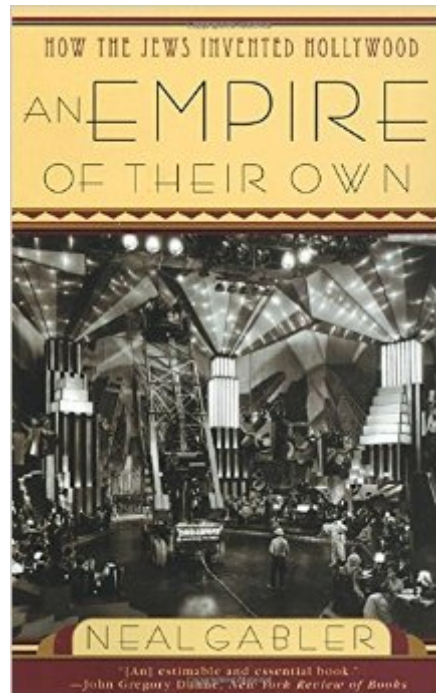


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An Empire Of Their Own: How The Jews Invented Hollywood



Synopsis

Winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Award for history, this "wonderful history of the golden age of the movie moguls" (Chicago Tribune) is a provocative, original, and richly entertaining group biography of the Jewish immigrants who were the moving forces behind the creation of America's motion picture industry.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (83 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Neal Gabler explores the fascinating question of how Hollywood was created primarily by a remarkable group of men who fit into a remarkably small demographic: European Jewish immigrants, most of them poor, most of them from Manhattan's lower east side, none of them practicing Jews, most of them from families with weak father figures. But together they moved to an almost completely protestant city and created the most successful form of popular entertainment in America, presenting an idealized version of American life for a nation in a constant for new national myths. The most fascinating thing about the book is the gap between the mythical world that they were presenting and their own backgrounds. For Louis B. Mayer, Andy Hardy's America was for him the real America, an America where there were strong nuclear families headed by strong fathers, doting neo-Victorian mothers, and obedient, respectful children. Economically most people were Middle Class, the tenor distinctively Middle American, and almost always Christian. Gabler argues that for most of these men, what they provided was not America as it existed, but the America that they wanted to be a part of. Almost all of the major studios were founded by men who more or less fit

Gabler's description. There are a number of major and minor characters in Gabler's story, the most prominent being Adolph Zukor, who was instrumental in creating Paramount; Carl Laemmle, founder of Universal; William Fox of Fox Pictures, which later merged with Twentieth Century; Louis B. Mayer, who built MGM into Hollywood's largest studio; Harry and Jack Warner of Warner Brothers; and the belligerent Harry Cohn of Columbia.

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