

CON MAN, FABULIST, FIXER, FOOL, DAVID HANS SCHMIDT WAS ONCE THE HOTTEST BROKER OF CELEBRITY SCANDAL. THEN HE TANGLED WITH THE WRONG CELEBRITY



1. On East Van Buren Street

▶ There's a lot you can buy on the short drive between Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and the various hotels and motels that form a ring around it. Tires, beer, two-for-one lap dances. Tacos from a truck. Barbecue grills and hot tubs, tiles and carpet. Sex acts with young women twice as tired as anyone their age ought to be. A \$10 steak. A \$35-a-night room. A \$500 used car. Cocaine, plumbing supplies, the promise of salvation.

There's nothing special about this, obviously. It's not so different from any other American city. It's certainly not the section of Phoenix that residents would choose to show visitors. But it's the part of any city that exists underneath the million-dollar homes, the shimmering swimming pools, the art galleries, the restaurants that show up in magazine pages. And it's what you see first when you fly into this city, rent a car, head out to the Doubletree or the Hyatt on your way to buy some authentic Indian art or meet your clients

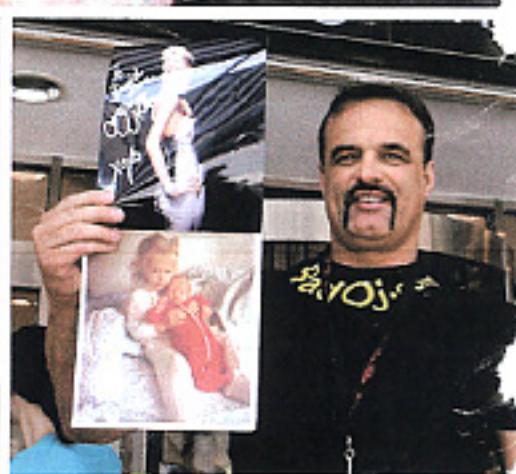
BY DAN HALPERN

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS MCPHERSON

to play some really fine golf courses. You can leave it behind in just a few moments: It takes only 15 minutes by car to arrive for afternoon tea at the Ritz-Carlton up on East Camelback Road by the Biltmore Fashion Park or just slightly longer to reach the spas at the Fairmont Princess or the Four Seasons in Scottsdale. You can leave it behind, but it's still there, obviously.

David Hans Schmidt, the publicist—the publicist, agent, broker, wrangler, provocateur, middleman, clearing-house, salesman of information and image—who billed himself the Sultan of Sleaze, the swaggering spark plug who screwed with the living gods and paid his own version of the ancient Greek price for it, called the city of Phoenix home for some 20 years. His base of operations was a nondescript condominium in the middle of this strange desert sprawl. Twenty years, plotting in his little room to reach out to the airbrushed starscapes of Los Angeles and New York, to reach out and stir up what trouble he could, to become important, to make people take notice. To command power. To make money. What I like about Schmidt is that he seems to have believed what he did was noble. Nobody else much thought so. But he did.

Who can say with certainty that he was wrong? It's easy enough to claim: What David Hans Schmidt did, by and large, was buy and sell pictures and film of semifamous and famous people, from Tonya Harding to Paris Hilton, usually in some state of undress, often engaged in various acts of sexual congress. Sometimes he set up the pictures with magazines, brokered the deal. He did a little moonlighting: suing the authorities, publicizing the not yet famous, representing the accused. Easy enough to say there was nothing more than an amoral need to be noticed, to make money. And maybe that was all of it. But maybe, if even by accident, what he did was to put the cocaine and whores and ripped-up tires out where everyone could see. John Updike once wrote, "Celebrity is the mask that eats into the face." What Schmidt did was show you the mess underneath.



