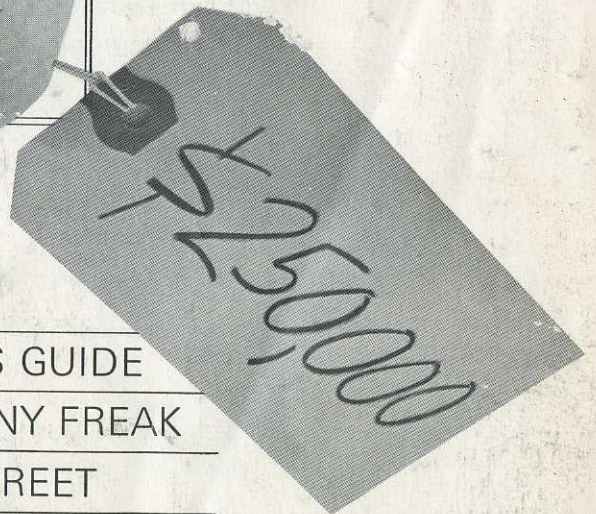


JULY 50c

# new york SCENES

**The Sex Newspapers:  
High Profit in Porn**



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TRUE DOPE — A SMOKER'S GUIDE  
CONFESSIONS OF A COMPANY FREAK  
FURNISHING OFF THE STREET

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# "Tits and Ass Sell"

reads a sign on the wall at *Screw*, first and most successful of the four sex newspapers. Who's behind them, how did they start, where are they going?

CLAUDIA DREIFUS

Six months ago, if a man wanted to buy some erotic pictures, he had to get them in the cesspools of 42nd Street. Times Square porn shops are sweaty dens of guilt which specialize in lowering everything they touch. For a price from \$2.50 to \$7, a rube can pick up photos of bored, restless sex-objects pictured in various contorted positions.

For the less brave, but equally horny, a raft of sex-and-violence tabloids, the *National Enquirer*, *Hush-Hush*, the *National Mirror*, etc., could be purchased openly at the friendly neighborhood newspaper vendor. While most of the material in the sex-and-violence rags is strictly fictional, e.g., "Baby Born With Six Inch Organ," or "Grandfather Chops Eight Year Old Into Hamburger—Serves at Bar-B-Q," these tabloids sell as many as a million copies per issue.

For the lonely female, sex and romance were graphically depicted on selected pages of *The Carpetbaggers* and *Valley Of The Dolls*. Girls read these novels, disguised under innocuous plastic covers, in the subway on their way to work.

Six months ago, that was the state of sex and popular literature. And then. . .

"*Screw* welcomes you to the first issue of the most exciting new publication in the history of the West.

"You are on the virgin trip of the first magazine-newspaper that gives sex a break and makes no bones about it. . .

"We will uncover the entire world of sex. We will be the *Consumer's Report* of sex, testing new products such as dildoes, rubbers and artificial vaginas.

"We'll review some of the movies you never expected to get reviewed. We'll try

to dignify the search for the hottest books and films by helping you get your money's worth. . ."

Editorial, November 29, 1968

Vol. I No. 1, *Screw*

A small photo-offset tabloid, *Screw* emerged out of the wet dreams of two underground writers, Al Goldstein and Jim Buckley. It was their vision to put together a newspaper free from violence, sadism or guilt, and devoted exclusively to the topic of sex.

"I met Jim," recalls Goldstein, "when he was working as Managing Editor of the now defunct *New York Free Press*. I had gone up there to give them a story I had written on my experiences as a company spy against a union at Bendix. I was rather guilt-ridden about having done such a rotten thing. Jim and I became friends and then one day he suggested that we put out a sexy newspaper together." Goldstein thought the idea for an erotic tabloid was perfect. "The underground papers had been doing that kind of thing for years. The *East Village Other* was carrying pages of 'bodies wanted' ads, and it really seemed like there was a demand." Staying late evenings at the *Free Press* office, Jim and Al began assembling Issue I, Number 1 of New York's first porn paper, *Screw*. Goldstein, who had experience as a newspaper man, put together the features. Buckley handled production. Steve Heller, the Art Director of the *Free Press* was in charge of layout. Only after the finished copy was in their sweaty hands did the real troubles begin. No printer would take *Screw*. Jim Buckley had to set the type for the first edition himself. Friends who had promised to invest in the paper refused to come through with money. "I know a lot of people who want to kill themselves now," says Buckley with a grin. "They could have owned 25% of our paper for an initial investment of \$100. We figure that *Screw* will be worth a quarter of a million dollars by the end of the year!"

Weeks of searching brought the address of a printshop whose night workers were willing to print *Screw* while the boss wasn't looking. "The guys said that if the owner saw the thing, he wouldn't permit it," relates Buckley. "They were right. Because when he found out what they had printed, he destroyed the plates. We did manage, however, to get 7,000 copies out of the shop safely."

