



## Charles N. Shephard

Partner

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Chuck Shephard focuses on entertainment, intellectual property, and employment litigation. He has a breadth of experience litigating in state and federal trial and appellate courts, and before various administrative and arbitration tribunals.

Chuck has extensive experience litigating in the fields of copyright and trademark law. For more than 25 years, he has represented Toho Co., Ltd., the owner of the intellectual property rights in the character “Godzilla,” policing the unauthorized use of Toho’s copyrights and trademarks and, where necessary, bringing litigation to enforce those rights. Chuck has also litigated numerous copyright cases in which motion pictures, television programming, books, and other intellectual property have allegedly been infringed.

Chuck has spent considerable time litigating on behalf of talent in the entertainment industry. Such matters have included disputes as to whether negotiations resulted in a binding agreement between the parties, disputes as to whether granted rights were intended to cover new technologies, claims as to whether studios have accurately reported and accounted to profit participants who have contingent compensation interests, disputes between talent and their representatives, and idea submission cases.

Among others, he has represented the Beatles, Tom Cruise, James Cameron, Dustin Hoffman, Warren Beatty, Annette Benning, Brad Grey, Uma Thurman, Courtney Cox, David Arquette, Kirsten Dunst, Carol Burnett, Peter Falk and Robert Towne in a variety of contractual and other disputes. He also has significant experience representing producers and distributors. Chuck was lead counsel for Toho-Towa Co. Ltd. and prevailed on its behalf in a dispute concerning the distribution in Japan of the motion picture *The Good Shepherd*. The case resulted in a published opinion from the California Court of Appeal (July 2013) addressing alter ego liability issues.

With significant experience litigating claims involving the right of publicity, Chuck was lead trial counsel in Dustin Hoffman’s successful right of publicity trial against *Los Angeles Magazine* concerning the unauthorized digital alteration of Mr. Hoffman’s image. In connection with that and other litigation, Chuck has frequently litigated the relationship between copyright and the right of publicity, the preemptive effect of the United States Copyright Act, and the extent to which the right of publicity is impacted by the First Amendment, parody, and other fair use considerations.

Chuck also has extensive experience in connection with the distribution of motion pictures, including international distribution. He has handled numerous arbitrations before the Independent Film & Television Alliance (formerly American Film Marketing Association), and in 2007 he was lead counsel in connection with successful appellate proceedings before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal, resulting in a published opinion, in the case of *Nippon Herald Films, Inc. vs. New Regency Productions, Inc.* involving issues of arbitrator neutrality and disclosure requirements.

**Awards**

- Listed, *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Litigation - Intellectual Property, 2024–2025
- Listed, *Southern California Super Lawyers*, 2012-2013, 2015-2016
- Rated, "AV Preeminent 5.0 out of 5," Martindale Hubbell

**Bar Admissions**

- California

**Court Admissions**

- United States District Court for the Central and Northern Districts of California

**Education**

- University of California, Los Angeles School of Law (J.D., *Order of the Coif*)
- University of California, Los Angeles (B.A., *summa cum laude*)
  - Phi Beta Kappa
  - Political Science Major