His design for Tara resembled rural architecture in the Piedmont section of north Georgia. He prepared a water color bird’s-eye view of 1860s Atlanta, which the art department used to construct plans for the sets.¹⁸ In addition Selznick also hired Susan Myrick, who advised on southern manners, customs and “talking southern.”¹⁹ For example, in the beginning of the film, Rhett Butler and Charles Hamilton engaged in an argument and Ashley Wilkes demanded Charles stop “tweaking his nose”.²⁰

¹⁵ *Gone with the Wind*, 1939.

¹⁶ Wilbur G. Kurtz, “How Hollywood Built Atlanta,” in *Gone with the Wind as Book and Film*, ed Richard Harwell, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1983), 142.

¹⁷ *Wilbur Kurtz*, 2-21-10, <http://generalthomas.com/kurtz.htm>.

¹⁸ Kurtz, pg 139.

¹⁹ Thomas Cripps, “Winds of Change: *Gone with the Wind* and Racism as a National Issue,” in *Recasting: Gone with the Wind in American Culture*, ed Darden Asbury Pyron, (Miami: University Presses of Florida, 1983), 142.

²⁰ History 151.

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Antebellum southerners used this phrase to refer to a duel. Thus the producer aimed for historically authentic sets and dialogue.

In addition Selznick included authentic costumes. Selznick used real Val lace for the petticoats even though they would be hidden under the dresses. Selznick insisted the actresses would know they wore real lace and would therefore better act the part of a rich plantation owner's daughter.²¹ Thus Selznick captured historical authenticity. *Gone with the Wind* is famous for its Technicolor style, which helped add to the historical authenticity. For example the silhouette of Ashley and Melanie in the beginning of the film at Twelve Oaks brought out the sunshine and colorful costumes in the yard. This element helped show the gaiety and magnificence of the Old South. Also the scenes of a destroyed Twelve Oaks used a steely, blue-gray coloring to signify the desolation and destruction the south experienced during the war.²² Selznick's artistic style and use of color added to the film's historical authenticity.

Despite these attempts to keep *Gone with the Wind* historically authentic, Selznick missed some elements in the film, which undermined much of the authenticity. The audience saw many inauthentic sets and props throughout the film. For example, during the scene when the wounded Ashley Wilkes is carried into his room, Melanie picked up a lamp with an electric cord attached. Also Scarlett ran past a lamp post containing an electric bulb when fetching Dr. Meade. And finally the audience saw a radio tower in the background when the shot outside the hospital widens.²³ Because Americans did not use electricity or radio in the 1860s, these unauthentic elements take away from the period look of the Civil War era. A soldier in the Atlanta hospital mentioned the Battle of Bull Run, but Confederate soldiers referred to this battle as the Battle of Manassas.²⁴ This dialogue did not capture the spirit of the 1860s south. And finally many of

²¹ *Gone with the Wind: Bonus Material*, 2004.

²² *Gone with the Wind: Bonus Material*, 2004.

²³ *The Internet Movie Database; Gone with the Wind; Goofs for Gone with the Wind*, 2-21-10, <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0031381/goofs>.

²⁴ *The Internet Movie Database; Gone with the Wind; Goofs for Gone with the Wind*, 2-21-10.

the sets' exteriors were paintings, including Twelve Oaks and the Atlanta mansion. Therefore the artists included many southern myths of "moonlight and magnolia" and they overdid the beauty. This led Wilbur Kurtz to comment that there was no such plantation in the south.²⁵ These inauthentic props and dialogue did not portray the proper period look of the 1940s and therefore make the film seem less plausible.

Selznick failed to recreate the racial relations of the Old South, which also undermined the authenticity of *Gone with the Wind*. Authenticity includes the social relationships among the characters and Selznick failed to include a rebellious black slave; those slaves who left the plantation were depicted as shantytown betrayers. The only emotional bonds experienced by blacks occurred between the slave and master.²⁶ In the film, a white southerner referred to the selling of ladies for a dance as a slave auction. Yet this bidding hardly resembled the gruesome violence of a real slave auction. In addition, when Scarlett used convict labor that was sick and underfed, Ashley stated that they never treated their slaves that bad. And finally many of the blacks contained stereotypical racial personalities. Mammy's fidelity, Prissy's absent-mindedness, and Pork's comic relief all demonstrate the racial stereotypes of African Americans in the antebellum south.²⁷ Therefore Selznick failed to portray the details of southern racial relations during the Civil War.