Having passed the first hurdle in the publishing game, the team of Goldstein and Buckley then had to go out and find a distributor for their paper. Newspaper distributors, by nature, are a conservative lot and did not want to touch *Screw*. Undaunted by yet another roadblock, the boys took to some unusual methods to get their sheet introduced to the public.

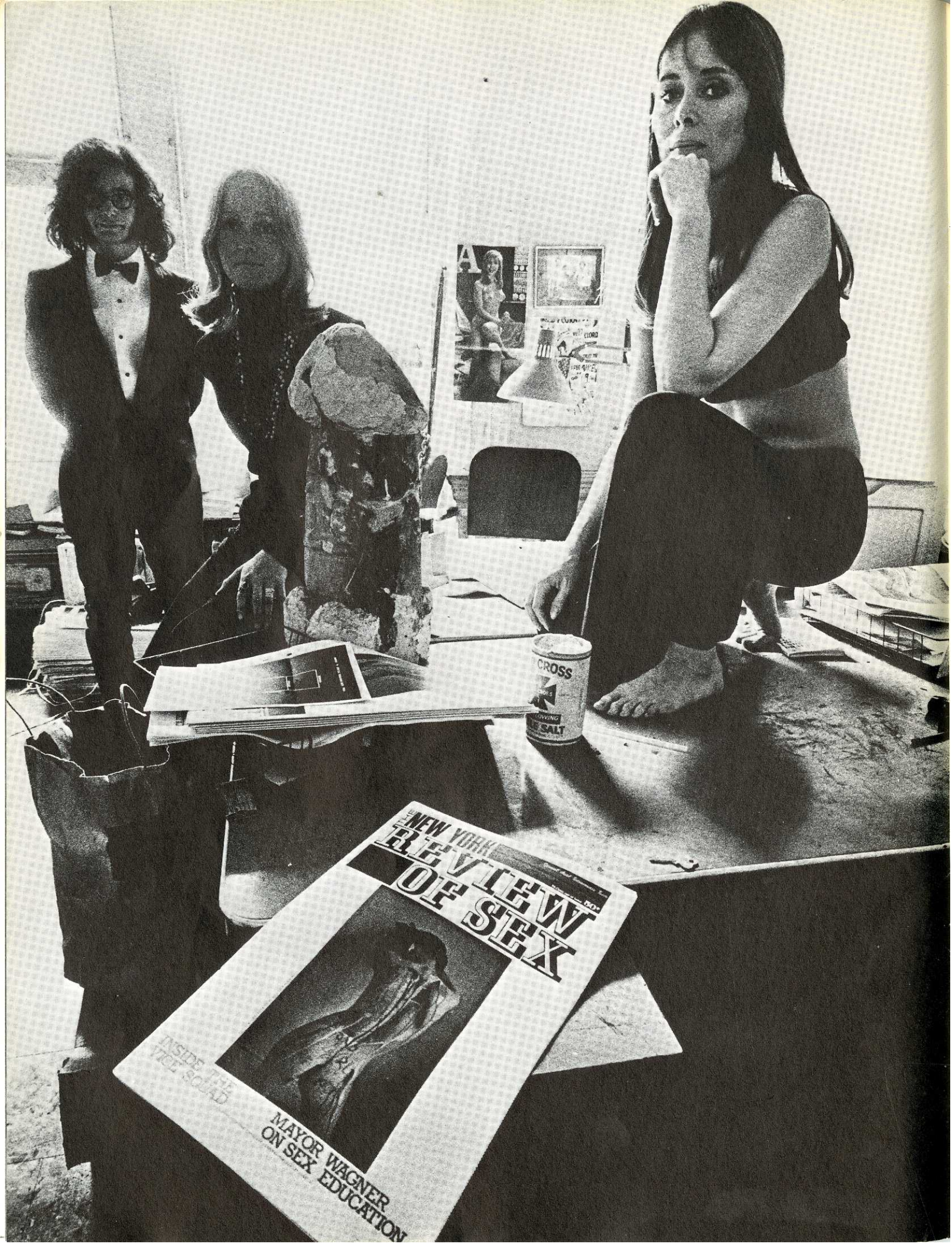
"I rented a Volkswagen," recalls Goldstein, "and Jim took to his bicycle. Together we went to every newsdealer in Manhattan and begged, pleaded and cried. Every single dealer said the same thing to us, 'Your stuff is filthy. If I get arrested, are you going to defend me?'" Finally, one kindly newshawker on the Upper East Side agreed to handle *Screw*—with the proviso that Jim and Al provide free legal aid in the event of a bust. *Screw* was on its way.

