

On "Hustler" is
 VIII. The "Carion Bird," the "Ultimate Obscurity" Who Is "Too...
 Unreal for Hate"

Although it is not the way books are usually written and ~~is~~ certainly is not a way to be preferred, because my purpose is to make a record for our history while that remains possible for me I began writing this book ~~as~~ as soon as I knew that Hailer's tale, which is really what it is, was to be published soon. ^{his} This is to say that I was writing the book under news-story conditions: It was a breaking story.

The mystery of how Hailer got into this monumental self-characterization ^{as a travel} was cleared up by Newsweek in its issue dated April 25, 1995. That, with Hailer as its source, confirmed my suspicion that he ^{was} still again, ^{in effect} Schiller's hired hand, ~~being a~~ writer, ~~he was for a second time~~ ^{for the third} Schiller's hired pen. The first time ^{we} were profit able to both. Besides the money it made for them ^{we} got Hailer his ^{the person} second Pulite Pulitzer, for The Executioner's Song.

Two Pulitzers is rare. So also is the winner of a single Pulitzer casting himself as the hired ^{been} hand of a ~~slick~~ slick promoter.

Before this issue appeared I had laid aside what I have been sent about Schiller ^{as} the professional. Despite my personal experience with him, experiences in which he makes a coiler/rattler with those rattle agitated appear to be ^{straight as a die} the staff that ~~was~~ carried, that straight, I had no active interest in him. I spent my time on the assassination, not ^{by} those for whom it is a ticket to fame and fortune. So what follows is what was sent me simply because of the way Schiller had behaved ^{on} on the assassination and as the running dog of errant government.

The most complete of these sources is the ["] Hell's Agent article by Robert Friedman in the ^{was} ~~the~~ October, 1977 issue of Esquire. Friedman was then managing editor of the reporters' paper, More. Of the other items I know that my dear friend, the late James D. White

who had spent his working lifetime with the associated Press, ^{United Press story} ~~sent~~ sent me the UP ~~How~~ ^{that was heading,} "How ^{it was} he Got the Story" ~~article~~ as published in the San Francisco Chronicle of January 17 ~~and~~ the New York Times "Gilmore's Agent an Entrepreneur Who Specializes in the Sensational."

I was also sent "Recipe for 'Paranoia'" from Newsweek dated October 3, 1977.

Yet with what is clear from these few sources that are not secret, it ^{is} to wonder what there might be that is not publicly known. Schiller has had quite a career.

*And God knows how many enemies he made climbing
to success.*

quote from Ian Mc Donald, a former Times of London newspaper editor sent me what I quote from The New Statesman of April 7, 1995.
Prevailing Winds publisher sent me its premiere issue.

Bill Weichter, my Louisville, Kentucky friend sent me Larry King's column from USA Today of February 6, 1995.

The AP story headed "Simpson ~~was~~ book to creat cash, not alarm," is from out local newspapers, the "Frederick News and the Post.

The Jerusalem Report's cover story, "Cover ~~Up~~," in its issued date May 5, 1995 1965-1966 saw.

I have also had access to the records of the late Sylvia Meagher on deposit in local Wood Collage, where all my records will be.

So, I have no secret sources. With Schiller, who needs secrets?

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It was my suspicion that Pulitzer's of or not, Mailer as again Schiller's man ~~that~~ that led me to clip that Jerusalem Report story before I saw ~~the xxxxxxxx~~ Mailer's admission to the Newsweek interviewer Gary Sawhill in its April 24 issue. The part of that suspicion that Mailer confirmed to Sawhill reads:

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"...Like "The Executioners's Song", Mailer's Pulitzer Prize -winning book on Gary Gilmore, 'Oswald's Tale' was dreamed up by the ~~journal~~ journalistic entrepreneur and world-class interviewer interviewer Lawrence Schiller, who recruited Mailer as his writer."

A "journalistic entrepreneur" who does not do his own writing? Who "recruits" another to write his story for him? ^{that is} ^m "Journalistic" ^{ship / but traditional} is that? Entrepreneur it is ^m by journalistic it is not.

It is wheeling and dealing and promoting deals, conniving at them, sneakily or overtly, cunningly or forcibly. But there is no taint of journalism in not trusting yourself to be your own writer on deal, big deals in particylar because they have the greatest potential. So why share them, why cut another in on a big killing when your's is the mind that conceived it and your's alone succeeded in pulling it off? The only real reason is because as a writer you are ~~not~~ up to the writing that requires. That is not journalism. That is being ~~a~~ a deal-maker, a fixer.

Schiller is a "journalist" only because he says he is a "journalist", not because

he is. He is not.

That he knew he is not a journalist is why he hired the writing of others. With the Gary Gilmore case he made ^{his second} the deal with Hailer who, with a Pulitzer to his credit and perhaps running a bit dry (the "perhaps" is from Hailer in his own Hailer's Tale, a work that without ~~the~~ conjectures and conditionals would never have gotten onto paper) became in effect the hired hand of a checkbook wheeler and dealer, ^a fixer who could not do the job for himself.

Indeed, how the mighty have fallen, even though with the Gilmore ghoulings it meant another Pulitzer. *By being again a hired pen.* end 141

But here it should be noted, it is Hailer himself, the king macho of all machos, who cast ~~himself~~ himself as the hiring writer. He told Newsweek that Schiller had "recruited" him as his, ~~Schiller's~~, "writer."

Schiller is a promoter, and able and an imaginative and a successful promoter.

Of deals involving death, singular and multiple.

Schiller deals in death and in his dealing with ~~death~~ death, for money, he used that most he-man of writers, Hailer, as his hired hand, to do his writing for him.

Schiller has the concept, he gets the idea, and Hailer then does his work for him.

As Friedman put it in his Esquire article,

(In a New York Times account what Schiller actually "covered" as a boy was free-lancing photographs of protests over the case in New York ~~(City)~~.)

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Buying the rights of the dead—or the about-to-be-dead, in the case of Gilmore—was nothing new to Larry Schiller. He had secured the rights of Lenny Bruce's ex-wife, Honey, as well as those of Bruce's mother and daughter, which he parlayed into an equal partnership in the successful biography *Ladies and Gentlemen, Lenny Bruce!* (Part of his deal with Albert Goldman, the book's author, was an unusual cover credit: "Based on the journalism of Lawrence Schiller.") He had bought the exclusive rights to a young woman's account of her losing battle with bone cancer, which became the basis of a book, *Sunshine*, and a TV movie. He had taken some of the last nude photographs of Marilyn Monroe several months before her death and, ten years later, had brought her back to life through the book *Marilyn*, which he packaged. He had interviewed Susan Atkins before she talked to a grand jury and had taken down her confession to the murder of Sharon Tate, then had sold the grisly story all over the world. He had conducted Jack Ruby's deathbed interview and before that had bought the rights to the photograph of Ruby shooting Lee Harvey Oswald. And before that, when he was just fifteen years old, Schiller had covered the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg story.

