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An Examination of Linda Lovelace
and her Influence on
Feminist Thought and the Pornographic Industry
In America

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An Examination of Linda Lovelace
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Linda Lovelace played a pivotal role in shaping American ideas about sex and pornography. Her story serves as a symbol for the various positions articulated within the feminist movement, and ostensibly, by the American public at large, regarding the contentious subjects of female sexual pleasure and victimization, as well as the uses for, and accessibility of, pornography. Linda Lovelace (nee Boreman) was born in 1949 in Brooklyn, New York. Following an unremarkable Catholic childhood, at the age of 22,

she starred in *Deep Throat* [1972], which would later become the most profitable and well-known pornographic film ever made. Behind the backdrop of the sexual revolution, Lovelace emerged as the most visible representative for a sexually libertine lifestyle that dominated the late 1960s and early 1970s. Eight years later, however, Lovelace co-authored *Ordeal*, an autobiography in which she denounced her involvement in the making of that film, alleging she was forced against her will to participate in its production. Lovelace then allied herself with well-known members of the feminist movement and emerged as its most prominent advocate against the inherent dangers of pornography. However, her changing allegiances created a furor, with many Americans questioning the veracity and motives behind her most recent declarations. In 2001, Lovelace's legacy was further complicated when she posed for a fetish magazine and began autographing *Deep Throat* merchandise at memorabilia shows. Before her untimely death stemming from injuries sustained in an auto accident in 2002, it seemed Lovelace had once again shifted her position on the permissibility of pornography in American society. Despite the fact Lovelace wrote four autobiographies, she left untouched any serious effort to analyze the larger and more complex issues regarding her ever-shifting positions on pornography. Relying on Lovelace's prior books, print media, interviews with family members and contemporaries from the pornographic industry and the feminist movement, this work examines the significance of Lovelace's life set against changing 20th century social mores, including the phenomenal growth of the pornographic industry and the various feminist positions on the place of women in it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| CHAPTER 1: Introduction | 1 |
| CHAPTER 2: Linda Boreman's Early Years..... | 21 |
| CHAPTER 3: Deep Throat and Linda Lovelace | 54 |
| CHAPTER 4: Linda Lovelace as Celebrity | 96 |
| CHAPTER 5: Linda Lovelace becomes Linda Marchiano..... | 132 |
| CHAPTER 6: Linda the Author | 176 |
| CHAPTER 7: Linda the Feminist Activist | 205 |
| CHAPTER 8: Linda Lovelace the Porn Star Icon | 242 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY..... | 282 |
| VITA..... | 294 |

Chapter 1: Introduction

“Doctor, I don’t know why it is, I just don’t enjoy sex,” said Linda Lovelace in the 1972 pornographic film *Deep Throat*. This troubling complaint and the subsequent “medical” discovery that explained her puzzlement are the basic plot of the film that is credited with helping to reshape American sexuality. Featuring explicit sexual scenes that glorified oral sex, *Deep Throat* became an immediate sensation and is still considered the most successful pornographic film of all time.

More than just a phenomenal box office success, *Deep Throat* had an immeasurable impact on American society. In their breaking story on the Watergate burglary, *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein referred to their secret informant as “Deep Throat”—a pseudonym they explicitly borrowed from film. But more important than its entry into the political lexicon, *Deep Throat* is also credited with altering American sexual mores. It became, arguably, the most important statement about American sexuality since the Kinsey Report was released in 1948. It may be impossible to gauge the degree to which it affected ordinary couples and their sex lives, but Americans seemed to talk more openly about sex than before *Deep Throat*’s release. Statistics on the pornography industry in the wake of the film are much more accessible. The film irrevocably changed pornography in America, and what had once represented a thin slice of Los Angeles film production and revenue would subsequently balloon into a billion-dollar industry that would eventually out-gross most motion picture studios. In the process, American ideas about obscenity and pornography would also dramatically change.

The success of the film also catapulted its feature performer, Linda Lovelace, into superstardom. With her sudden burst of fame, the public was eager to learn more about this new sex personality. Linda enthusiastically gave Americans what they wanted to hear and see. Following the success of *Deep Throat*, she co-authored two autobiographies *Inside Linda Lovelace* [1973] and *The Intimate Diary of Linda Lovelace* [1974]) that enhanced her image as the best known representative of a new libertine, swinging 1970s lifestyle.

F. Scott Fitzgerald once said, “There are no second acts in American lives.” But amazingly, Linda defied that dictum, and in less than a decade did an about-face and repudiated her involvement in the making of *Deep Throat*. Writing two more autobiographies in the 1980s, *Ordeal* and *Out of Bondage*, she chronicled a far different version of her life. Claiming she had been physically abused and forced at gunpoint to prostitute herself, she denounced her prior involvement with the pornography industry. Between the publications of these latter two books, a variety of feminists, including Gloria Steinem, Andrea Dworkin, Catharine MacKinnon and Susan Brownmiller, as well as the organization Women Against Pornography took up her cause. The woman who was once the world’s most famous porn star suddenly became pornography’s most vocal and visible adversary. A decade later, Linda shifted positions again when, in the late 1990s, she began to take part in memorabilia shows during which she autographed *Deep Throat* merchandise and old publicity photos and, in January 2001, by posing for *Leg Show*, a fetish magazine with international distribution.

Linda’s shifting position earned her few friends inside and outside of the pornography industry. Pornography insiders despised her for criticizing the industry,

which had brought her international attention. Former adult actress Gloria Leonard considered her an “Aaron Burr” who did a “traitorous turn...to the adult industry.” In Leonard’s estimation, Linda had committed an unforgivable sin. She believed workers in the adult film industry were there by choice, and that Linda’s assertion that she was a forced participant seemed to play upon the fear that young, unknowing women were being exploited and coerced to perform. Once again, said Leonard, the pornography business and its actresses were reduced to a “stereotypical idea [that] somehow women were drugged and dragged across the street.”¹

Nor were Linda’s critics outside of the adult entertainment business less vociferous. When she went on *The Phil Donahue Show* to promote *Ordeal* in April 1980, her co-author, Mike McGrady, assured her she would find a sympathetic ear. Linda was startled to discover, instead, a hostile audience that responded harshly to her tales of domestic violence, with Donahue on their side.² Even a decade after the publications of *Ordeal* and *Out of Bondage*, Linda was constantly questioned on the veracity of her claims. When journalist Fawn Germer interviewed her in 1997 for the *Rocky Mountain News*, she too was skeptical and repeatedly questioned why Linda could not successfully escape her abusive marriage to Chuck Traynor, the man she alleged had coerced her to work in porn. “They would drive to get food every night,” recalled Germer, “and I said, ‘Why didn’t you jump out of the car at a stop sign or something?’”³

Linda never could provide a satisfactory answer to her inquisitors. Even in cyberspace, a variety of Web pages dedicated to unkind summaries of her momentary brushes with fame can still be found. These writers, shielded by a cloak of anonymity

¹ Gloria Leonard, telephone interview by author, tape recording, August 9, 2004.

² Mike McGrady, interview by author, Lilliwaup, Washington, September 2, 2004.

³ Fawn Germer, telephone interview by author, tape recording, August 23, 2004.

characteristic of the Internet, also remain hostile to her motives and skeptical that she had been forced to perform in porno films. “Linda Lovelace crawled out of the pop-cultural primordial soup just in time to take advantage of a sea-change in the country's morals,” wrote one such blogger. But for speaking out against the industry that made her a household name, the same author is no less kind: “Hers is a story that makes one wonder whether humans should ever have left the savannas. At the very least, it makes you want to take a bath.”⁴

Yet, after Linda posed for *Leg Show* in 2000, she was not welcomed back to the pornography business with open arms. *Hustler Magazine* honored her in its March 2001 issue with its “Asshole of the Month” award. Referring to her photo shoot as “mercenary sexual exploits,” the magazine’s writer also took aim at her appearance, sneering, “The crow’s feet and sagging frame displayed in Linda Lovelace’s photos are as sexy as an anal wart.”⁵

Less remotely, in May 2005, politicians brought down by the Watergate scandal had a chance to disparage both the informant who did them in as well as Lovelace’s legacy. After years of speculation, the real “Deep Throat” finally revealed himself as W. Mark Felt, the former number two man in the FBI during the Nixon administration, prompting Nixon’s former deputy campaign manager, Jeb Stuart Magruder, to imply that Felt deserved the moniker “Deep Throat.” He noted it was good to close the chapter “of this person that was named after the greatest porn queen of all time.”⁶

⁴ Retrieved July 30, 2005 from <http://www.goodbyemag.com/apr02/lovelace.htm>.

⁵ Retrieved July 20, 2005 from *Hustler Magazine*, March 2001 edition, www.hustler.com.

⁶ *New York Times*, “A Mystery Solved: What Officials of an Era Think of Revelation,” June 1 2005, 17.

This prompts the question: why did one woman's vacillating positions on pornography and sex provoke such intense criticism? The answer, I believe, lies in an assortment of social and political realities, which frame Americans' understanding of sex and the female body. On the surface, our construction of sexual identities has become a simplified binary process in which we broadly interpret these subjects as either fundamentally "good" or "bad." In reality, pornography, sex and the female body are inscribed with numerous complicated and often contradictory meanings. Linda's story is a consummate example. By constantly shifting her personal stance on sex, pornography, and her role in the industry, she only added to the general confusion and misunderstandings within society at large.

My goal is to analyze the complicated symbolism behind Linda Lovelace's story, thereby resuscitating her reputation. I propose to do this as a biographical work that examines key moments of her life. In addition, I aim to contextualize the events of her life in broader terms, examining the historical, cultural, and social settings in which she operated.

Linda was an important person who bridged an era, and no serious biography exists. Although four autobiographies have been published, in addition to a whole host of articles and essays in the print media as well as the Internet, the story of her life is shot through with rumor and inaccuracies. In 1993, a reader of *Parade Magazine* asked how a lawsuit had been resolved in which Linda purportedly sued Traynor for damages related to her participation in pornography. The reader also asked whether she had died from acute hepatitis. In fact, no such lawsuit had ever been filed, and Linda was at the time

very much alive.⁷ As well, in the obituaries that appeared following her death, it was commonly reported that after her association with anti-porn activists, Linda had become a born-again Christian. While she always professed faith in God regarding her fortunate escape from Chuck Traynor, Linda never underwent any such conversion. Though she had been raised in the Catholic church as a youth, in her later years she never attended regular church services or affiliated herself with any other denomination.

The inaccuracies did not end there. In documenting Linda's declining health in the last years of her life, film writer Joe Bob Briggs and columnist Daphne Merkin both reported Linda underwent a double mastectomy. Supposedly Linda believed the silicone implants she had received were leaking, and the only solution was to have her breasts removed. Yet she never underwent any such a procedure.⁸

Along with these basic factual errors, there is a remarkable dearth of scholarship regarding Lovelace's life. This may in part be due to the fact she told much of her own story herself. In spite of her four autobiographies—she later disavowed the first two, alleging they were ghostwritten and untrue—on the surface it appears little is left to add. Indeed, mainstream biographical accounts dedicated to her are practically nonexistent. To date, the most complete work on Linda remains Eric Danville's self-published book, *The Complete Linda Lovelace*, a comprehensive catalogue of every book and film in which she appeared. Danville can be credited with not only writing the first paean to Linda but also for sparking a renaissance of interest in what is considered the "golden era" of porn. His interest, however, is that of an appreciative fan, and he makes no effort

⁷ *Parade Magazine*, April 18, 1993, 2.

⁸ See Daphne Merkin, "Pop-Porn: She Made Hard Core Acceptable to the Masses, Then Crusaded Against It," *New York Times Magazine*, 29 December 2002, 30, and Joe Bob Briggs, "Linda's Life: A Sad Story and Its Impact on Us All," *The National Review*, 25 April 2002, Retrieved on 30 March 2003 at www.nationalreview.com

to analyze or dissect the backlash surrounding her story. For the most part, published works on her are little more than brief summaries culled from her autobiographies. Three such are found in Luke Ford's *History of X*, Legs McNeil's *Uncensored Oral History of Pornography*, and Briggs's *Profoundly Disturbing Shocking Movies that Changed History!* While the authors are generally respected for their comprehensive insider knowledge of the film industry, they have added little in-depth scrutiny about Linda's life and her larger role within the sexual revolution.

Hollywood, too, has largely left Linda Lovelace's story untold. Historically, mainstream filmmakers have regarded the pornography business as an altogether different universe. The unofficial capital of the porn business is the San Fernando Valley, a short distance from downtown Hollywood, and this geographic boundary suited the more respectable industry just fine. But with the explosive growth of the pornography industry, Hollywood producers and documentary filmmakers have recently turned their cameras on their neighbors in the valley. In the past 10 years, there has been a flurry of documentaries about the pornography industry and its workers, but Linda herself has been largely neglected. As with the publishing industry, filmmakers have mentioned her, but only as part of a larger narrative about the porn industry in general. The most recent example of such a documentary is *Inside Deep Throat*, produced by Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato in 2005. As both homage to the golden era of porn and an examination of why *Deep Throat* managed to capture the zeitgeist of a nation, Linda is discussed, but only marginally.

Most film producers have preferred to focus on male porn stars because they never directly challenge viewers' assumptions about human sexuality. This is because

men in the porn industry are perceived as having healthy libidos, and as being more in control of their sexuality. They are thus seen as offering safer images to mainstream audiences. Documentaries like *Porn Star: The Life of Ron Jeremy* and *Johnny Wad: The Life and Times of John Holmes* do exactly this. While the latter documentary explores the grimmer aspects of Holmes's life, including his involvement with a drug dealer that culminated in the murder of four people and his continued acting in films even though he had been diagnosed with HIV, both films possess a comical underpinning. Holmes's obsession with his measurements and excerpts from his stilted dialogue as a detective helping damsels in distress bring levity to what are otherwise weighty matters. Jeremy, who acted in over a hundred films though overweight and none too attractive, is portrayed as an affable and intelligent legend.

Feature-length narrative films have also shied away from Linda's life. Perhaps the closest portrayal of what has been regarded as porn's golden years was director Paul Thomas's 1997 movie, *Boogie Nights*. Once again, the director's intent was to capture the porn industry from a male point of view. The plot follows Eddie Adams (played by Mark Wahlburg), a well-endowed busboy at a local eatery who is "discovered" by a pornography producer and offered a part in a film. Loosely based on the life of Holmes, Wahlburg's character represents the pornography industry in transition, when plot-driven, character-based films gave way to a videotape market with a format emphasizing more sex and less dialogue. *Boogie Nights* does feature Adams's female co-stars, "Rollergirl" and "Amber Waves," and while their eventual fates are haunting and sad, they are merely secondary to Adams's downhill trajectory in the business.

Clearly, female sexuality is mostly ignored in mainstream films, documentaries, and books, but Linda's story continues to capture the attention of the American public. I believe it does so for several reasons. It resonates because it mirrors classic literary formulas. On one hand, hers was the classic Horatio Alger story; with hard work and perseverance come the rewards of success. Indeed following *Deep Throat*, Linda achieved a measure of fame, driving a Bentley around Los Angeles and jet-setting around the globe. But an obvious problem with the sex industry is that it arguably takes little skill or hard work to succeed. Such work is typically based on looks and requires little talent. Linda achieved fame and success, but leap-frogged the part about hard work. To this end, pornographers and occasionally some sex workers in all of their gaudiness are the new Jay Gatsbys of the 21st century.

Writing a biography that concerns pornography and sex is not without hazards. People who choose to examine "sex" in the broadest of terms are often questioned about their motives, and, as a female writer, I am mindful of this. Issues of credibility and suspicion can plague any author who is interested in subject. Aldous Huxley once defined an intellectual as a person who has found one thing more interesting than sex. One wonders then, what Huxley would think of a scholarly pursuit on the subject of sex itself? Even those who choose to tackle the subject of sex in a clinical setting using objective scientific methods have faced immense skepticism and derision. Sex researcher Alfred Kinsey dared to suggest sexual knowledge need not be based on unproven and unscientific lore. Instead, he suggested that methodological and statistical research could be applied to the subject of human sexuality as much as any other investigation.⁹ After

⁹ James H. Jones, *Oxford Companion to US History*, editors Paul S. Boyer and Melvyn Dubofsky, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 422.

Kinsey interviewed thousands of subjects, his results were published in what are regarded as two seminal works: *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953).¹⁰ Collectively, these books contained massive information about human sexuality, but it was mostly the conclusions drawn about the sexuality of women that rankled the reading public. Kinsey's data on the high percentage of homosexuality among males was troublesome enough, but it was his findings about women that created an uproarious response. Specifically, Kinsey's data indicated a high percentage of masturbation by both males and females, and his research concluded women could experience orgasm and satisfaction during intercourse.¹¹ This information was a confrontation for parts of the American public.

The backlash was enormous, and Kinsey discovered neither his esteemed credentials nor the prestige of a university setting could save him from a doubting public. One Baptist minister likened Kinsey to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, "leading women 'out into the fields to mingle with the cattle and become one with the beasts of the jungle.'"¹² His funding would later be revoked, and the FBI doggedly investigated him for the rest of his life.¹³

Over a decade later, sex researchers William Masters and Virginia Johnson suffered similar attacks on their motives and qualifications. Their companion books, *Human Sexual Response* (1966) and *Human Sexual Inadequacy* (1970), documented the clinical results of hundreds of individuals who engaged in sexual intercourse in a

¹⁰ John Heidenry, *What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 22.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *Kinsey, Sex and the Measure of All Things*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 395.

¹³ Heidenry, 23.

laboratory setting. Their aim was to discover the roots of sexual dissatisfaction, and their operating principle was that everyone had the ability to enjoy sex.

As with Kinsey, the subsequent critiques of their work were harsh and voluminous, much of it legitimately so. Their prose was clumsy and overly infused with technical medical jargon, prompting one critic, Paul Robinson, to characterize their books as “two of the worst-written books in the English language.”¹⁴

Despite the criticism of Masters and Johnson’s qualifications, methods, and findings, much of the public response to their work was positive, but like Kinsey earlier, they faced a barrage of attacks directed at their character and motives. After all, the majority of their research was directed at women, and their theories on the primacy of clitoral over vaginal orgasm have caused many to read their work as feminist oriented. Robinson has gone so far as to say their findings “do more to advance the cause of women’s sexual rights than anything else written in the last quarter-century.”¹⁵ It is not surprising to note, then, that a certain hostility surfaced shortly after their publications were released. Some critics charged that the researchers themselves, as well as many of their subjects, were in all likelihood acting out involuntary perverted desires or were “unconscious exhibitionists.”¹⁶ The noted anthropologist Margaret Mead complained that, among other things, readers would regard their works as “pornographic entertainment.”¹⁷

The hysteria surrounding the work of scientific researchers has been and often still is enormous and accrues not only to those who choose to investigate human sexuality

¹⁴ Paul Robinson, *The Modernization of Sex: Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey, William Masters and Virginia Johnson*, (Boston: Harper & Row, 1970), 123.

¹⁵ Ibid., 151-52.

¹⁶ Heidenry, 34.

¹⁷ Ibid.

but also to famous names in the porn industry.¹⁸ That said, my investigation of Linda Lovelace's life is not fundamentally about sex per se but rather explores important issues of feminism and sexuality in American society, subjects that are potentially more inflammatory than the topic of sex itself. In part, this explains my primary motives for investigating Linda's life. For most of my adult life, I have been ambivalent about pornography and its effects on society, and I have never been completely persuaded by the arguments made by either the advocates or the detractors of pornography, though both sides make several valid points.

While a number of anti-pornography organizations exist, perhaps the best known is Women Against Pornography (WAP), which offers an array of compelling statistics that document the damaging nature of pornography. WAP believes the industry exploits both women and men alike, but that women's bodies in particular are commodified. It contends that pornography paves the way for acts of violence against women by providing a stage upon which they are objectified, thereby empowering men in the relationship dynamic. These are compelling arguments.

On the other side, advocates of pornography, including most porn workers, make equally persuasive points. Production and consumption of pornography are largely a voluntary endeavor. And as members of the Free Speech Coalition point out, efforts to control access to adult pornography amount to censorship and an infringement on civil liberties. Also, workers in the sex industry, both strippers and porn stars like Jenna

¹⁸ Even before me, writing about Linda Lovelace has been fraught with difficulty. Journalist Fawn Germer recounted when she interviewed Lovelace in 1997 for the *Rocky Mountain News*, her interview was intensely edited. She was surprised at this, having written countless pieces for the newspaper, and her editor at the time had never made so much as a grammatical correction. This is further explored in Chapter 8.

Jameson and Traci Lords, offer intriguing evidence that it is really the female performer who has control over her male audience.¹⁹

Yet, in squaring off against each other, each side on the pornography debate has made exaggerated claims and ridiculous assertions. Though author Gayle Rubin cautions against what she refers to as “the emergent middle”—the group in between which characterizes the two sides as “radical poles,”²⁰ given the intense political rhetoric both sides engage in, it is an easy mistake to make. When reading the rhetoric of anti-pornographers, I cannot help but feel they occasionally come across as shrill malcontents, uncomfortable with any aspect of sex and the body. After all, common sense tells us sex is a natural act that can be pleasurable and exciting, and always making connections among sex, rape, and violence rings untrue with many of our sexual experiences.

But there is a certain absurdity, too, behind the logic of feminists such as Nadine Stromberg and Susie Bright who favor pornography. I am reminded of an experience I had a few years back while browsing at a local feminist bookstore. I happened upon a small, round refrigerator magnet stating, “I ♥ pornography.” I bought it because I was struck by the silliness of it. Pornography may be a means of enhancing one’s sex life whether alone or with a partner, but proudly pledging affection for pornography, as one would towards, say, a pet chihuahua, seemed a silly overstatement. But even being of two minds on the subject of pornography can raise flags. In “The Uses of Ambivalence: Pornography and Female Heterosexual Identity,” author Celia R. Daileader notes even

¹⁹ See Traci Lords, *Underneath It All*, (New York: Harper and Collins, 2003), and Jenna Jameson with Neil Strauss, *How to Make Love Like a Porn Star: A Cautionary Tale*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2005). Both women document both positive and negative experiences working in the pornographic industry. Robert C. Allen has made similar observations. In *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture*, (Chapel Hill, UNC Press, 1991), he notes many sex workers “control” their audiences, rendering judgments as to who is “empowered” or “subordinated” impossible to discern.

²⁰ Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of a Politics of Sexuality,” *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. Carole Vance, (Boston: Rutledge Pressm 1984).

fence-sitting is problematic in that it “tends to cripple discussion of the issue and divide the feminist community against itself.”²¹ Indeed, with the pornography debates, there seems to be no middle ground. It may be a medium fraught with many inherently dangerous consequences, including an impaired ability to express intimacy to, at worst, the provocation of violent acts. And yet, for some individuals, pornography enables one to experience sexual pleasure, which should theoretically be a universal right, regardless of race, class, or gender.

Finally, I believe current global events demonstrate the need now, more than ever, for more scholarship on sex and gender relations. While my interest in exploring the problems of female sexuality has been long-standing, it took on a sense of urgency in the aftermath of a national political scandal on the one hand, and the tragedy of September, 11, 2001, on the other.

In the first instance, President Bill Clinton saw his credibility and the work of his administration undone but sidestepped the true nature of his encounter with Monica Lewinsky by famously stating “I did not have sex with that woman.” It was more than just a shrewd legal dodge. It also was indicative of the extent to which *Deep Throat* influenced America’s so-called culture of sexual permissibility.

In the second instance, America’s attention quickly turned to the 19 hijackers who had manned the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the field outside Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Who were these men, and what drew them to such fanatical extremes? I was particularly troubled by what seemed an obvious contradiction. The hijackers were consumed with

²¹ Celia R. Daileader. “The Uses of Ambivalence: Pornography and female heterosexual identity,” *Women’s Studies*, 26 (1997), 74.

hatred, but as devout Muslims, they believed, as part of their reward for initiating *jihad* against the United States, that 72 virgins awaited each of them in a heavenly paradise. While they prayed and kept the faith in the days before 9/11, they had, it was discovered, led fairly innocuous lives before carrying out the deadly attacks. Blending in, they rented apartments and cars, were spotted out at restaurants, and withdrew cash from ATM machines. And they consumed pornography. In August 2001, two of them visited two Las Vegas strip clubs and paid for lap dances. A strip club owner in Florida alleged three of them spent one of their last nights at his club, the Pink Pony, where they consumed alcoholic beverages and spent a couple of hundred dollars apiece on lap dances. And in Beltsville, Maryland, a few weeks before 9/11, one of the hijackers frequented the Adult Lingerie Center, looking at magazines and occasionally renting videos.²² In this age of globalization, as our geographic borders metaphorically expand across continents, we are exposed at an unprecedented rate to new and different cultures. In *Global Sex*, author Dennis Altman has observed, “It is an oversimplification to suggest that all cultures organize sexuality around the enhancement of male pleasure above female, but it is rare to find cultures where the reverse is true.”²³ Indeed, I believe this adds to the importance of a study of Linda Lovelace. Not only can her story provide insight into the challenging problems that confront us, but they may speak to broader global issues of sexuality.

Intertwining the subjects of sex, gender, feminism, and pornography requires complex reasoning, but my goal is not to draw any conclusions supporting or disproving one side or the other. Instead, I am interested in the gray area that results when these issues are tossed together and how they collectively drive vital political, social, cultural

²² Fagan, Kevin. “Agents of Terror Leave Their Mark on Sin City, Las Vegas Workers Recall the Men They Can’t forget” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4, October 2001.

²³ Dennis Altman, *Global Sex*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 5.

and economic forces in our world. It may well be our complex and sometimes contradictory attitudes about feminism and sexuality that create such confusion. Perhaps pornography has been misunderstood because the industry boasts few qualified spokespeople. Fifteen years ago, porn producer and director William Margold suggested porn was misunderstood because “there are so many nice marshmallows running around the San Fernando Valley,” adding, “I really believe my industry has a lot to say, it’s just that there’s so few ...who can say it.”²⁴ In addition, if the industry lacks articulate commentators, there also remains a shortage of willing interpreters. Margold’s observation still holds true. Pornography remains a little-understood industry with few scholars willing to devote their careers to analyzing just what it is trying to say.

I also struggled with the responsibility of doing a biography. Surely everyone before me who has chosen to write about another person’s life has born the weight of this responsibility. When I started my examination of Linda, family members who graciously granted me interviews reminded me that in their eyes Linda was a *person* and not just a subject. Some family members were reluctant to meet with me at all and, even after they agreed to do so, remained wary of discussing their memories. For years, they had seen Linda’s name exploited and her story sensationalized. “No one wants to hear about what a good person Linda was, that story doesn’t interest anybody,” Linda’s sister Barbara told me. With that in mind, I have striven to remain true to the memories of those involved with this project.

I have also elected to refer to my subject as “Linda.” While this is a permissible practice in some biographical works, it may be highly unorthodox in a formal research

²⁴ Robert Stoller and I.S. Levine, *Coming Attractions: The Making of an X-Rated Video* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 40.

project. However, the different last names Linda had throughout her life were loaded with meaning. On the opening page of *Ordeal*, Linda herself noted, “My name is not Linda Lovelace. Not these days.” While my goal has been to write an unbiased account of Linda’s life, I believe referring to my subject by her first name is an appropriate means of side-stepping inherent biases and focusing instead on the more substantive aspects of Linda’s life.

As well, I encountered other difficulties with this research that, to a large degree, I had been very naïve about. Despite the ubiquity and acceptability of pornography in the past 30 years, I learned for many, talking about it remains a touchy subject. For instance, Mel Mandel, who co-authored Linda’s second autobiography, was initially shocked I had managed to track him down for an interview. He noted that not even his girlfriend, with whom he had been living for the past twenty-five years knew of his creative contributions. “I can assure you,” he told me, “my work on that book is not listed on my resume.”²⁵

Porn is important because it is ubiquitous, it is tolerated, and it is profitable, factors which represent one of the greatest cultural shifts in the past two decades. Typing the word “sex” into Google, the leading Internet search engine, produces close to 200 million hits.²⁶ In 1999, *Forbes* Magazine estimated porn was a 56 billion dollar global industry, with Americans accounting for the largest percent of consumption. Frank Rich, a columnist for the *New York Times*, placed the American share of consumption at twenty percent, or approximately 10 billion dollars annually.²⁷ Ironically, two months

²⁵ Mel Mandel, telephone interview by author, 10 January 2006.

²⁶ “Porn in the USA,” Retrieved on 27 July 2005 at <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/11/21/60minutes/main585049.shtml>.

²⁷ See Frank Rich, “Naked Capitalists,” *New York Times Magazine*, 20 May 2001.

later *Forbes* criticized Rich's numbers, suggesting he had over-inflated the profit size of the industry by as much as eighty percent. However, Eric Schlosser, who examined the business of pornography in his 2003 book, *Reefer Madness: Sex, Drugs, and Cheap Labor in the American Black Market*, believes Rich's data is reasonable. From his own interviews with insiders in the industry, including conversations with staff at *Adult Video News*, its leading publication, he believes Americans spend about 8 billion dollars annually on sex-related industries, including video rentals and sales, phone sex, print media, strip clubs, and the Internet.²⁸ If Rich's and Schlosser's statistics are reliable, pornography may be the fastest growing, but least examined phenomenon of the past quarter century. Rich, in fact, suggests, "Pornography is bigger business than professional football, basketball and baseball put together." He adds, "People may more money for pornography in America in a year than they do for movie tickets, more than they do on all the performing arts combined."²⁹ Overshadowing debates over its merits or its detrimental aspects, pornography represents a growing part of the U.S. economy. Approximately 12,000 Californians work in the pornographic industry, which in turn pays over 36 million dollars in state and federal taxes.³⁰ These figures do not go unnoticed on Wall Street. *Forbes* observed that sex-related industries have routinely become "merger-and-acquisition activity just like any mainstream business."³¹

When I started this project, I knew of course that Linda had tragically died in a car accident at the age of 53, but I still believed I could find a positive story. I hoped to

²⁸ Eric Schlosser, *Reefer Madness: Sex, Drugs, and Cheap Labor in the American Black Market*, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company), 263-4.

²⁹ See both Dan Ackman, "Management and Trends: How Big is Porn?" Retrieved on 04/05/06 at <http://www.forbes.com/2001/05/25/0524porn.html> and Richard Morais, "Porn Goes Public: High Technology and High Finance are Making the Smut business Look Legitimate. How Did This happen?" *Forbes*, 6 May 1999.

³⁰ "Porn in the USA."

³¹ Morais.

write a biography of a woman who was confused and maligned while working in the porn industry but found her true calling after allying herself with feminists in the early 1980s. Larry Marchiano, Linda's second husband, unequivocally stated Linda had nothing but positive, happy experiences working with feminists the likes of Gloria Steinem, Andrea Dworkin, and Catharine MacKinnon, to name but a few. Yet, I learned the last years of Linda's life were hard; not only was she destitute, she also struggled with alcohol and drug addiction, and major health crises.

What conclusions can be drawn, if any, regarding Linda's sad, downward spiral? Did her earlier career in pornography permanently scar Linda to the degree that she simply could not transcend those prior painful experiences? I, myself, cannot answer this with any absolute certainty, but I do believe an examination of Linda's life can be of some instructional value to others, particularly young women who are enamored by the lure of easy money in sex-related industries.³² In San Fernando, where most porn films in California are made, thousands of women pour into the valley each day seeking a shot at stardom. The majority of actresses can earn anywhere from \$400-800 per scene. But porn actress Nina Harley has noted the market is so saturated with young women, the rates have fallen, with some beginners willing to work for as little as \$150 a scene. Hartley notes as well, most women auditioning for parts are shortsighted in their motives, only thinking about the possibility of making a lot of money in a short amount of time.

³² The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics has no data on the numbers of women employed in sex-related industries. Richard J. McDonald's document produced for the Labor Bureau ("The 'Underground Economy' and BLS Statistical Data") argues most data that is produced is inaccurate, as employees tend to underreport their incomes (if they report them at all) for a variety of reasons, including the stigmata of sex work, the desire to avoid prosecution, pay taxes or receive governmental assistance. For further information, see www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/1984/01/artfull.pdf, retrieved on 04/01/06. The Prostitutes' Education Network website estimates 1% of all American women work as prostitutes. This number also does not reflect exact percentage of women who work other sex-related industries such as strip clubs, phone sex, nude modeling, etc. See their website at <http://www.bayswan.org/index.html>, retrieved on 04/01/06

The long-term consequences of their actions go unconsidered, especially considering the average working span for such performances. At best, most actresses last only two years in the industry, after which time they are considered “overexposed,” thus ending their careers.³³ Perhaps Linda’s life can serve as a remainder that life does indeed go on, but the stigma may well linger on, long after the actual experience of working in the industry ends.

Though Linda Lovelace’s performance in *Deep Throat* is a vestige from a not-so-distant past, I thus believe it can teach us much about gender relations. Feminist thinkers have explored, pondered, theorized, and fought to eradicate the injustices suffered by women for over a century. Much progress has been made but a great deal of work is yet to be done. Pornography is not an-all-or-nothing proposition. It violates gendered patterns of power while at the same time upholding them. The vacillating position Linda Lovelace had throughout much of her adult life has much to teach us about ourselves.

³³ Schlosser, p.180.

Chapter 2: Linda Boreman's Early Years

Linda coauthored four autobiographies in her lifetime, but only in the third, *Ordeal*, did she give any attention to her childhood years. The first two books, *Inside Linda Lovelace* and *The Intimate Diary of Linda Lovelace*, were written in the early 1970s and were intended to further her image as a sex star. Those books contained anecdotes that portrayed Linda as an exhibitionist who enjoyed sexual stimulation at an early age. She would later claim that most of the material in these two books was fabricated. Her first effort, then, to address how she eventually ended up starring in the top grossing porn film of all times, came with her third book, *Ordeal*, a summary of her life story, beginning with her childhood years. It was here that Linda briefly described an upbringing that was dominated by a mother who was often physically abusive.

Furthermore, Linda insinuated this childhood abuse had led to her involvement into the pornography industry. When she went on *The Phil Donahue Show* to promote *Ordeal* in 1980, audience members accused her of excusing her involvement in porn because of a difficult childhood. In fact, the audience reaction was so overwhelmingly hostile that Gloria Steinem cited the exchanges as one of the reasons she initially agreed to speak on Linda's behalf. Steinem cut to the heart of the matter in an article she subsequently published for *Ms. Magazine* and entitled, "So Linda, what was it about your childhood that led you to a concentration camp?" Steinem clearly intended to show the audience that Linda, although not blameless, was not the only one at fault.

Why was the audience so hostile to Linda's suggestion that her childhood circumstances indirectly paved the way for her later involvement in pornography? I believe the answer is twofold. First, the negative reaction may have been due to the fact

that Linda scarcely mentioned any details about her early years. *Ordeal* begins shortly before she met Chuck Traynor, when she was 20 years old. Second, the condensed comments she did make about her childhood were unflattering to her parents, particularly her mother. Linda barely mentions any sort of a relationship with her father, but she documents her relationship with her mother, who liberally engaged in corporal punishment. When she came home from school once, for example, and asked her mother to define a profane word she had overheard, she wrote, “I got smacked in the face, kicked in the ass and sent to my room.”³⁴

The animosity toward her parents was evident not only in *Ordeal*, but elsewhere. In 1977, Linda filled out a questionnaire to update her credentials for the Screen Actors Guild. In addition to questions regarding stage, screen and television experience, she was asked to describe what handicaps she had to overcome. Her answer: “My parents.” In her own recollections, she had no romantic or flowery notions of growing up with John and Dorothy Boreman. Who then were John and Dorothy Boreman, and what events shaped their own lives and their subsequent roles as parents? It is an important question to explore because, as Linda herself has said, she became involved with Traynor largely to escape from her parents’ home.

Linda’s mother was undeniably a disciplinarian. The circumstances of Dorothy’s birth and her own childhood years clearly contained the seeds of dissatisfaction and shame that affected her beliefs about how her own daughters should be raised. Dorothy Elizabeth Tragency was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, on December 30, 1914. Her mother had recently divorced her first husband, with whom she had had four sons. Dorothy knew little about her mother’s first marriage, but as she grew older, she learned

³⁴Linda Lovelace with Mike McGrady, *Ordeal* (New York: Citadel Press, 1980), 6.

that her mother had divorced her first husband and married the milkman who made deliveries to her home. Her subsequent marriage was frowned upon by neighbors who were shocked that a married woman with four children had acted with such indiscretion.³⁵

Shortly after Dorothy's birth, the Tragencys moved to Waterville, Maine, where her father had purchased a small dairy farm. Sadly, her mother died suddenly of an illness shortly after their arrival, leaving Dorothy to face growing up in a strange town without her mother. Still, her childhood experiences were typical of those who grew up on small farms in the early twentieth century. A regular regimen of daily chores was to be performed before and after school, which left little time for leisure. At the age of 18, Dorothy began a relationship with an older man and shortly discovered she was pregnant. She informed him of this and pressed for a commitment, but he told her he was already married and not interested in providing her with any type of support. Dorothy was devastated but decided that adoption was out of the question. The following year, 1933, her first child, Barbara, was born.

Those first few years for Dorothy and Barbara were not easy ones. The Great Depression was raging, work was scarce, and the stigma of being an unwed mother in a small community in Maine created formidable challenges. For these reasons, Dorothy decided she might have better luck in a larger town so she packed up her infant daughter and moved to White Plains, New York. There, she experienced a reversal of fortune when she found work as a domestic servant in the home of a prominent physician and, more importantly, met her future husband, John Boreman. Standing six and a half feet

³⁵ The early biographical information about the Boreman family comes from an interview conducted with Barbara Boreman in Deland, Florida, 15 October 2005.

tall, John towered over most of his peers. He came from a family that was well liked in the White Plains area. His father and his mother were from England and Ireland, respectively, and after migrating to New York had had two children, including John, who was born on February 19, 1917.

Dorothy may have been attracted to John's strong work ethic. At the height of the Depression, he enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps. After his stint in the CCC, and like many other young men coming of age in the throes of an economic disaster, he took any kind of work he could find, mainly as a carpenter and auto mechanic.

After courting Dorothy for a year, John was offered a job at a shipyard in Maine and asked Dorothy to come with him. She accepted his proposal and packed up a few belongings and her infant daughter. The three headed to Maine. When they arrived, however, John discovered that the shipyard job had fallen through. They decided to make the best of the situation and were married on September 15, 1940. It was a small ceremony, with only the two of them and the officiating priest present. From that moment on, Barbara said John treated her as if she were his own. Though John and Dorothy experienced the normal ups and downs in the next 60 years of marriage, the relationship was a happy one. Nevertheless, Barbara believed Dorothy never got over the stigma of being an unwed mother. It appears that after she started her own family she was determined to make certain her own children did not repeat her mistakes. As a result, she watched over them with a vigilant eye. In this light, her protective nature and the strict rules she imposed may have been informed by the pain and embarrassment she had experienced in her own life.

Dorothy and John started their new life together in Brooklyn, New York, where John found work in the New York subway system. Dorothy stayed at home with Barbara. One month after their wedding, Dorothy discovered she was pregnant with her and John's first child. In the following year, on June 18, 1941, she gave birth to her first and only boy, Joseph. Dorothy and John both wanted a son, so Joey, as he was called, was a welcome birth. Unfortunately, Joey was a sickly child and died from unknown causes before he was a month old.

The United States entered World War II in December 1941, and John enlisted in the navy the following year, serving in the Pacific theater while Dorothy stayed in New York. Before leaving, John and Dorothy conceived their second daughter, Jean, who was born in 1943. When John was discharged from the service in 1945, he returned to his old job with the New York City subway system. Money was tight for the Boremans so Dorothy supplemented their income by performing wraps—rolling strands of hair with cloth—on neighborhood women. In 1946, John left the subway system and became a New York City traffic officer. The family also moved to an apartment located on the top floor of a five-story walk-up in the Bronx.

There they welcomed the arrival of their third daughter, Linda, on January 10, 1949. Dorothy asked 16-year-old Barbara what they should choose as a middle name. "Sue," replied Barbara, "Linda Sue." The only problem with Linda Sue was that the middle name was not that of a saint, which was necessary if Linda was to be christened in the Catholic Church. Instead, Dorothy chose Susan, which was derived from Saint Susanna, who had taken a vow of chastity before being executed for refusing to wed the emperor Diocletian.

Barbara ecstatically welcomed her second baby sister when Linda came home from the hospital, proudly announcing her arrival with a cardboard sign decorated with crayons. The sign embarrassed John, and he told Barbara to take it down. As Barbara recalled, this was typical of his personality, and he similarly interacted as such with his three daughters. John was quiet, shy and introverted, and the girls quickly learned, approached his parental responsibilities with a soft touch and in a whimsical fashion. “John never hollered, screamed or anything,” recalled Barbara. “He was always busy working and wasn’t even present at the birth of any of his children.”³⁶

It fell to Dorothy to discipline the children, which she did with a firm hand. Linda spoke of this, and Barbara later agreed, saying, “My mother was the boss over the children.” Their parenting styles contrasted markedly, and Barbara noted the difference in their methods sometimes created comical results. Barbara, for instance, excelled at stickball, but this was a sport considered unladylike and her mother frowned on her participation. She played anyway, sneaking out of the house wearing an old pair of her father’s pants that she cinched around her waist with a piece of rope. She also developed an avid interest in the New York Yankees. Asking her mother’s permission to attend a game, though, was out of the question. Dorothy refused even to consider the request. Yankee Stadium was no place for young ladies, she told her. Not one to be easily deterred, Barbara and her girlfriend developed a ritual of sneaking out to see the games at every opportunity. A simple coordinated lie between the girls made it easy to slip away from their homes for a few hours to catch a game, but getting the bus fare to the stadium and back proved more of a challenge. At best, they could usually scrape up enough

³⁶ Barbara Boreman interview.

money for tickets and part of the bus fare. Routinely, then, the two usually walked to Yankee Stadium and then rode the bus home. Barbara and her girlfriend did this several times and were never caught. Years later, when she confessed this transgression to her father, he only said, “You should have told me you were going to Yankee games. As a police officer, I could have gotten you in for free.”

These were the contrasting parenting styles during Linda’s childhood. Otherwise, Barbara noted, Linda had a normal upbringing. Like most of their neighbors, the Boremans lived a hardscrabble existence, but one that was typical for that time and place. The postwar economy offered plenty of opportunities for upward mobility and prosperity, but money was tight and the family scraped by, living paycheck to paycheck. Still, the children never lacked life’s necessities.

Barbara recalled few unusual events from her sister’s youth, with one exception. When Linda was 3 years old, she received a tricycle, which she pedaled up and down their block. One day, she lost her balance and the tricycle tipped to one side. Though she was only inches from the ground, she crashed to the pavement and, in addition to receiving minor cuts and scrapes, broke her arm. Years later, Barbara recalled that Linda never cried, but remained bubbly and energetic and never stopped smiling, even after she was taken to the hospital and her arm was placed in a cast.

That is the only story Barbara recalled about Linda’s childhood, which is unremarkable considering the 16-year difference between herself and Linda and that she was not around much when Linda was growing up. Dorothy’s strict parenting style created an atmosphere of oppression, and the Boreman sisters were all eager to leave the

house as soon as they could. Barbara admitted, in fact, she married her first husband for just that reason. After a stint in the navy, Tommy and Barbara settled in upstate New York. Jean also moved out of the home early in order to experience greater freedom. After graduating from high school in 1960, she married an attorney and also moved upstate. Their union quickly produced two children, a boy and a girl. However, the baby girl died of crib death, and the resultant strain ended their marriage. Jean's now ex-husband gained custody of their son and relocated to the Pittsburgh region, and Jean moved to be near Barbara.

For the next five years, Linda was the only child still living at home with her parents. In 1965, at the age of 48, John retired from the police department and took a job working in security for Eastern Airlines, which required the family to relocate to Florida. Late that summer, they moved to Davie, Florida, a small bedroom community outside of Miami. Dorothy was a devout Roman Catholic and had always insisted that her daughters attend parochial schools. In Davie, though, she was dismayed to discover no Catholic high schools were within a reasonable distance of their home. Overwhelmed with other aspects of their relocation, she decided for the sake of convenience to enroll Linda in Carol City High School, which was close to their home. Linda adjusted easily to her new environment. In gym class, she met a sophomore named Patsy Carroll. Patsy's father was in the military and after serving a tour of duty in Vietnam was stationed in Florida. Thus, as recent transplants, the girls immediately connected.³⁷

Patsy became enthralled with Linda. For one thing, Linda was a year older than she was and spoke with a slight New York accent. Compared with rural Davie, Florida, that meant sophistication and excitement. In fact, Linda seemed to know all the latest

³⁷ Patsy Carroll, telephone interview with author, 24 October 2005.

trends and fashions in advance of those of her classmates. She was even the first girl to roll up her shorts during gym class. Showing off more leg made their dull gym uniforms hip, and Patsy was impressed with Linda for showing her that simple but effective technique. The two soon became inseparable.

Unhappy at home, Linda bridled under the weight of her mother's attention. In Patsy, she saw a good friend with whom she could confide and share a laugh. Hanging out with Patsy had another benefit. It gave Linda a chance to escape her mother's eagle eye. Luckily, Dorothy liked Patsy and trusted her mother so she allowed the two girls to spend their afternoons together.

The arrangement apparently suited everyone. As Linda mentioned in *Ordeal*, Dorothy began experiencing startling mood swings after the family moved to Florida. Both Linda and Patsy believed menopausal changes accounted for her behavior. Patsy, though, later said she thought they were also at least partially accounted for by John being mostly an absent husband since he worked a night shift and slept during the day. Dorothy, lacking company and homesick for New York, began returning to visit at every opportunity.

Dorothy's trips back north gave Linda the freedom to spend more time at the Carroll home. In fact, Patsy recalled the one thing she and Linda shared more than anything else was savoring their free time after school. Both girls regarded high school and extracurricular activities associated with it as "uncool" and directed their energy to social functions apart from school. Linda was mostly a C student who was determined to graduate from high school but applied as little effort as possible in the process.

The two girls were both brunettes, and Linda's influence about what was hip soon had the two dressing alike. In fact, strangers often assumed they were sisters, a misconception they frequently reinforced. Patsy even had a large photograph of Linda that she kept displayed in the Carrolls' living room. Sometimes, when boys came to pick them up, Patsy would mischievously show them the photo so that Linda did indeed appear to be part of her family.

Patsy and Linda soon became regulars at the local hangouts where other teenagers spent their after-school hours. These included the Cloverleaf Bowling Alley, the Armory, and the municipal auditorium. Typically, these venues featured live music on weekends. The bands were usually local kids who had practiced in their garages to copy the latest sounds of groups like the Beatles or the Animals.

One day, the girls approached one of the club owners and asked if he would hire them as go-go dancers to accompany the bands on stage. They were both good dancers and with a little persuasion were able to talk their way into a job. Though they were never paid, the owner did give them \$15 apiece for costume material and granted them permission to dance on the stage. With their small budget, the girls made miniskirts and hip-hugger bellbottoms to wear with short halter-tops that mimicked the styles Cher was wearing at the time. The final addition to their stage costumes was low-heeled, mid-calf boots with side zippers.

Boys who went to the club, and the musicians, too, often asked the girls out on group dates. For a while, both Patsy and Linda dated members of the Shags, one of the more popular rock-and-roll bands in the Miami area. Linda dated the lead singer and Patsy the bass player. They never dated solo, however. The popular dating format of the

day was to go places as a group. Usually the date included the two couples and “a whole herd of kids, as many as we could fit in a car,” said Patsy.³⁸ Their outings included going to drive-in theaters, the nearby beach, or dances at other clubs.

Most of the time, nothing inappropriate occurred, the group dates ended uneventfully, and the girls returned home at an agreed-upon hour. In fact, Patsy is certain that Linda never went “all the way” with any of the boys she dated, first because there was never an opportunity, and second because she believes Linda would have confided in her about losing her virginity. However, one night they violated their curfews. After dancing on stage with the Shags, they learned about a party later that evening at the beach. Since they assumed their parents would not allow them to attend the party, they came up with a typical teenage scheme. They told the Boremans that Linda was going to spend the night at Patsy’s and the Carrolls that Patsy was going to spend the night at Linda’s. In their favor, no one would be home that evening at the Boremans’ since Dorothy was in New York and John was working the night shift. The girls attended the party and along with a half-dozen other kids ended up staying at an apartment near the beach.

Patsy cannot remember specifically how their scheme came undone, but the following morning the two discovered they had been caught. Linda was due to fly to New York that morning to join her mother, but she overslept and, upon awakening, realized she was going to miss her flight. To make matters worse, she and Patsy were also stranded because no one in the apartment had a car to take the girls home.

Still hoping they could pull off their scheme, Linda decided to stall and called her father. The plan was to tell him she had overslept at Patsy’s and would catch a flight to

³⁸ Patsy Carroll interview.

New York later in the day. Unfortunately, the Boremans' next-door neighbor answered the phone and told Linda that both Patsy's parents and John were down at the police station. Somehow, they had discovered their daughters were not at each other's homes and were now trying to locate them. Knowing they had been caught, the girls called John to come and pick them up. Dorothy's absence was a lucky break for Linda. John was not a disciplinarian, and, as the two girls nervously got into the car, he merely said, "You better get into the back seat so I don't hit you." Linda knew she would have fared much worse if Dorothy had been in the car.

Though Linda and Patsy engaged in typical teenage hijinks, their social lives were for the most part innocent. Patsy stated they were both largely naïve about sexual matters. There was never any opportunity for intimacy with boys, and Patsy said neither she nor Linda felt any urgency about having sex. Patsy recalled an incident in which she and Linda stopped by one day to visit her uncle, who was an amateur photographer. Rooting around aimlessly through his studio, the girls found a projector with a reel of film strung up and ready to roll. Turning it on, they were unprepared for the scenes that flickered across the screen at the other end of the room. The reel that played was an old pornographic film that featured black-and-white footage of a woman engaging in sex with a man. It was their first exposure to pornographic material, and Patsy clearly recalled that they shrieked in disgust, turned off the projector, and retreated in haste, hoping their uncle would not realize their accidental discovery.³⁹

Patsy's father was transferred to Virginia the next year. Linda, about to lose her best friend, found little incentive to stay in Florida. With her parents' permission, she decided to return to the New York area to finish her senior year and live with her sister

³⁹ Patsy Carroll interview.

Barbara. At first, Dorothy was reluctant to let her do so, but in the end, she consented to this arrangement, reasoning that Barbara could provide a well-supervised environment.

That fall, Linda began her senior year at Maria Regina Catholic High School in Hartsdale, New York. In her yearbook, Linda listed her favorite hobbies, which were clearly inspired by the year she had spent in Florida: dancing, surfing, and water skiing. For an inscription to accompany her senior picture, Linda told her classmates she had lived up to the phrase, "I shall return," to describe returning to New York. Her final year of high school was largely uneventful, with the exception of some difficulties Linda encountered in her senior English class. After receiving a 0 on a 30-point composition she turned in—she blamed a personality conflict with the nun who was her teacher—Linda was informed she would not have a sufficient number of credits to graduate. Disappointed, she returned to Florida at the end of the semester, enrolled in a Miami adult education program, and easily earned the three credits she needed to receive her equivalency diploma.

In the fall of 1967, Linda decided to enroll at Dade County Junior College. That semester, Dade County boasted the fastest-growing junior college in the nation, enrolling 8,000 first-year students, which was more than the top three Florida universities combined.⁴⁰ Linda took only a few classes, including English composition in which she received an A. "I wanted to prove to myself it wasn't me, it was the nun," Linda later said. Perhaps feeling one semester provided sufficient vindication toward her Catholic high school, Linda never attended another semester of college.⁴¹ She may have had

⁴⁰ Retrieved January 4, 2006 from <http://www.mdc.edu/hr/EmployeeHandbook/history.asp>.

⁴¹ Linda Lovelace interviewed by Legs McNeil, tape recording 7 January 2001.

difficulty adjusting at a college that was itself dealing with a staggering number of freshman students. Perhaps she was simply not suited for academic work.

Linda never expressed an interest in going to college after high school graduation, but she told Patsy she wanted to be a flight attendant or open a boutique. As her father was an employee of Eastern Airlines, the Boremans were allowed flying privileges, and Linda flew between New York and Florida with her parents to visit family. Those frequent trips gave her the notion that being a flight attendant would be an exciting career when she finished school, but she never seriously pursued that goal. Instead, she moved to Shrub Oak, New York, where her sister Jean, with their father John's help, had opened a small boutique. Jean was running the store with her latest boyfriend, Larry Marchiano, but she told Linda she could use some additional help. Jean's boutique featured hippie-type items--mostly fashionable clothing and beads--that were popular with the burgeoning youth movement. Unfortunately, though John poured countless dollars into it, the store never made a profit and eventually failed.

Barbara suspected it failed because her sisters' business acumen left much to be desired. Instead of focusing on sales, the business seemed to serve mostly as a place for local hippies to hang out and, Barbara suspected, consume drugs. In fact, Barbara believed this period of Linda's life, when she returned to New York to work with Jean, represented Linda's first encounter with the pervasive drug culture that flourished in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Shrub Oak was, after all, a short distance from Bethel, New York, better known for its most famous piece of property, the Woodstock Farm that hosted the festival that bore its name in 1969. The site was best known for "passing quickly into myth and becoming the ultimate tribal affirmation of the alternative values

of a generation—peace, life, freedom, spirituality, sex, drugs, and rock and roll.”⁴² In fact, Barbara believed it was the drug aspect of the counterculture movement that seemed to captivate both of her sisters. From this moment on, drugs became a regular part of Linda’s life, and Barbara could only watch from the sidelines as Linda repeatedly made bad decisions, mainly due to her regular consumption of drugs, especially marijuana.

