

# Hot Seat

## Hugh Hefner

The oldest swinger in town is still on top, writes **Novid Parsi**

*The Girls Next Door*, E!'s reality show starring the ever-active Hugh Hefner and his three live-in girlfriends, has just begun its sixth season in the US. A new doc about the Chicagoan, *Hugh Hefner: Playboy, Activist and Rebel*, debuted recently at the Toronto International Film Festival, and *Hugh Hefner's Playboy, 6 Volumes* (a signed, limited-edition release from Taschen) is now on sale. The man, by the way, is 83. We had to find out what keeps the indefatigable *Playboy* founder up.

**What would the 27-year-old who began *Playboy* think of the 83-year-old today?**

The luckiest guy on the planet. [Laughs] He's a kid who made his dreams come true and also changed the world in the process. Who could ask for better than that?

**How did you change the world?**

Are you so young you don't remember?

**In your words.**

In my own words, I played some significant part in changing the social-sexual values of our time. I had a lot of fun in the process.

**On the sixth season of *Girls Next Door*, you've got three new girlfriends, including 20-year-old twins. How do they compare to the last three?**

Better. [Laughs] It's hard to really compare new love and old love. With

ELAYNE LODGE



Crystal Harris, I think I've found what I thought I had with Holly [Madison]. I thought I found in Holly the girl I would spend the rest of my life with.

**Have you often thought that?**

Rarely, rarely. When my second marriage [to Kimberly Conrad] ended and I came out of it a little emotionally beat up and bruised in 1998, I think the multi-girlfriends following that was an overcompensation for the pain I had suffered in the marriage.

**So you're still compensating – you still prefer multiple girlfriends.**

Much better than the one wife, yes. It gives you options. It's probably to some extent a protection

and [laughs]... Well, there's more sex with more girlfriends.

**You can always go to the next one.**

Yes, there are fewer headaches with multiple girlfriends. I get a headache.

**“Having multiple girlfriends is better than one wife. It gives you options”**

**Do you think women's interest in you is motivated by their own ambitions or that it's genuine – or does it matter to you?**

It depends on the women! Without question part of it is wanting to be in the magazine, to hang out at the Playboy Mansion, to hang out with a celebrity. I get more attention and fan mail from young girls who want to become my girlfriends now in my 80s than I did 20 years ago.

A lot of it has to do with the television show.

**To what do you attribute being sexually active in your 80s – Viagra?**

**Something else?**

Well, it is certainly Viagra in part. But it also is good health – my mother lived to be 101 – and a good attitude.

**I've read that you've slept with most of any given year's Playmates.**

It depends on the year. I've certainly been romantically involved with a number of the Playmates, but you didn't have to sleep with Hefner to become a Playmate.

The one was not connected to the other.



Young buck Hefner when he was a pup

**Of course, you and *Playboy* have been the object of feminist attacks, especially in the 1970s. Have you outlived antiporn feminism?**

A new generation has grown up that isn't buying it, but that curse is still there, that antisexual element of the women's movement in the 70s and 80s.

**Do you think the argument that *Playboy* objectified women ever had any validity?**

Not ever. Never.

**Despite the naked women.**

Well, it's a men's magazine. [Laughs] And also, let me make something clear: women are sexual objects. If women were not sexual objects, there wouldn't be another generation. Women are a good deal more than that, but the attraction between the sexes is the beginning of civilisation – it's what the world is all about!

**So that goes both ways, right – men as sexual objects for women.**

I guess so – let me show you some of my mail! [Laughs]

**Could you tell me about your first time?**

My first time was with Mildred Williams, the lady I was about to marry. We were at the University of Illinois, and we travelled to Danville, Illinois, and stayed at a hotel. I must've been around 21.

**How was it?**

Disappointing. It was a little painful for her. But it got better.

**And keeps getting better, apparently.**

Yes, I would say that. It's practically perfect.

Hugh Hefner's *Playboy, 6 Volumes* is available in January. [www.taschen.com](http://www.taschen.com).