



The Art of Social War

By Jodi Wing
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Introduction

New Yorker Stacey Knight wants nothing more than to marry her devoted fiancé, Jamey Makepeace, and continue her career success in her beloved hometown. But then the unthinkable happens: Jamey's company acquires Pacificus Studios, and a condition of the deal is that the newlyweds relocate to LA.

Within the span of a one-way plane ride, the unwitting couple go from New York City insiders to LA pariahs as they land in a high-stakes, Technicolor social war, pursued by ruthless power brokers in the film demimonde. Stacey navigates a sea of confusing social obstacles, packs of wild coyotes (literally), and extremely bad behavior. Guided by Sun-Tzu's *The Art of War*, Stacey learns that she must adapt if they are to survive, and attack if they are to thrive.

Questions for Discussion

1. To what extent does Stacey's comfort with her identity as a New York professional prevent her from fully embracing the possibility of life in Los Angeles with Jamey?
2. How does the behavior of the Pacificus team at Jamey and Stacey's New York wedding hint at their ability to wreak havoc on their lives in Los Angeles?
3. How does the author's Dickensian use of suggestive last names for her characters (Jamey Makepeace, Julia Mallis, Charlie Trueheart, Phil Craven) affect your appreciation of their roles in the novel?
4. How does the portrait of LA society in *The Art of Social War* compare to the everyday social encounters and relationships in your circle?
5. Why does Stacey feel inadequate when she's among the ladies of leisure in the exclusive Los Angeles film community?
6. How does Stacey's rallying around a coyote relocation program transform her identity and others' perceptions of her?
7. How does Sun-Tzu's *The Art of War* influence Stacey in her scheme to expose Simon's misuse of corporate funds? To what extent is she successful in her efforts?
8. How does Julia Mallis's past come to haunt her in a very public way, and what roles do Barb Spurdoff and Ritzy Snippington play in her exposure? To what extent is Julia personally responsible for their retribution?
9. How do the many hardships that Stacey and Jamey have experienced make possible the exciting professional offer Stacey gets from Charlie Trueheart at the end of the novel?
10. Of the many humorous moments in this novel, which did you find most memorable or compelling, and why?

About the Author

Jodi Wing was born and raised in New York. A graduate of Colgate University, she settled in New York City and worked in marketing and public relations. She currently resides in Los Angeles with her husband. *The Art of Social War* is her first novel.