Then a series of unfortunate events exacerbated by, or in some instances directly connected to, drug use befell Linda. First, she became pregnant. Barbara recalled Linda came to her house and told her she suspected she was pregnant but did not want to tell their parents. Barbara promptly made an appointment for her to see a doctor, who confirmed the diagnosis. The circumstances surrounding the pregnancy are unclear, but what Dorothy had long ago feared might be visited upon her daughter had in fact come to fruition. Linda was pregnant and the father of the baby had apparently refused to have anything further to do with the situation.

Barbara was raising three young children, and, though she wanted to help, the demands of caring for an expectant mother in addition to managing her own household were more than she thought she could manage. “Linda, you have to go back to Mom and Dad” was the best advice she could offer. With no other options, Linda was forced to comply and returned to Florida.

Seven months later, she gave birth to a baby boy, which she affectionately named Alfie.” She wanted to keep the baby, and as her due date approached, she began to make preparations to raise the child on her own. She believed she could place him in a temporary foster home while she found her own apartment. She began looking into

⁴² Martin Torgoff, *Can’t Find My Way Home: America in the Great Stoned Age, 1945-2000*, (New York: Simon and Schuster), 239.

technical schools that offered keyboard and punch-key training. Linda hoped to improve her skills so she could find a job that paid enough to support herself and her child.

Instead, Linda signed papers that gave the infant up for permanent adoption. It later became a source of simmering bitterness between Linda and her mother which would last for years. Claiming she was under the influence of anesthesia and pain medication, Linda said she was merely presented with a series of papers to sign. She duly signed them but thought she had made her wishes clear. “She kind of understood,” said Patsy, “she had a period of time to get herself together and she could have her baby back. She didn’t understand it was permanent.”⁴³ When Linda discovered she had signed away her parental rights, she was devastated. She blamed her mother for the mix-up with the paperwork, believing Dorothy had tricked her into signing the documents.

Barbara believed Linda never got over the pain and anguish of that experience. It worsened her relationship with Dorothy and pushed her into a deeper dependence on drugs. Years later, Linda made multiple attempts to locate her firstborn son, but she was never successful. Barbara was uncertain why but recalled that Linda was never able to get the adoption records unsealed.

Without her baby, there was little incentive to stay in Florida and find an apartment or a job so Linda elected to return once again to New York. As before, she joined Jean at the boutique in Shrub Oak and worked to put the painful adoption experience behind her. Then, adding injury to grief, she was involved in a serious motor vehicle accident in September 1970. The New York State Police no longer has a copy of the accident report to substantiate the details, but as Linda recalled in *Ordeal*, she was driving south on the Taconic State Parkway near Mount Kisco, New York, when she was

⁴³ Patsy Carroll interview.

involved in a head-on collision. Linda said she was heading to New York City to purchase clothing for the boutique, but Barbara believed that drugs played a role in the accident. She did not think Linda was using any drugs at the time of the accident, but instead that she was headed to New York City for a party and perhaps to purchase some drugs.

Linda was taken to Northern Westchester Hospital in Mount Kisco, and Barbara received a phone call at 2 a.m. that morning informing her of her sister's admission. Barbara rushed to the emergency room and found Linda lying unattended on a gurney. At first, though her mouth hung open in a particularly odd manner, she did not think Linda looked too badly injured. On closer inspection, she saw that Linda's chin had split wide open and that several teeth were missing. Her unseen injuries—a lacerated liver and multiple broken bones—were even more serious.

The hospital staff informed Barbara that Linda would have to be admitted for some time, perhaps weeks. Barbara returned home and phoned their parents to notify them of the accident. Flights to New York were fully booked and it was several days before Dorothy could come to New York. Until then, Barbara agreed to assume the role of next-of-kin. The following days were hectic. Barbara went back and forth, checking on Linda's status at the hospital and then rushing home to care for her own family.

Barbara was not Linda's only visitor. Linda's friends heard about her accident, too, and quickly congregated in the hall outside her room. Barbara did not like their looks. With their long hair and tie-died clothing, they struck her as unsavory. She was also convinced they were using drugs, which affirmed her belief that Linda had been, too. On one occasion, Barbara arrived at the hospital to discover that Linda's bed was empty.

She went to the nursing station and was told Linda was in surgery. Puzzled, and alarmed, and as Linda's effective next-of-kin, she wanted to know why she had not been notified of the surgery in advance. The nurse was incredulous when Barbara explained she was Linda's sister. She told Barbara that one of the other visitors had signed the permission form. Barbara was furious, but it was too late to do anything about it so did not waste any time figuring out which one of Linda's hippie friends was the culprit. Of greater importance was the volume the incident spoke about Linda's lifestyle and the friends she was making. All of them were using too many drugs and, consequently, were exercising bad judgment and putting themselves in harm's way. The car accident made that crystal clear.⁴⁴

Dorothy finally arrived in New York, and Linda was discharged from the hospital a few weeks later. Linda stayed first at Barbara's house, which was an ideal place to recuperate since it was near the hospital. Barbara, however, was soon overwhelmed with the responsibility of caring not only for Linda but also for her own three small children. Dorothy and Barbara then agreed it would be best if Linda returned to Florida to continue her recovery there. Linda reluctantly agreed. No longer a minor, she desperately wanted to live on her own, but the circumstances conspired against her. For the second time in two years, she found herself returning to live with her parents.

The accident would have more far-reaching and fateful consequences than either bodily scars or once again losing her freedom. It was on this second return to Florida that Linda would make the acquaintance of Chuck Traynor, the man who would later introduce her to prostitution and pornography.

⁴⁴ Barbara Boreman interview.

Today, the city of Davie is a bustling suburb that has long since been absorbed into greater Miami. However, in 1970, when Linda moved back home to convalesce at the home of her parents, Davie was still a somewhat rural, isolated community. Located far from interesting nightlife or daytime distractions, the town offered little to do.

Linda was immediately bored and restless upon her return. Unable to work, she found little to occupy her time other than to spend her days lounging by the clubhouse pool in her parents' residential community. Luckily, before long, she discovered that her high school friend, Patsy Carroll, had returned to the Miami area after graduating from high school in Virginia. The two women quickly reestablished their friendship. Patsy regaled Linda with stories about the many dates she had had in recent months. She also told Linda about a man she knew named Chuck Traynor. Traynor was something of an enigmatic figure that owned and managed a nightclub in the Miami area. Patsy described it as a small biker club, a "hole in the wall," with a steady clientele. He also owned an old Spanish, two-story home in north Miami and, most impressively, drove a sporty Jaguar. He also had an impressive list of hobbies, including an interest in guns, amateur photography and flying.

Patsy told Linda she met Traynor at a nightclub where she had gone with a group of friends. The two shared a mutual relation—her uncle—and an interest in photography. Traynor seemed courteous, polite and well mannered. He told Patsy that, as a semi-professional photographer, he knew she had the right looks and would make a good model. Traynor intrigued Patsy, but she told him she was dating another man, who was a motorcyclist, which seemed to bother Traynor. While he owned a biker club, he had no

interest in the sport himself, and warned Patsy that one wreck could leave her scarred and unable to pursue the modeling career.⁴⁵

Patsy said Traynor could be a little pushy, but nothing about him scared her or put her off. He certainly was nice enough, but she was having too much fun with her motorcycling boyfriend. Luckily, Traynor accepted this, and the two continued to be friends. He was usually unavailable in the evening because he had to be at the club, but his afternoons were wide open, so he and Patsy often spent that time just hanging out. One day, Patsy told Traynor she wanted to visit a friend who was recuperating from a terrible car accident. Would he be willing to drive her out to Davie? He readily agreed, and offered to take her there the next day in his Jaguar.

Linda was sunning herself as usual by the pool when Patsy and Traynor arrived, and the three hung around and chatted. Their conversation was not particularly memorable. Patsy does recall that at one point Linda expressed anxieties about the scars on her abdomen and chin. While Traynor had warned Patsy to stay off motorcycles because of their inherent danger, he said nothing to Linda about her own bodily “imperfections.” This raises an interesting point; Traynor was warning women how the effect of bodily scars could lessen their attraction to the opposite sex. He recognized that Linda, with scars on her body, was likely suffering from low self-esteem and could be easily susceptible to his charms. In *Ordeal*, Linda too said her first encounter with Traynor was unremarkable, and if he had any interest in her at that point, she was unaware of it. In fact, he told her he had a single friend and offered to introduce her to him. Eager to escape her parents’ house for even a few hours, Linda readily agreed, and within a week, she, Patsy, Traynor, and his friend were double dating. As Patsy recalled,

⁴⁵ Patsy Carroll interview.

the foursome dined out together and talked, and that was about it. But shortly after, Patsy decided exclusively to date her motorcycle-riding boyfriend and ended her friendship with Traynor. This seemed not to bother him and it was only later that Patsy discovered why. He had decided to call on Linda instead. “Next thing I knew,” said Patsy, “Linda’s former date was calling me looking for Linda, and apparently Traynor had moved in on her.”⁴⁶

Patsy said the next she heard, Linda had moved out of her parents’ home and was living with Traynor.⁴⁷ Linda documents her early courtship with Traynor in *Ordeal* and admits that a prime motivation was her eagerness to leave her parents’ home.⁴⁸ When she resolved to spend the night with Traynor, he was tender and reassuring, and she believed she had made the right decision. She later said, “Being able to come in later than eleven o’clock at night and not get smacked across the face—what a luxury!”⁴⁹

Linda and Traynor quickly settled into a comfortable routine. Linda helped in the club, cleaning and checking the inventory. For entertainment, the two regularly attended the movies and dined at local restaurants. In the back of her mind, Linda entertained thoughts of returning to New York, but had little incentive to do so. Nothing but bad luck had occurred there: her failure to graduate from high school, the pregnancy, and then the car accident. In sunny, warm Florida, Traynor offered companionship and a measure of security.

The details of Linda’s early involvement with Traynor are not easily corroborated. The only source of information about those days is Linda’s account in *Ordeal*. Patsy

⁴⁶ Patsy Carroll interview.

⁴⁷ Patsy Carroll interview.

⁴⁸ *Ordeal*, 13.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

could not provide any new information because she rarely saw Linda after she began dating Traynor. As Linda told the story in *Ordeal*, Traynor began to assert control over her very shortly after she moved in with him. He did this in several ways, including hypnotism. Linda claimed he hypnotized her first to help her quit smoking and later as a means of teaching her “deep throat” techniques.⁵⁰ Although she rarely saw Linda, Patsy does not believe Linda was in love with Traynor, but that he had convinced her she should be and that as part of that manipulation, she should be willing to go to great lengths to help him out.

As it turned out, there was a great more to Chuck Traynor than met the eye, for he faced some serious prison time. Unbeknownst to Linda, but as she documented in *Ordeal*, he was distributing marijuana that he received from a supplier who dropped the shipments from an aircraft. Apparently, one night in early 1971, he was intercepted after picking up a shipment. He was arrested and charged with possession and intent to sell an illegal substance. As a result, he needed to come up with a large amount of cash to pay for his rapidly mounting legal expenses. Traynor recognized the sex industry offered an easy way to make a lot of money in a short amount of time. He likely knew this because he permitted such activities to take place at his own establishment in the after hours. He told Linda the fastest way to raise that kind of cash was by starting an escort service. Linda did not want to be a prostitute, but believing he would go to jail if she did not help him, she relented.⁵¹ Over time, Traynor not only prostituted her to individual clients but also even arranged once for her to have sex with five bank executives at a Florida Holiday Inn. If she resisted his efforts or argued with him, physical beatings resulted.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 20.

⁵¹ Patsy Carroll interview.

Not only did Traynor prostitute Linda to male clients, he also hoped to raise funds by having her pose for pictures in local sex magazines. Long the amateur photographer, Traynor recognized sex photos, which could be shot for next to nothing, were another means of raising fast cash.

As part of his efforts to control Linda, Traynor refused to allow Linda to spend time with Patsy. He also mocked Patsy behind her back and belittled her relationship with her boyfriend and the domestic routine they had established. Observing that Linda envied Patsy's nice apartment, he derided her and condescendingly refer to her as "Patsy Playmate."⁵²

That Linda's relationship with Traynor was deteriorating was obvious to Patsy, who started to receive phone calls at odd hours of the night from Linda telling her she was unhappy. One night, she told Patsy she had decided to leave Traynor. She would be turning a trick at the Howard Johnson's. The customer was one Linda trusted, and when she was finished with him, she planned to sneak out the back and exit to a side street. She asked Patsy to come to the hotel and pick her up. The plan worked, and she went to Patsy's home.

"Of course, Chuck called and started asking if I had seen her," Patsy recalled in 2005. "I denied seeing her or anything. So two days went by and he would call and ask me, and he was pretty nice at first. And I continually denied seeing her. And then, the phone calls started changing and getting threatening. But at the time I was about 20 or 21 years old, and I just couldn't take the threats seriously. It seemed like things like that don't happen."⁵³ Traynor's biggest threat was not physical harm. Instead, he told Patsy

⁵² Patsy Carroll interview.

⁵³ Patsy Carroll interview.

he knew people on the Miami police force and warned of a possible frame-up for a narcotics arrest.

After three days of hiding Linda, Patsy returned home from work to find Linda gone. She later learned that Traynor had showed up at her house and talked Linda into returning with him. Patsy believes it was not threats that caused Linda to go back with him, but that Traynor simply “made nice” to her. He promised she would no longer have to prostitute herself and told her she could decorate his north Miami home, which Linda had wanted to do for some time. Lured by the promise of a happy domestic routine, she returned to Traynor’s home and began decorating the place. The next time Patsy visited, Linda showed off the pillows she had sewn for the living room and the collage wallpaper she hung in the bathroom.⁵⁴ Unfortunately, Traynor’s kindness, such as it was, was temporary.

This visit was one of the last times Patsy saw Linda because Traynor forbade her to see Patsy again. In fact, he became more and more controlling. He sold the north Miami house and moved himself and Linda to a small houseboat. Linda never provided a clear explanation as to why Traynor made the move, though his legal fees may have necessitated the sale. As a part of his effort to avoid prison time, he suggested he and Linda marry, believing a wife could not testify against a husband in open court. So their marriage was not a result of their being in love but as part of a legal strategy. In *Ordeal*, Linda says she does not remember the exact date of their marriage or where the ceremony took place. She only recalls that when she protested and told him she did not want to marry him, he once again physically assaulted her.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ *Ordeal*, 73.

Facing possible drug charges, Traynor's violence toward Linda escalated. Barbara remembers the events Linda recounted in *Ordeal*. She remembers John Boreman telling her Linda had called him up one night and begged him to rescue her. John got dressed and went, but when he arrived at the marina, a padlocked gate thwarted him from reaching the boat. After returning home for some tools to pry open the gate, he made his way to Traynor's boat and knocked on the door. When Linda opened the door, she was naked. But "I didn't call you daddy," she said. "I never called."⁵⁶ John was confused by this odd behavior, but with Linda reassuring him everything was okay, he reluctantly left.

In the summer of 1971, Traynor and Linda decided to relocate to New York City. Though he had faced legal difficulties in Florida, Traynor for a time had been a successful small business owner in Miami and had several ties to the area. Unlike Linda, he had never lived in the northeast before, and it is unlikely he had a network of friends or family members in the city. Whose idea it was or how they decided upon New York is unclear. Linda, of course, had several friends and family members living in upstate New York, and she might have found the relocation agreeable.

Traynor and Linda probably viewed it as a temporary move, being lured to the city by the promise of finding work in New York's burgeoning sex industry. In his article on the growing permissibility of sex industries in the early 1970s, author Peter Braunstein noted that New York City, in particular, had grown more tolerant of the industry: "With its ever-expanding red light districts, graffiti-sprayed subway trains, and

⁵⁶ Barbara Boreman interview.

record homicide rates, New York City in the Seventies was regarded by the country at large as a latter-day Sodom teetering on the verge of ruin.”⁵⁷

While New York may have seemed a convenient and logical place to settle, other factors were developing that also paved the way for a more liberal climate of acceptability. It was an impetus that had been building for many decades. In their study of sexuality in America, authors John D’Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman document a relaxation of strictures that had prohibited widespread distribution of sexual material. That relaxation had been growing since the end of World War I. By the early 1970s, the movement had snowballed. Courts were refining the definition of obscenity and admitting more printed material into the mainstream. In 1966, for example, the novel *Fanny Hill*, which was first published in 1749, was found to be not obscene. In a series of cases concerning literary obscenity the Supreme Court ruled broadly in favor of artistic discretion and refused to prohibit importation or distribution of books based on such a label.⁵⁸

In the aftermath, note D’Emilio and Freedman, “popular novels, mass-circulation magazines, metropolitan newspapers, Hollywood films, and even television, the family’s entertainer, rushed to take advantage of the new liberal climate sanctioned by the courts.”⁵⁹ Things were changing not only in Hollywood, but in Washington, D.C., as well. In 1967, shortly before leaving office, President Lyndon B. Johnson approved the formation of a two-year, \$2 million study to investigate the effects of pornography on

⁵⁷ Peter Braunstein, “‘Adults Only’: The Construction of an Erotic City in New York During the 1970s,” *America in the Seventies*, eds. Beth Bailey and David Farber, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004), 130.

⁵⁸ John D’Emilio and Estele Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, (New York: Perennial Library, 1989), 287.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 288.

American behavior. The commission hoped to determine if connections existed between pornography and sexual, criminal violence. After convening the commission, Johnson left office, and the researchers, laboring in a seemingly forgotten environment, quietly worked to complete their mission. In April 1970, the study was finished, and the commission submitted it to President Richard Nixon. Comprised of nine separate reports, it was entitled *The Report of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography*.⁶⁰

The commission relied heavily on scientific methods, including examinations of clinical laboratory data that measured female and male responses to pornographic material. It also used statistical evidence from Denmark, which at the time was the only country with legalized hard-core pornography.⁶¹ In sum, the commission found no connection between pornography and sexual violence and declared, “federal, state and local legislation should not seek to interfere with the right of adults, who wish to do so, to read, obtain or review explicit sexual materials.”⁶²

Perhaps more significant than any presidential commission or standards established by American jurisprudence, the decision of Linda Boreman and Chuck Traynor to move to New York in 1971 to work in the sex industry was animated by a decade of student radicalism and the sexual revolution. As David Allyn has documented, the political turmoil of the sixties, which was in part grounded on U.S. foreign policy in Vietnam, also witnessed a relaxation of social and cultural mores that paved the way for greater sexual freedom. Boasting catch phrases such as “Make love, not war,” college

⁶⁰ Joseph Slade, *Pornography in America: A Reference Handbook*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO Press, 2000), 231.

⁶¹ Heidenry, 116.

⁶² Slade, 231.

students and activists hoped to create awareness of the absurdity of violence and engage in what they perceived as radical actions that violated conventional norms. “The slogan,” says Allyn, “expressed the commonly held view that sexual liberation would lead to a decrease in social tensions.”⁶³

Author Beth Bailey concedes contemporary marketing techniques are highly sophisticated, and have reduced many ideals of the counterculture movement to what now seems like insincere rhetoric. But for a generation of youth, of which Linda and Traynor were very much a part of, slogans like “Make Love, Not War”, and others like, “Sex, drugs and rock and roll” represented a doctrinaire philosophy. “To embrace them was to declare allegiance; smoking pot, or believing in “free love” or even just listening to psychedelic rock, many believed, made them a part of some vaguely defined countercultural community,”⁶⁴ noted Bailey. While all these activities were imbued with meaning, sexual liberation and sex in particular, was an especially vital means of political expression. It offered, noted Bailey, “a visual and verbal language with which to challenge the Establishment.”⁶⁵ The means of expression, however, varied widely. For some, Sexual Liberation, as it was sometimes called, meant nothing more than a tacit acknowledgment that interaction between men and women needed to be less rigid. For others, it meant far more. Sexual liberation was a total abandonment of traditional sexual mores.⁶⁶

⁶³ David Allyn, *Make Love Not War: The Sexual Revolution: An Unfettered History*, (New York: Routledge Press, 2001), 50.

⁶⁴ Beth Bailey, “Sex as a Weapon: Underground Comix and the Paradox of Liberation,” *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and 70s*. Eds. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (New York: Routledge Press, 2002), 306.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 307.

⁶⁶ Doug Rossinow, “The Revolution is about Our Lives: The New Left’s Counterculture,” *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and 70s*. Eds. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, (New York: Routledge Press, 2002), 116.

Perhaps with these motivations in mind, this was the backdrop against which Linda and Traynor found a small apartment in Jersey City. After paying the security deposit and their first month of rent, they had only \$50 left.⁶⁷ Traynor began in earnest to find work for Linda and himself. In *Ordeal*, Linda says he tried first to prostitute her through agencies that catered to wealthy clients, but her long hair and hippie wardrobe ruled her out as an upscale call girl.

Traynor abandoned this scheme and decided to return to the industry he knew something about: still photography. A few jobs featuring Linda as a model in sadomasochistic poses or engaging in sex acts with another woman generated a small income but more, Traynor learned, could be made performing loops. In the mid- to late 1960s, the loop format had exploded in popularity, particularly in the Times Square area.⁶⁸ Loops were brief sex films designed to be played at peep show booths at sex parlors and strip clubs. Running an average length of 8 to 10 minutes, they were inexpensive to produce and could be cranked out quickly and sold to local distributors for a comfortable profit.

Linda and Traynor both performed in a series of eight loops that were shot out of an apartment near 48th and Broadway.⁶⁹ These loops were all standard pornographic fare. As film scholar Joseph Slade has observed, most pornographic films are highly conventional and formulaic. Indeed, in all of the loops, which represent Linda's first experience on celluloid, she is the quintessential—and insatiable—sex performer. The sets have psychedelic features, with paisley printed fabric covering the chairs. Before disrobing, the actors also wear typical sixties-style fashions, including headbands, beaded

⁶⁷ *Ordeal*, 93.

⁶⁸ Braunstein, 130.

⁶⁹ *Ordeal*, 100.

necklaces, macramé sweaters, and bell-bottom jeans. Many of the loops are relatively innocuous in content. For instance, in one, Linda can be seen laughing as she tries to coax another sexual encounter with her lover, but he playfully pushes her away. As the male actor rebuffs her repeated advances by getting dressed, she appears frustrated but playfully gives him the finger as he exits. In another loop, Linda demonstrates the deep-throat technique Traynor has taught her. There are also scenes of group sex.

Linda and Traynor shot additional loops that catered to unusual sexual proclivities. As Peter Braunstein notes, the loops shot in the late 1960s featured women performing strip teases for the camera or engaging in conventional sex positions. But directors soon began to experiment with different subgenres, and by the early 1970s, the films became racier. Different sexual fetishes were explored, including gay porn, S&M, and bestiality.⁷⁰ Notable among those are films featuring sexual penetration with food, “golden shower” sequences, and copulation with a dog. Again, while these loops feature specialized sexual fixations, they also adhere to conventions of the genre. In *The Foot*, Linda is seen masturbating herself when suddenly a foot enters the screen. The foot belongs to another woman, though the viewer sees nothing other than a mid-calf stylishly sporting an ankle bracelet. Linda copulates with the foot, which subsequently “ejaculates.” As Linda later explained, Traynor rigged a tube on the backside of the foot, and used a prepared mixture of whipped egg whites, flour and butter to produce a white frothy material. One can scarcely imagine a better example of both Traynor’s immaturity as well as his creativity in his willingness to pander to the lowest common denominator. What then, must Linda have been feeling as she went along with these bizarre scenarios?

⁷⁰ Braunstein, 130.

The most infamous of these fetish films featured Linda copulating with a German shepherd. The loop itself is fairly unremarkable and again adheres to the standard pornographic conventions. Linda's lover rejects her repeated sexual advances and, still unsatisfied, she seeks fulfillment through bestiality. Linda alleged that what was remarkable was what was not seen on camera. She did not want to perform sex with a dog and refused to do the scene. But as she documents in *Ordeal*, Traynor threatened her with a gun. As she tells the story, "I looked at the three men. And then I noticed that on the small table directly in front of me there was a gun, a revolver."⁷¹

Fearing for her life, Linda agreed to perform the scene. It is important to note, however, that her performance in the loops initially does not appear to prove her claim of coercion, for she appears to be enjoying herself. But pornography is an inherently dishonest genre, and in reality there is no evidence that in fact she is. Linda acknowledged, "I was supposed to look very excited. I was feeling nothing but acute revulsion."⁷² Scholars including Linda Williams and Joseph Slade have observed that most pornographic films cannot provide tangible confirmation a woman has achieved orgasm. Only a man's pleasure can be documented, which is why the "money shot," ejaculation, is a staple of pornographic fare. If a woman can fake expressions of pleasure and if there is no proof she has in fact achieved orgasm, it stands to reason that she could just as easily mask displeasure, or in Linda's case, perhaps even terror. One seeking to challenge Linda's version of events will gain little by examining the loops themselves.

More importantly, however, the loops marked a low point for Linda on a much deeper level. They symbolized Traynor's complete domination over her. Now thoroughly

⁷¹ *Ordeal*, 109.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 112.

abased and lacking the self-esteem simply to walk away, Linda found herself stuck in a nightmare. She was miles away from her parents in Florida, living in an alien city in which she was forced to rely on Traynor for life's basic necessities. It mattered little to her that her sisters Barbara and Jean lived nearby because she felt they were powerless to assist her. In fact, this was the case. At the time, her sisters realized something was amiss, but Traynor was always close at hand and confronting her about the details of her new beau was impossible. Barbara recalled that during the summer of 1971, Linda and Traynor showed up one day at her home outside of the city. Barbara had been storing some pans and dishes for Linda in her basement, and Linda wanted to retrieve them. Barbara invited them to stay for lunch. It would be the first time she had seen her younger sister in quite a while, but when they arrived she was disturbed to note a drastic and wildly uncharacteristic change in Linda's appearance. Her hair had been set in curlers and she wore a lot of makeup. "What kind of work are you doing, now?" she asked Linda.

"Chuck has a construction company and I'm his secretary," Linda replied. Barbara looked Linda up and down. Linda's appearance struck her as so unusual that her instincts told her she was probably lying so she asked her to accompany her to the cellar to retrieve her items. When they reached the bottom of the stairs, she turned to Linda and said, "Now tell me the truth. What the hell is going on here? I don't like the looks of this guy." Before Linda could answer, Traynor appeared at the top of the steps. Linda turned to her sister and said, "Oh, I love him very much."⁷³ Barbara was troubled by this exchange, but Linda did not reveal any information so nothing more was to be done.

By this time, all the Boremans were nervous about Traynor. He was controlling and secretive regarding his private affairs, and the claim that his new profession involved

⁷³ Barbara Boreman interview.

construction was dubious. But in their wildest imagination, nothing could have prepared them for the true nature of his relationship with Linda and the work he was involving her in.

Chapter 3: Deep Throat and Linda Lovelace

Linda would later say that her phenomenal success in *Deep Throat* caught her off guard. After all, filming lasted only 12 days and was produced at a bargain-basement cost of \$25,000. At the time, it was just another in a long line of pornographic projects that she had completed during her association with Traynor. No one involved in it had any great expectations, but *Deep Throat* would go on to become the top-grossing porn film of all time. Moreover, it not only gained mainstream popularity, but also influenced both cinematic history and American sexuality. In short, it took the world by storm as celebrities like Warren Beatty and Johnny Carson began to discuss it publicly.

The question has often been asked, did *Deep Throat* spur the sexual revolution, or was it a product of the period? *Los Angeles Times* film critic Kenneth Turin believed it to be the proverbial “which came first, the chicken or the egg?” question.⁷⁴ Although the sexual revolution was well under way when it came out, *Deep Throat* certainly played a role in the loosening of Americans’ sexual mores. Perhaps the question remains unanswered because there has never been a serious analysis of why the film successfully reached a mainstream audience. Al Goldstein, founding editor of *Screw Magazine*, may have been somewhat self-serving when he claimed that it would have faded quickly into obscurity had it not been for his favorable review.⁷⁵ In *The Century of Sex*, the film’s success is explained by a brief comment stating that *Deep Throat* reduced the act of sex to a “spectacle.”⁷⁶ Author David Allyn suggested it became a success because it was the first to strike a balance between “a counterculture sensibility with hard-core footage of

⁷⁴ Kenneth Turin, telephone interview with author, tape recording, 12 September 2004.

⁷⁵ Richard Smith, *Getting Into Deep Throat*, (New York: Playboy Press, 1973), 25.

⁷⁶ James R. Peterson, *The Century of Sex: Playboy’s History of the Sexual Revolution, 1900-1999*, (New York: Grove Press, 1999), 152.

heterosexual penetration.”⁷⁷ In reality, none of these assertions alone adequately explains the film’s stunning success. Since the primary goal of this dissertation is to examine Linda’s life in greater detail and to understand better her significance, a brief exploration of both the history of pornographic film, the story behind the filming of *Deep Throat*, and an examination of “second wave” feminist debates of the early 1970s will be examined. These were among the factors that contributed to *Deep Throat*’s immense popularity, which catapulted Linda into both stardom and notoriety. Linda is obviously critical to the story behind *Deep Throat*’s success, but how this film evolved from the Times Square sex scene to blockbuster hit from coast to coast, involved an unlikely assortment of characters. Among them were an actress lacking the typical attributes of a porn star, a New York City hairdresser who wanted to work in film, and a low-level Mafia crime family.

The groundbreaking pornographic endeavor known as *Deep Throat* began with Gerard Damiano, who owned and managed a hair salon with his wife. Damiano had two small children and his work earned him a comfortable salary, but he was restless to achieve more. One evening, Damiano attended a party along with an accountant he had hired to manage the finances of his small business. The accountant told Damiano of another client who was a Hollywood director. The director was shooting a low-budget film in a New York City apartment and was in need of volunteers. He asked whether Damiano would like to help. Damiano agreed without hesitation and promptly showed up on the set to work as an assistant. “I watched him make this ridiculous film because he had no money to do it and that’s why we were all there, but ...it was like the sky opening

⁷⁷ Allyn, 234.

up,” he said.⁷⁸ Damiano worked for free, thrilled just to experience the filmmaking process. “I remember working 24 hours in one day for nothing,” Damiano said. “I remember going for lunch and paying for it and never getting the money. It was just like, from that day forward, I never wanted to do anything else.”⁷⁹

But Damiano was not in a position to walk away from his hair salon and embark on a new career. He was a family man with responsibilities. He realized that if he wanted to pursue his dream, he would have to be practical about it. In the 1960s and the 1970s, there were few opportunities for independent filmmakers. To make a decent film required vast amounts of capital. Equipment was expensive, as was the cost of hiring a cast and crew. The only other option for an aspiring filmmaker was pornography. For Damiano, as for many others, making sex films was not only the obvious option, but the only one. They were inexpensive to produce and for that reason alone, novice directors could participate in an industry that was relatively closed to outsiders lacking credentials or connections. “Thank God there was such a thing as sex,” Damiano said. “If we were going to do *War and Peace*, we never could have done it for 12 dollars.”⁸⁰ For Damiano, making sex films was not just a means of making a quick profit or fulfilling a perverse fantasy. They represented his only chance to work in an industry that beguiled him.

There were other benefits. In the backdrop of the sexual revolution, making pornography was an opportunity for social commentary. It was now okay to say sex was not dirty or obscene but a natural and pleasurable experience. “Make love, not war” was not an insincere slogan to justify casual sex. It was a political manifesto, a statement that

⁷⁸ Gerard Damiano, interview by Randy Barbato and Fenton Bailey, 7 August 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

aimed to expose the hypocrisy of war and violence while simultaneously suggesting that those were in fact the real obscenities of society. Still, despite the relatively low cost of making pornographic films, some capital was required and Damiano realized he would need a financial backer if he were going to make any film at all.

How he first became acquainted with the man who would eventually supply the capital is unclear, but financial backing and film processing was exactly the business Lou Periano was in. At some point in the late 1960s, Lou Periano and Gerard Damiano met and became business partners. But Periano was no ordinary film producer. He was also the son of Antonio Periano, of the Colombo crime family. The Periano family's affiliation with the pornography industry is a story that actually dates back to 1931. Two years before Prohibition officially ended, the streets of New York were still the scene of a violent struggle for control of a Mafia empire. It was here that Periano's father, Anthony started out as a foot soldier, making a comfortable living delivering 8-mm stag films to businesses around Times Square. Anthony quickly realized that even more profits could be made if he had an interest in the means of production, so he founded a processing plant called All-State Film Labs. At the age of 26, Anthony's son Lou, or "Butchie" as he was nicknamed, was put in charge of the facilities. Other than his family connections, Butchie Periano had few qualifications for such a position. He had graduated from high school and worked briefly as an insurance broker, but when one is born into a mob family, as a federal agent once remarked, "you don't get out." And Periano had no interest in straying from his familial vocational calling. Under his direction, All-State Film Labs was soon producing at least 50,000 reels of film a month.

Periano remained affiliated with the mob, but he also took on his new job in earnest. By all accounts, he aspired to produce mainstream films, but his best efforts resulted in what may be considered “grind-house” fare. Typical productions included, for instance, the 1962 film *Night of Evil*, a feature-length film about a high school cheerleader who commits armed robbery.⁸¹ Achieving only minimal success with such lowbrow films, Periano returned to work in the genre in which his family had so successfully created a niche market. By the late 1960s, he focused on the production of hard-core short films. Periano provided the funding for loops and other short-length features that he sold to theaters and clubs up and down the Times Square red-light district. This was how he came to make the acquaintance of Linda, Traynor, and Gerard Damiano.

The Times Square pornography scene in the early 1970s was fairly tight; most of the actors, directors and producers knew one another. Linda, Traynor, and Damiano were at a party when Linda demonstrated her “deep-throat” technique. Damiano realized Linda’s extraordinary skills as a fellatress could serve as a useful plot device and he would later claim the idea struck him as he was driving over the Brooklyn Bridge. As well, his years as a women’s hairdresser had sensitized him to the needs and problems of his clients, but in the end the inspiration for *Deep Throat*, with its focus on the female orgasm, was purely whimsical. His finished project, with the working title, “The Doctor Makes a House Call,” would be a mere 20 pages long, but this was considered a weighty tome compared with most other porn scripts of the time.⁸²

⁸¹ See Ellen Farley and William K. Knoedelseder Jr., “Family Business: The Porn Brokers”, *Los Angeles Times*, 13 June 1982.

⁸² Harry Reems, interview by Randy Barbato and Fenton Bailey, 5 December 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

Damiano decided that a woman unable to experience orgasm would be the central plot. This was to be a hard-core pornographic feature, so obviously sex scenes would be included, but he decided there would also be a real story line to advance the obligatory sex scenes. The script would also reflect his personality. Possessed with something of a comedic flare, Damiano was a natural storyteller, often regaling actors and crews on his sets with jokes and humorous anecdotes. When he sat down to write *Deep Throat*, which he did over the course of one weekend in the fall of 1971, he peppered the dialogue with witty one-liners. In fact, the humor in the screenplay would be one of many elements that set *Deep Throat* apart from other sex films.

The resultant plot was as follows: Since he already had his lead actress in mind, Damiano saw no reason to complicate his task by creating new character names. The main focus of the film, then, would be a woman named Linda, who confides to her friend Helen (played by actress Dolly Sharp) that she is sexually unsatisfied: “There should be bells ringing, dams bursting, bombs going off—something.” Helen dismisses the complaint. “Do you want to get off or do you wanna wreck a city?” she asks. But observing that her friend remains dejected, Helen decides the answer might be “different strokes for different folks.” Telling Linda that perhaps she simply needs to experiment more, she arranges for Linda to attend an orgy. Unfortunately, the orgy provides no results, and Linda remains unfulfilled. Nevertheless, Helen next sends her friend to seek medical help. She refers Linda to Dr. Young (played by Harry Reems) and following a brief physical exam, the doctor determines the problem: “Your clitoris. It’s deep down in the bottom of your throat.” Devastated by the news, Linda begins to sob and Dr. Young duly attempts to calm her, telling her a clitoris in the throat is better than none at all.

“Suppose your balls were in your ear,” Linda retorts. The ever-optimistic Dr. Young ponders this for a moment before replying, “Well, then I should hear myself coming!” Dr. Young is willing to treat his troubled patient, but he tells Linda that he already has his hands full with a buxom nurse (played by Carol Connors). Instead, Dr. Young provides Linda with a list of clients in need of therapy, opining that the cure to her problem is to become a “physiotherapist”—a job which requires Linda to make three house calls, including one to a patient who covers his sex therapy with his Blue Cross insurance policy. Following a sexual dalliance with her client Wilbur Wang, Linda receives a marriage proposal. She accepts, thereby giving the story a happy ending. This was the basic plot of *Deep Throat*.⁸³ It was not a perfect script by any means, but Damiano was satisfied he had created a vehicle that could capture Linda’s amazing fellating skills.

Linda related in *Ordeal* how she first became involved with the film. Damiano had seen her perform the deep-throat technique at a party as well as in the series of loops in which she had appeared. Inspired by her performance, he came up with the plot for *Deep Throat*. He told Linda, “I was driving over the bridge when it hit me. We’re going to do a whole film—and I mean a feature, thirty-five millimeters—about a girl who has a clit in her throat.”⁸⁴ Convinced he had a great idea, Damiano still needed funding, so he pitched his plot to Periano. In addition to laying out the story outline, he proposed shooting the film in Miami. He chose Florida because an adult filmmakers’ convention was simultaneously going on, which he wanted to attend.

Periano gave the green light, and agreed on an initial budget of \$22,000, but he had doubts about casting Linda. He was nervous about her physique—she had scars on

⁸³ Gerard Damiano, “Deep Throat,” script, 1971, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁸⁴ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 116.

her abdomen and chest from the 1970 car accident, and he did not feel her breasts were big enough. Damiano, however, held firm that Linda was to be the lead actress.

Unsatisfied with Damiano's commitment, Traynor arranged for her to fellate the mob financier in his office. Linda complied, and also ended up visiting Periano multiple times for three-minute sessions before the cast finally headed to Miami for the shoot.⁸⁵

In the fall of 1971, the production of *Deep Throat* began. Linda and Harry Reems were to travel from New York to Miami. Linda had actually worked with Reems in the past, for a loop that featured her in a nursing outfit and him as a sick patient in need of special attention. Linda was pleased that Reems would also be accompanying the crew down to Florida. She was drawn to his warm personality and what she felt was his "good sense of humor." Also, Traynor was intensely jealous of Reems, a fact that delighted Linda.⁸⁶

The trek south also brought Traynor and Anthony Periano, Lou's father, to the balmy climate of Florida, which seemed a welcome break from the New York weather. Linda, Traynor, and Anthony drove in a separate car and left a few days before the rest of the crew. As Linda recalls, Traynor insisted she fellate the elder Periano and when the trio stopped at a motel for the night, he sent her over to Tony's room. Anthony declined the offer, and the following morning he lectured Traynor on morals. Italians, he insisted, did not cheat on their wives. Traynor fell uncharacteristically quiet and never again sent Linda to Tony's room.⁸⁷ After the three arrived in Miami, they checked into the Voyageur Hotel, where Traynor promptly initiated a boot camp regimen for Linda, claiming, "These people don't want flabby people in their movie." As part of the routine,

⁸⁵ Ibid., 121-122.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 116.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 124.

he had her swim in the pool daily.⁸⁸ Linda complied with Traynor's instructions while they waited for Damiano and Reems to arrive.

Once the rest of the crew arrived, the production began in earnest. Damiano recalled a seat-of-the-pants experience. The initial organization and planning became lost as the actual filming took place. "Everything was done on the run," he said. "So you know, we were rehearsing lines in the car as we were going to the next shoot. We never knew today what we were going to shoot tomorrow."⁸⁹ Despite the relatively large budget and lengthy script, the film's crew was streamlined with most of the members performing more than one task. For example, Len Camp served as the still photographer, location director, and casting agent. Camp provided the rest of the crew, by introducing Florida performers he thought might want to participate.⁹⁰ Like Camp, Reems took on two roles, working as both a principal actor and the lighting director. One of his jobs as lighting director required packing and unpacking the lights as well as setting them up. Because his scenes were all shot in one day, he made \$100 total as an actor but \$50 per day for his work as lighting director. Linda was the only one on the set who did not have multiple tasks. Working only as lead actress, she would earn \$1,200 for her performance. This was actually the average salary for women who worked in the pornography industry at the time. Of this salary, Linda initially had no complaints and in fact referred to the figure she received as a windfall from a "great train robbery."⁹¹ In addition, she said that the wage difference between herself and her male co-stars seemed unfair: "The poor

⁸⁸ Ibid., 125

⁸⁹ Gerard Damiano interview.

⁹⁰ Harry Reems interview.

⁹¹ Linda would make this assertion in *Inside Linda Lovelace* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1973), 81. Though ghostwritten and later disavowed, Linda's comments about men's salary in the pornography business are interesting. She regarded her co-stars, particularly Harry Reems, with high esteem and likely did feel the pay disparity between the sexes was inequitable.

guys, who really do most of the work, get really lousy pay. Men's lib should look into this injustice.”⁹²

On the surface, nothing unusual or extraordinary happened during the filming of *Deep Throat*. The crew, as well as the rented equipment, was kept to a minimum. This minimalist approach often forced improvisation and creativeness, as lights were attached sometimes to doorknobs and chandeliers. At one point, Reems recalled a light precariously balanced and about to fall while he and Linda were being filmed having sex. “And I look up, and there’s this light,” he later recounted. “There’s this light slowly slipping off this...whatever it was held to. And even though we were in the middle of the act, I had to turn and say, ‘The light, the light right over my head. The light over my head, it’s gonna fall.’”⁹³

Reems otherwise noted the only thing that made the filming of *Deep Throat* at all unusual was the fact that budget was mostly spent on rented locations, instead of on film and equipment.⁹⁴ Many of the film’s exteriors were shot at the Voyager Hotel, a two-story building with sliding glass patio doors in every room that opened onto the pool area. If nothing else, this arrangement brought a sense of reality otherwise lacking in most porn movies, which typically were filmed on inexpensive sets. All in all, he recalled, the cast and crew worked in a relaxed state, and drank, drugged, and partied together throughout the shooting.⁹⁵

Linda, too, according to her account in *Ordeal*, recalled a certain camaraderie and joviality on the sets, with cast members frequently telling jokes and teasing each other.

⁹² Lovelace, *Inside Linda Lovelace*, 81.

⁹³ Harry Reems interview.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Later, however, she claimed her presence on the set was involuntary, and violent incidents were mixed in with the partying. As early as the first day of filming, for example, the cast threw a party. Like everyone else, Traynor at first appeared to be in a good mood but by the end of the night that had changed. He had grown increasingly detached and his anger welled to the surface. Linda dared to talk back. She knew full well this would incite him to violence, but on that first night in the hotel, she felt emboldened. Retiring from the party to their own room next door, she told him he was angry at the attention she was receiving and how he was losing his hold over her. He responded with his usual fury by punching and kicking. Linda cried out for help, but said no one responded to her pleas.

The following day, most of the cast and crew acted as if nothing had happened. One person took her aside and offered to help, but Linda was too embittered from the previous night's experience and declined.⁹⁶ The rest of the crew, including Damiano, who complained that he would have to change camera angles to hide the bruises on her legs, ignored her predicament. With no one to whom she could turn for help, Linda once again withdrew and became quiet. From then on, Damiano had constantly to prompt his leading lady to smile.⁹⁷ Damiano, for his part, said no one knew Linda was being abused during the filming, though he certainly recognized Traynor was creating problems. He recalled the following:

And, the morning we shot that scene, the "deep throat" scene, she came, and she was almost crying. She says, "I won't be able to do it good." I said, "What's the matter?" She says, "Chuck is so jealous. So, if I really get into the scene he's going to be mad at me." So, thank God he was...on the crew. And I had the production manager send him into Miami. I said, "We're running out of film, we need more film." So, Chuck went into Miami to buy film. And we shot the so-

⁹⁶ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 124.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 124.

called “deep throat” scene, and she was wonderful. But I had to get him out, that was the only problem we had.⁹⁸

Linda confirms that Damiano kept Traynor off the set by making him his errand boy.⁹⁹ Despite these problems, and further compromising her insistence she was not a willing participant, Linda apparently continued to have fun during the filming. The easy rapport she enjoyed with Reems continued to anger Traynor, but Reems’ and Damiano’s light-hearted demeanors lifted her spirits. The dialogue was so corny that Linda and Reems would often start laughing during a scene, causing Damiano to order them to practice their lines before shooting commenced.¹⁰⁰ As Linda told it, “Every time I lamented missing my clitoris—‘I want to hear bells ringing, dams bursting, and rockets exploding’—we’d break up. Harry would say something like, ‘Tell me, Linda, exactly why is it that you want to hear a dam burst?’ And that would be enough to set us off.”¹⁰¹ Breaking up was one thing, acting another. To her credit, Linda recognized that her talent as an actress left much to be desired. On her delivery of dialogue she later said, “I did my lines adequately, I think. I was understood.”¹⁰²

Reems had a different take on Linda. He was critical of both her acting and fellatio skills. “Linda Lovelace hurt,” he said. “She used her teeth too much.”¹⁰³ Reems had worked with Linda before *Deep Throat* in a couple of short loops; she never made much of an impression on him. “There was nothing that really jumped out at me and said, ‘Wow, what a beautiful woman,’ or ‘how sexually charged this person is.’ She was

⁹⁸ Gerard Damiano interview.

⁹⁹ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 137

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 136

¹⁰¹ *Ordeal* 136

¹⁰² Lovelace, *Inside Linda Lovelace*, 90

¹⁰³ Harry Reems interview.

rather quiet. I don't want to say 'slow,' but you know, didn't seem to be educated to any great degree.”¹⁰⁴

Reems may have been frustrated by Linda's poor delivery of lines, but Damiano was more realistic about her inability to act from the beginning. “She had never done anything before, never spoken a word on film,” he acknowledged. Perhaps because he had coached her for three weeks before shooting began in Florida, he generously added, “She was serious enough to retain what I tried to teach her. It's not very often that you get people willing to learn.”¹⁰⁵

The actors were usually only given 10 to 15 minutes of rehearsal time before each scene. This was rarely enough time for Linda, and Reems said she often fumbled her lines or forgot them completely. “A lot of her lines that she had in the script never showed up in the film because they were forgotten,” said Reems, who developed the character of a zany doctor largely as a reaction to Linda's monotone readings.¹⁰⁶ The flatter she read her lines, the more he exaggerated his own.

Reems does, however, credit Damiano as being creative enough to make the pornographic comedy work. “He had the vision of opening up that genre of film to the dramatics, if you will... [and he] gave it more depth than it had had previously,” Reems said. “It was still pretty thin, but this was leaps and bounds beyond...anything anybody had ever done before.”¹⁰⁷ Damiano's gift for comedy extended off the written page. He told jokes and comical stories as soon as the camera was shut off and, when scenes were

¹⁰⁴ Harry Reems interview.

¹⁰⁵ Richard Smith, *Getting Into Deep Throat*, (New York: Playboy Press, 1973), 47.

¹⁰⁶ Harry Reems interview.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

being filmed, preferred his actors to smile and laugh during sex. “He didn’t want just the serious stuff,” Reems said.¹⁰⁸

Following the filming, the actors and crew dispersed. Linda and Traynor returned to New York to seek more work in the porn industry. Damiano also returned to New York and began the post-production process, which included creating assumed names for the cast. This was standard practice in the adult entertainment business for two reasons. Pseudonyms allowed actors to avoid professional repercussions for performing in non-union films and ameliorated the stigma an actor might attract by acting in porn. Damiano claimed he created both the names “Harry Reems” and “Linda Lovelace” for his actors. In the past, Reems had performed under such whimsical names as “Dick Hurt” and “Peter Long,” but *Deep Throat* heralded the first time he used “Harry Reems.” For Linda, Gerard selected the name Linda Lovelace. “I wanted to give her love and lace, love and lace because that’s what she was,” he said. “The only thing I could think of was apple pie. You know, but that really didn’t make a good name...’Linda Apple Pie.’”¹⁰⁹ Linda believed that alliteration had something to do with her new name. “There had been a BB and an MM, and now he wanted an LL,” she said.¹¹⁰ Though Damiano could not have realized it at the time, Linda would indeed become the next sex superstar whose name recognition was bolstered by a figure of speech.

Damiano returned to New York City in January 1972 and began editing the final cut of *Deep Throat*. By this point, his budget was exhausted, but much work remained to be done. To capture the moment Linda experiences an orgasm, he wanted to include symbolic footage of bells ringing and rockets bursting in air. He managed to film bells

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Gerard Damiano interview.

¹¹⁰ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 138. BB presumably meant Bridget Bardot and MM, Marilyn Monroe.

clanging in nearby Union Square and Central Park but had to rely on the National Archives in Washington, D.C. for the rest. He told staff members he needed footage of rockets bursting in air for an industrial film he was making.

Extraneous footage like this was a nice creative flourish for his film, but Damiano was not content to stop there. As a finishing touch, he also wrote music with lyrics to accompany the film. A total of 12 songs were included, but here Damiano's ambitions may have gotten the better of him. In *Deep Throat*, Damiano's poetic abilities were embarrassingly simple: "Deep throat, deeper than your throat, deep throat, go row the boat, go get your coat, that's all she wrote, deep throat." Damiano would later explain that he was pleased with the results since the words rhymed. "I'd Like to Teach the World to Screw" was another notable song featured on the soundtrack, but in this instance, Damiano openly parodied the Coca-Cola song, "I'd Like to Teach the Word to Sing." These songs and the others featured in the film were not musical masterpieces by any stretch of the imagination, but a porn film with an accompanying soundtrack was one of the many factors that set *Deep Throat* apart.¹¹¹

Damiano completed the editing process in a few months. With a running time of 62 minutes, *Deep Throat* contained a total of 15 sex scenes and was, in Damiano's estimation, a sufficient piece of pornographic fare. Neither Damiano nor his principal actors expected *Deep Throat* to be such an explosive hit. To them, it was just another porno film. But as they discovered following the Times Square premiere nine months later, it was a groundbreaking endeavor that would permanently change their lives and the porn industry itself.

¹¹¹ Gerard Damiano interview.

Although historical studies of pornographic film are rare, the genre's history has been well documented by the few scholars who have explored its roots.¹¹² It is important to note this is not an overall history of pornography, but rather a brief synopsis that illustrates why *Deep Throat* gained popularity among a widespread audience.

The history of pornographic film has very deep roots. Ancient civilizations left behind pornographic works ranging from written materials on cave walls to sculptures and painted frescos.¹¹³ Following the invention of the daguerreotype, an early camera introduced in France in the mid-nineteenth century, pioneering photographers captured erotic images on film.¹¹⁴ By the early 1890s, with the invention of celluloid and motion picture cameras, the movie medium was quickly applied to the pornographic image. Early films consisted of short reels that ran an average of 8 to 10 minutes and were viewed in nickelodeons, the precursor to modern movie theaters. In these early pictures, filmmakers often enticed viewers with a potential sexual story line but then failed to deliver. *Making Love in a Hammock* [1897] for instance, featured attempts at an amorous encounter that were repeatedly thwarted by an uncooperative hammock.¹¹⁵

Most historians studying early pornography agree the most prolific makers and consumers of short erotic films were abroad, typically in France, Mexico, and Buenos Aires, Argentina. For instance, in French brothels, or in the red-light districts of the

¹¹² Other than the work of Linda Williams, *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the "Frenzy of the Visible,"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), few historical analyses of pornography exist. When studying this topic, historians frequently borrow from one another, as shall I. The only reliable historical work is Al Di Lauro's and Gerland Rabkin's *Dirty Movies: An Illustrated History of the Stag Film, 1915-1970*. Other writers also cite Arthur Knight and Hollis Alpert, who co-wrote "The History of Sex in the Cinema" for *Playboy Magazine*, a series of articles published between April 1965 and January 1969

¹¹³ See H. Montgomery Hyde's *A History of Pornography*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1964) and Walter Kendrick's *The Secret Museum*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

¹¹⁴ Al Di Lauro and Gerald Raskin note in *Dirty Movies: An Illustrated History of the Stag Film, 1915-1970*, 41. They note that the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University houses pornographic photos from the 1840s.

¹¹⁵ Di Lauro and Rabkin, 48

Mexican barrios, it was possible in the first decade of the 20th century to watch pornographic reels.¹¹⁶ In the United States, the oldest sex film can be found in the Indiana Archives, dating back to 1915. However, as Al Di Lauro and Gerald Rabkin, authors of *Dirty Movies: An Illustrated History of the Stag Film*, point out, other pornographic films were probably created before this date but were lost over time.¹¹⁷

From the turn of the century into the 1960s, American pornographic films varied in cinematography and quality, but they were all largely formulaic and featured similar plot contrivances. The most popular pornographic medium was the loop—a short 8-to-10 minute reel of film that emphasized minimal plot and featured copious sex between the two chief actors. Also characteristic of early sex films was the inclusion of bawdy humor, though this humor never detracted from a character, or characters, experiencing sexual pleasure by film's end. Usually the main character, either a man or woman, was caught off guard and seduced, or he or she became aroused for some reason and felt an insatiable urge to be fulfilled.¹¹⁸ This character was generally a housewife who was enticed by a traveling salesman or a voyeur watching women from a peephole in the fence. These female characters possessed insatiable sexual appetites, and by the end of each film, their sexual boundaries had been explored.¹¹⁹ The actors were often middle aged and not particularly attractive. They were unnamed and often wore disguises (such as doctor or robber masks) to remain anonymous.

