



Blue Collar OPERA

by GUY ARSENEAU

Cultural tsunamis are rare events that define the world around us, underscore a major realignment of values and compel us to confront the matrix of a world that is largely of our own making. As a rule, such events are singular occurrences. Twin events of this nature are almost unheard of. Yet such a confluence of circumstances happened with the death of *Playboy* magazine founder Hugh Hefner and the follow up fall from grace of Hollywood movie mogul Harvey Weinstein. While the concrete particulars of their respective lives varied greatly, they shared a common bond interest in and fascination with that most alluring of all human desires and needs—sexual gratification.

One man spent a lifetime building a media empire on the hedonistic fantasies of his fellow males. To an excessive degree, the other one lived out these erotic daydreams against the celluloid backdrop of his Hollywood movies. Hugh Hefner died (presumably with a smile on his face) at the age of 91 from natural causes. Harvey Weinstein, the disgraced king of Lala Land and official butt kisser for the former First Fool and presidential wannabe, Hillary Clinton, undergoes a slow and painful death from embarrassment and humiliation in the arena of public opinion. Millionaires, king makers and publicity hounds, both individuals relied on the hypocritical stance of American men regarding sex.

Although it is almost never discussed, let alone acknowledged, most American men are 37 going on 12. Bluntly stated, for Americans of the male gender, sex is something they “do” to women as a sign of domination and pleasure, rather than an act of loving intimacy they share with them.

On the face of it, in the world of big business, high finance, media sensationalism and technology giants, “official” corporate policies pay lip service to prohibiting “overt sexual harassment, inappropriate touching and offensive jokes.” Yet the truth, as any working woman can confirm, is vastly different.

During the course of my professional life, I was employed within the news division of a major television network. Young, naïve and still a small town

boy fresh to the big city, I soon discovered that women were routinely required to “put out” if they wanted their work to be used or acknowledged. As a copy boy at the time, I frequently entered a small enclosed room to gather teletype print outs of news stories. On more than one occasion, I stumbled, to my great embarrassment, on a young female producer performing sexual acts upon a male film editor. When I discussed this matter with one of my more seasoned co-workers he told me, “How else do you think women get their news item on the air the way they want if they don’t satisfy the editor?” Over the course of my employment with this network, I also learned that the term “having lunch with the news director” was a euphemism and poorly kept secret that translated into a prospective female TV correspondent having sex at a motel in order to gain employment.

For young women of that time, the highly toxic environment of the early seventies can be seen as the logical consequence to the “in your face” exploitation of American women and girls in the mid to late sixties. It is a safe bet that almost every high school boy in the United States during that era remembers the afternoon television programs built around a *whiskey a go-go* theme in which scantily dressed young girls danced trance-like in cages suspended above a dance floor. Patently sexist and on the cutting edge of today’s definition for political incorrectness, these “entertainment” programs demonstrated, to an almost obscene degree, that women of that time existed solely to serve the sexual needs and desires of their male partners.

While this type of misogynistic attitude towards women is currently out of vogue, the dynamics behind it remain alive and well. Hugh Hefner and Harvey Weinstein demonstrate the truth of this observation due to the fact that both men flourished and in fact became millionaires by milking this particular *zeitgeist* of our culture.

For the balding, beer gut, baseball-loving males of the lower middle class, this blue-collar opera mentality can plainly be seen today on a daily basis on such

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exploitative programs as *The Maury Povich Show*. Feigning mock horror and false concern for the welfare of children, Povich provides a daily parade of brainless women who appear on his show in order to identify the fathers of their respective children. The men who participate in these programs provide ample proof that evolution does in fact exist and often times runs backwards. Based on some of their statements, such as “Can’t be my kid, I can only makes me boy babies. I can’t makes me no girl babies.” Obviously, these men were born as humans but devolved into jackasses.

Hugh Hefner, Harvey Weinstein and Maury Povich—a high profile and unholy trinity of stupidity defined by a man who appeared to have been born in a filthy bathrobe, one who resembles a hemorrhoid with stubble and another one who could use his wrinkled

face for a scrotal transplant.

As the recent history of America clearly demonstrates over the past few generations, sex, political power and status intersect with one another in what is inarguably a male-driven and dominated culture. The last several decades give plenty of proof that male luminaries in the political, economic and media sectors of society view sex as a casual recreational pastime. John F. Kennedy, Bill Clinton, Donald Trump, Hugh Hefner, Harvey Weinstein, Bill O’Reilly and Maury Povich are living proof of that assertion. Sadly, the sexual exploitation of women is a rampant and sleazy fact of life in a penthouse, a warehouse or the White House.

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