Chapter I

Introduction

“Hollywood has always been a cage….a cage to catch our dreams” (John Huston, London Times Dec 27, 1987).

Any discussion of Hollywood Fiction warrants an introduction of the phenomenon of Hollywood. The name Hollywood was coined by H.J. Whitley, the "Father of Hollywood".


Hollywood. The name was magic, the lure overwhelming. Generations of Americans spent untold hours in darkened theaters captivated by a magical fantasy world. Young girls swooned over the latest Hollywood heart throb while boys dreamed about a life of adventure and glory. As had their pioneer ancestors before them, thousands trekked westward; their goal was Hollywood. Most were rejected by the magical kingdom, but a lucky few were “discovered” and became “stars” – America’s royalty of the twentieth century.

The lure of Hollywood reached far beyond the dreams of innocent youth. Artists of all varieties made pilgrimages to the world’s film
capital. From New York, London, Vienna, Rome, Moscow, and even Paris came the famous, talented, the hopeful, the has-beens, and the desperate, hopeful that this mecca of worldwide entertainment would bestow massive blessings of fame, wealth and power. (3)

The initial years marked the Pre-Code Hollywood sans censorship and establishment’s control. This was soon followed by censorship and various rules and regulations which severely curtailed the artistic freedom.

Tracing the evolution of Hollywood, Mathew Bernstein in his text “Controlling Hollywood; Censorship and Regulation in the Studio Era” says:

We currently take for granted the fact that most films made in Hollywood today are created and shown without hindrance. It was not always so. Throughout the history of American movies, there have been countless, often furious struggle to control or influence what could be produced and what could be seen. The cinema has been the most frequent target of the censoring impulse in this century because partly film was the first visual and aural mass entertainment form of the twentieth century and its power seemed overwhelming. Moreover, film was the most popular mass medium during its first fifty years. (1)
‘Pre-Code Hollywood’ refers to the epoch in the American film industry between the introductions of sound in the late 1920s. The "Pre-Code era" refers to a roughly four-year period in film history, beginning with the widespread adoption of sound in 1929 and ending on July 1, 1934, with the inauguration of the Production Code Administration and a policy of firm censorship. Before July 1, 1934, curtailment on movie content varied widely, depending on local laws, and public taste.

Thomas Doherty in his text “Pre-Code Hollywood: Sex, Immortality, and Insurrection in American Cinema” comments:

That four-year interval marks a fascinating and anomalous passage in American motion picture history: the so-called pre-Code era, when censorship was lax and Hollywood made the most of it. Unlike all studio system feature films released after July 1934, pre-Code Hollywood did not adhere to the strict regulations on matters of sex, vice, violence, and moral meaning forced upon the balance of Hollywood cinema. In language and image, implicit meanings and explicit depictions, elliptical allusions and unmistakable references, pre-Code Hollywood cinema points to a road not taken. For four years, the code commandments were violated with impunity and inventiveness in a series of wildly eccentric films. More unbridled, salacious, subversive, and just plain bizarre than what came afterwards, they look like Hollywood cinema but the moral terrain is so off-kilter they seem imported from a parallel universe.
In a sense pre-Code Hollywood is from another universe. It lays bare what Hollywood under the code did its best to cover up and push off screen.(2).

Thus, "pre-Code films" tend to be racier, sexier, more adult, more cynical, more socially critical, more honest and more politically strident than the films produced by Hollywood on up through the early 1960s.

On the other hand, as Gregory D. Black in his book “Hollywood Censored: Morality Codes, Catholics, and the Movies” explains how the arrival of censorship crippled the creativity in the movie industry.

The major Hollywood production studios- MGM, Warner Bros, Universal, United Artists, Paramount, RKO, Columbia, and Twentieth Century- Fox- bitterly fought this censorship system, which prevented them from making more realistic and honest films while more committed to box-office profits than art, the studio did attempt to bring some realistic, hard-hitting drama to the screen, but were thwarted by industry censors. It became impossible after the mid-1930s and beyond, for example, to make a reasonably accurate film from Zola’s “Nana”, Tolstoy’s “Anna Karenina”, or Steinbeck’s “The Grapes of Wrath”. These novels were too frank in their discussions of adultery, corruption, and injustice: their screen versions were altered to make them more in tune with conservative moral, political, and economic value system that dominated the movie censorship code.(6)
Movies about prostitutes were a familiar feature of the first years of the pre-Code era. Dietrich’s “Shanghai Express” (1932) is a perfect example of prostitute movie that endorses the heroine. “Call Her Savage” (1932) is a pre-code film directed by John Francis. It tells about a young woman born in Texas, who is forced to become a prostitute. In “Baby Face” (1931) Barbara Stanwyck, tired of being pimped out by her father literally sleeps her way to the top of a company. “Safe in Hell” (1931) is a film by William Wellman. Gilda Karlson is a prostitute. Towards the end of the story, wanting to be loyal to her boyfriend she prefers to die. In James Whales’s “Waterloo Bridge” (1931) Myra Deauvillie resorts to prostitution to support herself because she does not find a job during the World War II. She is being killed by a bomb towards the end of the movie. It was not the Roaring Twenties, as is generally believed, but the four years between 1929 and 1934 that was the real era of wide-open sexuality in films. Before Hollywood began enforcing a self-imposed Production Code, many films allowed for extraordinary frankness, including nudity, adultery, premarital sex and prostitution.