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Here was a man who knew the value of death. Here was a man who understood that death is the ultimate story, the final concept. He had said as much to a *Rolling Stone* reporter in 1971 at a preview of *American Dreamer*, his film about Dennis Hopper: "Murder and prostitution excite me. Let's face it: the desire of all photographers is to photograph murder—with a knife instead of a gun, preferably. That's what makes covering wars so exciting."

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As Friedman also reported, Schiller does not cheat his hired hands and whether or not they wind up liking or hating him and however they may feel about themselves as used, as hired hands in the most individual of endeavors, writing, on money he does not gyp them. He also sees to it that they get top billing. with him the "journalist,"

Writing about the idea with which he began, Of Larry Schiller as "Agent of Death," Friedman says he has read all the newspaper profiles of Schiller from the time of his biggest deal, Gary F Gilmore. Friedman then writes:

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Barry Farrell, who was later to team up with Schiller on the *Playboy* interview, had said it most starkly, when he described him in *New West* magazine as a "carrion bird." ("Schiller was always a Moriarty figure for me, an evil genius," Farrell told me. "When I went out to Utah to write my *New West* article, I thought I had him in a vulnerable position. I went with my pencils sharpened. But everyone I spoke to turned me around. He was very honest." Ten days after the article appeared, Schiller called and asked Farrell if he would like to work on the Gilmore interview for *Playboy*.)

Schiller's ^{table} of hired hands are not all as satisfied as Hailer. Hailer at least was ^{still} satisfied at the time his ~~se~~ ^{third} second writing job for Schiller appeared. He certainly was satisfied when he got the Pulitzer for the ^{second one} first one, the Cary Gilmore deal Schiller conceived and milked and milked and milked. Hailer was not Schiller's only hired hand -writers on that deal. As Friedman next wrote in E wire:

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My concept of Schiller as Agent of Death had been reinforced by a number of interviews I did before leaving for Los Angeles. Albert Goldman, who had had a bitter falling-out with Schiller over the Lenny Bruce book, was virtually screaming on the other end of the phone: "Larry is a voyeur at the ultimate obscenity. He finds the *most* lurid, the *most* gross, the *most* hideous thing anyone can imagine and gets the exclusive rights to it. That's his assignment in this world."

What Goldman told Friedman about Schiller as "a voyeur of the ultimate obscenity" as of 1977 is even truer when Schiller returned to his commercialization of the JFK assassination in what emerged as Hailer's Tale, despite its actual title. The assassination of a President is the most subversive of crimes in our country. Whatever the intent of an assassin or assassins, the assassination of any president has the effect of a coup d'etat, and that is what Schiller ^{using} with Hailer ^{ed} exploit in Schiller's deal.

But the reputation at stake is not Schiller's. It is Hailer's.

Hailer confirmed that he, too, had screaming matches with Schiller.

As he told Newsweek when sked, "How did you two work together?"

"We're free to fight, which makes for good relations. Once or twice one of us would pursue a line of questioning the other hated, and we were finally screaming at each other. And the poor Russian interviewee is sitting there looking at us like we 're madmen."

David Suskind, then a prominent and successful TV producer and star, also ^went for that Cary Gilmore exclusive. Schiller ^{yet} got it for ^{almost} a third less money that Suskind offered. That was no mean accomplishment when money ^{ng} seemed to be the ^{ng} primary interest of Gilmore and his family. Suskind told Friedman,

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"Schiller sweeps down on tragic events, like the death of Marilyn Monroe, or the pending execution of Gilmore, Vulture-like and ghoulish, salivating all the time."

That this did not suggest vampire to Suskind is surprising.

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He ~~beat~~ ^{got} Suskind and ~~getting~~ ^{Gilmore} the ~~line~~ exclusive. The United Press January 17, 1977 account of it ~~begins~~ was headlined by the San Francisco Chronicle, "How he got the Story." It begins:

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Larry Schiller didn't actually lie. The duplicity which has become his trademark was adequate to get him past the guards and into an interview with Gary Gilmore.

Schiller, a former news photographer turned producer, arrived at the Utah State Prison with Gilmore's attorneys and identified himself as "an associate" of the two lawyers.

After an exchange of pleasantries with the guard, the fact that prison regulations adamantly barred anyone but the killer's attorneys from seeing him was no longer in the way.

Schiller's method of meeting Gilmore was emblematic of his successful campaign to buy Gilmore's only asset: His story.

"He was just smarter than the guard," Warden Sam Smith lamented later. "Sometimes that happens."

It happened repeatedly for Schiller as he won the rights to the Gilmore story, outmaneuvering David Suskind, singer Paul Anka and a flock of others looking for the opportunity to turn the saga of the killer who wanted to die into movies and books.

Schiller's smarts is reflected in his seeing that ~~it~~ the prison made the story in clamping ~~an~~ ban on any media access to Gilmore.

Schiller was also handicapped by the fact that when he went after that one and the authorities had ~~to~~ denied access to Gilmore to all but his lawyers, Gilmore already had a lawyer. *who was dealing for the rights to his Gilmore story*

A lawyer who was also what UP described as "a freelance writer." He was Dennis Boaz, of San Francisco. Boaz ~~was~~ ^{had} interviewed Gilmore and was actively seeking deals for what he believed was and would be his exclusive. Boaz seemed to be favoring Suskind and Suskind's offer came to about \$140,000,

Schiller tried without success to make a deal with Boaz, Failing, he set off

on his own.

He had case^d/the job, so to speak, in his own mind. He did figure out how he might pull it off and for less money. He set out to enlist Gilmore's uncle and aunt, Vern and ^{Nicole Barrett.} Ada Damico. He also included Kathryn Baker. She was the mother of Gilmore's fiancée, ^{More} on this later.

Right off the bat Schiller went out of his way, seemingly against his own interest, in urging ~~the~~ Gilmore's family to protect themselves by getting a lawyer before they ^{with him.} made any deal. That impressed them favorably.

Schiller then began communications with Gilmore, first by a lengthy telegram and then through his uncle Vern. He got the message he wanted ^{to Gilmore} and the reply he wanted by including in a copy of the latest book he had promoted a letter that told Gilmore to indicate his trust in his uncle by telling his uncle to tell Schiller, "Gary got the book."

Before then Schiller had been dealing with Gilmore's relatives.