¹¹⁶ DiLauro and Rabkin, 46-47.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ See Di Lauro and Rabkin, and William Rostler, *Contemporary Erotic Cinema: A Guide to the Revolution in Movie Making*, (New York: Grove Press, 1999), 28-29.

¹¹⁹ See Williams, 176. Also, in his brief historical overview of sex films, John Hubner makes this observation as well. See *Bottom Feeders: From "Free Love" to Hard Core-The Rise and Fall of Counterculture Heroes Jim and Artie Mitchell*, (New York: Doubleday Press, 1992), 55-56.

These early films were known as “stag films” because they were shown at male-only venues like an Elk Lodge, Legionnaires Club, or a fraternity house. Equipment and film was so expensive, the cost was split among the audience, and as a result viewing was not private, but rather a group-affair.¹²⁰

Stag films also commonly featured a close-up shot of a male positioned on the bottom with an erect penis, as a woman mounted him from on top. This shot served more than one purpose. It provided a clear view of copulation that was otherwise not readily seen. It was a graphic illustration, for men without access to sex education or who were fearful of being ridiculed if they asked about sex, of how intercourse worked, and it made fakery in the industry unlikely.

The sex hygiene film was another popular genre introduced shortly after the advent of cinema. Offered to audiences as an educational experience, the sex-hygiene film was a duplicitous genre. It was regarded as more respectable than pornography but the underlying purpose was the viewers’ chance to see frank nudity. These films, too, were notable for their formulaic characteristics; they were typically short, with a running time between 18 minutes and an hour. Also, only adults were allowed into the theater, a stipulation that added to the genre’s allure. Sex-hygiene films normally played to sex-segregated audiences, with some of the earlier films being made specifically to educate young male GIs about the dangers of venereal disease and unprotected sex. Two of the more popular films were *Fit to Fight* and *The End of the Road*. But the genre had lucrative potential beyond screenings at military bases, and by the 1920s film exhibitors wisely screened their films to both male-only and female-only audiences, with young

¹²⁰ Di Lauro and Rabkin, 55.

ladies presumably being too self-conscious or proper to see such a film in the company of men.

Promoters generally featured two women-only showings, compared with one men-only, because sex-hygiene films tended to be more popular with women. The female-only screenings ran earlier in the day, usually 2 p.m. and again at 7 p.m. The later male-only showing, usually around 9 p.m., was referred to as “the Thundering Herd,” in reference to the eagerness displayed by young men who had been lured in by their excited female friends.¹²¹

The stag films and sex-hygiene films that predated *Deep Throat* paved the way for Gerard, Linda, and her costar Harry to bring pornographic film into the mainstream. Although more and more people had begun making and watching pornographic films in the 1950s, when recording and viewing equipment became less expensive, the average person still would not openly admit he or she had watched or participated in a pornographic film. While *Deep Throat* may have borrowed heavily from silent films, loops, and stags, it created an effect those earlier films did not—it made pornography something people no longer needed to feel ashamed about.

Deep Throat opened at the New Mature World Theater on June 12, 1972. The theater was in Times Square, which by the early 1970s had gained a reputation as being one of the seedier sections of Manhattan. This had not always been the case. Broadway and 42nd had once been referred to as Green Acres Square until the *New York Times* headquarters moved there in 1904 and the intersection was rechristened Times Square.

¹²¹ Joe Bob Briggs, *Profoundly Disturbing, Shocking Movies that Changed History!* (New York: Universe Publishing), 55. Despite what seems superfluous subject matter, Briggs provides an insightful historical overview of films that contained important plot devices, which later surface in mainstream pornographic films.

The area had once housed small shops and restaurants, but the square footage of the street-level businesses was relatively small. Gradually, the original proprietors moved to bigger locations, and because the small spaces could not generate much rent, they were ideal venues for the pornography business.¹²² By the late 1960s and early 1970s, pornographers were firmly entrenched in Times Square, likening the area to the notorious Tenderloin in San Francisco and the gamier parts of Los Angeles. Initially, the area boasted theaters with live strip performances, as well as sidewalk arcades. Customers with pockets of quarters could push their change through slots to operate projection machines showing grainy 8-mm loops, or they could pay to watch couples fornicating or women seductively disrobing on stage in dimly lit theaters. For the more adventurous, the city streets and back alleys teemed with prostitutes offering to make the Times Square experience more personal. Alongside the arcades and strip clubs, adult film theaters began to pop up. By the early 1970s, there were about two dozen, with new ones opening at a rate of one a month.¹²³

A mixed crowd frequented the area. A steady stream of businessmen on their lunch hour mingled with the touristy crowd of middle-aged and older men. In the evening, more gawking tourists joined the eclectic mix. Women, though less seen, accompanied their husbands or boyfriends. None of this sat very well with the *New York Times* management. As the neighborhood continued to decline, the higher-ups at the paper were almost permanently embarrassed. *Times* employees complained they felt

¹²² Ralph Blumenthal, interview by World of Wonder Production Company, 30 July 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

¹²³ Joseph Slade, "The Porn Market and Porn Formulas: The Feature Film of the Seventies," (6) *Journal of Popular Film* (1977), 175.

unsafe coming to and from work, and there were reports of occasional muggings.¹²⁴ In July 1971, city officials responded to various complaints and attempted to clean up the area. The vice squad efforts, however, were directed largely at the streetwalkers and owners of the live sex clubs. The movie theaters showing adult entertainment remained largely untouched and thus remained a relatively safe environment for people to patronize.

Despite any complaints the *Times* may have had about its neighbors, it often sent reporters out to cover screenings. The reviews were generally similar, usually written by a young writer who was well-versed in the importance of the First Amendment and the dangers of censorship, and ultimately lamented the tediousness of the films.¹²⁵ For regular patrons of the porn theaters who never bothered to pick up a copy of the *Times*, porn advertisements and screening schedules were available in two local rags—*The Daily News* and *Screw Magazine*.

Al Goldstein was something of a literary hack who got his start in journalism in the mid-1960s by writing for low-brow, pulp magazines similar to *Hush-Hush* and *Bold*, tabloids that typically featured scantily clad females on the cover and content emphasizing the salacious nature of true-crime events. Like Hugh Hefner before him, Goldstein became convinced there was a readership for more sexually explicit material and, taking advantage of the burgeoning sexual revolution, applied his nominal journalistic skills to the creation of *Screw Magazine*. Founded in 1968, *Screw* featured pictorial spreads of nudes, occasional investigative exposés, and fictional sex pieces.

¹²⁴ Ralph Blumenthal interview.

¹²⁵ Slade, *Trans-Action* page 37.

Distribution of *Screw* soon grew to 100,000 in the greater New York City area.¹²⁶ In an effort to set the magazine apart, Goldstein featured unique reviews of current porn films that relied on an unconventional rating system. Instead of a numbered system, or a list of stars, Goldstein devised what he called the “Peter-Meter” as a means of rating films. The Peter-Meter was “a schematic flaccid penis that firms up across a scale numbered from one to one hundred in response to a movie’s qualities.”¹²⁷ More specifically, Goldstein’s formula broke down as follows: he awarded up to 50 points for essential components of a film—namely, whether the film had an engaging plot and decent acting; up to 40 points for the film’s titillating or arousing potential; and up to 10 points for cinematography.¹²⁸ Goldstein, a tough critic, was anything but generous in awarding points to the films he screened.

His tendency to give not-so-favorable reviews may have been somewhat frustrating for the owner of the New Mature World Theater, one of many nondescript Times Square porn theaters in the early 1970s. However, the theater’s owner, Robert Sumner, regularly invited Goldstein to attend advanced screenings—a generous move considering that a bad review on opening night could have adversely affected revenue. Most films Goldstein reviewed rated somewhere between 30 and 50 on the Peter Meter, but in 1972, *Deep Throat* became the third film to rate a perfect 100.¹²⁹ Goldstein’s review came out one week before *Deep Throat* opened.

Whether or not the review helped, the New Mature World Theater was soon doing a standing-room-only business as the crowds turned out. Everyone, it seemed, wanted to

¹²⁶ Richard Smith, 30.

¹²⁷ Richard Smith, 30.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

see the new phenomenon, *Deep Throat*. The crowds were not limited to “the raincoat brigade” (a term used to describe porn theater regulars) but included a whole new demographic of middle-class men and women. Within six months the film had generated a buzz that spread across the city and suddenly the New Mature World Theater had to begin screening the film around the clock. Damiano had a hit on his hands, and as film producer Lili Zanuck has pointed out, it was an example of a successful independent film. “It was independently financed. It would seemingly never appeal to the mainstream. Its distribution would be the pornographic equivalent of an art house. And through word of mouth it would find its way into the mainstream.”¹³⁰

Why had this film created such a stir? Many people credit Ralph Blumenthal’s article for the *New York Times* in which he coined the phrase “porno chic” as part of a determining factor in the film’s popularity. Unquestionably, Blumenthal’s article contributed to a growing fascination with the film—even though it came out in January 1973, a full six months after *Deep Throat* had opened. In reality, it was largely recognition of a phenomenon that was well under way.

Censorship efforts initiated first by local officials and later the FBI added to the popularity of the film. Undoubtedly, the negative publicity only engendered notoriety, which inspired many people to rush out and see the film. But like Blumenthal’s article, the censorship attempts were largely a belated reaction.

Deep Throat’s unprecedented popularity can be explained by several factors. The comical nature of the film offered a parody of sex hygiene and pornographic films that had preceded it. *Deep Throat* became popular because it offered something familiar to

¹³⁰ Lili Zanuck, interview by World of Wonder Production Company, 26 March 2004, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

viewers by borrowing well-established exploitative techniques and weaving them into a longer narrative. One such borrowed element was the use of the doctor role, played by Harry Reems. References to medical professionals were not merely fictive devices. They had allowed film producers and directors to avoid criminal prosecution because such films were considered “socially redeeming,” thus conforming to the recent court decisions on what would prevent a film from being labeled obscene. Placed within the setting of a medical moral, such films enabled producers to instruct their audiences on sex safe and proper sex positions, thereby sidestepping obscenity issues. Reems himself often played such parts: “I played a lot of doctors in adult films. Prior to *Deep Throat*, everything had to have social redeeming values, so we wore the doctor’s coat. And I stood there and I said, ‘If you’re having a problem with....your oral sex, here’s what do to with your partner.’”¹³¹ The role of Dr. Young, then, allowed Reems to “instruct” audiences on perfecting oral sex techniques and owed much to sex-hygiene films of the past.

Not only did Reems pay homage to and parody the doctor character in *Deep Throat* he took it a step further. While the doctor character was a staple, he was usually a two-dimensional character, wearing a white coat with a pointer and motioning to a chalkboard where fellatio was identified. These films had no story or depth to them—nothing to tie the elements together.¹³² Part of *Deep Throat*’s innovation was that it successfully parodied the “white coaters,” as Reems refers to them.¹³³ Indeed, as Pete Hamill noted in *The Deep Throat Papers*, the film was a “cartoon.” Though Damiano may not have been aware of it as he made the film, *Deep Throat* was one of the first

¹³¹ Harry Reems interview.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

porno films to parody the genre of porn itself, and in doing so, gave average, middle-class people—not just the “raincoat brigade”—permission to watch a skin flick.

But there were other, more important, reasons for *Deep Throat*’s growing popularity. Against the backdrop of the sexual revolution and the second feminist wave, *Deep Throat*’s plot touched, however unwittingly, on the growing debate about the nature of female sexuality. Popular literature and a contentious dialogue within the rapidly growing feminist movement explored a heated topic: the connection between sexual pleasure and sexual power. During the second feminist wave women had a variety of legitimate laments: needs for better wages and improved child care to name but a few. In lobbying for social and political change, the meaning of sex was also changing, but this new meaning of sex was by no means clear. Instead, it was ambiguous and fraught with contradictions; women were no longer seen as frigid and unresponsive partners, but individuals whose sexuality should be freely and actively expressed. In the wake of research by both Kinsey and Masters and Johnson, women now understood, indeed many already knew, that experiencing orgasms was not only possible, but healthy and normal. But the question now at hand among inquisitive Americans was, what exactly did that mean?

Female pleasure was confusing for both men and women alike, and current literary offerings did little to clarify the matter. In their 1964 book, *The Sexually Responsive Woman*, authors Phyllis and Eberhard Konhausen recalled the experience of one exacerbated woman who said, “My husband tells me that he doesn’t think I have a clitoris, or that it is buried too deep.”¹³⁴ She added, “Sometimes I wonder myself

¹³⁴ Phyllis and Eberhard Konhausen, *The Sexually Responsive Woman*, (New York: Bell Publishing Company, 1964), 78

whether I have a clitoris.” The authors’ advice was bold: women were encouraged to masturbate instead of idly waiting for their partners to satisfy them.¹³⁵

Five years later, the subject of female orgasm became more convoluted. *The Sensuous Woman*, a popular how-to sex manual for women, reflected the growing interest in pleasurable sex but was burdened with contradictions. Though it encouraged women to be assertive in bed, the author, later revealed to be Joan Terry Garrity, a New York book promoter, hid behind the protective pseudonym “J.”¹³⁶ *The Sensuous Woman* also seemed to suggest that sex was ultimately a chore. “You’re not going to be able to skip out on sex, so accept it and look toward the good,” the author cheerily proclaimed.¹³⁷ Worse, the chapter entitled “Orgasm—Yours, Not His”—suggested that women fake their orgasms to keep their partners happy. “If you do it well, he won’t be able to tell. Surprising, I know, but true.”¹³⁸

Garrity’s advice probably affirmed for most women what they had already knew. It also conveniently avoided the sex-and-power questions plaguing American couples, and the debate raged on. In the late 1960s, self-described radical feminist and former member of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Anne Koedt carried the argument a step further. “The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm” made it clear the clitoris was the anatomical locus of female sexual orgasm. Originally published in pamphlet form but printed again in Koedt’s 1970 book *Radical Feminism*, the essay aimed forcefully to assert once and for all that the vagina served no necessary purpose for women. Men,

¹³⁵ Ibid., 85.

¹³⁶ Barbara Ehrenrich, with Elizabeth Hess and Gloria Jacobs, *Re-Making Love: The Feminization of Sex*, (New York: Oxford University Press), 82.

¹³⁷ Joan Garrity, *The Sensuous Woman: The First How-To Book for the Female Who Yearns to Become All Woman*, (New York: Lyle Stuart Publishing, 1969), 14.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 179.

however, were happy conspirators in perpetuating the myth she sought to dispel, said Koedt, because the vagina was the “best stimulant for the penis,” and men were committed to protecting their manhood and preventing their sexual extinction.¹³⁹

Feminist author Barbara Seaman was no less concerned with women’s pleasure or the site of orgasm, and in her 1972 book *Free and Female: The Sex Life of the Contemporary Woman* she offered a wholesale rebuttal to Koedt’s argument. Masters and Johnson, she writes, “never intended to put the vagina out of the sex business,” and, after offering her readers a brief anatomy lesson, she concludes orgasm is “a total body response...always marked by vaginal contractions.”¹⁴⁰ “Sexually, these women are through faking it,” she wrote, reassuring the male-reading audience. “Masturbation is lonely,” and with proper communication there would be no need to banish men from the bedroom.¹⁴¹

In this context, *Deep Throat*’s timeliness is easily explained. Gerard may have subconsciously realized this, though it is hard to say with any certainty. He admitted, as I have shown, that the inspiration for the script came to him as he drove across the Brooklyn Bridge and he had been amazed at Linda’s extraordinary fellating skills. Intuitively or not, *Deep Throat* reflected the growing awareness experienced by men and women alike of the woman’s anatomy and rights for sexual pleasure, but the film took that awareness one step further by playfully locating the clitoris in the back of Linda’s throat. This solved many problems. The clitoris could now be stimulated and orgasm achieved, and, as film historian Linda Williams points out, demonstrable proof of orgasm

¹³⁹ Anne Koedt, “The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm,” (originally a pamphlet but reprinted and cited at the following: *Sexual Revolution*, Ed. Jeffery Escoffier, (New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2003), 109.

¹⁴⁰ Barbara Seaman, *Free and Female: The Sex Life of the Contemporary Woman*. (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1972), 50

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 70.

is given. Simply looking at external genitalia provides little actual proof of orgasm. Faces are obviously more expressive though, and Williams notes that in *Deep Throat* it is a face that receives the action, a face that visibly expresses pleasure and happiness.¹⁴² Though the film could boast a heroine who reaches sexual satisfaction, it was at the same time a fraudulent solution. The clitoris is not located in the throat, and so as Williams again observes, “It is not being honest or solicitous of a woman’s real pleasure.”¹⁴³

Of note, not even Linda could adequately reconcile these basic contradictions. In a 1973 magazine interview with Yvonne Postelle, Linda was asked about a particular scene in the film where Damiano inserted rockets bursting in the air and ringing bells to represent female orgasm. The interviewer pointed out to Linda, “the movie cuts not to your face but to the man’s face, and there’s a complete shift in emphasis. It becomes *his* [italics added] orgasm the audience is watching, not yours.” Linda responded, “That was just poor editing. They probably overlooked it.”¹⁴⁴

Despite the absurd location of one woman’s pleasure, *Deep Throat* remains significant as one of the first films to explore a woman’s desire for sexual satisfaction. Up until that time, pornographic films were intended almost exclusively for a man’s sexual enjoyment. In practically all of them, a basic formula developed where women existed as part of a man’s fantasy; they were all attractive and desperately wanted sex and were blessed or perhaps burdened with insatiable sexual appetites. Granted, women in these films apparently enjoyed sex and actively sought it, but only concurrent to the pleasure of a man. *Deep Throat* offered something new—a female lead seeking sexual satisfaction

¹⁴² Linda Williams, interviewed by Fenton Bailey, 8 July 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

¹⁴³ Linda Williams interview.

¹⁴⁴ Yvonne Postelle, “Jesus, still loves you, Linda Lovelace,” *Venus*, November 1973.

for herself. The film allowed for the possibility that women's sexual pleasure could be explored and, in fact, could take precedence over that of her partner.

There is one final reason *Deep Throat* achieved such unprecedented popularity—the very difference of Linda herself. With freckles, a hippie demeanor, and plain-Jane looks, she embodied a wholesome sweetness rarely seen in pornographic films. In the 1970s, male actors in the adult business were cast primarily on their ability to maintain an erection, but possessing average looks also helped secure them roles. Male audiences needed to believe that the sexual fantasies depicted on screen were potentially theirs, too, and not reserved for more privileged, good-looking men. Linda served this same function for female audience members. She was not a buxom blonde as were most porn actresses; she embodied an earnestness that was not the typical oversexed, insatiable starlet. Her average looks made it easy for female viewers to relate to her. In fact, Damiano specifically wanted Linda for his film not just for her fellating skills but also because she looked “like the girl next door.” Unlike Periano, who financed the film and who wanted “a blonde with big boobs,” Damiano was committed to Linda’s sweet, innocent look. His instincts proved correct, as the box office results showed. Linda’s down-to-earth qualities were key to the film’s broad appeal with female audience members. A writer for *Time* magazine understood this well, referring to her as “a female Don Juan who is also funny.”¹⁴⁵ And film producer Zanuck, too, agreed that *Deep Throat*’s success was in no small measure due to Linda’s appearance: “I think if Linda Lovelace had been Jenna Jamison, we weren’t prepared for that. It was very easy to relate to Linda because there wasn’t anything offensive or startling.”¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ *Time* Magazine 15 January 1973

¹⁴⁶ Lili Zanuck interview

As much as Linda's girl-next-door persona appealed to women and men alike and fueled the film's popularity, many women resented her for her sexual abilities. Linda inverted, for perhaps the first time, sexual norms. Her amazing performance inadvertently raised the bar for other women. Fellow porn star Marilyn Chambers has remarked that many women resented Linda's performance in the film. Zanuck noted that historically it was men who suffered from performance anxiety. Watching Linda perform "deep throat" was, as Zanuck noted, "not your regular blow job. This was a blow job-plus."¹⁴⁷ In reality, there was no measurable evidence that American women felt threatened after watching *Deep Throat*. But there is some evidence that there was a growing sense that women had to be more talented—or make more effort—in bed to satisfy their lovers. A writer for the *Village Voice* noted this detrimental side of *Deep Throat* for women, as well. After listening to other women discuss not only sexual issues but their sexual experiences at a feminist discussion group, she observed sexual intercourse was "out," and fellatio was "in." "Suddenly talking about *Deep Throat* we realized the real problem," remarked the author, "No one is getting laid anymore."¹⁴⁸

Deep Throat's success, then, can be partly explained by it unwittingly parodying the female orgasm and raising the question of vaginal versus clitoral orgasm. But perhaps the more important question is, what did contemporary feminists think of the film, and what impact, if any, did it have on the women's movement in general? Betty Friedan, credited with sparking the second feminist wave in the 1960s following the publication of *The Feminine Mystique* [1963], seemed to subscribe to an older, more traditional view about sexuality. Falling in line more with nineteenth-century feminists Friedan believed

¹⁴⁷ Lili Zanuck interview.

¹⁴⁸ *Bachelor* August 1973.

public discussions about sex should be generally avoided and a highly regarded woman was not one who valued or discussed her sexuality. Authors Carol Hymowitz and Michaela Weissman note, “The wan and sickly woman with white skin and an air of fragility, who lay on her bed and smiled a vague smile, was in a sense a nineteenth-century sex symbol.”¹⁴⁹ Conversely, it was thought only “low” women experienced the disgrace of sexual desire.¹⁵⁰ Certainly there were exceptions to this philosophy of thought. For instance, the outspoken feminist Victoria Woodhull insisted marriage was nothing more than legalized prostitution and sex without pleasure was also a crime.¹⁵¹ Though she never denied its importance in the women’s movement, Friedan was wary of sexual satisfaction achieving prominence in the movement, and through NOW (National Organization of Women, which she founded in 1966), believed women should instead focus on measurable change such as equal pay and easy access to childcare.¹⁵²

But by the time *Deep Throat* was released (though not necessarily because of it), feminist camps could no longer ignore the importance of sexuality. The preferred method for exploring this topic had become consciousness-raising groups (CR), a method popularized by more radical members of the movement who had no official ties to NOW. The CR groups varied in methods and topics of exploration, but the only criterion for participation was, in the words of Barbara O’Dair, “the possession of female

¹⁴⁹ 72.

¹⁵⁰ See Carol Hymowitz and Michaela Weissman, *A History of Women in America*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1978), 71-2, for a brief overview of nineteenth century notions about sex. Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English, *Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness*, (Glass Mountain Pamphlet No 2, The Feminist Press, 1973), and Milton Rugoff *Prudery and Passion*, (New York: Putnam, 1971) provide a more detailed exploration of sexual relations in the nineteenth century.

¹⁵¹ Victoria Woodhull Martin, “The Elixir of Life,” reprinted by Miriam Schneir, *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings*, (New York: Random House, 1972), 153.

¹⁵² David Horowitz provides a more detailed explanation of Friedan’s position in *Betty Friedan and the Making of the Feminist Mystique*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998).

genitalia.”¹⁵³ Under Friedan’s influence, NOW initially ignored CR but capitulated in 1972 and began starting groups themselves in community centers and private homes.

Feminist artist and sexologist Betty Dodson also believed that by 1973 NOW was indeed moving in the right direction in terms of addressing issues of female pleasure but that *Deep Throat* derailed its efforts. Through CR groups, she affirmed, NOW had bravely begun to explore issues such as masturbation and familiarity with women’s bodies. In fact, Dodson had been asked to put together material for a chapter meeting. She made 100 slides featuring the female genitalia and entitled her program, “Split Beaver for Feminists” but was asked to change the title. As a compromise, she renamed it “Creating an Aesthetic for the Female Genitals.” The slide show featured photographs of precisely that, including “natural views,” images of “the hood pulled back off the clitoris,” and even the “split-beaver view.”¹⁵⁴ The important goal for a woman, then, was to become familiar with, and find pleasure in, her own body, not feeling satisfaction through administering oral sex to a man. For Dodson, *Deep Throat*’s spoof was secondary to the fact it was still about a sex act performed for the benefit of a man, not a woman.¹⁵⁵

In August 1973, fourteen months after the film’s debut, Linda did an interview with a journalist for *Bachelor*, an X-rated magazine. When asked if she had been exploited as “a male fantasy dream girl,” Linda insisted, “I was pleasing ME.”¹⁵⁶ In the end, it was a stalemate. *Deep Throat* cut both ways. Even Linda’s own position on the

¹⁵³ Barbara O’Dair, “Radical Feminism Reaches the Suburbs,” Ed. Ashley Kahn and Shawn Dahl, *Rolling Stone: The Seventies*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co, 1988), 62.

¹⁵⁴ Betty Dodson, interview by World of Wonder Production Company, 30 July 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

¹⁵⁵ Betty Dodson interview. Also, Dodson again affirms her feelings about the film in an email she sent to the author, dated 03/05/06.

¹⁵⁶ *Bachelor*, August 1973.

feminist movement and her assessment of how she fit into it captured this ambivalence.

In a November 1973 interview with Yvonne Postelle, Linda said, regarding the feminist movement,

To be honest with you, I haven't gotten into the women's movement at all. I've always been liberated, always done the things I want to do when I want to do them. I don't worry about this one or that one or anybody else. Like, some women's libbers are against me because I'm being exploited. Others are for me; they say I'm part of the movement because I'm the first woman in an X-rated film to openly seek pleasure and gratification when that's always been the role of a man.¹⁵⁷

The storm of philosophical arguments and contention in the feminist community aside, *Deep Throat* had taken on a life of its own in the country at large. Everyone, it seemed, was talking about it, and mainstream writers who had never before covered porn films began to take notice. The frenzied interest did not mean, however, that critics would forsake a critical assessment of the picture in the name of the latest fad. Writing for the *Village Voice*, Andrew Sarris complained the film was a “joyless repetitious documentary on the latest oral-genital techniques in the Kingdom of Pornalia.”¹⁵⁸ Vincent Canby of the *New York Times* responded to the film less harshly but seemed to be almost overwhelmed by the experience. With open perplexity, he asked, “I must say, *Deep Throat* is much less erotic than technically amazing. ‘How does she do it?’” Interestingly, female film critics tended to be far less bewildered by the physiology involved in the act of deep throating and panned the movie outright. Judith Crist of *New York* magazine bluntly dismissed it as a prime example of “idiot filmmaking.” Ellen Willis, writing for the *New York Review of Books*, referred to it as “witless, exploitive and

¹⁵⁷ Postelle.

¹⁵⁸ Smith, p. 53.

about as erotic as a tonsillectomy.” Nora Ephron’s article in *Esquire* also voiced an extreme distaste for the film. Admitting an almost desperate desire to be hip by going to a porn theater and watching the most talked-about film of the year, she denounced *Deep Throat* as a “porno chic” lie, and nothing more than “one of the most unpleasant, disturbing films I have ever seen—it is not just anti-female but anti-sexual as well.”¹⁵⁹

Despite these negative reviews, by January 1973, *Deep Throat* was playing to ever growing audiences. Representative of its growing appeal was the experience at the Pussycat Theater in Los Angeles where it opened a month after its New York premier.¹⁶⁰ Lacking a spokesperson the likes of Goldstein, audience reaction there was not as warm, and revenues dipped substantially within two weeks. Contributing to the film’s poor showing, the *Los Angeles Times* declined to print the title in its advertising section. Nonetheless, West Coast audiences simply could not ignore buzz the film continued to generate from New York, and the film’s revenues consequently rebounded to gross an estimated \$90,000 by the end of the first month.¹⁶¹ Much the same story was told in 73 other cities across the U.S.

Theater managers’ decisions to screen the film were not always well received. On the Upper East Side of New York, a picket line consisting of four adults and eight children gathered when a children’s matinee was cancelled so *Deep Throat* could be shown. The protesters cared not so much about an X-rated film as they did that their G-rated film had been inconveniently preempted. Residents also staged a protest when *Deep Throat* was screened at the Parkway Theater in Milwaukee. Citizens complained that the

¹⁵⁹ Nora Ephron, “Interview with Linda Lovelace,” *Esquire*, February 1973, 14.

¹⁶⁰ Heidenry 151.

¹⁶¹ Nicholas Karolides, *Banned Books: Literature Suppressed on Political Grounds*, (New York, Facts on File, 1998), 239.

film was bringing too much traffic into the area, creating parking problems and endangering their children, so they demanded it be withdrawn. When theater owners refused to give in to their demands, the group switched tactics. Hoping the hassle of making change for their \$3 ticket would frustrate the owners, the group purchased tickets to the film with either pennies or hundred-dollar bills.

By and large, *Deep Throat* enjoyed a steady run in spite of a continuing spate of legal challenges mounted against it. Within three years, the film was banned in at least 23 cities. The impetus for this ban partly stemmed from the 1973 Supreme Court ruling *Miller v. California*. In this decision, the Court ruled that a national standard for determining what was obscene was too broad and simply unworkable. In place of this, local communities were instructed that it remained their prerogative to determine what was “obscene.”¹⁶² As a result of this ruling, some American communities took legal action not only against *Deep Throat* but other pornographic films as well. However, the motivation for initiating criminal charges was not always straightforward. For instance, in their documentary *Inside Deep Throat*, producers Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato noted that Memphis federal prosecutor, Larry Parish, ostensibly pursued *Deep Throat* because of Mafia affiliations with the film, with obscenity a secondary issue.

The outcome of these trials varied. In Houston, for instance, libertarian impulses prevailed, resulting in no efforts to censor pornographic films. But only 200 miles away in San Antonio, eight theaters were closed after a local jury ruled *Deep Throat* was obscene.¹⁶³ This inconsistency could be seen in the state of New York as well. In late 1974, Binghamton, with a population of 64,000 determined *Deep Throat* was not

¹⁶² Slade, 217

¹⁶³ Heidenry 249.

obscene, but in New York City, officials decided to prosecute theater owners in earnest.¹⁶⁴ Why the Times Square screening captured the ire of the public prosecutor is unclear, though in all likelihood the enormous popularity of the film and the fact that it was drawing a wide audience, not the typical denizens of theaters, embarrassed public officials and caused them to take action. Moreover, the New York City prosecution of *Deep Throat* is remarkable for more than just exposing the unpredictable reactions of local officials. It was the first serious effort to restrict the film's screening. To this end, many aspects of the New York case were typical of how *Deep Throat* was subsequently pursued in cities across the U.S. Criminal action was almost always initiated on the basis of a challenge to the city's obscenity ordinances, and in almost every court case that followed a defense attorney would counter with the argument that the film was educational, artistically creative, and thus socially redeeming. In New York City, the defense attorney made those standard arguments, as well. But he went a step further employing a defense of the film that inventively recognized its ramifications for women and their bodies.

New York City efforts to halt the screening of *Deep Throat* first began on August 17, 1972. A patrolman by the name of Michael Sullivan entered the New Mature World Theater, watched the film, and then initiated legal action that resulted in the film's seizure. The lower court judge, Ernst Rosenberger, discovered a Federal Court of Appeals ruling that required that an adversary hearing take place before a film could be seized, so the print was returned to the theater. City officials were undeterred by this setback. The following week, August 29, 1972, the police raided the theater a second time, removed the outdoor advertising signs, and charged the theater owner, Robert

¹⁶⁴ Allyn, 235

Sumner, with promoting obscenity.¹⁶⁵ Sumner hired Herbert Kassner to defend him and a court date for later in the year was scheduled.

On December 19, 1972, the trial began in a lower Manhattan courtroom presided over by Judge Joel Tyler. Attorney William Purcell was assigned to prosecute the case. Believing the obscenity contained within the film was sufficient to warrant a conviction, Purcell's strategy was straightforward. By simply screening the film to the judge, he thought he could win the case outright. Kassner, employing a more complicated and aggressive defense strategy, announced he would call three expert witnesses to testify on the film's behalf. The first witness was Arthur Knight, a distinguished professor of film history. Knight was an expert on the subject, having written, among other things, a series of articles for *Playboy* magazine entitled "A History of Stag Films." Pointing out that many other available stag and pornographic films featured scenes exceedingly more sexually explicit than *Deep Throat*, he noted that no similar obscenity challenges had been raised regarding violations of community standards for them.¹⁶⁶

Following Knight's testimony, Purcell realized his approach to prosecuting the film may have been insufficient, and he quickly arranged for two experts to speak on behalf of the prosecution. The first was a sociology professor, Ernest Van Den Haag. Testifying that the film lacked artistic merit, the professor bluntly stated it was nothing more than a sex film with "a few wisecracks in it."¹⁶⁷ Purcell's second witness was Max Levin, a 71-year-old psychiatrist and editor of *Current Medical Dialogue*. Levin acknowledged that the film was something of a rarity. It featured a woman searching for sexual gratification, instead of the usual plot in which a woman serves as a man's sexual

¹⁶⁵ Richard Smith, 68-69.

¹⁶⁶ Smith, 94.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 135.

object. Yet, he stated, in his opinion, the film was fatally flawed because it featured fellatio as an act in and of itself (even though intercourse was not excluded) and not as a healthy part of foreplay. Thus he declared *Deep Throat* a perversion.¹⁶⁸

Now it was Kassner's turn again to call witnesses for the defense, and he promptly put Edward J. Hornick on the stand. Hornick was a psychiatrist with a background in sex education and had viewed over 75 pornographic films in the past two years. Ignoring the issues of educational value or artistic merit based on its humor, Hornick stated clearly that *Deep Throat* had a far more important point. "I submit," he told the court, "that a film in which a woman very plainly asks to be satisfied and is given that privilege on film advances that life right of women."¹⁶⁹ Kassner's final witness was John William Money, whose credentials included a degree in psychology with a subspecialty in sexology. Money also addressed the significance of the film against the backdrop of the sexual revolution and the advancement of women's rights in the previous 20 years.

Many people, especially women, adult women today, have grown up under the shadow of feeling that there was something disreputable of even enjoying sex.... In many instances, this makes for a very constrained and often very miserable marriage as far as the sex life of the marriage, equally for the husband and wife, and it is hard to tell which one is suffering the most. So, this film has a kind of, I almost want to say, cleansing action.¹⁷⁰

Following Money's testimony, on January 3, 1973, the defense rested its case. As with most obscenity trials, the judge's decision would come down to a question of which testimony he personally believed. On March 1, 1973, Judge Tyler issued his opinion:

"*Deep Throat*—a nadir of decadence—is indisputably obscene by any legal

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 195.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 223.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 258.

measurement, and particularly violative of Penal Law Section 235.05.”¹⁷¹ Until the judge rendered his decision, *Deep Throat* had continued to screen at the New Mature World Theater. Following the decision, Sumner cancelled any further showings. “Judge Cuts Throat, World Mourns” was promptly placed instead on the theater marquee. Kassner appealed and won when, a few years later, a higher court reversed Judge Tyler’s decision.¹⁷² Regardless of the subsequent legal wrangling over *Deep Throat* that continued to play out in New York and in other American cities as well, there remained no clear consensus about the arguments raised by either the defense or the prosecution among the public at large. Certainly, some applauded the decision to close down the film, whereas others did not, and some curious moviegoers were inconvenienced, having missed for the moment their chance to see the film. The attitudes of American women were no less divided. It is impossible to measure precisely the reactions of female audience members to either the film or the arguments of the defense, but surely as many women found it to be sexy and liberating as those who found it repulsive and unsound.

The cultural significance of *Deep Throat* and profits it generated have received some attention in the 30-plus years since its release, but how the film affected Linda and the lives of her family has received comparatively little coverage. Whatever the public thought of *Deep Throat*, the Boremans were at first oblivious to and then horrified by the film’s success. Still living in New York at the end of 1972, Barbara Boreman related she had no idea what *Deep Throat* was about until she heard a story on the local 11 o’clock news. Still unaware that her sister had starred in the film, she initially found the public

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 283.

¹⁷² Though The New York City trial was reversed on technical grounds, in many instances *Deep Throat* would be successfully appealed because it had been produced in 1971 and 1972, thus the *Miller* standards were not applicable to the film.

fascination with the film “disgusting” and promptly put the stories out of her mind. Only in the following year when Linda posed for a spread in *Playboy* magazine did her performance in the film come to the attention of family members. That moment came when Barbara received a phone call from a girlfriend who told her, “On your way to work, pick up a copy of *Playboy* magazine.” Barbara was confused. “I don’t buy that stuff and I don’t want that in my house,” she replied. Her friend persisted. “Your sister is modeling for the magazine, and if that’s not our Linda, I’ll eat my hat.”¹⁷³

Barbara had never been to an X-rated store in her life, but knew where one or two were located. She drove a circuitous route to the one that was furthest from her house and purchased the latest edition. She returned to her car and began to thumb through the pages until she found the photographs and read through the article that accompanied them. “Oh my God, oh my God, it is my sister,” Barbara shrieked. She returned home and called up John and Dorothy. “I’ve got some bad news,” she said. “You’re not going to like this, but I think our Linda is Linda Lovelace.”¹⁷⁴

“No, no,” insisted Dorothy, “that’s not Linda, that’s some nurse down here in Miami.” What Dorothy meant by this is unclear, but it is likely she had seen pictures of Carol Connors, Linda’s co-star in *Deep Throat*, and assumed she was the star of the picture. Oddly enough, Dorothy had received *Deep Throat* news clippings in the mail from an anonymous source, but she was confused as to who sent them or why they were sent. Following the success of *Deep Throat*, Patsy Carroll stopped by the Boremans’ to visit and Dorothy pulled out the mysterious newspaper articles. “I don’t know what someone is trying to tell me,” Dorothy confided. Patsy looked at the articles and

¹⁷³ Barbara Boreman interview.

¹⁷⁴ Barbara Boreman interview.

recognized a name she had heard Traynor mention. She thought the photo might be of Linda, but it was grainy and she could not be certain because the girl in the clippings had set and curled hair and Linda had always worn hers straight and long. To this day, Patsy does not know for certain, but it may have been Traynor who sent the clippings to Linda's mother as a means of controlling and humiliating Linda.¹⁷⁵

John Boreman could not believe Linda was in *Deep Throat* either but made arrangements to see it after Barbara called. The following day, he dropped Dorothy off at her afternoon bingo game and then drove to a Miami theater that was screening the film. "He was in the theater for ten minutes and when he came out, he vomited," Barbara said. "He realized that was his daughter and it was a shock. I was in shock, too. We all were."

Barbara emphasized that the world knew Linda as a porn star, but to her family she was a daughter and a sister. "Was I going to chastise her after I found out?" said Barbara, "No, she was over 21. But I was always proud of her. I loved her and in my eyes she could do no wrong."¹⁷⁶ Jean took the news of her sister's newfound fame more in stride. She did not act surprised when Barbara shared the news with her, only commenting that it was "a stupid thing to do."

After looking at the pictorial spread in *Playboy*, Barbara called Linda. "I'm sorry" Linda told her, "I didn't want you to know because I knew you'd be upset or angry." "I'm not angry," Barbara told her, "because I don't know who Linda Lovelace is. I only know who you are."¹⁷⁷ John and Dorothy dealt with their daughter's notoriety in a different manner. They acknowledged her fame but rejected the vehicle that got her there.

¹⁷⁵ Patsy Carroll interview.

¹⁷⁶ Barbara Boreman interview.

¹⁷⁷ Barbara Boreman, interview by Fenton Bailey, 9 December 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

Over a year after the film's release, Linda noted to a journalist that her mother could say, "That's my daughter, Linda Lovelace, the star," but she would never add, "She also did *Deep Throat*. They totally erased it from their minds."¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ Postelle.

Chapter 4: Linda Lovelace as Celebrity

In the months that followed the filming of *Deep Throat*, Linda and Traynor cast about for their next job. Unable to find steady work in New York, the two headed back to Miami, where Traynor once again resorted to pimping Linda. Traynor's methods of control were becoming more violent and debasing. He not only forced Linda to service a steady list of clients but made her perform with a dominatrix who at one point brutally sodomized her. As a result, Linda developed severe rectal bleeding that required medical attention. Her pain was severe, but Traynor was reluctant to take her to a doctor. Only when the pain became excruciating did he finally relent. What resulted was a prescription for antibiotics and pain medicine—and an agreement that Traynor had arranged whereby Linda would pay for the visit with an exchange of services. In short order, Traynor bartered her fellatio services with an optometrist and a dermatologist as well. Of these arrangements, Linda said, "I found myself praying Chuck and I stayed in good health."¹⁷⁹ It was at this time that Traynor learned the dermatologist could augment breast size with silicone injections and decided Linda should undergo the procedure. Linda said she had no choice in the matter. Some time in the spring of 1972, she underwent the procedure and within a few hours went from a 34-B to a 36-C.¹⁸⁰

The only real change in Linda's life after the augmentation procedure was the size of her breasts. Otherwise, she remained stuck in a cycle of abuse and reliance on Traynor for her next assignments in which she would yet again have to prostitute herself. One day, however, they had surprising news from Lou Periano, *Deep Throat's* producer. Their

¹⁷⁹ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 173.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 175.

movie was a runaway hit. The phones were ringing off the hook, and he desperately needed them back north to participate in interviews.

Linda gained nothing more financially for her role in *Deep Throat*, but she was, at least, suddenly a celebrity, and Traynor began in earnest to work the publicity machine. Under his influence, Linda gave a series of interviews that would only undermine her later allegations of abuse. More than once, she told stories about virtually every aspect of her past. In a September 1973 interview with Diana Helfrecht from the *Daily Girl*, Linda claimed she had grown up in the small town of Bryan, Texas, perhaps to suggest hers was a rags-to-riches life, and perhaps also in an attempt to sanitize her past involvement with more hard-core porn. She told reporters she and Traynor had lived in the back of a station wagon in Kentucky.¹⁸¹ She claimed to have moved to New York to work as a topless dancer and had earned ten dollars a day for simple modeling jobs. When Helfrecht asked whether her performance in *Deep Throat* was genuine, Linda replied, “Right! It’s me and that’s what I can do, and how I really am.”¹⁸² She told a reporter for *The Washington Post*, “In most porno films, people are not enjoying themselves, looking at the ceiling. I’m enjoying it one hundred percent.”¹⁸³ Ephron also encountered similar sentiments from her interviewee who insisted that she had no sexual inhibitions whatsoever.¹⁸⁴

While Linda was willing sweetly to insist that Lovelace was indeed her name, Traynor quickly lost patience. When a reporter for the *Washington Post* inquired as to whether the name appeared on Linda’s birth certificate, Traynor impatiently replied, “I’ll

¹⁸¹ Diana Helfrecht, *Daily Girl* September 1973.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ “Linda Lovelace: The Merchandizing of Porno-Chic Stardom,” *Washington Post*, 5 June 1973, B11.

¹⁸⁴ Ephron, 14.

show you her name, Linda Susan Lovelace, on a subpoena to appear in court.”¹⁸⁵

Traynor’s defensiveness may have stemmed from the fact that he, too, was perpetuating myths about himself. No records of military service in any branch exist, but Traynor held fast to his claim of teaching Linda the deep-throat technique from his experience with prostitutes in what he stated was the “Orient” during a stint in the Marines. “I mean they could do it for me but they couldn’t explain it, most of them only spoke a few words of English,” he said, “But I got really turned on and I found out exactly how it’s done.”¹⁸⁶

Whatever Linda told reporters about her performance or her name, the detail that did not change was that she and Traynor made very little money from *Deep Throat*, and they were both eager to start capitalizing on her fame with her starring role in the sequel to *Deep Throat*, *Deep Throat II*. Whose idea it was to shoot the film is unknown, but in all likelihood it was Lou Periano, who owned the rights to the first film, possessed the capital to finance its sequel, and stood to lose nothing by producing a film that could only further expand the profitability of his earlier endeavor. Both Linda and Traynor were more than eager to participate in the new venture. There would be some changes this time, though. Realizing they had been contractually suckered out of a vast sum of money for their—especially Linda’s—work on *Deep Throat*, they negotiated a better deal in which her salary was reported to be around \$40,000, plus five percent of the film’s net profits.¹⁸⁷

In *Ordeal*, Linda devoted nothing more than a few paragraphs to her involvement in what everyone hoped would be the second major film of her career. She justified this

¹⁸⁵ “Linda Lovleace: The Merchandizing of Porno-Chic Stardom,” *Washington Post*, 5 June 1973, B11.

¹⁸⁶ Favia Braun, “Inside Linda Lovelace: Besides that Infamous Deep Throat Clit, What Really Makes Her Tick,” *Swank*, June 1973, 96.

¹⁸⁷ Smith, 23.

by saying it lacked artistic merit and was thus undeserving of further comment. Whatever the film's merit or lack thereof, her participation in it implies she had not been coerced. Indeed, she was never anything less than a willing participant, which further weakened her later allegations of abuse in the first film. One reason may be that Traynor was treating her much better at this stage in their relationship. He had little choice: she was his meal ticket, and he needed her more than she needed him. It no longer served his best interests to berate or abuse her. On her end, Linda may have believed she needed Traynor. He had always served as her business manager, and she did not think she could find work and negotiate contracts on her own. In the months surrounding the filming of *Deep Throat II* then, the two were content to stay together.

Unfortunately *Deep Throat II* was fated to be a dismal failure. In fairness to both Linda and Traynor, the fault was not theirs. Film sequels are frequently poor cousins of the original hit, and this one was no exception. And try though they might, no one involved could come up with an idea to carry the story line of the first film in a new or interesting direction.

Periano did have a few changes in mind. He knew he wanted to capitalize on Linda's success from the first film, but he also wanted to expand the audience base. As a result, he came up with an odd scheme; two versions of *Deep Throat II* would be filmed. One would have an X rating and the other an R rating with only soft-core scenes. He also opted not to work with Gerard Damiano, and instead went with a new director. Damiano may not have been too disappointed. He too had been cut out of the profits of *Deep Throat*, as it turned out, and in any case was already in the process of working on another

film, *The Devil in Ms. Jones* [1973], which would actually go on to receive more critical acclaim than *Deep Throat*.

Joe Sarno, chosen to direct the sequel, was the logical choice for many reasons, and yet his career to date had been rather unusual. Whereas Gerard Damiano decided he wanted to direct but could only find work doing pornographic films, Sarno was a New York-based director who started in film by working on documentaries. He would later segue into soft-core sex films. Sarno never owned his own production company but had had a successful career as a director, working for other producers. He had been approached and asked whether he wanted to direct a soft-core sex film. “I didn’t know what a sex film was and I asked, ‘Will I go to jail?’” Sarno recalled. He was told there was no reason to fear that, so he accepted the job. But he had never directed any hard-core pornographic films. His work consisted of soft-core action with an emphasis on dialogue. He became, then, the perfect choice for the *Deep Throat* sequel. Sarno had another advantage that helped him edge out the competition for the job: he was a friend of Traynor’s. The two had previously known each other down in Florida. A producer brought him to Florida to work on soft-core pictures, and it was there that the two met.¹⁸⁸

Before production of their new film began, Sarno, his wife, Linda and Traynor went to a screening of *Deep Throat*. Sarno had never seen anything like *Deep Throat* before and was shocked. He decided that a good story line for the sequel would be to parody the success of the sword-swallowing phenomenon. The best way to do this was to aim for a screwball-comedy feel that poked fun at sex and the political chaos of the Cold War. The basic plot would involve Russian spies who were attempting to steal the secrets

¹⁸⁸ Joe Sarno, telephone interview, tape recorded, 9 January 2006

of Linda's fellating skills.¹⁸⁹ Linda's role would be similar to that which she had played in *Deep Throat*, only this time her character was called "Nurse Lovelace." Harry Reems also signed on for the sequel, playing a character named "Doctor Jayson." Other characters included Russian and American agents engaged in a cloak-and-dagger pursuit of Linda's secrets. Auditions were held in New York City in the fall of 1972. Almost every porn actor in the city showed up to vie for the rare opportunity of acting in a big-budget X and R-rated film.¹⁹⁰ Among the handful cast was Andrea True, a multi-talented woman who would later top the charts in the mid-1970s with the disco hit "More, More, More."

The production of *Deep Throat II* was unusual in several ways. Though the entire shooting schedule lasted a mere 10 days, there were with numerous complications. The filming took place at one of the worst possible times. Shot in New York City in January 1973, it was bitterly cold. Sarno was pleased with the location shots, but the extreme temperatures made shooting exteriors a miserable experience. Also, the cast and crew had come together for the sequel of an X-rated film so the new and higher standards of production were something with which most of the actors were unfamiliar. In contrast to the usual ultra-low budget conditions, the studios in which the interiors were shot were well heated instead of drafty and cold. Catered lunch breaks constituted another amenity not often experienced on the set of most porn films.¹⁹¹

Other odd things went on during the filming, as well. The leading lady was something of a mystery to the other actors. Andrea True recalled that her first impression of Linda was of a woman who was very quiet, soft-spoken, and pretty. She still sported

¹⁸⁹ Joe Sarno interview.

¹⁹⁰ Andrea True interview. tape recorded, 4 January 2006

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

the curly hairdo that she had in *Deep Throat*, which True felt was “very becoming” on her.¹⁹² And yet True noted no one on the set really got to know her very well. To the cast and crew, she remained “a curiosity that was never quite satisfied.”¹⁹³ This may have been in part because her manager, Traynor, was always lurking nearby, and though he stayed in the background and did not intrude, his very presence was off-putting.

True’s role in the film was soon expanded because Linda had trouble remembering her lines and those she did remember she did not deliver effectively. At first, Sarno tried to deal with this problem by shortening her lines and reducing her scenes but this proved frustratingly ineffective. To compensate, then, he started rearranging the shooting schedule and rewriting the script to give more dialogue and on-screen time to True. Linda did not seem bothered by these changes. In fact, she seemed rather nonchalant about the demotion, which True suspected was due in part to the fact that she was smoking a lot of marijuana and hash oil. “She knew what was going on, but she was stoned,” said True. When informed of script changes, Linda said took the news in stride, saying, “Oh, that’s okay, whatever.”¹⁹⁴

Rearranging the roles of the primary actors was not the only problem they faced. Worse, True and other cast members received new dialogue almost daily. As a result, they had no idea what the film was really about or how it was going to end. They were also told that more changes would be forthcoming to give the script a political overtone, but True never got any dialogue that seemed even remotely opinionated about anything.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

Though Sarno was both the chief screenwriter and director, the sudden, almost quirky changes were not his fault. Instead, the line producers, who were rumored to be Periano's mob affiliates, were taking liberty with Sarno's original script, adding and cutting dialogue and scenes with little rhyme or reason. Working only as an employee of the production company, Sarno had no choice but to do as he was ordered.¹⁹⁶

The last straw came when the cast was informed that the final scene of the film would be an outdoor pie fight. This scene typified the chaos that seemed to plague production from the start. The forecast that day, in late January, was for bitter cold, with subzero temperatures. The cast was initially excited about tossing cream pies at each other, but what in warmer weather could have been fun degenerated into utter misery as everyone stood outside in the cold and each in turn was hit in the face with cold whipped cream.¹⁹⁷

When *Deep Throat II* was almost a wrap, Traynor approached Andrea True and invited her to dinner at the Plaza Hotel, where both he and Linda were staying. He told her that the dinner menu was printed in French, which neither he nor Linda could understand. He hoped True could dine with them and give them some pointers about the menu. True indeed spoke French and she lived relatively close to the Plaza, so she agreed to meet them.

The following night, the three dined at the Plaza. The dinner conversation was largely unremarkable. Linda remained fairly quiet during the meal, though she did talk about the city and all its attractions. She particularly loved staying at the Plaza Hotel, adding that she felt like a princess and had never before been so well treated. During the

¹⁹⁶ Joe Sarno interview

¹⁹⁷ Andrea True interview.

course of the meal, Traynor produced some hash oil and offered it to her. True knew plenty of people who smoked pot or tripped on mushrooms or LSD but few who could afford the exotic and expensive hash oil. Preferring to stick to wine, she declined but noted that Linda and Traynor both liberally partook of the hash oil. By the end of the meal, True had had a bit too much to drink, and Traynor told her that he and Linda had reserved two suites, one of which she was welcome to use if she wanted to spend the night at the Plaza. True accepted the offer. Later, in *Ordeal*, Linda claimed “a scene came down” for the three of them, meaning they engaged in a *ménage-a-trois*.¹⁹⁸ True, however, denied this, noting she slept in a separate room and that the remainder of the night was uneventful.¹⁹⁹

The next morning, a loud noise coming from the hall awakened True. She peeked outside to see FBI agents pounding on Linda and Traynor’s door, threatening to break in, and heard Traynor say, “No, no, don’t bust down the doors, I’m coming to open them.” Adding to the pandemonium, a room service attendant arrived with Linda and Traynor’s breakfast order. True saw Linda open the door and step into the hallway. As the breakfast cart was wheeled past her, Linda began autographing photographs for the delighted FBI agents. True, however, was frightened and confused by the strange spectacle and decided to make a hasty departure. Dressing quickly, she left the suite, walked down the hall and disappeared into an elevator. To this day, she does not know why FBI agents were angrily pounding on the door of Linda and Traynor’s suite. She also has no explanation as to why agents who initially seemed so hostile were suddenly content to receive signed autographs. Though she had no evidence to the contrary, she

¹⁹⁸ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 201.

