Hollywood and Anti-Semitism

Hollywood and Anti-Semitism: A Cultural History up to World War II examines how the public perceived American Jews in the entertainment industry from the turn of the century to the outbreak of World War II. Eastern European Jewish immigrants are often credited with building a film industry during the first decade of the twentieth century and dominating it by the 1920s. In this study, Steven Carr reconceptualizes Jewish participation in Hollywood by examining prevalent attitudes toward Jews among American audiences. Analogous to the Jewish Question of the nineteenth century, which was concerned with the full participation of Jews within the sphere of public life, the Hollywood Question of the twenties, thirties, and forties addressed the Jewish population within mass media. This ground-breaking study reveals the powerful set of assumptions about ethnicity and media influence as it related to the role of the Jew in the motion picture industry.

Steven Alan Carr is associate professor of communication at Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne. He has contributed to Shared Differences: Multicultural Media and Practical Pedagogy and Jewish Women in America, among other publications.
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HOLLYWOOD AND ANTI-SEMITISM

A CULTURAL HISTORY UP TO WORLD WAR II

Steven Alan Carr
Indiana University—Purdue University Fort Wayne

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For Nancy, Maxine, and William
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This work has some of its own history, characterized in large part by my good fortune and the generosity of those around me. It was originally a dissertation, and numerous individuals mentioned in that document have had a formative influence. I owe certain people, however, my redundant gratitude. Much of the dissertation came together through the generosity and patience of Kimberly Jones, who offered both compassion and living quarters in those final weeks as I prepared to deposit a document for my doctoral degree from the University of Texas at Austin. Only in retrospect do I truly recognize the immense debt of gratitude I owe my dissertation committee and my advisor, Charles Ramírez-Berg. In particular, committee member Thomas Schatz has played a lasting role as both mentor and editor in giving me sage advice. In terms of both the dissertation as well as early stages of the revision, he remained key to the shape of the work.

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