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Charles Walters: The Director Who Made Hollywood Dance

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political ascendancy of Southern liberalism within the Democratic Party. Scott's push to improve roads, medical care, and education for all North Carolina citizens won him a strong following; yet, he also was seen by many politicians and business leaders as controversial and polarizing. During his time in office, Scott would be buffeted by the regional and national headwinds of segregationist politics and strident anti-Communism. This biography reveals how a deepening conservative backlash against southern liberals adversely impacted Scott's political fortunes and forced him to moderate his position on a host of issues including the question of racial segregation.

Who was W. Kerr Scott? Contrary to the negative press accounts of him as an unpolished country rube, Pleasants notes that Scott came from a prosperous and educated farming family. Influenced by the Grange Movement and President Roosevelt's New Deal, Scott decided to run for state office and held the position of Agriculture Commissioner for eleven years. He built up a strong base of support amongst farmers but remained a relative unknown to most North Carolinians. Thus, it was a surprise to many that Scott entered the 1948 Democratic Gubernatorial Primary and mounted a successful grassroots campaign against the Party's entrenched political machine. In explaining this victory, Pleasants argues that Scott's candidacy exposed an ideological and regional rift within the North Carolina Democratic Party. Scott's electoral strategy had been to weave together a coalition of farmers, small businessmen, and African-American voters.

Drawing on newspaper accounts, oral histories, and archival materials, Pleasants details how the newly elected governor translated his core progressive beliefs into sweeping legislation. Scott's "Go Forward" legislative agenda called for the paving of thousands of miles of dirt roads, raising teacher salaries by twenty percent, building or rehabbing schools, and constructing hospitals in isolated rural counties. He also pressured public utilities to bring phone and electrical service to thousands of farming families. Recognizing that many legislators, lobbyists, and business leaders would oppose such enormous state spending, Scott barnstormed the state and distilled his 15 point plan to a simple populist slogan—Better Schools and Roads.

In the area of social and racial progress, Pleasants argues that Scott was a moderate who could carefully press for change and skillfully deflect criticism. He believed that an inclusive government would contribute to the general advancement of civil society. As Governor, he appointed the first woman to the state superior court and a prominent African-American educator to the state School Board. Yet, Pleasants finds that Scott's moderate racial political views were being overtaken by national events and segregationist politicians. For example, Scott seems to have failed to realize the extent of the shift in political attitudes and discourse with his appointment of the liberal Frank Porter Graham to an empty US Senate seat. The subsequent contentious democratic primary revealed how the issue of integration was being used as a political litmus test.

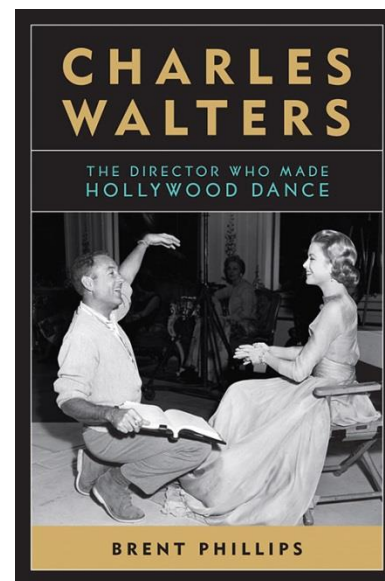
Graham's 1950 primary loss, Pleasants believes, dealt a significant blow to Scott's progressive agenda.

With the Supreme Court's landmark 1954 decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, the backlash against Southern liberals solidified around the issue of desegregation. Pleasants argues that Scott immediately recognized that he would need to speak out against school integration if he wanted to remain a viable candidate for public office. After winning a bruising Senate election in 1954, Scott frequently spoke out against integration while actively pursuing progressive legislation for farmers, the elderly, and the poor. Despite witnessing the growing Civil Rights movement, Scott chose to stand with his state and his party and oppose the Civil Rights Act of 1957. With his untimely death in office in 1958, W. Kerr Scott was not able to witness the profound economic and social changes that he helped to foster with his "Go Forward" program. As Pleasants' biography shows, Scott was a key architect in laying the foundation for the rapid modernization of a poor rural state.

Keith Gorman

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Charles Walters: The Director Who Made Hollywood Dance. Brent Phillips. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2014. ISBN 978-0-8131-4721-5. \$36.36.



The splendid contents of this marvelous work about movie director Charles Walters include Preface, Chapter One the Anaheim Hooper, Chapter 2. A "New Face" in Town, 3. Beginning the Beguine, 4. The Show is On, 5. Broadway's "Ranking Dancing Juvenile," 6. Backstage, 7. "You Think Like a Director," 8. Putting His Best Foot Forward, 9. A Company Man, 10. Good News, 11. A Swell Couple, 12. Fred and Ginger, 13. Metro-Goldwyn-Schary, 14. Get Happy, 15. "A Dear Dame" 16. Playing the Palace, 17. Hi-Lili, Hi-Lo, 18. "A Masterpiece of Modern Moisture," 19.