Issue Number 1 of *Screw* engendered protest from every imaginable quarter. Goldstein recently interviewed Assistant District Attorney Frank Conboy and reported that the D.A. had received over fifty complaints about the paper the first week. "People were calling him and telling him to bust us," says Al. "He told them that would be a bad idea since it would give us publicity, which is what he felt we wanted. He told them to just hang on and wait for us to die—that we probably couldn't get distribution. By the time the D.A. had decided to prosecute us, the paper had improved so that he said we had too much 'redeeming social content.' So he decided to wait again. . ."

Goldstein and Buckley, both unaware

*The unlikely trio of Roslyn Bramms, Al Goldstein and Jim Buckley put out Screw. Formerly they: a) ran for homecoming queen in Indiana; b) flunked the police academy physical; and c) considered becoming a priest.*





THE NEW YORK  
**REVIEW**  
**OF SEX**

INSIDE THE  
VICE SQUAD

MAYOR WAGNER  
ON SEX EDUCATION



of the D.A.'s reluctance to prosecute, were for weeks convinced they would be busted for obscenity violations. "Until about the third issue, we walked about every day with toothbrushes in our pockets—just in case we might be picked up," confessed Buckley.

Originally planned as a monthly, *Screw* became bi-monthly and then weekly. Today the tabloid sells over a hundred thousand copies per week and will soon surpass the *Village Voice* in circulation.

Why is *Screw* such a success story? Perhaps the paper's popularity is due to the enormous diligence, talent and *chutzpah* of its two editors. Frankly, *Screw* is a terribly literate and funny paper. Each week, Goldstein and Buckley run a series of outrageous features. Most popular is Al's column "Dirty Movies," which includes the "Peter Meter"—a glandular graph which measures Interest, Sexuality and Technical Expertise of the latest in exploitation films. *I, A Woman, Part II* received a rather limp rating . . . only 6%. A Times Square quality flick called "The Miracle of Love" fared much better. It won Goldstein's most erect ovation—84% on the Peter Meter.

Michael Perkins authors a column called "Fuckbooks," reviewing all that's new and raunchy in the world of literary porn. After fingering through his copy of "Portnoy's Complaint," Perkins concluded that Philip Roth is a "Cunt crazy yid . . . (who) would be a good guy to be in a circle jerk with. A literate one, of course."

To save their dear readers from the vulturous hands of unscrupulous hucksters, Goldstein and Buckley run a "Screw Goes To Market" column. Each week, the dynamic duo test out electric vibrators, orgy butter, imitation vaginas, legal hashish, etc. in their Betty Crocker kitchen and come up with a rating.

And then there's Lige and Jack, two homosexuals who write a kind of gay, but very serious, "Dear Dr. Joyce Brothers . . ." column. Jack and Lige, incidentally, will be receiving a special award at this year's Mattachine Society Banquet.

Al Goldstein likes to think of *Screw* as a crusading paper. "We're muckrackers in the old tradition. Sex is the new frontier," he claims. "Sure we make a lot of money on *Screw*. There's a sign in our office that says 'Tits and Ass Sell.' But we also use our money to do good things." For instance, *Screw* is currently suing the U.S. Bureau of Customs for not per-

mitting the paper to import some interesting photographs from Denmark. Another institution which is getting the *Screw*-sue treatment is ABC-TV, which had the gall to call the sheet "obscene." As their editorial blast said, "You call us pornography, we call you obscene!" Goldstein demanded equal time to answer ABC's alleged slander.

Like Portnoy, Al Goldstein comes from a very, very middle-class suburban background. To meet him, one would hardly judge him the type to be masterminding a "feelthy sheet" like *Screw*. A photo-journalist, Al used to work for the old *New York Daily Mirror*. Later, he wrote lies for some 8th rate sex-and-violence tabloid. "I've just been such a whore all my life that I absolutely refuse to compromise with *Screw*. I'm a true believer about that paper," he confesses.

Jim Buckley, listed as one of the publishers of *Screw*, stems from a Lowell, Massachusetts, Irish-Catholic background. "I wanted to be a priest," he says and one doesn't know whether he is joking or not. He's a very beautiful young man, who receives dozens of gay fan letters every time his picture appears in the paper. "I'm straight. Tell the readers that," he says, confessing weariness at his admiring public.

While neither Jim nor Al are very attuned to the feminist movement, "Women Power" is in evidence at *Screw*. The paper's Managing Editor is a young lady named Roslyn Bramms. Mrs. Bramms, incidentally, is the mother of an eight-year-old son.

Another woman who figures strongly in

my" performed as part of the play "Che!" *Screw* staffers are convinced that Mama Goldstein's subpoena was part of a plot to bust the paper, so to spare her embarrassment, they removed her from the masthead.

On a more positive note, "I have a dream," says Jim Buckley in an angelic tone. "It sounds silly. But one day I'd like to see a giant skyscraper, 'The Screw Building'—it would be penis shaped, of course. One of these days, you'll see, we'll be so big that the building will be called Time, Life and Screw!"