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Then Schiller got a break for which he had been preparing with care. Boaz had said on TV what Gilmore did not like. When they argued about that, Gilmore fired Boaz.

As it worked ^{for} out what Schiller bought the death rights ^{to} was about \$100,000 or about \$40,000 less than Suskind's offer. He pulled that off by looking out for the interests of others.

Grace Lichtenstein adds ~~details~~ details in her New York ^{Times} story of three days later. It begins:

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GAVE the
gave me public the last nude photos of Marilyn Monroe, the first prison interview with Susan Atkins, the Charles Manson follower, the heritage of Lenny Bruce, an account of the final days of a cancer victim and the photonegative of Jack Ruby shooting Uee, Harvey Oswald is now presenting the death of Gary Mark Gilmore.

[sic]

Lawrence Schiller, 40 years old, is the entrepreneur who obtained the rights to the story of the first man to suffer the death penalty in the United States in a decade. He also watched the execution, from which the press was barred. No one who knows him is terribly surprised. "A hustler and a good one" is regarded as a fair description of Mr. Schiller, according to friends, enemies and former collaborators.

As he sat in his motel room here not far from the Utah state prison—two secretaries answering two specially installed telephones, a tape deck and a Xerox machine behind him—he said, "I'm not interested in dollars and cents. I'm interested in getting a story nobody else can get."

A interest in kicks only?

What Mr Schiller has no interest in money can be argued but not his success in getting more than an exclusive on the story. as Lichtenstein wrote:

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He got the Gilmore story in much the same way he got others over the years—through relentless legwork, brashness and the help of professional writers. He came to Utah early in November, he said, and "ingratiated" himself with the killer's uncle, Vern Damico. Mr. Damico eventually persuaded Mr. Gilmore to drop another man, Denis Boaz, as his agent and accept Mr. Schiller's offer. From whatever deals Mr. Schiller was able to make, according to a report that Mr. Schiller said was accurate, Mr. Gilmore and his relatives would get \$60,000, his victim's families \$40,000 and his girlfriend, Nicole Barrett, \$25,000. Despite tight security, Mr. Schiller said, he taped 36 hours of interviews with Mr. Gilmore, some of it by telephone as late as seven hours before the execution. He had relatives bring Mr. Gilmore sheets with typed questions, on which the convict scribbled his answers.

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Where would Schiller get the money? Lichtenstein reported part of that:

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First, he collected \$70,000 from ABC Entertainment as an advance against rights to a television movie about Mr. Gilmore. ABC later bowed out because it wanted Mr. Schiller to make the movie immediately, but he was entitled to keep the \$70,000 while negotiating a new movie offer. Then, he arranged for Playboy magazine to buy rights to the first interview with Mr. Gilmore to be published following his execution, for an amount neither party would disclose.

As we have seen, that amount was \$20,000. So, without any other deals, and were there other deals! At most Schiller put only about \$10,000 of his own money in it.

Friedman ~~placed the book rights~~ reported that Schiller, *as* of the time of his interview, "has sold the book rights for \$500,000" and *already* had hooked Mailer to do the writing. He also placed the probable take of the movie ^{he} Schiller was ~~is~~ negotiating for at "more than \$10,000,000."

But Schiller had no deal on a book when he clinched his deal with Gilmore. As ~~Lichten~~ Lichtenstein wrote, with a additional reference to Barry Parrell:

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Several weeks ago, Barry Farrell, a former Life columnist, wrote a scathing article entitled, "Merchandising Gary Gilmore's Dance of Death," in New West. He called Mr. Schiller a "carrion bird." Mr. Farrell has now signed on as Mr. Schiller's collaborator on the Playboy interview, which Mr. Schiller regards as a "trial balloon" to test the salability of more extensive projects such as a book.

The plump, bearded Brooklyn-born Mr. Schiller has observed, "I always play by the rules. I just make the rules work for me."

It started when he was 14, he said, and used the prize money from a photography contest to go around the world for a summer shooting news, including marches protesting Julius and Ethel Rosenberg's execution in New York.

Mr. Schiller went on to become a leading freelance photographer for Life, where he and Mr. Farrell first collaborated on an early story about LSD, and for The Saturday Evening Post. He was in Dallas when the Oswald shooting took place, bought the negatives to that now-famous photo for \$10,000 and put the charge on his Post expense account.

I do not doubt that Schiller got the rights to one such picture but either he makes no effort to enforce those rights, caring only for big prices paid, or there was more than one because my friend Jim Leavelle, the detective handcuffed to Oswald when Ruby shot him, autographed a print to me.

The Times does not take people at their own appraisal of themselves. Lichtenstein did not, as quoted above, refer to Schiller as anything of "journalist." She referred to him with as kind a description as is possible, ~~as~~ an "entrepreneur."

In her account of Schiller's earlier commercializations of deaths she ^{reports} provides what was ~~probably~~ ~~his~~ his first use of Mailer as his hired hand, in commercializing sex:

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When Lenny Bruce died, Mr. Schiller ingratiated himself with Mr. Bruce's relatives, signed them to contracts, did taped interviews and eventually sold those rights as part of a book written by Albert Goldman. The two had a falling out and now describe each other in brutally unflattering terms.

Later on, Mr. Schiller was allowed to interview Miss Atkins in prison when she confessed to the Manson murders of Sharon Tate and others. The subsequent story, written for Mr. Schiller by Jerry Cohen, a Los Angeles Times reporter, made headlines because it was accused of prejudicing the Manson trial. According to one report, Mr. Schiller grossed \$175,000 for that story.

He sold the photos of Miss Monroe to Playboy for \$25,000. Then, he conceived a book with photos of her by many photographers and a text by a famous writer. Norman Mailer was chosen because Mr. Schiller's first choice, Romain Gary, was unavailable.

[SK]

the Marilyn Monroe part

(When I came to ~~this point~~ in reading Friedman's article in 1977 I recalled how entirely different it was ~~about 25 years~~ just before Pearl Harbor when I was a Washington magazine correspondent and did some freelancing. I was phoned in great distress by the editor of a small magazine for which I did a little work from time to time. That month's issue had been refused access to the mails when it was delivered to the post office for mailing from the printer. The reason was that it had used a picture of a young woman going over a wooden fence. She was wearing shorts that covered half her thighs. *a blouse that covered her entire upper body and*

Not at all like the bikinis and miniskirts that soon followed in women's styles. *who I recall was Marilyn Walker (Catholic or largely Catholic)*
The Postmaster General (was also head of the politically powerful group that called itself as "now recall" The Legion of Decency. That picture, of a woman more fully clothed than woman had been on beaches for almost all my life, was held to be indecent! *long*

(Their lawyers told the *publisher* that if they went to court and prevailed that would only be long, longer after other editions followed. *that issue would not be delivered.* It would be ruinous for the magazine.)

