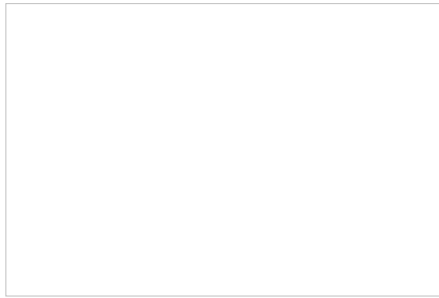


Playmates Expose The Dark Deeds Of Hugh Hefner And Playboy

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Playmates Expose The Dark Deeds Of Hugh Hefner And Playboy

If you have seen the A&E series about the secrets of Playboy, you will know that something was not right at the 'Mansion'.

After appearing in an article in Playboy Magazine, Peter Lawford and Don Adams, top buddies of Hugh Hefner, and mansion regulars, contacted our team to build a present for Hugh Hefner's birthday and deliver it to the Mansion in Los Angeles.

The present was a tribute to Hefner's girlfriend: Carrie Leigh.

Then things got wild.

An investigator made his first call to a guy named Rosenzweig, whom he knew from "Chicago days." Talks progressed over a period of several weeks. Ultimately, folks named Glassman and Caruso together worded a series of releases to be signed by Hefner, Eldridge, Bogdanovich, Nell Schaap and Louise Hoogstraten, each of them promising they would never file suit on certain issues again. The Dorothy Stratten murder had a long reach.

More Playmates than you know about have died from gunshots.

Hefner savored what he felt was his victory. "I'm not interested in crucifying Bogdanovich. I'm not interested in sending a guy to prison," he said one day in the library. "I have no problem with accepting the fact that it came from a combination of his guilt and craziness in combination with being lied to and misled by other people. I don't have any problem with that. But I'll be damned if I'm gonna pretend in talking to people that the last year and a half didn't exist." It was little matter to him that a paperback edition of Unicorn would soon be released. "I knew they would never pursue the suit. The depositions have left Bogdanovich totally exposed," he said. Just as Bogdanovich had portrayed Stratten and her family as Hefner's victims, Hefner seemed unable to view the mother and daughter of his murdered Playmate as anything more than Bogdanovich's pawns. "The supposed reason for dismissing the case is that the pressure is too much on Louise," he said. "Well, all the pressure has been related to . . . Bogdanovich."

Caruso, not unexpectedly, painted a different picture. "Hefner just out financed the girl," he said, adding, "Louise was strictly on the defensive from the first — she should have taken the offense to win," by delving more deeply into Hefner's own past. "I would have deposed Hefner for five or six days, six hours a day." For Louise and her mother, however, the grim realization that the suit would take at least five years to come to trial, that their lives would be overwhelmed by it, was all that mattered. "We never understood what a burden would be caused by filing and prosecuting a lawsuit. For [Louise's] health and sanity, therefore, I want, simply, please, for all this to be ended," Nell Schaap said in the press release issued along with Bogdanovich's. "Winning . . . is not worth even one more day of the pain and suffering involved." Bogdanovich, in his release, apologized. "I am sorry if Mr. Hefner's health has suffered because of things I have said or written. He and I were once friends, and I regret any pain Mr. Hefner and Dorothy Stratten's family have suffered as a result of past disagreements between him and me."

It appeared Bogdanovich had undergone his share of suffering, though more quietly than his antagonist. Hefner says he learned, on a tip from a Playboy photographer, that Bogdanovich, using a pseudonym, had entered Los Angeles' Cedars-Sinai hospital on July 4th complaining of chest pains. A close friend of Bogdanovich's denies the incident. There were rumors, too, that the director was about to file for bankruptcy. Four months later, Bogdanovich did just that in Los Angeles. According to news accounts, his failed attempt to re release They All Laughed — as a tribute to Stratten — had devastated him financially. In December, the Los Angeles Times reported Bogdanovich was left with \$21.37 in the bank and \$25.79 in his pocket. His debts, incurred as a result of trying to market and distribute the film, totaled more than \$6.6 million against assets of \$1.5 million.

