



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on November 6, 2012

Helen Gurley Brown and Dolores Marie Jasper: Two Very Different Lives and Legacies

“She changed the world,” gushed New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. “And she changed the world for women.”

The “she” to whom Mayor Bloomberg referred was Helen Gurley Brown and the occasion of his remarks was a memorial service on October 18 at New York’s Lincoln Center for the “legendary” editor-in-chief of *Cosmopolitan* magazine. Reportedly, about 1,000 journalists, fashionistas, and social gadflies had gathered with Mayor Bloomberg, ABC icon Barbara Walters, actors Matthew Broderick, Brooke Shields, and Kelli O’Hara, Fox/*New York Post* gossip columnist Liz Smith, Hearst Corp. CEO Frank Bennack, and Hearst scion William R. Hearst, III, to pay homage to the dearly departed original “Cosmo Girl.” The “NY Culture” section of the *Wall Street Journal* [reported](#):



Brown

Mr. Bloomberg, a friend of Ms. Brown’s, said, beginning in the 1960s, the editor introduced women to a life that they “have every right to experience, without shame or limitation: A life of personal choice and professional opportunity.” ...

He added that her driving philosophy was “not that you had to live this way or that, but that a woman could live any way she wants.”

“Gave ‘Single Girl’ a Life in Full (Sex, Sex, Sex)” – *NY Times*

The Lincoln Center memorial provided the opportunity for a second big round of media and celebrity



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huzzahs for the woman who played a key role in launching the sexual revolution of the 1960s and “liberated” generations of women from the stultifying “oppression” of Christian morality. The first round of laud and honor for the queen of glamor porn began on August 13. The *New York Times* announced Helen Gurley Brown’s death on page A1, with the headline, [“Gave ‘Single Girl’ a Life in Full \(Sex, Sex, Sex\).”](#)

More events celebrating the life of the “Practical Goddess of Love to Ordinary Women,” as bestselling author Gail Sheehy described Brown, continue to pop up.

I first learned of Ms. Brown’s death when I walked into the hospital waiting room, where the morning TV talk shows were all abuzz with reportage about the passing of this supposedly great heroine and liberator of women. I had spent the night beside a hospital bed where my mother, Dolores Marie Jasper, was suffering through the last few days of her life.



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Like Helen Gurley Brown (HGB to her friends and worshippers), my mother was 90 years old, and like Brown she had known poverty, growing up in rural America during the Great Depression. However, in all other ways that matter the two women were as different as night and day. As is the case with millions of other women who married, raised families, worked hard, and lived honorable lives, my mother’s passing would go unremarked by the “great and the good” of high society. According to the “Cosmo” gospel of HGB and her ilk, Dolores Marie Jasper (DMJ), née Lauer, was a typical “mouseburger,” a term of derision applied to all those single and married women who live “boring” lives sans steamy adulterous affairs and haute couture. Unlike HGB, DMJ did not do power lunches with Liz Smith, Woody Allen, or Hugh Hefner; she did not wear HGB-style stiletto heels, fishnet stockings, and mini-skirts.

HGB left small-town Arkansas for Los Angeles, and then the bright lights of Manhattan where, by her own account, she began fornicating her way to fame and



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fortune. In contrast, DMJ left her family's farm in Wisconsin to go to nursing school and then volunteered to join her brothers, who were serving in our Armed Forces in World War II. DMJ also went to Manhattan, but it was to catch a troop ship to Europe, where she bound up the wounded, nursed the sick, comforted the dying, and experienced all the horrors of war. She also met a gallant young paratrooper from Idaho, Morris Jasper, who would become her husband. Together they would bring 13 children into the world.

In 1962, Helen Gurley Brown burst into the limelight with her scandalous bestseller *Sex and the Single Girl*. The commercial success of that titillating how-to book opened the door for her at the Hearst Corporation, where she radically transformed its *Cosmopolitan* magazine into the soft-porn glamor mag that dominates the cleavage gauntlet at checkout stands in most of our drugstores and supermarkets. Her other books include *Sex and the Office* (1964), *Helen Gurley Brown's Single Girl's Cookbook* (1969), *Sex and the New Single Girl* (1970), *Having It All* (1982), *The Late Show*, and *I'm Wild Again* (2000).

"In Ms. Brown's hands," the *New York Times*' writer purred, with apparent approval, "*Cosmopolitan* anticipated *Sex and the City* by three decades."