Clockwise from top: PLAYBOY Playmate Nicole Narain and actor Colin Farrell pose for the camera in 2002, this time with their clothes on; David Hans Schmidt shows off two signed photos of Paris Hilton; mug shot of Schmidt from a 1997 arrest in Arizona; cover of one of the many homemade sex tapes Schmidt made famous, this one starring Dustin Diamond (Screech from *Saved by the Bell*); Tonya Harding in 1990 in her wedding dress just before she takes it off for her honeymoon (the video of which became another Schmidt deal).

2. From Greater Minnesota to the Sun Belt

David Hans Schmidt was born in Minnesota in 1960 and died in Phoenix in 2007. It's safe to say he was inclined to seek out trouble from early on. "My whole lifetime with David has been damage control," his father, Fred Schmidt, said in 2006. "From the start we could not keep him in the playpen with his brother. Once David got teeth he'd bite Doug and draw blood. He's been like that ever since."

Here is the opening of Schmidt's own narration of his early years, from his website, HansNews.com: "David Hans Schmidt, a so-called hyperactive lad/Ritalin experiment, was born first of twin boys in Rochester, Minnesota, an 'arid and sanitized little community,' as Garrison Keillor once said, on May 27, 1960." His father started developing real estate in the 1970s, becoming one of the most successful developers in the region; clashes between him and David, the son would later claim, included beatings with wire coat hangers (which Fred denied and which David also said was part of his motivation to succeed). The elder Schmidt's other two sons, Douglas and Bill, both stayed in Minnesota: Doug, David's fraternal twin, became a contractor in Rochester, and the youngest, Bill, a grain and hog farmer. David Hans Schmidt, however, seems to have spent most of his time trying to get out of Minnesota. After a pattern of behavioral problems, he was sent to a series of boys' homes and schools for problem children, living away from home for two years, beginning at the age of 13. At 18 he left home two weeks after high school graduation for the Army, joining the 82nd Airborne—the same outfit his father had served with 35 years before.

Schmidt was discharged honorably in 1981 and graduated from Augsburg College, in Minneapolis, in 1985; he tried graduate school briefly and ended up spending a little more than a month trying to work for his father before giving up on that idea. "The old man said, 'My way or the highway,' so I chose the latter," he liked to tell reporters over the years. He hitched a ride, he always claimed, with a bankrupt farmer headed to Arizona and set off to make his fortune. *(continued on page 112)*

Sex tapes! There is erotic art that goes back to Pompeii, but those people didn't have distribution deals.

It was in the Sun Belt that David Hans Schmidt's myth of David Hans Schmidt began in earnest. According to Schmidt, he was hired as a reporter for *The Arizona Republic*, covering "business and politics." In 1987, with Arizona governor Evan Mecham on the verge of impeachment, Schmidt was hired—he said, as often as he could insert it into conversation—as Mecham's "third and final press secretary." In 2002 he said, "No one else wanted the fucking job, and I was there to take it."

Except, of course, he never was a reporter for *The Arizona Republic* and never was Mecham's press secretary. Richard Ruelas, a *Republic* staff writer who did some time covering Schmidt's exploits, tells me, "What he did was write a few freelance pieces for the *Arizona Business Gazette*, not the *Republic*. He never had any job at the newspaper." Ron Bellus, the Mecham press secretary whom Schmidt liked to call "my predecessor," says, "He was never hired by Mecham to do anything." The extent of Schmidt's involvement, Bellus says, was coming in to ask him about a job and then, finding there was none, acting as if he had been hired. "David had a canny knack for seeing something and saying 'How can I use this?' He saw there were some things going on around Ev, and he called the Phil Donahue people. And they said, 'Well, sure, we'll put him on the show.' So he called us, said he'd set it up, and Ev said, 'Sure.' David was never paid for it, he had no position to be doing it, but he made that happen."

"Phoenix doesn't ask many questions," Ruelas says. "We don't care what your last name is. He was one of the figures of the Phoenix of the wild, booming 1990s, with money flying around—so much money, who was going to stop and check up on him?"