However, *Gone with the Wind* set the stage for greater racial equality in the mid-twentieth century and this equality also undercut the film's authenticity. A Jew himself in the 1930s, David O. Selznick attempted to honor the black point of view and he "felt so keenly about what was happening to the Jews of the world that he could not help but sympathize with the Negroes in their fears about insulting and damaging material."²⁸ Thus Selznick omitted the word "nigger," all references to the post-1860s Ku Klux Klan, and other southern legends even though

²⁵ *Gone with the Wind: Bonus Material*, 2004.

²⁶ Thomas Cripps, 144.

²⁷ Catherine Clinton, "Gone with the Wind," in *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies*, ed. Mark Carnes, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1995), 134.

²⁸ *Gone with the Wind: Bonus Material*, 2004.

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southerners used such language in the 1860s. In addition, although Hattie McDaniel could not attend the premier of the film in Atlanta because of the segregation laws, she did become the first African American to win an Oscar for her role of Mammy. At the Academy Awards in 1939, McDaniel dressed in furs, sat at Selznick's table, and received a kiss from Vivien Leigh and a handshake from Clark Gable. Black actors gained recognition from the white community.²⁹ With the omission of the harsh language and the more equal social relationships, *Gone with the Wind* undermined its authenticity.

Selznick included several historical accuracies in *Gone with the Wind*. Selznick accurately portrayed the life of the southern woman, the Cult of True Womanhood and the inability for most southern women to fulfill this ideal. Early nineteenth century southern society developed the idea of the Cult of True Womanhood in order to separate work from the home; it created new gender expectations. Women strove to meet the standards of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity.³⁰ However many women could not achieve this ideal, including the wealthy wives of plantation owners. For example, domesticity referred to the separation between work and the home and women's duties only concerned the home. Fewer than twenty-five hundred families in the south constituted the planter elite, yet even those wealthy women were expected to manage a range of tasks. Plantation mistresses oversaw growing herbs, planting gardens, blending medicines, dipping candles, spinning thread, weaving cloth, knitting socks, sewing clothes, supervising the slaughter of the hogs, processing and curing meats, scouring copper utensils, preserving vegetables, and churning butter.³¹ In the beginning of *Gone with the Wind*, the plantation overseer informed Ellen O'Hara that the creek bed had been cleaned out and asked what needed to be done the next day. This brief

²⁹ Cripps, 137-149.

³⁰ Charlotte Weber, "The Cult of True Womanhood: Fantasy or Reality?" (Lecture, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, January 27, 2009).

³¹ Catherine Clinton, *Tara Revisited: Women, War, and the Plantation Legend*, (New York: Abbeville Press, 1995), 41.

interaction demonstrated the mistress's role on the plantation. Thus Selznick accurately portrayed the role of women.

David O. Selznick also included the values of his era when he shaped *Gone with the Wind* to resemble the American 1930s' feelings about international isolation. The film captured the idea that the past looked brighter than the future and these same feelings can be applied to the 1930s. After World War I, the United States experienced great prosperity in the 1920s, but the stock market crash in 1929 sent the country into the Great Depression. Anxieties arose about the quality of American life and the impending conflict in Europe made many Americans desire a return to isolationism. The nostalgia in *Gone with the Wind* during the post-Civil War years reflected the disillusionment Americans also experienced after World War I. *Gone with the Wind* reflected the 1930s American society's belief that the past appeared more attractive than the future.³² Therefore Selznick incorporated a sense of his era in the Civil War film.