"Unencumbered by husband and children," the *Times* continued, "the Cosmo Girl was self-made, sexual and supremely ambitious.... She looked great, wore fabulous clothes and had an unabashedly good time when those clothes came off." Ah, yes, those gloriously promiscuous, exciting, sensational Cosmo Girls! Think Lindsay Lohan, Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, Kim Catrall, Paris Hilton, Madonna, Kim Kardashian, et al — and their legions of pitiful imitators. Vapid vixens, narcissistic nymphos, vacuous voluptuaries.

Here's a trio of HGB's Cosmo Girls for you: Cat Marnell, Moe Tkacik, and Edith Zimmerman. Never heard of them? Neither had I until I read an October 24 [New York Observer piece](#) about the three of them headlining a panel on "the legacy of the late *Cosmopolitan* editor Helen Gurley Brown."

Cat Marnell, a potty-mouthed Paris Hilton wannabe, confessed drug addict, and columnist for (appropriately) *Vice* magazine, told the assembled HGB devotees: "My kind of feminism is that you want to be hot and awesome." More from Ms. Marnell: "I think that money's awesome. That's what drives things." And "My publishing idol is [pornographer] Larry Flynt." Hardly profound or even provocative, just pathetically prosaic. Marnell, who was fired last June from her gig as a "beauty writer" at xoJane.com due to her drug habit, [explained her situation thusly](#):

I'm always on drugs. [...] Look, I couldn't spend another summer meeting deadlines behind a computer at night when I could be on the rooftop of Le Bain looking for shooting stars and smoking angel dust with my friends and writing a book.



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Maureen “Moe” Tkacik, who shares Marnell’s penchant for lacing her writings and conversations with f-bombs and other expletives, is a co-founding editor of the *Jezebel* blog and author of the “Das Krapital” column at the *Washington City Paper*. Tkacik told attendees at the HGB “legacy” celebration, “Before I was a Marxist, I was a slut.” (Presumably, now she considers herself a Marxist slut.) “I basically don’t think anyone should be allowed to accumulate more than \$50 million,” says Comrade Moe. “There should just be a cap, and everything beyond that goes to the abortion fund.”

Edith Zimmerman, founder and editor of *The Hairpin* website, wrote a piece celebrating HGB’s global triumph entitled, [“99 Ways to Be Naughty in Kazakhstan: How Cosmo Conquered the World,”](#) for the August 3, 2012 *New York Times*. She reported from *Cosmo*’s 2012 biennial Cosmic Conference in Madrid, Spain, which celebrated the magazine’s global reach, with 64 international editions distributed in more than 100 countries in 35 languages.

Gossip maven Liz Smith, a longtime friend of HGB, [wrote](#) in the *Chicago Tribune*:

Helen was the woman who made *Cosmopolitan* magazine, sexual freedom and entrepreneurship for women — a “brand.” It is still a “brand,” one of the first, and remains an international beacon for the rising women of the Middle East, Asia and the world.

Seriously? An “international beacon for the rising women of the Middle East, Asia and the world”? Why, because her glamor porn covers the earth and school girls in Singapore, housewives in Hong Kong, and “mouseburgers” in Morocco can now learn how to drape themselves in the latest *prostitute chic* couture and read in their native tongues such empowering and enlightening fare as “His Secret Sex Cravings,” “50 Kinky Sex Moves,” “The Cosmo Girl’s Guide to Oral Sex,” “Sex Toys That Up Your O-Factor,” and “13 Ways to Get You and Your Guy Insanely Turned On.” Those are some of the more printable current titles on *Cosmo*’s website. Anyone who has stood in line at the grocery store over the last four decades knows that *Cosmo* has recycled these same banal titles (or nearly identical variations) again and again.

The *New York Times*’ HGB obit informed us that, “in her 32 years with the magazine, her husband wrote all the cover lines.” Her husband, of course, was Hollywood movie mogul David Brown (*The Sting*, *Jaws*, *Driving Miss Daisy*). So how “liberated” is that? HGB turned over the concocting of salacious titles to *Mister Brown*. Did he tackle the job with such elan because it indulged his sexual fantasies, because it made him piles of money, or because it gave him abundant opportunities to utilize his Hollywood casting couch techniques with the endless stream of young bimbettes desperately seeking to score a *Cosmo* cover shoot? Maybe all of the above. According to bios on HGB, it was David who convinced Helen to write and publish her first book and to take the *Cosmo* editor job from Hearst.

