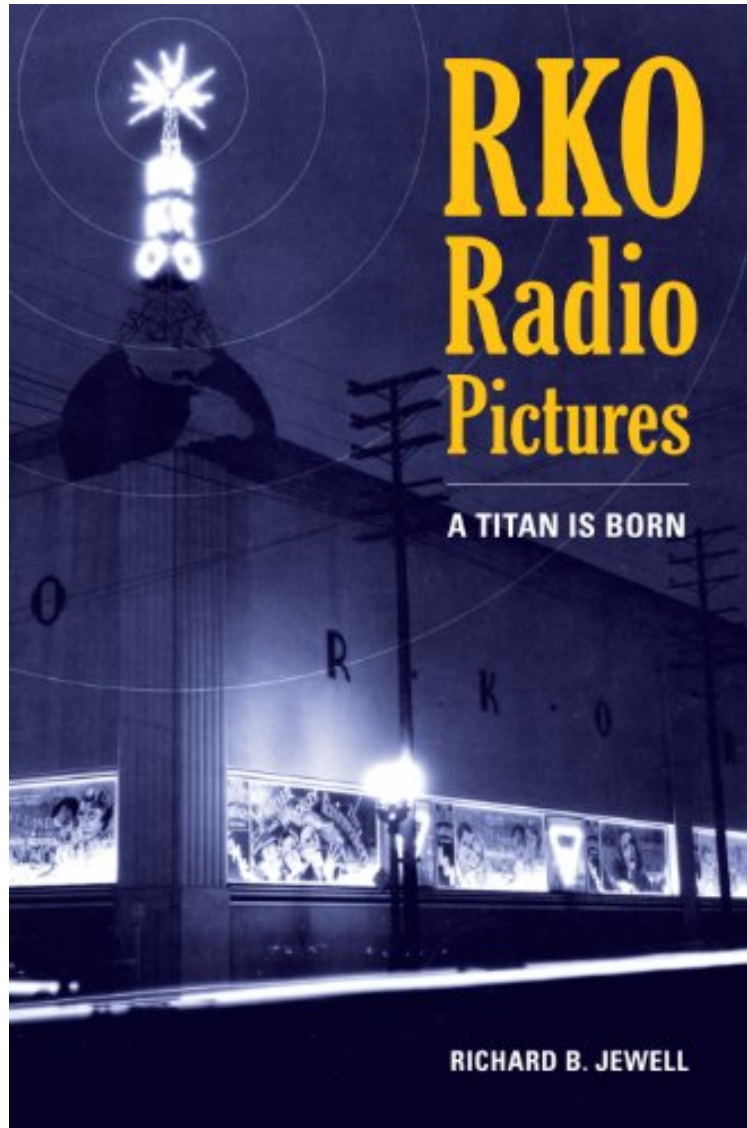


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## RKO Radio Pictures: A Titan Is Born

*Richard B. Jewell*

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**Richard B. Jewell : RKO Radio Pictures: A Titan Is Born** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised RKO Radio Pictures: A Titan Is Born:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Little Movie Studio That CouldBy JackBluegrassRKO Studios was probably the smallest major movie studio in Los Angeles. Incompetent ever-changing management ran it, made more films with box office sales that didn't even recover production costs, failed at teaching contract actresses and actors necessary performance skills, and routinely overshot filming budgets. It spent 7 years in bankruptcy during the 1930s Depression making movies. But, RKO gave us some of the best American films ever made: King Kong, Astaire

Rogers musicals, Gunga Din, and Orson Welles' Citizen Kane and The Magnificent Ambersons. RKO had a stable of talented film technicians: master scoring composer Max Steiner, producer Pandro S. Berman, art decorators Van Nest Polglase, Carroll Clark, and others who created its famous art deco "BWS" (Big White Sets) in Astaire musicals, and a stable of talented character actors. Bigger movie-making competitors considered the RKO Camera FX department to be the best in the business. Author Richard Jewell reviews the 2-way blizzard of dysfunctional correspondence and decisions from 1929 thru 1942 between RKO money men in New York City and the movie makers in Hollywood. Film professor Jewell at USC appears to have a love affair with quirky RKO. So do I. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful By Douglas Wellman If you are a fan of movies, especially the old classics, this is a great book. If you are a fan of film history and fascinated by the ins and outs of Old Hollywood, this is a WONDERFUL book. Much has been written about the golden years of 20th Century-Fox, MGM and Warner Bros., but the Hollywood community of old had an abundance of talent and many true stars - both in front of and behind the camera - worked in studios that get less attention today, such as RKO, Republic, and even Columbia to a degree. As I read this book names kept jumping off the page at me because I had no idea they were at RKO. This is an exceptionally well researched book that is fun to read. I'm happy to have this one in my collection. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Great Read! By James Robert Parish An excellently research/written history of the complex rise and fall of RKO Radio Pictures. - a very informative tome that explains so much why RKO never lived up to its potential. Highly recommended!

One of the "Big Five" studios of Hollywood's golden age, RKO is remembered today primarily for the famous films it produced, from King Kong and Citizen Kane to the Astaire-Rogers musicals. But its own story also provides a fascinating case study of film industry management during one of the most vexing periods in American social history. RKO Radio Pictures: A Titan is Born offers a vivid history of a thirty-year roller coaster of unstable finances, management battles, and artistic gambles. Richard Jewell has used unparalleled access to studio documents generally unavailable to scholars to produce the first business history of RKO, exploring its decision-making processes and illuminating the complex interplay between art and commerce during the heyday of the studio system. Behind the blockbuster films and the glamorous stars, the story of RKO often contained more drama than any of the movies it ever produced.

Jewell not only makes great use of this primary material, but presents a clear, fair-minded narrative that puts the facts into proper context.