¹⁹⁹ Andrea True interview.

suspected such strange events were probably commonplace in the lives of Linda and Traynor.²⁰⁰

Deep Throat II was not released until the summer of 1974. The movie made little sense to most audiences and was a failure. Sarno himself would later acknowledge that too many people in the production process had little practical filmmaking experience. When they were done rewriting and changing things, the final screened version bore little resemblance to Sarno's original vision. The result was a picture so convoluted that audiences could barely follow the plot. However, there was another, far more obvious, reason for the film's failure. "Its central theme," said True, "wasn't Lovelace and giving deep throat, and that's what people wanted to pay to see."²⁰¹

The lack of deep-throating, then, doomed the film. Any sequel featuring Linda Lovelace would have had to repeat the amazing skills she demonstrated in *Deep Throat*. As long as Linda did not perform fellatio, the audience was almost guaranteed to be disappointed. Sarno knew this and that an X rating would have solved the problem, but that version was never released.²⁰² According to pornographic film historian Luke Ford, the X-rated footage was stolen from a vault shortly after it was shot and never recovered.²⁰³ Sarno, however, insists that no X-rated material was ever shot. He was, after all, a soft-core film director. Shooting X-rated scenes required a different level of technical expertise, which he did not possess. In his former genre, the camera never panned down below the waist. He knew only how to film the *suggestion* of sex and nothing more. The producers of the film did pester him at several points during

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Joe Sarno interview.

²⁰³ Luke Ford, *History of X: 100 Years of Sex in Film*, (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1999), 32.

production to shoot “hotter scenes” and Sarno complied, but none of those shots involved fellatio or X-rated sequences.²⁰⁴ In the end, probably the worst losers were the gullible audiences who paid the cost of a full ticket in the hope of seeing something an R-rated film could never deliver.

Deep Throat II was an utter failure, but it did not seem adversely to affect Linda’s career. In fact, riding high on the crest of the sexual revolution, she was still very much a hot commodity. Her next project, then, seemed to fall easily into her lap, though it was actually Andrea True, and not Traynor who helped Linda line up the deal. It began through a conversation she had with a friend named David Zentner, who worked for Pinnacle Books. True mentioned in passing that she had befriended Traynor and Linda on the set of *Deep Throat II*. Asked whether she would put Zentner in touch with them to arrange a book deal, True agreed, but with the proviso that she would get 10 percent of its profits. True then contacted Linda and Traynor to discern their interest in a book deal. They were indeed interested. Not only would a book be another way to generate more income, but it also struck both of them as a more reliable way to market Linda’s name without running into legal problems.

At this time, both Linda and Traynor had been fairly worn down by repeated efforts to block screenings of the film across the United States. In 1972, Linda managed to avoid prosecution only because she had been granted immunity in exchange for her willingness to testify about her involvement in the film.²⁰⁵ While Linda was willing to testify to avoid prosecution, she did not support efforts to halt the film’s screenings. She did, however, maintain her sense of humor about it. When playfully asked what she

²⁰⁴ Joe Sarno interview.

²⁰⁵ Alexa Vance, “Porn’s New Superstars,” *Mr. Magazine*. December 1974, 25.

would do if she were stranded on a desert island with a judge who had ruled against *Deep Throat*, Linda replied, “I’d quickly change his mind.”²⁰⁶ Also, at the time True pitched the book idea to Linda and Traynor, the Supreme Court had only recently released the *Miller* decision, affecting community standards and pornographic material. Linda stated her own opinion on the matter unequivocally: “I think it’s wrong. Remember Adolf Hitler believed in censorship. I don’t believe in censorship of any kind. The next thing they’re going to do is come knocking on your door and take away your TV and radio.”²⁰⁷ Writing a book, then, seemed a surefire way to avoid such messy entanglements with the law.

Linda and Traynor were rumored to receive an advance ranging from \$40,000 to \$100,000 from Pinnacle Books for what provocatively came to be titled *Inside Linda Lovelace*.²⁰⁸ A ghostwriter was brought in to assist with the project, and the book was completed in less than two weeks. The process involved Linda answering a series of questions the ghostwriter had prepared in advance, but the answers were not her own. Traynor concocted most of the responses, which, in turn, made up the contents of the book. One of its compelling features was the inclusion of 22 photographs, including one of a scantily but legally clad Linda that folded out to three times the book’s size.

In the end, *Inside Linda Lovelace* only further compromised her subsequent allegations of abuse. “This is my story. I lived it, I wrote it and I offer no apologies to anyone,” Linda was quoted in the preface. Elsewhere, the book did little more than further the myth of her hypersexuality. She confessed that she was possessed of a

²⁰⁶ “Linda Lovelace: The Merchandizing of Porno-Chic Stardom,” *Washington Post*, 5 June 1973, B11

²⁰⁷ *Variety*, 25 July 1973.

²⁰⁸ Kenneth Turan and Stephen Zito, *Sinema: American Pornographic Films and the People Who Make them*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), 90.

runaway libido for which she routinely masturbated. Of her teen years, she happily described her stint as a go-go dancer, noting that the audience reaction was encouraging. “They dug me and I dug being dug,” she wrote. “I guess it was then that I knew I was an exhibitionist.”²⁰⁹

Though Linda assigned Patsy Carroll the pseudonym “Betsy” in *Ordeal*, she refers to her by her actual name in *Inside Linda Lovelace*. It was, after all, Patsy who had introduced Linda to Traynor, and as this first literary effort was basically what amounted to a tribute to the man who had discovered her, proper credit was given. Needless to say, Linda devoted several pages to Traynor’s sexual prowess and her gratitude for the deep-throat technique he had taught her.

More interesting than what Linda included was what she omitted. When the book was published in 1973, she had already undergone breast augmentation, but she made no mention of this, assuring her readers that her breasts appeared larger of late because Traynor had taught her certain exercises to expand the chest muscles.²¹⁰ She also admitted that her body of work before *Deep Throat* included 8-mm loops, but she only mentioned one, *The Foot*. The encounter with the canine, the nadir of her film career, was never mentioned.

Film critic Kenneth Turan complained that the book was typical of an old Hollywood studio biography—giving readers little information, most of which is inaccurate.²¹¹ This first autobiography was so obviously a fluff piece that few trade journals bothered to review it. *Newsweek*, however, did publish an excerpt in which Linda made a startling confession: she once seriously considered becoming a nun. It is

²⁰⁹ Linda Lovelace, *Inside Linda Lovelace*, (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1973), 33.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

²¹¹ Turan and Zito, 147.

hard to know for sure whether the editors took such a claim seriously or were merely poking fun.²¹² Literary critic Angela Carter wrote a brief review, correctly assessing that the book had nothing of importance to say except for the abjectly sad picture it painted of its own subject. “She is a...prisoner in a cage whose bars are composed of cocks. And she has been so thoroughly duped she seems quite happy there,” said Carter, who found the public fascination with Linda disturbing. “Each age gets the heroine it deserves, and by God, we deserve Linda Lovelace.”²¹³

Deciding Hollywood would be the most logical location to start, they relocated to California in the spring of 1973. Traynor immediately set up Linda Lovelace Enterprises with the goal of turning Linda into a mainstream actress and personality. The project was only minimally successful, with plenty of pie in the sky but few legitimate paying jobs.

Big money was always just around the bend. A contract calling for Linda to appear as a nightclub performer in Las Vegas and Lake Tahoe stalled because Traynor insisted on \$50,000 when the producers were only willing to pay \$35,000. He insisted that Linda should receive a \$300,000 guarantee for any film she performed in, which scotched deals before they got past the talk stage. To avoid obscenity charges with any future film she made, “I’m thinking of a film with segments like a pie,” he told the *Post*. “A hard-core segment could be dropped out in a city where there is trouble with obscenity laws.”²¹⁴ One scheme followed another. A Linda Lovelace adult board game was in the works. He was negotiating a two-year, \$1,000-a-month contract for writing a

²¹² *Newsweek*, 28 June, 1973.

²¹³ Angela Carter, “Fleshly Matters: Lovely Linda: Review of Linda Lovelace, *Inside Linda Lovelace*, Originally printed in *New Society*, (1974), reprinted in *Shaking A Leg: Collected Writings*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 55.

²¹⁴ “Linda Lovelace: The Merchandizing of Porno-Chic Stardom,” *Washington Post*, 5 June 1973, B11.

column, something akin to a “hip Ann Landers,” in *Oui* magazine, with Linda answering questions and offering sex advice to readers.

Hope springs eternal, though, especially in Hollywood. And when asked to point to Linda’s credits, they could always mention a series of 30- and 60- second commercials filmed for M&J Shoe Company.²¹⁵ “I’m Linda Lovelace, and I know what you want,” Linda says in a husky voice. “You’re looking for comfort, variety and style. So I guess we have a lot in common. Like in shoes.”²¹⁶ And then there was the famous occasion when Linda pressed her hands in fresh concrete at the front entrance of the Pussycat Theater, where *Deep Throat* had been playing for 13 consecutive months. This publicity stunt was of course intended as a funny twist on a classic Hollywood moment of immortalization that had taken place for decades in front of the landmark Grauman’s Chinese theater.²¹⁷

Despite the paucity and negativity of these initial reviews, *Pinnacle* arranged a book tour, which kicked off at the Gaslight Club in New York City in October 1973. Unknown to Linda, Al Goldstein was in attendance and he planned to make trouble. It had never sat well with Goldstein that Linda had achieved an unprecedented celebrity status for her work in a pornographic film, and he took it upon himself single-handedly to reveal her as a fraud. Goldstein’s efforts were mean-spirited, but his attempt to foil Linda was steeped in long-standing tradition. Pornography had for decades served not only to sexually titillate but also to spoof various social classes. Larry Flynt, in fact, excelled at this, notably when he published photos in *Hustler* magazine of Jackie Onassis lounging

²¹⁵ *LA Herald Examiner*, 20 December 1973 and “Linda Lovelace Films Commercials for Shoes,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 10 December 1973.

²¹⁶ *Time Magazine* 5 October 1973.

²¹⁷ *LA Herald Examiner*, 24 December 1973.

naked on the deck of a yacht with her Greek tycoon husband, Aristotle.²¹⁸ Armed with stills of the 8-mm dog loop, Goldstein showed up at the press conference prepared to expose Linda's secret. He also carried with him a blown-up advertisement that had been featured in *Screw* magazine. A film company from California had purchased the original loop and was selling copies. Mocking the advertising slogan for *Deep Throat*—"How far does a girl have to go to untangle her tingle?"—the loop was promoted as "Linda Lovelace, star of *Deep Throat*, untangles the tingle of Fido!"²¹⁹ When the question-and-answer session for reporters began, Goldstein waited for the right moment and then posed his question, asking Linda whether she had indeed shot a film involving a dog. She maintained her composure and requested that he be escorted out of the room, which he promptly was. This was the first time the dog footage had come to light. Following the press conference, another reporter presented Linda with the outtakes. Linda insisted it was not she. "Look at the picture, it's an Oriental girl," she said with feigned sincerity.

Other than Goldstein's efforts to expose Linda's involvement with the 8-mm loops she shot before her role in *Deep Throat*, the promotional tour was uneventful. How well the book sold remains unknown, since publishing figures in the early 1970s were rarely made public. Three years later, however, when Pinnacle attempted to publish the book in the United Kingdom, a suit arguing that it violated obscenity standards was filed against the UK publisher. Similar to arguments used in the multiple obscenity trials of *Deep Throat*, the issue in the trial was whether the book had any redeeming social value.

²¹⁸ See Constance Penley, "Crackers and Whackers: The White Trashing of Porn," from *White Trash: Race and Class in America*. Eds. Matt Wray and Annalee Newitz, (New York: Routledge, 1997). Laura Kipnis also explores class dynamics in pornographic magazines, also noting how can "destabilize" mainstream culture, providing a means for lower class groups to vicariously speak out against cultural conformity. For further reading, see *Bound and Gagged: Pornography and the Politics of Fantasy in America*, (New York: Grove Press, 1996).

²¹⁹ "Arf?, Arf, Arf, Arf! (Maybe), *Oui*, October 1973.

The defense held that the book was “technically instructive,” with the state countering that its lovemaking techniques could prove “fatal to the weak of heart.”²²⁰ The jury deliberations lasted five hours, and resulted in an acquittal. When Linda, in California, learned of the decision, she was “ecstatic.”²²¹ This would be the last time any of her efforts would be subject to criminal charges.

Following the promotional book tour, Linda and Traynor once again returned to California in their continued effort to parlay her career into something bigger. Naturally, *Deep Throat* caught the attention of porn publishing magnate Hugh Hefner, who was eager to meet Linda. In fact, it was obligatory that he do so since she was the biggest sex star in the country. In short order, Linda appeared in the first of two *Playboy* magazine spreads. She later said she had no idea how much she was paid to appear in the magazine because Traynor had, as usual, confiscated all the money.²²²

Linda’s initial assessment of Hefner was mixed. He possessed many qualities that put her off. He spent more time talking to Traynor than to her, mostly discussing “every kind of kinky sex.”²²³ Linda was also irritated that Hefner knew about the 8-mm loop in which she had performed with a dog, and he was keenly interested in witnessing a re-creation of the scene in real life. Still, he was a gracious host and very complimentary of her, telling her that she looked prettier in person than she did on film. He also gave both her and Traynor credentialed passes that enabled them to roam his estate as they

²²⁰ *Time* Magazine, 9 February 1976.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 189.

²²³ Ibid., 195.

pleased.²²⁴ And he helped them find a secretary for Linda Lovelace Enterprises, a former Playboy bunny named Dolores Wells.

Traynor and Linda duly contacted Wells for an interview. Traynor liked her because his sole criterion for a female employee was that she “have big tits.”²²⁵ Linda liked her because she exuded a warm disposition and was easy to talk to. She and Wells quickly developed an easy rapport. Linda in fact, confided early on to Wells the strange circumstances of her life—how she had never intended to make a career in pornography and how Traynor had introduced her to, and forcibly kept her in, the life. But, as luck would have it, *Deep Throat* became a smash hit, and here she was, relocated to California, seeking a legitimate film career.

On her end, Wells was struck by how sweet Linda was. She seemed to enjoy her newfound celebrity status, but also appeared overwhelmed by the craziness that surrounded her. For instance, Wells had a six-year-old daughter, and Linda told her she herself had always wanted to have children. In fact, that was all she ever really wanted—a happy marriage and children, but she didn’t feel it was something she could look forward to any time soon, particularly at that stage of her career.²²⁶

The Playboy mansion was not the only place where Linda attracted a crowd of celebrity admirers. Her fellating talents also captured the attention of many celebrities who went out of their way to contact her or sidle up to her at a party to introduce themselves, including Warren Beatty, Joe Namath and author Shel Silverstein to name but three. Perhaps her most notable admirer was Sammy Davis, Jr. Davis biographer

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid., 211.

²²⁶ Dolores Wells interview by Fenton Bailey, 26 July 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

Will Haygood noted that Davis was 46 years old in 1972 and was experiencing something akin to a midlife crisis around the time of *Deep Throat*'s theatrical release. Davis was also intrigued by the pervasive youth culture, which in the early 1970s was riding the crest of the sexual revolution. This had a profound effect on him. "The wave of youth, of everything young, was so colossal," wrote Haygood, that Davis "had no intention of being left behind."²²⁷ Impressed that a new generation could abandon rigid sexual standards of the past, Davis reasoned he should as well, and he threw himself into a wholesale obsession with sexual experimentation and pornography. In addition to frequently arranging sex parties at his home, Davis had his secretary contact Los Angeles-area pornographers who willingly sent copies of their latest productions for him and his friends to watch. At the time, Davis was married to his third wife, Altovise, who did not seem bothered by his latest hobby and willingly went along with it.²²⁸ It followed, then, that when Davis heard of the explosive popularity of *Deep Throat* he had to see it. The only problem was, he could not find a copy to buy, and it was out of the question for him to stroll into the Pussycat Theater on Santa Monica Boulevard to catch one of the showings.²²⁹ The solution to this quandary was simple; he rented the entire theater for his own private screening, and watched the film in the company of his wife and a handful of friends. The effect was immediate: he decided he must contact the producer of the film, not only to congratulate him but to arrange a meeting with Linda Lovelace herself.

Where the two eventually met is unclear. In *Ordeal*, Linda said she was in Periano's office when Davis called and that arrangements were made for the two to meet later that evening at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. When she and Traynor

²²⁷ Wil Haygood, *In Black and White: the Life of Sammy Davis Jr.*, (New York: Knopf, 2003), 411.

²²⁸ Haygood. 441.

²²⁹ Ibid.

arrived, neither was prepared for what they encountered. They anticipated at least a discussion of pornography and perhaps even a sexual tryst. Instead, they found Altovise sitting in a corner doing needlepoint while Davis chatted innocuously with them.²³⁰ Haygood, however, believed that Linda and Davis met for the first time when he invited her to his birthday party, where she served as the evening's token porn star.²³¹ In any event, it was not long after their introduction that the two began a steady sexual relationship.

On the surface, Sammy Davis, Jr., had nothing in common with Chuck Traynor, and yet in some ways the two were not so dissimilar. Traynor had displayed a public veneer of kindness towards Linda, however abusive and cruel he was behind closed doors. Davis, too, exhibited a generous public persona. He was romantic and affectionate with Linda, buying her jewelry and small gifts on numerous occasions. The two men shared another trait. Perhaps uncomfortable initiating measures to achieve independence on her own, Linda relied on each of them, in turn, to escape situations she found untenable. Just as Traynor had initially "saved" Linda by allowing her to leave her parents' house, so too, did Davis become a momentary escape from Traynor. "Sammy," wrote Linda, "looked like a savior to me. Just being in his company kept me out of other situations."²³²

And yet, Davis used Linda to his own advantage. She came to learn that his gifts and generosity had a price. Behind closed doors, Linda was expected to satisfy Davis's sexual fantasies, which included experimentation with group sex, bondage, and role

²³⁰ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 185.

²³¹ Haygood, 441.

²³² Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 213.

playing, in which she willingly participated.²³³ But her relationship with Davis was more complicated than with Traynor. Over time, Davis seemed to develop some genuine feelings for Linda, which she reciprocated. She began to accompany him everywhere—from casual dinner dates to a decadent jaunt to the Hawaiian Islands. Davis was unashamed to be in her presence and apparently oblivious to any possible stigma about hanging out with a porn star, even when others would snigger when he introduced her at parties. He even began to take a lively interest in her career. Encouraging her to expand her skills and improve her marketability, he hired a coach, Francis Davis, to teach her to dance and sing.²³⁴

Davis, however, had little luck trying to advance Linda's career. When, for instance, he invited her to a highway safety telethon, theater owners would not allow her to participate as a guest speaker. Linda was devastated, recognizing for the first time that her porn-star celebrity status had its boundaries.²³⁵ Despite this, Davis was committed to helping her career and, in the fall of 1973, put her in touch with a few other people he thought might be of service. One of them was David Winters.

Winters, then 35, had a diverse and long-standing career as an actor and choreographer, his most notable work being the choreography for the film *West Side Story*. Following that, he began to instruct actresses (such as Ann-Margaret and Raquel Welch) in dance and song. Winters, then, boasted a strong track record of working with actors who possessed little dance experience or formal voice training. And yet from these mediocre talents, he was able to produce successful Broadway acts.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Haygood, 412.

²³⁵ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 186.

Following up on Davis's advice, Traynor called Winters's manager to ask if he would produce a stage show for Linda. Winters's manager took the call but, familiar with the name Linda Lovelace, told him that Winters would not be interested and hung up the phone. The manager duly relayed the conversation to Winters and was surprised by the reaction he got. Winters was actually intrigued by the idea of working with a porn star and he told his manager, "I don't want to do Mitzi Gaynor's act, and I don't want to do Florence Henderson's act. All these people are boring to me. I want to do something that's interesting and maybe this girl, let me go meet with her, maybe there's something interesting here. Maybe there's something, a bit of a spin to it, you know?"²³⁶

At that, Winters agreed to go to the offices of Linda Lovelace Enterprises. While he was in the reception area waiting for Traynor and Linda to appear, Dolores Wells showed him Linda's publicity book. Winters was expecting an album of professional head shots, or perhaps a series of flattering pictures featuring Linda posing next to other celebrities. Instead, he found shots of Linda performing fellatio. They made him uncomfortable and he contemplated leaving, but then Linda walked into the room. "It was like a movie, this girl comes through the door, and she looked like she was a teenager from a Midwest school: sweet little face, a couple of freckles here and there, and just charming. Very sweet and unassuming."²³⁷ Winters was impressed not only by Linda's appearance but also by her personality. Much to his surprise, she was also polite and demure. Traynor told him that they already had a show booked in Miami and that the

²³⁶ David Winters, interview by Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato, 4 January 2004, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

²³⁷ Ibid.

financial backing was in place; the only thing missing was Linda's talent. They needed help immediately.²³⁸

Winters agreed to produce the show, and arrangements were made for Linda to go to a local studio so he could assess her talent as a singer, dancer and actress. He quickly discovered that she possessed none. Undeterred, he recruited a colleague, Joe Cassini, to work with her for a few hours and teach her some basic dance steps. She had difficulty following his lead. "I saw she couldn't dance," said Winters. "So then I said, 'Okay, let's see about singing.'"²³⁹ He took her to another colleague, Seth Riggs, and asked him to assess Linda's vocal abilities. When they arrived at Riggs's Los Angeles house, he was finishing up with another client, so Linda and Winters waited in their car. At this point, Linda began to caress him by stroking his inner thigh, and before long she was performing fellatio on him. It never dawned on Winters that perhaps Traynor suggested that she do this, which was, after all, consistent with his track record of pimping her out. Whether Traynor instructed her to do this may never be known for certain because it is quite possible that Linda may have been genuinely attracted to Winters. In fact, by her own account, Linda later admitted she found him alluring and unlike anyone she had met before.²⁴⁰ In any event, Winters was at first shocked by her action, but found the experience pleasurable and did not tell her to stop. However, their mid-day encounter was interrupted a few minutes later when a secretary came out to inform them that Riggs was available now for the appointment.

Winters left Linda and Riggs alone to work on the basic vocal techniques, and once again the prognosis was grim. Following the lesson, Riggs privately took Winters

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 225.

aside and told him, “She sucks.” Winters laughed and told him that was a double entendre to which Riggs shot back, “I didn’t mean it that way, but she can’t sing either.”²⁴¹ Winters did not know how next to proceed, and he told Linda up front that she had no talent: “Linda, you can't sing, you can't dance, and you're not a great actress. You're not Sarah Bernhardt, and nobody wants to see you get up on the stage and recite Shakespeare, anyhow. So I don't know what to do with you.”²⁴²

Still, a contract had been signed. Linda was scheduled to open at the Miami Paramount Theater on November 1, 1973, and Winters was committed to seeing the project through. He also found himself growing more and more attracted to Linda, which strengthened his commitment to the faltering project. Winters hired dancers and singers to serve as back-up performers for the show, perhaps better to hide her theatrical faults, and he brought on board Mel Mandel, a New York writer who had worked with him on stage productions and musicals in the past.

It was at this point, in August 1973, that Linda decided to end her marriage to Traynor. In *Ordeal*, she said the breaking point came when he tried to control the time she spent at rehearsals, which she felt was sabotaging her career. “I had never worked harder in my life, but it was decent work,” she said, “singing and dancing and learning new things.”²⁴³ Winters, however, had a different version of what led to the final break: “There were no rehearsals. She was coming over to my house and we were just getting it on.”²⁴⁴ In any event, Linda had somehow mustered the courage to leave Traynor once and for all. She vaguely stated in *Ordeal* that she believed she waited until this particular moment to do so

²⁴¹ David Winters interview.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 226.

²⁴⁴ David Winters interview.

because the timing was right. *Deep Throat* had turned her into a celebrity. It may have taken her a few years to realize it, but gradually she recognized that Traynor could not harm her without cutting off his own hand.

In reality, there was another and stronger reason for the break that Linda may not have understood or been able to articulate at the time: Winters had become a protector, albeit a much kinder one, than the domineering Chuck Traynor. Clearly, Linda had established a pattern of dependence on the men in her life. Just as Sammy Davis, Jr., had showered her with gifts and affection, the limitations of their relationship were clear: he was a married man who relied on Linda primarily for his sexual fantasies. Winters, as well, was strongly attracted to Linda, but he wanted something in return. Not only did he want to cultivate her career but did so with an iron fist. Somewhat ironically, it was an off-hand comment by Mandel, the writer, that partially motivated her to leave Traynor. Mandel's memorable words were, "I'd rather be dead than not living." However, Mandel had not been commenting about Linda's relationship with Traynor, but about Winters's domineering nature. "I began to think of her as somebody really being thrown from pillar to post and never knowing where she was at, and in the grip of people who would always tell her to do this, or do that,"²⁴⁵ he said. In Mandel's estimation, Linda was a sweet, good-natured person who was in over her head. It was not just Traynor who controlled her, but just about everyone. "After a while," said Mandel, "I began to think she had no life of her own and was really at the whim of whoever happened to be involved with her."²⁴⁶ Dolores Wells also noted the powerful influence Winters had over Linda. "He

²⁴⁵ Mel Mandel interview.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

just overwhelmed her with his gentlemanly ways,” she said.²⁴⁷ Mandel recognized as well that this was why Linda was strongly attracted to Winters. “David was a powerful little guy. He would say, ‘you gotta do this and you gotta do that. There’s big stuff ahead for you.’” But, Mandel added, “Linda was not totally without volition. I mean, she did what she thought was best for Linda.”²⁴⁸

Since she lacked the confidence to believe she could succeed on her own, she saw Winters as a logical replacement for Traynor. In effect, Linda had traded up. Her attraction to him was not entirely based on the belief that he could manage her career better than Traynor. She also found him physically attractive and kind, and once she had directed her attention solely to him, she simply no longer had the energy to continue the charade with Traynor. Instead of insulting her, as Traynor so frequently did, Winters bestowed compliments on her and allowed her to believe anything was possible. Likening her to Marilyn Monroe, Winters told her how the 1950s pin-up had once posed nude and the subsequent discovery had caused a scandal. If Monroe could survive the fallout from that scandal, Winters reasoned that surely, 20 years later, Linda Lovelace could and further, go on to become not just a major celebrity but an icon.²⁴⁹ His logic was clearly flawed, as he later admitted. Monroe had achieved stardom through legitimate screen acting and was already a huge celebrity when the nude photos were discovered. Linda, however, was a virtual unknown whose trajectory to stardom was based solely on her fellating skills.

In any case, with Winters in her corner, Linda plotted her final escape. Accompanied by Dolores Wells, she headed first to the Malibu cottage she shared with Traynor at a time she was sure he would be gone. In the bedroom, Linda began hastily to

²⁴⁷ Dolores Wells interview.

²⁴⁸ Mel Mandel interview.

²⁴⁹ David Winters interview.

throw items into a bag, pausing briefly, however, to show Wells an M-16 rifle hidden ominously under the bed. After gathering up more belongings, the two then discussed where she should hide out. Wells's house was out of the question since Traynor would certainly come looking there. Wells suggested instead the Beverly Hills Hotel.²⁵⁰ After checking in, Linda called Winters and informed him of the latest developments and where she was staying. She also told him, "I want to keep seeing you. I love you. I don't want to be with him. It's a whole different world, being with you."²⁵¹

Winters was thrilled at the news. He was crazy about Linda as well and wanted to continue their romantic and professional relationship. Linda told him, however, of Traynor's dark side, and he knew with certainty that he had not heard the last of Mr. Traynor.

Sure enough, when Traynor figured out Linda had left him, the harassment began. First, he ranted and raved, demanding that she return at once to their home. Then, he begged and pleaded, telling her, "You are my wife. I love you."²⁵² When all this failed, he began calling on their mutual acquaintances, beginning with Dolores Wells, who tipped Linda off and told her Traynor was driving around with a gun and trying to track her down.²⁵³

Winters also experienced the harassing phone calls. The situation for him was particularly frightening because his house was at the top of a hill and visible from Traynor's and Linda's cottage. As well, he and Linda were continuing to carry on their romance. When Traynor called him and growled into the phone, "I know she's over

²⁵⁰ Dolores Wells interview.

²⁵¹ David Winters interview.

²⁵² Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 236.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 232.

there. I can see her,” Winters knew he meant it. Consequently, Winters purchased a gun of his own and was ready the next time Traynor called. “Look,” he told his tormentor, “I just bought a gun, okay? You want to come over here? Come on over. Let’s get this over with once and for all. Come on, Chuck, come over here. I’m waiting for you.”²⁵⁴

Following that conversation, he never heard from Traynor again. “Never a word,” Winters said, “because he was a bully. And like most bullies, if you confront them, they’ll back down.”²⁵⁵

Traynor, however, was not finished. He next contacted Lou Periano and told him Linda had been taken from him against her will. Would he provide some Mafia muscle in getting her back? Periano, who never gave Linda and Traynor one penny beyond what they were contractually due for her performance in *Deep Throat*, believed Linda was in a bad situation—or worse, that someone had injured Traynor’s pride—and agreed to provide assistance. In short order, Winters was then paid a visit by what appeared to be an associate of the mob. Winters, sitting by his pool one afternoon with Mel Mandel and another business associate, Norman Sacs, recalled that all three were approached by an unusual figure. They had been sunbathing in the nude, so at first the man’s presence was a bit awkward, but what followed next was, as Mandel recalled, something like a scene out of a bad *Godfather* movie.

The man introduced himself as Vinnie and cut straight to the point. “Where’s Linda?” he asked.

“I don’t know,” Winters told him.

“Yeah, we think you know.”

²⁵⁴ David Winters interview.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

“I don’t know. I have no idea where she is.”

“Look, Mr. Winters. Look, I dressed nice for California, huh? I dressed respectful for you. I’ve got a nice shirt on. But I’ve been told to kill you. I’m here to kill you. We know you know where Linda is, so you’d better get her. You got 24 hours.”²⁵⁶

Though he was not the intended recipient of Vinnie’s attention, the encounter left Mandel shaken. “I was scared out of my wits,” said Mandel, but Winters appeared unruffled. “This is literally a true thing,” Mandel went on, but “David did not give a damn. I forgot the words he used, but he just brushed him off.”²⁵⁷ Winters, it turned out, was good at bluffing. The truth was, he was terrified and phoned Linda immediately following Vinnie’s departure. “I can’t see you anymore,” he said. “I can’t go through the rest of my life looking over my shoulder and worrying that someone is going to kill me.” He then begged Linda to straighten out the matter.

Linda feared Traynor, but apparently had no such trepidation about dealing with the Mafia. “I’ll take care of it,” she calmly assured him. And indeed, she did. With just one phone call to Periano, the matter was resolved. Linda simply told Periano of the years of abuse she had sustained at the hands of Traynor. Winters knew that the Mafia broke all sorts of laws and at times were highly amoral but surmised that violence against women was one thing they would not abide. “They do all kinds of things, but they don’t like women to be hit,” Winters said. “It’s a very bad thing to them. You don’t hit a woman.” Following Linda’s call, Winters in turn received a call from Vinnie: “Mr. Winters, what I said to you yesterday I meant, and what I’m going to say to you now I

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Mel Mandel interview.

mean. You can go with Linda. The Perianos got no problem.”²⁵⁸ Winters was, of course, relieved. His brush with the mob was frightening but also strangely surreal. Vinnie even told Winters that the next time he was in New York he should look him up and they could have a cup of coffee. “Yeah, yeah, Vinnie, thanks,” replied Winters, “Yeah, we’ll see you in New York. Thank you.”²⁵⁹

Other than for some legal problems that came up later, that was the end of Linda’s and Traynor’s relationship. Traynor wasted little time pining for Linda, for he quickly connected with Marilyn Chambers, who was another up-and-coming porn star who would soon make her mark with another smashing porn hit, *Behind the Green Door*. And Linda was at last free from Traynor’s abusive control. That Chambers would become his second wife was one of the many strange ironies of Linda’s life. In 1973, Chambers was, behind Linda, the No. 2 porn celebrity in America, but their paths to stardom had been markedly different. Unlike Linda’s darker introduction to the business, Chambers was a natural blonde who began her career as a legitimate model and actress. At the age of 17, she signed a contract with the Wilhelminia Modeling Agency in New York and was selected to take the place of Ivory Soap’s old “Betty Crocker 1950s-type of woman,” as Chambers put it.²⁶⁰

Following this success, Chambers relocated to San Francisco in 1971 to pursue a career in acting. Four years after the “Summer of Love,” the city was still drawing large numbers of youths enamored of its tolerance and celebration of, sex and drugs. The problem was, the city also lacked opportunities for acting. As a result, Chambers showed up at every casting call she could, which eventually led her to the door of Jim and Artie

²⁵⁸ David Winters interview.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

Mitchell. Chambers did not know that the Mitchell brothers were involved in the production of porn and initially balked at the first part they offered her. The brothers were persistent, however, and Chambers eventually agreed to play the role of “Gloria” in their film *Behind the Green Door*. [1972] Based on an old story that had circulated among GIs in World War II, the film’s plot involves a woman who is abducted and forced to participate in various sex acts. Eventually, Gloria quits resisting and experiences rapturous pleasure.²⁶¹ Interestingly, and unlike Linda, who later claimed she had been forced into the industry against her will, Chambers, who achieved fame playing a woman who is forced to have sex against her will, never recanted any part of her career.

In other ways, though, Linda and Chambers had a great deal in common. *Behind the Green Door* was a smashing success, in part because Chambers, like Linda, appeared natural and wholesome. When the Mitchell brothers discovered that their star was also the new Ivory Soap girl, they wasted little time exploiting the winds of fortune that had suddenly blown their way. Promptly calling newspapers, hiring a public relations firm, and scheduling interviews, the brothers gleefully spread the word: the Ivory Soap symbol of purity was also an American sex star.²⁶²

At first, Chambers only knew peripherally of *Deep Throat* but following her role in *Behind the Green Door*, Chambers decided she needed someone to manage her growing career. Like everyone else, she had heard about *Deep Throat* and, assuming that the person most knowledgeable about managing a porn star’s career was Traynor, sought him out. “It was my mission to find Chuck Traynor,” she said. “I had to find him, had to get this guy. And I wanted him to become my manager because I wanted him to do for

²⁶¹ Hubner, 181.

²⁶² Ibid., 201.

me what he did for her.... I tracked him down. I don't remember exactly how I got his number. It wasn't through the Screen Actors Guild or anything. Anyway, I called him and I said, 'You know'—because not being from California—I'm thinking everybody does business on the beach or something, like they do in France—and so I said, 'I'd really like to get together with you and Linda and have a beer on the beach or something.'”²⁶³ Traynor laughed at Chambers's earnestness and agreed to meet with her. He told her that he could, in fact, be of some assistance and bragged that his most recent accomplishment included a deal for Linda to star in a theatrical revue in Miami. That first phone conversation quickly turned personal. Traynor filled her in on the latest details of his life, including that he and Linda were divorcing. Chambers figured, correctly, that could only work to her advantage. “I'm thinking,” she said, “my whole life I wanted to be Ann-Margaret, that's all. I mean, I love Ann-Margaret. And that's who I wanted to be. And I figured she's going to get there first, Linda is, and I'll be darned if I'm going to let that happen. So I said to Chuck, 'I really want to meet you.'”²⁶⁴ Traynor was intrigued and offered to fly Chambers down to Los Angeles. “I'll meet you, you stay here for like about a week, we'll see if you can sing and dance,” he told her.²⁶⁵ At their first introduction, he was shocked to see her casually clad in jeans and a comfortable blouse. “I just looked like a total hippie chick,” said Chambers, and Traynor said, “Oh, my God, I have a lot of work to do.”²⁶⁶ Just as he had molded Linda into a sexual icon, he was clearly scheming to do just the same with Chambers.

²⁶³ Marilyn Chambers, interview by Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato, 8 July 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Puction Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

Traynor was openly resentful that his former protégé was rehearsing for her upcoming show without him. “He had put a lot of time and effort and money into Linda. And so he was pissed off,” said Chambers.²⁶⁷ Linda apparently was, too. Traynor and Chambers were in the office discussing her career when suddenly the phone rang. It was Linda, and she was so angry, Chambers could easily make out both sides of the conversation. Linda was “screaming and yelling on the phone at him, that she wanted this and she wanted that, and she was going to divorce him and she was going to sue him.”²⁶⁸

Traynor and Chambers soon agreed to form a partnership, and in short order he produced some paperwork for her to sign. Chambers, however, was not as naïve as Linda. She knew a few things about contracts, and although she believed Traynor was the right man to manage her career, she was not going blindly to sign on the dotted line.²⁶⁹ “I said, ‘By the way, my attorney is going to be flying down this evening,’” she told him, stopping him cold in his tracks after he slid a stack of papers in front of her.²⁷⁰ “That is not to say I was really terrific putting my career together,” she said. “But I did know what I didn’t want. And I wasn’t going to get ripped off.”²⁷¹ If Traynor was looking for an easy mark to replace Linda, Chambers was not going to be it.

Chambers did have her attorney look over the contract, and eventually a deal was finalized. Her past experience in the entertainment and modeling business clearly gave her an advantage in the contract end of the business. Otherwise, in all likelihood she would have ended up victimized as Linda had been.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

Chambers was savvy about contracts, but Traynor still had an assortment of tricks up his sleeve. He told Chambers that if he were going effectively to manage her career, he would have much to teach her. At that, he offered to take her back to his home and teach her the deep-throat technique that made Linda famous. Chambers consented, and they went to the Malibu cottage he had once shared with Linda. Before the lesson began, Chambers nervously excused herself to use the bathroom. What she saw next only made her anxiety worse: “I opened up the shower curtain, and in the bathtub was this huge pile of dildos,” she said, guessing that they were Linda’s parting insult to her ex-husband. “I’m leaving you forever, and your dildos, too,” was her interpretation of Linda’s act.²⁷²

Traynor began the lesson after she emerged from the bathroom. Though she did not notice at the time, she later realized that hypnosis, which he helped induce with either a watch or a candle, was part of his technique. He used it as a means of establishing control and sending a message he wanted to be obeyed without question. Chambers was skeptical and thought, “Oh yeah, this is, like, really going to work.” But she also desperately wanted a successful career like Linda’s, and so she willingly followed his commands. In 1975, some two years after they met, they married. Just as Linda had moved on, so too had Traynor, who summed up their relationship to *Time* magazine by noting, none too fondly, “You gotta trade in your old car when it can’t make the hills.”²⁷³

The relationship that evolved between Traynor and Chambers seems extraneous to the rest of Linda’s life, but it bears further commentary in that it validated Linda’s subsequent allegations about him. While Chambers’ relationship with Traynor appears to have been less violent than his was with Linda, it undeniably confirmed his controlling

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ *Time* 17 December 1973.

personality. Under his tutelage, she began voice and dance lessons. He also bought her new clothes and took her to beauty salons for hair and nail treatments. “It was,” recalled Chambers, “kind of like an Eliza Doolittle thing.”²⁷⁴ He also engaged Chambers in debasing situations similar to those he had put Linda through. He insisted, for example, that Chambers answer the door in the nude at hotels and offer room-service attendants oral sex in lieu of a tip. As he later said, “To create the perfect porn star, you have to create an image of a totally uninhibited sexual creature who would be happy being anything you wanted her to be.”²⁷⁵

Chambers, who may have had some reservations, consented to this, believing he had her best interests at heart. “I wanted to be a star, and nothing was going to stop me,” she said.²⁷⁶ And yet, Chambers later conceded that their relationship was not without problems. Traynor, in fact, once told her that he regretted not meeting her when she was 17—figuring she would have been more pliable and less opinionated at that age. Though she insisted their relationship never reached the level of violence Linda documented in *Ordeal*, she conceded that she and Traynor had some serious arguments. “But try to make me do something I don’t want to do, and we’re going to have a problem,” she said. “So we bumped heads quite a bit.”²⁷⁷

As a final footnote, one peculiarity marked Linda and Chambers’s relationship: neither would ever achieve any success as a legitimate mainstream actress. Under Traynor’s management, Chambers did have a brief theatrical career, debuting at the Capital Theater in Passaic, New Jersey, in 1974. The show opened with Chambers

²⁷⁴ Marilyn Chambers interview.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ David Winters interview.

bursting out of a giant Ivory Soap box in a rhinestone-clad costume, dancing and singing her way through the rest of the revue. And though she could carry a tune reasonably well, the show quickly fizzled. As Linda herself would soon discover, audiences expected nudity and sex, and nothing less. “A porno star trying to go straight, it just wasn’t working,” said Chambers.²⁷⁸

In the end, Chambers’s relationship with Traynor did little to advance her career. For the next decade, she would go on to headline shows at porn theaters and she starred in a few more pornography films, but eventually she recognized her work in the porn industry had doomed any hope of a crossover success, and she abandoned any attempt to work in mainstream films. In 1985, after 10 years of marriage Chambers divorced Traynor, abandoning that partnership, as well.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 5: Linda Lovelace becomes Linda Marchiano

By the fall of 1973, Linda had made several important changes in both her private and professional lives. Foremost among these was the dissolution of her marriage to Traynor and, on September 29, she instructed her new attorney, Harvey Strassman, to initiate divorce proceedings. Strassman, appearing in Santa Monica Superior Court, told reporters it was not a trial separation but a permanent end of their two-year marriage. He offered little else except that Linda was filing on the grounds of irreconcilable differences, claiming only a joint bank account and a foreign automobile as assets.²⁷⁹

Linda's scheduled debut at the Paramount Theater in Miami was a casualty of the divorce. It is likely she may have been unable to meet the terms of her contract. In the chaos following her separation, she was simply unprepared to perform by the scheduled November 1 date. She also had been spending most of her time with Winters instead of rehearsing. More important, however, Traynor had orchestrated the Miami contract, and Linda had some incentive not to meet the terms of the agreement. Not doing so offered her a chance to return the favor and some wreak havoc in Traynor's life. LeRoy Griffith, the show's producer, agreed to push back the opening date a month, but even with this additional time, Linda could not or would not meet her contractual obligations. Winters, who had now officially taken over as her business manager, suggested she "feign sickness" to get out of the contract altogether.²⁸⁰ This advice proved unsound, for Griffith filed a breach of contract suit in the amount of \$75,000 when she followed it. Adding insult to injury, Phil Mandina, a Florida-based attorney who represented Traynor during his legal difficulties two years earlier, and also represented Linda Lovelace

²⁷⁹ "Star of Deep Throat Files to End Marriage," *Las Angeles Times* 29 September 1973.

²⁸⁰ David Winters, unpublished autobiography, 2001, copyright Winters/Casey, January 2003, obtained from World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

Enterprises, slapped her with a second lawsuit for \$19,500 for nonpayment of legal fees for legal services rendered between January and September 1973.²⁸¹

Despite these setbacks, Linda optimistically forged ahead with her career as a legitimate actress. Winters, who had lofty goals for Linda, wanted to package her as a sex symbol—albeit one who did not disrobe. This was something Traynor had been unable to accomplish—even Linda’s contract with the Paramount Theater required a brief glimpse of nudity. But Winters wanted none of that for Linda, as he himself noted to a writer for *Variety*. Most actresses tried to hide or destroy copies of nude photographs from their earlier careers, but Linda was the first to employ the opposite strategy, using her porn credentials as a means of gaining more legitimate gigs.²⁸²

Distancing Linda from her pornographic past while at the same time using her notoriety to further her career proved to be a flawed strategy, though Winters, to his credit, tried every means at his disposal. In November 1973, a Los Angeles-based television show entitled “Stereoscope,” featuring local psychologist Lorie Chase, booked Linda. During the half-hour interview, it became apparent Linda would have trouble making the transition from porn star to mainstream actress. “Pornographic films are a bore,” she told Chase, adding, “I’m definitely shy. I’m not a loud, boisterous person.” Chase pointed out that this was not the image Linda had fostered for the past two years and reminded her she had openly declared herself an exhibitionist. In fairness, this was the image Traynor had crafted for Linda—that of a sexualized nymph whose performance in *Deep Throat* was a mere extension of her natural personality. Inarguably

²⁸¹ “Porn Star Lovelace Wrapped up in Suits,” *Variety*, 19 December 1973.

²⁸² “Linda Lovelace Tries to Shed ‘Deep Throat’ Image for Miami Café Break-in,” *Variety* 29 September 1973, 2.

though, Linda seemed at ease in that role. “I’m not an actress,” she told Chase, “I’m being myself.” “But, today you’re an actress?” Chase skeptically asked.²⁸³

This was exactly the problem that haunted Linda for the rest of what turned out to be a short career. Unable and at this particular time unwilling to disavow her pornographic past, her desire to be accepted by mainstream actors was thwarted at every turn. In October, for instance, she was scheduled to perform at the Thaliens Ball in Los Angeles, where Sammy Davis, Jr., had been selected as the guest of honor. Named for Thalia, the Greek muse of comedy and poetry, the group had been established some years earlier by a group of actors who hoped to counter what they considered the pervasive, lowbrow, quality of Hollywood product. Upon hearing of Linda’s scheduled appearance at the ball, founding member Dorothy Manners wrote articles of protest in both the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* and the *Los Angeles Times*, indignantly stating, “In no way do I consider that Linda Lovelace, star of *Deep Throat*, fits into any activity of the Thaliens.”²⁸⁴

In addition to her other problems, Linda had begun to realize that something was seriously amiss with her new business manager, who bore striking similarities to Traynor. Linda may have first realized this during an episode of acute facial pain in November 1973. Her physicians were uncertain of its etiology so she was admitted to a local hospital for further observation. The admission may have been a ruse that allowed her and Winters to produce medical documents indicating that she was “medically incapable” of performing. In her hospital room, Linda received a visit by Winters and his associate, Mel Mandel. Winters noted that a bouquet of flowers in the corner of Linda’s room was

²⁸³ “Interview with Linda Lovelace by Lorie Chase,” *Stereoscope*, 1973, UCLA Film and Television Archives, Los Angeles, Ca.

²⁸⁴ Dorothy Manners, *LA Herald-Examiner* 13 September 1973.

from Traynor. Linda was delighted with how the arrangement brightened her otherwise bleak room, but Winters was furious and immediately removed the flowers. She was upset when he returned. “Why did you do that?” she demanded. Mandel, who had been observing the exchange from the corner of the room, was equally upset. “David, let her enjoy the damn flowers,” he said, but Winters refused to back down. Mandel believed the incident in the hospital room was typical of Winters’ controlling behavior toward Linda. In the months that followed, from something as minor as disposing of flowers to signing motion picture deals, Winters insisted on having absolute control over her.²⁸⁵

Winters must have agreed with this assessment, for he acknowledged in his own words that he was both a Svengali and Henry Higgins character who exerted absolute control. But Winters also saw his role in Linda’s life as far more beneficent than his predecessor. “Chuck controlled her in a...nasty and terrible way,” he said. “I controlled her because we had a vision..., which was to create this incredible movie star and be happy together.”²⁸⁶ However, one thing established Linda’s relationship with Winters as different from that with Traynor: she openly embraced Winters’s advice.

“She just bared herself to me,” Winters said. “She was the product, and I molded her as I wanted her to be.” Mel Mandel agreed, noting that Linda was unable to make career decisions on her own and, in fact, wanted someone to tell her what to do. Winters could, however, be just as unfeeling as Traynor had been. For example, he told Linda that Delores Wells was overpaid despite all the assistance she had provided during her travails

²⁸⁵ Mel Mandel interview.

²⁸⁶ David Winters interview.

with Traynor and that his own accountant and managers could better handle Linda's affairs. He then fired Wells.²⁸⁷

Winters continued to be determined to sell Linda to the public as a sexy actress who no longer performed in pornography, but he had his work cut out for him. In lieu of the nightclub act in Miami, he began searching for a new stage act that involved no nudity—but also one that did not involve much singing or dancing. He decided her talents, or lack thereof, would be best displayed if she could concentrate solely on delivering dialogue. In December 1973, he had signed a contract committing Linda to a role in a bedroom comedy called *Pajama Tops* that would open at the New Locust Theater in Philadelphia and then tour the eastern seaboard theater circuit.²⁸⁸ Winters, however, made a critical mistake with Linda's theatrical debut. The play, which had first been staged almost 20 years earlier, was a poor choice for a revival, especially in the wake of the sexual revolution in which Linda had played such a prominent role, for the play was stale, and the dialogue embarrassingly unfunny. Linda's delivery did little to help. Walking onstage to deliver her lines, she was visibly nervous and in short order bungled some of her dialogue. Following her opening night performance, she admitted it could have gone better, adding, "But I didn't choke." Linda probably did not intend this as a double entendre.²⁸⁹ Winters responded to her performance far less ambiguously. Noting that even on opening night, the seats in the theater were mostly empty, he gave her scant opportunity to improve her acting skills. "Every performance, we opened and there were more people on stage than in the audience," he said. "So after a week, I closed

²⁸⁷ Dolores Wells interview.

²⁸⁸ *Hollywood Reporter* 19 December 1973.

²⁸⁹ "Linda Lovelace in Pajama Tops," *LA Herald-Examiner*, 28 December 1973.

it. It just wasn't working."²⁹⁰ In fairness, Linda's lack of talent was not the sole reason the play bombed. She was, once again, stuck in the same quandary as before; audiences expected nudity and when word got out that there was none, they stayed away.

Winters was frustrated by the debacle, but undeterred. He suspected that part of the problem might have been the venue. Linda needed an audience that was more forgiving than the jaded patrons in Philadelphia. At that, the pair returned to California where they were sharing a house in Malibu, and he plotted their next move. To improve Linda's marketability, he undertook a vast campaign to educate her and expose her to what he considered a broader, richer culture. Winters himself had hailed from the theater, and he was appalled to discover that Linda knew absolutely nothing about his first love. "When I met her," said Winters, "She had never heard of George Bernard Shaw. She never heard the name. She didn't know Cyrano de Bergerac. She'd never heard of it."²⁹¹ Winters remedied this by taking Linda to a multiplicity of dance and theatrical performances. Linda did enjoy being exposed to new and different things, but for Winters these were not just outings—they were also lessons, and more often than not Winters was a harsh taskmaster. Mandel recalled that Winters often harangued Linda, correcting her vocabulary and grammar. He instructed her to avoid "street talk" and encouraged her to read more, although as Mandel noted, Winters himself never seemed to pick up a book. Linda also discerned Winters's sanctimonious manner, dryly commenting years later, "I became cultured, I guess."²⁹² Mandel, however, perceived a far more immediate and

²⁹⁰ David Winters interview.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² "Deep Coverage: An Exclusive Excerpt from *The Complete Linda Lovelace*," Retrieved on 12 January 2004 from www.penthouse.com/exclusives/editorial/0107_lovelace/.

negative consequence of Winters's tutelage: Linda became deathly afraid of saying the wrong things and began to second-guess herself.²⁹³

To all appearances, Linda and Winters were for the most part happy and content, with Winters trying to further her career with more and more projects. Oddly enough, however, Linda's next undertaking did not involve show business but instead a tour of college campuses across the United States in the spring of 1974. The inspiration for the tour came after her participation at the annual Harvard Lampoon Celebrity Roast. At that ceremony, Linda was honored as the actress "most willing to flout conventions and risk worldly damnation in the pursuit of artistic fulfillment." Winters could not help but notice that despite Linda's lack of formal education, she had a way with the crowd. Before her arrival, student supporters on the Cambridge campus circulated fliers referring to Linda as "America's Sweetheart," and she, in turn, participated in the motorcade event, later graciously accepting a "Wilde Oscar" award.²⁹⁴ Though *Deep Throat* lost out to *Last Tango in Paris* for "Worst Picture of the Year," Linda was undeniably a smash among college students.

Following that event, Linda received requests from other schools, beginning with a call from a Northeastern University with an invitation to participate in a debate, for which she would be compensated. Winters thought it was the perfect venue for her, in part because the two often discussed how pornography was really the lesser evil in society compared with the violence of war. The topic had particular resonance for them because they were often called upon to testify at *Deep Throat* obscenity trials across the United States. Along with Mandel, they were en route to Tucson, Arizona, because Linda

²⁹³ Mel Mandel interview.

²⁹⁴ *Newsweek*, 17 December 1973.

had been subpoenaed once again. But they decided to make a stopover and see the Grand Canyon. Mandel recalled the three of them standing at the rim of the canyon, taking in its majestic beauty when Winters and Linda became engaged in a conversation about the true nature of obscenity in American society. It was Winters who told Linda that violence was more ruinous to the morals of young Americans than sex or pornography. Although Winters certainly did not come up with this idea on his own, he probably deserves credit for introducing it to Linda.

In the first six months of 1974, Linda visited 25 college campuses, generally earning speaking fees of around \$4,000.²⁹⁵ The events were completely orchestrated by Winters, who left nothing to chance by writing every line she delivered. Mandel brainstormed and came up with potential questions audience members might have for Linda and then wrote out thoughtful answers in response. In case there was a question she did not have an answer for, she was to respond with an impertinent answer and move on.²⁹⁶

The college circuit tour proved to be a good venue for Linda's comments on sexual freedom, and the publicity she received was enormous.²⁹⁷ Though her initial visit at Harvard was intended as a joke, her subsequent lectures were taken more seriously. Of the audience reactions, Winters himself observed, "It always started out as a kind of tongue-in-cheek evening, until she gave her speech, and then people would start to listen."²⁹⁸ The students were particularly impressed with Linda's comments on the role of sex in cinema. Her views were not original and could be summed up with what by then was the well-known phrase, "Make love, not war." This indeed had been an effective

²⁹⁵ David Winters, unpublished autobiography.

²⁹⁶ David Winters interview.

²⁹⁷ Wayne King, "Sex Week at U. of Alabama Stirs Only Token Protests," *New York Times*, 24 March 1974.

