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## When the Cock Crows: A History of the Patheacute; Exchange

*Richard Lewis Ward*

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**Richard Lewis Ward : When the Cock Crows: A History of the Patheacute; Exchange** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When the Cock Crows: A History of the Patheacute; Exchange:

Influential during Hollywoodrsquo;s silent-film era, the Patheacute; Exchange was a multinational film company with a production and distribution model very different from the self-contained units of most major studios. When the Cock Crows: A History of the Patheacute; Exchange, by Richard Lewis Ward, tells the unconventional story of this unique

company, examining its triumphs and failures on the margins of the Hollywood system and its legacy in the movie business. Ward traces the company's turbulent evolution from its roots as an American distributor for Pathe's, its French parent studio, through its many subsequent changes in ownership, to its final years under the controversial leadership of Joseph P. Kennedy and the eventual merger of the company's production department with RKO. Included are the stories of the unlikely survival of Pathe's nonproduction assets, such as Pathe Industries, Inc., Pathe-America Distributing Co., Inc., and Pathe Communications Corporation, which continued to operate as part of the industry long after the Exchange had ceased to exist. Ward also provides a fascinating glimpse into the silent movie era and the business and creative decisions that led the Exchange to fail. Film historians have largely ignored the Pathe Exchange, despite its having produced some of the most famous early serials (including the series that began with *The Perils of Pauline*) and distributed the first films of comedy legends Harold Lloyd, Harry Langdon, Laurel and Hardy, and *Our Gang*. When *The Cock Crows* reveals the promise and peril of early Hollywood and establishes the company's vital place in film history, creating a more vivid picture of this era.

Ward's thoroughly researched book provides an indispensable history of the Pathe Exchange. . . . [It] traces the company's tribulations on the fringes of Hollywood and, more important, illuminates the complex and ever-shifting corporate world of Hollywood itself during these formative years.—Joshua Yumibe, author of *Moving Color: Early Film, Mass Culture, Modernism* . . . Neither a part of the oligopoly that controlled Hollywood nor a denizen of Poverty Row, Pathe Exchange, an offshoot of the venerable French company, occupied a unique niche. Ward provides us with a revealing account of a self-marginalized company constantly at the economic mercy of a vertically integrated system it could never fully penetrate.—Charlie Keil, University of Toronto