Robert Ebert of the *Chicago Sun-Times* also recognized the resemblance between the post-Civil War era and the post-World War I era in *Gone with the Wind*. However he focused on the character of Scarlett O'Hara, which was more a product of the 1930s than the 1860s. The flappers of the 1920s, the bold movie actresses of the time, and the economic Depression prepared the world for Scarlett's free-spirited modernity. Because the Great Depression forced many women to work outside the home, many in the female audience sympathized with Scarlett's struggle to keep her land and survive poverty. Scarlett's drive to control her own economic destiny become the "symbol the nation needed as it headed into World War II; the spiritual sister of Rosie the Riveter."³³ In addition, Ebert also recognized the equality African Americans gained with this movie. Ebert stated that the film granted humanity and complexity to its

³² Gerald Wood, "From *The Clansman* and *Birth of a Nation* to *Gone with the Wind*: The Loss of American Innocence," in *Recasting: Gone with the Wind in American Culture*, ed Darden Asbury Pyron, (Miami: University Presses of Florida, 1983), 133.

³³ *Chicago Sun-Times*, 2-21-10,
<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/19980621/REVIEWS08/401010323/1023>.

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African American characters. For example Mammy is the most sensible and clear-sighted character throughout the picture. In addition Ebert reminded his readers of the realities of the 1930s; segregation laws still existed in the South. Considering the era in which producer David O. Selznick made *Gone*, the film was a step above *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and served as a step toward racial equality.

Gone with the Wind most famously reflected a legend of the Old South and many of the initial reviews believed the myth. Frank S. Nugent of the *New York Times* commented on the “bitter decade when secession, civil war and reconstruction ripped wide the graceful fabric of the plantation age.”³⁴ He particularly noted the glamour and perfection of the Old South. Thus Nugent, as well as the rest of the audience, bought the myth and never considered the alternative. The audience ignored the inauthentic and stereotypical racial relations between blacks and whites and considered this point-of-view as the historical truth to the Civil War. Other critics such as John C. Flinn, Sr. believed the film’s length of nearly four hours takes away from the central plot, the Civil War, and the Reconstruction. The conflicts between Scarlett and Rhett were overlong and overplayed.³⁵ Indeed Selznick devoted the last quarter of the film to Scarlett and Rhett’s relationship, ignoring the historical plot which (although created a myth) gave life to the movie. Thus Selznick failed to fully capture the history of Reconstruction.

Although David O. Selznick created a legend when he produced *Gone with the Wind*, he also initiated racial equality in Hollywood and reflected 1930s values into the 1860s world. By omitting racially negative aspects of African Americans, the film presented blacks with humanity and complexity never seen before in Hollywood (which also undermined the film’s authenticity). Hattie McDaniel became the first African American to win an Oscar for her role in *Gone with the Wind* and she thus pushed her race forward. Also the film reflected 1930s ideals of international

³⁴ *New York Times*, 2-21-10.

³⁵ *Gone with the Wind*, 2-21-10,

<http://www.variety.com/index.asp?layout=Variety100&reviewid=VE1117487972&content=jump&jump=review&category=1935&cs=1>.

isolationism and the roles of women. While the characters in *Gone* longed to return the better days of the pre-Civil War, so too does the 1930s audience wish to turn the hands of time before the Depression. The strong, independent woman also emerged as an acceptable heroin. Together with these elements and its Technicolor splendor *Gone with the Wind* proved an epic movie that connected the past to the present.

David O. Selznick produced *Gone with the Wind* in 1939 and although the film told the story of a girl in the 1860s, *Wind* also demonstrated how to be a woman in the early 1940s and the early years of World War II. *A League of Their Own*, although produced in 1992, is a film that portrayed the life of women in the 1940s. In a way, *League* acted as the follow up to *Wind* in the sense that *Wind* prepared 1930s' women for the endeavors of World War II, while *League* demonstrated the final product of 1940s' women. *League* provided a sequel to *Wind* and told the story of the women of the 1940s and their places during World War II.

In 1992 director Penny Marshall released *A League of Their Own*. Many big stars appeared in the film including Geena Davis, Lori Petty, Tom Hanks, Madonna, and Rosie O'Donnell. Based on a story by Kim Wilson and Kelly Candaele, this film captured the first season of professional women's baseball, an industry that lasted from 1943 to 1954. Set in 1943, *League* told the story of the women pioneers who served their country playing baseball while the men were overseas. Reviewers labeled the movie a comedy, a drama, a baseball film, and also a feminist film. Marshall used the league's inaugural season for the setting in order to inform society of the social issues that arose in the 1940s and the choice women faced between the traditional role and new freedoms. Despite the film's historical authenticity, Marshall failed to accurately recreate 1940s feminism; instead she connected the past to the present and brought her generation of Third Wave Feminism into this history.