The *New York Review of Sex* is the child, although an unwanted one, of *Screw*. Originally founded by Sam Edwards and Jack Banning, former publishers of the *New York Free Press*, the paper is the product of the demise of the *Free Press* and a split among the *Screw* staff.

About the time that *Screw* was set to print its fourth issue, it was announced that the *New York Free Press* would cease publication. The *Free Press*, a rather interesting muckraking journal, somehow had never managed to pick up enough readership to make it go. Months of debts had taken their toll and the paper was about to go out of business.

At first attempts were made to save the *Free Press* from oblivion. Michael Luckman, a young New Left Public Relations free-lancer, attempted to buy the journal, but was told he would have to pay a rather high "non-negotiable price" for it. Then came John Dupont, scion of the famous chemical family. He was interested in buying the *Free Press*, the *High School*

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## "One of these days we'll be so big that the building will be called Time, Life and Screw!"

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the *Screw* picture is a very pretty airline stewardess named Mary Philips. Mary, who is also a part-time student at Columbia University, just happens to be co-publisher of *Screw*. A fortunate investment of \$175 last November caused her to own over 50% of the newspaper's stock. "The best investment I ever made," she chuckles.

Motherhood is not forgotten at *Screw*. Until recently, Mrs. Gertrude Goldstein was listed on the paper's masthead as "business manager." Gertrude is Al's old lady—in the old meaning of the word—and she was placed in the staff box kind of as a joke because, as her son says, "nothing my mother is connected with could be dirty!" Her relationship with *Screw* was ended recently after the Grand Jury called her in to testify about pictures Al had taken of alleged "consensual sodo-

*Free Press* (published out of the FP's office) and *Screw*. His idea was to consolidate the three, and to use the profits from *Screw* to subsidize the other publications. But not all the parties involved were enthusiastic about the idea, so the deal fell through.

In the midst of the death throes of the *New York Free Press*, Edwards and Banning hit upon the idea of putting out another sex paper. *Screw*'s success seemed to prove that there was a ready market. Only two problems were in their way: Goldstein and Buckley. Many of the *Free Press*'s staff, Banning included, were listed on *Screw*'s masthead. The break from the pioneer paper was bitter, but in the end many of the old *Free Press* people came over to the new journal.

"I felt terrible about leaving *Screw*," relates Steve Heller, the Art Director of

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*The staff of the more formal N.Y. Review of Sex, led by art director Steve Heller, were delighted to stand in for their boss, publisher Sam Edwards, who prefers to stay discreetly out of the picture.*



the *New York Review of Sex*. Jim and Al were my friends. What I finally did was tell Jim Buckley that I was leaving to take a new job. Instead I went to the *Review*.

There were other problems, too. "Sam and Jack wanted to set up a paper that would compete with *Screw*. I was against that," says Heller, who is a relative of the author of *Catch 22*. "What I wanted was a paper that wouldn't compete, but would be complementary. I mean, they had a different style—raunchy and humorous. What I wanted to do was something different, more like a tabloid *Eros*—a paper filled with beautiful erotic art, muckraking, and great erotic literature. Our paper was to be political. Goldstein was down on politics."

Steve Heller, an English major at NYU, tells of the early days of the *New York Review of Sex* with great bitterness. "When we finally ended all the rancor, we were able to get down to designing our paper. But our problems didn't end. Many of the *Free Press* people were reluctant to

The Big Apple." Edwards writes under the nom de plume "D. Melmouth." The mythical Melmouth, incidentally, is listed on the masthead as the *Review's* Editor.

Few members of the staff are willing to talk about their work with other reporters. This seems rather unusual, for most writers and editors are just dying to gush on about their creative drivelings. When I asked for an interview, I got the frigid treatment from Edwards. A similar request to Marianna Milbert, the Assistant Editor, was greeted with a whole minute of stone telephone silence. Steve Heller later explained that "no one here likes to talk about the paper. It's as simple as that."

There are other signs of the staff's self-consciousness. Heller admits, "I've lost all my friends since I started putting out the *Review*. Most of the people still think that pornography is exploitation. The only people who still talk to me are my parents. My Dad brings the *New York Review* to his office and shows it

power of the porn press.

Rivalry and hatred is the password among the editors of the pornzines. The fierce hatred that exists between the various sheets could be called a Twentieth Century version of the Trojan War. However, there is one opinion on which all other sexy papers will unite: their unmitigated loathing for the *New York Review of Sex*. Most of this passion stems from the D. Melmouth/Sam Edwards column, "Our Man In The Big Apple." On different occasions Edwards has used his column as a base for attacking the underground and sexy press. He once suggested that the *East Village Other* was serving as a front for the Mafia. *Rat*, another underground paper, published by former SDS National Vice Chairman, Jeff Shero, was accused of giving over editorial control to the Motherfuckers, an East Village guerrilla group. Said Edwards:

"When the Motherfuckers siezed editorial control of *Rat*, they came out strongly against anal intercourse which was really a rejection of the Black Panther/Peace and Freedom Party's fielding a Presidential slate instead of repudiating the election."