Could I do something?

(It happened I could. I had arranged with the information office of the Treasury Department, Chuck Schwartz, with whom I had a friendly relationship, for him to ghost an article for the secretary, the dignified Henry Hargenthou, on some angle to the government's interest as war dress *near* height.

(So first I informed Schwartz that if it come out the secretary would be identified with public indency found to be that by his cabinet mate, the Postmaster General.

(Then I spoke to a friend who was then Number 2 in the Office of War Information, my good friend Katherine C. *Blackburn* ~~Valeburn~~. She had been known as "Casey" from before I was born. She saw the political problems for the administration immediately. She sent me to see Oscar Cox, whose high rank in the Department of Justice then I do not remember. He having been fired by Richard Nixon when he was today is best remembered as the first Watergate Special Prosecutor. Richard Nixon fired

(It took no time at all for the Department of Justice to find that magazine was not indecent. *and to persuade the Post Office it was not.*

(Not that friendly deal with each other *on a pay-back basis* than way but the morning after Pearl Harbor I have Casey all the research for an article that had appeared three months

earlier in the then largest picture magazine whose Washington correspondent I was, Click, in which I had accurately ^{pre} ~~re~~ predicted not only the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor but all else it then did. Our government not only had not anticipated that, it also was not ready with any propaganda to expose Japan. Casey used my work for that and soon I was seeing where she had planted it.)

(How our concepts of right and wrong, of what is decent, moral and ethical other than in sex pictures ^{have changed} since then. In those days the Schillers ^{could} would not have been rich and famous and hiring the pens of ^{established writers,} ~~the rich and famous~~. They would have been pariahs, outcasts, making their livings more decently and honestly or not at all. Or if they did not they'd have faced or been in jail.)

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That Schiller was capable of ~~business~~ ^{king} Lichtenstein also reported. ~~in~~ recounting that Schiller although ~~he~~ exclaimed to have taken no fee in acting as the agent to place the book, ~~the~~ Minamata for W. Eugene Smith, the photographer whose book it was, he had done more for Smith.

Smith had been beaten up badly in his investigation of a mercury poisoning scandal in Japan. Schiller was ¹instrumental, Lichtenstein's word, in having Smith flown back to the United States for treatment.

Schiller made no effort to hide what he really is from ~~Litchy~~ Lichtenstein:

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Mr. Schiller feels he's been potrayed harshly by people who are jealous of his enterprise. He spoke with deep cynicism about the publishing and journalism businesses, which he said competed madly for—and poured money like water into—sensational stories, only to criticize him for winning at the same game.

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Whether Schiller can be potrayed too harshly can best be answered by ~~th~~ ⁹se he victimized for money and for acceptability of the government, particularly the FBI. ~~the~~ ³ many of us are not "jealous of his enterprise" and in fact would have nothing to do with his ^{only} ghoulishness, whether or not it is also "enterprise." Getting rich and famous by hurting others as well as our history is not adequately described as mere "enterprise."

But Schiller did understand th what publishers would do for money and he knew the commercial value of female nakedness. ⁴he set out to make what had been unacceptable acceptable,

Friedman reports how Schiller set out to be the first to get ¹ a female pubuc hair photographed and published in Playboy. Schiller's ^u idea was to get this done "ithout anybody's noticing it." He used the black dancer, Paula Kelly as his model. Playboy published these pictures in August, 1963. As Friedman said, it worked, "except that people noticed." *124 here*

Schiller entrepreneurship with sex and Haier's involvement in their ^{schiller} selling of it dates to an accident in 1962. Before getting to that ^{he} told Friedman of his:

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Concept: "Marilyn Monroe had to be lovable, huggable and fuckable." This rather crass concept was the guiding principle behind Schiller's book *Marilyn*. "I conceived the project in 1972," he recalled, pulling from the box a *Time* magazine cover featuring Monroe and Norman Mailer, who wrote the book. "I knew from the very beginning we were going to have a *Time* cover. And I understood from the very beginning the concept of a cover, okay. Marilyn had to be alive, not dead. I didn't want a book about just another dead movie star. You follow what I'm saying?"

Friedman returns to ^{Monroe} ~~his~~ later

What he is "digging" is what has become "news" to make the cover of a major news magazine and that he understood that and exploited for money

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The camera, if it is pointed in the right direction at the right time, also has the power to make the person behind the lens famous. In 1962, Schiller got his first real break. Marilyn Monroe gave it to him. He was on the set of George Cukor's *Something's Got to Give*, a film that was never completed, taking pictures of Monroe for *Paris Match*. In the middle of a pool scene, she took off her bathing suit. Cukor's cameras continued to roll and Schiller

snapped away. Only one other photographer was on the set. "I went over to him," Schiller recalled, "and said, 'Two sets of pictures will only drive the price down.'" They entered into a partnership on the set. But he had to get Monroe's approval before he could sell anything.

"I would sit in her T-bird down the block from Schwab's and show her the prints," he said. "She would drink Dom Perignon and edit the pictures with pinking shears. She had the right to destroy a negative if she didn't like it. One day, I showed her a beautiful *tusshie* picture—a beautiful ass shot. I knew she'd love it, okay. And she said with a laugh, 'Why do you think I should release this picture?' I looked at her and said, 'You're already famous, Marilyn, now you can make me famous.'" Monroe released the pictures and Schiller promptly sold a set of them to *Life* magazine for \$10,000. It was his first big sale.

Monroe loved the attention of the camera; Schiller gave it to her. It was exploitation by mutual consent. But sitting in her Thunderbird, cutting negatives with her pinking shears, she never dreamed that the overweight photographer with the *tusshie* shots would get her on the cover of *Time* magazine ten years after her death.

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So, Schiller's career of successful exploitation began with his deal to sell pictures of Marilyn Monroe's backside-- and that made TIME's cover.

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Then Schiller got the marketing idea he called "The Legend and The Truth":

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... that would offer by catalog "a number of full-color remembrances of Marilyn Monroe," including the picture book *Marilyn*, with text by Norman Mailer, a series of eighteen- by twenty-four-inch posters, a calendar, a datebook, a jigsaw puzzle and a deck of playing cards with

her picture on the backs.
Schiller was understandably defensive about *The Legend and the Truth* when he pulled the brochure from the bottom of the box. He was no longer the photographer exploiting an image on the set of *Something's Got to Give*; he was now a big-time promoter. "I was offered a lot of money to do a lot of things I thought were in very bad taste," he said. "Marilyn's whole life was based on exploitation and she condoned it. She enjoyed seeing herself on pillowcases and ashtrays. But I felt it was in bad taste. I turned down offers to do T-shirts, shoes, endorsements for nylons and for sheets with her nude body on them."