Schmidt opened DHS Public Relations in 1987. He had a few attorneys as clients—Schmidt would get them unpaid gigs on local television as expert commentators—and did publicity for a few nightclubs. "One day Dave took out a full-page ad in our Sunday paper," Andrea Denning, who worked as his assistant first in the early 1990s and then again a few years later, wrote to me. "It was a cheesy black and white of him without his shirt on, and it was just the funniest thing I ever saw. He had me work that day so I could answer the phones and keep track of reaction. Needless to say, the phone rang off the hook, and people just roasted him. But Schmidt said as long as they spelled his name

correctly, all publicity is good publicity." The tagline for Schmidt's ad read MEET A PR PRACTITIONER WHO HAS A PAIR. He told a reporter at the time that his clients always said, "Schmidt, you've got balls, man," adding, "I've been hearing this for five years now, and I figured, you know, it's time the rest of the community knew about this."

It was in 1992 that he realized he could get paid to feed Americans' growing appetite for seeing semifamous people with their clothes off. Standing in line at a grocery store, he spotted a tabloid photo of Jennifer Flowers, who had recently announced she'd carried on a romantic relationship with Bill Clinton. Schmidt called Flowers's attorney, and so began the career he would be known for. Flowers agreed to let him represent her. The pictures of Flowers that Schmidt brokered appeared in the December 1992 issue of *Penthouse*.

Schmidt's profits came mostly from pictures he set up or sold of women embroiled in scandal—nude photos of Paula Jones, the Arkansas state employee who had sued Clinton for sexual harassment, or of Suzen Johnson, the flight attendant whose escapades with Frank Gifford were a tabloid favorite. He also brokered deals for celebrities who weren't caught in scandals but just wanted renewed attention, such as the actress Shari Belafonte. He would also branch out, representing a man suing the county for enduring a horrible beating while wrongfully imprisoned, publicizing the case of an accused serial murderer, fronting for an Oregon high school valedictorian who had her honors revoked when caught with some boys in the locker room shower. But it was the tapes that caught the public's attention.

Sex tapes! There is erotic art that goes back to Pompeii and further, but those people didn't have the same kind of distribution deals. And so Schmidt focused his attentions on video: of Divine Brown, the prostitute who was arrested with Hugh Grant; of the skater Tonya Harding and her husband, Jeff Gillooly; of the former child actor Dustin Diamond (Screech from *Saved by the Bell*); of the actor Colin Farrell and Playmate Nicole Narain.

What's interesting about the tapes, of course, is much less what's actually on them than the fact of them. What's compelling to people is more to see celebrities at a disadvantage and less to see something sexually exciting—that is, the thrill of what you were not supposed to see (even if, not so secretly, you were

supposed to see it) or perhaps the thrill of seeing the people who pretend for a living caught in a moment of not pretending (celebrities interacting without scripts). Take the Farrell tape, which has to recommend it not only one of the more attractive pairs of any of these particular couples taped with their pants down but, much more interesting, a string of helpful metacommentary.

It begins with a little expository narration:

NARAIN: [Giving Farrell the camera] Here, you hold on to that.

FARRELL: [Pointing camera at his penis] I am putting this [camera pans to her crotch] right in there.

The narrative arc arrives at a potential conflict—the possibility of disgrace and failure:

FARRELL: Aw, the battery's dead...so is my fucking cock.

NARAIN: Shut up.

Triumph over the threat of ignominy: NARAIN: Oh God, oh my God...oh... God...baby...fuck, oh shit...oh shit, oh fuck, oh God, oh God, oh God.

Continued narration of events as Farrell moves downward:

NARAIN: Oh my God. You're gonna enjoy this.

FARRELL: [Pauses] I'm not enjoying this already, baby?

NARAIN: You're gonna enjoy....

FARRELL: Holy fuck, man. Breakfast, lunch and fucking dinner, right here. I'm not even fucking joking.