This period is different from any later period in film industry. It saw the first great flowering of the American horror film. The first couple of years of the 1930s saw the rise of horror movies. In “Doctor X” (1932) themes such as murder, rape, cannibalism, and prostitution are interwoven into the story. It is considered by some as “old dark house” genre of horror films and takes place in New York and Long Island. “The Mystery of the Wax Museum” (1933) is an American mystery horror-thriller film by Warner Brothers. It was directed by Michael Curtiz. “Murders in the Zoo” (1933) prove that its pre-code movie. There are several extremely gruesome murders involving mauling and human embroidery. “The Black Cat” (1934) is a horror film. Newlyweds
Peter and Joan Alison, on their honeymoon in Hungary are trapped in the home of a Satan-worshipping priest. “Frankenstein” (1931) is a horror monster film from Universal Pictures directed by James Whale. It is of the monster coming alive by Frankenstein experiment. After the unexpected consequences the monster is killed by the villagers and Frankenstein is safe. “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” (1931) is a pre-code horror film by Rouben Mamoulian. This is a tale of a man who takes a potion which turns him from a mild-mannered man of science into a homicidal maniac.

The era came to an abrupt close when Catholic watchdog groups threatened boycotts of all films and the Church established the Legion of Decency to monitor movies.

Gregory D. Black in his book “Hollywood Censored: Morality Codes, Catholics, and the Movies” says:

Cities, States, foreign government, and most important, the industry itself had prescribed rigid restrictions on the content of films during its golden era of studio production. This system of censorship, which the film industry not only accepted but embraced, encouraged, and enforced, was Hollywood to develop film beyond the “harmless entertainment” label that has been firmly fixed on it.(5) Studio heads bowed to the pressure and the era of censorship began, lasting until the establishment of the industry’s rating system in 1968.
Commenting on the dominance of censorship, Gregory D. Black says:

Censorship is a key ingredient in understanding how films were made during the studio era, and is vital in any analysis of their content or structure. From the early 1930s to the mid-1960s, every story considered, script written, and film produced was subjected to a thorough cleansing by industry censors before reaching the screen. Preproduction censorship administered by Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) – commonly known as the Hays Office – was an integral part of the studio production system.(5)

Hollywood’s power and influence of the movie industry has been the subject of numerous studies. The cinema of the United States, often generally referred to as “Hollywood”, has had a profound effect on cinema across the world since the early 20th century. Its history is sometimes separated into four main periods: the Silent Film Era, Classical Hollywood Cinema, New Hollywood, and the Contemporary Period.

The silent films had no synchronized recorded sound, especially with no spoken dialogue. In silent films for entertainment the dialogue is transmitted through muted gestures, mime and title cards(Silent film, Wikipedia)

Hollywood’s history can be traced and analyzed up to present day. In 1887, Harvey Henderson Wilcox established a 120-acre ranch in an area northwest of Los Angeles. From then on, Hollywood grew from one man’s family to over 5000 people in 1910. By then residents around the ranch incorporated it as a municipality, using the
name Hollywood for their village. While they voted to become part of Los Angeles district, their village was also attracting motion-picture companies drawn in by the diverse geography to the mountains and ocean side.

By the early 1930’s, Hollywood had become well established as a big film factory, producing films that were mainly opportunities for cinema-goers to escape from the mundane, dull, boring reality of their daily lives into a world of make-belief. The studio system, which was dominated by a few big film companies, such as MGM, Paramount, Twentieth Century Fox and Universal, controlled the production of films, their distribution, and their exhibition in the cinemas that the studios owned. Film-making had become a very profitable big business dominated by a small number of Hollywood studios.