The film opens with a flash forward to 1988 with the older Dottie Hinson reluctantly leaving her suburban home to participate in the reunion celebration of the women's professional baseball league. Dottie does not understand the importance of the league and therefore fights her daughter

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who forces her to attend the reunion. When Dottie steps off the bus and walks into the stadium, the movie suddenly flashes back to Willamette, Oregon, 1943. Newsreels explain that major league baseball players have left for the war and the league is close to shutting down. Candy bar owner, Walter Harvey, has hired Ira Lowenstein to develop a plan to save professional baseball. The film then introduces the audience to the younger Dottie Hinson (Geena Davis) and her kid sister Kit Keller (Lori Petty) playing in a hometown girl's baseball game. Unbeknownst to the players, a scout, Ernie Capadino (Jon Lovitz), watches them from the stands. After the game, he invites Dottie to try out for the women's professional baseball league. Because Dottie is waiting for her husband to return from the war, she is anxious to resume normal life and turns down the offer. However when the scout offers Kit an invitation as long as Dottie comes too, Dottie agrees to make the train trip to Chicago for her sister.

The train stops first in Fort Collins, Colorado and Ernie scouts another girl, Marla Hooch (Megan Cavanagh). Her dad convinces Ernie to take Marla despite her unfeminine appearance. Upon arriving at Harvey Field in Chicago Dottie, Kit, and Marla meet soon-to-be teammates Mae Mordabito (Madonna) and Doris Murphy (Rosie O'Donnell). The players demonstrate their skills in batting, fielding, and throwing. When the team lists are posted, sixty-four girls earned spots on one of the four teams (Rockford Peaches, Racine Belles, Kenosha Comets, and South Bend Blue Sox). Dottie, Kit, Marla, Mae, and Doris all made the Rockford team. When the new league models the uniforms, the players show skepticism in the revealing short skirts but all agree to follow the league's rules. The players attend charm and beauty school and stylists give them makeovers.

Meanwhile, Walter Harvey (Garry Marshall) offers the managing job of the Rockford Peaches to Jimmy Dugan (Tom Hanks). Jimmy is a washed-up former professional player and a fall-down drunk who does not take his managing job seriously. When the first game arrives with the Peaches matching up against the South Bend, very few spectators watch the game and Jimmy sleeps off his hangover, leaving Dottie to manage the team. Jimmy eventually begins to show interest in the games and slowly takes

over his managerial duties. The women's league still does not pack the stands. Before a particular game Ira Lowenstein expresses this concern to the Peaches and encourages them to give "everything [they] got".³⁶ In an attempt to bring attraction to the league, Dottie slides into the splits while catching a foul ball and her picture appears on the cover of *Life Magazine*. As the season progresses more and more fans flock to the ballparks and the league gains in popularity. Dottie quickly stands out as the best player in the league and earns the nickname "The Queen of Diamonds". During one game, Jimmy chews out his right fielder Evelyn Gardner (Bitty Schram) for missing the cut-off man. She breaks down in tears and Jimmy exclaims his famous line "There's no crying in baseball!"³⁷

With all this success the girls sneak out of their team hotel and head to a roadhouse where Mae and Doris light up the dance floor with a toe-tapping jitterbug scene. Later, when traveling on the team bus, Evelyn writes the league's official Victory Song and the girls proudly adopt the message. As the season rolls on, the Peaches are one game away from the playoffs and Jimmy pulls a struggling Kit from her pitching position and Kit blames her sister for her troubles. In an effort to keep the team together, Ira Lowenstein trades Kit to Racine. Distracted with their successful season, the women almost forget about the reality of World War Two until a representative of the War Department arrives in the locker room just before a game. In a telegram, Betty "Spaghetti" Horn (Tracy Reiner) learns of her husband's death. This event rattles Dottie and she cries alone in her room until her husband Bob (Bill Pullman) miraculously enters the room. Dottie decides to quit the team right before the World Series against the rival Racine Belles (and her sister) and return to Oregon with her husband. However Dottie has a change in heart and returns to play in the final game. Hitting against her sister, Dottie manages to hit an RBI double in the top of the ninth inning to put the Peaches ahead. However Kit responds in the bottom of the inning by hitting the ball deep to outfield. Ignoring the stop

³⁶ *A League of Their Own*, DVD, directed by Penny Marshall. 1992, Culver City, CA: Columbia Pictures, 1997.