An ontological discussion—do they exist without the camera? He can't seem to see her without it:

FARRELL: [Finding her in the camera's view] Where is she? Oh my God...hey, baby.

NARAIN: Hi, baby.

The practice of filmmaking, the act of making art, is given serious consideration:

NARAIN: You need some angle shots right now...err...what do we gotta do? Oh my God, you're gonna make me come. Can we film this? Okay, you know what? We should just set this thing down.

FARRELL: Give me the fucking thing for a second.

And then the point:

FARRELL: Okay, what do we do with this thing? What do we do with this thing, princess?

NARAIN: What do you wanna do? You want to watch what we just did?

Compared with some romantic comedies, it's not bad writing. But the point is, perhaps, that on some level it passes for real: This is what these people do when no one is watching, this is authentic; this is not a gauzy love scene in a romantic movie, it's grainy reality. Except, of course, it's not. What these tapes do, simply, is show fantasy and fiction doing a slightly more effective—or more sinister—job of imitating reality than the old forms of fantasy and fiction. But it does something more than that, something

essentially different from the old forms, which imitated reality but were not meant to be mistaken for it. Here, the mistake is the point: These images are supplanting reality, pretending there is no artifice. The fake is passing for true.

That particular con worked pretty well for Schmidt. "Who knows where he got this stuff to begin with," says Scott Ross, a well-known L.A. private investigator who has worked for lawyers defending Michael Jackson and Robert Blake. "But when someone wanted to shuffle some sleaze out of their hands, they would eventually hear 'Well, there's this guy in Phoenix who does this sort of thing. You could send it to him.'"

Schmidt loved being in the middle of it. "David could be a lot of fun," says George Rush, who writes the Rush & Molloy gossip column for the *New York Daily News* with his wife, Joanna Molloy. "It was fun to watch him with strangers having their first brush with him. I took him to Michael's—the New York restaurant that has long been a favorite spot for media types—and he hit on all the waitresses. I loved watching everybody looking shocked by him. He got so excited that he was in the middle of the media lunch scene, handing out his cards, coming on to the waitresses, having a great time."

The offense could be too much, even for people who liked him—from bar fights to arguments, the macho act could be tiresome, and Schmidt had some tendency to come out with ridiculous racist, sexist and anti-Semitic remarks he thought were funny. No one who knew him seems to feel he meant much by them; rather, he just didn't understand any sort of propriety. But either way, he had become a certain kind of player. "He did become the clearing-house for celebrity sex scandals," Rush adds. "He was the guy to know. If he told me it was ready to go, I trusted it. You wanted to stay plugged in."

When a mix-up by Paris Hilton's employees resulted in her defaulting on storage-locker payments, Schmidt was contacted by the couple who bought the contents at auction—diaries, videos, photos. He also got hold of taped conversations of Michael Jackson—authentic, though without much of interest to recommend them. An (almost surely fake) sex tape of O.J. Simpson. When someone came across nude photos of Jamie Foxx, that someone found Schmidt. And when a computer technician decided to copy photographs of Tom Cruise's wedding, he called Phoenix. Which was, naturally, the beginning of the end for Schmidt.

3. ON SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD

It's Oscar night, and the middle-aged character actor sitting next to me at the restaurant bar is drinking and watching the show. I've been harassing him on the question of whether Hollywood is some-

how essentially un-American, undemocratic, fantastic, cut off. The playground of the gods. Neither of us believes this exactly, but the idea has come up and we've decided to argue about it. "Think about it, my brother," he says. "Everything radical in this country—it got funded here, it got played out here. You think we weren't watching when Bobby got shot, when Dr. King got shot? This was a radical place. You think it's an island? I got here in 1968. What this place was, it was a radical, clear expression of the time, art made out of a movement, a metaphor, a document next to a bunch of kids out there protesting, marching. Once upon a time Hollywood was a serious place. And we did serious shit. It was different then."