This is where Mailer started with Schiller, in their joint ~~merch~~ merchandizing of the nude Marilyn Monroe after she was dead. That was not "in bad taste."

In his personal comment on this Friedman says,

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The Marilyn Monroe concept was a pinnacle of good taste compared with the last item Schiller dragged out of the carton at the end of the afternoon. It was a copy of a paperback book, published by New American Library, entitled *The Killing of Sharon Tate*. "More chilling than *Helter Skelter*," the cover promised. "The bizarre story of the Charles Manson blood orgies, including the confession of Susan Atkins, participant in the murders." The author was Lawrence Schiller.

No, apparently Schiller did not get an established writer to do that one. ~~He~~ ~~he~~ wanted to do it himself.

Mailer's chum of more than two decades has used many well-established writers over the years. It seems that Mailer was the most durable of them. Which he may soon regret it he ever allows himself to recognize what he has done to his reputation and the esteem in which ^{1000 152} Pulitzer's should be held. One of ^{schiller's} ~~the~~ many ^{hired writers} had several observations to make to Friedman about Schiller. The first Friedman uses is in discussion of the

Scavengers book:

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"That would have been an appropriate title had it been Schiller's autobiography. Have you ever heard of anybody so completely committed to scavenging?" Wilfred Sheed, who had written *Muhammad Ali* for Schiller and who also had had a falling-out with him, warned me: "Larry Schiller is too unreal to hate."

Sheed also added a facet to Schiller's commercial success:

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"Schiller symbolizes the photographer in our society," Wilfred Sheed observed. "He is attention personified. You want to be famous. He wants to make you famous."

Except for the backside and the dog, this is what Schiller did and made money by doing as did those he used.

Schiller-as of this writing; in any event- is one of the minority Schiller used who did not wind up detesting him, as Sheed reflects above and others did earlier in this considerable condensation ^{of the comments} of the Sheed-seeing majority. Friedman has this story account of Schiller latching on to Gilmore's lover:

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He was on the phone. A disarming grin spread over his bearded face. "Nicole, darling, how are you? I've been trying to get you for three days." He motioned me to sit down. The Nicole on the phone was Nicole Barrett, Gary Gilmore's lover and partner in a failed suicide pact. When she was released from a Utah mental institution, I later learned, Schiller brought her to Los Angeles and set her up in an apartment. "I want to take you out to dinner tonight. So get yourself a baby-sitter. . . . Norman will be here next week . . ."

My eyes wandered around the office. I didn't see a typewriter, which didn't surprise me, since Schiller had described himself to me over the phone, rather grotesquely, I had thought, as a "writer without hands." On the wall opposite the Marilyn blowup was a poster of Dennis Hopper holding an automatic rifle in his left hand near the words: "Dennis Hopper is the American Dreamer and the camera is his weapon."

". . . I don't want you going back to Utah for the divorce without me. . . . By the way, I just got a videotape of the press conference I gave after the execution . . ."

On a shelf, fourteen black loose-leaf notebooks were lined up impressively. Volume Five was marked "Nicole Barrett."

". . . Yes, you can wear your Levi's tonight."

end 153

That Schiller deal with ABC-TV for The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald ~~and it backed out on?~~

while Friedman was interviewing Schiller he learned that the deal was back on. ⁴ ~~12~~

Friedman provided ^{another} ~~some~~ of his insights into Schiller in reporting this:

..... He had also demanded that for every negative statement about him in my article I include a positive statement. That, of course, I had refused to do. His desire to be interviewed obviously outweighed his fear of looking bad.

I soon learned that to interview Schiller I had to negotiate as well as to ask questions. Every few minutes, or so it seemed, he would stop my tape recorder and offer me a deal. Would I be interested in seeing the screenplay of *The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald*, a four-hour television movie he is producing for ABC? Then I would have to promise not to reveal what happens in the last ten pages. Would I be interested in knowing the true story of what he was doing covering the Patty Hearst trial for *Time*? Then I would have to agree not to call *Time's* bureau chief in San Francisco. If I refused the deal, it was on to something else.

But for all his game playing, Schiller was remarkably open, answering all my questions, admitting his foibles. Instead of the loathsome character I had imagined to go along with my Agent of Death concept, he was charming, almost likable. No doubt he was aware that his reputation preceded him and he was trying his hardest to show me the other side of Larry Schiller. I felt like a reporter confronted by the leader of a death cult and accused of misrepresenting the group in the press, then told: "You have to understand that human sacrifices are only a small part of our total program."

Which is pretty much what Schiller said when I asked him early on why he was attracted to all these death

stories. "I am drawn to unwarranted, uncalled-for deaths," he admitted. "Lenny Bruce didn't have to die that way, or the people in that little fishing village in Japan. [Schiller produced Eugene Smith's epic photographic study *Minamata*, which chronicled mercury poisoning in a Japanese town.]

"There's always a mystery behind that type of death, and there's no question that journalism feeds on deaths. That's what makes front page in all the newspapers—not people being born.

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stories. "I am drawn to unwarranted, uncalled-for deaths," he admitted. "Lenny Bruce didn't have to die that way, or the people in that little fishing village in Japan. [Schiller produced Eugene Smith's epic photographic study *Minamata*, which chronicled mercury poisoning in a Japanese town.]

Newsweek dated October 3, 1977 gave The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald a little more than a full page. The heading reads, "Recipe for Paranoia." Its second paragraph says enough:

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space
indent*

Now ABC has applied the docu-drama technique to an even more explosive subject. On this Friday and Sunday, ABC will broadcast "The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald," a four-hour film dealing with what might have happened had JFK's accused assassin lived to face prosecution. It's an engrossing notion, but what emerges is a case study of the dangers of TV's pervasive new form. The docu-drama's creators maintain that they are offering America a salutary catharsis, an opportunity to discover whether Oswald would have been found guilty or innocent—and whether he acted alone or as part of a conspiracy. Yet by indiscriminately blending hard evidence with pure conjecture, ABC must stand accused of irresponsibility in the first degree. The verdict here is guilty as charged.

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154*

Schiller being ^{as} Schiller— and getting rich and famous, if not also infamous, doing it, ^{normal}
in most of his deals Schiller begins putting out money. He buys them, hardly any
^{and accepted} concept of journalism but a business practice.

An obvious question is had Schiller bought the rights from the KGB?

Obvious from his long record but not from any review, interview, newspaper or magazine article or radio or TV appearance of which I know when ~~he~~ was promoting his book ~~it~~ or when it was written about.