Before these “The Electric Theatre” was the first movie theatre built by Thomas Lincoln Tally in downtown Los Angeles in 1902. From 1909 to 1918 Selig Polys Cope Company filmed hundreds of movies and this was the first permanent studio in LA. In early 1910, director D.W. Griffith was sent by the Biograph Company to the west coast with his acting troupe, consisting of actors Blanche Sweet, Lillian Gish, Mary Pickford, Lionel Barrymore and others. Travelling several miles north to Hollywood, Griffith filmed the first movie during the 19th century about California. In 1911, the first motion Picture studio was built by Nestor Motion Picture Company in Hollywood. Universal Studios was founded during 1912 and Thomas Lincoln Tally showed the first colour movie at the Electric Theatre in Hollywood. Keynote Pictures Studio filmed its first movie with Charlie Chaplin in 1914. D.W. Griffith’s “Birth of a Nation” was released in the year 1915 and was hailed as the important film of all times for American movie
history for introducing story flash backs, dramatic close-ups and cross-cutting. Four brothers during 1918 opened the Warner Brothers Studio. In 1923, to publicize a new housing development a sign was erected for Hollywood.

The Hollywood family film is one of the most popular, commercially-successful and culturally significant forms of mass entertainment. California has always been known as an "incubator" of new ideas, new products and entrepreneurial spirit. Throughout much of its history, Southern California has held an image as the land of golden opportunity and a place for new beginnings. The people, institutions of knowledge, great climate and infrastructure have enabled the Los Angeles region to emerge as a leading business, trade and cultural center—a creative capital for the twenty-first century. The city is the largest manufacturing center in the West, one of the world's busiest ports, a major financial and banking center, and the largest retail market in the United States.

The Hollywood industry is one of the most powerful and influential enterprises in the world, its visual voice heard around the globe. Society, in return, receives the impact of Hollywood’s impressions and the messages. It would appear that Hollywood has analogous obligations and responsibilities in its quest for box-office success.

“Hollywood” as both fantasy and material reality dominated the world of American entertainment for virtually the entire twentieth century. Movies have great impact on society. When moving pictures first emerged at the turn of the century they presented viewers with a flickering new form of entertainment. Entertainment has always been a part of society. However just like any other social factor, it is capable of doing either harm or good.
“Movies corrupt the values of society”

“Too much sex and violence”

“They’re worldly and a waste of time”

Those are just a few of the refrains repeated by many of culturally concerned Americans. Even without sound, the mass appeal of these early movies and their portrayal of sex and violence managed to draw fire from America’s moral guardians. As a society, in Hollywood, there are well known studios named Paramount, 20th Century Fox, MGM and others. These studios own their own production facilities; run their own worldwide distribution networks. Therefore they control theater chains to commit to show their companies’ products. Meanwhile, they keep under their control actors, directors and screenwriters. Despite the warnings, the motion picture industry flourished during 1920s with forty million Americans from all walks of life went to the movie houses each week. Movie makers attracted young people, made films that were of flappers doing the dance named Chesterton, playing the new sounds of jazz and gangsters selling the liquor during Prohibition. It was the Hollywood scandal in the early twenties that helped intensify the anger of local censors to look inside the problem. Catholic religious leaders especially turned up the heat on Hollywood, calling for strict moral standards and a code of conduct for movie content based on the premise that “no picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it”. In 1933, Archbishop Amleto Giovanni Cicognani gave a speech at a Catholic Charities Convention in New York City about how movies were ruining America’s children. He called for the “Purification of cinema”. The Hays Code brought sweeping changes to the
motion picture industry beginning in 1930. This is the result of a collaborative effort between “The Association of Motion Pictured Producers, Inc” and “The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc”. The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930 recognized high trust and confidence which have been placed in them by the people of the world and which have made motion pictures a universal form of entertainment. There were set of rules governing American film making, American cinema for over three decades. The code was founded according to the concept: “If motion pictures present stories that will affect lives for better, they can become the most powerful force for the improvement of mankind”- the clear implication being that films were signal failing to achieve these lofty aims. There were general principles, which said, (i) No picture shall be produced that will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympathy of the audience should never be thrown to the side of crime, wrong doing, evil or sin. (ii) Correct standards of life, subject only to the requirements of drama and entertainment shall be presented. (iii) Law, Natural or human shall not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation. Further particular applications in part of crimes against the law, sex, vulgarity, obscenity, profanity, costume, dances, religion, locations, national feelings and titles were also taken care of. The code sets up high standards of performance for Motion Pictures and demanded respect for all races, religions and Nations.