³⁷ *A League of Their Own*, 1992.

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sign at third base Kit plows through home plate, knocking down Dottie and causing her to drop the ball. Kit is safe and Racine wins the game. Before the girls board their respective team busses, Dottie invites Kit to return home to Oregon but Kit chooses to stay in Chicago with her teammates until the next season. The film then brings the audience back to 1988 and the dedication of the “Women in Baseball” exhibit at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Dottie sees Kit walk in with her children and grandchildren and they embrace. Walking through the exhibit, Dottie finally now sees the importance of the women’s professional baseball league.

Director Penny Marshall included many historical authenticities to create the period look of the women’s professional baseball league in 1943. Authenticities include the sets, props, costumes, acting, dialogue, and social relationships that helped capture the spirit of the time and made the film plausible. By using the historical settings to shoot the scenes, filmmakers help support the authenticity of the movie. In *A League of Their Own*, the league held the final tryouts at “Harvey Field” (a spoof off Wrigley Field) and the director filmed these scenes at the real Wrigley Field in Chicago, complete with the ivy-covered outfield wall. The historical league also held their final tryouts at Wrigley Field and thus Marshall added to the film’s authenticity. Filming in a historical location rather than a constructed studio provided *League* with a sense of reality and helped make the film believable. Marshall also took the costumes and league uniforms into consideration. The film’s uniforms are an exact replica of the historical uniforms; one-piece, short-skirted tunic with satin shorts, knee-high baseball socks, and a baseball hat. A symbolic patch representing the team’s home city decorated the chest of the ensemble.³⁸ These authentic costumes were important because the historical league heavily encouraged femininity among the players. Therefore the film’s uniforms enabled Marshall to capture a sense of the importance of femininity in 1943. Marshall supported the authenticity of the sets and costumes by using the

³⁸ *ESPN Page 2*, 2-1-10, <http://espn.go.com/page2/s/closer/020511.html>.

historical location of Wrigley Field and using exact replicas of the league's uniforms.

Marshall also added to the authenticity of the film through acting and dialogue. All the actors performed their own stunts, except Geena Davis, and all the actors received real injuries and bruises that Marshall depicted in the film. In one particular scene, actress Renee Coleman slid into the base resulting in a real, massive strawberry bruise that lasted a year. This practice enabled the actors to express true pain in their faces, which helped make the events seem real and the film believable. In the final scene set in 1988 at the "Women in Baseball" exhibit, the filmmakers cast the original league players as the older women walking through the Hall of Fame. This technique helped capture the true emotions and reactions of the women who experienced this historical event. The audience witnessed the sentimental attachment to the league firsthand. In addition Marshall included dialogue to establish historical authenticity. In the film, the Peaches' announcer exclaims "Oh Doctor!" during a particularly exciting play. In the 1940s Brooklyn Dodgers announcer Red Barber actually made this phrase popular. Therefore by adding that line, the filmmakers helped capture the spirit of the time.³⁹ In another scene the Peaches sing the original lyrics of the league's official Victory Song. Lavone "Pepper" Paire Davis, a veteran of the women's professional league, co-wrote the song in 1944⁴⁰. The lyrics helped portray the spirit of the players in the 1940s and their sense of patriotic duty by playing in the All-American league and their feelings of pride and passion for the game. Through acting and dialogue, Marshall contributed to the film's historical authenticity.

Despite these attempts to keep *A League of Their Own* historically authentic, Marshall added aspects to the film that undercut much of the authenticity. The audience saw many inauthentic sets, props, and social relationships throughout the film. Film objects needed to show the way people used these things to shape space, time and body, and for the way

³⁹ *The Internet Movie Database; A League of Their Own; Trivia for A League of Their Own*, 2-2-10. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0104694/>.