²⁹⁸ David Winters, unpublished autobiography.

slogan for anti-war protesters among others, and coming from the most popular sex performer of the day, it had a particular resonance with the audience. As Winters recalled, she told students plainly, “We show action and dying in movies, [so] why can’t we show love? And sex is a part of love, so we can’t we show sex and why can’t we show love? Why is that banned?”²⁹⁹

Perhaps the highlight of the tour took place at the University of Alabama in March 1974. Linda was asked to attend a film and lecture series in which various topics were promoted, including homosexual themes, sex-change operations, and rape prevention. During her standard lecture, four students streaked Linda, and afterwards a raffle was held in which a chaperoned dinner date with Linda was awarded.³⁰⁰ Still, her appearance was not without its critics, and even in the more accepting environment of college campuses, complaints were lodged about her presence. A Tuscaloosa minister, for instance, complained, “What of any significance is Linda Lovelace going to be able to say to an academic community that will be any aid in understanding human sexuality?”³⁰¹

The first half of 1974 heralded other career and personal changes for Linda. On February 21, 1974, Linda’s divorce with Traynor was finalized, and the following day she entered Los Angeles Superior Court and legally changed her name to Linda Lovelace.³⁰² Her decision for doing this was likely at the prodding of Winters, who believed her name was an important asset. Indeed, he could not help but notice how the name “Lovelace” opened a lot of doors that otherwise would have remained shut. In

²⁹⁹ David Winters interview.

³⁰⁰ *Los Angeles Times*, 26 March 1974.

³⁰¹ King.

³⁰² *Hollywood Reporter* 22 February 1974.

particular, when accompanied by Linda, he was able to gain regular entry to the Playboy mansion, where they spent three or four nights a week. When not eating or drinking, they lounged by the pool and held court for those who passed by.³⁰³ Mandel, who occasionally accompanied them, was amazed at the reaction she received: “Linda didn’t have to do anything. Everybody approached Linda.”³⁰⁴

The time spent at the mansion typified Linda and Winters’s relationship, with Linda serving as the star attraction and Winters vicariously enjoying the perks of her celebrity. And while Winters mostly worked very hard to promote Linda’s career, he did so with the intention of conveniently inserting himself into the limelight and making a tidy profit from the association. In April 1974, Winters and Linda attended the 74th Academy Awards show in Hollywood. It was indeed quite a spectacle, and again one that reflected Winters’ creative thinking. He hired a coach pulled by white horses, accompanied by footmen, as Linda and Winters’ means of transportation to the ceremony. He also had Linda show up on the red carpet in a leopard-skin bikini, holding a Great Dane on a leash.³⁰⁵ The dog was his, and he keenly realized its presence would add to the outlandish display.

Inspired by the media attention Linda received in the United States, Winters decided to take her to England in May 1974. In yet another attempt to propel further career, the British-born Winters figured he knew his home turf best. He also thought that any publicity Linda received in Europe might indirectly generate more interest in her career in the United States. This was, in fact, Winters’s true genius. Less successful at promoting Linda as an actress, he could, however, stage elaborate stunts that consistently

³⁰³ David Winters, unpublished autobiography.

³⁰⁴ Mel Mandel interview.

³⁰⁵ *Hollywood Reporter*, 3 April 1974.

kept her in the public eye. Also working in his favor, English censors had blocked the screening of *Deep Throat*, and audiences had developed an intense curiosity about her well before she arrived.

Upon arriving in London, Winters promptly took Linda to the Dorchester Hotel just in time for what was perhaps the biggest social event of the year—the Ascot Races. “I thought, hum...what a great time to expose her at the Ascot,” he said, “because everyone comes with the big hats.”³⁰⁶ Winters then took Linda to a London tailor and ordered his own set of large hats and outfits for the races. As he had done at the Oscars ceremony, he hired a four-horse carriage for transportation. As he had anticipated, the crowd reaction was favorable: “When we showed up at Ascot, the place went mad,” said Winters, “because nobody comes in a coach and white horses to the Ascot. Everybody arrived in limousines in those days.”³⁰⁷

Linda’s outfits were no less eye-catching. She wore a black see-through blouse which revealed both her breasts, and a large sun hat adorned with turkey feathers. When her attire caused one proper British lady to gasp in shock, Linda remarked, “I don’t know what she was screaming about. I couldn’t tell her front from her back. At least everyone knew my front.” Despite at least that one negative reaction, the headline of the *Daily Mirror* referred to Linda’s presence at the Ascot races as a “winning double.”³⁰⁸ The following day, Linda made a second appearance at the races, this time wearing a crocheted pantsuit with a matching wide-brimmed hat. Her outfit was again transparent, though this time she was wearing no panties.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁶ David Winters interview.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ *Daily Mirror*, 19 June 1974.

³⁰⁹ “Shocking Miss Lovelace,” *London Evening News*, 19 June 1974, 1.

Winters, not content to stop there, also contacted *News of the World* and made a deal for the paper to run Linda's life story for an undisclosed sum. A long article was serialized on the front page, with photos, in May and June 1974. Linda was quoted extensively, recounting, for example, how much fun the Playboy Mansion is. Scandalous headlines trumpeted the story: "The Shocking Miss Lovelace," and "Lovers? My Score Is a Perfect 100!" Lest the point be missed, large blow-ups of her were plastered on the back of double-decker buses in London. Winters also persuaded the BBC to photograph Linda daily. "We created an incredible storm of publicity over there," he boasted. He also rented two Rolls Royces in London. One license plate said "penis" and the other said "womb," and they again posed for even more pictures in Hyde Park.³¹⁰

Winters believed their time together in the United Kingdom was the high point of his and Linda's relationship. After returning to United States, however, their relationship slowly began to lose steam, though he continued to search for new ways to promote her career. Still, under his direction, Linda next saw the publication of her second "autobiography," *The Intimate Diary of Linda Lovelace*. Winters hired Mandel to write the book, which was produced in only three days' time. Mandel embraced the writing assignment in earnest but used the pseudonym "Carl Wallin" because he was nervous about having his name on the cover. For his efforts, Winters paid him about \$350 with a promise of 5–10 percent of the royalties. As it turned out, he never received so much as another dime for his work.³¹¹

Though Winters was able to secure another respectable publishing deal with *Pinnacle*, Linda's second book did not fare as well as her first. Its profitability is

³¹⁰ David Winters interview.

³¹¹ Mel Mandel interview.

unknown, and the book garnered no literary reviews, nor did *Pinnacle* undertake a promotional tour to help with its sales. However, the book did succeed in meeting a few of Winters's objectives. It served, to a certain degree, to keep Linda's name in the public eye by once again reminding readers of Linda's fellating talents, and it also updated readers on the latest events in her life.

More importantly and often overlooked, *The Intimate Diary of Linda Lovelace* backed up her claims about Traynor from whom she was now divorced. Linda was open about the split, and in speaking of Traynor she noted, "I have been threatened by a man who is very sick. He is full of violence." Linda documented the early years of abuse at Traynor's hands, pointing out the bruises on her body that were visible in *Deep Throat*. Referring to her former husband as "Chuck the Schmuck," she also informed her readers she had been chased around Hollywood in the wake of their divorce as Traynor sported an M-16 rifle.

Though these comments are unsettling, they did not cause a furor as they would in her next autobiography, *Ordeal*. For one, Linda did not renounce her role in the filming *Deep Throat*. On the contrary, she explicitly stated, "Don't get me wrong. I enjoyed doing what I did in *Deep Throat*—it's what happened sexually with Chuck that I hated."³¹² As well, the third autobiography was a light-hearted peek at Linda's life, one in which she described encounters, both sexual and platonic, with various Hollywood celebrities. Some, like Elvis, were excited to meet her, but nothing sexual happened between them. With others, she used coy pseudonyms to describe her encounters, the more obvious being "Mr. Dynamite," who was clearly Sammy Davis, Jr.

³¹² Linda Lovelace, *Inside Linda Lovelace*, (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1973), 9-10.

Winters next cast about to find a suitable film project for Linda. Keeping in mind his ultimate goal—to make her a mainstream star—he believed he had the ideal property based on a piece by Robert H. Adleman entitled “The Bloody Benders.” The story involved a young woman living in the Midwest who operated an inn, murdered her clientele, and buried them in the backyard. The story, grisly though it was, would be presented as a comedy. Winters, however, could never find anyone willing to finance the project so he settled on his second idea, *Linda Lovelace for President*. His inspiration was twofold. Winters had a fondness for a popular comedy album recorded in 1962 called “The First Family.” Recorded by stand-up performer Vaughn Meader, the skits parodied President John F. Kennedy and the first family during the Cuban missile crisis. Sales of the album plummeted when Kennedy was assassinated, but Winters had never forgotten how very funny and popular it had been. He also remembered how well received Linda’s speeches had been during the tour of college campuses a few months before.³¹³

Winters proposed the idea of the film to both Linda and studio executives, who green-lighted the project. Shooting was set to begin as soon as possible, but the film would not be released until 1976, when the nation celebrated its bicentennial and in time for the November presidential election. It was a timely piece. In the aftermath of the Watergate scandal, with President Richard Nixon resigning from office, Linda would be a new kind of candidate who could bring the troubled nation together. That the premise of the film concerned a female presidential candidate was timely in light of the current crescendo of feminist political rhetoric. Shirley Chisholm, a New York congressional member, had thrown her hat into the Presidential ring, seeking her party’s nomination at

³¹³ David Winters interview.

the Democratic National Convention. She received only 151 delegate votes, but her entrance into the arena represented the first time a woman had been considered for the executive office. The *Roe v. Wade* decision of 1973 and proposed Equal Rights Amendment guaranteeing equal rights for all Americans regardless of sex further inspired feminists across the nation. The script, capitalizing on these motifs, called for Linda's nomination for president by a diverse group of frustrated delegates who could not agree on a mainstream candidate to represent their respective parties. In the chaos of their nominating conventions, they at last agree Linda Lovelace is the only candidate who can truly represent them all.

Her platform would be “free love,” and she would run in the “Upright Party,” and the campaign tour, when plotted on a map, bore the shape of an erect penis. In addition to flaunting sexual taboos, the film's very premise was radical. Linda would be the presidential candidate everyone could rally behind. Winters had a budget of \$800,000 to assemble a respectable cast and crew. Jack Margolis, who had worked on many Hollywood film and television productions, was hired to write the screenplay. Winters selected him in part because of his reputation for writing witty dialogue. Claudio Guzman, who had directed mostly television shows, including “I Dream of Jeanie,” was brought on board to direct the picture. The supporting actors including comedian Chuck McCann, musicians Mickie Dolan of the Monkees, and Scatman Crothers. Many of them were people Winters had either met at the Playboy mansion or had personally worked with.³¹⁴

The film was shot around the Washington, D.C., area and Winters, who had clearly demonstrated his skills at publicity by this point, arranged for Linda to

³¹⁴ David Winters interview.

“campaign” in front of the White House. Tourists hoping to catch a glimpse of now President Gerald Ford instead got to meet Linda Lovelace. Winters had her wear a white see-through lace outfit with a “Linda Lovelace for President” button over each breast. She passed out bumper stickers in an effort to promote her “campaign.”³¹⁵

Later, after the film’s release in the summer of 1974, Hefner devoted ten pages to *Linda Lovelace for President* in *Playboy*, and *Variety* placed it at the No.11 spot at the end of the opening week.³¹⁶ Word-of-mouth reviews quickly reversed those figures, however, and the film flopped. Even Linda’s sister Barbara was bitterly disappointed when she went to see it. “Oh my God, same old crap,” she thought. “I’m out of here.” She left the theater early and never saw it in its entirety. Barbara then called Linda to complain: “You said it was going to be funny.”

“It is funny,” Linda insisted.

“Well, not the part that I saw,” Barbara replied. Nevertheless, Linda cheerfully sent her a promotional gift—a sweatshirt with the film’s title on it.³¹⁷

Back in Los Angeles after the filming of *Linda Lovelace for President*, Winters once again busied himself with Linda’s next career move. He had recently made the acquaintance of Italian film producer Ovidio Assinitus, who believed Linda would be the ideal star for his next picture, *Laure*. The film was to be based on the *Emmanuel* book series, about the life of an exotic European swinger. Assinitus was thrilled at the chance to work with Linda, recognizing that her name alone would probably generate a substantial draw for his picture. Winters, acting as Linda’s manager, negotiated the contracts in the spring of 1974, but in addition to brokering a \$120,000 deal on Linda’s

³¹⁵ *Los Angeles Times*, 22 August 1974.

³¹⁶ David Winters, unpublished autobiography.

³¹⁷ Barbara Boreman interview.

behalf, he inserted himself into the contract as a salaried co-executive producer. The picture would be rated R and upon its completion, Twentieth Century-Fox would distribute it. Shooting was to begin in the summer of 1974. Only one problem remained: neither Linda nor Winters was given a script. Assinitus explained that it had not yet been written, so as a compromise the contract was amended, ensuring that Winters would have sole discretion to eliminate any content he found objectionable. Despite these shortcomings with the contract, Linda duly signed it.

Unfortunately, Linda and Winters's relationship had taken a turn for the worse by the time production for *Laure* began, and Linda would soon discover that her former lover was not much of an ally when she herself contested details of the contract. The cracks in the romance, however, had begun to surface as far back as January 1974 during a fateful trip to Las Vegas. At that time, Winters decided he wanted to stage a second theatrical show for Linda, believing the atmosphere there would be more conducive than Philadelphia had been. "Vegas doesn't have to be theater. It doesn't have to get great reviews. You can put your name up on a theater [marquee] and you can run for three, four, six months," he reasoned.³¹⁸ The idea was that Linda would star in a play that had formerly run in Los Angeles. The story featured Billy the Kid receiving fellatio from Jean Harlow. Though the sex act was only intimated and not performed on stage, the show had been stopped every night by the Los Angeles police department. Despite these repeated raids, the theater continued to reopen night after night, selling tickets to the performance. As could be expected, Winters intrigued the publicity surrounding the play. He suspected, if given a chance, it could successfully run uninterrupted in Las Vegas.³¹⁹

³¹⁸ David Winters interview.

³¹⁹ David Winters interview.

And yet, before he could even lay the groundwork for the production, he and Linda were arrested for cocaine possession while staying at the Dunes Hotel. Linda said she was standing in the bathroom putting on makeup, getting ready to go out for the evening, when the police knocked on the door. Though Winters claimed the scene was chaotic, Linda said the police were actually very polite and treated her in a matter-of-fact fashion.³²⁰ The officers confiscated a vial of cocaine and an assortment of amphetamines and barbiturates.³²¹

Winters believed the bust was due to corrupt Las Vegas politics and a district attorney who did not want *Deep Throat* playing in the state of Nevada. Linda, however, privately remarked to friends that she suspected it was a set up in which Winters was somehow involved, though he, too, had been arrested and faced criminal charges. After all, Winters did excel at publicity stunts, and she wondered whether this may have been yet another one. Linda was arraigned on one count of cocaine possession, released on a \$7,000 bond, and told that she faced a six-year prison sentence if convicted.³²² A hearing was scheduled for July 25.³²³

By the time Linda and Winters were scheduled to appear in court for their hearing, their relationship had completely collapsed. The reasons were many. Linda could be childish and petty, particularly about Traynor, and could never stop lamenting that her fame rested on *Deep Throat*. Winters in turn grew tired of her seeming inability to move forward with her life. His goal had been to make her a mainstream star, but it was a never-ending uphill battle in which he constantly had to tell her, “Linda, you did it,

³²⁰ Larry Marchiano, interview by author, Littleton, Colorado 12 November 2005.

³²¹ *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 1 February 1974.

³²² *People Magazine*, 4 March 1974, 67.

³²³ *Variety*, 27 March 1974.

that's the reason I'm with you. I would never have met you, I would never be trying to market you. So stop complaining about it. I don't want to hear it." But in spite of all his efforts to turn her into a star, she kept returning to *Deep Throat*. "She wanted to have a regular life," said Winters. "No matter what was happening and how wonderful it was for her...she always went back to that. She never broke that connection."³²⁴

Winters's personal relationships were suffering, too. "More people hung up the phone on me when I called them. They would just hang up the phone. Sammy Davis, Jr., was the one who just over and over said to me, 'You're killing your career, kid. What are you doing?'" He even suggested that it was perfectly okay to have sex with Linda, but nothing more. "Don't have your life around her," he advised.

Linda was having her own misgivings about Winters. Even though he had helped procure steady contracts, she was feeling used. She could not help but notice that he handsomely rewarded himself with every project he managed, was living an extravagant lifestyle, and yet never seemed to spend a dime of his own. Their friends certainly noted this, too. Though Mandel was not intimately familiar with the financial complexities of their relationship, he noted that Winters's finances always seemed to go from one extreme to the other. Dolores Wells, however, believed that he used Linda solely to further his own career and pocketbook. Linda must have realized this as well. She was shocked to discover, for instance, that Winters had purchased two Bentleys, one for himself and one for her. She later learned, however, that hers was only leased.³²⁵

By that time, however, Linda had had a stroke of good luck. The Las Vegas district attorney realized that evidentiary problems made the case against her shaky, and

³²⁴ David Winters interview.

³²⁵ Larry Marchiano interview.

in July 1974 the charges were thrown out. The judge ruled that the search warrant was invalid because it involved a nighttime search, with no probable cause. Winters, too, had his charges dropped earlier in the week.³²⁶ Unfortunately, despite having the Vegas charges dropped, more legal troubles loomed. In the fall of 1975, she returned to Miami to appear in court regarding the suit Griffith and Mandina had filed against her for failure to produce the show. The case did not end in her favor, and she was subsequently ordered to pay \$32,000.

She planned to stay at her parents' house in Davie, but when she arrived Linda discovered it was more crowded than usual. Her sister Jean had temporarily moved back to Florida with her infant son, Larry Paul, and the boy's father, Larry Marchiano—the same Larry she had met back in Shrub Oak when she worked at Jean's boutique.

After graduating from high school in 1965, Marchiano headed down to the draft office to get out of service in the Vietnam War. He told army personnel at a New York draft office, "I'll kill you if you make me kill somebody else." In short order, he was designated a 4-F, unfit for military service, or as Marchiano puts it, "I was declared nuts," but as he explained, "I wasn't nuts. I was just really overzealous, anti-war. How the hell did I know what I was talking about? I'm 18 years old. I was all wound up with no place to go. Song titles like, 'Three Dead in Ohio,' and all this stuff, and I went down there to the draft office, and I was angry as hell. Instead of locking me up, they declared me 4-F."³²⁷

Thus avoiding military service, Marchiano worked on Wall Street for a major advertising firm, starting in the mailroom and working his way up to the position of print

³²⁶ *Variety*, 26 July 1974.

³²⁷ Larry Marchiano interview.

production manager. In 1970, technological changes rendered his job obsolete. Laid off and wary of finding another job in what he saw as a rapidly changing market, he decided to move to Long Island and work in the cable TV industry. Within a few years, he became a foreman and then site supervisor.

It was during this time that Marchiano and Jean began dating in earnest, and three years later Jean became pregnant and gave birth to Larry Paul. Marchiano and Jean never married, but they stayed together for another year. By 1974, however, with the relationship failing, Jean decided to return to Florida to be closer to her parents, and Marchiano agreed to drive her and Larry Paul there. “This was really hippie,” said Marchiano, “so there was no divorce court.” It was also an amicable split. “Me and Jean had gotten to the point where this ain’t happening,” said Marchiano. “It was like, ‘okay, it’s not working but come and stay in touch with your son.’” As a result, a mutual agreement was reached. Instead of working in New York and saving up some money, Marchiano and Jean decided to leave immediately for Florida. Jean, however, did not want to be stuck in her parents’ home without any form of transportation so she asked Marchiano to find a job in Florida for a while in order to help her buy a car. Marchiano agreed to the plan, with the understanding that he would soon return to Long Island, and when they arrived in Florida found a job right away at a plumbing company. Within a short amount of time, he was able to give Jean \$600 so she could buy a car. “They were all happy,” he recalled, and so he made plans to return to New York. He gave his employer appropriate notice that he was quitting and within two weeks loaded his

belongings into his car and showed up for his last day of work. His fate would turn, however, on a melted cheese sandwich.³²⁸

Cutting pipe all morning was demanding, physical labor, and by midday Marchiano was famished. He returned to his car to retrieve his lunch, which he had casually left on the dashboard of his car. A life-long New York resident, he did not fully appreciate how high Florida temperatures could rise in a short period of time, so when he unpacked his lunchbox, he was dismayed to see his cheese sandwich had become a lumpy mess. Still, it looked edible, and Marchiano was starved, so he wolfed it down and returned to work. Within the hour, he had developed a full-blown case of food poisoning and was of no use to the rest of the crew, so he returned to the Boremans' to recuperate. Later that afternoon, he woke to see John standing over him. "Hey, how you doing?" Boreman asked, adding, "I brought Linda home."³²⁹

Marchiano vaguely remembered that Linda had impressed him as "a snotty pain in the ass"³³⁰ when he first met her in Shrub Oak. She was four years younger than he, and they had little in common since she was just a kid, relatively speaking, whereas he had faced a series of challenges right out of high school and had been out on his own working an assortment of jobs. Marchiano recalled what happened next: "I get up and I take a look, and I'm sick, and I look and she goes, 'Hi, Larry.' And I look at her and believe me, this is not Linda Boreman. This is a whole different woman. She is very attractive and she's had a little work, but she looks great, and I look at her and I go, 'Linda Boreman, what the hell happened to you?'"

"No, they don't call me that anymore," Linda replied.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Ibid.

“What do they call you, then?”

“They call me Linda Lovelace.”

“Oh, that’s bullshit! What are you telling this shit, this ‘Linda Lovelace’ shit?”

“That’s my name,” she told him, and then invited Marchiano out onto the back porch. The two drank a couple of beers and chatted for a few hours, with Linda filling him in on her role in *Deep Throat* and what she had been doing since then. Despite the fact that Marchiano had been dating Jean for the past few years, he was unaware that a celebrity was in the family. He was underwhelmed with Linda’s stories and what struck him as a crazy West Coast lifestyle of late-night parties and unlimited drugs. When she finished, Marchiano was unimpressed and returned back to the sofa to continue his convalescence.

Later that evening, Linda approached him again. At first, Marchiano thought she wanted to regale him with more Hollywood stories, but she had a far darker tale to tell. “Listen, Larry, I’ve been through some really bad times lately,” she said. She then told him that she suspected people were stealing her money and taking advantage of her. Though Traynor and now Winters were out of her life, she still had to deal with the contracts she had signed under their tutelage and was starting to realize she had been duped. Marchiano was sorry but did not think he could do anything to help since he was driving back to New York the next day, so he said good night and went to bed. But sleep did not come easily because the stories Linda had told him had left an impression. “I’m thinking,” recalled Marchiano, “of everything from wild sex parties, which I’ve never been to, to all kinds of things floating around in my head.” Despite this, he remained committed to leaving the next day.

The following morning, as he was preparing to leave, Linda approached him once more. “You’re really leaving?” she asked.

He said he was.

“What would you think about coming out to L.A. and helping me, just answering the phones, helping me out in some way,” she asked. “You could collect money so people would not steal it from me.”

“I’m a hippie,” Marchiano replied. “I don’t even got a clean shirt, you know what I mean?”

Linda was persistent: “One of my friends is in town, and maybe he can explain it all to you. We’re all going to the Diplomat Theater tonight to meet my friend. Come on, we’ll buy you some clothes.” The Diplomat was the premier venue in Miami, in Marchiano’s estimation, “about as uptown as you can go.” He told Linda he would stay one more night. That afternoon, Jean and Linda took Marchiano shopping for clothes, and in the evening they all piled into the family car and headed to the theater. Up to this point, Marchiano was fairly nonplussed, until they were escorted down the aisle and given seats in the very front row. A short while later Sammy Davis, Jr., came onto the stage.³³¹

When the concert ended, the group was taken backstage. In a cluster of several dressing rooms, Marchiano observed people casually chatting and drinking, but before he could join in Linda took his hand and led him to the dressing room where Davis was seated. Davis offered them both beers and a joint, which they readily accepted. As Linda had promised, Davis then proceeded to tell Marchiano about the troubles she was having. “It’s true,” he said. “She’s got a bad deal, and maybe you can help her out.” He told

³³¹ Ibid.

Marchiano much the same story Linda had told him the day before. Her finances were a mess and people in Los Angeles were taking advantage of her. Davis hoped that Marchiano might be able to straighten things out for her. He then pulled \$5,000 from his wallet and said, “Why don’t you take a ride out to L.A. and see if you can help her out?”³³²

The following morning, Marchiano weighed his options. He had had too much to drink the night before, his head was ringing, and he was having a hard time thinking clearly. He no longer had a job in Florida, and he did not have one lined up on Long Island. At best, he had made anywhere from \$80 to \$110 a week in construction. But Sammy Davis, Jr., of all people, had offered him a job of sorts and \$5,000 up front!

He got out of bed and wandered into the kitchen, where he found Linda sitting at the breakfast table. “Well, I’ll go,” Marchiano told her. “Give me directions to your house. I never go anywhere without my car—a blue 1973 Chrysler Newport Royale.” The following day, he headed to Los Angeles. He assumed he was just helping his ex-girlfriend’s sister out of a financial mess, though he may have lacked the necessary qualifications or experience to do so. And while Linda was pleased by his decision, her mother was not. “She hated me for all the right reasons,” Marchiano said. “I’m dropping off one daughter, saying, ‘This relationship isn’t working,’ and I’m heading to California toward Linda’s house. I had seemingly abandoned her grandchild and her daughter by dumping them on her doorstep.”³³³

Marchiano was in no way prepared for what he found when he arrived in Los Angeles. It seemed that not only were Linda’s finances in disarray so, too, was her

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

personal life. The scene in her bungalow was one of total chaos. The phones never seemed to stop ringing, and he was bombarded with calls from people pitching one project after another for Linda. Soon, however, he discerned a common thread: “People were calling, but it was always, ‘What can I get out of you?’” Marchiano also realized that despite her fame and notoriety, Linda’s career was on shaky ground. He admitted, however, that he based his opinion mostly on the fact that she had just finished filming *Linda Lovelace for President*, and an advance screening confirmed that it was the most pathetic movie he had ever seen.

But Marchiano was there first and foremost to help with her finances and thus began the task of figuring out what needed to be done. In short order, Linda presented him with a stack of paperwork containing contracts and bank statements. Marchiano first pored over the fine print, trying to make sense of it. Of course, he had no legal training and some of what he read was incomprehensible, but clearly, in some cases Linda was not being paid what she was owed. After studying the contracts for a few more days, Marchiano decided to call upon Linda’s latest attorney, David Rudich.

At Rudich’s office, Marchiano wasted little time with formalities. He told Rudich that Linda had not received any royalties for *Inside Linda Lovelace*. “What is your background, Mr. Marchiano?” asked Rudich. “I’m from New York,” Marchiano replied. “I’m in construction. I just finished up some construction in Miami. And now I’m here to help Linda out. I hear you’re full of shit. Linda’s making money, but she ain’t getting none, and you’re in charge.”³³⁴

Rudich looked at the paperwork Marchiano handed him and said, “Jeez, you’re right. We owe you quite a bit of money.” He then instructed Linda and Marchiano to fly

³³⁴ Ibid.

to New York to collect the money from a publishing company, the name and location of which Marchiano no longer remembers. Marchiano did not know this was a runaround—in fact, he was encouraged by the exchange, as was Linda, so they promptly flew to New York and headed to the address Rudich had given them. The publishing company offices were in a small eight-story walk-up, and to access the building one had first to use a ground-floor intercom. Marchiano hit the buzzer and soon a voice on the other end inquired who was calling. Marchiano stated his name and the purpose for his visit, but the receptionist on the other end told him, “I’m sorry, he is not here right now.” Marchiano turned to Linda. “Watch this,” he said and hit the buzzer again. “Tell them Linda Lovelace is here.” Without further ado, the door was buzzed open. They discovered that the man was, in fact, in his office and he even brought out a bottle of champagne for the visit. After brief pleasantries were exchanged, Marchiano asked about the check he was there to collect. The amount due was \$32,000. The publisher politely told them that a check had been cut and even sent out...to Chuck Traynor.

Marchiano was unfazed. He walked over to the office window, looked out, and asked Linda to leave the room for a moment. She complied and, still standing by the window, Marchiano asked, “You take the subway to work every day, don’t you? You come to work the same way, don’t you?” The publisher, sensing a vague threat, nodded slowly. Marchiano continued, “I’m really in a bad spot because some people are really pissed that Linda is getting screwed like this, and there’s nothing I can do to stop them.”

“What are you talking about?” the publisher asked.

“You’re the one who wrote the check to the wrong person,” Marchiano replied. “We’re not going to take you to court, but I want you to know personally there is nothing I can do to help you.”³³⁵

Marchiano clearly remembered what happened next. The publisher wrote a check for \$32,000 and, at Marchiano’s insistence, personally accompanied them to the bank. After they cashed the check, Marchiano put the money in a briefcase, shook hands, and departed. He then explained word for word to a very puzzled Linda what had transpired. As they were walking down the street, Linda was ecstatic. She grabbed him by the arm, repeating the last line of Marchiano’s threat, “And there’s nothing I can do about it!”³³⁶

Following this incident, the word quickly traveled back to Los Angeles that Linda’s new business manager was serious about collecting monies owed. Though he no longer remembers specific contracts or who owed Linda how much, he spent the rest of 1975 calling on lawyers in the Los Angeles area and gradually turned her finances around. It was hard work. The contract language was dense and boring, and often times Marchiano had to call Victor Yannacone, his own attorney on Long Island, to help make sense of it all. On one occasion, Marchiano even flew out to Long Island, armed with what Yannacone described as “a whole file cabinet drawer full of documents.” Marchiano asked Yannacone to explain an assortment of strange contracts that bore Linda’s signature. These documents, he said, essentially reduced Linda to a lifetime of indentured servitude. In the course of her short career, following the success of *Deep Throat*, Linda had foolishly signed documents that granted over 100 percent of her gross income to Traynor. The contracts essentially stated that for every dollar Linda made

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

during her lifetime, she had to pay another four to five cents more to the holder(s) of the contracts.³³⁷ Though these agreements were later abrogated, it was typical of the morass Marchiano encountered in trying to help Linda with both her career and her finances.

Still, he made slow and steady progress untangling Linda's problems, and soon her accounts seemed to be in order. By late 1975, in addition to his duties as business manager, Marchiano undertook the new responsibility of accompanying Linda on a tour to promote *Linda Lovelace for President*. Though the film had been finished for several months, it had taken Linda's ex-boyfriend David Winters several months to finalize a distribution deal. During their months together on the road, the romance between Marchiano and Linda began to heat up. For months now, Marchiano had been working to protect Linda's interests, and she was again drawn to a man who could take charge. But Marchiano possessed other qualities that appealed to Linda. He was, in essence, a blue-collar worker with a high school education. He had little experience with show-business types, nor did he seem overly impressed with them. "He was fresh from that other world, the normal world," Linda noted.³³⁸ She could identify with Marchiano, and though she had embraced the celebrity lifestyle, a part of her longed for that normal life as well.

This would not, however, be an easy relationship to present to her family. Marchiano had, after all, been virtually married to Jean, which was certain to cause some hard feelings. Jean did express some bitterness every now and then, but Barbara told her to look on the bright side: "You're better off without the son-of-a-bitch." As for Linda, Barbara figured, "She's got to be nuts."³³⁹ Marchiano said there were never any hard feelings between him and Jean, though he did remember that occasionally at family

³³⁷ Victor Yannacone, telephone interview by author, tape recording, 27 November 2005.

³³⁸ Lovelace, *Out of Bondage*, 37.

³³⁹ Barbara Boreman interview.

gatherings Linda and Jean would get drunk and discuss his bad qualities. Wisely, he chose not to get in the middle of those conversations.³⁴⁰

In any event, Marchiano and Linda had discovered that they worked well together in negotiating the world of show business. During the publicity tour, they came up with what they referred to as a “code 13.” In the company of Hollywood celebrities and fans, they could not so easily extricate themselves from ticklish situations. People had unrealistic expectations of Linda as a porn star, and Marchiano discovered that the easiest and most polite way to remove themselves from uncomfortable scenes was to come up with a phrase that they both understood was their cue to leave. Either one of them could call Code 13 for any number of reasons. As Marchiano said, “We’re with some people and we just want to go make love, or we just want to kiss, or this guy’s an asshole.” Whatever the reason, they used the procedure to make a hasty exit, and it brought the two of them even closer together.³⁴¹

Following the tour, Linda filled in Marchiano about the next project Winters had cooked up before their relationship ended. She was to begin shooting *Laure*, and she explained that the deal had been signed months earlier, but of course now Marchiano would accompany her to Europe. The first time Winters was introduced to Marchiano was right before they left. The two men could not have been more different in terms of education, experience and background, but they would have to put up with each other at least until shooting finished in Rome, when Winters would have to return to London to take care of other business.

³⁴⁰ Larry Marchiano interview.

³⁴¹ Larry Marchiano interview.

Linda and Marchiano did not see the script until they had arrived at the hotel in Rome, and what they did see was only partial pages since *Laure* was a work in progress. Marchiano thumbed through the pages and was confused. It did appear to be pornographic, which was encouraging, but beyond that the basic plot seemed odd. It concerned, Marchiano recalled, “A doctor and his wife in the jungles, with no compromising positions and no nudity.” He was not sure exactly what they were supposed to be doing in the jungle, but overall the script seemed a good one. Linda was told her character was an ethnologist, but she and Marchiano had to look up the term. Marchiano, perplexed, sent copies of the contract to Yannacone. He looked them over and told them it seemed to be a good project for Linda to pursue.³⁴²

Still, Marchiano and Linda were informed it would take a few weeks before production was scheduled to begin. In the meantime, they enjoyed their stay in Rome, which turned out to be a magical experience. Their hotel was beautiful, and they had plenty of leisure time to explore the city. Things seemed to be progressing, and Linda was pleased. Marchiano recalled that everyone involved in the production was initially nice and polite, but the situation began to deteriorate as they received more and more pages of script.

At a meeting one evening with the producer and cinematographer, Linda was handed a script that required nudity and soft-core romance. She and Marchiano thumbed through the pages, looked at each other with sidelong glances, and called for a code 13. They retreated to their hotel room and scarcely needed a discussion about the new script changes. They went straight to the phone and called Yannacone, who told them what they needed to do and say to the producer. What followed, recalled Marchiano, was the

³⁴² Ibid.

longest code 13 they had ever had. Four weeks passed with Marchiano and Linda cloistered in their hotel room, trying to change the terms of the contract.³⁴³

Finally, they reached an agreement. Linda would be given a supporting role instead of the lead, but she would still get paid for her work, and more importantly not have to take off her clothes. David Winters, however, tells a completely different story, claiming that the more script pages Linda received, the more intimidated she became. Linda, he said, knocked on the door of his hotel room at 2 a.m. with a complaint: “It scares me, David. It’s just too wordy. Look, I’m sorry, but I don’t think I can carry it off.” Winters was at first irate but later realized that she was probably right. Linda finally accepted a smaller role, a suitable replacement was found, and Winters headed off to London.³⁴⁴

When the filming in Rome wrapped, the cast and crew headed for their next location in Manila. Marchiano and Linda, however, had open-ended first-class tickets and a few days of free time so they decided to stop over in New Delhi, India. As exhausted as they were from the shoot and their four weeks in Rome, they could not sleep so each took a few Seconals. Knocked out cold, neither of them woke when the plane landed in New Delhi. The flight crew was not amused by their stupor. They were finally shaken awake by a pair of irritated police officers with automatic rifles. In their exhaustion and still under the influence of the pills, they blindly followed the guards to a waiting car that dropped them off at a plane that was departing for Manila in ten minutes.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ David Winters autobiography, unpublished.

The incident was indicative of the role of drugs, and of the whirlwind craziness, in their lives at this time.³⁴⁵

Neither Marchiano nor Linda had been to the Philippines where the jungle scenes were to be filmed. They were disappointed upon their arrival in Manila: the country struck them as plain and unattractive. Daily rain delayed the production schedule, and the crew and cast had little to do to occupy their leisure time. Requiring a pass if they wished to travel at night, Marchiano and Linda stayed in their hotel room. They tried to watch television, but Marchiano said the local news was harrowing, with a lot of state-sponsored executions. To occupy his time, Marchiano began purchasing and selling currency, which became a profitable diversion, while Linda was working. Somehow, though, a governmental official was informed of his activities, and he was told to stop, which he did. “Everyone I talked to had a rifle, and I had nothing, so I stopped,” Marchiano said.³⁴⁶

The routine quickly became old so Marchiano and Linda decided to venture out to the Philippine countryside during the day. They hired a driver who took them to nearby villages. Overwhelmed by a level of poverty they had never before seen, they resolved to do something about it on their next excursion. Linda insisted on buying bags of food and making a second trip so she could give it to the children she had seen on their earlier trip. “We stopped the car and put the food out, and everybody ran away,” said Marchiano. Their driver, who had not been apprised of their intent, informed them that this was a technique kidnappers used. They would put out food, grab children who came by, and then sell them. “We returned to our hotel room, drank some wine and cried about that,”

³⁴⁵ Larry Marchiano interview.

³⁴⁶ Larry Marchiano interview.

recalled Marchiano. When the rain finally relented and the crew and cast prepared to begin shooting, things once again went wrong with the terms of Linda's agreement.

The problem this time was that while the producers were happy with her in a smaller role, they had decided they wanted her to perform in the nude. She refused to do so, and Assinitus promptly called Winters to complain that Linda would only come out of her dressing room wearing "clothes that covered her up to her neck."³⁴⁷ Winters was exasperated, and as his romance with Linda had long since ended, he no longer cared what happened with her career. He told the producer, "Fire the bitch," which is precisely what happened.³⁴⁸ Linda and Marchiano, in turn, had Yannacone draft a letter which stated that she would not participate in a film which has "no other purposes but to degrade me as a woman and human being and which are nothing more than ill-disguised references to my past performances." As Linda herself stated, the letter meant, "You can't fire me, I quit!"³⁴⁹

Linda and Marchiano then left the Philippines and returned to the United States. Clearly, Linda's relationship with Marchiano heralded changes on many fronts. He did not have the same managerial style of Traynor or Winters. Though he was a take-charge kind of person, he refused to do as his predecessors had done—to exploit Linda's image as a wild starlet with voracious appetite for sex. "When you met us, it was very clear who we were," said Marchiano. "People around us got the message that Linda and Larry were for real. We don't want to do any hard drugs. We like to smoke a little weed and drink

³⁴⁷ Winters, autobiography, unpublished.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Lovelace, *Out of Bondage*, 60.

some champagne and have a good time together. This is basically it. And it took a long time for people to believe this.”³⁵⁰

Sometimes this created awkward moments, as when Linda and Marchiano wanted to see Led Zeppelin at the Forum in Los Angeles in March 1975. Marchiano found out that all three shows were sold out, but he was able to reach the tour manager, Peter Grant. In lieu of tickets, Marchiano suggested that Linda introduce the band to the audience, and Grant was amenable. Marchiano and Linda were ushered backstage to the dressing room area. Led Zeppelin, notoriously insatiable for sexual favors from groupies, clearly expected something of that sort from Linda. When she entered the dressing room, however, the band members very quickly and graciously realized that their expectations were not going to be met. Linda then went out onstage before a wildly cheering audience and introduced the band. “She thought it was a gas,” said Marchiano.³⁵¹

Other than such occasional celebrity forays, the time Marchiano and Linda spent together back in Los Angeles was mostly uneventful. They spent most of their time alone together and seldom went out to nightclubs or parties. There was, of course, an occasional visit to the Playboy mansion, but Marchiano recalled they only went there so Linda could visit a few friends. Linda herself admitted she always felt more comfortable hanging out in the kitchen and talking with the staff. “These were the people I could relate to,” she said.³⁵² Unlike Traynor or Winters, Marchiano was not overly impressed with the Playboy mansion nor its owner. “I admit,” he said later, “the time I spent hanging out with Linda, there were certain celebrities I met that impressed me, but Hefner was not one of them.” Hefner struck him as being very friendly, but he also

³⁵⁰ Larry Marchiano interview.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Legs McNeil interview.

seemed a sad, if not tragic, figure: “He had this nice house, but he had all these asshole people around. He had security guards around and it seemed as if people were constantly coming in and out screaming. It was chaotic.”³⁵³

Los Angeles was becoming a bore for both Linda and Marchiano. They did frequent a nightclub there called Pips. By all accounts, Linda was a terrible dancer. Despite this, after a few drinks she would lose her inhibitions, cut loose, and start dancing. Marchiano estimated that every time they went to Pips, the nightly drink bills came to around \$500, but he and Linda never paid for a thing. The owners and patrons were just happy to have Linda there.

Otherwise, they did not go out much. Still, throughout 1976, their life together was happy enough that they decided to marry. There was no fanfare. The ceremony was simple, with just Marchiano, Linda, and a Justice of the Peace to hear them repeat their vows—if in fact they did, for Marchiano can recall no details of the wedding and they did not even inform Linda’s family of the event. For years afterward, Barbara doubted they had actually married. Whatever the truth, married or not, Linda could put both *Deep Throat II* and *Linda Lovelace for President* behind her, as she was also about to embark on a new, and what she considered more exciting, career path. In October 1976, she discovered she was pregnant.

Linda had always wanted to be a mother. It was, in her words, “my highest aspiration.”³⁵⁴ And yet shortly after discovering she was pregnant, a new set of worries arose. She received notice the Internal Revenue Service was investigating her, and her assets were frozen. Marchiano had managed to save money through his aggressive

³⁵³ Larry Marchiano interview.

³⁵⁴ Lovelace, *Out of Bondage*, 63.

collection strategies, and they had approximately \$35,000 in the bank in spite of their extravagant spending on drugs. They would never see a penny of it. In the investigation that followed, the IRS seized the funds, but that turned out to be the least of their worries. What the IRS was really after was mob-related profits connected to the pornography industry.³⁵⁵

The story of *Deep Throat*'s phenomenal box-office success was well known by the mid-1970s. A porn film made for a mere \$25,000 had generated an estimated \$600 million in profits, and these amazing numbers did not escape the attention of the IRS. What happened to the \$600 million, and had any taxes been paid? Linda had always insisted that she only received \$1,200 for her role in the film, but the IRS would not take her word for it. Marchiano and Linda soon learned that a mob informant had allegedly testified that the \$600 million could be traced. Not only that, but he had alleged Linda knew where this money had gone. This was, of course, absurd. Linda had never shared in any of the film's profits, nor did she have any idea where the money had been channeled.³⁵⁶

The bigger problem was that the mob vastly overestimated Linda's knowledge of *Deep Throat*'s profits. "Up to this point," explained Marchiano, "Linda was no threat to the mob. But if Linda 'talks,' then there's going to be indictments and problems." Linda feared that the mob would likely solve this problem the easiest way possible, and that meant taking her out. Linda and Marchiano were scared so they called Victor Yannacone

³⁵⁵ Larry Marchiano interview.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

and filled him in on as many details as they knew. “Okay,” Yannacone told them. “This is a bad one. You better come back east.”³⁵⁷

Linda and Marchiano took the next available flight to New York. When Linda first walked into his office, Yannacone was struck that she seemed to be in obvious pain. She told him she had been experiencing pain in her breasts, which she attributed to the silicone injections she had received years earlier. She also showed him her legs, which had also become painful and were developing varicose veins. Yannacone wrote down the name and address of an uptown Manhattan obstetrician and told Linda to make an appointment as soon as possible.

At the physician’s office, Marchiano sat in the reception area and waited while Linda was taken into an examination room. After sitting for over an hour, Marchiano was at last asked to come back to the doctor’s private office. “What did you do to this girl?” the doctor demanded. “I’m going to call the cops. What did you do to her?” Marchiano was too stunned to reply, but he quickly realized that the doctor assumed he was responsible for Linda’s injuries. Marchiano usually grew frustrated when confronted or falsely accused of something, but in this instance he took a deep breath, exhaled, and then calmly explained to the doctor that he had never harmed his wife. The doctor was eventually convinced, but something else troubled Marchiano much more than the doctor’s erroneous belief that he was somehow responsible. For the first time, Marchiano understood just how badly Traynor had damaged Linda. He knew, of course, she had been abused and had heard all the horrible stories. He knew, for instance, how Traynor had kicked Linda, how she would roll in a ball to protect herself from his beatings, and he

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

knew about the times Traynor had struck her with a closed fist, but to hear how the abuse was still physically affecting her rattled him to the core.³⁵⁸

The doctor did have some good news, however. He told him that Linda could have a safe pregnancy, but she would need to be cautious. He then began to make an appointment for Linda's next office visit. "The problem," said Marchiano, "was his office was in uptown Manhattan. We lived in California. He wasn't exactly in our neighborhood." Following the office visit, Marchiano and Linda discussed what they should do next.³⁵⁹

They decided they had few incentives to stay in Los Angeles. Linda's career had stalled, she was pregnant, and they were still the subjects of an IRS investigation. Completely broke, their options limited, they packed up their belongings, said goodbye to their friends, and, with a loan from Yannacone, rented a truck, hitched the Bentley to it, and headed east for Long Island, where Yannacone had found a temporary home for them in Montauk Point.

Marchiano's nerves were frayed. He was drinking too much, and he was smoking a lot of marijuana, which only exacerbated his mental condition. Linda, however, was calm and implacable. "Don't worry, Larry," she told him repeatedly. "Everything's gonna be all right." As much as it sometimes irritated him, it also amazed him. When the world seemed to be falling down around them, he did not understand how she could be so unfazed. "From what I've been through, this ain't nothing," she assured him. Marchiano believed that Linda's ability always to maintain such an attitude was evidence of her

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

indomitable spirit that had survived, despite years of abuse at the hands of Traynor.³⁶⁰ In the years following their move from California, there would be many lean, hard times, but Linda never once complained.

The next challenge would be to find a new place to live. The Montauk Point house was only temporary so they needed something more permanent. Linda scanned the classified ads of the local paper and found a tiny house in Center Moriches. It was an old army barracks unit that had been modified with a few extra walls, and the rent was only \$50 a month. Marchiano was pleased at Linda's find, and, in fact, it seemed that their luck was starting to turn. In short order, Yannacone informed them that the IRS had dropped its investigation of Linda.³⁶¹

Later in 1977, there was still more good news: Linda gave birth to a son, Dominic Paul Marchiano. Marchiano noted that Linda was thrilled to be a mother. "You have just never seen anyone happier," he said. In the days that followed, Linda seemed to grow more and more content. She loved being a mother, and she set about making their rented house a home. Unfortunately, the happier Linda became, the more Marchiano's mood seemed to go in the opposite direction. Both desperately wanted a normal family life, but somehow, following the birth of their son, word was out that "Linda Lovelace" was now living in Center Moriches.

As a result, oftentimes, cars would drive past their home in the middle of the night. Pounding on the horn, men would lean out their car windows and yell, "Hey, Linda, I got something for you." Marchiano and Linda decided that people like that were disturbed, but that was little consolation. "It wasn't the average person who was going to

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

do this,” said Corrine McGrady, whose husband, Mike, later co-authored Linda’s third autobiography. “It took an obsessive, freaky kind of person to track them down.”³⁶²

And though Linda and Marchiano were settling into a comfortable domestic routine, they were broke and in desperate need of assistance. Friends and family helped out when they could, but the two recognized they would need to turn to the public welfare system in their time of need. It was a difficult decision to make but a necessary one. Their first visits to the public assistance office were humiliating.

Marchiano and Linda gave as much information as possible to the social workers who immediately made the connection as to who Linda Lovelace was. The Marchianos faced a dubious and hostile office staff who intimated that they might be trying to chisel the federal government. Linda and Marchiano were, however, stripped of all assets, including the Bentley, which had been leased to begin with and was long gone. As a result, compounding Marchiano’s humiliation, they had to take the bus to the welfare office. Linda, however, remained unflappable. Marchiano admitted that this was a very difficult time in his life. “I was so angry,” he admitted, “because it was the only way I knew how to act. I’m just trying to change things. I’m angry.” This frustration and rage was always present, but one day in particular stood out in his mind. He, Linda, and “Little Dom,” as they called him, had left the welfare office and were waiting for the bus to arrive when it began to rain. Marchiano, on the verge of an explosion, looked over at Linda and stopped: “There’s this little freckled face again looking at me with this big smile.” Linda then turned to him and said, “Everything’s gonna be okay.”³⁶³

³⁶² Mike McGrady interview.

³⁶³ Larry Marchiano interview.

And so they were. In November 1976, Linda received an offer to star in a revue at the Aladdin Baghdad Theater in Las Vegas. *My Daughter is Rated X* was the title of the play, which was scheduled to open on January 21, 1977. It appeared to be a perfect project for Linda. Written by Robert Fisher and Arthur Marx, the sexual comedy told the story of a New York girl who becomes an actress and returns back home with her out-of-wedlock child. Her father, a movie censor, must come to terms with the fact that his daughter once appeared nude, engaging in sexual hijinks in a film. After the signing the contracts, Linda, Marchiano, and Dominic headed out to Las Vegas to begin rehearsals.

The show was a failure and was subjected to scathing reviews. *The Hollywood Reporter* referred to the cast as “more victims than perpetrators of this hapless, unfunny and altogether dreadful 90-minute waste of time and talent.”³⁶⁴ A reviewer for the *Los Angeles Times* complained, “As a fully clothed actress, Ms. Lovelace continually smiles at the audience in total disregard of whatever else is happening on stage. She delivers her lines as if she were reading them for the first time.”³⁶⁵ Though Linda was by no means a talented actress, the dismal debut was not solely her fault. The dialogue, for instance, was embarrassingly bad. Lines like, “I thought *Deep Throat* was a Disney picture about a giraffe” gave the cast members little to work with. The show’s failure was due to the same problem that had plagued Linda’s post-porn career from the start: the audience expected nudity at the very least and possibly more displays of her singular fellating talent. When this did not happen, they left disappointed. Linda’s costumes were critiqued as much as her acting skills. “She arrives on stage,” noted the *Times* reporter, “wearing enough clothes to get her through the worst cold snap of the season.” Marchiano

³⁶⁴ *Hollywood Reporter*, 27 January 1977.

³⁶⁵ Mike Kerrigan, “Linda in Vegas: Name’s the Game,” *Los Angeles Times*, 2 February 1977, 12.

maintained, however, that the show bombed in part because it called for Linda to dance. “She was a wonderful gal, but she couldn’t dance,” he joked. “I always said if we were going to sue anyone, it should have been for the dance lessons Linda took.”³⁶⁶

Once again, Marchiano and Linda returned to Long Island. Marchiano was able to get occasional construction work, but for the most part he and Linda were broke. Still, Linda’s optimism and good humor were unfailing. For instance, Linda had heard of a local Catholic charity that provided additional assistance to welfare recipients. As part of the eligibility process, a member of the organization came to the house to take an inventory of their belongings. There was not so much as a jar of mustard or ketchup in the refrigerator, and they desperately needed help. Unknown to Linda, earlier in the day, a friend of Marchiano’s had dropped off a case of beer. When the charity worker arrived, Linda gave him the obligatory tour of their home. When she reached the kitchen, she opened the refrigerator door. Linda was as surprised as the aid worker, but, without missing a beat, she said to him, “Well, do you want one?”³⁶⁷

Times were hard, but Linda was confident things would eventually turn around. Marchiano was far more easily discouraged, particularly in the aftermath of the Las Vegas show closing. Dejected, he visited Yannacone. They discussed, among other things, the conundrum that plagued Linda’s career: she did not want to take her clothes off to make money, but under those circumstances, her future job prospects, and the family finances, were poor. Yannacone listened patiently to Marchiano’s lament and finally came up with a solution.

³⁶⁶ Larry Marchiano interview.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

“If you want to make some money,” he said, “Why don’t you write a book?”³⁶⁸

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 6: Linda the Author

Victor Yannacone laid the groundwork for what would be Linda's third autobiography, *Ordeal*. A skilled litigator with years of experience, Yannacone recognized Linda may not have had much of a chance of pursuing civil or even criminal charges against Traynor, but if she ever wanted the truth about the abuse she had endured and the circumstances under which she made *Deep Throat* to be known publicly, a book contract might do more for her than any legal proceedings. If Linda wanted to write a book, it stood to reason that she should find a capable author who could help her. After all, she had received assistance with her first two books from accomplished writers, and the stories she told in them were largely fabricated. Now she was ready to tell the truth, which in many instances can be an easier story to tell than a fabrication. And though she had once earned an "A" in the junior college English composition class she had taken years before, she clearly lacked the skills to produce such a book on her own.

Yannacone, then, pitched the idea for a third autobiography to a few of his colleagues, one of whom eventually steered him to Anthony Curto. Curto was an attorney who also boasted many impressive literary accomplishments, most notably, according to Yannacone, in 1970 he helped get the Solzhenitsyn Papers, the collected writings of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and subsequently published as *The Gulag Archipeligo*, smuggled out of the Soviet Union.³⁶⁹

Curto was suspicious about Linda's story, but he in turn suggested the name of a writer client by the name of Mike McGrady, who had written *A Dove in Vietnam* [1968], which made no secret of the author's political leanings, and *The Kitchen Sink Papers: My*

³⁶⁹ Victor Yannone interview, information also retrieved on 5 December 2005 at www.kirjasto.sci.fi/alesol.htm.

Life as a Househusband [1974], which documented his yearlong experience as a stay-at-home dad. He was also a staff writer for *Newsday*, a Long Island and New York City daily, and credited with being the creative force behind a successful parody of contemporary fiction entitled *Naked Came the Stranger*,³⁷⁰ which featured a dizzying array of sexual peccadilloes.

