



The Other Hollywood: The Uncensored Oral History of the Porn Film Industry

By Legs McNeil, Jennifer Osborne, Peter Pavia

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A raucous and revealing oral history of the birth of the adult film industry, *The Other Hollywood* peels back the candy coating to let the true story be told -- by the stars, movie makers, and other industry players who lived it. And what a story it is: Through hundreds of original interviews, contemporary newspaper accounts, police reports, court testimony, and more, Legs McNeil and coauthors Jennifer Osborne and Peter Pavia trace today's billion-dollar industry from its makeshift, mob-connected origins to the Internet age. Along the way we encounter porn stars such as Linda Lovelace, John Holmes, Traci Lords, and Savannah -- along with countless mainstream stars, politicians, FBI agents, and more.

Epic, hilarious, and moving, *The Other Hollywood* contributes to the porn industry the one thing missing in all previous accounts: a vivid, tragicomic, irresistible humanity.

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- Sales Rank: #221594 in Books
- Published on: 2006-02-21
- Released on: 2006-02-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.28" w x 6.00" l, 2.00 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 620 pages



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

From the nudie cuties of the 1950s to celebrity porn in the late 1990s, *The Other Hollywood: The Uncensored Oral History of the Porn Film Industry* offers an insider's view of the adult film industry's transition from a shady, backroom business to a \$10-billion-per-year money machine and mainstream acceptance. The story is told through interviews with hundreds of actors, directors, law enforcement officials, and other participants, all edited together with expert skill and pacing.

The industry exploded in the early 1970s with the success of the Mafia-backed *Deep Throat*, which reportedly grossed \$100 million after an initial \$22,000 investment. Featured at the Cannes Film Festival in 1973, the film ushered in the rise of "porno chic," making it fashionable, for a time, to take a date to a porn film. One industry insider described *Deep Throat* as "the *Blair Witch Project* of its time." Filled with sleazy intrigue, vivid details, and many heartbreaking--and even touching--stories, *The Other Hollywood* covers the actors, the numerous legal challenges to the industry, FBI sting operations, the Mafia connection, rampant drug use, rock stars, celebrities, the opposition by religious and political groups, the emergence of AIDS (that claimed the lives of porn superstars such as the famously endowed John Holmes), and the explosion of the video market and its overnight fortunes. Even at 600 pages, this is a quick and engrossing read that is hard to put down. --Shawn Carkonen

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. This compulsively readable book perfectly captures the pop culture zeitgeist. It doesn't hurt that the history of American pornography is inextricably intertwined with all the subjects that captivate us: sex, drugs, beauty, fame, money, the Mafia, law enforcement and violence. McNeil (*Please Kill Me*) focuses on the industry's dark underbelly: suicide (Savannah), fratricide (the Mitchell brothers), Mafia hits (John Gotti whacked Robert DiBernardo, the mob's point man in the porn business) and gangland slayings (John Holmes). But beyond the scintillating subject, it's McNeil's skillful technique that elevates this oral history, coauthored by journalists Osborne and Pavia, above the tedium of a courtroom transcript. Most chapters contain multiple story lines, which McNeil cleverly weaves together by the end. And the book's two most fascinating stories—about the making of *Deep Throat* and the Traci Lords child pornography case—involve unreliable narrators, which gives them a *Rashomon*-like quality. In the case of *Deep Throat*, the movie that catapulted hardcore pornography into the mainstream, its star, Linda Lovelace, claims she was forced to perform in the movie, though everyone else connected to the film contradicts her. As for Lords, her detractors make a compelling argument that far from being the victim she portrays herself to be in her book, she deceived the industry about her age so she could make a fortune and leverage her sob story into a mainstream Hollywood career. Whether recounting high-profile scandals or answering trivia about the origins of porn films and lap dancing, this is a relentlessly gripping read. B&w photos.

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Despite massive sales in the software and home-video markets, pornographic movies haven't attracted much serious historical attention. To somewhat redress that situation, McNeil and associates proffer an oral history of the genre. Scads of dirty-movie stalwarts contribute, with their comments edited into topical chapters to trace the who, what, where, and how of the industry rather than to highlight particular stars. Performers who achieved mainstream fame (Ron Jeremy, Traci Lords) rub shoulders with prolific porn stars (Steve Byron, Nina Hartley), behind-the-scenes moguls (Dave Friedman, Ann Perry), and mainstream

commentators (John Waters, Roger Ebert) to recap porn's progress from stag reels and nudie-cutie features to big-budget extravaganzas like *Deep Throat* and *Behind the Green Door* to the triumph of video over film and the concomitant disappearance of the last vestiges of plot, timing, and character development. Smut goddess Ginger Lynn's rise to prominence concurrently with the metamorphosis of the ideal female porn body, and Seka's groundbreaking career and marketing strategies, receive loving description; and the notorious John Holmes, of the prodigious sex and cocaine appetites as well as the prodigious endowment, gets his due, too (a frequent costar confirms that with Holmes, "it was like doing it with a big, soft loofah"). A satisfying overview of an American cultural staple, though perhaps an invitation to interface with the forces of overweening decency, too. *Mike Tribby*

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Users Review

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