Novelist Erica Jong (*Fear of Flying*) also gives Brown’s hubby David credit for helping to create our “hook-up culture.” Jong wrote:

She made our hook-up culture possible, or at least *Cosmo* did, which was completely her vision and to some extent her husband David Brown’s. He wrote the cover lines.... So I think many women too young to know who she was have absorbed her lessons. She did change the culture. No doubt about it.

Helen and Hef, Cosmo and Playboy: Partners in Pincer Attack on Decency and Christian Culture

Cosmo, HGB, and her husband David — with the backing of the mighty Hearst Corporation — did indeed change the culture, exchanging our supposed Victorian hang-ups for hook-ups. (And, as Helen boasted, they made “tons of money” while doing so). They can claim a significant share of credit for the



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sexually transmitted disease pandemic, the “Girls Gone Wild” phenomenon, millions of unwed mothers, and millions of abortions — to name but a few of the social pathologies of our degenerate hook-up culture.

Far from “empowering” women — one of the most frequent accolades heaped upon HGB by her fans — Helen Gurley Brown rates with *Playboy* porn king Hugh Hefner as one of the most crass predators exploiting women. HGB and Hefner were actually good friends and collaborators, and Brown actually modeled *Cosmo* after *Playboy*. [Hefner told Stephen Galloway of *The Hollywood Reporter*:](#)

What is not well known is that, after she wrote *Sex and the Single Girl*, Helen approached me about coming to work for me. She wanted to do a female version of *Playboy*.

It was the early 1960s and I had just started the first *Playboy* Club and a magazine, *Show Business Illustrated*, which was not doing well, and I was not at the point where I felt I could take on another magazine title. So she approached Hearst and they hired her to turn *Cosmopolitan* into a version of *Playboy*. In the early days, they even had a little symbol like our bunny, a pussycat that appeared at the end of every article. In a parody tribute to *Playboy*, she even did a nude [April 1972] centerfold with Burt Reynolds.

I helped her find writers and agents so that she knew who the players were and how much a writer could expect to be paid.

Interestingly, Hefner claims higher standards of morality than Brown on some matters of adultery. Said Hefner:

When she founded *Cosmo*, her views on sexuality and the sexual behavior of unmarried women were radical and the same as mine. In terms of male and female relationships, our philosophy was very similar. [As to her notion that older women should have affairs with their friends’ husbands:] I don’t think that’s a very good idea — unless it’s something they have all agreed to. The immorality in infidelity is in the cheating. People can live lives in a variety of ways; it is the lying that is immoral, not the sex.

Some of HGB’s other admirers have also expressed disagreement with her unabashed endorsement of adultery, especially when it involves the husbands of one’s friends. Apparently, these folks have only been *partially* liberated; they still need to be purged of a few remaining hang-ups. For HGB, the only calculation that mattered with regard to adultery — whether with one’s boss or one’s neighbor — was the benefits to be extracted from it: pleasure, money, career advancement. She had no moral qualms about counseling women on how to seduce married men at the office — or anywhere else, for that matter. Hey, if some mouseburger wife can’t satisfy her husband, don’t blame me, she would argue.

Hefner is not the only pornographer to sing HGB’s praises. Mike Edison, former editor-in-chief of *Screw* magazine, penned a tribute (“[In Praise of Helen Gurley Brown](#)”) for the *New York Observer*.

Bob Guccione, the late publisher of *Penthouse*, also is on record complimenting Brown. No doubt, Larry Flynt is a fan too. It’s not too difficult to see why the pornsters all love HGB. Men have been trying to convince women to jettison their virtue for a fun time in the sack since time immemorial. *Penthouse*, *Playboy*, *Screw*, *Hustler* and their innumerable imitators are aimed at indulging the wildest prurient fantasies of boys and men, but only vicariously, virtually. Helen Gurley Brown’s *Cosmo* has succeeded in convincing millions of girls and women to *actually* indulge those male fantasies — and to consider themselves enlightened, liberated, and empowered for doing so! HGB was the best thing ever to come along for those engaged in the pornification of our entire culture and the degradation of women into



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purely objects of male sexual pleasure.

Want a truly chilling picture of the amoral maelstrom HGB's sybaritic gospel is taking us into? Take a look at quintessential suburban teen Cosmo Girl Stephanie Woods and her gal pal, who stole \$164 from a nine-year-old girl selling Girl Scout cookies at a mall. (See the video at the end of the article.) The mentally and morally vacuous teens express not the slightest twinge of conscience for their crime; in fact, they both indignantly say they are "-ssed off" for having to pay the money back. Their only remorse is over being caught. After all, "money is money," they both say. The Girl Scout had it and they wanted it; that's all that mattered. No moralizing, please, about mine, yours, and "Thou shalt not steal."