Naked Came the Stranger was a literary hoax that McGrady had masterminded. The game began when he circulated a challenge to his fellow writers at *Newsday* and to “anyone who had ever been seen tapping on a typewriter.”³⁷¹ Twenty-five writers, each of whom would produce a chapter for the fake novel, answered the call. At their first meeting, McGrady explained that, “There will be an unremitting emphasis on sex. Also true excellence in writing will be quickly blue-penciled into oblivion.”³⁷² As a general rule of thumb, he also edited out any words that were more than three syllables long and excised any author’s attempt at symbolism or stream of consciousness, especially, he noted, “If it bordered on the clever.”³⁷³ After all of the chapters had been submitted, the authors each signed contracts that enumerated their compensation. Each also pledged he or she would not reveal that the book was a hoax until the publisher granted them permission to do so.³⁷⁴

To mask the cynical intent of their work McGrady proposed the authors would collectively use the pseudonym Penelope Ashe. The working title would be *Strangers in the Valley*, a clear reference to and shot at Jacqueline Susann’s runaway bestseller, *Valley of the Dolls*. It was fellow contributor Beulah Gleich who suggested *Naked Came the*

³⁷⁰ Penelope Ashe (pseudonym), *Naked Came the Stranger*, (New Jersey: Barricade Books, 1969).

³⁷¹ Mike McGrady Papers, Box 1, Rare book and Manuscript Collection, Columbia University, New York.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

Stranger, because it was believed the word “naked” seemed more honestly to capture the saucy subject matter of the book. Eventually the hoax was exposed, and soon after sales of the book shot upward. In any event, while McGrady certainly had the skills and credentials to sign on as Linda’s co-author, it is indeed ironic that, given his past, he was ultimately selected to do so. Had the reading public recalled this particular story behind Linda’s co-author they might have been even more dubious of Linda’s assertions of abuse which she maintained in *Ordeal*.

McGrady, who had clearly demonstrated his disgust with the literary tastes of the nation, was initially skeptical and unconvinced Linda’s story was worth telling, but as Yannacone told him, “There’s a great story here, I got a huge porn star eating dog food from a can and hiding out.”³⁷⁵ Even at that, the dramatic introduction failed to convince McGrady. For one thing, he had never seen *Deep Throat* and had not been impressed by the brouhaha that initially surrounded it, and whatever its popularity, he was dubious of its merits. He was not, however, priggish by any stretch of the imagination and agreed with many of the ideas and ideals forwarded by the sexual revolution. “I felt,” said McGrady, “We were much too uptight as a society and I had always felt that way. I was very liberal leaning on every issue and that’s one of them.”³⁷⁶

And yet, he was not convinced that freedom to watch a pornographic film necessarily represented a beneficial change. “[*Deep Throat*] was the thing to see at that time, in New York City, anyway,” said McGrady. “But, it was also nothing more than an excuse to take [your] secretary out on a Thursday afternoon and see a dirty movie.”³⁷⁷

³⁷⁵ Mike McGrady interview.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

McGrady was also skeptical because Linda's story simply seemed too implausible to be true. He had actually met Linda seven years earlier when he was a freelance journalist and she was at the height of her fame. Perhaps because he had written on weightier matters like the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War, he had dismissed *Deep Throat* and its star as nothing more than a phenomenon and a shallow one at that. His initial depiction of Linda in the article he had first written was not kind. "I'm sure I made fun of her," he said. "You make fun of the target, and she was a target. She was not a subject. She was fair game because she was doing this absurd thing in front of millions of people and I was as scandalized as anyone."³⁷⁸ McGrady, then, was not going to roll over and believe any story Linda wanted to tell him.

Despite reservations, McGrady agreed to meet Linda in the spring of 1979 at Victor's office. This meeting was far more favorable than their first one seven years earlier. McGrady was instantly impressed with how warm, personable, and sincere Linda seemed. Marchiano, however, was a different story. "He was foaming at the mouth and swore he and Linda were being followed by hoodlums," recalled McGrady, "and he informed everyone present that he had to drive over curbs and take extreme evasive maneuvers in order to lose their presumed assailants."³⁷⁹ Giving at least some credence to what seemed an otherwise highly improbable tale, McGrady noted Linda seemed drained, pale, and nervous.

Following that dramatic introduction, Yannacone led McGrady and Linda into a room and the two sat down to begin the interview process. Over the next few hours, Linda related her life story and the true nature of her involvement with *Deep Throat*. It

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

was a good beginning, but McGrady still was not sure he wanted the assignment.

Nevertheless, he agreed to meet with Linda a few more times. If, and only if, she finally convinced him that her story was worth telling would he sign a contract.³⁸⁰

In those next few meetings, McGrady became solidly convinced Linda was telling him the truth, but he was finally won over after Linda begged him to watch *Deep Throat*. In particular, she wanted him to see the bruises on her legs that are visible in the early scene featuring her sunbathing by a pool. Of the film's basic premise, he remained unimpressed. "I thought the same thing I would think of a sword swallower," he said. "I'd say, 'Oh, that's interesting they can do that stuff.'"³⁸¹ But he also saw the bruises. "So I thought, okay, there's another confirmation of her story." Something else also convinced McGrady Linda just might be telling him the truth: After watching *Deep Throat*, he could not help but observe Linda was, in his estimation, a terrible actress.³⁸² If she could not act onscreen, she could surely not fake a performance off screen either.

After McGrady decided to take on the project, he informed his own attorney, Anthony Curto, who responded to the news with horror. "I don't want you to do this, Mike. This can't help your reputation."³⁸³ McGrady was adamant however, and in short order the contracts were signed. McGrady and Linda were paid a modest advance against royalties and agreed jointly to split any further royalty income from the book. Linda would receive top billing, but McGrady would also be noted on the front cover. Linda would also use the name "Lovelace" on the book's cover though throughout the story she would adamantly insist that was no longer her name. This seemed an inherent

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Ibid.

contradiction, but McGrady noted no discussion was ever even entertained to use “Boreman” or “Marchiano” instead. “Linda understood,” said McGrady, “that no one would buy a book about Linda Boreman. She was no dummy at all when it came to money and trying to figure out how to make some.”³⁸⁴ They both concluded what Linda had been through was nothing short of an *Ordeal*—in the course of relaying her story to McGrady this one word seemed to come up frequently—so they jointly agreed to entitle the book as such.

Indeed, the book was aptly titled, not only in reference to Linda’s past experiences but also because of the writing process Linda and McGrady went through. For a two-week period, the two met daily in Yannacone’s office where Linda retold her story into a tape recorder. They proceeded in a chronological fashion, but McGrady also had a list of prepared questions. McGrady would then go home and transcribe their conversations, returning the next afternoon to begin the process all over again. As Linda herself observed, the interviews seemed to leave McGrady spiritually drained. At times, he seemed visibly shocked by the stories Linda recounted, and on other occasions tears would well up in his eyes. Often times during their meetings, McGrady said Linda would occasionally stop the interview process telling him, “Mike, I don’t think you’re ready for this.” And, he recalled, “She was right!”³⁸⁵ McGrady’s wife Corrine also noted how the collaborative process affected her husband. “He would come home depressed because it was such a downer,” she recalled.³⁸⁶ Linda was also not immune to the horrors she recounted. Whenever McGrady approached a topic that was too painful to discuss, Linda would sometimes break down and cry.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

Still, the two found they worked well together. Once they began the book project in earnest, McGrady knew for certain his seasoned reporter instincts were right. Linda was telling him the truth and the story was a powerful one. He did, however, suspect in a few instances she exaggerated the details of some stories, but regardless, the basic facts were truth. “I don’t know which ones [she embellished],” McGrady said. “I’m sure there were some, but I don’t think she lied to me. I don’t think she ever sat down and said, ‘I’m going to put him on.’”³⁸⁷

For McGrady, the veracity of Linda’s claims was not a troubling concern. The bigger problem was dealing with Marchiano, who had initially sat in on earlier interview sessions that Yannacone had arranged among himself, Linda and an assortment of other attorneys. Yannacone at that time considered initiating a civil suit on Linda’s behalf but had first arranged a deposition of her testimony during which Marchiano was combative and disruptive. Resenting what he perceived to be intrusive, inappropriate questioning of his wife’s past, he proved to be so argumentative and bellicose that on one occasion Yannacone ordered him out of the room. McGrady, then, knew to insist that he work with Linda alone, but Marchiano always seemed to lurk nearby, and McGrady grew frustrated with his looming presence. “He was just off the deep end constantly,” recalled McGrady.³⁸⁸

In Marchiano’s defense, as Yannacone has pointed out, his feet should perhaps not be held too close to the fire. He certainly knew about many parts of Linda’s relationship with Traynor, and he knew of the physical repercussions of the violence. But knowing that Linda was once again pouring over the details of these stories and reliving

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

them to a certain degree, dramatically affected him. “I think,” said Yannacone, “Larry truly loved her and he wanted to do everything he could to make things right. He was disturbed by hearing the things that were done to her, and I think if he ever met Traynor or Lou Periano, he would have done terrible things.”³⁸⁹

The story Linda told in *Ordeal* did not begin with her childhood. Those details were completely omitted. Instead she began her story when she was in her early 20s, just days before she first met Traynor. Information about her parents and siblings was largely absent, although she let readers know she was desperately unhappy in her parents’ home where she was staying following her 1970 car accident. It was hard for Linda to make the transition from an independent young woman to a daughter living under her parents’ rules. “If I was just fifteen minutes late, she’d [Linda’s mother] greet me at the door with a hard slap across the face or a rap with a broomstick,”³⁹⁰ she wrote. While she honestly told readers her relationship with Traynor was not her first sexual encounter, she described herself, “Not a virgin, but still an innocent.”³⁹¹ As previously noted, Traynor offered her an escape from her parents’ home, which she eagerly accepted, but before long, she realized she had merely traded one prison for another, for she was prostituting herself to help Traynor with his various legal expenses. *Ordeal* was filled with dark tales of rape and sexual violence. Linda described, for instance, Traynor’s plans to enter her in a contest involving copulation with donkeys in Juarez, Mexico. She avoided that encounter when their car broke down en route to the border, but in other instances she was not so fortunate. Traynor prostituted her to five businessmen at a Holiday Inn suite outside of Miami, and when she protested, he threatened to kill her. Escape was never an

³⁸⁹ Victor Yannacone interview.

³⁹⁰ Lovelace, *Ordeal*, 11.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

option. “There was always a gun pointed at my head. Even when no gun could be seen...” wrote Linda.³⁹²

Following their move to New York City, Linda described how she met Gerard Damiano and her subsequent involvement in *Deep Throat*. In this telling, of course, she was not a willing participant in the film, but one who was coerced. Of the filming process, she wrote, “I wasn’t looking forward to it. It was the next thing to do and it would have to be done.”³⁹³ Linda was comfortable, however, working with Gerard and Harry Reems, among others, but when she relaxed and let her guard down in their presence, Traynor became jealous. Following one successful day of shooting, during which Linda had been sharing a laugh with her co-stars, Traynor savagely beat her in the privacy of their hotel room. Cast members offered to help when they saw her bruised body the following morning, but Linda had become embittered. Convinced they could hear Traynor attacking her the night before, she found their pledges of support belatedly useless.³⁹⁴

Following *Deep Throat*’s phenomenal success, Linda now recounted a different reaction to the celebrity frenzy that ensued. Traynor had brainstormed and written out answers to any questions Linda might be asked during the course of an interview. Her responses were carefully scripted. She was now to tell audiences she was exhibitionist who loved sex and could never get enough. She also had changed her attitude towards the celebrities who were drawn to her. The best she could now say about Sammy Davis Jr. was he was at least an improvement over her relationship with Traynor,³⁹⁵ but she also

³⁹² Ibid., 62.

³⁹³ Ibid., 125.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 125

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 216.

took the opportunity to sully Davis's reputation by recounting a practical joke they had once played on Traynor. At Davis' behest, while the three were watching a dirty movie, Linda initiated fellatio on Traynor, but Davis took over for her. Linda was certain Traynor found the homosexual encounter objectionable but did not want to offend a famous celebrity the likes of Sammy Davis, Jr. It was a humiliation for Traynor and one that Linda savored.³⁹⁶

David Winters also fared poorly in *Ordeal*. While Linda admitted she had fallen in love with him, she told readers he had liberally spent her money. When the relationship ended, Linda said Winters struck her, though she admitted this was the only time violence surfaced in their time together.³⁹⁷

Ordeal was a morality tale which ended on a cautionary note. "How can you identify a Chuck Traynor? The answer: You can't." Linda concluded, "It could happen to me and it could happen to you."³⁹⁸ The epilogue, however, ended on a more positive note. "I knew that God would one day show me the way to get away from Chuck," wrote Linda, "And that's what kept me going and accepting all the things that had happened. I just put my faith in God and got through it." Interestingly, Linda and McGrady intended to end the book on an upbeat note, but they instead may have created the lasting misconception Linda had become a born-again Christian.

In any event, Linda was thrilled when McGrady showed her the final draft of their collaborative efforts. "Just to have her story told, this was *huge*," recalled Marchiano, "[And now] she could say, 'Read this book and you'll know what really happened.'"³⁹⁹

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 218-19.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 262.

³⁹⁹ Mike McGrady interview.

McGrady, too, observed how *Ordeal* had incidentally produced positive effects. “She lost a lot of the shame that she had always carried with her,” he said.⁴⁰⁰

With the collaborative process now complete, it was time to find a publisher. McGrady had many connections in the literary world, but he quickly discovered that no one wanted to touch a story of sexual violence concerning one of the biggest porn stars in the world. As the rejections mounted, McGrady began to despair. “I was the most frustrated human being on earth,” he said. “I kept telling publishers, ‘You got a book here that’s going to make a fortune. Don’t you want to make money?’”⁴⁰¹ The subject matter was just too risky though, and he and Linda soon learned that the writing process was a cakewalk compared to the monumental task of actually getting their book published. The first 32 publishers rejected the manuscript outright. “They all turned me down, and brutally,” said McGrady. “[And] it was not polite turn-downs. It was, ‘We want nothing to do with this woman and her so-called story.’”⁴⁰² Even Crown Publishing, which four years earlier had published McGrady’s *The Kitchen Sink Papers*, rejected the manuscript. McGrady was convinced the editorial director there, a woman he knew personally, would warmly receive the manuscript. Instead, she responded with a terse rejection letter: “Tell Mike not to bother me with his peripheral little projects anymore.” After *Ordeal* became a best-seller, McGrady said the same editorial director contacted him and asked why he had not given Crown a chance to publish the book. “Very happily, we sent back the original letter,” said McGrady.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

By May 1979, Linda and McGrady's luck finally turned with the 33rd publisher, Lyle Stuart and his company, Citadel Press. While so many older, established publishing houses shied away from controversial subjects, Stuart embraced them—as he had done with *Naked Came the Stranger*.

Stuart enjoyed the reputation in the publishing business as a nonconformist, and his own experience as a writer may have shaped the very laws of what was permissible and what was not. In the mid-1940s, he had been described as a “fast-talking, young hustler who had kicked around Broadway.”⁴⁰⁴ He earned his living by writing for anyone who would buy his material, usually low-brow, gossip magazines the likes of *Mad*. Eventually Stuart sent submissions to the famous gossip reporter, Walter Winchell, who took an immediate liking to the young reporter. Stuart believed Winchell liked him because he could effortlessly produce copy nearly identical to Winchell's own style. Winchell, in turn, admired Stuart's sharp wit. When Stuart covered the publicity stunt marriage and rapid divorce between a midget and a leggy model, he quipped, “They didn't see eye to eye.” Winchell told Stuart it was “the funniest line he'd had in twenty years.”⁴⁰⁵

In 1951, the professional relationship between Stuart and Winchell turned toxic when Stuart decided to engage in more serious journalistic endeavors. When Winchell declined to publish a piece he wrote on the condition of blacks in the South, Stuart retaliated. In other daily papers, he leveled a series of accusations against Winchell, questioning the authorship of his columns and asserting he was “one of the greatest

⁴⁰⁴ Neal Gabler, *Winchell: Gossip, Power and the Culture of Celebrity*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 423.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 424.

hoaxes ever put over on newspaper readers.”⁴⁰⁶ Stuart’s attacks on Winchell eventually came to the attention of a publisher named Sam Roth, who offered him a thousand dollars to fashion his series of articles into a feature-length book, which was subsequently entitled *The Secret Life of Walter Winchell* [1953]. Roth, however, was no ordinary publisher. By the 1950s he presided over a vast publishing empire that specialized in pornographic material.⁴⁰⁷ Unsurprisingly, Stuart’s expose infuriated Winchell. Before the book was published, two men attacked Stuart, he barely managed to fight them off. In the years following this incident, Stuart had been careful to never incriminate Winchell on this matter but believed he was responsible for alerting the F.B.I. to Roth’s vast pornographic publishing empire. After the Winchell expose was published, Roth’s offices and warehouses were raided, and the confiscated material was subsequently used to build a case against him. He was charged and later convicted for distributing pornography. His case was appealed all the way to the Supreme Court, culminating in the 1957 Supreme Court decision, *Roth v. United States*. Though his conviction was upheld, the decision established the concept that only material “utterly without redeeming social value” which appealed to “prurient interests” of the “average person” was not afforded protection under the First Amendment.⁴⁰⁸ However, the language the court used was vague, and the decision created more confusion than clarity. From this ruling, subsequent cases involving sexually explicit materials were argued before the court, and pornography was made more accessible as the definitions established in the Roth decision

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 424.

⁴⁰⁷ See Joseph Slade’s brief biographical sketch in *Pornography in America: A Reference Handbook*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO Press), 195.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

were redefined.⁴⁰⁹ Stuart must have been mindful that some of the explicit sexual descriptions contained in *Ordeal* would have, in the not so distant past, been considered obscene, and his own efforts at shock journalism indirectly paved the way for a gradual relaxation of obscenity standards.

How Stuart personally felt about Roth's conviction is unknown, though he likely learned profit was to be made in publishing controversial subjects that pushed the limits of the First Amendment. In addition to publishing *Naked Came the Stranger*, Stuart also published an assortment of other controversial books, including titles such as *The Anarchist's Cookbook* and *The Turner Diaries*, both popular manuals for fringe groups.

Despite Stuart's laudable commitment to civil liberties, McGrady was of two minds about him. He respected his "gadfly reputation" and thought he might be the right man for the job. "What I did like [about Stuart] was he understood the importance of making money. He didn't do things for the fun of it. He did it to make a profit." But he also was wary of Stuart, surmising he was akin to a robber when it came to distributing royalties. In fact, he recalled a conversation he had with Stuart that made him somewhat nervous. Stuart had explained to McGrady he thought of all authors as children, "They should not be entrusted with large sums of money."⁴¹⁰ Despite this, McGrady submitted the manuscript to him.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid. Joseph Slade points out that in the wake of the *Roth* decision, the Supreme Court would continue over the next 20 years to further narrow the circumstances under which pornography could be prosecuted. For instance, in *Smith v. California* [1959] the Court ruled courts had the burden of proving book sellers must know the material they are selling is obscene. In *Memoirs v. Massachusetts* [1966] the Court ruled a work must fail three Roth principles before it could be deemed illegal (have a prurient interest, appeal in a patently offensive way and lack socially redeeming value). In *Miller v. California*, Chief Justice Warren Burger felt the *Roth* standards were too broad, and narrowed the provision regarding unredeeming social value, writing instead a work must "taken as a whole, lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value."

⁴¹⁰ Mike McGrady interview.

Just as McGrady had hoped, Stuart expressed an immediate interest in the project and sensed the chance to make a hefty profit from it. In fact, *Ordeal* so piqued his interests that he read the entire manuscript from cover to cover, later confiding to McGrady it was one of the few times he had ever done this.⁴¹¹

Still, Stuart did have some reservations. *Ordeal* was an explosive book. It named names and contained shocking stories of violence and sex. He agreed to publish the book, but insisted Linda must first pass a polygraph test before he would sign the contracts. Linda readily agreed. The exam took place in New York City in November 1979 and lasted for nearly two days. Nat Laurendi, who had worked for both the F.B.I. and the New York Police Department for years, was given the assignment. McGrady prepared over one hundred questions for the exam and went over the material contained in the book to familiarize Laurendi with the story. A great deal was riding on Linda successfully passing the test. After she entered the examining room, McGrady, Stuart, Marchiano, and even Yannacone paced nervously outside. When Laurendi finally came out of the room, he announced, “This woman is incapable of lying.”⁴¹² While McGrady thought all along that she was telling the truth, he felt a great sense of relief, and he cried out, “Halleluia!”⁴¹³ More importantly, Stuart now agreed to publish *Ordeal*.

It seemed as though the hard part was now over, but Linda was in for even more scrutiny. Despite all she had been through, the attorneys involved in the process remained skeptical in the meeting during which the contracts for *Ordeal* were to be signed. McGrady recalled one of the lawyers turned to Linda and said, “I’ve got to ask you this. Now, I know it’s going to sound like a tough question, but you’ve got to tell me

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

the truth. Did you ever sleep with Mike McGrady?” McGrady found the question absurd, and he laughed out loud at the mere suggestion. However, he noted that Linda turned bright red. Puzzled by her reaction, McGrady followed her to her car after the meeting and asked her why she had blushed. “Well, you know,” she responded sheepishly, “I sometimes fantasized about it.” It was now McGrady’s turn to blush. This was an angle the shrewd Long Island reporter had never considered. “Linda Lovelace fantasizing about me!” he thought.⁴¹⁴

By December 1979, Stuart had ordered an advance of 50,000 hard copies of the book. But he had to know many people would regard Linda’s new version of events as a fabrication. After passing the lie detector test, Stuart leaked the contents of *Ordeal* to gossip columnist Liz Smith. She responded favorably, reporting the book was “too sensational for words.” Yet the headline under which the story appeared in the L.A. *Herald-Examiner* sarcastically questioned, “Is this too much to swallow or what?”⁴¹⁵ That Linda had once been a porn star immediately diminished her credibility, and it would be an uphill battle to convince the reading public otherwise. The *Publishers Weekly* book review of *Ordeal*, for instance, noted Linda was merely “expos[ing] herself once again” but this time instead of on film, she was doing so in print.”⁴¹⁶ The reviewer was also not impressed with Linda’s allegations, noting “her melodrama would hardly put a sweet-savage heroine to the blush—although it might the celebrities named.”⁴¹⁷

If readers were not shocked by the frank sexual tone of the book or the allegations of abuse, those who had known Linda personally were surprised, for a variety of reasons.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 20 November 1979.

⁴¹⁶ Review of *Ordeal*, *Publishers Weekly*, 11 January 1980, 83.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

Andrea True, who starred with Linda in *Deep Throat II*, read the book and was stunned. Yet she never doubted the truthfulness of Linda's claims, even though she had personally met Traynor but never witnessed firsthand any of the abuse Linda documented. "There was nothing I saw that would give me a hint of his sadistic treatment of her, or that she was a prisoner of any sort," recalled True. But after reading Linda's latest book she was convinced Traynor was nothing more than an "aggressive, domineering pimp." When she finished reading *Ordeal*, True wept.⁴¹⁸ David Winters, Linda's ex-lover, was also caught off guard by the contents of the book. "She couldn't write another book about how great sex was. Who cares? No one is going to buy it anymore," thought Winters, "So by going the reverse, I thought it was very clever."⁴¹⁹

McGrady, too, received a great deal of feedback for his involvement in the project. While many of his colleagues congratulated him on the book's publication, he also received a fair amount of criticism. "You're being taken for a ride," was the comment he heard the most, which left him stunned. "I resented it," he said, "I considered myself a reporter, and I didn't get taken for rides."⁴²⁰

To no one's surprise, Traynor vehemently denied Linda's allegations in *Ordeal*. In fact, he soon called on McGrady and Yannacone. McGrady recalled Traynor contacted him in the weeks following the book's publication and told him, "You've got a lot of things wrong. You want to tell a story, tell my story." To do this he proposed McGrady now assist him with his own autobiography. He even had a title for it, "On Training Women." Nonplused, McGrady told Traynor, "Get lost."⁴²¹ Yannacone said Traynor

⁴¹⁸ Andrea True interview.

⁴¹⁹ David Winters interview.

⁴²⁰ Mike McGrady interview.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

was not content to propose co-authoring his own book or simply denying the allegations, but he actually tried to stop the publication of the book. In fact, Yannacone was in Stuart's office when they received notice a libel suit was forthcoming. In response, Yannacone prepared a countersuit charging Traynor with an assortment of crimes including civil kidnapping and bondage. The suit also sought heavy punitive damages. Faced with a countersuit, Yannacone said Traynor dropped his libel suit, and Linda then requested no further intervention on her behalf. She told Yannacone that she was simply pleased her story was being told. "She did not want to litigate anything," said Yannacone.⁴²²

Despite Traynor's concerns about the accuracy of the book, *Ordeal* was both controversial and compelling. For one, it did not merely tell a tale of abuse at the expense of the pornographic industry. *Ordeal* positioned itself as disdainful of sexual violence, and yet it simultaneously engaged the reader by offering what could be considered a sordid, even titillating account of sex and violence. To this day, McGrady makes no apologies for the frank sexual content. "I think," he said, "It's just part of telling the full story as completely as you can."⁴²³ In fact, he recalled telling Linda before the project began that he would only do the job if they agreed to leave nothing out. "If we're going to tell the story, we've got to tell it all. And if people are going to come back and say to us, 'Why didn't you talk about that?' I don't want to hear that."⁴²⁴ McGrady maintained he was not trying to produce a salacious book but instead leave nothing unaccounted. "It was my urging," he explained, "to get her to talk about the more disgusting things in the book, and I never let go. And I made her follow through

⁴²² Victor Yannacone interview.

⁴²³ Mike McGrady interview.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

and talk about it.” In fact, this pact between Linda and McGrady likely accounted for the altercation that subsequently took place between McGrady and Marchiano after *Ordeal* was finally published.

McGrady maintained Linda had made Marchiano promise he would never read the book, but he broke his word and read it anyway. “He was very, very stirred,” recalled McGrady, “and he confronted me after he read the book, shouting, ‘I don’t ever want you to speak to my wife again about anything!’”⁴²⁵ Marchiano, however, remembered the story differently. He insisted he never promised not to read *Ordeal* and to this day has not read it its entirety. “There was no need for me to read the book,” explained Marchiano, “I already knew firsthand how Linda had suffered at Chuck’s hands. I was angry because McGrady promised he would leave out a lot of the disturbing sexual parts of Linda’s story from the book, and he did not.”⁴²⁶ Marchiano insisted as well, that while Linda was always thrilled with the end result, she was also disappointed that the tone of the book was so titillating, though she respected the decision of her co-author to include what he had.

McGrady, too, had some regrets about *Ordeal*. While he insisted on total honesty for the sake of the reader, he later admitted some of the stories they included struck him as vengeful. In particular, he was unhappy they had included the story about Sammy Davis, Jr. “In a way, I felt that she was getting even with Sammy for some imagined slight,” he said. But he added, “In her mind, he was one of the many who used her and didn’t help her.”⁴²⁷ McGrady also regretted leaving in the anecdote involving Davis playing the practical joke on Traynor which involved fellatio, not because he found it too

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ Larry Marchiano interview.

⁴²⁷ Mike McGrady interview.

embarrassing or implausible, but because he feared Traynor might try to kill him if he read it!⁴²⁸

By December 1979, Linda's collaborative work with Mike McGrady had come to an end, and she again attempted to return to a life of normality on Long Island. Things were looking up for the Marchiano family. Marchiano had begun working again in construction and Linda was optimistic that her third autobiography would generate some much-needed income for the family. Additionally, Stuart informed Linda he was scheduling a book tour to promote sales for *Ordeal* early the next year. In the meantime, Linda continued to care for Dominic, who was now four years old. She also had more exciting news. She was once again pregnant, with an anticipated due date of mid July.⁴²⁹

It was at this time that Marchiano came home from work one day to find Linda excitedly awaiting his arrival. "I want you to look at this house that's for sale," she told him. She hurriedly dragged him down the street to a huge, two-story house sitting on a three acre-plot only a few blocks away from where they lived. "I want to live in the biggest house on the block!" Linda informed Marchiano. She had even taken the initiative and called the listing real estate agent. He informed her he would let the house go for \$36,000. "Oh, Jeez, that's not too much money," Marchiano sarcastically replied. It only took a simple math calculation for Marchiano to realize his construction salary would not even be remotely sufficient to make the monthly mortgage payments. Linda, however, was not easily deterred. "You know, I'm going to call Lyle Stuart for another advance on the book," she told him. As she picked up the phone, Marchiano waited nearby and overheard her tell Stuart, "It's very simple. I need that loan like you need me

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Larry Marchiano interview.

to appear on a tour to promote that book.” Stuart was over a barrel and knew it. A check was in the mail the next day.⁴³⁰

The following month Marchiano and Linda closed on their new home in Center Moriches. Linda lived up to her word and participated in the tour and a series of interviews to promote *Ordeal*. Stuart had scheduled Linda on an assortment of local and regional radio and television programs. Linda would travel to major American cities, including Chicago, Detroit, New York, and Los Angeles, to name but a few, to promote the book. Marchiano would accompany Linda on the tour as much as his work schedule allowed. At the start of the tour, Linda informed Marchiano she did not really know what to anticipate. In light of the inaccuracies contained in her first two autobiographies, she wondered how the public would now respond to the story contained in *Ordeal*.⁴³¹ Moreover, while Linda remained steadfast in her insistence *Ordeal* was accurate she worried about potentially saying something inappropriate on the tour that might anger Stuart or McGrady. As a result, Linda decided to confer with McGrady before she did any interviews. Calling him up to solicit his advice before most interviews, McGrady was usually able to assuage feelings of doubt as well as provide helpful tips about the TV personalities Linda was scheduled to meet with.⁴³²

On January 10, 1980, Linda’s first promotional appearance was scheduled on the *Tomorrow Show*, hosted by Tom Snyder. She called McGrady for his input. He told her Snyder had a reputation as a tough, critical interviewer. Linda felt the truth was on her side, but she braced herself for a withering onslaught. Whatever her fears might have been, Marchiano recalled Linda was collected before she went on stage. He was a wreck,

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

⁴³¹ Lovelace, *Out of Bondage*, 146.

⁴³² Mike McGrady interview.

but she calmly turned to him and said, “I’ll see you in a couple of minutes.” What happened next surprised Linda, Marchiano, and McGrady alike. Snyder proved to be the exact opposite of what McGrady had predicted. The fifteen-minute interview was anticlimactic, with Snyder simply asking Linda to repeat what she had written in *Ordeal* for the television audience. This she did ably, peppering her responses with well-practiced lines like, “Linda Lovelace was a fictitious character of somebody else’s imagination.” Snyder was evidently won over and deeply affected when she recounted what really happened when *Deep Throat* was being filmed. Linda and Marchiano, for their parts, were thrilled at how well the interview went. “This broke the egg,” Marchiano said, acknowledging both he and Linda thought they had started something in motion. When Linda left the studio later that day, she was pleased. Snyder seemed a genuinely nice person. He had even made mention of Linda’s pregnancy and wished her well. Her performance on his show had also gone much better than she anticipated it would. Unfortunately, what Linda did not realize was the *Tomorrow Show* was the calm before the storm. Linda’s subsequent appearances would not go as smoothly. In fact, it was her appearance on the *Donahue Show* a few months later that would ignite a maelstrom of controversy, and once again push her to center stage to star in a new debate about pornography and sexuality in America.

In the early 1980s, Donahue was credited with being a pioneer of the day-time talk show format. His show was very popular and reached a huge audience. Linda knew that being on the *Donahue Show* was one of the most important interviews she could give. She had personally seen the show many times and was familiar with Donahue’s interview style. She also thought the mostly female audience would respond positively to

her appearance. Nevertheless, she first conferred with McGrady before she was slated to appear. McGrady assured her she had nothing to worry about. “Donahue,” he told her, “is ‘Mr. Liberal.’ Don’t worry about a thing. He’s a pussycat.”⁴³³

On April 14, 1980, Linda made her appearance on the *Donahue Show*. Recalling McGrady’s comments she at first felt relaxed and comfortable. Donahue set the tone for the interview by telling the audience *Ordeal* was “the grimmest book I’ve ever read in my life.” Linda, in turn, reiterated her story of domestic discord with Chuck Traynor. “I was a prisoner of sexual abuse,” she told the audience. Of the prior fame and notoriety she had achieved for fellatio, she now announced, “I found the whole thing quite disturbing.” Initially some in the audience did respond favorably, with one person telling Linda she was a “lovely lady.” Following that, the tone of the show quickly turned, and Linda was unprepared for what happened next. Most of the audience, and Donahue himself, were dubious of Linda’s claims. One member accused Linda of “exploiting herself” with *Ordeal*, and another commented the sexual references in the book rendered it as dirty as any porn film. Another audience member said of the book, “Convince me it’s not just a lucrative venture.” When Linda described her relationship with her parents, emphasizing a desire to get out of her house, only to end up with Traynor, another irritated audience member asked, “A lot of us had this going on, and we didn’t end up the route you went.” Still another challenged her, “How could you do this if you weren’t willing?” Even Donahue chimed in, asking Linda, “How could a nice girl like you get involved in this?” However, there was one question the audience kept asking repeatedly, until Donahue finally stepped in himself to sum up their frustration. “The audience is

⁴³³ Mike McGrady interview.

having a hard time understanding how you could be so helpless,” he told Linda. “You’re blaming other people and not taking responsibility on your own.”⁴³⁴

Why the contents of *Ordeal* elicited such a strong reaction may be explained by examining some of the broader themes it contains. Though neither Linda nor her co-author Mike McGrady intentionally set out to produce a formulaic autobiography, *Ordeal* functioned as both a “captivity narrative” as well as a “seduction narrative.” The incorporation of these literary genres may lie at the heart of why *Ordeal* became both a best-seller and a stunning controversy. The captivity narrative was an American literary invention dating back to the late 1600s. Its conventions involved mostly Indians abducting women colonists. The story usually ended following a successful escape.⁴³⁵ Certainly Linda’s story followed along these lines. As well, captivity narratives necessarily relied on religious references, for whatever the culpability, if any, of the captive, she or he had by the end unquestionably experienced a convincing redemption. This may account for Linda’s repeated statements that her faith in God was stronger than ever. As previously mentioned, Linda may have sincerely believed faith had something to do with her escape, although an interesting consequence of her religious references was the subsequently erroneous impression she had become a born-again Christian.

Another significant consequence of McGrady and Linda indirectly resorting to the formula of the captivity narrative may well explain why *Ordeal* held such a broad fascination for the American reader. Older captivity narratives functioned as a means of cultural introduction and eventual exchange. After all, colonists had little understanding

⁴³⁴ *Phil Donahue Show*, Universal Studio Productions, originally broadcast 10 April 1980.

⁴³⁵ Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola does an excellent job of documenting the conventions of the captivity genre in her introduction to *Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), xi-xxxviii.

of aboriginal cultures and to a certain degree the stories escapees provided were often insightful glimpses into a way of life that was little understood. Similarly, many readers had no exposure to the inner workings of the pornographic industry. Linda's story bridged that gap to a certain degree, providing information that was otherwise inaccessible and forbidden.

Yet, *Ordeal* was not solely written in the vein of the captivity narrative. It also borrowed heavily from another literary invention, the seduction narrative, a popular genre with origins dating back to the 18th century. These narratives usually told the story of a young girl who was naïve and sexually inexperienced. Led astray by a false-hearted man, the young woman faced ruin and shame. Linda's story, then, followed in the vein of other well known classics, including Samuel Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* [1740], a novel about a servant's efforts to thwart her master's advances, which results in her subsequent imprisonment and eventual escape, as well as William Stead's alleged non-fiction account of female white slavery. Published in July 1885, as a series of articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Stead documented unscrupulous men who kidnapped impoverished girls from London and sold to brothel owners on the European continent.⁴³⁶

Seduction narratives served many purposes. For young female readers, they were cautionary tales about the dangers of reckless passion. For the middle-class readership, they also provided a satisfyingly come-uppance, for it was usually men of immeasurable wealth who attempted however unsuccessfully to ruin the morals of young, working-class girls. Certainly *Ordeal* contained identical elements of these genres.

⁴³⁶ Both Judith Walkowitz and Raymond L. Schultz explore how Stead borrowed heavily from the seduction narrative style and define its conventions. For further reading, see Walkowitz's *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) and Schultz' *Crusader in Babylon: W.T. Stead and the Pall Mall Gazette*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972).

Like Richardson and Stead before them, Linda and McGrady subtly employed similar literary formulas into *Ordeal*. Linda was, after all, innocently recuperating from a car accident when a debonair Chuck Traylor led her into a life of debauchery.

Examining Linda's allegations in light of the captivity and seduction narrative, it also makes sense why Linda's allegations were so stunning and unsettling. By employing conventions of the captivity and seduction narrative, Linda's allegations capitalized on the public's worst fears about pornography. It easily leant itself to a false perception that women who work in the porn industry were dragged off the street, drugged and forced against their will to make films.

One other feature of the seduction narrative *Ordeal* also shared. Seduction narratives were comforting in that they left traditional gender roles intact. Patricia Cline Cohen, who examined the genre in detail, noted the hallmark of such narratives usually involved, "A male fantasy that placed masculine desire at the core of a sexual interaction and endowed it with magical potency to unlock a slumbering female sexuality."⁴³⁷ By employing that formula commonly used in seduction narratives, Linda raised perhaps the most unsettling question of all: who really has control. While Linda admitted she was not a virgin when she met Traynor, her story strongly suggested she was a powerless victim in the face of overwhelming adversity. This may explain why prominent feminists like Gloria Steinem would later rush to Linda's defense. By contemporary standards, Linda's

⁴³⁷ See David Reynolds, *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the age of Emerson and Melville*, (New York: Knopf, 1988) as well as Patricia Cline Cohen's book *The Murder of Helen Jewett: The Life and Death of a Prostitute in Nineteenth-Century New York*, (New York: Knopf, 1998), as well as the biography on William Stead, who contributed to the genre with his pamphlet about white slavery. Collectively, these works document the conventions of the seduction narrative and its relevance to nineteenth century readers.

admissions were incongruent with a modern feminist position which insisted women were responsible for exerting control over their environments.

There may have been a final reason why Linda's allegations were so stunning, a reason that transcended both the captivity and seduction narrative techniques. Joseph Slade, who has written extensively about pornographic films, observed there is very little violence in most pornographic film. In fact, violence is actually antithetical to pornography. Viewers ultimately watch such films for purposes of arousal and climax, and thus most pornographic films must follow standard conventions in order to achieve those results. Women, then, are presented as insatiable and in constant need of sex and male characters function primarily to assist the female in this objective.⁴³⁸ In this light, Linda's behind-the-scene version of what really happened during the filming of *Deep Throat* was destined to evoke an intense reaction. Linda's story was truly one of domestic violence and therefore no brutality was ever seen onscreen. This fact would be overlooked because, to a certain degree, she had connected violence to the most popular pornographic film ever—a film millions of first-time viewers had seen.

In any event, it seemed the *Donahue Show* had inspired other interviewers to declare open season on *Ordeal*. In the subsequent interviews that Linda gave, her credibility was questioned repeatedly. While Linda seemed unconcerned by the attacks, Marchiano noted the publicity tour was especially hard on him. People who did not believe Linda's story frustrated him, and he had little patience for them. Anyone who

⁴³⁸ Joseph Slade, "Violence in Hard Core Pornographic Film: A Historical Survey," (34) *Journal of Communication*, 1984, 16. In addition to Slade's work, a number of other scholars have made similar conclusions. Stephen Prince, in "Power and Pain: Content Analysis and the Ideology of Pornography," (42), *Journal of Film and Video*, 1990, 31-41, examined 32 porn films and concluded violence was a rarely present, and that most films "honor concepts of 'normalcy.'" See also Karen Jaehne, "Confessions of a Porn Female Programmer," (37), *Film Quarterly*, 1983, 9-16. Most cable programs, responding to the requests of their viewers, prefer conventional pornographic fare.

challenged her story, in his estimation, was attacking Linda personally. As the tour progressed, Marchiano grew more and more frustrated. Yet, in mirror opposition to his emotions, Linda never got upset, even when being aggressively interviewed. On one occasion, Marchiano recalled an interviewer had been ruthless and mean. On the way home in the car, Linda happily chatted. “This is a nice car. Maybe we should buy one of these.” He was flabbergasted at how she could endure a relentless attack on her credibility but seem disconnected from the experience afterwards.⁴³⁹

He was also in awe how Linda had stood her ground, but he knew as well she was telling the truth, and could never be cornered. In the end, the publicity tour brought them closer together. They even found themselves once again using “Code 13” when they suspected an interviewer was becoming too hostile. However, this time around they no longer even had to utter the words. During interviews, Marchiano usually waited for Linda off to the side, out of range of a camera or microphone. Linda would simply look over at him, and he knew just by the expression on her face that she wanted him to get involved.⁴⁴⁰

Despite these difficulties, *Ordeal* represented a triumph. On March 23, 1980, it debuted on the *New York Times* best-sellers list in the number nine position. It would peak at the number six position for two weeks in a row before falling on April 27 to the number twelve position. It was a commercial success, and it had given Linda the chance at last to tell the real story behind the making of *Deep Throat*. These were both benefits Linda had eagerly anticipated. But the publication created one thing Linda had never

⁴³⁹ Larry Marchiano interview.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

expected—it opened the door for an association with what would be a new contingent of powerful allies in the fight against pornography.

Chapter 7: Linda the Feminist Activist

Prior to the 1980 publication of *Ordeal*, a great deal of change had taken place within the pornographic industry. As the film critic Jon Lewis has observed, porn may have become more accepted after 1973, but it was not entirely a profitable venture. While there were notable successes other than *Deep Throat*, including *Behind the Green Door* and *The Devil and Ms. Jones*, break-away phenomena for the most part were not common. In the 1980s, this would change, of course, due in large measure to technological developments, such as the availability of the VCR.⁴⁴¹ While these changes ultimately facilitated an even wider viewing of porn films, the public arena, where pornography was still a viable presence, became a hotly contested space.

In the intervening years since *Deep Throat's* 1972 release, forces had been gearing up to tackle the new permissibility of pornography. Certainly conservative, faith-based groups had always objected to what seemed an increasingly widespread tolerance of pornography, but by the late 1970s, prominent women within the feminist movement began to rise up in protest as well. It may have seemed on the surface that the feminists took a while to organize and respond. However, debates over the acceptability of pornography were not new to the feminist community. As has previously been discussed in chapter 2, *Deep Throat* was a success in part because it illuminated the importance of a woman's right to sexual pleasure. Women within the feminist community, then, were keenly aware of the role sexual politics played in their day-to-day lives. But by the end of the decade, some women were beginning to observe that the right freely to express oneself in a sexual manner was not entirely without disadvantages.

⁴⁴¹ Jon Lewis, interview by World of Wonder Production Company, 24 July 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

Pornographic images seemed to be growing increasingly more violent. It seemed sexually offensive films and imagery was everywhere, and feminists could not help but sit up and take notice. In particular, in 1976, a Los Angeles billboard featuring a chained woman and the caption “I’m black and blue from the Rolling Stones and I love it” spurred women into action, resulting in the removal of the advertisement. The 1977 release of the film *Snuff* also angered women. Though it was later revealed to be a hoax, its plot was designed to capitalize on the mutilation and torture of a woman for the sole purpose of sexual pleasure for the viewer. And perhaps most notorious of all, in June 1978, the cover of *Hustler* featured a woman’s body fed headfirst into a meat grinder.⁴⁴²

These were troubling images, but still, there was reluctance within the feminist movement to confront pornography. Feminist Diana E.H. Russell noted that this hesitancy was based in part on the fact that anti-pornographers were typically conservative and their views antithetical to the basic tenants of feminism. “They are often against abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment, and the Women’s Liberation Movement. We have been so put off by the politics of these people, that our knee-jerk response is that we must be *for* whatever they are *against*,” she noted.⁴⁴³

However, what seemed the increasing ubiquity of sexually violent images could no longer be ignored, and women’s groups began to respond. One of the first to take action was Susan Brownmiller, who co-founded Women Against Violence in

⁴⁴² Diana E.H. Russell’s slide show script for Women Against Pornography documents in greater detail the story behind both the Rolling Stones billboard and the notorious meat grinder cover on *Hustler*, which was obtained from the World of Wonder Production Company archives, Hollywood, Ca. The feminist backlash against the film *Snuff* is explored by Eithne Johnson and Eric Schaefer in “Soft-Core Hard-Core: Snuff as a Crisis in Meaning,” (45) *Journal of Film and Video*, 1993, 40-59.

⁴⁴³ Diana E.H. Russell, “Pornography and the Women’s Liberation Movement,” *Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography*, Ed. Laura Lederer, (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1980), 301.

Pornography and Media (WAVP) in San Francisco around 1978. The organization would later shorten its name to Women Against Pornography (WAP).

In addition to her own reaction against extreme sexual imagery, Brownmiller's inspiration for starting WAVP stemmed from her landmark book, *Against Our Will* [1975]. Discussing rape in its many aspects, Brownmiller explored how it was too rarely treated as a serious crime and how victims were more often than not blamed for the crime. During the writing process, Brownmiller came to feel that pornography was logically connected to rape, for in questioning physical and sexual violence against women she also explored root causes for the permissibility of such behavior.⁴⁴⁴

Brownmiller saw this connection right before her eyes. In the course of writing *Against Our Will*, she regularly visited the New York Public Library, taking the subway from Greenwich Village and walking through what she termed "the porn strip," a cluster of sex clubs and theaters in Times Square. The daily commute began to make Brownmiller uncomfortable. "There I was, writing about the factors that contribute to rape, and it seemed quite logical to me that this explosion of pornography was not going to help us get rid of rape," she observed.⁴⁴⁵

After completing her book, Brownmiller returned to San Francisco and began organizing other women in the fight against pornography. She believed pornography reflected a "male fetishistic view of what women are and what women want sexually." The goal, then, of this newly founded group was straightforward. "Women Against Pornography was an educational movement from start to finish," explained Brownmiller.

⁴⁴⁴ Susan Brownmiller, interview by World of Wonder Production Company, 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

“The idea was to convince people that there were good, sound, feminist, humanitarian reasons to be against pornography.”⁴⁴⁶

Brownmiller and others decided to organize a march in North Beach, where the porn businesses of San Francisco were clustered. Their first foray against pornography was largely successful, but Brownmiller noted a problem. “It occurred to me that you could have a march every day of the week in San Francisco, and people would wave and say, ‘Aren’t we terrific, don’t we have a colorful city?’ and it wouldn’t make a bit of difference.” Brownmiller realized, then, that if she wanted to tackle effectively the problem of pornography, she had to return to Times Square, which clearly represented the epicenter of pornography in America. The movement relocated to New York and quickly set up in a small storefront in the heart of the pornography district. Many prominent feminists quickly joined the movement, including Shere Hite, Robin Morgan, and Delores Alexander, who was named Executive Director. Rental space in the area was at a premium, but the group found a dilapidated building that had formerly been a restaurant. The business had failed, defaulting on its back taxes, and the city allowed WAP to use the space at a bargain rate.⁴⁴⁷ The new location was an odd stroke of luck and somewhat ironic as well. In addition to situating itself in the heart of the porn district, WAP was now within blocks of the New Mature World Theater where *Deep Throat* had premiered.

At their new location, WAP engaged in an assortment of tactics to protest pornography, including leading tours to the seedier venues of Times Square. All sorts of groups participated in the tours: high school students, nuns, priests, and European

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

tourists. “The main thing,” noted Brownmiller, “was people who had a position about pornography; they never had a chance to actually experience it. And they were astonished.” The tours often involved the groups getting tossed out, but Susan Male, another founding member of WAP observed, “That was okay, that was part of the tour.”⁴⁴⁸ Getting tossed out of establishments may have been the easy part. Brownmiller noted as well the very presence of the tours inside strip clubs often created palpable tension. “We were women in clothes showing men and women in clothes what goes in these parlors where women without clothes were dancing for men in clothes. The group without clothes, what we now call sex workers, it was hard for them.” She added, “They could do what they could do, they could get themselves coked up or whatever to go through their work day, taking off their clothes and gyrating, and pretending they were having a great old time sexually for the men who were watching. They could get through that day, but our presence was often a bit much for them.”⁴⁴⁹ The WAP tour guides recognized there were financial issues involved in one’s decision to work in a strip joint, which sometimes produced what Brownmiller described as “very human moments.” “They didn’t have computer skills. They wanted money in their pockets and this was one of the few job opportunities open,” said Brownmiller. “We wanted our sisters to be free, but they were choosing to do it, and they needed money, and they were getting better money than they would if they were waitressing somewhere.” Brownmiller recalled one instance where a striper, instead of a theater owner, angrily confronted the tour group. “How dare you tell me I’m being exploited,” the woman told her.

⁴⁴⁸ Susan Male, interview by World of Wonder Production Company, 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁴⁴⁹ Susan Brownmiller interview.

In spite of the regular confrontations—or perhaps because of it, the tours were a success, and at five dollars a head as the suggested donation for the tours, the coffers for WAP quickly filled.⁴⁵⁰ WAP also engaged in a public awareness campaign, which included speaking out against pornography at every available opportunity. As their movement grew, mainstream news outlets began to take notice, and WAP members willingly granted interviews in a variety of publications, even *People Magazine*, to further their cause.⁴⁵¹ Brownmiller was also asked to make an appearance on *The Phil Donahue* show on July 18, 1979. She readily accepted the invitation and laid out the goals of WAPs movement, telling the audience pornography not only distorted normal sexual imagery, but also worse, facilitated a climate whereby rape was more tolerated. During the course of the interview, Donahue queried her about the various aspects of her organization, even asking about *Deep Throat* and Linda's performance in the film. "Wasn't she having a good time?" he asked. Brownmiller responded, "You know what? I just can't believe she was having a good time. I can't believe it."⁴⁵²

This exchange between Donahue and Brownmiller did not escape the attention of Linda, who was, amazingly enough, at home watching when the broadcast aired. She promptly called up Mike McGrady and asked him to intervene on her behalf, and he willingly complied. Delores Alexander, it turned out, was a former colleague of his, having once worked herself as a writer for *Newsday* magazine. McGrady called her and

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Arthur Lubow, "Susan Brownmiller Comes to Times Square not to Peep but to Bleep it in her Anti-Pornography Crusade," *People*, 27 August 1979, 39-40.

⁴⁵² Susan Brownmiller interview.

mentioned his and Linda's forthcoming book, affirming, indeed, "Linda Lovelace didn't have a good time."⁴⁵³

Importantly then, Linda and McGrady were the first to initiate contact with this feminist organization, not the other way around. Yet Linda herself may have contributed to a broader misunderstanding that the feminist movement had co-opted her with a comment she made when she herself was on *The Phil Donahue Show*. When asked by an audience member if she saw a connection between feminist issues and the need to protest pornography. She responded, "I'm waiting for Ms. Brownmiller to get in touch with me. I do want to get involved with that."⁴⁵⁴ Unintentionally, Linda created an impression she was a passive participant should a WAP member ever call her.

Linda would eventually meet Susan Brownmiller, but, adding to the confusion of who recruited whom, it was Linda's very same appearance on *The Donahue Show* which caused one of the guiding lights of the feminist movement actually to take the initiative and contact her first. Gloria Steinem was watching the April 10, 1980, broadcast and was appalled. Interestingly, she, too, had appeared on Donahue's show in the mid-1970s to discuss issues imperative to feminism, including the Equal Rights Amendment. From her own experience on the show, she knew that Donahue was well informed about current political topics and had strong feminist sympathies, but when she watched the show Linda was on, Steinem felt "enormous disbelief."⁴⁵⁵ In Steinem's estimation, the audience and even Donahue himself were engaging in a wholesale attack on Linda's character based on her prior affiliation with the porn industry.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ *The Phil Donahue Show*, broadcast 10 April 1980, video obtained from World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁴⁵⁵ Steinem makes this comment the following month on the Tom Synder show, broadcast May 1980, video obtained from World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

Like Brownmiller and other feminists around her, Steinem had grown increasingly concerned over what seemed the acceptance of pornography in the past ten years and perceived inherent dangers from sexually explicit material. In 1978, in fact, she penned an editorial piece for *Ms.* (a magazine she had founded six years earlier), articulating her view of the difference between erotica and pornography, explaining that the former was “a mutually pleasurable, sexual expression” while the latter was “violence, dominance and conquest.”⁴⁵⁶ When *The Donahue Show* ended, Steinem resolved to become involved.

She first contacted Mike McGrady to see if he could put her in touch with Linda. She explained why she was interested in Linda’s story, but first asked McGrady what his overall instinct about Linda was. McGrady assured her that he believed Linda’s story was an honest one. Following this conversation, the two women arranged to meet.⁴⁵⁷ Linda’s first impression of Gloria Steinem is not recorded; however, she later confessed she had known very little about Steinem when first contacted by her. And though she sensed an association with feminists could do much to substantiate her story, Linda claimed she really did not know much about the movement. “Ten years earlier, when everyone else was discovering feminism, it barely dented my consciousness,” she would later write.⁴⁵⁸ This is an interesting statement for Linda to make, for she certainly had to be aware how her role in *Deep Throat* had animated feminist debates on sexual pleasure. It is likely Linda meant to suggest recent feminist battles over such subjects as abortion or the Equal Rights Amendment had little bearing on her own life. In any event, following Steinem’s

⁴⁵⁶ Gloria Steinem, “Erotica and Pornography: A Clear and Present Difference,” first printed in *Ms.* 1978, reprinted in *Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography*, Ed. Laura Lederer, (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1980), 35-9.

