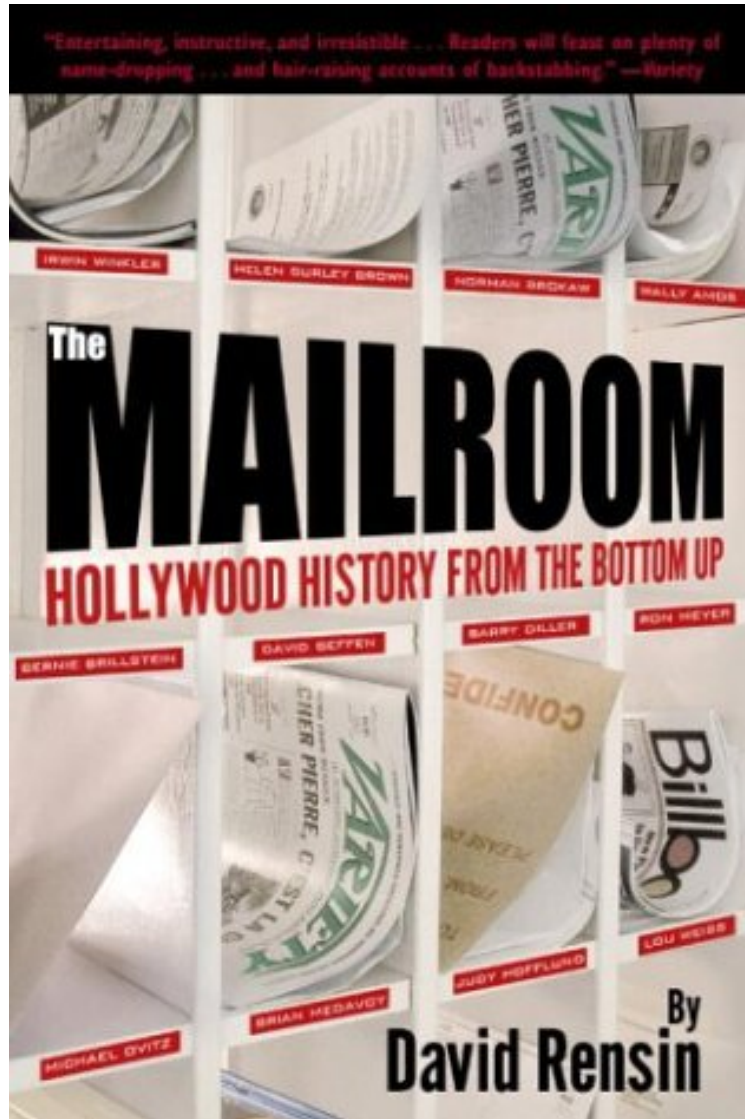


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## The Mailroom: Hollywood History from the Bottom Up

David Rensin

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**David Rensin : The Mailroom: Hollywood History from the Bottom Up** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mailroom: Hollywood History from the Bottom Up:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Essential Hollywood ReadBy RaquelA cool inside-look at the intense mailroom culture in Hollywood. Great read, especially for anyone looking to get into the industry.11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. FAST, FUNNY, OUTRAGEOUS MUST-READBy A CustomerI haven't even finished reading this book and already I love it. I know Hollywood isn't like any place else in America, and this just makes what it's like to start at the bottom in Tinseltown all the more fascinating. At the same time, these kids who

went through the mailroom share much with all of us. Everyone has to start somewhere, and in the end the experience isn't all that different. You won't believe some of the crazy stuff these kids had to endure and survive while learning how to play the game. I love the story about delivering the, uh, stool sample. And the one about how David Geffen kept from getting fired by faking a letter from UCLA saying he graduated. And the ones about hoping to deliver stuff to pretty young actresses, or crashing the company cars out of total frustration. It's endless. And mind-boggling. And really frank. A history of Hollywood also comes through. In the beginning, behind-the-scenes people got into show biz for the glamour, to rub elbows with the stars and be dazzled; then it became about the power and money and business. Or maybe it was always like that, only the perks became accessible to more than just the top layer, which is why Harvard law grads and Wharton MBAs began to forgo huge corporate salaries to push a mail cart for \$400 a week -- or less. The Mailroom paints a stunning picture of ambition -- with lots of humor and humanity -- and best of all, the author just lets the people speak for themselves in this oral history. It's truly a book that shows instead of tells. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Highly inspirational and informative book on "getting your start" in Hollywood !By stephen craig aristeiHaving started in the mail-room myself, I particularly related to it.....Knowing most the participants and people mentioned in this book made it all that much more fun....A fun read.....And Inspiring read.....A book that gives you a 411 on many of today's "power brokers" in the film and TV industry....I would highly recommend reading this book...It is a "no punches pulled" look at the "agency business" from behind the curtains !

