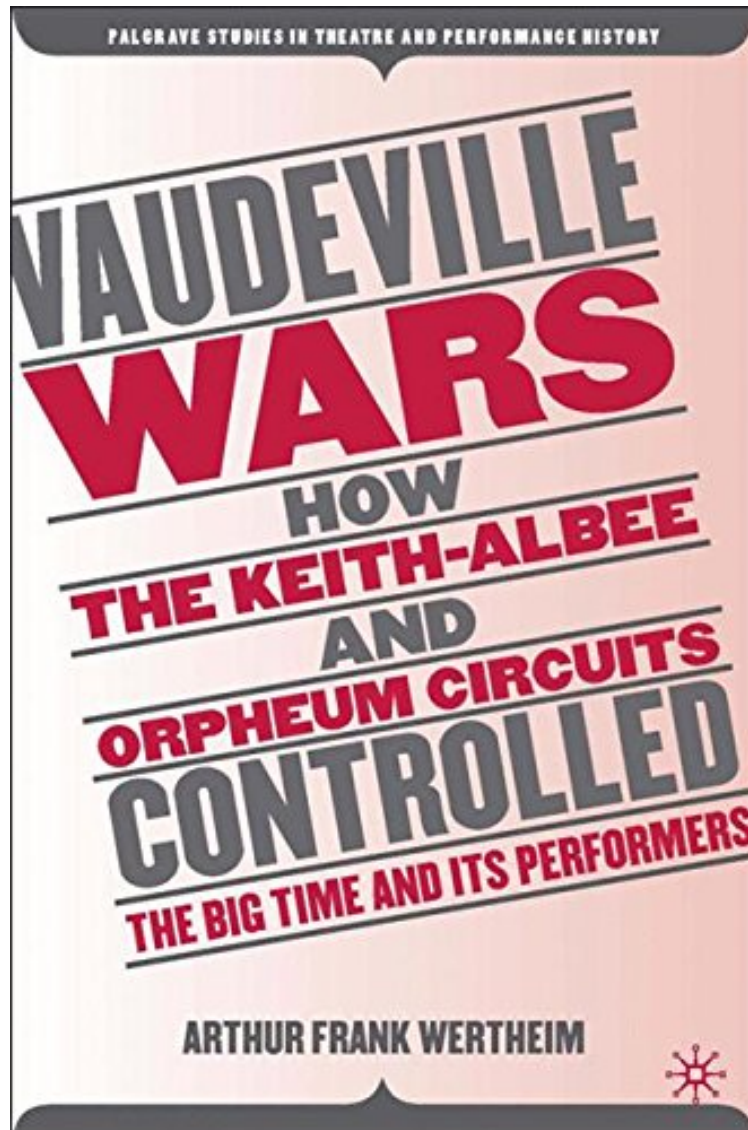


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Vaudeville Wars: How the Keith-Albee and Orpheum Circuits Controlled the Big-Time and Its Performers (Palgrave Studies in Theatre and Performance History)

A. Wertheim

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Orpheum circuitBy L. S. BrooksThis is a very good book about the early motion picture theater business and how it worked and progressed thru the years.....its ups and downs.....very interesting individuals and how they treated their business and the people that worked for them.....high school youth, college youth and individuals interested in the motion picture industry would be happy with this book.....lb4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Wertheim's Vaudeville Wars Explores New Ground.By Frank CullenThis is the book that puts big time vaudeville in perspective.Too often in chronicles of the golden age of vaudeville, the stars eclipse the movers and shakers around whom they revolved. Pastor, Proctor, Keith, Albee, Meyerfeld and Beck were among the vaudeville universe's few law-givers who dictated how brightly, how often and where the stars shone.Until Wertheim's "Vaudeville Wars: How the Keith-Albee and the Orpheum Circuits Controlled the Big-Time and Its Performers," the men who created the institution of vaudeville had remained as inscrutable as official portraits. Wertheim drags away from their ledgers, telephones and mahogany desks and places the derby-hatted, cigar-smoking barons of vaudeville downstage center under the spotlight. He invests with personality the colorless B.F. Keith, the remote E.F. Albee, the inventive Proctor, the lesser known Morris Meyerfeld and the volatile yet discerning Martin Beck. They emerge as human beings--some venomous, all ambitious and a few nearly decent.Arthur Frank Wertheim has thoroughly researched their machinations and provided the most clear, entertaining and reliable history of the business end of vaudeville. Besides being an engrossing read, "Vaudeville Wars" makes a fine case study fit for any MBA program.

This book maps the intriguing story about how the tycoons of the two most powerful circuits, Keith-Albee in the East and the Orpheum in the West, conspired to control the big time. Despite the battles between the performers and the circuit moguls, the vaudeville wars forged an electrifying entertainment that at its zenith brought joy to millions.

'Vaudeville Wars offers the only thorough account of the vaudeville business from the ground up, centering on the roistering entrepreneurs who, within a generation, lifted their enterprise into America's leading diversion. Wertheim shows both the human side and the voraciousness of the moguls. Unravelling the business-end of show business from the motley fabric that was vaudeville, he demonstrates that when the enterprise faded, only a few of the founders were left to witness their lofty estimate of vaudeville's manic display ensconce itself in the national lore.' - Leigh Woods, author *Transatlantic Stage Stars in Vaudeville and Variety* (forthcoming, Palgrave Macmillan) 'Until Wertheim's *Vaudeville Wars*, the men who created the institution of vaudeville had remained as inscrutable as official portraits. Wertheim drags away from their ledgers, telephones and mahogany desks the derby-hatted, cigar-smoking barons of vaudeville and places them downstage centre under the spotlight. They emerge as human beings - some venomous, all ambitious and a few nearly decent. Wertheim has provided the most clear, entertaining and reliable history of the business end of vaudeville. Besides being an engrossing read, *Vaudeville Wars* makes a fine case study fit for any MBA programme.' - Frank Cullen, founder, American Vaudeville Museum, *Vaudeville Times Quarterly* 'Wertheim gives us what is likely to be the definitive work on the business side of vaudeville for a long time to come, offering countless details available nowhere else, well organized and completely comprehensive... A valuable resource, one long needed.' - American TheatreAbout the AuthorARTHUR FRANK WERTHEIM served as the Director of Development Communications at UCLA, USA, from 1984 to 1997 and also as a Visiting Scholar in that University's Department of Film and Television from 1992 to 1995. He has published articles and book reviews in the *Journal of American History*, *The American Historical* and the *Journal of Popular Culture*.