*end
155*

VIII. The "Hustler" is the "Carrion Bird," the "Ultimate Obscurity" Who is "Too Unreal To Hate."

Although it is not the way books are usually written and certainly is not a way to be preferred, because my purpose is to make a record for our history while that remains possible for me I began writing this book as soon as I knew that Mailer's tale, which is really what it is, was to be published soon. This is to say that I was writing the book under news-story conditions: It was a breaking story.

The mystery of how Mailer got into this monumental self-characterization as a friend was cleared up by Newsweek in its issue dated April 25, 1995. That, with Mailer as its source, confirmed my suspicion that he was still again in effect Schiller's hired hand, for the third time. The first times were profitable to both. Besides the money it made for them, the second got Mailer his second Pulitzer, for The Executioner's Song.

Two Pulitzers is rare. So also is the winner of a single Pulitzer casting himself as the hired pen of a slick promoter.

Before this issue appeared I had laid aside what I have been sent about Schiller. Despite my personal experience with him, experiences in which he makes a coiled rattler with those rattles agitated appear to be straight as a die, I had no active interest in him. I spent my time on the assassination, not on those for whom it was a ticket to fame and fortune. So what follows is what was sent me simply because of the way Schiller had behaved on the assassination and as the running dog of errant government.

The most complete of these sources is the "Hell's Agent" article by Robert Friedman in the October, 1977 issue of Esquire. Friedman was then managing editor of the reporter's paper, More. Of the items I know that my dear friend, the late James D.

White who had spent his working lifetime on Associated Press, sent me the United Press story that was headlined, "How He Got The Story" as it was published in the San Francisco Chronicle of January 17 and the New York Times "Gilmore's Agent an Entrepreneur Who Specializes in the Sensational."

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I was also sent "Recipe for Paranoia" from Newsweek dated October 3, 1977.

Ian McDonald, a former Times of London correspondent sent me what I quote from The New Statesman of April 7, 1995.

Prevailing Winds publisher sent me its premiere issue.

Bill Neichter, my Louisville, Kentucky friend sent me Larry King's column from USA Today of February 6, 1995.

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The AP story headed "Simpson book to create cash, not alarm," is from our local newspapers, the Frederick News and Post.

The Jerusalem Report's cover story, "Cover-Up," in its issue dated May 5, 1995 ^{is} ~~is that~~ saw.

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I have also had access to the records of the late Sylvia Meagher on deposit in local Hood College, where all my records will be.

So, I have no secret sources. With Schiller, who needs secrets?

Yet what is clear from these few sources that are not secret, ~~is that~~ ^{is} it is to wonder what there might be that is not publicly known. Schiller has had quite a career. And God knows how many enemies he made climbing to success.

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It was my suspicion that Pulitzers of or not, Mailer was again Schiller's man that led me to clip that Jerusalem Report story before I saw Mailer's admission to the Newsweek interviewer Ray Sawhill in its April 24 issue. The part of that suspicion that Mailer confirmed to Sawhill reads:

—

"...Like 'The Executioner's Song', Mailer's Pulitzer Prize-winning book on Gary Gilmore, 'Owld's Tale' was dreamed up by the journalistic entrepreneur and world-class interviewer Lawrence Schiller, who recruited Mailer as his writer."

A "journalistic entrepreneur" who does not do his own writing? Who "recruits" another to write his story for him? That is Journalism Entrepreneurship, but traditional journalism it is not.

bc/bc/

It is wheeling and dealing and promoting deals, conniving at them, sneakily or overtly, cunningly or forcibly. But there is no taint of journalism in not trusting yourself to be your own writer on deals, big deals in particular because they have the greatest potential. So why share them, why cut another in on a big killing when your's is the mind that conceived it and your's alone succeeded in pulling it off? The only real reason is because as a writer you are not up to the writing that it requires. That is not journalism. That is being a deal-maker, a fixer.

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off/

Schiller is a "journalist" only because he says he is a "journalist", not because he is. He is not.

That he knew he is not a journalist is why he hired the writing of others. With the Gary Gilmore case he made his second deal with Mailer who, with a Pulitzer to his credit and perhaps running a bit dry (the "perhaps" is from Mailer in his own Mailer's Tale, a work that without conjectures and conditionals would never have gotten onto paper) became in effect the hired hand of a checkbook wheeler and dealer, a fixer who could not do the job for himself.

Indeed, how the mighty have fallen, even though with the Gilmore ghoulings it meant another Pulitzer. By being again a hired pen.

But there it should be noted, it is Mailer himself, the king macho of all machos, who cast himself as the hireling writer. He told Newsweek that Schiller had "recruited" him as

his, Schiller's, "writer."

Schiller is a promoter, an able and an imaginative and a successful promoter.

Of deal involving death, singular and multiple.

Schiller deals in death and in his dealing with death, for money, he used that most he-man of writers, Mailer, as his hired hand, to do his writing for him.

Schiller has the concept, he gets the idea, and Mailer then does his work for him.

As Friedman put it in his Esquire article,

Buying the right of the dead--or the about-to-be-dad, in the case of Gilmore--was nothing new to Larry Schiller. He had secured the right of Lenny Bruce's ex-wife, Honey, as well as those of Bruce's mother and daughter, which he parlayed into an equal partnership in the successful biography *Ladies and Gentlemen, Lenny Bruce!* (Part of his deal with Albert Goldman, the book's author, was an unusual cover credit: Based on the journalism of Lawrence Schiller.") He had bought the exclusive rights to a young woman's account of her losing battle with bone cancer, which became the basis of a book, *Sunshine*, and a TV movie. He had taken some of the last nude photographs of Marilyn Monroe several months before her death and, ten years later, had brought her back to life through the book *Marilyn*, which he packaged. He had interviewed Susan Atkins before she talked to a grand jury and had taken down her confession to the murder of Sharon Tate, then had sold the grisly story all over the world. He had conducted Jack Ruby's deathbed interview and before that bought the rights to the photograph of Ruby shooting Lee Harvey Oswald. And before that, when he was just fifteen years old, Schiller had covered the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg story.

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(In a New York Times account what Schiller actually "covered" as a boy was free lancing photographs of protests over the case in New York City.)

Here was a man who knew the value of death. Here was a man who understood that death is the ultimate story, the final concept. He had said as much to a *Rolling Stone* reporter in 1971 at a preview of *American Dreamer*, his film about Dennis Hopper: "Murder and prostitution excite me. Let's face it: the desire of all photographers is to photograph murder--with a knife instead of a gun, preferably. That's what makes covering wars so exciting."

