

at *The Birds*,” is an exercise in looking at ideas and culminations of designs, one also needs to examine Alfred Hitchcock’s many sources to fully appreciate his entire volume of work.

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F&H

Hollywood and Hitler, 1933 -1939

Thomas Doherty

Columbia University Press; 448 pp; \$35 ISBN9780231163927

Thomas Doherty’s meticulously researched study examines the encounter of the American film industry and moviegoers with Hitler and Nazism during the seven-year period between Hitler’s rise to power and the outbreak of war in Europe. Predominantly employing primary sources, Doherty traces the narratives of key individuals, institutions, and organizations that figured in shaping what, if anything, of Nazism appeared on American screens.

Doherty’s carefully crafted thirteen chapters focus on what influenced the way Nazism came to be represented in motion pictures, documentaries and newsreels from 1933 onwards. On July 1, 1933, four months after Hitler was appointed Reich Chancellor of Germany, “a new law regulating the production and importation of motion pictures in Germany codified the anti-Semitic actions that had already been initiated by roving gangs of brownshirts” (22). The policy of Aryanization that eliminated Jews from the German film industry was “sudden, ruthless, and comprehensive” (21). Doherty’s first chapter addresses how the Aryanization policy decimated Weimar’s revered film industry, demanding as well that American studios with a presence in Germany remove their Jewish workers. “Studios had two options - obey or pull up stakes.” Some studios such as Paramount, Fox, and MGM, acquiesced; other studios eventually pulled out but “maintained back-channel communications and intermediaries in the country” (38). Warner Brothers departed “by the end of 1933,” becoming the first studio to “withdraw on principle” and refuse to have any dealings with Nazis (38). In his chapter on Warner Brothers Doherty, in accord with Michael Birdwell’s study *Celluloid Soldiers* (1999), highlights how its fierce anti-Nazi stance made it the major studio of exception.

Doherty’s explanation for the absence of Nazis and the disappearance of Jewish characters from 1930s Hollywood movies--a subject often glossed by other authors--represents one of the most comprehensive accounts of how “commerce and censorship colluded” in the era (45). With no official policy on how to handle foreign and domestic politics, the Production Code, given teeth in 1934 with Joseph

Breen's establishment of the Production Code Association (PCA), proved of service through its proviso on the subject of "National Feelings." The Code stated: "The history, institutions, prominent people, and citizenry of all nations shall be represented fairly." Throughout the thirties, Breen's office would invoke the phrase to quash projects (commonly submitted as scripts at the pre-production stage), proposing to tackle the rising threat of Nazism or represent Jews on the screen. In addition to placating conservative domestic groups, the PCA's enforcement of the Code meant that American films were initially more inclined to pass the stringent, and often bizarre stipulations of Goebbels' Reich Ministry of Popular Entertainment and Propaganda that issued certificates and import permits for release in Germany. Doherty's illuminating chapter goes on to outline how the PCA put to sleep Al Rosen's pet project, *The Mad Dog of Europe*, before it was given a chance to bite. Breen's vetting of the project and his "unofficial judgment," which became widely circulated in a memo, included the line: "The purpose of the screen, primarily is to entertain and not to propagandize"; it went on to formulate "a policy that shaped Hollywood's attitude to anti-Nazi cinema for the rest of the decade" (57). The chapter also discusses films referring to either Nazis or Jews that somehow managed to make their way onto American screens – typically on limited release and in most cases before the PCA had become fully operational.

Two chapters that inform, and may amuse, address the misjudged sponsorship of Mussolini's son's visit to Hollywood, and the ill-timed visit of Nazi darling, director Leni Riefenstahl, which coincided with Kristallnacht, Germany's infamous Night of the Long Knives. In each case the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League (HANL) mobilized to see that the individual in question was sent packing. Doherty devotes a chapter to the HANL, covering its establishment, fundraising publicity stunts, and effectiveness. The organization does not, however, receive the unquestioning praise from Doherty that it often does in the public's memory: he does not overlook its 180-degree turn following the Hitler-Stalin Pact, owing to its leader's communist affiliations.

Doherty frames the book beautifully with the figure of Carl Laemmle, founder of Universal Pictures, whose film *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930) sparked violent protests from Nazi brownshirts in Berlin and Vienna upon its release. The German Board of Censor's banning of the movie demonstrated to the Foreign Department of the MPPDA in 1930 "that films are now in politics for good as far as Germany is concerned" (8). Laemmle, a German immigrant loved by most of Hollywood, spent the remaining years of his life devoted to charities and "shepherding scores of refugees" from his hometown of Laupheim to America. He died in 1939, the same week as the Hitler-Stalin Pact. "Laemmle's passing," writes Doherty, "was...a reminder of what Germans and Germany had meant in Hollywood a lifetime ago, before 1933"; it marked for many the end of an era (364).

Like Catherine Jurca's *Hollywood 1938* (1912), Doherty's book, beyond the films he treats, relies heavily on trade paper sources such as *Variety*, *Hollywood*

Reporter, Film Daily, and The Motion Picture Herald. Doherty does an excellent job of marshaling and incorporating quotes from their pages even while cautiously reframing their hyperbolic prose, which is notorious for lurching from moralizing to pecuniary handwringing to unabashed fandom. It would have been helpful had Doherty expanded further upon these papers' biases and ownership. The wealth of information Doherty has garnered from trade journals underscores the importance of their archival digitization both to preserve and widen access to those no longer in business. In addition to trade papers and movies, Doherty employs as sources national newspapers, studio and PCA archives, and autobiographies.

Doherty's book rewards his reader with an understanding of what audiences would have known of Nazism and Nazi policy from going to the movies in the thirties. It provides an informed backdrop to scholars looking to contextualize and analyze individual films from the era—films that seem either to sidestep or covertly address the issues of the day. While other studies on Hollywood and Hitler have often treated the thirties as a prelude, featuring them as a prologue to what was to come, Doherty's book "sharpens the focus on a blurry chapter in motion picture history" (375). Doherty succeeds in demonstrating how, in this era, "the motion picture industry was no worse than the rest of American culture in its failure of nerve and imagination and often a good deal better in the exercise of both" (12).

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The Films of Joseph H. Lewis

Gary D. Rhodes, editor

Foreword by Francis M. Nevins; Wayne State University Press, 2012; 284 pp; ISBN 9780814334621; \$31.95

Since his death in 2000 at the age of 93, the New-York-born B-movie director Joseph H. Lewis has gained an ever-growing reputation as arguably "king of the Bs." Among his contemporaries, perhaps only Edgar G. Ulmer and Jacques Tourneur have enjoyed anything like that of celebrity. Nonetheless, following Francis M. Nevins' useful but critically insubstantial *Joseph H. Lewis: Overview, Interview and Filmography* (1998), Gary Rhodes' collection of essays is to date only the second book-length study of Lewis' thirty-year career as a low-budget genre director who made — often in a matter of days not weeks — over 100 films. Like Nevins, who contributes a foreword, Rhodes' professed aim is to examine Lewis' eclectic work as a whole and thereby bring what he regards as overdue attention to films other than *Gun Crazy* (1950) and *The Big Combo* (1954) — both relatively

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