Was it? Was Hollywood once a golden place where art was created, where the social and political narrative of the country found its through line? Or simply a reflection of a loftier reality? A mythmaking apparatus that allowed an unmythical America to dream of greater things? Was America once high and has it now come low, reduced by tabloids and sex tapes, idiocy and apathy?

The maitre d' answers the phone every 10 seconds. "Clooney party? What Clooney party? No. Shut up. Go away," he says and hangs up. "Fucking idiots," he says. "Party of what? No, George is in Argentina," he says. "No, that was two years ago." He rolls his eyes. "Like I'd tell them even if it were true," he says. "Why do these idiots think their lives will be better if they sit 20 feet from somebody famous?" He looks up at the screen above the bar, at semiliterate actors struggling to read lists of nominees. "Can we turn this off?"

We can't turn it off.

"This is got to be the boringest shit in the universe," someone else says. "Isn't there a Lakers game on?"

There is—the Lakers are currently crushing the Sonics in Seattle—but no one moves to change the channel.

Everyone is bored, but no one will stop watching. What's the addiction? The addiction is multiple and overdetermined, but surely it includes this: The gods are made human again. Since some time not too long after Aphrodite cuckolded Hephaestus by sleeping with Ares, Westerners have mostly had to put up with an omnipotent, omniscient, perfect God, a godhead that is unknowable and mysterious and absent. A god who never fucks up. It's been a long and hard deal for us to put up with, clearly.

But now we have them back! Like the early Greeks, who liked the idea of gods and men moving around together, gods with some depraved human qualities. We've got them again: stupid gods, divorced gods, gods who are bad parents, gods with drug problems, gods who get fat. Gods who forget to put on underwear. Gods who sleep with their nannies. Gods, O gods, constant source of entertainment and voyeurism mixed with the awe and worship and scorn and pity and catharsis. Gods made divine by money and celluloid, by publicists and guitars, faked-up versions of us.

4. DURANGO TO FLORENCE

What I like about David Hans Schmidt is he seems to have been perfectly willing to be known as a villain, and what I like about him is this didn't stop him from claiming he was a hero. He



"Hand over your money! Also...please sign this petition supporting the right to bear arms!"

spend in prison, mostly a product of repeated offenses, each serving to compound his sentences with attendant other problems—a marijuana charge, a gun charge—thrown in. He felt himself to be entirely a victim—a victim of a “Kafkaian” nightmare, as he put it. A persecuted hero. In the manuscript of his unpublished memoir, *Dead Dogs Burning*, Schmidt writes bitterly about the contrast between his achievements and the evil acts committed by the district attorneys in his cases: “I help people. I produce film, television, book and magazine deals that enrich not just the client and myself but employ millions of workers.... I make people’s lives better.... I take great joy and adulation in what I achieve and I am dumbfounded and remised as to how they can feel even a remote amount of accomplishment in destroying or attempting to destroy a man’s life.... Where they plunder, I paint, where they murder, I create. What a true waste of human ability and potential it is to be joined in this world with such unworthy primates.”

The book itself is mostly a narration of Schmidt’s two months in jail in 2000 but is fleshed out by constant name-dropping and self-congratulation; it is a portrait of a semisuccessful con man whose ego gets him into trouble more than it gets him out of it, though he himself doesn’t seem to see this. Outside prison, everywhere he goes is “posh” or “first-class” or “VIP.” Prices are thrown around as much as possible. Everyone loves him; he gets standing ovations several times throughout the book. Inside prison he is alternately a victim or a hero. (Everyone calls him “governor,” but he feels, he says, like one of the dog carcasses incinerated at an animal-rendering plant near the jail, hence the title.) It’s hard to overstate how confused the writing and thinking are—he loves big words and rarely misses a chance to entirely misuse them. But the anger running through the book is fierce and clear. He ends it with a hopelessly muddled passage announcing that he will begin a new life. The book closes as he goes to work out at his health club on the day he is released from prison: “I sloshed back my way from the VIP locker room but paused to stare out the window. Across the desert basin the morning sun was over the mountain range now—it was the beginning of a new day as well as a new life, and a time to let the old ways die like *Dead Dogs Burning*...and like all other of God’s creatures may die a death but somewhere deep within their demise and incineration transcends and is replaced with a rebirth of new life and resurrection. And by virtue of their corporal existence, no matter what form, may win life everlasting.”

