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HOLLYWOOD “INSIDERS” EMPLOY ILLEGAL BUSINESS PRACTICES THAT HURT INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS AND PUBLIC, NEW BOOK REPORTS

LOS ANGELES — Major Hollywood studios and distributors employ unethical and illegal business practices that hurt independent filmmakers and the movie-going public, according to a new book based on more than a decade of research.

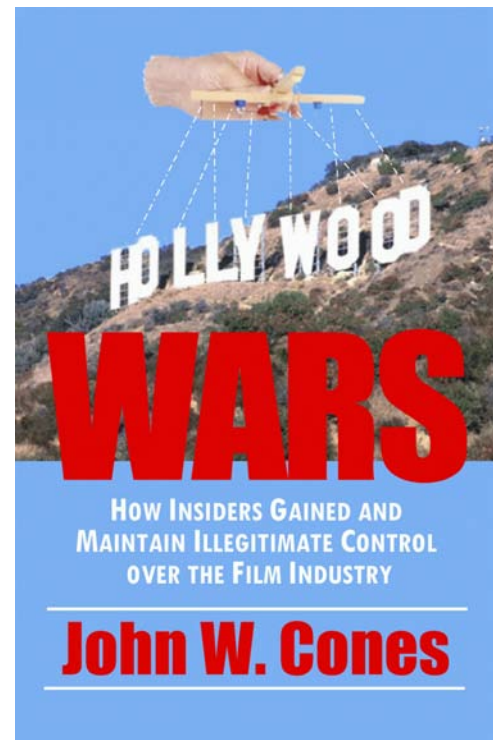
“When you consider the overview of Hollywood business practices presented by this book ... , it isn’t hard to reach the conclusion that something is incredibly rotten in Hollywood,” Los Angeles film attorney John W. Cones writes in *Hollywood Wars: How Insiders Gained and Maintain Illegitimate Control Over the Film Industry*. “[T]here is no merit system left in Hollywood. The lives and careers of talented people are being destroyed on a regular basis and the patterns of bias in motion picture content makes the Hollywood-based U.S. film industry a detriment to society.”

More specifically, Cones identifies and documents through hundreds of case studies 114 tactics that studios and their associates have used to gain and maintain “illegitimate control over the film industry.”

Among them:

- Using discriminatory practices against Hollywood outsiders, including D. W. Griffith, Howard Hughes, Orson Welles, Kirk Kerkorian, and David Putnam;
- Using the trade press and other publications to spread harmful rumor, innuendo and defamatory comments about Hollywood outsiders;
- Falsely accusing Hollywood outsiders, film industry critics and Congressional investigators of being anti-Semitic;
- Excluding outsiders from the social activities that lead to advancement in Hollywood;
- Artificially inflating the cost of film production for self-serving reasons;
- Paying excessive studio executive compensation;
- Overstating distribution expenses for films and consistently failing to properly implement the terms of distribution agreements;
- Providing favored treatment for insider productions as opposed to independent films;

(more)



- Consistently engaging in antitrust law violations;
- Continuing the practice of block booking through the use of the blockbuster strategy;
- Stealing ideas and scripts for films;
- Cheating profit participants, such as directors and movie stars, out of film revenues;
- Discriminating against Mormons and other non-Jewish religious groups;
- Using the studio's relationship with film critics to obtain favorable advertising blurbs;
- Falsely claiming significant financial benefits for the national economy when movie revenues only benefit a small, insular group of people.

Cones writes that Congress and federal agencies have ignored these and other problems.

“At a minimum, it would appear that Congress and federal agencies of the United States have negligently avoided their oversight and regulatory responsibilities with regard to the implementation of U.S. laws relating to employment discrimination and competition in the marketplace (antitrust laws)” in the film industry. “[Y]ears of enormous political contributions to U.S. Presidents, key members of Congress and Los Angeles District Attorneys have effectively negated both the federal government and the DA’s office as factors in the Hollywood game. Thus ... it may actually be accurate to say that there really are no rules in Hollywood; after all, no one has accepted the responsibility of enforcing the rules that currently exist.”

Cones adds that “unless the Hollywood outsider groups are able to work together in a coordinated effort to bring down the power of the Hollywood insiders, nothing will change. Only if power is shared more equitably can change be realized.”

Hollywood Wars is being released nationwide on January 2, 2007. Marquette Books LLC is one of the fastest-growing independent publishing companies in the United States. *Hollywood Wars* is its 50th title. The company started with one title in 2002.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John W. Cones is a securities and entertainment attorney in Los Angeles, where he advises clients who produce independent feature films, videos, television shows and plays. He has written eight other books on Hollywood, and he lectures frequently on film finance and distribution. He can be reached by phone at 310/477-6842 and by e-mail at jwc6774@adelphia.net

ABOUT THE BOOK

HOLLYWOOD WARS: How Insiders Gained and Maintain Illegitimate Control Over the Film Industry
By John W. Cones

“I confess I was a skeptic when I first saw the proposal for this book. But Cones’ evidence is overwhelming. Every filmmaker, actor and screenwriter should read this book, which also is ideal for college courses in film studies and critical and cultural studies.”

—*Dr. David Demers, associate professor of communication and publisher*

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