⁴⁰ *Official Website of the AAGPBL*, 2-5-10, <http://www.aagpbl.org/>.

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they make statements about social relations.⁴¹ The filmmakers filmed the train scenes at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois and used trains that were not native to the Pacific Northwest during the Oregon station scenes. The filmmakers lacked a sense for the historically shaped space. Also at the end of the film Mr. Murphy (Doris's father) paid for his ticket using a modern ten dollar bill.⁴² Finally during the first professional game, the few fans in the crowd poke fun at the players and question their ability to play ball. The film demonstrates this low attendance and lack of acceptance throughout the first half of the movie. However in reality women's softball was widely popular in the 1940s and *Time Magazine* estimated over 40,000 teams to exist at the time. Touring clubs such as Barney Ross' Adorables and Slapsie Maxie's Curvaceous Cuties became popular traveling the country. Therefore most fans already knew that women could play baseball and they were even supportive of the professional league.⁴³ Jimmy Dugan also demonstrated an inauthentic social relationship. Tom Hanks' famous line, "There's no crying in baseball!" played on the stereotypes of women. Even though society perceived women as the emotional gender, historical male baseball players had already shown emotion by 1943. Particularly the most famous, Lou Gehrig cried when he gave his farewell speech at Yankee Stadium on July 4, 1939.⁴⁴ These inauthentic sets, props, and social relationships did not portray the proper period look of the 1940s and therefore make the film seem less plausible. In addition to sets and props, Marshall also added inauthentic dialogue and acting. In two different scenes in *League*, Mae slid headfirst into a base. Veteran Rockford player Shirley Burkovich never recalled anyone sliding headfirst throughout her years in the league.⁴⁵ This inauthentic acting failed to capture the spirit of the women's professional league because it took away from the league's femininity. Wrigley placed a significant emphasis

⁴¹Davis, 1987.

⁴² *The Internet Movie Database, A League of Their Own; Goofs for A League of Their Own*, 2-2-10.

⁴³ *ESPN Page 2*, 3-11-10.

⁴⁴ *ESPN Page 2*, 2-2-10.

⁴⁵ *ESPN Page 2*, 2-1-10.

on feminism and this style of play did not coincide with this image. After the World Series game between Rockford and Racine, Jimmy Dugan comments that Walter Harvey offered him a managing job in Wichita. Dottie replied “wow, Triple A” but the AAA distinction did not exist until 1946, three years after the women’s professional league’s inaugural season. In 1943 AA designated the men’s minor leagues.⁴⁶ Marshall needed to use this inauthentic dialogue so that the audience could understand different social relationships of the 1940s. Marshall needed to stress the honor Jimmy received in being named as a minor league coach, but that sense of prestige would have been lost if she used the term AA. However despite their intentions these dialogues and acting did not give the proper period look required for authenticity.

Director Penny Marshall also included several historical accuracies in *A League of Their Own*. Historical accuracies follow the historical plot and are concrete facts verified by multiple sources. Marshall accurately demonstrated why the women’s professional baseball league began during World War II. In the early 1940s club owner Philip K. Wrigley was concerned that men’s professional baseball would shut down for the duration of the war. In order to sustain profits, he decided to establish a women’s professional softball league in 1943 where the players earned salaries between \$50 and \$125 a week. Similarly in *League*, candy bar king and Chicago club owner Walter Harvey sent scouts to recruit female players for the women’s league because the men’s league lost players to the war. In addition, Wrigley ultimately chose women players as his strategy because in June 1943 *Time Magazine* estimated 40,000 women’s softball teams existed throughout the country. One of the early scenes portrayed a local softball game that attracted a large crowd. Therefore the film accurately depicted the popularity women’s softball had already gained before the existence of the professional league.⁴⁷ The filmmakers helped the audience understand why the baseball tycoons established the women’s professional league in the midst of World War II. These historical

⁴⁶ *The Internet Movie Database, A League of Their Own; Goofs for A League of Their Own*, 2-2-10.

⁴⁷ *ESPN Page 2*, 2-1-10.