Do you understand that? I don't! But whatever the reasons for *Rat's* derriere-garde thoughts, Edwards' comments are regarded by fellow editors as narrow-minded hostility.

There are some more positive things about the *Review*, that make it stand out as distinctive. Their nudes are prettier than those in the other sexy papers. Especially striking was their series on a nude family, a touching salute to traditional values. The fact that they are trying to politicize their readers is also very positive. Says Steve Heller, "A lot of people buy out paper for the nudes; we try to give them something in addition. But I'm afraid that most of our readers buy the *Review* for the spreads and that they just ignore what's in the margins."

Heller is unhappy about the paper's isolation. He worries what will happen if a political and pornographic repression comes and the papers aren't united. "We know we should have friends in the rest of the underground. But then we go and say things and I don't know why . . ."

It was the *East Village Other* that first pioneered sex in the underground tabloid field, by featuring a weekly subterranean sex-symbol, "The Slum Goddess of the Lower East Side." *EVO* staffers found that sensual looking women were a great help in boosting the paper's circulation. And then came their famous classified advertising section:

"Handsome bachelor, versatile,  
sterile, looking for groovy,  
slim chick for intimate meetings  
at my pad."

Suddenly classified advertising became revolutionized. Readers bought *EVO* just to gander at the outrageous and often ter-

## Many fear that the *Kiss* bust is part of a more general attempt by the authorities to put the underground press out of business.

get involved with a sexy newspaper. They were politically oriented and it took a lot of work to get the writers to come along with us."

Then came the question of what to call the new paper. At first, the journal was to be named the *New York Review of Free Sex*. (Ah, the *Free Press* lives!) Someone topped that idea by suggesting they drop the word "free." Hence, the title the *New York Review of Sex*—a play on the super highbrow *New York Review of Books*.

Most observers agree that the *New York Review of Sex* is an interesting and good looking publication. Steve Heller has made a point of using only first quality art work and photographs. A hefty newsstand price of 50c per issue permits him to run full-color spreads and to print on heavy stock paper. As for their writers, the paper has retained many of the fine people who were doing work for the *Free Press*.

One cannot help noticing, though, that the *Review's* mentors are terribly uncomfortable about putting out a sexy sheet. Co-publisher and Editor, Sam Edwards, does not list his full name on the paper's masthead. Instead he is listed as "S. Edwards." When writing his bi-weekly underground gossip column "Our Man In

around to the other CPA's. Sex is a wierd thing, you know. On one hand, it's beautiful, because the human body is beautiful. Then it's so animalistic and there are all those idiot laws."

The newspaper itself reflects the staff's discomfort with its orientation. Unlike the other pornzines, it is not a rant-raving missionary for the sexual revolution. Its pages are often more political than they are erotic. For instance, while none of the other sex papers showed any interest in this year's mayoralty election, the *Review* has gone whole hog to support Bronx Borough President Herman Badillo. More reflective of the paper's ambivalence toward sex is the back page, "What's Up and Coming"—a kind of guide to erotic events. Suggestions for "sexy" happenings on this calendar vary from the Joffrey Ballet, Asia House, uni-sex wigs, *I Am Curious, (Yellow)*, the American Shakespeare Festival, the Fillmore East, and some sexploitation films playing at the Hudson Theater. Very little in the way of avant garde stuff!

The level of writing on the paper can be quite good. The ace reporter, Ray Schultz, is thought by some to be New York's next Jimmy Breslin. And from time to time, Marianna Milbert writes some interesting pieces. Then there's Gregory Battcock, a very literate art and film critic who reviews plays, books and dirty movies. "I get more comments from one piece in the *New York Review of Sex* than one year's worth in the *New York Free Press*," says Battcock, indicating the

Graduate business school at NYU hardly prepared Joel Fabrikant, *EVO* business manager and *Kiss* publisher, for the intricacies of steering the papers through more than their share of obscenity busts.



ribly funny personal ads. Lonely men and women looking for a quick, but unattached relationship could find it on the back pages of the underground newspaper. Homosexuals. Sado-masochists. Foot fetishists. Wife-swappers. Father-rapers. You name it, you could find it in *EVO*'s classified. Incredible! Sex had finally become so open that you could advertise for it!

It was natural that many of the people involved in printing *EVO* should get into the sex-sheet field on a bigger basis. Weeks of bull-sessions among *EVO* staffers brought Joel Fabrikant, the *Other*'s Business Manager, to the conclusion that there was an opportunity to publish another sex paper. Together with a few *EVO* regulars, he decided to publish *Kiss*. Although *Kiss* was to be entirely separate from the *Other*, it would employ some of the talent and facilities of *EVO*.

