



Beneath Contempt & Happy To Be There: The Fighting Life of Porn King Al Goldstein

Jack Stevenson

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Beneath Contempt is a raucous, heavily illustrated X-rated tale of the amazing life and publishing career of unrepentant porn king Al Goldstein. The self-made sultan of Times Square, he ruled over this mythic realm of sin and corruption for decades, chronicling its forbidden pleasures in the pages of his trailblazing sex paper Screw and making them accessible to millions. His story is the stuff of the American Dream. An overweight cab driver and welfare recipient who founded Screw and became the most outspoken figurehead of the sex revolution, Goldstein went on to become a multi-millionaire and tireless opponent of all things "establishment." Here was a man who had sex with the world's most famous porn starlets, rubbed elbows with literary lions such as Henry Miller and Phillip Roth, attended celebrity orgies with the likes of Gay Talese, partied with Hugh Hefner at the Playboy mansion and then lost it all, morphing into America's most famous homeless drifter of the new millennium. He threw his heart, soul and fortune into a series of bruising First Amendment battles and became a folk hero to the disgruntled masses, giving the finger to the world as ex-wives drained him and fired ex-employees and unwitting targets of his vicious satires who couldn't take a joke sued him. Cabbies, waiters and cops on the beat cheered him when he appeared on the street. The Al Goldstein story stars a cast of thousands of hookers, hustlers and porn starlets, with key guest parts played by equally colourful characters. In addition to getting up-close-and-personal to Goldstein in a way that lends heretofore unavailable detail and context to the story, Beneath Contempt charts Screw's emergence from the underground press scene and gauges its achievements as a catalyst of counterculture rebellion. It surveys mid-70s porn chic and illumines Screw's increasingly lonely crusade for total freedom of sexual expression, covering the court battles in the late 70s and touching on the downfall of Times Square in word and image. Finally, the stunning and total collapse of his business empire and personal life is mapped out in meticulous detail, as is his ascension from the ashes and his run for the presidency in 2008. The movies Al was in over the years, the bizarre spin-off papers he published, such as Mobster Times and Death Magazine , the erratic personal behaviour - it's all here in this readable and lavishly illustrated profile of America's last angry dirty old man.

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