Playboy, by comparison, which had accrued legal expenses in the six figures starting with its attempt to challenge Bogdanovich's manuscript, was unscathed. "Companies have to draw a line in terms of what they're going to allow an individual to get away with. And this was well beyond that line," Rosenzweig explained. "Most of our costs were picked up by our insurance company. You understand, the attack was on the corporation, not just an individual. The attack was on the heart of the company — Hefner and Playmates."

Stepping inside Hefner's world, which is largely confined to the five acres in Holmby Hills, you sense the way of life he seeks to defend is less sexually liberating and glamorous than frayed at the edges. But Hefner's vision is rose-colored. "Contrary to what Peter suggests, this house was quite literally a sanctuary for Dorothy," he says. "It was a way of escaping from her husband and the rest of the hassling that goes on out there. This place has been referred to as Shangri-La. And it is. You get hassled out there — you don't get hassled in here."

Tonight, Labor Day Sunday, a typical gathering of middle-aged men and very young women cluster in groups, mostly of their own sex, inside his Gothic house. The standard ratio at Hefner's house is three women to every man. A fleet of youthful butlers keeps glasses filled and ashtrays emptied. The mansion regulars are gathered: actors with familiar faces whose names, nonetheless, hover just below recall, producers who aren't producing, athletes for whom the mansion connotes class, teenagers on the cusp of womanhood in search of film careers or unknown thrills — or with nothing better to do. Among the men are actors Robert Culp and Chuck McCann; former football player Jim Brown, who recently beat a rape rap; former L.A. deputy district attorney Vincent Bugliosi, Charles Manson's prosecutor; director Richard Brooks (In Cold Blood, Looking for Mr. Goodbar); and octogenarian Max Lerner, the gnomish journalist and house intellectual. Lerner stays in a guest bedroom when he's in Los Angeles and indulges in Playboy-speak, as in, "I had breakfast with Dorothy Stratten the morning she made Playmate of the Year." This is not Hollywood's A crowd.

"Nothing's changed around here in ten years," says a big man named Gene Shacove, who is wearing matching white parachute-silk jacket and pants. Shacove is standing next to a tiny 1954 Dali — Young Virgin, Auto-Sodomized by Her Own Chastity. Nearby, at the top of the double stairs leading to Hefner's bedroom, a pumpkin-size bronze sculpture rests on a pedestal. Close examination reveals it to be, unmistakably, an upturned, disembodied vulva. Mansion staffers, who call it the "Brass Ass," leave notes for one another in the opening. Down the hall a few feet is a large glass case filled with small figurines of a man and woman in every imaginable posture of sexual intercourse. A Midwestern university art professor sculpted the collection.

Shacove was the inspiration for Warren Beatty's Shampoo character, the Beverly Hills haircutter who loved women. Now, Shacove cuts Hefner's hair. "Well, one thing's changed," he says, after a minute. "In the old days, when you'd ask for a cigarette, they would bring you a pack. Now, you're lucky if you get one." Women are invited to these twice-weekly evenings of buffet dinners and movie showings because they are Bunnies in Playboy clubs, or friends of Bunnies, or the reigning Playmate of the Month. Often, they are invited on the basis of a nude Polaroid they sent to the Playboy studios on Sunset Boulevard in hopes of being chosen for a Playmate tryout. Or they are culled from the stacks of Polaroids of women who are photographed naked every Thursday morning in these studios in what amounts to an open casting call. These sessions are the real business of Playboy, the gritty essence of Hefner's empire. His people bill the free-for-all weekly events as a kind of community service, a "courtesy" toward what they say is a multitude of 500 Playmate hopefuls a year.

Miss Chiquita Banana stands by the bar in a borrowed, backless red leather dress, a bit wobbly in her heels. She's 18 and, under the makeup, a kid. "I've heard a lot of movie producers hang out here," she whispers, her eyes casting over the crowd. Two young women are strolling a path outside. One carries a Flashmatic camera; she's in her own Disneyland. Masculine gazes follow them as they pass, conversations falter until they are out of sight. "I don't know why you keep calling them women," one male guest snaps unexpectedly. "He never has women up here — they're girls. I'm not talking about age. They've never been anywhere — not even to a great restaurant. They wouldn't know endive from iceberg."