Theatrical motion pictures are primarily intended or regarded as entertainment. Mankind has always recognized the importance of entertainment and its value in rebuilding the bodies and soul of human beings. It enters intimately into the lives of men and women and affects them closely. Hays code may have included a handful of “good”
rules at best, the majority of code has poorly written, illogically thought out. Only a handful of producers cooperated with Hays with his idea of self-regulation. Other film makers continued to produce films that sexually moved the Flapper generation. The Hays code does have influence over the film in some places, but the majority of the films disobey its standards. The scenes of seduction, murder, violence and police brutality, which stray from standards of the code, and result in acquisition of wealth, money and fame that was an intriguing reality during 1930s.


Hollywood is easy to hate, easy to scorn at, easy to publically criticize. Some of the best lampooning has been done by people who have never been through a studio gate. On the other hand, many novelists such as William Faulkner and F.Scott Fitzgerald took jobs writing screenplays in Hollywood since they made more money. But many novelists such as them soon felt the film industry made them so miserable, and wrote novels detailing fictionalized versions of their experiences. Often some of these novels would revolve around some bitter screenwriter or producer who believed they were screwed over by some studio executive. And these same novels often took place during the Golden Age of Hollywood in the 1930s-1940's.
This thesis involves a study of select Hollywood-Novels of Scott Fitzgerald, Nathanael West, Budd Schulberg, Norman Mailer and Mordecai Richler.

F. Scott Fitzgerald’s career was remarkable for its brevity and intensity. He lived his times and wrote about his age with sympathy and irony. Born in St. Paul’s, Minnesota in 1896, he was educated at Princeton. He began his first novel *This Side of Paradise* in college and worked at it in army training camps. In 1924, he went to Paris and during this phase appeared *The Great Gatsby* and it was lifted to the level of a classic of American Literature. “All the Sad Young Man” (1926) lifted him to best short story writer. To fulfill his mounting financial obligations, Fitzgerald moved to Hollywood in 1937 and secured a screenwriting contract with MGM studios. When his contract with MGM expired in 1939, he began writing the novel *The Last Tycoon*. This novel was posthumously published in 1941. Towards the last year of his life, he wrote *The Last Tycoon* about Hollywood. He died with about 150 pages of the novel complete. Those pages are among the touching things ever written. The novel is alive with his intuition that Hollywood was reshaping America. *The Last Tycoon* shows what a really first-class writer can do with material –how he gets under the skin”. The novel even in its imperfect state is Fitzgerald’s most mature piece of work. It is marked off also from his other novels by the fact that it is the first to deal seriously with any profession or business. Fitzgerald tells us (through his letters) that Hollywood had disappointed him. “My dreams about this place are shattered”, he said in one letter, and in another, “Everywhere there is, after a moment, either corruption or indifference”. He set out, then, in *The Last Tycoon*, to picture Hollywood as he saw it exactly and honestly. Fitzgerald was a writer, and a born writer, a writer who strived against considerable odds
to widen his range, to improve and sharpen his great technical gifts, and to write a kind of novel that no one else of his generation was able to write. It has become widely accepted that Fitzgerald was at his best when writing about experiences known and observed first-hand.

_The Last Tycoon_ though incomplete is a fascinating tale of studio politics in early Hollywood. Monroe Stahr in the novel is workaholic who can “work all through the night on a single picture.” It is not till the end of the novel that he realises that he has spent his whole life working, trying to make vast amount of money, only to find that it doesn’t mean anything. He works hard chasing the American Dream but ultimately never achieves his goal. F. Scott Fitzgerald shows his disdain of social classes and especially the attitudes of those in the elite class. However the main focus is on Hollywood. Jealousy is also in the main plot line, beginning with Cecilia’s love of Stahr, the failure of the American Dream, the darker side of American society, social structures, and conflicts between relationships are been focused in the novel.

Nathanael West was born Nathan Weinstein, in New York City on Oct 17, 1903. He was a screen play writer and satirist. In 1933, West moved to Hollywood as a script writer. He published his third novel “A Cool Million” in 1934. He worked on many films. It was this time he wrote “The Day of the Locust”. West took many of the settings and minor characters of his novel directly from his experience living in the hotel on Hollywood Boulevard. His reputation grew after his death, especially with the publication of his collected novels by “New Directors” in 1957. _Miss Lonelyhearts_ is widely regarded as his master piece. _The Dream Life of Balso Snell, Miss Lonelyhearts,_
A Cool Million and The Day of the Locust are powerful books which remained largely unread in West’s lifetime, but they have received increasing attention since West’s death. The Day of the Locust is a short novel, took more than three years to find its final shape. It still stands as one of the best novels written about the early years of Hollywood. Most of West’s fiction is, in one way or another, a response to the Depression that hit America with the stock market crash in Oct 1929. West saw the American dream, as having been betrayed both spiritually and materially.