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accuracies were important because they were a recreation of the past that the audience could appreciate.

Penny Marshall also accurately demonstrated how owners portrayed the women's professional league and why they portrayed it in such a way. Philip Wrigley's greatest concern was selling the femininity of the league and thus he created the image of the All-American girl. The All-American girl could play baseball like the men but was still expected to behave like a lady. Thus Wrigley recruited women who could play and who also had attractive figures. The movie briefly captured this strategy when the recruiter told Dottie "not only can you play but you're kind of a dolly."⁴⁸ Spring training for the teams included attending Rubenstein's Beauty Salon where they learned to dress appropriately, they were taught proper etiquette, and received a beauty kit. The kit included lipstick, cleansing cream, hair remover, and other personal hygienic products.⁴⁹ The players in *A League of Their Own* also attended charm and beauty school where they learned how to sit, walk, and drink tea like a lady. All the players received makeovers. By including these scenes, Marshall began to capture the importance of femininity in the women's professional league. As another aspect to his All-American theme, Wrigley required the teams to line up in a "V" for Victory formation when singing the National Anthem. He wanted to promote the image of the league's patriotism while the country fought in the war.⁵⁰ The film also portrayed the victory formation before the World Series and therefore Marshall demonstrated the importance of the league's patriotism. Both the historical and the film's club owners portrayed the league and the players as feminine and patriotic. Although Marshall covered some feminine and patriotic aspects in the film, she failed to recreate the intensity the league placed on these ideals. Instead Marshall included her generation of Third Wave Feminism into this

⁴⁸ *A League of Their Own*, 1992.

⁴⁹ *Official Website of the AAGPBL*, 2-5-10.

⁵⁰ *Official Website of the AAGPBL*, 2-5-10.

history.⁵¹ Historically Philip Wrigley's main concern was femininity in the league. The 1940s served as a transition period in feminism. While women experienced new freedoms during this time, many societal aspects remained male dominant. Wrigley saw the profitability of feminism and realized that the proper image sold the tickets.⁵² Because of these femininity aspects, the league resembled softball more than baseball. In the beginning of the 1943 season, owners referred to the league as the All-American Girls Softball League. The owners did not change the name to AAGBL until midway through the first season.⁵³ However *A League of Their Own*, completely disregarded the first name altogether and referred to the league as the All-American Girls Baseball League throughout the entire film. Also during the historical 1943 season, players used a ball the size of a softball, which the pitchers threw underhand, and the bases were 65 feet apart. The league began to adopt overhand pitching and took steps to more resemble baseball in 1948. However in the movie (set in 1943), the players pitched overhand with regulation size hardballs and regulation diamonds. At the end of the film, the speaker announces to the players that they are the first women to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Although the Baseball Hall of Fame dedicated a "Women in Baseball" exhibit in 1988, the HOF did not induct the league's players.⁵⁴ Therefore Marshall left out the intense femininity aspect and integrated her generation of feminism by completely rejecting the gender binaries that men played baseball and women played softball.

Although critics nominated *A League of Their Own* for two Golden Globes and it won other awards, the film did not win overall. The *Chicago Reader* stated that the period dialogue didn't always sound authentic.⁵⁵ In

⁵¹ Third Wave Feminism rejected the gender binary and the Second Wave Feminist assumption of a single female identity. Second Wave Feminism concerned only upper-middle class white women.

⁵² "The Women of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League: Pioneers in Their Own Right," 2-9-10, <http://www.uwlax.edu/urc/JUR-online/PDF/2004/grawozburn.pdf>.

⁵³ *Official Website of the AAGPBL*, 2-5-10.

⁵⁴ *ESPN Page 2*, 2-1-10.

⁵⁵ *Chicago Reader*, 2-9-10, <http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/a-league-of-their-own/Film?oid=1054273>.

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addition *Washington Post* Staff Writer Joe Brown argued that Marshall “takes a choppy hits-and-bloopers approach to the baseball scenes”⁵⁶ and believed the games lacked passion and suspense. He also noted Geena Davis’ late arrival on the set, which made her seem distant from her teammates. Because Brown concentrated on the baseball aspects of the movie, he completely struck out on the director’s purpose of *League*. Penny Marshall intended to examine the choices women faced in the 1940s. In addition the movie requires Davis’ distance from her teammates. Davis’ character did not consider the league as an alternative route from a woman’s domestic life. Therefore her character never felt attached to the league or the girls.