“Two-Faced Woman,” 20. Cinderella Stories, 21. In High Society, 22. Branching Out, 23. A Virgin and a Housewife, 24. Spoiled Spinster, 25. “What Elephant?”, 26. Ain’t Down Yet, 27. After the Lion, 28. Final Ovation, Appendix: The Works of Charles Walters, Acknowledgments, Notes, Index, and Illustrations follow page 130. The work has some connection to the Southern USA by content. Judy Garland, best known for her portrayal of a Southern USA Kansas farm girl in *The Wizard of Oz*, was a movie star Charles Walters directed extensively as well *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Charles directed *Texas Carnival* starring Esther Williams and Red Skelton. Louis Armstrong, New Orleans entertainer and musician, starred in *High Society* with Grace Kelly and Frank Sinatra directed by Charles Walters. Charles was born in Pasadena on November 17, 1911. He was raised in Southern Anaheim, California. As a youth, he was in the school theaters and attended California theatres with companions. He was also a teacher at University of Southern California.

The writing style is easy to read. The content is excellent sharing the directing of numerous beautiful movies by Charles Walters like *Ziegfeld Follies* of 1946, *Lili*, *Easter Parade*, *The Glass Slipper*, *High Society*, and his last Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) movie *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*. The cost of movies Charles directed and earnings are disclosed. Walters worked for MGM for twenty two years. Chuck and Gloria Swanson danced together all night at various supper clubs in New York between WWI and WWII. Chuck for a while resided with his longtime companion John Darrow in Malibu. Chuck had residences in Malibu, Las Palmas, and Palm Springs. Two other friends were Jimmie Morrissey and Joe Anthony.

The perceived interest to the readership of SELn is perfect due to the unparalleled research on this movie director. Fifty three black and white splendid photographs reveal the Walters in action directing numbers of people and famous movie stars. The cover photograph of Charles and Grace Kelly enchants. Phenomenally astounding are the thirty four pages of exhaustive notes categorized by the twenty eight chapters and preface. The twenty two page index is well detailed. Appendix the Works of Charles Walters is a magnificent timeline of Charles Walters including Stage Work: Performer, 1931-1939, Stage Work: Choreographer 1938-1951, Stage Work: Director 1954, Film Work: Choreographer (Other Than in his Own Movies) 1942-1948, Film Work: Performer 1943-1953; Film Work: Director 1945-1966; Uncredited Film Work: Director 1958-1961; Television Work: Director 1970-1976.

Illustrious movie star Joan Crawford asked Chuck Walters to direct her in “Torch Song.” Chuck had more than working relationships with Judy Garland, Joan Crawford, and Tyrone Power and considered them his friends, visiting one another’s residences. Novelist Sidney Sheldon wrote scripts for MGM with Walters such as *Easter Parade*. Chuck worked with spectacular marvels including Doris Day, David Niven, Debbie Reynolds, Judy Garland, Joan Crawford, Leslie Carone, Ava Gardner, Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire, Gloria Swanson, Shirley MacLaine, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Esther Williams, Sidney Sheldon, Vincente

Minnelli, George Sidney, Busby Berkeley, Stanley Donen, Arthur Fred, Ray Thompson, Imogene Coca, Audrey Christie, Lucille Ball, Nancy Walker, and Dorothy Kennedy Fox. Charles Walters was thought of chiefly as a director of ladies. After retirement, Chuck displayed in his residence signed photographs of Gloria Swanson, Joan Crawford, and Debbie Reynolds. Charles Walters died at age seventy-one caused by peritoneal mesothelioma with metastasis. The author, Brent Phillips, is a New York University archivist of media. Conclusively, the success about movie director Charles Walters is indispensable for academic and public libraries. The recommended audience is researchers of movies and movie directors, readers interested in movies and their making, and also anyone studying Charles Walters.

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Race and Ethnicity in Arkansas: New Perspectives.
Edited by John A. Kirk. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2014. ISBN 978-1-55728-665-9. 220p. \$24.95



The Little Rock Integration Crisis in 1957 became world news when President Eisenhower ordered Federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to protect nine black students who were court ordered to integrate a “whites only” school. The fervor and violent tempers of those days brought the state of Arkansas to the forefront of questions involving rights to educational opportunities for all citizens in Arkansas and throughout the United States.

In the 1950s, as a child growing up in a small town in western North Carolina, I remember asking my Father, “Dad, why does that bus go right by our school in the morning and cross town to another school?” His response to me was “those were black children and they like their own school”. At the time, I did not question his logic. Our lives in that small town were lived “that way”, white here and black there.

Picking up this newly edited book, “Race and Ethnicity in Arkansas New Perspectives”, gave me a chance to see a