Nathanael West emphasizes the misleading facades of a superficial Los Angeles without much exaggeration The Day of the Locust turns 1938 Hollywood into a sunshiny, cheerful hell. The author describes a part of Hollywood few of us ever seen. He represents a dark look at Hollywood film industry. The novel explores the potentially destructive, ultimately empty allure of the Hollywood and it is a novel which puzzles some readers who expect a story about glamorous and talented performers or about successful film makers. The people who go into Hollywood seeking fame find only sleaze. Like the boats many people sink and their dreams never come true, but no dream ever completely disappears. West tells the story of characters on the fringe of the entertainment industry; in which appearance diverge radically from truths. “The Day of the Locust” infuses the elements of the traditional American concerns, like the corruption of Hollywood and the disillusionment of those who move abroad from their hometowns to live the dream. It reveals the destruction of society and the alienation of the characters that attempt to fulfill their aspirations. The characters in the novel want to lead a life of wealth, luxury and happiness that in California is not as easy to reach as they imagined it would be. They develop discontent and disappointment in their lives and become
disillusioned towards the world, which initiates the feeling of alienation within the Hollywood lower level society.

The protagonist of *The Day of the Locust* is Tod Hackett, a young graduate of the Yale School of Fine Arts who gets spotted by a talent scout and brought out to Hollywood to learn set and costume design. He is the most privileged of characters. Day by day Tod toils at the studio and plans “The Burning of Los Angeles,” the vast canvas he aspires to paint. He is not able to make a living at painting so has come to Hollywood to draw sets, and earn a decent living. He is hopelessly in love with his neighbour Faye Greener, an aspiring young actress of little talent. Tod knows that he has little to offer Faye, “neither money nor looks”. They are lovely figures, bit actors, extras, and other sorts of hangers-on. West emphasizes the less glorious lives these folks lead, scratching out a living in hard times. In “The Burning of Los Angeles” Faye has been depicted as a naked girl in the left foreground being chased by the main body of the mob. The naturalness and simplicity of her artificiality ensures that she remains unconcerned with the way her acting is received. She thus stands as wholly self-sufficient and self-contained. West distinguishes Faye as a sort of center to the novel, an object around which the rest of all the charters circle and complete. Through Faye, Tod meets her father Harry Greener, a clown. He has restricted his clowning to the boards, but latter he clowned continuously. It was his sole method of defense. After his death Faye moves into Homer’s house. Homer was a Middle Westerner and was concerned on how miserable and lonely he was.

He was desperately trying to avoid the black memories of Romola Martin. Except for her, his life had been entirely without variety of excitement. He had come to
Hollywood not to succeed but to warm himself. Faye was on the arrangement with him that Homer will support her and invest in her until she becomes a star. Tod bitterly thinks to himself that Faye has only chosen Homer because of his income and his house. Faye continue the business arrangement with Homer, she becomes bored and aggressive towards him. Tod had other rivals for Faye’s attention such as Homer Simpson and Earle Shoop. Earl was a cowboy from a small town in Arizona. All the three are in love with Faye, she however can only love a man who is either very handsome or very rich, and none of them come close to that. The cockfight is the turning point of the novel. At the fight’s conclusion the men are invited to drink into Homer’s house. Their inner beast is woken by the combination of drink and Faye’s coquettishness as she dances with Miguel and Earle. There is a fight between them and all leave. Homer recounts the entire incident which happened in his house to Tod. Homer’s accidental discovery of Faye in bed with Miguel leaves him nearly catatonic. Tod finds Homer in a disturbed condition. He leaves him and goes to a restaurant. The final thing in the novel is the riot that erupts, engulfing Tod and Homer, outside the premier of a movie at Kahn’s Persian Palace Theatre. What stands as a crowd to see celebrities, is wiped into a riot by a combination of the police presence and Homer’s attack on the small Adore, who had a nasty temper. People shouted, and there was a continuous roar of catcalls, laughter and yells, pierced occasionally by a scream. The crowd was made up of lower middle classes, every other person was a torchbearer. They were savage and bitter, especially middle-aged and the old, and had been made so by boredom and disappointment. All their lives they had been slaves. West comments on the type of people in the crowd, describing them as restless for entertainment, waiting to see a violent climax of some sort like in the movies. There
boredom becomes more and more terrible. The riot gives Tod the final inspiration for his unpainted masterpiece, “the Burning of the Los Angeles” showing the city’s destruction and its citizens’ experiencing horror. The novel isn’t as much of a story as it is a picture of what this echelon of people face in life and an expose that life in Hollywood for the masses of its employees is far from the glamour life pictured in newspaper. The novel is also a representation of tragedy and chaos as indication of the collapse of mass culture and the alienating effects of that betrayal.