⁴⁵⁷ Mike McGrady interview.

⁴⁵⁸ Lovelace, *Out of Bondage*, 169.

phone call, the two women met for the first time in late April 1980, and once again Linda laid bare the basic facts of her story: Traynor had abused her, and she was an unwilling participant in the film that had skyrocketed her to fame. Steinem was impressed with Linda's sincerity, and, following that visit, she immediately took up Linda's cause in earnest.

She first used *Ms.* to defend Linda and attack what she perceived as a troubling double standard directed against women sex workers. The piece was entitled, "Tell me, Linda, What in Your Background Led You to a Concentration Camp?" In the article, Steinem explained how the lengthy heading represented her frustration at the accusations swirling around Linda's character. "One wonders," mused Steinem, "Would a male political prisoner or a hostage telling a similar story have been so disbelieved?"⁴⁵⁹

In further defense of Linda, Steinem addressed another point that had been raised on the *Donahue Show*; did *Ordeal* represent simply another means of creating sensational headlines for the underlying purpose of a quick profit? Steinem pointed out that Linda and her family had been living on welfare and had a right to make money, and Linda had certainly had never made any money from *Deep Throat*.⁴⁶⁰

The following month, May 1980, Steinem launched another counterattack, beginning with an appearance on Tom Snyder's *Tomorrow Show*. This was Linda's second appearance on the program in five months, and it is likely the two women selected this program to announce their newly formed alliance because Snyder had proven himself a compassionate ear when Linda first appeared on his show back in January. In any event, Steinem used the allotted 15-minute slot wisely, explaining that she had first

⁴⁵⁹ Gloria Steinem, "Feminist Notes: Linda Lovelace's 'Ordeal,' 'Tell me, Linda, What in Your Background led you to a Concentration Camp?'" *Ms.* May 1980, 72.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

decided to contact Linda because of the insensitivity she had witnessed on the *Donahue Show*. “Why do we doubt sexual stories?” Steinem asked. “No one asked what led Mr. Traynor to be abusive.” Linda nodded in approval as Steinem waged an eloquent defense, but Linda was not a passive participant on the show. Near the end of the interview, she spoke up herself, informing Snyder, “Everyone going to see *Deep Throat* is watching me being raped.” Before the interview ended, the two women encouraged the audience to come down to Times Square the following Saturday to participate in a protest.⁴⁶¹ It had been eight years since *Deep Throat* first screened, but amazingly, it was still playing at venues not only in Times Square but in other theaters around the country as well.

Following that interview, Steinem at last introduced Linda to Susan Brownmiller and other members of WAP. As Steinem had advertised, the group convened to protest a screening of *Deep Throat*. Before the protest began that Saturday morning in May, a press conference was held during which Linda spoke out about *Deep Throat*. Again, Linda succinctly cut to the significant part, repeating what would become her trademark line of the decade, “Every time you watch the film, you’re watching me being raped.”⁴⁶² This protest represented the first time Linda had allied herself with WAP, and Marchiano has said it was a thrilling time for her.⁴⁶³ The WAP feminists accepted the truth of her story without question, and for Linda it was a relief no longer having to be constantly on guard. Whatever reservations she had had about the feminist movement were resolved for the moment, and she subsequently noted that only after meeting these women did she

⁴⁶¹ *Today Show*, hosted by Tom Snyder. Broadcast on May 10, 1980, from World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁴⁶² Susan Brownmiller interview.

⁴⁶³ Larry Marchiano interview.

understand “there was nothing wrong with being a feminist.”⁴⁶⁴ The WAP protest also signaled a rebirth of sorts for Linda. Suddenly, and for the first time, she was free to speak out publicly and did not need a script or someone to manage her career and tell her what to say, as had been the case when she was with Traynor and David Winters. In its early stages, then, WAP appeared to be a success, and Linda’s contribution to that success should not be discounted. Her unique history as a former-porn-star-turned-activist placed her at the center of the debate on sexuality and feminism in American society. Though WAP had successfully been garnering national media attention before Linda joined, she played a pivotal role in furthering that interest as well as advancing their educational campaign.

However, it was not just her convictions about pornography that had changed. At the first rally during which Linda appeared, and in subsequent anti-pornography events throughout the 1980s, she looked very differently from how she had looked in her *Deep Throat* days. In most newspaper photographs of Linda, she now typically wore a huge, oversized pair of glasses, and her hair was untamed and frizzy. Her physical appearance seemed to fit the image of a dour, unattractive crusader against pornography. As well, Linda’s dramatic physical change made her an easier target among pornographers and others who remained unconvinced she had been coerced to make *Deep Throat*. Surely, Linda must have been aware that her physical appearance was not as striking as it once had been and could make her the subject of further ridicule. However, years later, when Linda looked at the photographs of herself during the mid-1980s, she would laugh and explain to her daughter that she looked different because, unlike in her *Deep Throat* or

⁴⁶⁴ Lovelace, *Out of Bondage*, 175.

“B.C.”—before children—days, she now had two children and a husband. Busy taking care of her family, she had less time to devote to her physical appearance.⁴⁶⁵

Linda’s conversion did not go unnoticed, especially by others still working in the pornographic industry. *Deep Throat* had brought Linda international fame and even the porn industry itself a new measure of respectability. Linda’s turn-about seemed unconscionable, and following her denouncement, the phrase “Linda Lovelace syndrome” quickly sprang up as a term that denoted one’s disavowal of their pornographic past. Linda’s affiliation with the anti-pornographers also spawned bitterness from her former co-workers. Adult film star Gloria Leonard lodged a vociferous campaign against Linda. Using her position on the board of directors at the Free Speech Coalition, an organization founded by pornography insiders to advocate First Amendment issues, she regularly referred to Linda as a “Benedict Arnold.” Film producer Candida Royalle also commented on Linda’s conversion but found fault not with Linda but the feminists. “It infuriated me that Women against Pornography would take this deeply troubled, traumatized woman and just basically use her for their movement,” she remarked.

Georgia Spelvin, who had worked with Damiano on his second feature-length film, *The Devil in Ms. Jones*, related, for instance, her chance encounter with Linda on the set of a locally produced talk show. Spelvin was excited to meet Linda and, rushing up to her with her hand out, gushed, “I’m so glad to see you. I’ve been wanting to meet

⁴⁶⁵ This information comes from an interview conducted with Linda’s daughter, Lindsay Marchiano, interview by Fenton Bailey, 18 November 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood. Ca.

you for years.” In response, Linda turned her back and walked away.⁴⁶⁶ She responded similarly to Gloria Leonard during another chance backstage encounter when they were giving interviews. Leonard, too, felt angry and insulted by what she perceived as a heartless snub. Fellow porn actress Candida Royalle, however, recognized that Linda’s reaction was not based on anger, but pain. “It was so traumatic for her,” Royalle said. “She was probably raw from the experience.”⁴⁶⁷ Meeting anyone who was currently working in the industry simply brought back too many painful memories. Interestingly, Linda seemed not to care in the least what industry workers now thought of her. Following *Ordeal*’s publication, she was beginning at last to recognize that she was not to blame for the years of abuse she had endured, and she regarded pornographers disparagingly. In her estimation, she had asked for help and had not received it, and now it was her turn to be cold to those employed in the industry.

Despite Linda’s contribution to the anti-pornography movement and any criticisms it may have generated, WAP members would soon discover they had much bigger problems; as feminists opposing pornography, they were creating deep cracks at the heart of their foundation. The group decided on the name Women Against Pornography because, noted Brownmiller, “it seemed more inclusive than feminists against pornography.” But despite the clever name, WAP discovered that groups that had traditionally allied with anti-pornography organizations in the past wanted nothing to do with them. For instance, a Catholic church just down the street from Times Square was unwilling to join forces with WAP. “We were feminists, we were pro-abortion, we were

⁴⁶⁶ Georgia Spelvin interview, interview by World of Wonder Production Company, 2003, transcript, World of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁴⁶⁷ Candida Royalle, telephone interview with author, 23 July 2004.

pro-gay rights, we were anti-pornography,” explained Susan Male.⁴⁶⁸ While the Church sympathized with their cause, it could not abide by other tenets the feminists held dear and thus declined any official association.

While the Catholic Church was reluctant to join forces with WAP, conservatives who had traditionally opposed many goals of the feminist movement were now eager to find alliances. Phyllis Schafley, for instance, had by the early 1980s gained national prominence as an outspoken conservative Republican who opposed abortion laws and the Equal Rights Amendment. But she heartily aligned herself with the feminist anti-pornography movement. Feminist attorney Catharine MacKinnon and activist author Andrea Dworkin also embraced what had become a new feminist cause. In fact, these two women would form a fast alliance and collectively pioneer a major shift in the anti-pornography debates, pushing it further to the right than any other members of WAP could have possibly envisioned was possible. Like other feminists around them, MacKinnon and Dworkin initially became involved with the anti-pornography movement in the late 1970s. Their specific motives for joining the movement were due in no small part to the belief that the aftermath of the sexual revolution had actually eroded sexual relations for women. It had encouraged sexual freedom, experimentation, and the right to gratification, but it had also more darkly disregarded the dangers and pitfalls inherent in these newfound freedoms.⁴⁶⁹ It was now time for those dangers and pitfalls to be examined and considered. And like Brownmiller, MacKinnon and Dworkin believed pornography was a cause all women could rally behind. “For them,” noted historian Alice Eckels, “pornography was the issue that could transcend race, class, age, sexual

⁴⁶⁸ Susan Male interview.

⁴⁶⁹ Alice Eckels, *Daring to be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975*, (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1989), 289.

preference and even ideology.”⁴⁷⁰ It is one of the greater ironies that neither woman ever envisioned how their very entrée into the anti-pornography movement would not unite other feminists but instead create a lasting divide.

Despite their good intentions and steadfast commitment to what could best be described as conservative feminism, MacKinnon and Dworkin themselves came from radically different backgrounds. MacKinnon was born in Minnesota in October 1946 into a conservative, upper-class family. From 1946 to 1948 her father had served one term in the House of Representatives as a Republican and worked for Richard Nixon’s 1952 vice-presidential campaign.⁴⁷¹ MacKinnon attended Smith College, graduating with a B.A. in 1969, and then later Yale, where she eventually received both a J.D. and a Ph.D.⁴⁷² It was during her years at law school that MacKinnon became socially active, opposing the Vietnam War and working for a time with the Black Panthers. She also became increasingly interested in feminist issues and how they could be advanced through legal channels. On the surface, it seemed MacKinnon was just another college student whose politics were informed by the pervasive student radicalism of the 1960s. However, author Christopher Finan noted, “If MacKinnon was a member of the counter-culture, she was no hippie.”⁴⁷³ While she steadfastly believed in the advancement of women’s rights, she increasingly grew to believe the current climate of “liberal feminism” was ill-equipped to tackle this problem. Liberal feminists believed achieving legal equality was the most practical solution to ending women’s oppression.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Biographical information on Catharine MacKinnon was retrieved on 10/05/05 at <http://www.mnhs.org/library/findaids/00108.html> Manuscripts College, George E. MacKinnon, An Inventory of his papers at the Minnesota Historical Society.

⁴⁷² Further biographical information on MacKinnon comes from Joseph Slade’s brief sketch in *Pornography in America*, 190.

⁴⁷³ Christopher Finan, “Catharine MacKinnon: The Rise of a Feminist Censor, 1983-1993,” retrieved on 7 April 2005 from <http://www.mediacoalition.org/reports/mackinnon.html>.

MacKinnon, however, believed the sexes were not equal, and never could be.⁴⁷⁴ Instead, she felt oppression stemmed from male control of female sexuality. The oppression of women as a class could only end after measures were taken to end that control.⁴⁷⁵

In Dworkin, MacKinnon found a kindred spirit who embraced a similar philosophy. Unlike MacKinnon, Dworkin came from a liberal, middle-class background, her formative years far removed from the political conservatism that marked MacKinnon's life. During her college years at a small liberal arts college in Vermont, Dworkin too became involved in the anti-war movement. However, following her arrest during a protest, in which she was later subjected to a body cavity search, Dworkin's politics grew more radicalized. Disgusted by the war, and the treatment of anti-war protesters, Dworkin moved to the Netherlands. There she married a man who became physically abusive and forced her to prostitute herself on the streets. She eventually escaped her husband and returned to the United States, however; galvanized by the experience, Dworkin threw herself into the fight for women's rights.⁴⁷⁶ In 1979 she would write what was later considered the "bible" of the anti-pornography movement, *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*, in which she argued (more forcefully than Brownmiller) that pornography subordinates women and facilitates rape.

It was shortly after protesting *Deep Throat* in Times Square that Brownmiller and Steinem introduced Linda to Dworkin. Then Dworkin introduced Linda to MacKinnon in June of 1980, during a book-signing party for Dworkin's latest book, *The New Woman's*

⁴⁷⁴ MacKinnon noted for instance that a woman could get pregnant, but a man could not. If laws were passed treating men and women the same on the job which afforded them equal pay, a woman was clearly disadvantaged. What if she got pregnant and wanted paid maternity leave? If an employer denied this request, courts might agree such requests were illegal, as men could not be granted a similar leave.

⁴⁷⁵ Finan.

⁴⁷⁶ Biographical information on Andrea Dworkin is obtained from her autobiography, *Heartbreak: The Political Memoir of a Feminist Militant*, (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

Broken Heart. Linda was eight months pregnant, and after the reading for the book ended, she approached MacKinnon and said, “Gloria said you might have some ideas for doing something about the movie.” As MacKinnon recalled, “She was strong, clear, direct, very pregnant, very happy about it, and wanted to do something about *Deep Throat* very much.”⁴⁷⁷

Linda made a favorable impression on the two women, and they both decided to see if they could help her with a civil suit against Traynor and possibly others she had cited as being responsible for sexual and physical abuse. Arrangements were soon made for the women to meet again to discuss further Linda’s story. Linda, however, was mistaken if she thought MacKinnon and Dworkin would be easy allies in her effort to obtain legal redress. In that first meeting, she instead endured a withering cross-examination, with the two spending five hours questioning Linda on every detail of her past. “I want to tell you,” said Dworkin, “You don’t want the two of us questioning you. It was an ordeal for Linda.”⁴⁷⁸

But her responses awed the two women. “She was amazingly filled with detailed information about everything that had happened to her. And she had what was called a ‘John’s book’—a book of names and phone numbers of men who had raped her over a period of time,” said Dworkin.⁴⁷⁹ Following that meeting, MacKinnon and Dworkin decided Linda was indeed telling the truth and could use their help. For the next year, from roughly 1980 to 1981, they worked on building a case against the men who had raped Linda. The statute of limitations had expired for a criminal case so instead they opted to pursue a case based on a violation of civil rights. Dworkin noted, however, that

⁴⁷⁷ Personal correspondence with Catharine MacKinnon, 28 March 2006.

⁴⁷⁸ Andrea Dworkin interview.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

despite the many astute legal minds engaged on Linda's behalf, the case might be a difficult one to prove. Their success would likely hinge on which testimony a jury simply chose to believe.⁴⁸⁰

After working on the suit for over a year, the group came to an impasse. Gloria Steinem, who was also actively engaged with the group, and another team member who had once worked for the Justice Department believed the case was not solid. MacKinnon and Dworkin, however, wanted to proceed. With the group divided, the final decision rested with Linda, who opted not to pursue the matter any further. Dworkin believed this was because there was a small chance they would prevail and Linda feared retaliation by people in the industry.⁴⁸¹ "She was very afraid of them," said Dworkin.⁴⁸² Marchiano confirmed that this was a very difficult decision for Linda to make but said she was not so much afraid as she was realistic that nothing could be done in a court of law. The case, noted Marchiano, involved not only suing people who had physically harmed Linda but also pursuing those who had stood by and done nothing while Linda endured years of abuse at the hands of Chuck Traynor. What hurt Linda, in reflecting on her years with Traynor, was how no one had tried to help her. From Gerard Damiano and Harry Reems to Sammy Davis, Jr., and David Winters, none of them had done anything, but, as Marchiano said, Linda realized "You can't sue for not caring."⁴⁸³

Despite the decision with the legal case, Linda forged ahead with other avenues of protest. She would continue for the rest of her life to participate in demonstrations in both U.S. and European cities where *Deep Throat* continued to be screened. With the

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Larry Marchiano interview.

organizational help of MacKinnon and others, Linda also went on the college lecture circuit, speaking before audiences about her experience with pornography. She continued this for the remainder of her life. MacKinnon noted that every time Linda spoke, it was a powerful experience for the audience. Most had no idea how pornography was made, and Linda's comments were usually an eye-opener. Though Linda herself had had only a semester of education beyond high school, she came across as articulate and passionate. Even at Ivy League schools like Yale and Harvard, Linda consistently captivated and enthralled the entire audience.⁴⁸⁴

Patsy Carroll, Linda's old friend from their Florida high school days, noted that the process of speaking at colleges seemed to transform Linda. It also further shaped her impressions of the feminist movement. Carroll recalled, for instance, an occasion when she met Linda in Tennessee. Linda was scheduled to speak at a college in the Knoxville region, and Carroll made plans to meet her there so they could catch up and reminisce about old times. The feminist movement fascinated Linda at the time, and she told very funny stories about some of the women in it she had gotten to know. At the same time, she admitted she still did not entirely understand feminism or the feminists and their movement. She found it strange and interesting, for example, that her bodyguards on her speaking tours were women who wore fatigues. It was a task she had never before seen women do, and women instead of men serving as bodyguards seemed to her an odd gender-role reversal.⁴⁸⁵

In fall 1983, Dworkin and MacKinnon called on Linda with a new solution to her aborted lawsuit from two years ago. They had an idea to change the local zoning

⁴⁸⁴ Personal correspondence with Catharine MacKinnon, 28 March 2006.

⁴⁸⁵ Patsy Carroll interview.

ordinance, but their story actually began with a college class MacKinnon and Dworkin had been teaching at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. The class was a visionary project for the two women. It was intended, according to Dworkin, as “an exceptionally rigorous course” designed to explore the inherent dangers of the pornographic industry. Freshmen at the university were not allowed to attend—only sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Dworkin and MacKinnon also screened potential enrollees in order to weed out “voyeurs,” requiring students to submit an essay stating why they were interested in the subject matter. The final class roster consisted of approximately 60 women and, in Dworkin’s recollection, four men. A third of those enrolled in the class identified themselves as feminist activists. One student was also an elected judge and excused herself from the class when illegal pornography was screened because she would otherwise be obligated to report the event to the proper authorities. The class, among other things, watched pornographic films, purchased pornographic materials, and discussed them.⁴⁸⁶

During that same fall semester, city council members in Minneapolis decided to schedule a hearing regarding what seemed a proliferation of adult book stores in the city. A zoning ordinance was already in place, with which many on the council were satisfied, but after receiving several recent complaints about adult businesses in local neighborhoods, the council decided to entertain a revision of the law. However, council member Charlee Hoyt heard that Dworkin and MacKinnon were teaching a class on pornography and thought they might have some insights into a new ordinance on zoning. The two women were promptly solicited for advice. Dworkin, however, informed the council they could not become involved. She told the council members zoning ordinances

⁴⁸⁶ Andrea Dworkin interview.

were problematic. “We thought that all they were trying to do was protect the rich, white neighborhoods, mostly Republican, neighborhoods, from having pornography in their areas,” said Dworkin. “Back in the early 1980s pornography was zoned into the poorest, mostly black, sometimes Asian, sometimes Indian, parts of the city.”⁴⁸⁷

The two women then informed Hoyt, “We cannot come and help you because we’re against zoning.”

Hoyt replied, “What are you for?”

Dworkin replied, “We’re for a civil rights approach.”⁴⁸⁸

The two were asked to come before the council and explain specifically what they wanted to do. They did so, and, following their presentation, were hired to write a new law designed to tackle pornography in the city of Minneapolis. Five weeks later, on November 23, 1980, they presented their proposed ordinance to the council. Though it was only five pages long, it was audacious in scope. They had, in sum, defined pornography as a form of sex discrimination and a civil rights violation. MacKinnon and Dworkin defined pornography as “the systematic practice of exploitation and subordination based on sex, which differentially harms women.” With an additional nine points, the definition also enumerated the criteria which defined *exploitative*. The ordinance also contained a provision which made it illegal to coerce anyone to participate in porn: “Any person, including transsexual, who is coerced, intimidated, or fraudulently induced into performing for pornography shall have a cause of action against the

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

maker(s), seller(s) or distributors(s) of said pornography for damages and for the elimination of the products of the performance(s) from public view.”⁴⁸⁹

MacKinnon had specifically included the coercion provision based on Linda’s experiences filming *Deep Throat*.⁴⁹⁰ This ordinance, it was hoped, would provide a legal means through which Linda, among others, could now sue for wrongful damages. The statute of limitations for such violations was placed at five years. Though *Deep Throat* had been produced in 1972, all Linda now needed in order to have her day in court was for a vendor in the Minneapolis city limits to sell a copy of the film.

Following their late November presentation before the council, public hearings were scheduled two weeks later, around the first half of December. This was not a lot of time to consider the full ramifications of the new ordinance, but this may not have mattered, as many council members readily observed some serious flaws contained within MacKinnon and Dworkin’s handiwork. Most obviously, the definition of pornography was clearly very broad. For many of the council members, one of the enumerated points: “an image or picture that subordinated women” could mean just about anything. The ordinance seemed to border on censorship. However, in fairness to both MacKinnon and Dworkin, they were grappling with what is precisely one of the most difficult aspects of pornography: how does one define it? This is why Justice Stewart Potter’s remark, “I know it when I see it,” perfectly captures the vagueness inherent in such a definition. Everyone has different standards for what constitutes erotica, obscenity, and pornography. Justice Potter’s remark only makes us wonder what it is that he sees.

⁴⁸⁹ The ordinance is reprinted in its entirety in *In Harms Way*, Eds. Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 429.

⁴⁹⁰ Personal correspondence with Catharine MacKinnon 28 March 2006.

Did Linda realize that the ordinance had potentially defined pornography too broadly and that its provisions, if enacted, might allow for a wide category of material to fall under the definition of “sex discrimination”? After all, Linda always asserted that she never supported censorship of any kind. Even as early as 1973, she told an interviewer “Adolph Hitler believed in censorship. I don’t believe in censorship of any kind.”⁴⁹¹ As well, she would adamantly maintain in the years following her involvement with the ordinance that she absolutely opposed infringements on free speech. The answer to this seemingly contradictory behavior is best explained by the fact Linda’s overriding concern to receive financial compensation from her forced participation in *Deep Throat*. MacKinnon and Dworkin’s ordinance simply represented her best chance at making that a reality.⁴⁹²

In any event, during the public debates on the ordinance MacKinnon and Dworkin proceeded, as planned, with the scheduling of a series of witnesses to testify before the council on behalf of the ordinance. Their goal was to prove to council members that pornography caused harm, and they packed the hearings with a scheduled list of both women and men who were willing to come forward to testify to that premise. Unsurprisingly, MacKinnon contacted Linda about testifying as well. After all, the coercion provision of the ordinance was written with Linda in mind, and aware of this fact, she was more than willing to testify about her own past experiences in the industry.

Linda, then, was one of many who spoke in favor of the ordinance, but many of the city council members personally noted that they did not consider Linda to be the star witness. However, Linda was the most recognized name on the roster of speakers. Many

⁴⁹¹ *Variety*, 25 July 1973.

⁴⁹² Larry Marchiano interview.

of those who spoke out as victims of pornography were doing so publicly for the first time.

Linda's testimony was brief. She started off by telling the council that she was not a willing participant. "So many people say that, in *Deep Throat*, I have a smile on my face, and I look as though I am really enjoying myself. No one ever asked me how I got those bruises on my body." She concluded by adding, "It is time for something to be done about the civil rights of victims and not criminals—victims being women."⁴⁹³

Dworkin then cross-examined Linda, asking her to recount some of the more painful aspects of her relationship with Traynor, including Linda's copulation with a dog. After relaying those details again, Linda wrapped up her testimony, stating, "I feel very hurt and disappointed in my society and my country for allowing the fact that I was raped, I was beaten, I was put through two and a half years of what I was put through. And it's taken me almost ten years to overcome the damage he has caused. And the fact that this film is being shown and that my children will one day walk down the street and see their mother being abused, it makes me angry, makes me sad. And virtually every time someone watches that film, they are watching me being raped."⁴⁹⁴

Though Linda inadvertently emerged as one of the more prominent witnesses at the proceedings, most of the city council members did not recall being especially moved by her testimony alone. City council member Tony Scallon described Linda's testimony as "compelling" but was not surprised by her story. "Someone who starred in the theaters and is now saying she's been misused ... it was probably true, because like most people,

⁴⁹³ *In Harms Way*, 60-2.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

like most of the prostitution in our country is people who have been sexually abused,” he noted.⁴⁹⁵

What overwhelmed council members more than anything was the media spectacle that ensued over the course of the two-day hearing. Though the ordinance definitions were laden with problems, members were swamped with phone calls by their constituents who complained, “You should be against pornography.”⁴⁹⁶ When Dworkin debated the merits of the ordinance with a member of the Minneapolis Civil Liberties Union, supporters booed the opposition. What seemed like extremism on behalf of the ordinance backers began to wear down some city council members. “We were lobbied very hard,” recalled council member Barbara Carlson, “You couldn’t go to the bathroom without being lobbied.”⁴⁹⁷

Despite the efforts of MacKinnon, Dworkin and their many supporters, the mayor of Minneapolis, Don Fraser, made it clear he would veto the ordinance. Though he was himself a liberal Democrat, Fraser was convinced the ordinance would only cause headaches for the city, and he also feared that an expensive lawsuit by the ACLU would surely follow. However, advocates in favor of the ordinance were not ready to accept defeat, and they continued to work hard to change his mind. In fact, they came into the council chambers in an attempt to take over the building, leaving the city council members completely bewildered. “It’s not unusual to have demonstrations in Minneapolis,” noted Tony Scallon, “but it was unusual to have them in city council chambers.” Supporters of the ordinance then held a candlelight vigil outside the mayor’s office and a second one outside his home.

⁴⁹⁵ Tony Scallon, telephone interview with author, 23 August 2004.

⁴⁹⁶ Sally Howard, telephone interview with author, 10 August 2004.

⁴⁹⁷ Finan, 13.

On December 13, 1983, the city council passed the ordinance. Linda was thrilled because, MacKinnon noted, “It would have finally given her her day in court against *Deep Throat*.”⁴⁹⁸ But, as he had promised he would, Fraser, promptly vetoed the ordinance. Linda, according to MacKinnon, was now “devastated.” Dworkin observed, however, that Linda was grateful for their efforts all the same. “She never expressed bitterness. She knew we worked 23 hours a day on it, day and night for months.”⁴⁹⁹

The council members knew they did not have the requisite number of votes to override the veto, so the ordinance was lost. Scallon was not surprised that the mayor would take such an action, admitting that while he, too, sympathized with the victims of pornography, the constitutionality of the ordinance was troubling. As previously stated, many council members felt the ordinance was doomed long before the public debates began, due in large measure to its broad definition of pornography. City council member Dennis Schulstad noted, in fact, that for this very reason, it was obvious from the start that even if it passed, the ordinance would not withstand a legal challenge.⁵⁰⁰ Scallon, who supported the ordinance, believed as well that the broad definition “killed us in the end.”⁵⁰¹ City Council member Charlee Hoyt, who had sponsored the ordinance, pointed out that using the word *pornography* jeopardized the passage of the ordinance from the onset. “If we had not used the term *pornography* but invented a term, I think it probably would have gotten listened to much more quickly,” she later reflected.⁵⁰²

Perhaps of more importance than the intense media reaction was how the council members all observed the ways in which the subject split their constituency. Just as

⁴⁹⁸ Personal correspondence with Catharine MacKinnon, 28 March 2006.

⁴⁹⁹ Andrea Dworkin interview.

⁵⁰⁰ Dennis Schulstad, telephone interview with author 23 August 2004.

⁵⁰¹ Tony Scallon, interview.

⁵⁰² Charlee Hoyt, telephone interview with author, 9 August 2004.

members of Women Against Pornography had recognized fissures in their traditional base of alliance, so the council members noted that the ordinance created the strangest of bedfellows. Many liberal Democrats who traditionally did not favor censorship supported the ordinance. Civil libertarians who traditionally supported feminist causes now voiced loud vocal opposition, and gays and lesbians seemed split down the middle. Council member Dennis Schulstad noted that the ordinance divided even the core feminist contingent of Minneapolis. “Feminists testifying were really quite liberal people and they were banding together with quite conservative people trying to do away with pornography...I think the feminists would normally be agreeing with the Civil Liberties Union, and here they were on the opposite side of the issue.”⁵⁰³

Divisions amongst the feminists surfaced in other ways as well. Dworkin noted, for instance, that in the course of getting the ordinance passed, a meeting was held with council members, other women who were planning on testifying, and many other prominent citizens, including the mayor’s wife, Arvonne Fraser. Linda was in attendance at this meeting, but the way she was treated appalled both MacKinnon and Dworkin.⁵⁰⁴ Most of the group largely ignored her, and when she did attempt to vocalize her own opinions, she was treated with derision.

Dworkin and MacKinnon instinctively recognized why Linda’s presence elicited such a reaction from other women in attendance. They could propose a radically forward-thinking piece of legislation with the potential to change irrevocably the foundation of sex discrimination laws. As well, the very subject itself of anti-pornography and feminism had fractured traditional political alliances within the movement, while also

⁵⁰³ Dennis Schulstad interview.

⁵⁰⁴ Andrea Dworkin interview.

bringing in newer, possibly even more powerful allies. And yet, in the end, some things never changed. In this instance, old ideas about sex industry workers prevailed, or as MacKinnon herself remarked, “Class issues and how prostituted women are regarded were at play.”⁵⁰⁵

Dworkin also believed this was another instance where categories of superiority had surfaced in Minneapolis among many supporters of the ordinance. “They were good women and she [Linda] was a bad woman,” said Dworkin. “Maybe she didn’t have the education they had, maybe they thought she was a whore. I don’t know, but they treated her badly.” In fact, Dworkin noted, Linda did pick up on the fact she was not highly regarded within the group, and both Dworkin and MacKinnon attempted to console her afterwards.⁵⁰⁶

Following the mayor’s veto, Linda once again returned home to Long Island. The following year, MacKinnon and Dworkin drafted a second version of the ordinance, but once again Fraser vetoed it. Discouraged, but undeterred, the two women tried again in other cities, including Indianapolis, Los Angeles, and Boston. In most instances, nothing came of these efforts. Following the Minneapolis hearings, opposition to such proposals became better organized, effectively contributing to their defeat. Among those rising up in opposition was none other than a feminist contingent which began referring to themselves as “pro-sex” and “anti-censorship” coalitions. Angered by MacKinnon and

⁵⁰⁵ Personal correspondence with Catharine MacKinnon, 28 March 2006. Indeed, scholar Ruth Rosen documents similar reactions in her study of late nineteenth century reform movements aimed at curbing prostitution. In particular, Rosen notes reformers embraced the challenge of eliminating prostitution under the belief it “represented the quintessential symbol of the sexual and economic exploitation of women in a patriarchal society,” and yet the cross-class alliances that they occasionally forged with prostitutes were frequently undermined by class and ethnic prejudices that prevented women from making a united stand on the issue of prostitution. See *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918*, (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), xv.

⁵⁰⁶ Andrea Dworkin interview.

Dworkin's solutions to pornography, these women complained suppression was being advocated instead of education. San Francisco-based author Susie Bright noted too that MacKinnon and Dworkin were simply perpetuating the false myth that women were incapable of enjoying sex. "We're not just a small group of women being manipulated by dirty old men," said Bright.⁵⁰⁷

In Indianapolis, the only city MacKinnon and Dworkin's ordinance successfully passed into law, feminists now actively participated in the counterattack. In April 1985, 63 feminists, including Betty Friedan, Rita Mae Brown, and Kate Millet, backed what became known as the FACT brief (Feminist Anti-Censorship Taskforce). Challenging the Indianapolis ordinance in the courts, the brief argued the ordinance should be struck down for its violation of free speech. It also noted the ordinance was "a throwback to the Victorian view of sexuality," explaining, "It allows little room for women to openly express certain sexual desires, and resurrects the notion that sexually explicit materials are subordinating and degrading to women."⁵⁰⁸ The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals concurred with the logic of the anti-censorship forces, ruling the Indianapolis ordinance unconstitutional on the grounds of First Amendment violations.⁵⁰⁹

MacKinnon and Dworkin's efforts, then, ultimately ended in failure, but to their credit, they represented a visionary approach to tackling the issue of pornography—pursing the subject as a civil rights violation instead of a violation of community standards of decency.

⁵⁰⁷ Finan.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ For a thorough history of MacKinnon and Dworkin's efforts to get their anti-pornography civil rights ordinances passed in the early 1980s, see *In Harm's Way*.

Upon hearing the Indianapolis ordinance had also failed, Linda was again dismayed, but many good things were happening, which mitigated the bad. Her second child, a daughter, Lindsay, had been born in July of 1980. There was also exciting news from Lyle Stuart. Based largely on the success of *Ordeal*, he wanted her to write a follow-up book to update readers on her latest adventures. Additionally, Gloria Steinem had agreed to write the introduction. Her name would clearly lend an element of prestige to Linda's story. Mike McGrady was again selected to co-author what would be Linda's fourth autobiography. McGrady was thrilled to sign on again and impressed that Steinem had agreed to write the introduction. "I was just amazed when she did get involved," said McGrady.⁵¹⁰ Oddly, Marchiano does not recall Linda being overwhelmingly excited that Steinem had offered to write the introduction. "She was looking for anyone to help, it didn't matter who," he said. His recollections were that Linda was fairly blasé about Steinem's involvement.⁵¹¹

In any event, Stuart wanted her to write *Out of Bondage* because *Ordeal* had been so hugely successful it simply did not make sense not to write another book. McGrady concurred that the reasons for a fourth book were purely economic. "Because the first book had done so well, it was like when someone does a movie and it makes a hundred million dollars, they always do a part II. In a way, that's what happened here."⁵¹²

Unfortunately, as sequels often go, *Out of Bondage* was largely a rehash of *Ordeal* and contained little that was new or useful. In fact, Linda and McGrady summarized once again the darker, sexually explicit stories from Linda's past, only this time the stories were printed in italics and told as flash-backs. It was a technique designed

⁵¹⁰ Mike McGrady interview.

⁵¹¹ Larry Marchiano interview.

⁵¹² Mike McGrady interview.

to show that Linda was haunted by these events from her past, as she may well have been, but it was also obviously an effort to spice up the book and likely not forego the reuse of material that had made the third book such a stunning success.

McGrady later sheepishly admitted that this was true to a certain degree, noting that this was why it was so important that Steinem had signed on to writing the introduction. Her participation lent the book an aura of respectability that it otherwise might not have deserved.⁵¹³

Some important new information was included in the book, however. Linda did describe in greater detail her failed film career and the fiasco in the Philippines. She also added more details about her marriage to Marchiano. Most importantly she included commentary on the negative public reaction to *Ordeal* and her new association with feminists.

Reviews of *Out of Bondage* were quick to point out that it was a comparatively weak follow-up to *Ordeal*. Writing for the *New York Review of Books*, Brett Harvey considered it a “thin book” and noted that Linda left “odd gaps” in retelling her story.⁵¹⁴ *Publishers Weekly* likewise observed that *Out of Bondage* held very little new information, and that at best, it largely rehashed the darker moments of *Ordeal*.⁵¹⁵

Stuart, as seasoned a publisher as he was, must have known that sales for *Out of Bondage* would not match those for *Ordeal*, and consequently he spent very little money promoting it. He was right, of course, for it generated only modest sales and never cracked any of the best-seller lists.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Brett Harvey, “Out of Bondage Book Review,” *New York Times Book Review*, 6 July 1986, 15.

⁵¹⁵ “Out of Bondage Book Review,” *Publishers Weekly*, 18 April 1986, 53.

Despite the poor showing of what would be Linda's final autobiography, Steinem would for many years maintain an active friendship with Linda and her family. McGrady noted that even following the successful publication of *Ordeal*, if Linda was short of funds and waiting for a royalty check from Lyle Stuart, Steinem never hesitated to reach into her purse and give Linda cash. Steinem was generous in other ways as well. Marchiano recalled that, throughout the 1980s, Steinem would show up occasionally at their Long Island home bearing all sorts of gifts. It was an odd sight to see. Marchiano believed Steinem projected a public image vastly different from her private life. For instance, Marchiano believed part of the public façade involved getting around her home in New York City in a limousine with a chauffeured driver. However, she often paid visits to the Marchiano Long Island home, showing up in a sport convertible and casual attire. The car, recalled Marchiano, was usually packed with gifts, including fresh fruit and an assortment of groceries.⁵¹⁶

And yet, despite these warm and generous gestures, Linda maintained a certain level of ambivalence about Steinem. Marchiano said, for instance, Linda remained grateful for Steinem's generosity but personally felt let down by Gloria. "She did do her articles and she did a little showcase," said Marchiano, "But Linda personally didn't feel that Gloria Steinem followed up."⁵¹⁷ What Marchiano likely understood was that Linda never got *Deep Throat* permanently removed from shelves or received compensation for damages she suffered and, in the end, remained frustrated. Steinem may have been an easy target for Linda to focus her frustration on, for in the aftermath of *Out of Bondage*,

⁵¹⁶ Larry Marchiano interview.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

Steinem did become less involved in Linda's life. Marchiano would later confirm that by the end of the decade, her involvement with the family was negligible.⁵¹⁸

The same did not hold true of Linda's association with Dworkin and MacKinnon. There, Linda maintained lifelong friendships. Though nothing came of their efforts to change the laws and get pornography victims any sort of compensation in Minneapolis, Dworkin and MacKinnon stayed in touch with Linda for the rest of her life. Marchiano recalled that Linda never expressed any disappointment or bitterness toward MacKinnon or Dworkin as she had with Steinem. In fact, Linda always remained somewhat in awe of them, especially Dworkin, whom Linda described as "the real deal."⁵¹⁹

In fact, it was MacKinnon who would arrange what would turn out to be Linda's last major public testimony against pornography, at the 1986 Attorney General's Commission on Pornography. As has previously been discussed in chapter 2, a similar commission convened in 1968 but determined no recognizable connection could be established between pornography and criminal violence. It was thus recommended that pornographic materials remain unrestricted, with the exception of minors. While these findings obviously predated the Reagan administration by 18 years, like Nixon before him, Ronald Reagan, too, wanted an updated report on the status of pornography in America, one that would reach different conclusions than the 1968 Commission had.

Thus, in May 1984, Reagan's Attorney General, William French Smith, called for the formation of a new Commission on Pornography. However, before this commission ever convened, Smith resigned from the Reagan administration. His successor was Edwin

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

Meese, III, and the newly formed commission was soon dubbed the Meese Commission: after the newly appointed attorney general.⁵²⁰

The new commission differed markedly from its 1968 predecessor in several ways. For starters, the Committee preferred not to define pornography at all, deciding any such effort to do so would be “futile.”⁵²¹ Their aim, then, was to find effective ways to limit the spread of pornography without compromising the First Amendment, or to find “more effective ways in which the spread of pornography could be contained, consistent with constitutional guarantees.”⁵²² From the start, then, the Commission was not interested in determining whether or not pornography was harmless. In their estimation, it was clearly a stimulus to sexual violence. Their mandate was how best to contain it. The commission convened under President Johnson had relied almost exclusively on scientific data. Under the Reagan Administration Commission on Pornography, academics, anti-pornographers, and individuals who had been harmed by pornography were solicited—those who could provide testimony which supported the conclusions the Commission had set out to prove. This meant the testimony of people like Linda was now highly valued. Often referred to as “victim” testimony, anyone who could allege an assortment of crimes and conditions related to pornography or resulting from it, including battery, assault, rape, suicidal ideation, and promotion of racial hatred, was now not only solicited but regarded as credible evidence.

⁵²⁰ According to Catharine MacKinnon, the very fact this commission informally bears his name is largely an effort to discredit its findings, because in part Meese eventually resigned in 1988 following an investigation of his office, which found numerous ethical violations had occurred. In fact, as Heidenry points out, Meese never attended any of the hearings, and nor did he ever read the commissions completed 2,000 page report.

⁵²¹ *Final Report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography*, (Nashville: Rudledge Hill Press, 1986), 226-228

⁵²² *Ibid.*, ix.

Hearings were held in Chicago, New York, Houston, and Washington, D.C. throughout the first half of 1986. In addition to the hearings, the commission visited adult book stores and viewed films and magazines. MacKinnon stated that Linda was asked to participate in the Commission hearings because “her experience was relevant to their deliberations.”⁵²³ In general, she acted as liaison for Linda whenever someone was interested in having her speak at an engagement. This included anything from speaking at a college to protesting a screening of *Deep Throat*. If Linda said yes, MacKinnon would provide the necessary contact information. MacKinnon noted that Linda preferred not to initiate contact herself because it saved her money on her phone bills if she were instead contacted.⁵²⁴ In any event, this was how Linda was first contacted and asked to testify.

While many men and women testified to the inherent violence of the pornography industry, Linda caught the attention of casual and serious observers alike. As had been the case in Minneapolis, of all the victims testifying, Linda’s was clearly the most famous and recognizable name.⁵²⁵ Linda testified in New York City on January 21, 1986, again recounting what was now her standard version of events. “I physically and suffered mental abuse each and every day,” Linda told the committee members. “During the filming of *Deep Throat*, actually the first day, I suffered a brutal beating for smiling on the set.”⁵²⁶ Linda also pointed out to the committee that based on her own experiences there was no way to ensure other women were truly working in the industry willingly. Otherwise, Linda’s testimony was largely anticlimactic. After all, by this point, she had

⁵²³ Personal correspondence with Catharine MacKinnon, 28 March 2006.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

⁵²⁵ Philip Noble and Eric Nadler, *United States of American vs. Sex: How the Meese Commission Lied about Porn*, (New York, Minotaur Ltd, 1986), 148.

⁵²⁶ Linda’s testimony is printed in its entirety in *Pornography’s Victims: Excerpts from the Official Transcript of Proceedings, United States Department of Justice, The Attorney General’s Commission on Pornography Public Hearings*, Ed. Phyllis Schlafly, (Illinois: Crossway Books, 1987), 230.

been publicly denouncing her involvement in the making of *Deep Throat* for over six years. The only new information Linda relayed that had not been told in either *Ordeal* or *Out of Bondage* concerned the bruises on her body, which were evident in *Deep Throat*. When asked what was done to cover them up, Linda explained, “One of the guys that was on the film, Mr. Reems, was also into stage makeup and all that, and he had the right kind of pancake or whatever they do. They just put layers and layers on it to try and cover it up, but it still shows through.”⁵²⁷

In late summer of 1986 the Commission concluded their hearings and began to compile their findings and conclusions. However, well before the report was released, critics began to launch an attack. Foremost among the complaints was that no connection was clearly established between pornography as a stimulus to violence. Critics also noted that despite its recommendations to curb the spread of pornography, the descriptions and testimony contained within the report were equally as explicit as the material it hoped to contain.⁵²⁸

Over time, critics also observed that few of its recommendations were ever implemented. Though the report listed 92 suggestions, which ranged from “making it an unfair labor practice to hire individuals to participate in sexual performances to outlawing doors on booths in porno parlors,” none of these were ever followed through on. The only “victory” came, incidentally, well before the Commission had convened. Alan E. Sears, the executive director of the Commission, sent letters to a number of retail companies across the United States, suggesting they were “dealing in pornography.” As a direct

⁵²⁷ Ibid., 231.

⁵²⁸ Edwin McDowell, “Some Say Meese Report Rates an ‘X,’” *New York Times*, 21 October 1986, C13, and “Meese v. Playboy,” *National Review*, 1 August 1986, 13-14.

result, the convenience chain store 7-11 stopped selling adult magazines in some 7,500 of its nationwide stores.⁵²⁹

For Linda, as well, participating in the Commission did nothing to prevent the distribution of *Deep Throat*. Nor did it ever result in the creation of federal criminal statutes that would have afforded Linda legal recourse against men the likes of Chuck Traynor. However disappointed Linda may have been about the lack of measurable change, she was again simply thrilled at the chance to talk about her experiences filming *Deep Throat*. “If she were telling her story to one person or a crowd, Linda didn’t care,” Marchiano noted.⁵³⁰ The important thing was to get the truth out. When she finished testifying, Marchiano said Linda expressed once again excitement that she had had the opportunity to tell her story even though she knew her celebrity status was partly responsible for her invitation.⁵³¹ Interestingly, however, Dworkin noted that there was a something of a conundrum with Linda’s testifying. It seemed to help her deal with her pain, but it was also addictive. “I think that what happened to Linda,” said Dworkin, “was when the media was focused on her she had more satisfaction than when she was alone with the burden of what had happened to her.”⁵³² Unfortunately for Linda, the testimony she gave in front of the Attorney General’s Commission on Pornography would represent her last major public appearance. Left alone, for the most part, to grapple with these inner demons, in the last years of her life, Linda would seek solace in far more destructive measures.

⁵²⁹ David M. Edwards, “Politics and Pornography: A Comparison of the Findings of the President’s Commission and the Meese Commission and the Resulting Response,” Retrieved on 12 April 2006 at www.home.earthlink.net/~durangodave/html/writing/Censorship.htm.

⁵³⁰ Larry Marchiano interview.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

⁵³² Andrea Dworkin interview.

Chapter 8: Linda Lovelace the Porn Star Icon

Following the publicity tour for her last book, in 1986, Linda and Marchiano returned to their home in Center Moriches, Long Island, and settled into a routine of comfortable domesticity. Marchiano began his own construction company, Larry Marchiano Dry Wall and Spackling, and Linda took up in earnest the task of caring for her two children and occasionally Marchiano's son, Larry Paul, Jr., whom he fathered in his earlier relationship with Linda's sister, Jean.⁵³³ By all accounts, Linda blossomed in her role as mother and wife. Among the other homemaking skills she was proud of, Linda was a spectacular cook, which both amazed and puzzled her older sister, Barbara, since their mother had never spent a great deal of time teaching her daughters culinary skills. Happy in her new role, Linda often hosted barbecues at her Long Island home featuring a smorgasbord of dishes. Linda made every entrée from scratch, often featuring fancy pasta and fish recipes.⁵³⁴ She also loved spending every spare moment she had with the children, not only keeping a watchful eye over their play activities, but also going out of her way to help create magical childhood memories for them. She regularly helped them construct elaborate forts in the backyard and once even built a serpentine bike path in the backyard, using pieces of wood as street signs with her children's names to mark parts of the path.⁵³⁵

By the end of the year, however, Linda's happy routine was becoming increasingly more difficult to follow. Odd pains whose source she could not determine began to wrack her chest and upper abdomen. In addition, she was often exhausted and her appetite had slacked off. Though she was not experiencing pain in her breasts, Linda

⁵³³ Legs McNeil interview.

⁵³⁴ Barbara Boreman interview.

⁵³⁵ Legs McNeil interview.

at first suspected the trouble might be related to the silicone injections she had received several years before, which may have leaked. Finally, no longer able to ignore her fears and the pain, she scheduled an appointment at Sloan Kettering Hospital in Manhattan. A few mornings later, before Marchiano left for work, she told him she was going to have a routine breast exam and believed the results would confirm her suspicions. When she returned home later that evening, she reported that her fears were, in fact, legitimate: the silicone had leaked and was scattered throughout her breasts, and she would have to have a double mastectomy.

Wasting no time, a surgery date was scheduled and Linda's parents agreed to fly to New York to help watch the children. As part of the preoperative arrangements, Linda was also instructed to report to the hospital a few weeks in advance for preliminary tests. But then, only a few days prior to the scheduled surgery, Marchiano came home from work and discovered Linda sitting in her car parked on the driveway, crying. "What's going on?" he asked.

"The doctors took a needle and went into my liver today and I just found out I don't have to have a double mastectomy," Linda told him, "I just have to have a liver transplant." A simple blood test had revealed Linda was actually suffering from an acute case of hepatitis, most likely contracted when she received a blood transfusion after her 1970 auto accident.

The news was devastating. "We didn't know what a liver transplant was," said Marchiano. "Linda was just overjoyed that she didn't have to have the double mastectomy." They would soon discover, however, that the new diagnosis was a far more frightening proposition. By 1987, liver transplants had been performed in the

United States for several years, and while statistics on successful transplantation had gradually improved, it was still considered a dangerous operation, with rejection rates fairly high and life expectancy rates relatively low. Before Linda could receive a transplant, however, a different battery of tests would have to be performed, and only if she qualified would her name would be added to a long waiting list. This new turn of events was both surprising and disheartening news, and though Linda and Marchiano resolved to go through it as best they could, they were clearly in for a long ordeal. To add to their troubles, they were now informed that their medical insurance would not cover a liver transplant. Only in the past few years had they been able to get out of debt, but now a financial disaster loomed: if Linda was indeed a candidate for the transplant, they would have to sign over everything they owned to the hospital, including the family home and their two cars.⁵³⁶

In early March 1987, Linda's doctors informed her she was indeed a transplant candidate, but the surgery could not be performed locally. She was instructed instead to check in at Presbyterian Hospital in Pittsburgh, where she would be prepared for surgery and wait until a suitable donor liver was found. Their hopes rising, she and Marchiano caught the next available plane out. The next day, she was admitted to the hospital and Marchiano in turn stayed next door in a dorm at the adjoining Ronald McDonald House. He was nervous about the upcoming surgery, but Linda remained buoyant and positive. "Don't worry, Larry," she told him, "It will be all right." Once again, Linda firmly believed no experience—not even going under the knife for a risky procedure—could ever be as bad as the years of abuse she had endured from Traynor. Marchiano was not convinced, however, and in the evenings he would walk to a nearby store after visiting

⁵³⁶ Larry Marchiano interview.

hours and return with a grocery cart loaded with a case of beer, which he shared with the other dorm residents.

Amazingly, and against all odds, a donor match became available by the end of that week, and Linda was promptly wheeled out of her hospital room and prepped for surgery. The operation lasted over 14 hours, after which she was taken to an intensive care unit and listed in critical condition—a routine classification following transplantation surgery.⁵³⁷ Marchiano was told strict visiting hours would be enforced, but he had never spent a long time away from Linda in their years together, and he did not intend to do so now. In the week before the surgery, he had become familiar with the layout of the hospital and, having been warned that hospital protocol severely limited visiting hours for the first few post-surgical weeks for transplant recipients, had managed to obtain a stethoscope and a lab coat. Blending in with the hospital staff, he discovered he could come and go freely throughout the building without being questioned. He entered and left the transplant care unit at will during the following weeks, even during restricted hours, spending his days sitting alongside Linda.

The rest of the family was informed the two-week period following the transplant would be critical because that was when patients were most at risk for rejecting their new transplants. There was nothing they could do, then, but wait until the end of March and, with nearly daily updates from Marchiano, carefully monitor Linda's progress from a distance. When the seemingly interminable two weeks finally came to an end, Barbara, ever the concerned sister, arrived at the hospital where she was given directions to Linda's room on one of the upper floors. With no idea of what to expect, nothing could prepare Barbara for what happened when the elevator doors opened, for Linda had

⁵³⁷ "Linda Undergoes A Liver Transplant," *Variety*, 9 March 1987.

anticipated her arrival and was standing before her clad in a hospital gown. In one hand she clutched an IV pole, and in the other she held a white paper cup turned upside down on top of her head. To complete the effect, when the elevator door opened and Barbara stepped out, Linda began singing, “Happy birthday to my liver, happy birthday to my liver.” Barbara was stunned. Up to this moment, she had feared the worst, counted the minutes, and just prayed Linda’s transplanted liver would not be rejected. She did not, in her most optimistic moments, anticipate Linda would be up and about, much less greet her so ebulliently. Based on Barbara’s reaction, Linda clearly sensed this as well.

“What’s the matter, Barb?” she asked, “Can’t speak?”

“What are you doing out of bed?” Barbara demanded.

“The doctor said if I can do ten push-ups, I can go home, and believe me, in three weeks, I will go home.” Linda replied. Like Barbara, Marchiano too was amazed not only at Linda’s determination to recover quickly but by the courteous professionalism of the hospital staff. Everyone at Presbyterian Hospital, from doctors all the way down to orderlies, knew they had a former porn star in their midst. Her operation, after all, had been reported in *Variety*, *People* Magazine, and CNN, to name but a few media outlets. (Barbara had even gone so far as to contact *People* and suggest that all the moviegoers who had seen *Deep Throat* pitch in a quarter apiece to help cover her sister’s \$200,000 surgical expenses.⁵³⁸) And yet, no one ever treated Linda unkindly or so much as even gawked at her during her extended stay.

In spite of Linda’s confidence, the road to recovery was slow. Though there were no signs that her body was trying to reject her new liver, she was still vulnerable to

⁵³⁸ “Letters,” *People* Magazine 9 March 1987. Barbara Boreman confirmed this story as well during the October 15, 2005 interview.

postoperative infections and would require further, and extended, hospitalization. Finally, six weeks following her surgery, the doctors at last granted her permission to go outside. Out in the morning sunlight, Marchiano was struck anew by Linda's beauty and in particular the freckles on her face. Of course he knew she had always had freckles, but following the surgery, her slow recovery, and the harsh fluorescent lighting in the hospital, she had lately seemed sallow and washed out. But outside in sunlight, her freckles were once again prominent. And, though she had remained upbeat throughout the long, drawn out process, her spirits now soared even higher. "I think I'm going to live," she told Marchiano. A month later, she was completely discharged from the hospital, and though she would require years of careful follow up exams, she had managed to beat the odds and survive.