Originally, Lennox Raphael, author of the much-arrested play *Che!*, was to edit the paper. But Lennox was so involved with the day-to-day hassles of bailing his cast out of jail that his editorial tasks were given over to star *EVO* columnist, Dean Latimer.

*Kiss* is very much the product of the mind of editor-writer Latimer. A recognized expert on pornography, sex and depravity, Latimer is known to own the largest collection of porn on East 10th Street, and rumor has it that his collection is surpassed only by that of this state's esteemed Governor, also a famous art collector.

Lanky and gentle, D. A. Latimer stems from a background most unusual for a pornzine editor. Canton, New York, a small farming community on the northern tip of Appalachia, is his ancestral home. After a brief academic bout at Potsdam State College, he drifted to New York City and then to California. On the coast, Latimer was awarded the Wallace Stegner Creative Writing Fellowship at Stanford University. For a full year D.A. played at "creative writing" and lived off a grant endowed by arch-reactionary oil millionaire H. L. Hunt. Says Latimer, "Hunt is supposed to keep copies of the works of his 'fellows.' Wonder if he's collecting my stuff?"

"Because the sexually liberated people of this country deserve more and better erotic literature and pictures to enjoy. . . . To counter the righteous hypocritical groundswell of sexual repression presently growing in this country. . . . To assert the constitutional rights of our artists and writers to print and peddle any form of

artistic and literary gruel that they wish. . . . To make a bundle. . . . Mainly to make a bundle, we have decided to inaugurate yet another New York pornzine," editorialized Latimer in the first issue of *Kiss*. New York was evidently anxious to support another sex paper, and the first issue's run of 30,000 was sold out in one week's time!

While the public applauded *Kiss*, there were those in the District Attorney's of-

with the law, Fabrikant has gone ahead with the production of Issue #4 of the paper. "We'll just have to see what happens," he says with great determination. "Frankly, this whole experience has really changed my views on things. It's just incredible for me to believe that anyone has the power to tell anyone else what they can read."

Returning to the non-legal, day-to-day problems of putting out a pornzine, Dean

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## Prof. Sexus tells where to find aphrodisiacs and how to do vaginal exercises or adjust to balling four men in one afternoon.

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fice who looked upon its appearance with less than unmitigated happiness. Their lack of enthusiasm for the paper was reflected by the fact that Issue #3 had hardly hit the stands before the paper was busted for "obscenity" and "hard-core pornography." It seemed that *Kiss*'s art department had overstepped the borders of "commonly accepted decency," by printing a series of photographs depicting actual sexual intercourse. Now, to show intercourse is not necessarily obscene—not even by legal standards. It is perfectly proper to show the sexual act when penetration is complete—i.e. no penises peering out from female crevices. However, the law defines the depiction of an erect penis in the process of penetration as dirty, criminal and harmful to the minds of the populace.

As punishment for offending the public morality, New York Supreme Court Justice Davidson issued an order restraining the distribution of Issue #3. Thanks to this little piece of justice, all copies of the paper were removed from the stands—which meant that *Kiss* lost thousands of dollars in printing costs and potential sales. Adding a kind of bonus to the situation is the fact that *Kiss*'s staff faces the possibility of criminal charges and jail.

There are many who fear that the *Kiss* bust is part of a more general attempt by the authorities to put the underground press out of business. Although the offending photographs were printed in *Kiss*, the *East Village Other* was named as a co-defendant in the obscenity proceedings. The authorities are well aware of the fact that *EVO* does not publish *Kiss*, that Joel Fabrikant is the publisher, and that separate corporate papers have been filed for both publications. Nonetheless, they refused to remove *EVO*'s name from the restraining order and the result is that the paper is having a great deal of difficulty with the newsstands. Few newsvendors want to touch a potentially "hot" paper.

As of this writing, the legal status of *Kiss* is unclear. Undaunted by his tussle

Latimer is hoping that *Kiss* will prove different from the other sex-sheets. ("That is, if we are allowed to publish.") Because of its fraternal relationship with *EVO*, it has access to many of the underground's finest literary and artistic talents. The paper features on a regular basis the horny fantasies of such underground cartoonists as R. Crumb, S. Clay Wilson and Spain Rodrigues.

Because *Kiss* is still a comparatively new publication, its editorial staff has yet to develop a concrete sense of the paper's format. "We want to experiment," says Dean. "Porn is such a tremendously open field. What we want to do is raise erotic writing to the kind of level that science-fiction is on." Toward this end, Latimer is soliciting the talented emissions of his readers. "You have no idea what incredible fantasies we get in the mail," he exclaims. "People have always felt this stuff and repressed it. Now, if we can get them to put their shit down on paper. . . . and print it. . . . MAN!"

