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The Hollywood Trust: Trade Associations and the Rise of the Studio System (Film and History)

Kia Afra
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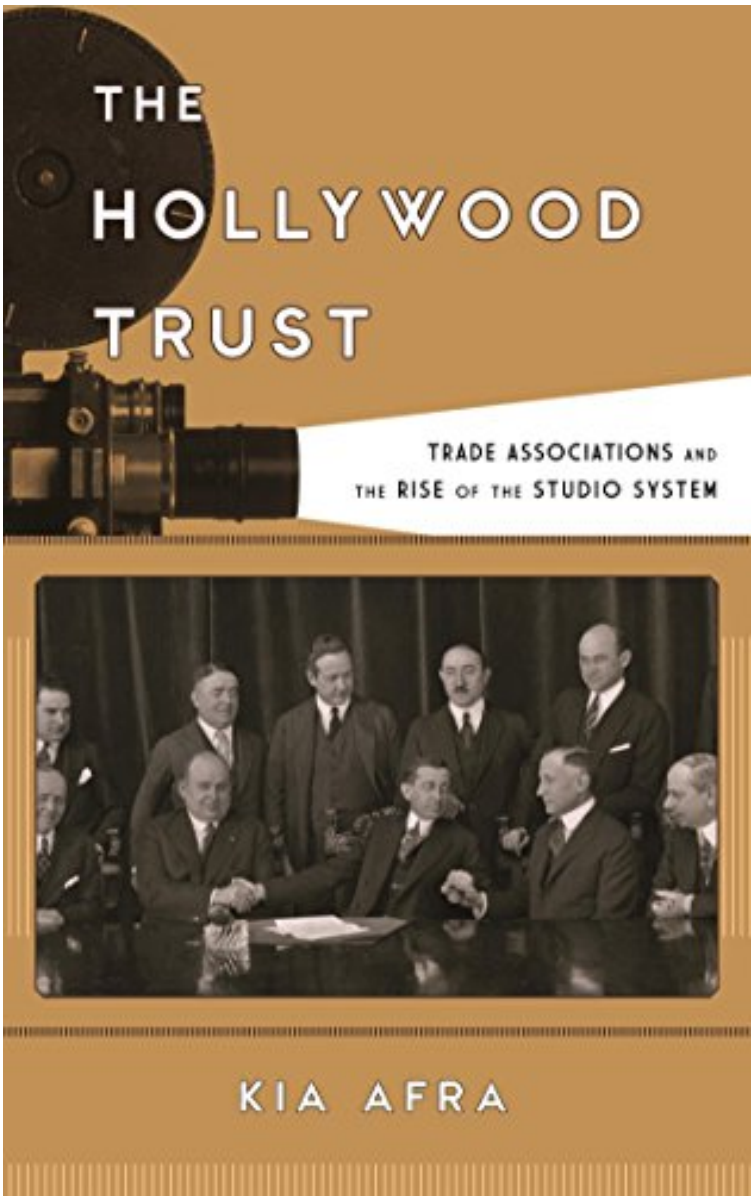

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Kia Afra : The Hollywood Trust: Trade Associations and the Rise of the Studio System (Film and History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Hollywood Trust: Trade Associations and the Rise of the Studio System (Film and History):

As the film industry was establishing itself at the start of the twentieth century, trade associations played a pivotal role in the emergence of the studio system. These producer-distributor trade associations were forums for internal and external conflicts, as well as the true sources of influence and power in early Hollywood.In The Hollywood Trust: Trade Associations and the Rise of the Studio System, Kia Afra provides a detailed account of three successive trade organizations from 1915 to 1928. By examining the Motion Picture Board of Trade, the National Association of the Motion Picture Industry (NAMPI), and the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA), Afra outlines the relationships of power in Hollywoodrsquo;s early years, asking questions such as: How and why did the studio system come about, and what were the industrial and institutional forces that impacted Hollywoodrsquo;s development? In order to answer these crucial questions, The Hollywood Trust explores the role played by film industry trade associations in navigating important issues facing the burgeoning studio system, including censorship, public relations, trade practices, government regulation, film distribution, labor conflicts, taxes and tariffs, and exhibitor opposition.A vital look at an under-reported aspect of the studio system, this volume fills a gap in the history of the American film industry. As such The Hollywood Trust will be of particular interest to scholars of film history, as well as those concerned with cultural history and the political economics of entertainment.

Though many scholars and researchers have written about the film industry, they rarely examine the structure of the industry from the perspective of trade associations, organizations, censorship boards, producers and distributors, and those involved with legal matters. That is the subject of this book. Afra looks at how the film industry became a vertically integrated oligopoly in which a 'limited number of firms controlled production, distribution, and exhibition.' He assembled this study from corporate files, legal documents, financial reports, trade papers, and personal correspondence (1910-30). Arguing that the confluence of studio executives, Wall Street, and government policies-which were sometimes at odds and sometimes collaborated-resulted in and shaped the studio system, Afra provides a comprehensive history that reveals how multiple players, including censorship agencies, trade associations, producers, distributors, exhibitors, theater owners, and studios, promoted their own interests in developing the studio system. Filmmakers too played a role: e.g., D. W. Griffith headed the National Association of the Motion Picture Industry's committee on censorship. Those who teach film history or matters related to censorship will find this an excellent reference for explaining the formation of the industry. The book is thorough, well researched, and extensive in its analysis. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. CHOICEAbout the AuthorKia Afra has worked in the film and television industry as a director, editor, and sound recordist. Afra has taught film history at Brown University and Moorpark College and his articles have appeared in Film History, Quarterly of Film and Video, and Cinema Journal.