Budd Schulberg was an American screenwriter, television producer, novelist and sports writer. He was the son of Hollywood film-producer B. P. Schulberg and Adeline Schulberg. Being the son of a successful Hollywood producer, Schulberg had an insider's viewpoint on the true happenings of Hollywood, and his literature and film reflected this. Schulberg was born 27 March 1914, in New York City. When he was five years old his family moved to Hollywood, where his father, was head of production at Paramount’s Famous-Lasky studios. Schulberg describes his life from about 1920 to 1937 as "Hollywood": "The studio back lot was my playground and hundreds of nights I went off to sleep with the drone of interminable story conferences as my lullaby music." Between 1931 and 1936 Schulberg was graduated from Deerfield Academy and Dartmouth College. Between 1936 and 1939, Schulberg was an apprentice screenwriter, during which time he also had a series of short stories published, several of which became bases of his later novels. In 1939, Schulberg left Hollywood and moved to Norwich, Vermont, just across the state line from Dartmouth College. It was here that he completed his first novel, What Makes Sammy Run? Schulberg spent three and half years (1942-1946) in the U.S. Navy, working for the Office of Strategic Service in Washington and Europe,
gathering photographic evidence for the Nuremberg trials. Much of this material he used as the basis for several short stories. One of these, "Nazi Pin-Up Girl" concerns Leni Riefenstahl, the director of the classic documentary “Triumph of the Will”. In spite of his war record, Schulberg, in 1951, voluntarily testified before the congressional Un-American Activities Committee that he had been a Communist briefly during the 1930s. 

Budd Schulberg’s *What Makes Sammy Run?* presents a very grim depiction of Hollywood’s skeletons in the closet. Stories about success and failure, a person’s maltreatment of others, greed leading to human misery abound in the novel. It presented Hollywood as a place where one could gain or lose all in an instant. Hollywood was also the place to witness victorious parties at the club of the season, rumors that spread magically on the fate of its dwellers. *What Makes Sammy Run?, The Harder They Fall, The Disenchanted, Some Faces in the Crowd, A Face in the Crowd: A Play for the Screen, Across the Everglades: A Play for the Screen, The Disenchanted: A Drama in Three Acts*, by Schulberg [and Harvey Breit] and *Sanctuary V* are some of his books.

*What Makes Sammy Run?* by Budd Schulberg is a brilliant book that shows the savagery, the insensitiveness, and cruelty caused by the drive for money, which characterized the general attitude of most people in America during the end of 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s. Sammy Glick, the main character in the book, is a poor Jewish boy who grows into an adult and spends all his life trying to get to the top of the hierarchy by knocking other people down. He becomes a man of ruthless ambition. It is money, prestige, and power, which are most important for him. His mind is constantly occupied with thoughts of how to manipulate people and benefit from their hard work. He first used his wiles in a New York paper. It was there that he first started to work.
Then he invaded Hollywood, wreaked havoc as he snaked his way to the top. This book has explored not only the many faces of Hollywood, but also has delved into the intricacies of human relationships and how they can or can’t withstand the pressures of showbiz. Sammy Glick is a “victim of cultural conditions” and poor living standards. It is the Western civilization that created the Sammy Glicks. All the numerous opportunities for advancement and personal fulfillment make people forget what their life is really about. It is all images that counts. Other people judge how successful one is, by all the "dead possessions" one has. Sammy’s cunning, ruthless way to approach life is simply unimaginable. Sammy Glick is a "frantic marathoner’ of life, ‘springing out of his mother’s womb, turning life into a race in which the only rules are fight for the rail, and elbow on the turn, and the only finish-line is death”.

