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# Angelina Jolie dismisses lawsuit against In the Land of Blood and Honey

'It's par for the course' – actor defends directing debut against claims of copyright infringement from Croatian author

**Ben Child**  
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Angelina Jolie at the premiere of In the Land of Blood and Honey in New York. Photograph: Carlo Allegri/Reuters

Angelina Jolie has dismissed a lawsuit filed against her directing debut, *In the Land of Blood and Honey*, which claims it borrows liberally from a 2007 book by a Croatian journalist about the Balkan conflict of the early 1990s.

### In the Land of Blood and Honey

**Production year:** 2012

**Countries:** Rest of the world, USA

**Directors:** Angelina Jolie

**Cast:** Rade Serbedzija, Zana Marjanovic

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James Braddock, also known as Josip Knežević, is suing Jolie and the producers of her film in the northern district court of Illinois claiming they infringed the copyright on his book *The Soul Shattering*. Both works, he alleges, are set in wartorn Bosnia and Herzegovina and feature a main female character who is captured, imprisoned and raped by soldiers, as well as a Serbian camp commander who falls in love with her and helps her escape.

In an interview with the LA Times published yesterday, Jolie denied ever having read Braddock's book. "It's par for the course. It happens on

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almost every film," she said during an interview about her new film at a New York hotel. "There are many books and documentaries that I did pull from," added the Oscar-winning actor, citing work by journalists Peter Maas and Tom Gielten. "It's a combination of many people's stories. But that particular book I've never seen."

Braddock alleges he met with Edin Sarkic, one of Jolie's producers on *In the Land of Blood and Honey*, several times in 2007 and 2008 to discuss adapting his book into a movie. He says he subsequently kept in touch with Sarkic via email and text message over the following two years, and was surprised to see the film-maker working on a movie with similar subject matter that he had not been consulted over.

*In the Land of Blood and Honey*, which premiered in New York earlier this week, also came in for criticism last year from Bosnian victims of sexual violence during the Balkan conflict. Their anger, which was directed largely at Jolie and her UN goodwill ambassador status, centred on erroneous reports in local media that the film featured scenes in which a Bosnian rape victim falls in love with her Serbian attacker.

"I felt sympathy for people for whom these issues are so sensitive," Jolie told the Times. "But when you're coming at something because you care so much about an area, especially women in that area, as I was, and you know the themes of the film are violence against women, then to be accused of the opposite hurts. You feel a little sickened by it."

Away from the headaches of directing, Jolie was [yesterday reported](#) to be in talks with the [French film-maker Luc Besson](#) to star in an untitled project described by the Deadline blog as a "dramatic thriller ... rooted in true scientific elements". She is also said to be considering a historical epic about the British aristocrat Gertrude Bell, who helped define the current Middle East and the borders of Iraq after the fall of the Ottoman empire and prior to the first world war. Other potential projects include a new take on *Sleeping Beauty: Maleficent* for Disney, and portraying medical examiner Kay Scarpetta in a film based on the bestselling Patricia Cornwell series of novels.

*In the Land of Blood and Honey*, meanwhile, is being released in the US

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