What did the found criminals "need" the money for? Gasoline, cigarettes, a new necklace, and new cell phone, Cosmo Stephanie told reporters. She is one of HGB's "daughters," one of the legions of spoiled, bratty, pampered, self-indulgent, moral flatliners who are taking HGB's "Having It All" philosophy to its logical conclusion. She looks as if she could have stepped right off of a *Cosmo* cover.

The adulatory obits for Helen Gurley Brown unabashedly promoted her famous hedonist maxim: "Good Girls Go to Heaven/Bad Girls Go Everywhere." Not too surprisingly, the remorseless Cosmo Girl Stephanie Woods went on to a string of additional crimes while awaiting trial on her Girl Scout robbery charge. Like Lindsay Lohan, Britney Spears, and her other "Bad Girl" idols, Stephanie found out that "Everywhere" includes jail, court, prison, rehab, probation, etc. And, ultimately, Hell, for those who fail to repent and reform.

Likewise, millions of Cosmo Girls have sadly discovered that "Having It All" also means having HIV/AIDS, HPV, sexual herpes, chlamydia, syphilis, Super Gonorrhea, and other antibiotic-resistant STDs. And all too frequently it also entails abortion, fatherless children, broken marriages, family disintegration, drug and alcohol addiction, and a host of other social ills.

"Her Children Rose Up and Call Her Blessed" — Proverbs 31:28

Dolores Marie Jasper didn't have a closet full of designer labels or a wealth of the earthly treasures that HGB would have considered essential. She didn't hobnob with the rich and famous. She didn't desire those things. She was blessed with natural beauty, but not the airbrushed fake beauty — augmented by silicone, plastic, and botox — exalted by *Cosmo*.

Dolores Marie Jasper spent her life building up this fragile thing we call civilization, while Helen Gurley Brown was busy tearing it down. By her prayers, by her example, by her kind and joyful spirit, by her courage, faith, dignity, fidelity, and love, DMJ genuinely empowered not only her own daughters and granddaughters but all women, while HGB degraded womanhood and seduced women into the voluntary bondage of carnality, banality, and venality.

I do not know the manner in which Helen Gurley Brown died and only God knows where her soul is today, but we can be sure she did not exude her trademark flippancy when standing before her Creator and Judge to account for the mayhem and misery she has visited upon His creation. I *do* know how Dolores Marie Jasper died. She died as she lived, with honor, dignity, and courage. In her last days, she was surrounded not by jet set socialites, paparazzi, and the high and mighty of this world, but by the children, grandchildren, friends, and neighbors she had so richly blessed while on this mortal coil.



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h her children at her 89th birthday celebration

She received the Last Rites of the Catholic Church, including Penance, Viaticum, and Extreme Unction. As she drifted in and out of consciousness in her last hours she occasionally joined in the Rosary and other prayers being prayed by those gathered about her bed, mumbling the words she had reverently offered for others so many thousands of times throughout her life. One of her last acts, when all her strength had fled, was to summon the effort to reach out and hold the Crucifix to kiss her Savior. She lived a holy life and died a holy death.

In the Book of Proverbs, King Lemuel tells of being instructed by his mother in a vision regarding the qualities to look for in a woman. This biblical maternal wisdom is instructive still:

Who shall find a valiant woman? Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her.
 The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no need of spoils.
 She will render him good, and not evil, all the days of her life....
 Strength and beauty are her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day.
 She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue.
 She hath looked well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle.
 Her children rose up, and called her blessed: her husband, and he praised her....
 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
 Give her of the fruit of her hands: and let her works praise her in the gates.

HGB went “everywhere” and continues to be showered with worldly praise. DMJ lived the life of a valiant woman and her works will praise her in the gates of Heaven.

Photos: Montage, top right: Helen Gurley Brown (left) and Dolores Marie Jasper flank landscapes depicting their disparate worlds — a lake near Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, and Manhattan.

Next, right: Helen Gurley Brown is shown during an interview at her office at Cosmopolitan, Sept. 20, 1982, New York: AP Images

Next, left: Dolores Marie Jasper



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Next, right: Morris Jasper, U.S. Army paratrooper

Next, left: Dolores Jasper with her children at her 89th birthday celebration



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