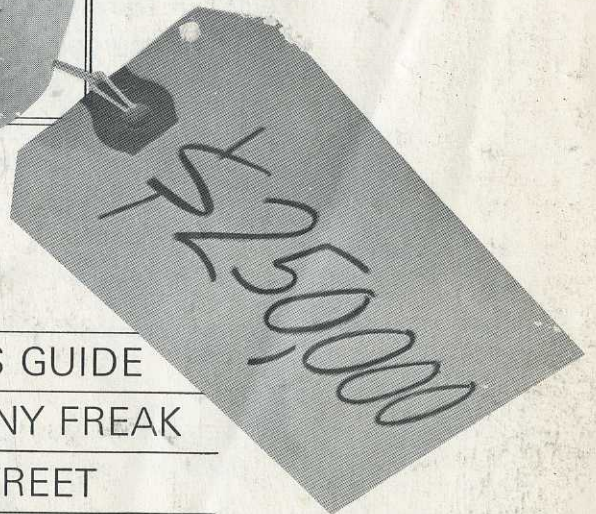


JULY 50c

new york SCENES

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



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

"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.