Roger Ebert of the *Chicago Sun-Times* immediately recognized Marshall’s message. He commented that the movie was about transition, the “tug-of-war between new images and old values”⁵⁷ that women faced in the 1940s. Ebert recognized Marshall’s use of the baseball league as simply the backdrop for this feminist story and he saw *League* as one of the many chapters in the story of women’s liberation. He believed Marshall’s take on the movie was fresh and held a bittersweet charm. Likewise, Richard Schickel of *Time* realized Dottie’s authentic awareness of the uncertainty of a woman’s position in the 1940s.⁵⁸ Because of the war, the government encouraged women to enter the workforce to replace the male workers but once the war ended many women were forced back into the domestic sphere. Both Ebert and Schickel recognized the choices women faced during World War II and that Marshall captured in *A League of Their Own*.

A League of Their Own was not simply a baseball movie. The film contained another level, which proved to be the epitome of the story. The women used their professional baseball league only as a stage to enact their

⁵⁶ *The Washington Post*, 2-3-10. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/longterm/movies/videos/aleagueoftheirownpgbrown_a0ade7.htm.

⁵⁷ *Chicago Sun-Times*, 2-3-10.

<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/19920701/REVIEWS/207010302/1023>.

⁵⁸ *Time*, 2-9-10, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,975950,00.html>.

fight for women's rights. *League* told the story of the women pioneers who served their country playing baseball while the men were overseas. Acting under the guise of patriotism, these women players made great strides for women's issues. The director intended to capture this piece of women's history and although Marshall hit many of these aspects out of the ballpark, she also included many feminist elements of her generation. By including Third Wave Feminist aspects into the historical league, *A League of Their Own* connected the past to the present.

Both *Gone with the Wind* and *A League of Their Own* reflect the social world and the women's roles therein from the times they were produced. Made in 1939 *Gone with the Wind* told the story of a young girl in the 1860s who more often reflected a woman of the 1930s. The Civil War and Reconstruction forced Scarlett O'Hara to transform from a young southern belle to an independent matriarch. Under the economic woes of Reconstruction, Scarlett struggled through poverty to keep her land and home, Tara. Scarlett vowed she would lie, steal, or cheat so that she would never be hungry again. She drove her sisters to the fields to pick cotton, began a lumber business, and even married for money in order to secure the taxes on Tara. Thus women of the 1930s Great Depression sympathized with Scarlett's trials and tribulations. The Depression forced many women into unfamiliar jobs outside the home and despair often drove women to steal and cheat for economic security. Thus the Scarlett O'Hara of the 1860s often reflected similarities with the young women of the 1930s. Produced in 1992, *A League of Their Own* told the story of the female professional baseball players of the 1940s. In portrayal of the 1940s' league, however, reflected the values of the late twentieth century feminism. The historical league primarily focused on femininity and therefore certain elements kept the league in good standing. Penny Marshall lessened the feminine intensity of the historic league when she used the regular hardball rules instead of the historically correct softball rules (softer ball, shorter bases, and underhand pitching). Third Wave Feminism began in the early 1990s and challenged the assumption of a universal female identity and also rejected the gender binary. Therefore Marshall left out the

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intense femininity aspect and integrated her generation of feminism by completely rejecting the gender binaries that men played baseball and women played softball. The female athletes in *A League of Their Own* played ball according to regulation baseball rules.

Gone with the Wind and *A League of Their Own* redefined women's roles for their respected time periods. *Gone with the Wind* encouraged young women of the late 1930s to be independent, to create their own economic destiny, and it ultimately prepared them for their roles outside the home during World War II. Ironically, *A League of Their Own* told the story of the women who stepped up to this challenge and served their country in the public sphere. However *League* also defined women's social status for its 1992 audience and pushed for complete equality between men and women. Therefore both *Gone with the Wind* and *A League of Their Own* told the story of past women's experiences through the lenses of their respected present women's values.