It's like a plot from a Hollywood potboiler: start out in the mailroom, end up a mogul. But for many, it happens to be true. Some of the biggest names in entertainment--including David Geffen, Barry Diller, and Michael Ovitz--started their dazzling careers in the lowly mailroom. Based on more than two hundred interviews, David Rensin unfolds the never-before-told history of an American institution--in the voices of the people who lived it. Through nearly seven decades of glamour and humiliation, lousy pay and incredible perks, killer egos and a kill-or-be-killed ethos, you'll go where the trainees go, learn what they must do to get ahead, and hear the best insider stories from the Hollywood everyone knows about but no one really knows. A vibrant tapestry of dreams, desire, and exploitation, *The Mailroom* is not only an engrossing read but a crash course, taught by the experts, on how to succeed in Hollywood. From the Trade Paperback edition.

From Publishers Weekly Rensin (coauthor, *Don't Stand Too Close to a Naked Man*) captures the ambition, manipulative plotting and hustler mentality of a few Hollywood mailroom employees in this series of raunchy, realistic interviews with some top agents who started out in the mailroom. As with any entry-level gig, "the hours are long, the pay... abysmal." Star mailroom grads from the William Morris Agency, Creative Artists Agency, ICM and others voice conflicting views, making Rensin's book an uncompromisingly truthful tell-all of what it takes to make it in the movie biz. William Morris's Norman Brokaw recalls, "I made it a point to develop relationships early on," while Bernie Brillstein's a bit more blunt: "I kissed ass." Most of the agents admit opening up private correspondence and packages, insisting, "everybody did it." Rensin also exposes affairs with secretaries to learn company secrets, fights over use of phones that led to wrestling matches, and homophobia. Sam Haskell, William Morris's worldwide head of television, offers a different take: "Your primary power is your character and your integrity." Rensin furnishes fresh anecdotes about an embarrassed novice who didn't recognize Judy Garland, or another who believed in Marilyn Monroe despite a casting specialist calling her "just another blonde." Clashing views of Mike Ovitz, from "a superb leader" to someone who preferred "style over content" and to whom "appearances were everything," help explain Ovitz's meteoric rise and massive collapse. Most notably, Rensin shows that the road from mailroom to mogul is a rough one. The stories are amusing, intriguing and sometimes horrifying, but Rensin, to his credit, never dilutes sordid details. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Rensin's upward-mobility saga suggests that aspiring Hollywood conquistadors should start in the mailroom of a talent agency instead of hanging around soda fountains in tight sweaters, waiting to be discovered, or essaying other such fabled, fame-and-fortune-seeking ploys. Focusing on the cesspools of power behind the stars--the William Morris Agency, Creative Artists Agency, and lesser stokers of the dream machine--Rensin outlines the path to real power in film by relaying the personal stories and reminiscences of the back-channel operatives who wield it. He reveals no shortages of backbiting, antisocial behavior, and power politics in the mailroom, though the place lacks the glamour usually gleaned to gild such showbiz exposes. Do readers dig the dirt on the David Geffens and Barry Dillers of the world as much as that on the Winona Ryders and Mickey Rourke? Well, if they're money minded, they ought to. The goods Rensin's got on the likes of Michael Ovitz makes his ilk as exciting as the stars an Ovitz lucratively manipulates. Mike Tribby Copyright copy; American Library Association. All rights reserved ldquo;Entertaining, instructive, and irresistible . . . Readers will feast on plenty of name-dropping . . . and hair-raising accounts of backstabbing. rdquo;mdash;Varietyldquo;A TERRIFIC BOOK . . . Loaded with great stories, unusual insights, and laugh-out-loud humor. You will love this one. rdquo;mdash;LARRY KINGldquo;FASCINATING . . . A bracing lesson in the acquisition and exercise of power . . . with a big emphasis on the maxim that what doesn't kill you will make you stronger. rdquo;mdash;Los Angeles Timesldquo;THE MAILROOM IS A BLAST TO READ. This is the way Hollywood operatesmdash;the fun, the giddy high, the

espionage, and the wrenching twists of luck and disaster. David Rensin is a master at eliciting the truth nobody else captures. —CAMERON CROWE —SHAMELESS SCHMOOZING, casting couch know-how, plotting and hustling are all detailed in *The Mailroom*. —The New York Post (Required Reading) —FASCINATING . . . [THE MAILROOM] REALLY DELIVERS. —People —A-LIST HONCHOS . . . DISH ON THEIR RISE FROM PEONS TO POWER PLAYERS. —US Weekly —This is indeed Hollywood history, more specifically a cogent account of how talent agencies have evolved since [William] Morris was ruled by executives in size 36-short suits. Rensin's clever use of personal memories as mosaic pieces, arranged in patterns to form an industrywide portrait, is history for grown-ups. —Variety —Coming from the William Morris mailroom as I have, [I found] this book [to be] the truth of what I experienced. . . . It's hilarious, a bit crazy, and it should make anyone wonder why people put their careers in the hands of these idiots . . . and remember, I'm one of them. If you have a child, make sure he or she reads this before starting at ...