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The Writers: A History of American Screenwriters and Their Guild

Miranda J. Banks

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Screenwriters are storytellers and dream builders. They forge new worlds and beings, bringing them to life through storylines and idiosyncratic details. Yet up until now, no one has told the story of these creative and indispensable artists. *The Writers* is the only comprehensive qualitative analysis of the history of writers and writing in the film, television, and streaming media industries in America.

Featuring in-depth interviews with over fifty writers—including Mel Brooks, Norman Lear, Carl Reiner, and Frank Pierson—*The Writers* delivers a compelling, behind-the-scenes look at the role and rights of writers in Hollywood and New York over the past century. Granted unprecedented access to the archives of the Writers Guild Foundation, Miranda J. Banks also mines over 100 never-before-published oral histories with legends such as Nora Ephron and Ring Lardner Jr., whose insight and humor provide a window onto the enduring priorities, policies, and practices of the Writers Guild.

With an ear for the language of storytellers, Banks deftly analyzes watershed moments in the industry: the advent of sound, World War II, the blacklist, ascension of television, the American New Wave, the rise and fall of VHS and DVD, and the boom of streaming media. *The Writers* spans historical and contemporary moments, and draws upon American cultural history, film and television scholarship and the passionate politics of labor and management. Published on the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the Writers Guild of America, this book tells the story of the triumphs and struggles of these vociferous and contentious hero-makers.

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