It didn’t happen. Nothing changed. He was back in jail soon enough and spent a full 14 months in state pris-

ons in Yuma and Florence. Overall he would spend some two years inside, from 2000 through 2003.

“He just didn’t seem to think any of the rules applied to him,” Richard Ruelas, who was handed the task of writing the *Republic*’s last piece on Schmidt, tells me. “And then was always surprised when he found out they did.”

“He really wasn’t very good as a con man,” Lee Froehlich, *PLAYBOY*’s executive editor, tells me. “You didn’t have to listen too hard to hear him misuse or mispronounce big words. There were conspicuous internal inconsistencies to his routine. He had a grandiose personality. He often came across as a blowhard. I couldn’t imagine him fooling anyone, but I admired his hustle.”

That naivete would take him to some strange places. In early 2007 he was contacted, he claimed, by “folks directly connected to the crown prince of Dubai,” who told him Saddam Hussein’s execution had been staged and the former dictator was alive and well in Iran. He tried to sell the story to *PLAYBOY*—first asking for astronomical sums, then suggesting a \$50,000 advance and offering photocopied pictures of a piece of hair and a “foot nail” off the “death body” as proof, along with a transcript of an interview, conducted by a freelance journalist (“I”), of an Iraqi policeman (“EB”) who had witnessed the fake execution. The transcript has, to say the least, its suspect aspects but is also a brilliant, fantastic document; the best part is its “translated” language:

I: Thank you for the honest and fraternal conversation. I’m relieved to know that the great Saddam is fit as a fiddle. Thank you for your personal efforts to rescue the Arabic nation....

EB: That did me good to speak to a religious fellow about the future of our homelands. And what we cannot accomplish with weapons we will compensate with shiftiness, and we will clean all countries.

“I don’t think David knew he was selling a bum story,” Froehlich says. Schmidt claimed to have video, photos and Saddam’s Tehran address but never produced them.

“They were conning him,” George Rush tells me. (Schmidt also pressed Rush to pay for the story.) “And whether he believed it or not, he knew there was a possibility of a big score, and that was what counted.” But everything was the big score—everything was the biggest story of a lifetime. And sometimes it yielded results. It took countless calls to *PLAYBOY* photography director Gary Cole and lots of blind alleys before the Suzen Johnson (1997) and Shari Belafonte (2000) photos ran in the magazine’s pages. “He was what we sometimes refer to in this business as a heavy lift,” Rush adds. “That is, he will occasionally pay off. You have to listen to him 20 times for every one thing you can use. But he grew on you. He really did grow on you. What he went through every week was more drama than most people go through in a year.”

5. THE END OF THE ROAD

Schmidt was, probably, just naive enough to think Tom Cruise might give him more than a million dollars for photographs of Cruise’s wedding. In the spring of 2007 Schmidt was contacted by Marc Lewis Gittleman, a computer tech who had stumbled on almost 8,000 photos on a broken laptop one of Cruise’s wedding photographers had brought in



“Oh not much, just sitting around watching a double header.”

"His parents put him in the Mayo Clinic," Ron Bellus tells me. "And what they said there was, he was not just bipolar but severely bipolar. But he didn't want to take those pills—he always refused the meds. He thought it slowed him down. He had this incredible energy and drive. And then he'd hit bottom. He'd call me up crying on the phone, and then two days later he's up and up, and then eventually it would happen again."

