

AL GOLDSTEIN



Before there was Larry Flynt, before there was Howard Stern, there was Al Goldstein.

He was first with the kind of irreverent, your-face sexual satire later copied by Larry Flynt, When Howard Stern was 96H popping his pimples in high school, Al Goldstein had already been arrested 19 times for publishing SCREW magazine. An irrepressible innovator, Al Goldstein is a man without equal in the pantheon of American iconoclasts.

For people who love pigeonhole, Al Goldstein is an easy mark. They can simply label him “SCREW publisher” and let it go at that, allowing myths, distortions and societal stereotypes to fill in the picture. But the truth is that Al Goldstein defies such easy classification. He is a writer, photographer, gadget collector, film buff, life-long atheist, cigar aficionado and family man—but even these titles fail to completely describe him.

Al Goldstein was born over 60 years ago in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. He grew up in a family of journalists and emulating his press-photographer father, became a shutterbug himself. He also exercised his verbal facility on the debate team of Brooklyn’s Boys High School. Goldstein also served a stint in the Army, receiving an honorable discharge before earning an English degree from Pace University. His first love remained photojournalism; he cut his professional teeth making the rounds with famed reporter Walter Mitchell for the New York Mirror.

In 1968, Goldstein founded SCREW magazine with an investment of \$300. The success of SCREW proved that he had struck a nerve in the body politic—and a raw one at that. Prudish rage at SCREW’s audacity and explicitness brought continued harassment, leading to 19 arrests and culminating in a 1977 Federal obscenity but in Wichita, Kansas that ended in total vindication. As it approaches its 30th anniversary, SCREW magazine remains the most controversial, irreverent pastiche of sex and satire ever committed to newsprint.

The succeeding years have spawned a variety of projects. Most prominent among them is Midnight Blue, the outrageous cable and satellite television show that Goldstein defended all the way to the Supreme Court in a successful challenge to broadcast censorship. The Goldstein byline has also become increasingly visible, appearing in such varied publications as the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, Film Comment, Miami, Forbes ASAP, Harper’s, Penthouse Forum and Playboy. Al Goldstein is also currently a contributing Editor at Penthouse and a columnist for London-based Arena magazine. He also holds an honorary doctorate from the Institute for the Advanced Study of Sexuality.

Has time mellowed Goldstein? Not likely. The devoted father of Jordan Ari Goldstein (who graduated number one in his class at Georgetown University), he continues to enjoy worldwide travel and reading the 150 magazines to which he subscribes; the scrappiness of the Brooklyn boy who refused to be silenced is still there. Al Goldstein is a controversial man, a “butcher of sacred cows” with a very real motivation to forge a better world—one that is more open, more progressive and free of age-old superstitions. He remains an idealist committed to this vision.

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