It was in the library that Hefner first noticed Carrie, the 20-year-old from Vancouver who was staying in his house while she tried out for a Playboy-cover photo session. "I remember the evening quite well," Hefner begins. He is standing in his bedroom holding a picture of Carrie taken by Hollywood photographer Hurrell. The sophisticated creature in the photograph is hardly recognizable as Carrie. "I was playing Monopoly. It was one of those things where you look across the room and . . . something happens. Just two weeks earlier, my relationship with

[Playmate] Shannon [Tweed] (now married to Kiss star Gene Simmons) had ended. And I was determined not to get involved again. But the mutual attraction was very obvious. We fell for each other."

Hefner acknowledges what he calls the "thematic coincidence" of Carrie and Dorothy Stratten being from Vancouver, and of each staying in his house while her photography sessions wore on. But he asserts the real thematic coincidence is with Barbi Benton. Both women decided to halt the march toward Playmate when they became lovers with Hefner. Both wanted something more than \$15,000, a five-year paid subscription to Playboy, and a platinum rabbit-head pin — the tangible benefits accrued by Playmates. "Carrie," says photo editor Grabowski, who invited the Canadian to L.A. to test for the magazine, "presents a challenge to Hef of his ever really knowing her. The girls he's had in the past haven't really had all these dimensions. She can be any woman she wants, and she wants it all. I also think," Grabowski adds, "the fact that she's so bright presents a problem."

Carrie Leigh can look elegant, but she prefers to cultivate a distinctly trashy look. She's a clothes junkie who favors a Los Angeles boutique called, appropriately, Addictions. Hefner gives her a clothes allowance that she routinely exceeds. On some mornings, she wanders the grounds in her bathrobe with a deathly-white clay mask on her face. Other females on the premises gaze in astonishment. "So what if none of Hef's other girlfriends did that," Carrie says on the night she's interviewed in the zoo-park backyard. "This is my home. I wouldn't be living here if I had to worry about it."

She's determined not to be mistaken for another L.A. "bim," an ingénue who thinks her best shot at superstardom involves taking off her clothes. "I've been a model since I was 14," she says. "I came here to do cover tests. I had never really thought of being a Playmate. It wasn't like I was from a town in Ohio and didn't know what was happening." When Hefner called her in Vancouver to tell her he was in love with her and wanted her to return and live with him, she remembers thinking, "It won't last." But it has lasted. She shrugs, and says coolly, "I wanted out of my life the way it was. Hef came along."

She's not worried about Hefner's antipathy to marriage. "How long do most marriages last? When he went with Barbi, that was nine years! Shannon — that was three years. Nothing lasts forever, but his relationships last as long as anyone else's." Carrie wants to experience more of the world outside Holmby Hills, and she wants more out of her own life than just being Hef's girlfriend. "He's captured most of his dreams. I haven't. I say, 'Listen, Hef, remember when you were 22? It's not that you're not enough for me — you are — but I have to expand my mind,' and I know that's hard for him to understand."

The company was growing like crazy in the Sixties, but the business side never really meant anything to me. People tend to put me down for that, but if people want to believe that business is that important, good luck to them. That is not what I'm all about. — Hugh Hefner

Hefner is bathed in television lights. His three-piece suit seems blindingly white. Carrie looks like a peacock crossed with a mermaid. A tall headdress of jewels and feathers sits on her head; her floor-length dress clings like Saran Wrap. They are surrounded by reporters in a private corner of the new Manhattan Playboy club. The original one closed two years ago due to declining revenues and membership. This night — opening night — is a show of corporate optimism and determination to keep up with the times: young men in tight pants and suspenders, white collars and cuffs, their hairy chests exposed, serve drinks along with young women dressed in the same waist-cinching costumes Gloria Steinem griped about 23 years ago. Over the bar, a pair of Hefner's satin pajamas hang framed behind glass like the preserved garments of a sacred conqueror. The designer lost the battle to drop the name Playboy from the club; he gained one concession: the rabbit-head logo is played down. Al Goldstein is here, George Plimpton is here, Christie is here. "I think I saw Harrison Ford," one guest says. "It must have been someone in a Harrison Ford mask" is the glum response.

Hefner has never liked New York and hasn't been here in eight years. "Rosenzweig," Hefner said weeks earlier, "just got back from New York. He says it's pure Fellini." Nevertheless, Hefner bravely chartered a jet and brought along Dr. Saginor, Lisa Loving and others to christen the new club. Now, he is ready to join his party. He moves slowly out into the cavernous space with Carrie Leigh on his arm taking mincing, Japanese-style steps in her narrow dress.