While much of the tabloid's literary materials are already reader contributed, Editor Latimer manages to write a weekly column called "Mung," which reflects the author's own interests and perversities. For those unfamiliar with 1950's nostalgia, the name comes from a series of high school jokes. According to D.A., he was reminded of the word by *EVO*'s lady editor Lita Eliscu, who provided him with this definition of mung:

"You take a pregnant lady gorilla and tie her by the heels upside down from a branch, and you beat her belly with a board. The stuff that comes out of her mouth—that's mung." Says Dean, "Mung addicts are very rare now, but I remember at one time we were all wearing Mung sweatshirts, shooting Mung frisbees, murmuring 'I pledge allegiance to the Mung of the United States of America. . . .'"

In an effort to liberate its readers, the pornzine regularly publishes features on such taboo subjects as orgies, pedophilia, wet-dreams (Continued on p. 56)

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*Marv Grafton—brave, clean and reverent, former Olympic fencing star, and advertising manager of Rat—conducts business as publisher and sole owner of Pleasure from his tiny office behind a heavy black curtain.*



necrophilia, and homosexuality. "We'd like to get into the woman thing," says Latimer. "Frankly, I'd like to be printing the first sex sheet that is geared to turn women on. Most erotica is written for men. And I'll tell you, there have been times when some female-oriented porn would have come in mighty handy . . ."

Joel Fabrikant, *Kiss's* publisher, hopes that the new pornzine will prove a crusader in the sexual revolution. Says Fabrikant, who holds a Masters Degree from NYU's Graduate School of Business Administration, "I am publishing this paper because I really believe that it will help liberate people from their sexual hang-ups. People need to be freed of their puritan background because it really tends to fuck up their lives. We need a situation where men will cease to be jealous . . . where women can have all the men they want without guilt.

"I'll tell you what I'd like to see this paper doing. I'd like to see it making people think they have a right to sex. The hypocrisy of social mores have to be broken down and one way to do it is by putting it right there on the newsstand. People have got to stop feeling guilty."

What is an All-American Boy from Queens doing publishing a sex tabloid? "I dig sex," says Marv Grafton, former Olympic fencing star and Scorpio. "I don't care if people like screwing chickens—that's their thing and they need to express it."

Marvin Grafton was a quiet pre-medical student at NYU until the day

he saw an ad in the *Village Voice* for a business manager for the underground newspaper, *Rat*. There he became aware of the newsstand potential of sex. One issue of *Rat*, baring a blowup of a nude breast, nearly doubled that paper's circulation. When *Screw's* sales began to reach orgasmic proportions, Marv decided to move out from *Rat* and start his own paper. Grafton, who owns 100% of the stock of *Pleasure*, is the Business Manager, Publisher, and Chairman of the Board. An old friend from California, Larry Talbot, works as Editor. But it is clear that Grafton exercises tight control.

Of all the pornzines, *Pleasure* is the raunchiest and most 42nd Street-ish. Low on literary value or art work, the paper prefers to show a lot of nude spreads. Its centerfold usually consists of a two page fold-out: on side one, a well-hung young Dionysian; on the flip side, a split beaver. Actually the idea of showing male pin-up boys is unusual for the pornzines. No doubt the paper has a larger circulation among homosexual porn purchasers.

"Sex and the Zodiac" is a regular feature authored by one of *Pleasure's* two women writers, Tina Bellini. Grafton is most keen on her column, as he is very "into" astrology. "Gemini, Gemini, the thought of you leaves me smiling," coos Miss Bellini. "He is one of the few signs that wrinkle my brow, so fathomable is he, in sexual prowess as well as in everything else."

From time to time, *Pleasure* prints their own version of the *Playboy* Interview. Rather than talk with, say Jean Paul Getty, they might interview an interesting \$300 per night call-girl or a 42nd Street stud. Usually, the repartee is filled with graphic descriptions of the subject's sexual adventures and, incidentally, the subject's put-down of the interviewer's word-freaking.

For the horny, there is an advice to the sex-lorn column, "Prof. Sexus." The Professor, *Pleasure's* answer to Dr. Albert Ellis, tells readers where to find aphrodisiacs, how to do vaginal exercises and how to adjust to balling four men in one afternoon.

Grafton feels that he is willing to print most anything except the blatantly "illegal." "Our motto is: If it gives you pleasure, do it! So we've got no taboos at all. We've even got a girl working for us who is into the sado-masochism trip. The only thing we won't touch is fellatio, because that is considered to be sodomy and sodomy is illegal."

Without question Marv Grafton appears to be one of the most thoroughly wholesome people to be found in the underground and sexy press. He is a sports enthusiast, lives in Brooklyn, has a steady girlfriend, loves his Great Dane dog and also his mother. His interest in publishing *Pleasure* is thoroughly all-American: he wants to make some money and also crusade for freedom of expression. He con-

siders himself to be a radical, but won't mix politics with his paper. "I'm kind of a left-wing Jock," says Grafton.