Norman Mailer was one of the towering figures of the twentieth century American letters and an acknowledged master of essay. With his supple mind and pugnacious persona, he engaged society more than any other writer of his generation. He is a widely known American author because of the length of his career and his many different and important books. He has been on the cover of every major American magazine and has appeared on nearly every talk show in existence. It is safe to say that he has been interviewed on radio, television and print more than any other author, over 500 times. He has been tremendously productive, publishing 40 books from 1948 to 2003. No discussion of the modern American novel would be complete without reference to his novels, several of which have become classics. Norman Mailer was born in Long Branch, New Jersey, but he was raised in Brooklyn New York. Mailer’s literary talents were recognized and encouraged at school by his teacher, who let him write
whatever he wanted. His first literary effort was a 250 pages story called “Invasion From Mars”, which he penned at the age of nine in notebooks. However, it was not until he attended Harvard that he decided to become a writer. He graduated from Boys High School in 1939 and then studied at Harvard University, Cambridge (1939-43), receiving B.S in aeronautical engineering. In 1941 Mailer’s “The Greatest Thing in the World” won story magazine’s college contest. In the late 1940’s Mailer worked in Hollywood as a script writer. He moved in 1951 to Greenwich Village in New York City. Mailer’s third novel, The Deer Park (1955) was about the corruption of values in Hollywood. The novel was published by G.P.Putnam’s Sons. The novel rose to number six on the best seller list. The Presidential Papers (1963) established Mailer as one of the most vigorous essayists in America. The Armies of the Night (1968) was a nonfiction novel published by New American Library in 1968. It won the Pulitzer Prize for General Non-fiction and National Book Award in category Arts and Letters. The book’s full title is Armies of the Night: History as a Novel/ The Novel as History. As the title suggests, the narrative is split into historicized and novelized accounts of the Oct 1967 “March on the Pentagon”. In the same vein, he wrote Miami and the Siege of Chicago (1968) and Of a Fire on the Moon (1970) and Cannibals and Christmas (1966). In The Prisoner of Sex (1971) Mailer proposed that gender might determine the way a person perceived orders reality. He also published a highly successful true life novel, The Executioner’s Song (1979) and The Cold Blood in Mailer’s style. Mailer was fascinated by Marilyn Munroe, and eventually wrote two books about her: Marilyn (1973) and Of Women and their Elegance (1980). The Gospel According to the Son (1977) was a retelling of the Jesus story. Mailer celebrated his 80th birthday in New York and published The Spooky Art(2003) a
collection of writings about writings. Mailer was awarded in 2005, the National Book Medal for distinguished contribution to American Letters. His final novel, *The Castle in the Forest* (2007), about the young Adolf Hitler, formed in a way a complementary pair to *The Gospel According to Son*. The story was narrated by a devil. Mailer died of renal failure on Nov 10, 2007, in Manhattan, at the age of 84.

*The Deer Park* is a powerful and vigorous satire on Hollywood’s excesses and corruption. Combining a savage imagination with a heightened documentary realism, Mailer paints an uncompromising and terrifying portrait of a corrupt society lost in moral confusion and despair. In this novel, sex is the main subject and politics is pushed into the background. Published in 1955, this novel is more structured, stable and credible, built around a “story” or group of stories involving authentic characters and plausible events. The characters are mostly Hollywood types vacationing at a fantastically at resort called Desert D’Or.

The novel is split into separate parts, interlaced with one another in the course of the text. The chief protagonist of the *The Deer Park* is Charles Francis Eitel. He is one of the best directors in town, a humane and intelligent man with ambitions once, yet crippled by the inescapable need to stay successful. Eitel is a black listed director, banned from making films because of leftist connections in 1930s, who is unwilling to testify about these associations before a congressional committee. Middle-aged, divorced, handsome and cultivated, he is trying to write an ambitions film script while living on the last of his savings.
The story teller is Sergius O’Shaugnessy, a brilliant and beautiful fake, a blue-eyed blond with decorations on his uniform from the Korean War. He was a young Air Force pilot, decommissioned for health reason. He lands in the Desert D’Or in search for a new beginning as a writer. It is a fashionable Californian resort where Hollywood’s elite converge when they need a break. It is an incestuous hothouse of a town – a haven for manipulators, film stars, lovers, pimps, producers, whores, gamblers, scriptwriters and cheats. He has won $14,000 in poker game in Tokyo, and he uses it to suggest he is from a wealthy family instead of an orphanage. He goes to Desert D’Or as a kid who may sell his life story to the picture business. Sergius is soon a figure at Desert D’Or which is Palm Springs, though it often feels like Las Vegas. He meets people: Dorothea O’Faye, a onetime singer, a hostess. She is a rough, tough old actress. Much of the action of the novel revolves around her house. She is a retired night club performer, call girl and successful gossip columnist. She holds continuous open house for the inhabitants of Desert D’Or and her house is known as “The Hangover”. Her son Marrison Faye is a pimp by vacation with free access to both the highest and lowest levels of Desert D’Or. He is very economical in the way he expresses himself. Lulu Meyers speaks in the mixture of everything. She is self-educated and speaks like a radiant actress. She is the young star of the day. Lulu was a nice girl of the 40’s she had some measure of control over her life. She becomes a spoiled actress. “The Deer Park” is split into separate parts, interlaced with one another in the course of the text, the first of these and the dominant one is the story of the love affair between Eitel and Eelena. The second concern Sergius himself and his relationship with Lulu Megers. And the third part is centered about the enigmatic Marion Faye. These characters influence each other, but isolated from one
another at plot level. The story of Eitel and Eelena is Mailer’s greatest realistic narrative. They both marry at the novel’s conclusion.