"Listen, I'd heard it before," Ruiz says. "I knew his depressions very well, had been through ups and downs with him many times, but I never thought he'd do it. I loved him. There were so many great and generous things about him, but he was also a huge narcissist. I always thought that would save him from dying—he loved himself too much." Ruiz tried to convince Schmidt to ride out the sentence and then get back on the pills for manic depression, restart his life—get more active in his church, join Ruiz's architectural and design business and start a new career. Schmidt sobbed and hugged him; when Ruiz left he thought he'd defused the situation.

On September 28, a Friday, Phoe-

nix police found Schmidt's body at his home. He had hanged himself in his bathroom.

What pushed him over the edge? Was he afraid of more prison misery—beatings, privation, humiliation? Afraid his career as a person of importance was over? Sent low in a moment of horrible depression, unable to see any rational hope?

"He was really scared," Kardon, his attorney, tells me. "Really scared. But he also said he could handle jail again. I really thought he was going to be okay." And there was a strong chance, she says, that he might have walked away on probation despite his criminal record. Schmidt knew this—knew there was a real chance he would do no jail time. Kardon doesn't feel the prospect of jail alone pushed him over the edge; she mentions an article about Schmidt in *Phoenix* magazine that had come out in September. "He wouldn't let me see it," she says. "He was devastated by it."

The piece, in the October 2007 issue, contains some explosive Schmidt family comments. "Whenever I accomplish something," Schmidt tells the reporter,

David Leibowitz, "[my father] is one of the first people I call, just to spite his ass.... I'll rub his face in it every time. I let that spite fuel me."

Leibowitz asks the elder Schmidt if he loves his son. "Absolutely not," he replies. "How could you find love in your heart for someone who's caused you such pain for so many years?"

On the other hand, Ruiz tells me he saw Schmidt talking to his father on the phone after the story came out—a loving conversation, he said, in which Schmidt arranged for his father to collect his things when he was sent down, told him he loved him. Their last conversation, according to Fred Schmidt, took place on the Wednesday before his son's death and was "brief and pleasant"; later, he says, he and his wife came home to a message from their son that said Fred was a good role model and they were good parents. But there can be little doubt that David Hans Schmidt took a fundamental anger to the end.

"I came to realize he had a kind of 'impostor syndrome,'" his former assistant Andrea Denning tells me. "No matter how successful he was in business, it would never be good enough for his father. I really think it is sad that David carried his father's disapproval with him to the grave."

"He took that *Phoenix* magazine article very hard," Rush says. "But he didn't really take personal responsibility for many of his actions, and typically he would blame his father. He did seem very devoted to his mother. I think if he had gotten the proper care, he might still be alive. He just didn't find someone who could treat him. But on the other hand it was really just his own stubbornness that prevented him from finding what he needed. He was, ultimately, just entirely dedicated to his way of life. And once he couldn't deal in celebrity sex, he didn't know what to do with himself."

"I think the killing factor," says Gary Cole, "was his being outed by Cruise. For him it meant his days as the Sultan of Sleaze were over, and he couldn't bear that thought. He so much as told me before his death."

Toward the end of his memoir Schmidt writes that he, like Van Gogh, never did anything just for the money—not for the "tons of it," he writes, "not the hundreds of thousands and millions." Because, he says, he knew, as Van Gogh did, that the money would follow the fame. Not that the money would follow the pursuit of passion or art or love—rather, that it would follow fame. What David Hans Schmidt wanted, surely like anyone, was love. Instead, he got some measure of celebrity. And found himself in a world, in a life, where he couldn't tell the difference between them. Caught up in an imitation of life. Love on camera. Which is to say, no love at all.



CHOOSE RESPONSIBILITY
STOLICHNAYA® Premium Russian Vodka, 35% Alc/Vol (70°), Vodka. Distilled From Grain.
©2008 Imported by HeUBLEY, Inc., New York, NY



