

\$900 Million "Conjuring" Movie Trial Scheduled

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A scene from the blockbuster hit, "The Conjuring." [/caption]

Summary: A Virginia judge has allowed the Conjuring case to move forward.

The Conjuring movie franchise has scored several haunted houses worth of cash for Warner Brothers Studios, but one man said that the spooky work belongs to him. Warner Brothers tried to get the man's lawsuit thrown out in court, but this week, a judge allowed it to move forward and scheduled a trial for next year, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Gerald Brittle is an author who published a book about Ed and Lorraine Warren in 1980 called *The Demonologist*. The Warrens were well-known paranormal investigators, and their case files were purchased by Warner Brothers and adapted to make movies such as *The Conjuring*, *Conjuring 2* and *Annabelle*.

Brittle said that he and the Warrens had an agreement that they could not enter a movie deal without his consent and that he has the exclusive rights to their case files. The author said that despite Warner Brothers knowing this, they entered a deal with the Warrens in the 1990s and used the case files as well as his book.

"[W]hen Lorraine Warren granted the Defendants the right to use the Warren Case Files, which the Defendants themselves repeatedly state their movies are based on, she could not have done so because she had years earlier contractually granted that exclusive right to use those same Warren cases, Warren Case Files and related materials to the Plaintiff," Brittle's attorney Patrick C. Henry II stated in the lawsuit. "Lorraine Warren had nothing to convey."

Brittle filed a \$900 million lawsuit in Virginia against Warner Brothers, and he claims copyright infringement, trespass to chattels, conversion, conspiracy and more. In addition to suing Warner Brothers, Brittle named New Line Productions and director James Wan as defendants.

The Conjuring franchise has been lucrative for Warner Brothers. Each film has earned hundreds of millions of dollars.

Warner Brothers responded to Brittle's lawsuit and said that no one has a monopoly to *real-life* figures and events, and they argued that the case be moved to arbitration since Brittle had failed to state proper claims.

This case has drawn attention not only for the stakes involved but because Warner Brothers' argument is based upon the logic that ghosts are real, according to *AV Club*.

U.S. District Court Judge John Gibney Jr. wasn't convinced by Warner Brothers and did not dismiss the case.

"The Court declines the parties' invitation to wade into the truth or falsity of the Warrens' paranormal escapades or to parse the resulting similarities between the works at this stage of the case," Gibney stated. "This type of analysis, which bears on the evidence presented and factual determinations, is better suited for summary judgment or trial."

The trial is scheduled for April 16 of next year.

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What do you think of Brittle's case against Warner Brothers? Let us know in the comments below.