Over the next year and a half, Linda made steady progress with her convalescence, but as the weeks and months passed, Marchiano noticed a slow but evident change in her disposition. Though she had always remained steadfastly cheerful on the surface, even in the darkest of times, she seemed deep down to be afflicted with an underlying sadness that may have been exacerbated when her older sister, Jean, informed the family she had been diagnosed with an advanced form of breast cancer. By the time the doctors made the discovery, in late 1987, they were able to detect over 13 lumps. Her physicians recommended a radical double mastectomy but Jean balked at the advice, Linda believed, largely because she was too vain to have her breasts removed. Both Linda and Barbara encouraged Jean to proceed with the surgery, but she adamantly refused to do so. "How would you like it," she angrily asked her surgeon, "if I cut off both your balls?" Instead she insisted on tinkering with homeopathic remedies, but to no

avail. On April 27, 1988, Jean lost her battle with breast cancer. Her death devastated Linda. Not only had Linda lost a beloved older sister, but she was frustrated at the senselessness of it, believing Jean's vanity had gotten the better of her. Years later Linda remained convinced that had Jean followed her doctors'—and her sisters'—advice she would still be alive.

Compounding this loss, Marchiano's drywall business faltered in the spring of 1988. Marchiano was determined, however, to keep his business going and instead of waiting idly for jobs to come his way he visited coffee shops, bars, and restaurants up and down Long Island looking for work, but there was simply nothing available. Again the Marchiano family witnessed another setback. The profits from *Ordeal* and *Out of Bondage* helped keep food on the table, but Marchiano and Linda could only watch in despair as their bank account shrank further and further with every passing month.

In 1989, Marchiano decided to take a short break to see his sister in Denver, Colorado, who had just given birth to her first child, in the hope it might do him some good to spend time visiting with his family. Up to this time, both Marchiano and Linda had spent most of their lives on the East coast, with the exception of the brief years they lived in Los Angeles trying to promote Linda's film career in the mid-1970s. Though they had traveled extensively between the coasts, and had briefly stopped here and there for book signings and other appearances, neither one had spent any real time in the Midwest, or paid much attention to their surroundings. When Marchiano first arrived, then, he was struck by how absolutely different everything was compared to Long Island. It was not just mountains. Denver, it appeared, was booming. In every direction he turned, he saw endless numbers of properties in all phases of development. Emboldened

and excited by the possibilities, he promptly headed to the biggest home builder in Denver and applied for a job. In short order, he was hired as a sheet rocker starting at \$30,000 a year. He excitedly called Linda and told her they needed to move to Denver right away. “You’re crazy,” she responded. The salary, \$30,000, was a small fraction of what he had been making when work was steady on Long Island, and Linda was wary of moving halfway across the country and putting their children in a new school. But Marchiano knew how to sell his wife on the relocation. Linda loved to shop and decorate, and he assured her their first priority would be to find and furnish a new house. Linda agreed to at least come out to Denver and take a look around.⁵³⁹ Once she had, she agreed that they should at least give it a try.

In 1989, the Marchianos moved to Littleton, Colorado, bought a small three-bedroom house on Euclid Street and quickly settled into a comfortable routine. Marchiano excelled at his new job, and Linda once again concentrated on keeping house and caring for the now thirteen-year-old Dominic and eight-year-old Lindsay. Still, there was time to maintain her ties to anti-pornography feminists and, when invited, she regularly spoke at colleges and universities about her experience filming *Deep Throat*. Yet, in hindsight, Marchiano now recognized the move did not herald the fresh start he had hoped for. However hard she had worked at covering it up, Linda continued to grow unhappier and visibly more depressed over the next five years.

Alcohol was undoubtedly a principal factor, for Linda’s drinking habits intensified following their move to Colorado. As well, Linda had always considered herself something of a “hippie” and continued regularly to smoke marijuana, an old habit she acquired in the early 1970s. In both *Ordeal* and *Out of Bondage*, Linda herself

⁵³⁹ Larry Marchiano interview.

documented a long history of addiction to various substances, but she always assured her reader she was no longer using. This was clearly untrue, and by the mid-1990s her addiction problems had gotten the better of her. Andrea Dworkin believed Linda's past association with Traynor fueled her addictions. "She was gang raped and then she was serially raped. And it destroys something in you, no matter how hard you fight it." Accepting that, it is little wonder she never stopped drinking or using drugs. In fact, in 1992, Marchiano found a job for her as a secretary for a local construction company. At first, Linda seemed to enjoy the work and performed well at the job, but within a year and a half she was fired. Author Joe Bob Briggs, known among other things for his devotion to American cult films, first reported this story in a 2002 online article he wrote for the *National Review*, attributing her termination to "falsifying a time card." (This was a curious choice of words, suggesting to the reader that regardless of her occupation, in either the porn industry or as a secretary, Linda might have been incapable of ever telling the truth.) The truth was that Linda was terminated because her drinking had increased to the point where it affected her work. She had gotten into the habit of taking an hourly lunch, and on Friday afternoons in particular would return to the office and clock back in, but then leave 15 minutes later to begin weekend revelries without punching back out. When her boss discovered this, she was fired.

Dworkin's analysis of Linda's addiction problems may be correct. Linda may well have relied on alcohol and drugs to escape the specter of *Deep Throat* and her earlier work in the porn industry.⁵⁴⁰ Marchiano, too, believed her past involvement with pornography may well have played a role in her addiction but pointed out that she was unfailingly optimistic through most of the years they were together. "She was one of the

⁵⁴⁰ Andrea Dworkin interview.

happiest persons I've ever seen in my life. Where does it go to addiction and alcohol? I don't know."⁵⁴¹

Perhaps, too, Linda's wish for escape was partially driven by the fact that her children were getting older and would inevitably soon learn the truth about their mother. The thought could hardly be comforting. How, after all, would they react and what could she possibly say to them? One of the few hints came during her interview on the *Phil Donahue Show*, during which she had denounced reports, and her own earlier statements, that she had enjoyed making *Deep Throat*. She expressed the hope her son (Lindsay was not yet conceived) might one day read *Ordeal* and understand that she had been more a victim than a willing participant.

And, it turned out, in fact, that Dominic was the easy one. At an early age, Linda informed him she had once been injured due to her involvement in a bad industry. How much of this Dominic understood is unknown. However, the revelation certainly came when he was in his early teens, shortly after Linda found some porn magazines in his room. Angered by the discovery, Linda insisted that he read *Ordeal* in order to get a more realistic idea of the pain and anguish entailed in making of porn. The tactic evidently worked. By all accounts, Dominic was never apparently embarrassed by his mother's past and always told her how proud he was of her.⁵⁴²

Lindsay, however, took the news of her mother's former celebrity life and involvement with pornography much harder than her older brother. Though Linda had occasionally brought her to speaking engagements at colleges and universities, Lindsay later claimed she had no idea her mother had once been a famous porn star until she was 12-years-old. She learned the truth when a student in her school approached her with a copy of the *Playboy* magazine in which Linda had once posed. Lindsay bore a remarkable resemblance to her mother and the kids at school teased her about the photo

⁵⁴¹ Larry Marchiano interview.

⁵⁴² Ruth Nash, telephone interview, tape recorded, 15 November 2005, and Eric Danville, telephone interview, tape recorded, 15 August 2004.

spread. That afternoon, Lindsay came home from school expressing anger and disbelief to her mother. "Actually, that is me," Linda told her. As she had with Dominic, she then encouraged Lindsay to read *Ordeal*. Lindsay complied, but said she found the book too difficult to understand.⁵⁴³

After Linda's secret was out in the open, Lindsay recalled her mother now shared fond remembrances of her former celebrity life, though never in Marchiano's presence. For instance, when she played a Led Zeppelin CD, she would tell Lindsay the story of how she once introduced the band at the Forum in Los Angeles, and occasionally, when Marchiano was at work, she would bring out boxes of postcards and mementos she had acquired when she traveled through Europe at the height of her fame.

These had to be difficult years for Lindsay. She has recounted, for instance, that when she was thirteen the reading material for one of her social studies class was *Parade Magazine*. She was horrified to discover a reader had written a question about her mother in the April 18, 1993, issue, in the "Personality Parade" section, featuring questions from readers about film celebrities. The brief paragraph written about Linda indicated she was married to Larry Marchiano and listed Lindsay's and Dominic's names. Linda helped Lindsay by meeting with her teacher, who was very understanding, and cancelled the assignment for that week.

It seemed for Lindsay there was no escaping her mother's past. No causality can be established with certainty (regarding Lindsay's shame over Linda's past), but Lindsay would subsequently become far more of a discipline problem than Dominic ever was. By the time she was fifteen, she had begun coming home well past her curfew, and this gradually evolved to staying out all night at a keg party. Marchiano was furious and grounded her for the rest of the school year. The punishment only exacerbated Lindsay's relationship with her parents, and Lindsay continued to act out even more. She eventually dropped out of high school in her junior year after she became pregnant. Linda was devastated by this turn of events but mindful of her own experience with an out of wedlock child did not pressure Lindsay to give up the baby for adoption. Instead, Lindsay eventually moved out and lived with the father of her child. Following the birth of the child, a boy she named A.J., Linda turned her attention to becoming a doting grandmother.⁵⁴⁴

The troubles with Lindsay, and the constant drinking and drugging were all beginning to take their toll and Linda and Marchiano's marriage was showing the strain. Finally, in an attempt to stem the tide, Marchiano began attending Alcohol Anonymous meetings and quit. Linda was either unable or unwilling to follow his example and continued to drink. She soon became more incapable of being either a functioning wife

⁵⁴³ Lindsay Marchiano, interview by Fenton Bailey, 18 November 2003, transcript, World Of Wonder Production Company Archives, Hollywood, Ca.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

or parent. By the beginning of 1996, their marriage had unraveled very nearly beyond repair. The final straw for Marchiano was an incident that took place when he returned home late from work one evening to find Lindsay and a group of her friends drinking beer and smoking marijuana in the kitchen. Linda, it seemed, was passed out in their upstairs bedroom. Marchiano ordered Lindsay's friends out of the house and then woke up Linda and angrily confronted her. From then on, the split was irrevocable and what little that was left of their marriage totally disintegrated. In April of that year, after 22 years of marriage, Marchiano filed for divorce.⁵⁴⁵

Marchiano had filed the papers, but the decision to do so, as it turned out, was largely mutual. Over the years, his quick fuse and short temper had worn Linda down, and she, too, was exhausted by the never-ending chore of trying to make the marriage work. Relieved that it was at last over, she called up her friend Patsy Carroll and told her the news, "Can you believe, after 22 years of marriage, I'm getting a divorce."⁵⁴⁶

By the summer of 1996, Linda had moved out of their home and into a small apartment in Littleton. In the subsequent divorce settlement, Linda and Marchiano sold their home and split the proceeds. But Linda had to this point relied on Marchiano's income, which had steadily grown to somewhere in the \$60,000 range. In the wake of the separation, Linda's predicament was something of an irony, given her past involvement with feminist debates on sex and pornography. Suddenly, Linda found herself just like the thousands of other women who in the wake of divorce find themselves in financial straits. Having been occupied keeping house and raising children, she neither had time, nor the necessity, to hone what meager job skills she had, or to get

⁵⁴⁵ Marchiano interview.

⁵⁴⁶ Carroll interview.

any work experience. Consequently, there was little for which she was qualified, and she was forced to take a series of low end secretarial jobs to make ends meet and was always low on cash.⁵⁴⁷ Luckily, her father, John, was able and willing to come to her rescue. Seven months after her divorce, he loaned her the money to purchase an \$89,000 condo in Englewood, Colorado. Barbara, Linda's older sister, said that John continued from then on to bail her out of one tight spot after another, essentially supporting her for the remainder of her life.⁵⁴⁸

The six years following Linda's divorce were filled with job after dead-end secretarial job and occasional appearances at feminist functions. She still enjoyed the speeches at colleges, for which she received modest compensation and, more importantly, the approbation of the audiences, including the occasional standing ovation. Otherwise, these years were a time of nearly constant turmoil. Her drinking, which she managed to keep a secret from her feminist contacts and friends, remained a problem.

Through it all, she could not escape, nor let go of her cherished "star" history. In one telling example, she was invited in 2000 by her feminist friends to participate in a protest at a showing of *Deep Throat* in Scandinavia. Unfortunately, her supervisor refused to give her the necessary time off, telling her, "This happened a long time ago. I think you need to get over it and get back to work." Linda persisted, telling

⁵⁴⁷ See Sandra Opdycke's documentation of trends in women's income in *The Routledge Historical Atlas of Women in America*. Ed. Mark C. Carnes, (New York: Routledge Press, 2000), 116. She notes, "Women's child-rearing responsibilities were a significant factor in their lower earnings. When because of their children women entered the workforce later or took a few years off in mid-career, or chose part-time jobs, or avoided positions that involved extended or long hours, these decisions usually cost them money, both in lost raises and in the lost opportunity to keep pace with their male colleagues." She further notes, "The disparity between male and female earnings often caused a sharp drop in a woman's standard of living after a divorce..."

⁵⁴⁸ Barbara Boreman interview.

him, “I’d like to get over this, but I can’t.” After a heated exchange, she was given a choice: go back to work or quit. She cleaned out her desk.⁵⁴⁹

The royalties from *Ordeal* and *Out of Bondage* were another, however unreliable, source of income.⁵⁵⁰ Often, Linda called Mike McGrady, her co-author, to seek his help, but there was only so much he could do, and the royalties remained minimal. Mike and his wife, Corinne, tried to talk Linda into seeking training for better jobs, but “I think she only thought in terms of small jobs,” Corinne said. Her and Mike’s greatest fear was that they would one day pick up a newspaper and read that despite her assurances she was finished with the porn industry, Linda had gotten back into the industry she had forsaken.

Linda spoke little of the grim circumstances of her life during the years following her divorce, with the exception of what would be her last major interview, with Fawn Germer of the *Rocky Mountain News*, in early 1997. Germer had been an investigative reporter for many years and had grown interested in feminist subjects following a series of articles she wrote about domestic violence. One day, Germer was intrigued to learn that Linda had given a speech at the University of Denver along with feminist activist Robin Morgan. Germer contacted Morgan, who told her Linda lived in the Denver area, and put her in touch for an interview. When she contacted her, however, Linda was reluctant and told Germer she was simply not interested in any newspaper exposure at that time. Soon after, however, she changed her mind, and the two women finally agreed to meet at a nearby Einstein’s Bagel shop.

⁵⁴⁹ Eric Danville interview.

⁵⁵⁰ Mike McGrady interview.

When Linda showed up for the interview, Germer thought she looked “used up,” which she attributed to recent divorce.⁵⁵¹ Germer had done her homework on Linda. She asked about her role in *Deep Throat*, of course, and her feelings then and subsequently about pornography as it related to her life and the feminist ethic and movement. She also asked about her testimony before the Meese Commission, her speaking engagements, and her books. And, as anyone else who had followed Linda for the past two decades, she was keenly interested in the old but never adequately answered question: Why hadn’t she tried to escape from Chuck Traynor?

Linda was generally cooperative and open in her answers, but wary of discussing Traynor and sidestepped any questions about their relationship. Instead she steered the interview toward a discussion of her current problems and preferred to complain about her present circumstances.

One of Linda’s comments—“I prostituted myself so I could have kids”—stood out for Germer. The comment made little sense since Linda’s days of prostitution clearly pre-dated her marriage to Marchiano and the birth of her children. Looking back, however, it may be because by this time she was so battered by fate and fortune that cause and effect and time were muddled. Always pushed and shoved this way and that by outside forces, it is also likely that her thinking here was influenced by the rhetoric of the women with whom she had been associated in the feminist movement more than any level-headed, rational thinking. Perhaps, too, Linda could only think of relationships with men as involving some form of sexual inequality or bondage—though Germer never queried her any further about this. In any event, shortly after the comment, Linda slid her

⁵⁵¹ Fawn Germer, telephone interview with author 23 August 2004.

resume across the table. It boasted proficiency with basic computer programs. Germer was jarred by the reality that one of the most famous pornographic film stars of the 1970s was now looking for secretarial work and that she had consented to the interview only as a means of networking for a new job.

Following the interview, Germer asked Linda if she would consent to be photographed for the article. Linda agreed to the shoot, but only if she was fully clothed, and shot from behind so her face would not show. Arrangements were made for Linda to meet with a staff photographer, but she stood him up twice. After the third rescheduling, she kept the appointment.

The interview had been somewhat surreal, but what happened when Germer submitted her piece to her editor was even more disturbing. Instead of crosschecking the facts himself, he called Germer and relentlessly grilled her. “How do you know this?” he demanded, “How do you know she testified before the Meese Commission?”

Germer was stunned. In her three years as a reporter for the *News*, she had written many controversial stories that the editor had left untouched. With this story, however, what she thought was a rather innocuous piece had evidently been elevated to a subject too dangerous for the *News*. When the story did run on April 27, 1997, it was completely toned down from original version. “I don’t think they were as sensitive to the idea of a porn queen being in the paper as they were to a porn queen making some statements about men who exploit them,” said Germer.⁵⁵²

In 1998, Linda received a phone call from New York from Eric Danville, who had worked for such periodicals as *High Times* and *Screw*, and was currently a writer for *Penthouse Forum*. As a writer in the pornography industry, Danville knew his subject

⁵⁵² Fawn Germer interview.

well and over the years had developed a fascination with *Deep Throat*, recognizing Linda as an iconographic figure who had never gotten the credit she deserved. Danville had thus decided to write a long piece on Linda and the cultural impact of *Deep Throat*, which he eventually entitled *The Complete Linda Lovelace*. At first he envisioned the piece as a semi-biography featuring select interviews with insiders in the industry, but as the project evolved, he instead focused his efforts on what would be a comprehensive catalogue of books, music, and magazine articles written about both Linda and *Deep Throat*. Danville realized, however, that the *piece de resistance* would be an interview with Linda herself. After a brief search, he tracked down Linda and called her. Suspecting she might very well be wary of his affiliation with the pornography industry, he decided honesty was the best policy and mentioned his credentials up front, including his past affiliation with *Screw Magazine*'s editor, Al Goldstein. When Linda heard Goldstein's name, she immediately told Danville, "I don't think I'm interested," and hung up.⁵⁵³

Linda immediately picked up the phone and called Andrea Dworkin. Someone from the porn industry had tracked her down, she told Dworkin, and she was terrified. She needed to go into hiding immediately and needed help moving out of her apartment. Dworkin patiently explained she could not catch a plane at the last minute, urged Linda to calm down and sit tight, assuring her she had nothing to fear. In retrospect, Linda's reaction to the call seems exaggerated, yet it was not entirely unreasonable. Danville was, after all, the first solicitation from a pornography insider in well over a decade. In addition, she was in all likelihood drinking and using drugs heavily at the time, which

⁵⁵³ Eric Danville interview.

may have made her somewhat paranoid. Caught off guard, she was understandably panicked.

Danville, however, was persistent, and called back a week later. He repeatedly assured her was not interested in another sensational, exploitative interview, nor was he a crazed fan. He told Linda he was working on a retrospective and he described in detail the work he had thus far completed. Finally Linda gave in. “It sounds interesting, what you’re doing, but I want to get a sense of you and meet face to face.”⁵⁵⁴ She proposed meeting Danville at Mike McGrady’s house outside of Seattle, telling Danville she trusted the instincts of her former co-author. She then called McGrady, who was skeptical but agreed to at least talk to Danville. Danville, having gotten McGrady’s number from Linda, called him, but the conversation did not go well. McGrady was suspicious and skeptical about the intent of Danville’s book and reneged on his agreement to meet him. Disappointed but undeterred, Danville called Linda back and asked again if he could meet with her in Colorado. This time, she consented.

Why she did, after her initial terror, is not clear. It is possible that, in the course of their phone calls, she got a better sense of what he was trying to do. It is also possible she realized that the pornography business had changed dramatically since she had made *Deep Throat*. Porn was more permissible. Besides, as she told Patsy Carroll, she realized that people had been making money off of *Deep Throat* since 1972 so she thought she might as well, too.

In any event, Danville made arrangements to fly to Denver. The interview was to be the first she had agreed to give to someone from inside the pornography business in over a decade. This was news, and Danville excitedly shared his good fortune with a few

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

close colleagues. Among them was Diana Hansen, the editor-in-chief for a glossy fetish magazine entitled *Leg Show*, with whom he dined the night before his scheduled departure. Hansen was impressed when Danville told her Linda had agreed to meet with him. “Do me a favor,” she told him. “See if she wants to pose for *Leg Show*. Tell her she won’t have to be naked. She can pose in lingerie. I can get her some money.” Danville agreed to do so, and the next morning boarded his flight to Denver.

Linda had agreed to pick up Danville at the airport, though she asked him beforehand what he looked like so she could better recognize him. Danville told her not to worry and assured her he would most assuredly recognize her. After deplaning, however, he grew more and more uneasy as he watched people stream past him. “Wow,” he thought, “Maybe I really don’t know what she’s going to look like.” Then he spotted her. She looked exactly as he had imagined a 50-year-old Linda Lovelace would look! She was 30 years beyond when the world knew her as the most famous porn queen of all time, but still, “I thought she was really, really cute,” said Danville. “She was a good looking older woman!”⁵⁵⁵

Linda turned out to be, in Danville’s estimation, “At heart, an old hippie from the early 1970s who kept that kind of drug ethic going on most of her life.”⁵⁵⁶ It was not long after she met him, in fact, that Linda confessed that she smoked weed regularly and, of late, had acquired a habit of using methamphetamines. She also drank. In fact, she told him as they left the airport that she needed to stop at a store to pick up some beer. Danville accompanied her in, and as she reached into the cooler, she asked if he wanted a couple as well. “Sure,” Danville said, “I’ll have two.” Linda grabbed two six packs for

⁵⁵⁵ Eric Danville interview.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

Danville and two more for herself. “Wait a second,” Danville protested, “I thought you meant bottles. I’ll just have the one.” Linda got a couple six packs for herself, and they returned to her condo, where they drank one after the other. But Danville could not keep up. By the night’s end, he was clearly drunk, but Linda seemed barely effected. “This woman is 50-years-old and she’s drinking me under the table,” he thought to himself. The following morning, he was hung over and barely able to get out of bed, but Linda, who had consumed a considerable amount more than he had, was up and about, urging him to get out of bed so they could start the day.⁵⁵⁷

After this auspicious start, Danville and Linda got along quite well. Danville was a congenial sort, smart, and easy to get along with. Sprinkling his talk with “hon” and “dear” and “sweetie,” he had Linda at her ease as they spent the weekend hanging around her condo and chatting amicably as the interview progressed. Linda was open and gracious in response to Danville’s prepared questions. He had long known that many people in the porn industry were bitter about Linda’s affiliation with anti-porn feminists, and regarded her as a vicious turncoat. Danville had thought that assertion was exaggerated and was glad to find the truth to be more nuanced. Linda Lovelace was not “this kind of horrible shrewish person,” said Danville. Rather, she was more realistically ambivalent. She was not, in fact, totally against porn in spite of the way she had been painted by the anti-porn feminists. She had even, at one point, encouraged her son, Dominic, to be an exotic dancer to make money. She herself, she insisted emphatically, had been an unwilling participant, “But she realized there were people who could participate in the industry and come out of it unscathed.”⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

Other things Linda told him caught him completely off guard. “Are you a happy person?” he asked her. “My kids don’t respect me,” she told him, probably recalling the tensions between her and Lindsay. “The feeling I got,” said Danville, “was they had to put up with a lot for having Linda Lovelace as a mother. I think that definitely had some effect on them.”⁵⁵⁹

Danville was also surprised at the bitterness Linda expressed towards the anti-pornographers and feminists she had befriended in the early 1980s. When they needed an example of how pornography harmed women, Linda felt they paraded her out as “our porno victim.” Adding insult to injury, the feminists stopped calling her as soon as the issue of pornography faded from the national consciousness following the Meese Investigation. “They wouldn’t call her up just to chat or make nice with her or anything like that,” he reported.⁵⁶⁰ Years later the rejection still stung Linda, as well as her sense that many feminists regarded her as beneath them. She was not as educated as those who were speaking on her behalf: they could make an example of her, but she was never good enough to be considered their equal, as exemplified, she told Danville, by the fact that Gloria Steinam did not invite her to her wedding in 2000. She had watched from the sidelines as a broader movement flourished and catapulted others to fame but left her behind. While she had continued to speak at college lectures, being paid only a modest amount for her efforts, she had watched in frustration as a long line of other feminists repeated and capitalized on her story to sell their own books and magazine articles but never gave her a dime.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

Some of the things Linda told him he had read and heard before. She insisted, as she always had, that she did not favor censorship of any kind. She recognized that many workers in the sex industry were consensual participants but insisted she had not been one of them. She told Danville all she could do, in fact, all she had ever done, was speak out about her own personal experience in the industry. She only had a complaint about the film that catapulted her to superstardom, and her solution to the problem was as clear as it was impossible. “I think,” said Danville, “she wished *Deep Throat* would disappear.”⁵⁶²

Linda was a sophisticated interviewee in ways that Danville had not anticipated. He had not appreciated, for instance, how smart she was about working the press to her own advantage. Whenever, for example, she was speaking publicly or for the tape recorder during their interview, she referred to Chuck Traynor as “Mr. Traynor,” while in a casual conversation, however, she would say “Chuck” or “Chuck Traynor.” How cleverly, he noted, did she thus negate, for the record, any emotional involvement with Traynor. Clever, too, as she sorted through a box of photographs and old newspaper clippings, how she paused at one item that had been sent to her by Mike McGrady. It was a book review of *Ordeal* which featured Linda’s often repeated quote; “Whenever someone watches that movie, they’re watching me being raped.” McGrady had scribbled “Yeah” in the margins, indicating he found the quote direct and to the point. When Linda saw the old clipping, she rolled her eyes and laughed, “Oh Jesus, Linda, get a new line, would ya.” Whether that was sophistication or cynicism he was not sure, but Danville was nonetheless intrigued by this response, and later realized that he, as well as many others before him, had likely underestimated how media-savvy she was. “By even

⁵⁶² Ibid.

volunteering that, I knew she understood the power of the media and how one good line will be repeated for the next twenty years,” he said. “She was no dummy. She has been internationally famous since the time she was 22-years-old, and when you’re that young and the media is all over you, you learn what it’s like.”⁵⁶³

For Danville, the weekend spent with Linda was a smashing success and, just before returning to New York, he felt comfortable enough to ask Linda if she would be interested in Diane Hansen’s proposal. “There is nudity in *Leg Show*, but you don’t have to be naked,” he told her. Linda’s response was immediate. “How much will it pay?” To this day, Danville has refused to disclose how much money was offered, but Marchiano indicated the amount was \$5,000. Danville agreed to contact Linda about the specifics of the contract and promised to be in touch again soon. Within a few months, the contract was signed and arrangements were made for the photo session.

The money undeniably influenced Linda’s decision to pose for *Leg Show* but she also possibly recognized that despite her past affiliation with Women Against Pornography, she had issues with many of the ideas they espoused. She had, after all, always maintained she was opposed to censorship and was certainly aware of the growing movement that steadfastly opposed the pro-censorship stance of Dworkin, MacKinnon, and Women Against Pornography that had dominated the feminists’ pornography debates of the 1980s. Led in part by Nadine Strossen, then-president of the American Civil Liberties Union, this new wing of feminists had risen to counter what they perceived as inappropriate efforts to censor not only pornography but just about any image deemed provocative or sexually explicit. Strossen, in particular, was troubled that Dworkin and MacKinnon had elected to wage a counterattack on pornography under the

⁵⁶³ Ibid.

aegis of feminism, and she collectively referred to their camp, and others who embraced similar notions, as "MacDworkinites." Any effort at censorship could only harm feminist causes, not advance them, Strossen thought. It was not just Strossen who was wary of the rightward-leaning ideas of MacKinnon and Dworkin: other organizations committed to freedom of expression had sprung up as well, including the Feminist Anti-Censorship Taskforce, Feminists for Free Expression, and the National Coalition Against Censorship's Working Group on Women, Censorship and "Pornography." Though these groups varied in their organizational style and methods, they had one thing in common: A dedication to promoting feminist issues, which they believed could only be hurt if an association with conservative, pro-censorship forces continued.⁵⁶⁴

Linda flew to New York in the fall of 2000 to pose for *Leg Show* Magazine. As Hansen had promised, no nudity was involved. Instead, Linda posed in a variety of lingerie outfits and stiletto shoes. During the shoot, Danville was struck by how naturally she performed in front of the camera. It was apparent that she had never forgotten tricks of the trade she had learned years before. She required virtually no coaching or suggestions from the photographer as she spontaneously assumed a series of provocative poses.

In the interview that accompanied the spread, Linda told Danville nothing was wrong with a woman being in her 50s and acting sexy. This was not just an empty justification. Conscious of her figure and both pleased and proud that even in her fifties she had maintained a svelte profile, she enjoyed being appreciated as a woman. In fact, after the shoot when Danville told Linda that he had also interviewed Marilyn Chambers,

⁵⁶⁴ Nadine Strossen, *Defending Pornography: Free Speech, Sex, and the Fight for Women's Rights*, (New York, Scribner, 1995), 23.

Traynor's second wife, only one month earlier, Linda quickly asked how she looked. "She's okay," Danville told her, adding, "She's put on a few pounds." Linda leaned towards Danville and gave him a slight wink, "I was always better looking than she was," she told him.⁵⁶⁵

Danville was committed to helping Linda, but he was also trying to promote his own book, which was now titled *The Complete Linda Lovelace*. He made arrangements for Linda to come to New York for a joint autograph session, paid for her plane ticket and her hotel room, and pledged 10% of his book sale earnings to her. The only condition was that she sign her name "Lovelace" instead of "Boreman." She was hesitant at first, but then told Danville, "Okay, I'll do it." Unfortunately the bindery did not finish the book in time, so Danville had no product for her to autograph. He told Linda to come to New York anyway. He would put together some glossy photographs for her to sign since they were already scheduled to autograph *something*. Linda agreed, with the stipulation that she not be depicted nude, to which Danville readily complied. He also arranged for three or four autograph collectors to meet Linda. As it turned out, that was a shrewd move, for they bought every single picture that she signed, netting her approximately \$10,000 in three days. The amount shocked Linda. Here she had distanced herself from *Deep Throat* for some 30 years, never realizing the extent to which there was a profitable nostalgia angle to be played.

The signing was a success for other reasons as well. Excited fans told Linda how much her life story had meant to them. "People would come by and say, 'I read *Ordeal* and it helped me get away from an abusive boyfriend.'" But they also told Linda, "*Deep Throat* was the first porn movie I ever saw with my wife, and my sex life is so great."

⁵⁶⁵ Eric Danville interview.

Linda was so pleased that she offered Danville 15% of the profit for working as her manager, but he refused. “I’m not your manager,” he emphatically told her, “I don’t want you to say that I’m your manager. I’m just your friend.” He suggested that she could reimburse him for the hotel room and the plane ticket if she wanted to, and they would call it even. Danville said he never made a dime off the project, but it was here that he observed what he considered Linda’s fatal flaw. “In addition to being so helpless and directionless, she was also a really malleable person. You could get her to do anything, if you told her you thought it was in her best interests.”⁵⁶⁶

There was more to the New York trip than signing autographs. Sometime during the weekend, Danville mentioned a screening of Candida Royalle films starring Veronica Vera showing at a local theater. Royalle was part of the vanguard movement of women who embraced pornography, believing it did not inherently degrade women and need not be solely produced for male audiences. Royalle’s aim for the past ten years had been to produce erotic pornography oriented toward female audiences. Her films were geared toward female orgasm and a woman’s pleasure and had in the process furthered the notion that pornography could be respectable.⁵⁶⁷ Linda knew of Royalle’s films and was impressed with the work she was doing. She told Danville she wanted to see them. This made Danville uncomfortable, but he told her, “If you want to go see this stuff, I’m not going to tell you what to do.” Whatever misgivings he may have had, he nevertheless accompanied Linda to the theater and, after the showing, introduced her to Royalle. At their first introduction, Royalle observed Linda was still svelte but also estimated Linda

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁷ See Candida Royalle, “Porn in the U.S.A.” from *Feminism and Pornography*, ed. Drucilla Cornell, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 540-550. Royalle explains the philosophy behind Femme Productions, the company she founded, which produces pornography aimed at women.

had gone through some difficult times. “She just looked like a woman who had lived hard,” Royale thought.⁵⁶⁸ Still, they had a nice conversation in the theater lobby. Overall Royale found Linda to be likeable. “She was just so sweet, and ... almost defenseless,” said Royale. Linda then mentioned she was frustrated at how other people were using her name to make money and was now prepared to use that notoriety for her own advantage. She asked if Royale could provide any assistance. Royale said she would be happy to help in any way she could. “Please Linda, call me,” she told her, “Let me work with you to get something going for yourself. Something you can feel okay about.”⁵⁶⁹ Linda, she noted, would never call.

Danville too observed that Linda seemed awed by the changes in porn since the days of *Deep Throat* and by the fact that women could act in the industry without being exploited. She was also awed when Danville mentioned Annie Sprinkle, a successful performance artist who explored issues of gender and the body in her experimental theatrical routine. In 1972, at the age of 19, Sprinkle had worked in a concession stand at a porn theater, which for her was a life-changing event. One afternoon, local authorities raided the theater and confiscated the print. The film was none other than *Deep Throat*. Sprinkle was later called to testify during the subsequent obscenity trial. Waiting in the lobby outside of the courtroom, Sprinkle befriended another witness who had been called to testify—Gerard Damiano, the film’s director. Sprinkle would later become Damiano’s mistress for several years. She would also go on to star in several porn films herself before segueing into experimental theatrical performances and book writing.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁸ Candida Royale, telephone interview with author 23 July 2004.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁰ Annie Sprinkle, telephone interview with author 25 August 2004.

Danville told Linda that Sprinkle had been inspirational to many women in the industry and had on multiple occasions mentioned how *Deep Throat* and Linda's performance had inspired her. "She's happy in the business," Danville told Linda. "If it wasn't for you, she would not have gotten into this." Linda, recalled Danville, did not know what to make of that. She had never before heard of any one she had influenced to work in the industry and whose experience had been positive.

By the time the weekend was over, Linda had started to recognize that pornography was a more complicated phenomenon than she had thought and that it could empower as well as oppress. The money she had made, the approbation of fans she hadn't even begun to guess she had, the inspiration of Royale and Sprinkle had combined to make the weekend one of the best in her later years. By the time her plane landed in Denver not only could she pay off some of her old bills, but her spirit was renewed.

Six months later *The Complete Linda Lovelace* was published. Danville asked Linda to return to New York for a second autograph signing convention. Linda told him she would sign his book to help promote sales, but she also wanted to sign 8 x 10 photographs of herself, as she had before. Danville explained if she did that, she would essentially be competing with him. People might prefer her autograph to his book. "Well, why would I sit at that table and make 10% on the book, when I could sign autographs and keep all the money myself?" she asked. Danville was stung by this, but patiently explained he had to recoup the money he had made with his self-published book. Linda finally agreed to attend the second autograph signing session, but she was three hours late. By that time, though, Danville had become frustrated with Linda and their

relationship had grown strained. Danville observed that regardless of anything he did to help her, Linda seemed vulnerable and emotionally needy.

“Needy” was the operational word, for Linda had once again reverted to form. Danville had revived her career, and as she had done with Traynor, Winters, and even Larry Marchiano, she latched on to him and sought his advice. Typically, she began calling him once or twice a week to talk about both professional and personal matters. Soon, however, she was calling Danville in the middle of the night. At first too polite to ask her to call at a more reasonable hour, he took her calls, even though she sounded drunk and occasionally rambled incoherently. But enough was soon enough, and after a few weeks, he told her, “Look, you can’t keep calling me at 3 a.m.” Linda was immediately apologetic, and though he thought setting boundaries with her was necessary, he also suspected that when he did so, she would likely drift to someone else for a sense of direction.

In fact, this is exactly what happened. Through contacts she had made through Danville, Linda had now begun to participate in memorabilia shows. These weekend ventures were held at various convention centers across the country and usually involved vendors hawking collector items and autographed merchandise from classic films and television shows from the past. Linda now began to make regular appearances at these shows, but Danville learned she was now not only signing photographs but fans’ video copies of *Deep Throat*. “If someone is going to pay me ten to twenty dollars for a signed copy of *Deep Throat*, I’m going to do it,” she told Danville. “That’s fine,” he told her, but privately this new development disturbed him.

As he feared, Linda was likely heading down what he considered a dangerous path. He thought he had offered Linda a chance to make money in a dignified fashion, but he sensed now she was crossing a line. Following the success of the New York shows with Danville and her participation in other shows across the country, others who were less well-meaning saw the opportunity to capitalize on Linda's return to the pornography business. One of them, Joe Coleman, producer of "The Thriller Theater Show," contacted Linda. Coleman, a colorful throwback to the old circus barkers, hosted conventions every three or four months that celebrated classic 1950s sci-fi and horror films and hosted vendors selling collectors' items that celebrated kitsch and macabre aspects of American culture. With her notoriety from *Deep Throat*, he thought Linda would be a perfect compliment to his shows. When Linda informed him she had been contacted by Coleman, Danville was suspicious. "I'm not sure I like the idea of you turning her into a circus freak, that you can have Linda showing people around and seeing two headed babies in jars," he told Coleman. Linda, however, was excited about the deal and the money Coleman offered and agreed to participate. Coleman, in turn, had some t-shirts printed up with the phrase "I choked Linda Lovelace." Danville fumed when he learned about the latest autograph venture and told Linda, "You know, I don't think that's a really good idea because now you're really playing into that sort of mercenary thing. It's a sleazy thing for you to be associated with. I'm trying to help you get away from that, but still be able to make money on your past." But when Linda insisted that it was not sleazy, Danville realized again that she was incapable of saying no to anyone, regardless of whether or not it was in her best interests. "Linda," he persisted, "You gotta not listen to what everyone says."⁵⁷¹ The two had the same conversation

⁵⁷¹ Eric Danville interview.

more than once, and the results were always the same. Linda was now following the direction of Coleman and could not be dissuaded.

It seemed Linda had come full-circle and once again fully embraced her performance in *Deep Throat*. In 2000, she was asked to participate in “Biketoberfest,” an annual motorcycle festival at Daytona Beach, Florida. Linda’s sister Barbara had moved back to Florida to be closer to her retiring parents, and her old high school friend Patsy Carroll lived nearby, so that October Linda headed south, thinking she could visit family and friends and earn some extra money at the same time. Barbara lived the closest to the festival and had an extra room, so Linda opted to stay with her. When she arrived, however, Barbara immediately noticed a distinct change in her younger sister. Linda looked more than merely tired or worn out; she was unmistakably ill. Barbara asked if everything was okay, but Linda assured her that other than a nagging back pain she had been experiencing for the past few months, she was fine. Barbara soon learned, however, that she was not being truthful on many counts.

The night of her arrival, in the early morning hours, Barbara was awakened by a noise in the kitchen. Getting up to investigate, she discovered Linda rummaging through the refrigerator, pulling out a beer, and uncapping it. “What the hell are you doing?” Barbara asked. “It’s okay,” Linda told her, “I can handle it. I know what I’m doing.” Annoyed, Barbara said nothing and returned to bed. Two days later, however, Linda began to complain that her back pain was getting worse. Both Barbara and Patsy had noticed she was ingesting large quantities of over-the-counter pain medicine and anti-inflammatories. And then, on the third night of her visit, the back pain became acute, rendering her immobile. Barbara told her she needed to go to a doctor, but Linda did not

have the strength to get out of bed. “Please, Barb, just leave me alone,” Linda pleaded. Barbara persisted, however, and Linda finally agreed to visit a nearby hospital where she was admitted and after two days of tests learned her kidneys were failing. Her best bet, the doctors told her, was to return immediately to Denver where local physicians could initiate dialysis treatment.

With little choice in the matter—she was rapidly becoming dangerously toxic—Linda acceded without a fight and returned home. There, she was admitted and worked up, and began a regimen of weekly dialysis treatments. Unfortunately, neither Barbara nor either of her children were suitable matches, and she was soon informed that she would not be placed on the list for an outside donor. Why she was deemed ineligible is uncertain, but the family believes the decision had something to do with her earlier liver transplant, possibly the heavy regimen of anti-rejection medications she had taken for years. The news was devastating, for it meant she was committed to a lifetime of twice weekly dialysis treatments and possibly an early death. When she called to tell Patsy, she barely got the words out and then could only cry. Patsy could do nothing but remain quiet on the other end of the line.

There is conflicting information as how the failure of her kidneys and her dialysis treatments affected her use of alcohol and recreational drugs. Marchiano had remarried within a year following their divorce, but they had remained friends, and though their friendship was occasionally strained, he continued to be supportive of her, especially now that she faced a new health crisis. Marchiano said she continued to drink heavily and increased her crystal meth habit during this time. In fact, he recalled on one occasion, she came over to his house in a panic. She was scheduled for a dialysis treatment later that

afternoon but did not think she could keep the appointment. “My system is full of street drugs I’ve been taking, and if I go in for dialysis, the doctors are going to draw blood, and they’re going to detect this,” she told him.

After moving to Colorado, Linda befriended a new woman named Ruth Nash. She firmly denied Marchiano’s version of events and stated instead that Linda became conscientious about following her dialysis regimen. She quit using drugs. Also, because she had to monitor and limit the fluids she took in, she quit drinking because alcohol would make her retain fluid. In addition, more health conscious than ever, she planned out all her meal, and substituted boiled fish for meat in order to help her stay within recommended weight guidelines.⁵⁷²

And so, with her new diet and her dialysis, Linda settled in to an otherwise as normal as possible routine. Her father continued to help support her, and she managed quite successfully to live on a modest, fixed income. A frugal shopper, she sought out sales and spent much of her time decorating her Englewood condo. Ruth Nash believed those days were some of Linda’s best, as she put the past behind her and became just plain Linda living a normal life as she had, deep down, always wanted. She fondly remembers spending nights staying up until the wee hours decorating Linda’s condo, how they painted flowers and little bumble bees on the bathroom walls. She recalls their trips to craft stores, where Linda could indulge her eye for decorating and arts-and-crafts. One day they were shopping at a craft store and Linda bought an armload of bags of plant sticks on sale for ten cents a bag. When asked why, she told Ruth “I don’t know, but I’ll find a use for them somehow.” Her greatest delight, though, was baby-sitting her grandson, A.J, whom she kept constantly busy with games and craft-type projects.

⁵⁷² Ruth Nash interview.

She also continued to work with MacKinnon and Dworkin, but it is interesting to note she never told any of the feminists she worked with that she had posed for the fetish magazine the year before. MacKinnon stated she knew of Linda's involvement with the memorabilia shows but only knew vaguely that Linda had been involved with some sort of "modeling."⁵⁷³ In any event, and by all accounts, Linda's friends insisted she was content with her life. Though she was overwhelmed by her declining health, she again remained buoyant and optimistic. She was not suicidal and nor did anyone at any time ever hear her express thoughts of ending her life.

Linda's relationship with her family also appeared to have reached an accommodation of sorts. Her fame from *Deep Throat* was long since behind her, and she was, after all, still Barbara's sister and John and Dorothy's daughter. By all accounts, her parents never mentioned *Deep Throat* and were in some form of denial that she had ever starred in it. The skills she had once bragged about, however, were something Barbara could occasionally joke with her about, in the way that only a family member could.

For instance, Barbara recalls that Linda once came to Florida to visit her and their parents and while there, was sent to watch Barbara perform in a local night club show. Barbara, billed as Spiffy LaRue, wore a sequined gown and a blond wig and sang torch songs. Linda raved about her performance, and after the show told her, "Barb, that's amazing! I could never do what you do." And Barbara shot back, "Well, I wouldn't want to do what you can do." Linda, in turn, gave her a dirty look.

And then, suddenly, on April 3, 2002, a tragedy struck. That morning, Linda had visited her friend Ruth Nash, who lived in Littleton, and left Ruth's to return home some time around 10 a.m. Ruth said the two made plans to meet again that afternoon after her

⁵⁷³ MacKinnon, personal correspondence, 03/28/06

dialysis session. Shortly thereafter, Linda was driving east on highway 470 outside of Denver when her car inexplicably veered to the right and left the road. The car went down a sharp embankment and rolled three times. Linda was ejected from the car and found approximately 60 feet away. Other drivers who witnessed the accident later told police the car did not seem to be experiencing any mechanical trouble; it was simply on the road one minute and then rolling the next. It is likely Linda was not wearing a seat belt, though both Ruth Nash and Linda's daughter Lindsay insist Linda was adamant that they be worn at all times.

Why Linda's car suddenly left the road remains a mystery. The car appeared to be in good working order and was not believed to be a cause of the accident. And while Linda had suffered a series of setbacks with her health in the past few years, the family does not believe she was attempting to commit suicide. It is more likely that she simply became momentarily distracted and, in a split second, lost control of her vehicle. Ruth Nash believed the dialysis treatments Linda was receiving affected her ability to drive safely. She had been warned she could experience sudden and unpredictable drops in blood pressure that could cause momentary blackouts.⁵⁷⁴

The family and Ruth Nash remained unaware of Linda's fate until two days later. Ruth, in the meantime, went over to Linda's apartment later that afternoon. Linda's car was not in the parking lot, nor did she come to the door when Ruth knocked. Ruth called the dialysis center and discovered Linda had missed her afternoon appointment. She then called local hospitals, but no one had a patient named "Linda Boreman." Later, they discovered that Denver Health Medical Center, where the ambulance had taken her, had incorrectly listed her as Linda "Bordman," an error that caused a two-day delay in

⁵⁷⁴ Nash interview

notifying her family. When the family did finally learn of her fate, they hurried to the hospital. The prognosis was grim. Linda had suffered 37 broken bones, a collapsed lung, brain damage, the severity of which was not ascertainable at the moment. Worse, she was in a coma and on life support.⁵⁷⁵

Marchiano, too, had rushed to the hospital to be by Linda's side where he remained for the next 13 days. However, Linda's condition remained unchanged, and the doctors held out little hope for her recovery. After two weeks of hopeful waiting, the family made the decision to remove her from life support, and the machines were disconnected. At her bedside, it was now Marchiano's turn to remain steadfastly optimistic, and he believed when the doctors took her off life support she would open her eyes and begin to breathe on her own. Sadly, his optimism was unfounded. Slowly, her breathing stopped, and her pulse faded as life slipped from her. On April 22, 2002, Linda passed away from complications stemming from her motor vehicle accident. She was 53 years old.

POSTSCRIPT

Linda's untimely death was a shock to all who knew her, including her former co-author Mike McGrady. And while McGrady was as surprised as anyone to hear that she had died from her injuries, he remembered a conversation he had had with her years before. After a life of incredible hardship, including her first car accident in New York back in 1970 and her subsequent abusive relationship with Traynor, she had told him she thought the cards had been stacked against her. "She did not feel," recalled McGrady, "that she was going to live to a nice, happy old age."⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁵ "Linda Lovelace Kin Can't Afford her Burial" New York Post, April, 26, 2002, p. 25.

⁵⁷⁶ McGrady interview

Linda's legacy remains as complicated as her life. Following her death, obituaries in major newspapers across the world announced the passing of the most notorious porn star of all time. In death, as in life, the obituaries left everyone on all sides of the pornography debates unhappy. Not all the national obituaries focused on Linda's ever shifting position on pornography. *The Los Angeles Times*, for instance, concluded with a 1997 quote in which Linda remarked, "I'm not ashamed of my past or sad about it. And what people might think of me, well, that's not real. I look in the mirror and I know that I've survived."⁵⁷⁷ Other obituaries, however, featured more updated information on the last years of her life. Her obituary in *The London Globe* mentioned her recent involvement with memorabilia shows and featured an accompanying photo of her holding up an autographed t-shirt with the printed words, "I made Linda Lovelace gag." Other thumbnail sketches of Linda seemingly made a mockery of her dedication to the anti-pornography movement.

Danville was dismayed after reading the *Globe* obituary. "The picture suggested she was reduced to selling this stuff at autograph shows. And I was like, 'No, she was actually meeting a lot of nice people, selling head shots, and people were telling her how much they loved her and how beautiful she was.'"⁵⁷⁸ *The New York Times* obituary left Corrine McGrady incensed. In addition to mentioning Linda's association with Eric Danville and the memorabilia shows, it mentioned how Linda had recently watched "*Deep Throat*" with Danville, telling him, "I don't see what the big deal is."⁵⁷⁹ After reading the article, Corrine stayed up all night contemplating the letter of complaint she

⁵⁷⁷ "Linda Boreman, 53, Star of 'Deep Throat' became Advocate Against Porn", *Los Angeles Times* 23 April 2002.

⁵⁷⁸ Eric Danville interview.

⁵⁷⁹ "Linda Boreman, 53, Known for 1972 film 'Deep Throat,' *New York times* 24 April 2002.

wanted to write. In the end she elected not to do so, though her feelings of anger stayed with her a long time. Linda, she thought, was a gentle kind person who had suffered greatly at the hands of Traynor, and in her estimation, the *Times* obituary seemed to trivialize how strongly opposed Linda had been to the film.⁵⁸⁰

Ruth Nash was also angry about the ensuing publicity. Driving in her car on the morning of the funeral, she listened as local DJs announced Linda's death and added an assortment of tasteless oral sex jokes. In death as in life, it seemed impossible for Linda to escape the legacy of *Deep Throat*.⁵⁸¹

Not all the obituaries featured Linda's most recent involvement with the porn industry. Ruth Nash said Dworkin and MacKinnon only learned of Linda's involvement with Danville and her photographic spread in *Leg Show* at Linda's memorial service, and it was only because Marchiano took that opportunity to update them on Linda's surreptitious activities. Despite learning of this, MacKinnon reacted generously and wrote a eulogy for Linda in *Time* the following month. "She sought the dignity of an ordinary life," wrote MacKinnon, and, sidestepping her recent affiliation with the porn industry, "From forced 'sex freak of the '70s,' she became a beacon of resistance and hope—and changed the debate on pornography forever." She added, "Brave, gentle, miraculously resilient and valiant beyond words, Linda never accepted that her violation was constitutionally protected, as was her violators' speech."⁵⁸²

Commentators within the porn industry were also ambivalent about Linda's legacy. Over two years after Linda's death, former porn star Gloria Leonard had harsh words for Linda. "I always felt she was an 'Aaron Burr,' who did a traitorous turn on this

⁵⁸⁰ Mike McGrady interview.

⁵⁸¹ Ruth Nash interview.

⁵⁸² Catharine MacKinnon, "Eulogy," *Time Magazine* 6 May 2002

industry.”⁵⁸³ Porn star veteran Sharon Mitchell was far more charitable. “She was really the first, the most recognizable,” said Mitchell, “and probably the most bitter.”⁵⁸⁴

While many porn workers never forgave Linda for her allegations of abuse, the contributions she made to the industry were undeniable. William Margold, an industry insider who founded the organization PAW (Protecting Adult Welfare—an agency promoting the health of sex workers) summed up Linda’s connection to the industry.) “Linda Lovelace was *Deep Throat*; *Deep Throat* was Linda Lovelace...she brought us into social respectability and at least social awareness. She represented an entire era.” In January 2003, at Margold’s behest, Linda was posthumously inducted into the Legends of Erotica Hall of Fame in Las Vegas.⁵⁸⁵

The variegated opinions speak to the difficulty of making sense of a complicated life riddled with contradictions. The totally unremarkable and uneducated child of a blue-collar family, suddenly and unexpectedly the star of the most popular pornographic film of all times, the easily most recognized name associated with the business at that time and, arguably, since, her life then took remarkably strange turns. Renouncing the film that is credited with giving her international notoriety, affiliating herself with the anti-pornography wing of the feminist movement, as vociferously speaking against censorship, and finally returning to the business she had wholeheartedly shunned, her speech and actions created confusion and concern on both sides of the pornography debate.

⁵⁸³ Gloria Leonard, telephone interview with author, 9 September 2004

⁵⁸⁴ “Linda Lovelace Dies at age 53. Deep Throat star later renounced adult film: industry reaction polarized.” Retrieved from on 01/05/06 at www.adultvideonews.com. Article appeared on 06/02/02,

⁵⁸⁵ “Linda Lovelace to Enter “Legends of Erotica Hall of Fame,” retrieved on 01/05/06 from www.avn.com

Andrea Dworkin's assessment, that Linda had grown addicted to fame, was most probably correct. "When people tell you you're great all the time, I think she needed that," Dworkin said. But she also believed Linda never recovered from the experience of being forced to make *Deep Throat*. "It destroys something in you, no matter how hard you fight it. And that happened to Linda, so by the end of her life she was very amenable to the seduction of a lot of people who were saying, 'Well you know, we love you and we'll be respectful of you, but we love you as Linda Lovelace, not Linda Boreman.'"⁵⁸⁶

Perhaps in the end, Catharine MacKinnon's final thoughts about Linda best summed up her strange life trajectory. "Linda," she said, "never accepted that her violation was constitutionally protected as was her violators' speech. 'Why,' she asked me, 'do pimps' rights matter and mine don't?' Having survived so much and fought so hard, she died without an answer."⁵⁸⁷ That may be as apt a conclusion as we are able to find, given the complexity and contradictory nature of the myriad issues swirling around about sex and violence, pornography and censorship, and justice and feminism, all of which were encapsulated in Linda's life.

⁵⁸⁶ Andrea Dworkin interview.

⁵⁸⁷ Catharine MacKinnon, "Eulogy", *Time Magazine* 2 June 2002.

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