Canada’s literature reflects the Canadian perspective on nature, frontier life, and Canada’s position in the world. Canada’s ethnic and cultural diversity are reflected in its literature. Satire, irony and search for self-identity are some of the traits of Canadian literature. One of Canada’s popular/critically acclaimed writers, Richler is probably the best-known Canadian author. In more than two dozen books of fiction and non-fiction, along with innumerable contributions to magazines, he became one of the first Canadian writers to be widely recognized outside of Canada. In a peculiar way that repeated the ambiguous nature of his bilingual, bicultural homeland, he was considered both an icon of Canadian culture; who won all of Canada’s most important literary awards and one of that culture’s most withering critics. In 1959, he published *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* and in 1963, *The Incomparable Atuk* was published by him. *Cocksure* (1968) ridicules popular culture and the entertainment industry. It received the Governor General’s Literary Award, Canada’s highest writing prize. Its treatment of sex and its bawdy language offended some critics in the late 1960’s one of whom called the book “truly dirty”. *Cocksure* has extravagant plotting and fantastic characterization. According to Richler, the subject matter of cocksure lent itself to savagery. In the novel, Richler examines topics such as the Hollywood, Canadian society, Jewish culture, the adverse effects of materialism, relationship between people of different backgrounds, the liberal individual’s predicament in the modern world sans values.

The setting of *Cocksure* is London in the permissive sixties. The setting is actually, a transplanted Hollywood; Hollywood transplanted as a kind of rank weed
throughout the world. Richler attacks, on different levels—the producers, directors, writers, and actors of crude/commercial fantasies that dominate the mass media. Mortimer Griffin, the WASP anti-hero of the novel, is a high level editor of Oriole Press, a British-based publishing firm that is taken over by an “aging undying” movie mogul who suddenly, seemingly inexplicably, moves across the ocean to be closer to his British operations. This producer, Star Maker turns out to be a grotesque emblem of fraudulent Hollywood, as well as fraudulent London of the times. The epitome of self-concern, Star Maker aims first at self-perpetuation and then self-reproduction. When, in the first episode of the novel, the sycophantic Dino Tomasso, who has been designated as Star Maker’s heir, finds that he is being demoted to the London operation, in one first and final burst of fury he tells Star Maker to “Go fuck yourself”(C,3). This Star Maker decides to do. After a certain amount of surgical juggling, Star Maker finally consummates his relationship with himself in an act of autoeroticism that has obvious symbolic overtones for a society that is, increasingly, both narcissistic and hypersexual.

Mortimer comes to know more and more about Star Maker’s enterprises (on all levels) after he is chosen to be the new head of Oriole Publishing. He is chosen, incidentally, because of his “marvy lymphatic system”(C,184). For those who work for Star Maker, however, good health is definitely unhealthy. Tomasso, for example, who had already contributed to Star Maker’s well-being, is soon called upon to give more. First one eye and then the other are lost before this subordinate realizes how truly blind he has always been. Like Star Maker’s other greedy lackeys, he has been willing to sacrifice—personal pleasures, moral principles, and body parts—all for the prospect of ultimately inheriting a piece of Star Maker’s kingdom. But as Star Maker swells with
child, Tomasso’s hopes are dashed. He knows too much about the business. He must be replaced—and eliminated. Mortimer subsequently fares no better. The novel ends with the protagonist going the way of Tomasso. Mortimer, however, will be eliminated because of his refusal to abandon traditional values and his unwillingness to be a part of the murderous Star Maker industries. On the positive side, the Star Maker is a maverick endowed with a creative/business brain who successfully experiments with the toy-actors who replace the non-cooperative actors of the Hollywood.

This Thesis strives to assess the glorious and sinister aspects of Hollywood; especially, the influences Hollywood exercises over human lives.

The Thesis has seven chapters. This Introductory chapter traced the origin and evolution of Hollywood. Later, it introduced the literary genre of Hollywood Fiction and offered a critical introduction of the lives and works of the writers chosen for the study.


The Seventh chapter sums up the research findings.