Most pornzine editors complain that their private sex lives have deteriorated since they've gotten into the sex field. At one of the tabloids, an editor said: "I get lots of offers now. But I work so damn hard at publishing porn that I have no time or energy for sex." Although some fan letters have arrived by mail, Grafton has received no concrete offers yet. "Frankly," he admits, "I'd be inclined to accept any offers I get; I'm a Scorpio," he grins.

Until recently, bi-monthly *Pleasure* was assembled at Grafton's own apartment. When the paper grew too big, a new office had to be acquired. Most of the sexy sheets publish under corporate names: *Screw* is Milky Way Productions, the *New York Review of Sex* is published by the New York Seed Company, and *Pleasure* by the Fuzzy-Wuzzy Publishing Co. When a curious landlady wanted to know what kind of materials were to be printed by her new tenants, Grafton told her "children's picture books." And on a quiet hillside in southern California, Walt Disney rolled over in his grave.

While there has been a sexplosion of pornzines, the underground has not at all abandoned sex. The classified advertising section of the *EVO* is as titillating as ever. And the *Other's* cartoonists, R. Crumb, Vaughn Bode, and Spain Rodriques, are still penning incredible sexual fantasies. *Rat*, too, continues its traditions and usually shows a very healthy collection of politically radical nudes. And recently John Wilcock, Editor of *Other Scenes*, had to spend two days blacking out an erect penis from 30,000 copies of his newspaper. The member, it seems, was photographed in a position still legally classified as "pornographic." Rather than risk arrest, Wilcock gathered some friends together and for two unending days, they inked out the offending organ.

Wilcock, who was in at the beginning of the *Village Voice* and the *East Village Other*, and who now edits his own paper, *Other Scenes*, makes some wry comments on the popular effect of pornzines.

"Before *Screw*," he explains, "about 20% of the unsolicited manuscripts I received were sexual in nature. Now that these papers have caught on, almost 80% of what I get is sexy. And you wouldn't believe the kind of stuff I'm sent. I even get offerings of photographs of people screwing!"

According to Wilcock, the current sexual revolution is the very positive product of the work of the late Lenny Bruce and of Paul Krassner, Editor of the *Realist*. "They turned a whole generation on and told them that it was good to be horny, that prurient interests should exist. It is because of Bruce and Krassner that these papers have such a popular appeal."

There are others who are less than en-

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thusiastic about the growth of the sexy tabloids. Manhattan's Assistant District Attorney Frank Conboy has made it clear that he needs only the slightest excuse to haul the pornzines into court. And the *Kiss* bust was an ominous sign of legal zealotness. Then there are all those elderly ladies who staff an organization called "Morality in Media." Sex papers, in their view, are terribly distressing. Of course, there is the Mafia, which can be assumed to be unhappy about the porn-sheets cutting into their lucrative Times Square trade. The publishers of the sex and violence magazines ("Wife Eats New Born Baby, Live!") wish for nothing more than the demise of pornzines.

Nor have the guardians of the nation's morality been dormant in their fight for decency. Down in Washington, President Nixon took time out from the War in Vietnam to announce a national campaign against smut and pornography. The President termed porn as one of the gravest social problems facing the nation today. It is ominous to note that the victims of anti-smut vigilantism are almost invariably the small publications of the avant garde, not the multi-million dollar smut works of the Mafia.

With such a formidable cast of adversaries, it is possible that by press-time the pornzines will be a thing of the past. Frankly, I hope not.

There is no question that the sex-sheets are often gross, crude and in the worst of taste. But they are a lot healthier than what existed before them. The fact that a man can buy erotic materials at his own neighborhood newsstand takes sex out of the locker room, strictly forbidden milieu. No longer need a person go to the guilt ridden porn chambers of Times Square for an expensive sneak peek at the sensual world. If he wants some erotic literature, he can simply plunk down a dime and a quarter and enjoy all he wants.

Even healthier is the fact that the pornzines are pushing the sex-and-violence rags, like the *National Enquirer* and *Hush-Hush*, from the stands. All of the porn-papers steadily refuse to show any violent acts. "Sex is beautiful," says Dean Latimer. "The violence and mutilation that is pictured in those sheets is the ugliest, sickest thing on earth." Essentially, the sex tabloids are successfully removing the worst perversities from the popular perception of sex.

Still more important is the fact that the sex papers are actually pioneering a new American art form, erotica. Gore Vidal, author of *Myra Breckenridge*, has suggested that pornography is really the only interesting area a writer can still work in. There may come a time when sexual art will become as much a creative outlet as science fiction now is. If that happens, it will be because two young men decided to publish an outrageous little tabloid and fight hell and high water to get it to the public. ■■■■■