'BOYS DON'T CRY' MAKERS SUED

By Staff
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wo lawsuits have been filed against the makers of the Academy Award-nominated movie "Boys Don't Cry," which chronicles the 1993 slaying of a woman who posed as a man in rural Nebraska.

A woman depicted in the movie accused Fox Searchlight Pictures and others involved in its production of slander in one lawsuit. The other accuses Fox Searchlight of breaching a contract for allegedly abandoning plans to finance another movie on the Nebraska murder.

The killing of 21-year-old Teena Brandon in a farmhouse near Humboldt outraged homosexual activists and drew national attention.

Brandon, who went by the alias Brandon Teena, was killed by two men who wanted to silence her after she told police they raped her when they learned her true gender.

Lana Tisdel, a Falls City woman who dated Brandon, asks for unspecified damages in the slander suit filed in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles. The lawsuit claims the movie makes references to Tisdel as "lazy, white trash and a skanky snake."

The movie also falsely implies Tisdel's willingness to engage in sexual favors in exchange for alcohol, the lawsuit claimed.

The other lawsuit, filed in Los Angeles County Superior Court, accuses Fox Searchlight Pictures of abandoning plans to finance a movie on the case after learning "Boys Don't Cry" was already in the works and it could buy the rights to that film.

The 1999 movie about Brandon's murder led to an Academy Award best actress nomination for Hilary Swank, who portrayed Brandon, and a best supporting actress nomination for Chloe Sevigny, who played Tisdel.

The second lawsuit was filed by Aphrodite Jones of Los Angeles, who alleges that she had made a deal with Fox Searchlight to turn a book she wrote about the murders into a movie starring Drew Barrymore.

Jones' lawyer, Glen Kulik, and officials at Fox Searchlight, did not return calls seeking comment.

John Lotter and Marvin Nissen were convicted of killing Brandon and witnesses Lisa Lambert and Philip DeVine.

Lotter, who received three death sentences, is scheduled to die April 26 in the state's electric chair. Nissen testified against Lotter and was sentenced to life in prison.