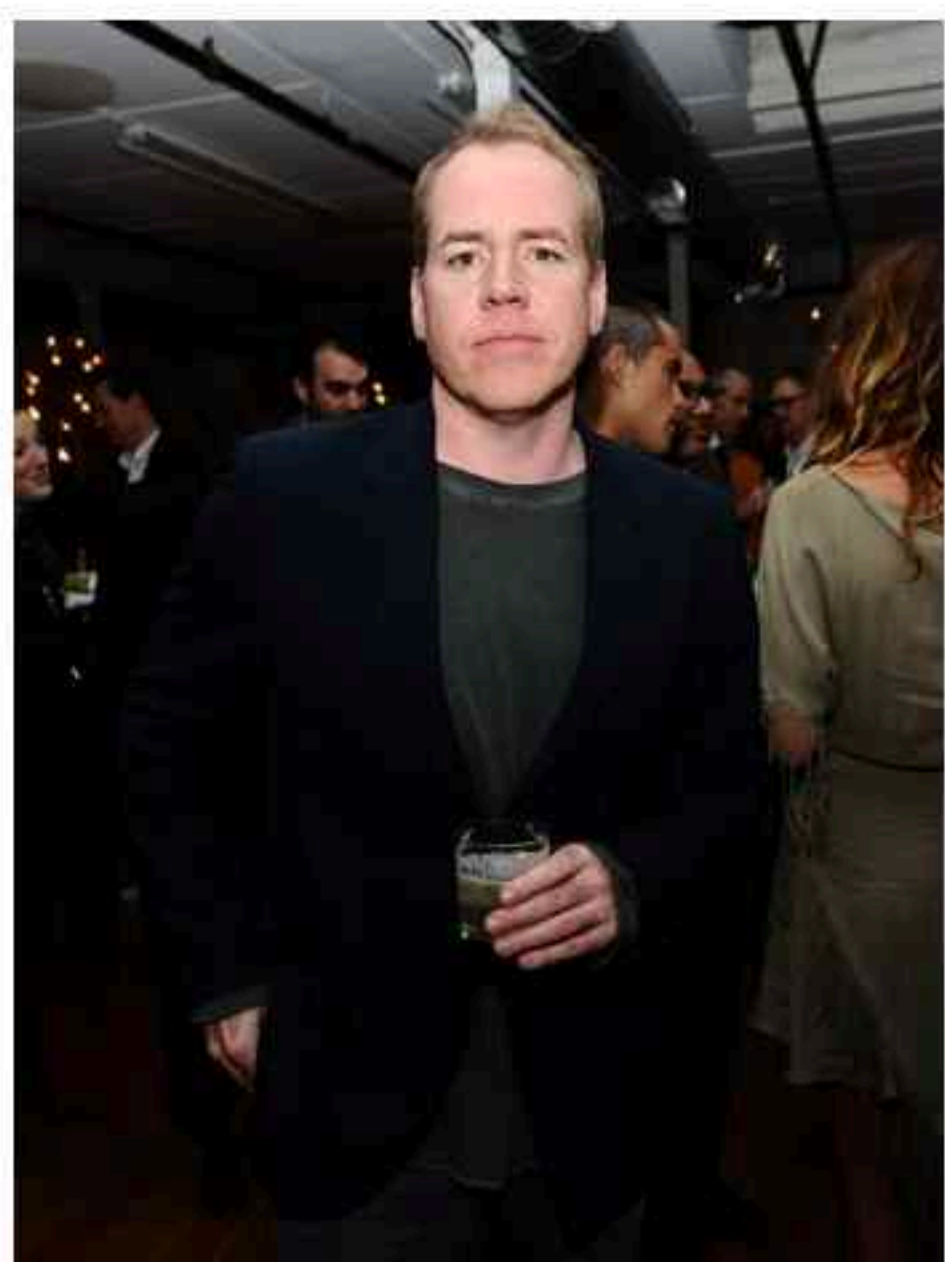


# Bret Easton Ellis' Agency Hires Top Litigators in Nikki Finke War (Exclusive)

12:42 PM PDT 7/19/2012 by Matthew Belloni

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**ICM brings on Howard Weitzman and Lawrence Iser after the reclusive blogger allegedly tells agents she will reveal their addresses, schools of their children, unless they cut ties with the star author.**



Michael Buckner/Getty Images

The war of words between author **Bret Easton Ellis** and blogger **Nikki Finke** is taking a new and possibly serious turn.

Multiple sources tell *The Hollywood Reporter* that ICM Partners, the talent agency that represents Ellis, has hired litigation attorneys **Howard Weitzman** and **Lawrence Iser** to represent it in legal matters related to Finke, and the lawyers have fired off two separate letters to her website's owner demanding that she stop harassing agency employees.

The letters, according to sources who have seen them, claim Finke has been calling various ICM partners demanding that the agency

sever ties with Ellis and provide his contact information in the wake of a feud that stemmed from him writing on Twitter that he and the reclusive blogger live in the same condo building. (Gawker later claimed that the duo live in a West Hollywood building where Deadline owner Penske Media Corp. bought a unit in November, but it's not clear if Finke actually lives there.)

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## EXCLUSIVE: Bret Easton Ellis Ramps Up His War Against Hollywood Blogger Nikki Finke

Sources who have seen the cease-and-desist letters say the letters also claim that Finke has told top ICM employees she would reveal their home addresses and where their children go to school. Finke also is alleged in the letters to have told at least one agent that she would write things damaging to the agency on the Deadline blog that the agency's executives believe to be false.

In a statement to *THR*, Penske Media Corp. attorney **Bryan Freedman** denied that the allegations in the letters are accurate. "There is absolutely no validity to any of the claims that have been alleged in the letters," Freedman said. ICM, Weitzman and Iser declined to comment.

The legal moves are the latest in an expanding battle that began after Ellis tweeted June 22: "I'm not sure if this is good news or bad news but I just found out that Nikki Finke lives in the same building as I do in West Hollywood." Ellis followed up with another tweet July 13 claiming, "Nikki Finke called one of the agencies that reps me and threatened to sue me AND destroy them as well. Fortunately the agency was ICM."

The *New York Observer* then reported that Finke had called ICM agent **Binky Urban** and, failing to reach her, "gave her assistant what was characterized to us as an epic, otherworldly screaming-at, the likes of which the assistant had never previously experienced." (According to the lawyer letters, Finke has asked that an ICM assistant be fired.)

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Ellis then followed up with a tweet Monday claiming Finke also was targeting people who work at their condo building. "The hectoring, threatening, vaguely litigious emails she sent to our buildings [sic] owner and management was a truly awful thing," Ellis wrote. And in a statement to *The Hollywood Reporter* published on Wednesday, Ellis said Finke "went ballistic, and her reaction was harassing and unacceptable."

Now ICM, which had nothing to do with the tweets, seems to agree. Weitzman and Iser are veteran Hollywood litigators, having handled cases for a diverse clientele including recent matters for **Michael Jackson** and **Bethenny Frankel**.

Hollywood agents and executives have long complained privately about being harassed by Finke, who began writing her blog in 2006 and sold it to Penske in 2009. According to reports, Finke has a history of litigation and threats of lawsuits (her parent is suing *THR*, and she reportedly has sued E-Trade and threatened *Women's Wear Daily*, among others).

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