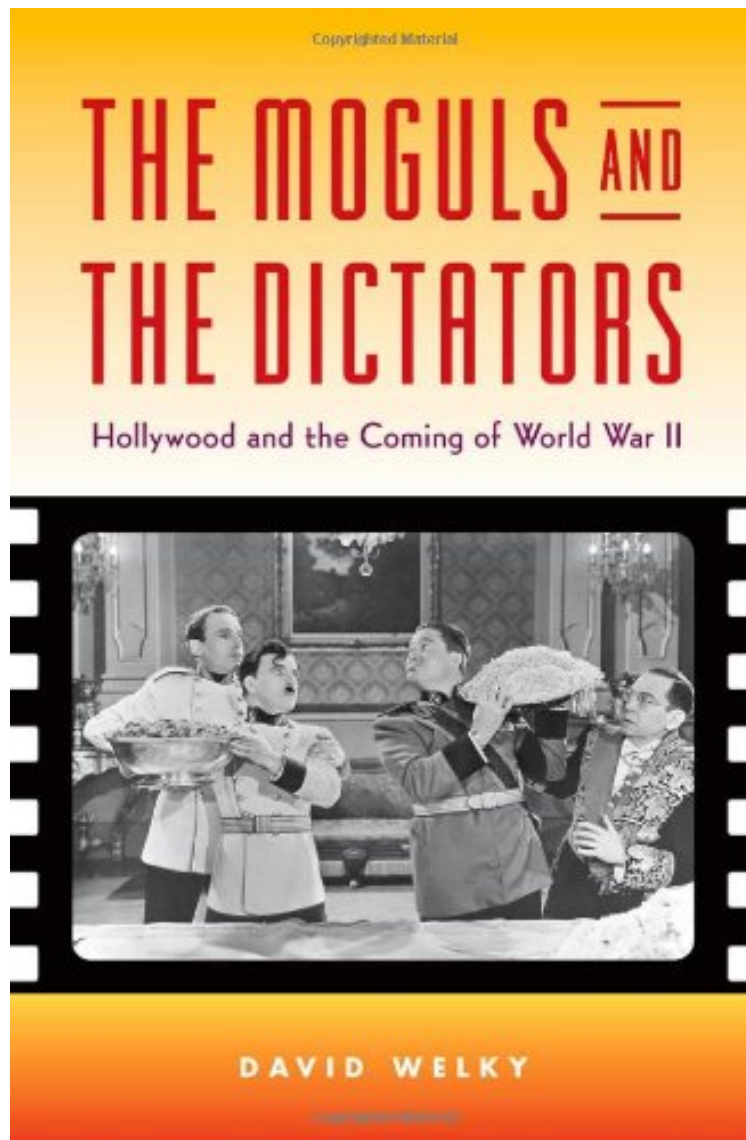


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# The Moguls and the Dictators: Hollywood and the Coming of World War II

David Welky

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**David Welky : The Moguls and the Dictators: Hollywood and the Coming of World War II** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Moguls and the Dictators: Hollywood and the Coming of World War II:

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Hollywood in that sensitive nutty periodBy Thomas MartinThis

book covers that peculiar period when the film factory had to confront the touchy issue of the rise of the Hitler threat and yet still adhere to the official neutrality policies of the U. S. Government. Also the studios wanted to protect their thriving European markets. This was the period of "A Yank in the RAF" and "Mrs. Miniver". How do the studios present a political message to the public that does not want to hear it and still rake in profits? In hindsight it all looks cut and dried. But, at the time it was a real dilemma.

In this fresh look at moviemaking during the Great Depression, David Welky examines Hollywood's response to the rise of fascism and the beginning of the Second World War. Through innovative analysis of hundreds of movies including *The Dawn Patrol*, *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, and *Sergeant York* Welky traces the shifting motivations and arguments of the film industry, politicians, and the public as they negotiated how or whether the silver screen should portray Nazism, depict conflict overseas, promote Americanism, and support President Roosevelt's rearmament efforts. Hollywood, Welky argues, was a primary player in the debate between interventionists and isolationists. These competing groups vied for influence and control over the message Hollywood offered the public either scolding it for being too timid or attacking it for being too aggressive. The national debate reached a fever pitch in September 1941, when isolationists in the U.S. Senate staged widely publicized hearings, accusing the movie industry of warmongering. While prewar Hollywood often reflected the principles of the Roosevelt administration, it also sometimes outpaced the cautious and politically astute president. Providing Americans with the psychological preparation they needed to enter World War II, popular movies familiarized audiences with the wartime experience, offered definitions of patriotism and Americanism, and established the fundamental distinctions between democracy and dictatorship. Welky's depth of research and focused, analytical approach will be appreciated by historians as well as film buffs.

"The research is impeccable and the footnotes are copious, and, despite the number of players involved, the story that Welky tells is nothing less than riveting. His rich anecdotal material transcends any potentially scholastic tone, and as a reference source it is worthy of being 'Kindled.'" (Charles L. Hoyt Internet of Books) "These are fresh retellings of old sidebar legends... There have been other works that treat this area, but few match the quality of interweaving the worlds of movies, diplomacy, and the temper of the times (especially as seen in the minds of the moguls)." (Thomas Cripps, professor emeritus, Morgan State University) "Well-written and absorbing new history." (J. Hoberman Film Comment) "A superbly researched account of the Depression/pre-War years in Hollywood." (Empire) "To his credit, Welky's 'Essay on Sources' alone makes the book worthwhile. But there is another approach that of a historian, not a cinema studies scholar or humanist from a related discipline that enables him to mine the studio archives and discover material that might elude another's eye." (Bernard F. Dick Journal of American History) "Lively study... What makes *The Moguls and the Dictators* engrossing is its ability to bring the period, its events and its main protagonists vividly to life." (Andr Kaenel Cercles) "The Moguls and the Dictators is an abundantly detailed, highly informative book that serves both as a useful reference text and as an engaging story, and it is an original and valuable addition to interwar film scholarship." (Hannah Durkin SCOPE) "A fascinating and convincing portrait... Thoroughly researched and engagingly written, *The Moguls and the Dictators* not only adds to our understanding of Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s but also provides a valuable model for thinking about the interaction of business and cultural history." (Benjamin L. Alpers American Historical ) About the Author David Welky is an assistant professor of history at the University of Central Arkansas, the author of *Everything Was Better in America: Print Culture and the Great Depression*, and coauthor of *Charles A. Lindbergh: The Power and Peril of Celebrity*. He has also published articles in *Film History* and *Film Quarterly*.