Carrie Leigh lived with Hefner for five years in the 1980s. After leaving the Playboy Mansion, she filed lawsuits against the magazine publisher — one palimony suit and one for publishing unauthorized photos of her.

"It's almost like a cult," she told The Washington Post in 1999. "When you live in an environment like that that's so different from how other people live, you start forgetting who you are and what you believe is right."

She added: "It took me a few years after I did leave to wipe it out of my head."

Hugh Hefner kept extensive journals and video logs of his sexual exploits and former lovers, according to witnesses who have seen the goods. The new burning question is, who gets the diaries now that the sexual icon is gone?

A 1999 profile of Hefner, who died at age 91 of 'natural causes' related to hedonism, revealed the editor and mogul kept "logs of his sexual activity on legal pads that he locked in a private cabinet by his bedroom."

"There were stacks of them," late-80s Hefner paramour Carrie Leigh told TheWrap Founder and CEO Sharon Waxman, then a correspondent for the Washington Post.

"On the left, it would say the names of the people. Next to that, it would say the type of sex ... and to the right of that, he would grade it. A-plus-plus-plus was the highest grade, down to C-minus," Leigh said at the time of the interview in 1999.

Leigh, and other individuals who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said Hefner also kept cameras hidden throughout his bedroom that recorded his romps from the '70s and '80s. Leigh said Hefner would often replay the tapes during their lovemaking, inspiring feelings of jealousy.

As the relationship faded, Leigh panicked that the tapes would come back to haunt her as she chased a career and family.

"I said, 'We might break up, I might go on and have children, and I can't have you having these tapes — someone else might get a hold of them,'" she explained.

Hefner told Waxman that he destroyed the footage after Leigh managed to walk off with some. But he did acknowledge the logs were habitual and remained.

"I'm a writer-editor. I've done that kind of thing since early childhood," he told Waxman. "Do you think it's unusual? As a writer, the first thing you do is keep observational notes."

A friend of Leigh's, Kelli Moore, who saw the logs, described them as "bizarre. That was just inexplicable to me. Weird."

Whether the video archive remains or not, the sex diaries would still be a beyond-juicy read (imagine those letter grades next to famous faces). The question is — who gets it?

After the Carrie Leigh incident, Hefner threw the present out of the upstairs window of the mansion and smashed it on the driveway, the Playboy archivist tells us. (In fact, the job of one of the 'Playboy Archivist's was to delete stuff that would embarrass Hefner...)

Carrie got her payback though. The video room where the sex videos of the Mansion orgies were stored was right down the hall from Hefners bedroom.

Carrie grabbed a bunch of videos. Other playmates, who had been abused (..and sometimes raped) learned to snatch a Sony 3/4" video cassette too. Tony Curtis, Don Cornelius, Wilt Chamberlain, Jerry Brown, Marilyn Monroe, John Houston, Don Adams, Bill Cosby (whose Playboy girlfriend was found with a bullet in her head) and over 200 other famous people are on those videos. Politician's and LA public figures are on those tapes.

The oligarchs from YouTube, Google, Facebook and LinkedIn engage in the same sort of sex crimes and they, also, hold media exposure over the heads of those who might arrest them. The fact that Hunter Biden is a sex criminal, according to most of Congress, and he never gets arrested, proves how powerful media company control can be.

Some of Hefner's top staff and other girlfriends got screwed over by Hefner and some of them grabbed tapes, too. In addition to the main tape library, near Hefner's Master Bedroom, there was a set of very dirty, very incriminating tapes secretly known as the '*Never Tapes*' that were in another safe in the house. These were to never be shown to anybody. The story goes that those ones were '*sunk in the ocean*'...**but they were not**. Hefner's most covertly pissed off key staffer has the worst of them and, rumor has it, they sold copies of the tapes to an illicit group in Malta...

Will those tapes suddenly start streaming on the internet A La' Pam Anderson?

Time will tell, but Hefner 2.0 exists in multiples in the Silicon Valley mansions of Woodside and Atherton, California and absolutely nobody is doing anything about it! Elon Musk, Steve Jurvetson, Eric Schmidt, Goguen, etc. have been called out for these sex crimes over-and-over but....