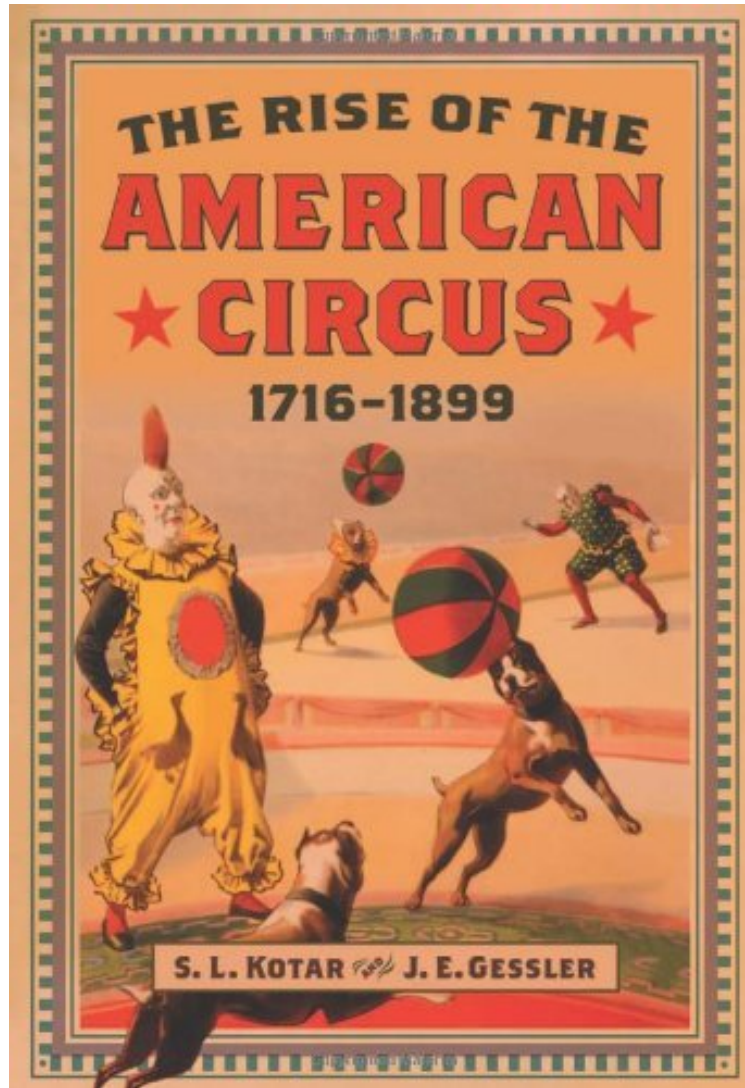


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The Rise of the American Circus, 1716ndash;1899

S.L. Kotar, J.E. Gessler

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S.L. Kotar, J.E. Gessler : The Rise of the American Circus, 1716ndash;1899 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rise of the American Circus, 1716ndash;1899:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A worthy reference bookBy HelcuraThis book is an excellent reference on the history of the circus in England and in the United States. It is an exhaustive listing of names, places, playbills, performers, owners and other details. It will doubtless grace the shelves of many academic libraries.It is, however, excrutiatingly boring to read. The authors have compiled a massive amount of data, but they have not really written a book of the sort one reads - there is neither academic commentary nor any expansion on the lists. Even potentially exciting events such as elephants falling through bridges are rendered in barely interesting prose.If you want to know why the circus had such an influence in the United States or want to understand the experience of the

circus from either the perspective of the audience or the performer, you will have to search out other books. This book is worth owning by those who are passionate about circus history or those who need to find historic details about specific circuses or people. Otherwise, don't bother.

To both young and old, the circus remains an icon of American entertainment, a wholesome pastime untouched by the passing years. But the modern circus, with its three rings, ringmaster, animals, and acrobats, is the product of nearly three hundred years of evolution. This intriguing work chronicles the history of the American circus from its roots in England through its importation to America to the end of the nineteenth century. It introduces the early pioneers of the circus, addresses business concerns such as management and training, and discusses the development of the show itself, including the incorporation of menageries, the need for animal training and care, the addition of circus music, the use of the tent, and the unique attractions of side shows and "freaks." Personal stories of those who made their lives under the "big top" are woven throughout the narrative, adding an intimate perspective to one of America's most enduring entertainments.

"Kotar and Gessler...showcase the companies, human and animal acts, and mixed responses to this evolving form of entertainment." --Reference Research Book News. About the Author S.L. Kotar of St. Louis has been writing (together with J.E. Gessler) for more than four decades, beginning with scripts for television's *Gunsmoke*. J.E. Gessler lives in St. Louis.