As Friedman also reported, Schiller does not cheat his hired hands and whether or not they wind up liking or hating him and however they may feel about themselves as used, as hired hands in the most individual of endeavors, writing, on money he does not gyp them. He also sees to it that they get top billing with him the "journalist."

Writing about the idea with which he began, of Larry Schiller as "Agent of Death," Friedman says he has read all the newspaper profiles of Schiller from the time of his biggest deal, Garry Gilmore. Friedman then writes:

Barry Farrell, who was later to team up with Schiller on the *Playboy* interview, had said it most starkly, when he described him in *New West* magazine as a "carrion bird." ("Schiller was always a Moriarty figure for me, an evil genius," Farrell told me. "When I went out to Utah to write my *New West* article, I thought I had him in a vulnerable position. I went with my pencils sharpened. But everyone I spoke to turned me around. He was very honest." Ten days after that article appeared, Schiller called and asked Farrell if he would like to work on the Gilmore interview for *Playboy*.)

Schiller's stable of hired hands are not all as satisfied as Mailer. Mailer at least was still satisfied at the time of his third writing job for Schiller appeared. He certainly was satisfied when he got the Pulitzer for the second one, the Gary Gilmore deal Schiller conceived and milked and milked and milked. Mailer was not Schiller's only hired hand-writer on that deal. As Friedman next wrote in *Esquire*:

My concept of Schiller as Agent of Death had been reinforced by a number of interviews I did before leaving Los Angeles. Albert Goldman, who had had a bitter falling-out with Schiller over the Lenny Bruce book, was virtually screaming on the other end of the phone: "Larry is a voyeur at the ultimate obscenity. He finds the *most* lurid, the *most* gross, the *most* hideous thing anyone can imagine and gets the exclusive rights to tit. That's his assignment in this world."

What Goldman told Friedman about Schiller as "a voyeur of the ultimate obscenity" as of 1977 is even truer when Schiller returned to his commercialization of the JFK

assassination in what emerged as Mailer's Tale, despite its actual title. The assassination of a President is the most subversive of crimes in our country. Whatever the intent of the assassin or assassins, the assassination of any president has the effect of a coup d'etat, and that is what Schiller, using Mailer, exploited in Schiller's deal.

But the reputation at stake is not Schiller's. It is Mailer's.

Mailer confirmed that he, too, had screaming matches with Schiller.

As he told Newsweek when asked, "How did you two work together?"

"We were free to fight, which makes for good relations. Once or twice one of us would pursue a line of questioning the other hated, and we were finally screaming at each other. And the poor Russian interviewee is sitting there looking at us like we're madmen."

David Suskind, then a prominent and successful TV producer and star, also went for that Gary Gilmore exclusive. Yet Schiller got it for almost a third less money than Suskind offered. That was no mean accomplishment when money seemed to be the primary interest of Gilmore and his family. Suskind told Friedman,

"Schiller sweeps down on tragic events, like the death of Marilyn Monroe, or the pending execution of Gilmore, vulture-like and ghoulish, salivating all the time."

That this did not suggest "vampire" to Suskind is surprising.

He beat Suskind and got the Gilmore exclusive. The United Press January 17, 1977 account of it was headlined by the San Francisco Chronicle, "How he got the Story." It begins:

Larry Schiller didn't actually lie. The duplicity which has become his trademark was adequate to get him past the guards and into an interview with Gary Gilmore.


Schiller, a former news photographer turned producer, arrived at the Utah State Prison with Gilmore's attorneys and identified himself as "an associate" of the two lawyers.

After an exchange of pleasantries with the guard, the fact that prison regulations adamantly barred anyone but the killer's attorneys from seeing him was no longer in the way.

Schiller's method of meeting Gilmore was emblematic of his successful campaign to but Gilmore's only asset: His story.

"He was just smarter than the guard," Warden Sam Smith lamented later. "Sometimes that happens."



It happened repeatedly for Schiller as he won the rights to the Gilmore story, outmaneuvering David Suskind, singer Paul Anka and a flock of others looking for the opportunity to turn the saga of the killer who wanted to die into movies and books.

Schiller's smarts is reflected in his seeing that prison made the story in clamping a ban on any media access to Gilmore. 

Schiller was also handicapped by the fact that when he went after that one and the authorities had denied access to Gilmore to all but his lawyers, Gilmore already had a lawyer who was dealing for the rights to his Gilmore story.

A lawyer who was also what UP described as "a freelance writer." He was Dennis Boaz, of San Francisco. Boaz had interviewed Gilmore and was actively seeking deals for what he believed was and would be his exclusive. Boaz seemed to be favoring Suskind and Suskind's offer came to about \$140,000.

Schiller tried without success to make a deal with Boaz. Failing, he set off on his own.

He had  caused the job, so to speak, in his own mind. He did figure out how he might pull it off and for less money. He set out to enlist Gilmore's uncle and aunt, Vern and Ida Damico. He also included Kathryn Baker. She was the mother of Gilmore's fiancée, Nicole Barrett. More on this later. 

Right off the bat Schiller went out of his way, seemingly against his own interest,

in urging Gilmore's family to protect themselves by getting a lawyer before they made any deal with him. That impressed them favorably.

Schiller then began communications with Gilmore, first by a lengthy telegram and then through his uncle Vern. He got the message he wanted to Gilmore and the reply he wanted by including in a copy of the latest book he had promoted a letter that told Gilmore to indicate his trust in his uncle by telling his uncle to tell Schiller, "Gary got the book."

Before then Schiller had been dealing with Gilmore's relatives.

Then Schiller got a break for which he had been preparing with care. Boaz had said on TV what Gilmore did not like. When they argued about that, Gilmore fired Boaz.

As it worked out what Schiller bought the death rights for was about \$100,000 or about \$400,000 less than Suskind's offer. He pulled that off by looking out for the interests of others.

Grace Lichtenstein adds details in her New York Times story of three days later. It begins:

The man who gave the public the last nude photos of Marilyn Monroe, the first prison interview with Susan Atkins, the Charles Manson follower, the heritage of Lenny Bruce, an account of the final days of a cancer victim and the photonegative of Jack Ruby shooting Lee Harvey Oswald is now presenting the death of Gary Mark Gilmore.

Lawrence Schiller, 40 years old, is the entrepreneur who obtained the rights to the story of the first man to suffer the death penalty in the United States in a decade. He also watched the execution, from which the press was barred. No one who knows him is terribly surprised. "A hustler and a good one" is regarded as a fair description of MR. Schiller, according to friends, enemies and former collaborators.

As he sat in his motel room here not far from the Utah State Prison--two secretaries answering two specially installed telephones, a tape deck and a Xerox machine behind him--he said, "I'm not interested in dollars and cents. I'm interested in getting a story nobody else can get."

Interest in kicks only?

Whether Schiller has no interest in money can be argued but not his success in getting more than an exclusive on the story. As Lichtenstein write:

He got the Gilmore story in much the same way he got others over the years--through relentless legwork, brashness and the help of professional writers.

He came to Utah early in November, he said, and "integrated" himself with the killer's uncle, Vern Damico. Mr. Damico eventually persuaded Mr. Gilmore to drop another man, Dennis Boaz, as his agent and accept Mr. Schiller's offer. From whatever deals Mr. Schiller was able to make, according to a report that Mr. Schiller said was accurate, Mr. Gilmore and his relatives would get \$60,000, his victim's families \$40,000 and his girlfriend, Nicole Barrett, \$25,000.

Despite tight security, Mr. Schiller said, he taped 36 hours of interviews with Mr. Gilmore, some of it by telephone as late as seven hours before the execution. He had relatives bring Mr. Gilmore sheets with typed questions, on which the convict scribbled his answers.

Where would Schiller get the money Lichtenstein reported part of that:

First, he collected \$70,000 from ABC Entertainment as an advance against rights to a television movie about Mr. Gilmore. ABC later bowed out because it wanted Mr. Schiller to make the movie immediately, but he was entitled to keep the \$70,000 while negotiating a new movie offer.

Then he arranged for *Playboy* magazine to buy rights to the first interview with Mr. Gilmore to be published following his execution, for an amount neither party would disclose.

As we have seen, that amount was \$20,000. So, without any other deals--and were there other deals!--at most Schiller put only about \$10,000 of his won money in it.

Friedman reported that Schiller, as of the time of his interview, "has sold the book rights for \$500,000" and already had hooked Mailer to do the writing. He also placed the probable take of the movie he was negotiating for at "more than \$10,000,000."

But Schiller had no deal on a book when he cinched his deal with Gilmore. As Lichtenstein wrote, with an additional reference to Barry Farrell:

Several weeks ago, Barry Farrell, a former Life columnist, wrote a scathing article entitled, "Merchandising

Gary Gilmore's Dance of Death," in New West. He called Mr. Schiller a "carrion bird." Mr. Farrell has now signed on as Mr. Schiller's collaborator on the Playboy interview, which Mr. Schiller regards as a "trial balloon" to test the salability of more extensive projects such as a book.

The plump, bearded Brooklyn-born Mr. Schiller has observed, "I always play by the rules. I just make the rules work for me."

It started when he was fourteen, he said, and used the prize money from a photography contest to go around the world for a summer shooting news, including marches protesting Julius and Ethel Rosenberg's execution in New York.

Mr. Schiller went on to become a leading freelance photographer for Life, where he and Mr. Farrell first collaborated on an early story about LSD, and for The Saturday Evening Post. He was in Dallas when the Oswald shooting took place, bought the negatives to that now-famous photo for \$10,000 and put the charge on his Post expense account.

I do not doubt that Schiller got the rights to one such picture but either he makes no effort to enforce those rights, caring only for big prices paid, or there was more than one because my friend Jim Leavelle, the detective handcuffed to Oswald when Ruby shot him, autographed a print to me.

The Times does not take people at their own appraisal of themselves. Liechtenstein did not, as quoted above, refer to Schiller as any kind of "journalist." She referred to him with as kind a description as is possible, as an "entrepreneur."

In her account of Schiller's earlier commercializations of deaths she reports what was his first use of Mailer as his hired hand, in commercializing sex:

When Lenny Bruce died, Mr. Schiller ingratiated himself with Mr. Bruce's relatives, signed them to contracts, did taped interviews and eventually sold those rights as part of a book written by Albert Goldman. The two had a falling out and now describe each other in brutally unflattering terms.

Later on, Mr. Schiller was allowed to interview Miss Atkins in prison when she confessed to the Manson murders of Sharon Tate and others. The subsequent story, written for Mr. Schiller by Jerry Cohen, a Los Angeles Times reporter,

made headlines because it was accused of prejudicing the Manson trail. According to one report, Mr. Schiller grossed \$175,000 for that story.

He sold the photographs of Miss Monroe to Playboy for \$25,000. Then, he conceived a book with photos of her many photographers and a text by a famous writer. Norman Mailer was chosen because Mr. Schiller's first choice, Romain Gary, was unavailable.

That Schiller was capable of kindness Lichtenstein also reported. She recounted that although Schiller exclaimed to have taken no fee in acting as the agent to place the book, Minamata for W. Eugene Smith, the photographer whose book it was, he had done more for Smith.

Smith had been beaten up badly in his investigation of a mercury poisoning scandal in Japan. Schiller was "instrumental," Lichtenstein's word, in having Smith flown back to the United States for treatment.

Schiller made no effort to hide what he really is from Lichtenstein:

Mr. Schiller feels he's been portrayed harshly by people who are jealous of his enterprise. He spoke with deep cynicism about the publishing and journalism business, which he said competed mainly for--and poured money like water into--sensational stories, only to criticize him for winning at the same game.

Whether Schiller can be portrayed too harshly can best be answered by those he victimized for money and for the acceptability of the government, particularly the FBI. Many of us are not "jealous of his enterprise" and in fact would have nothing to do with his ghoulishness, whether or not it is also only "enterprise." Getting rich and famous by hurting others as well as our history is not adequately described as mere "enterprise."

But Schiller did understand what publishers would do for money and he knew the commercial value of female nakedness. He set out to be the first to get female pubic hair photographed and published in Playboy. Schiller's idea was to get this done

"without anybody's noticing it." He used the black dancer, Paula Kelly as his model. Playboy published those pictures in August, 1969. As Friedman said, it worked, "except that people noticed."

(When I came to the Marilyn Monroe part in reading Friedman's article in 1977 I recalled how entirely different it was just before Pearl Harbor when I was a Washington magazine correspondent and did some freelancing. I was phoned in great distress by the editor of a small magazine for which I did a little work from time to time. That month's issue had been refused access to the mails when it was delivered to the post office for ailing by the printer. The reason was that it had used a picture of a young woman going over a wooden fence. She was wearing a blouse that covered her entire upper body and shorts that covered half her thighs. Not at all like the bikinis and miniskirts that soon followed in women's styles. ^lTh¹ then Postmaster General who ^Iwas recalled¹ was named Walker, was also the head of the politically powerful Catholic or largely Catholic group that called itself as I now recall "The Legion of Decency." That picture, of a woman more fully clothed than women had been on beaches for almost all my long life, was held to be indecent!

(Their lawyers told the publisher that if they went to court and prevailed that would only be long, long after other editions followed. It would be ruinous for the magazine. That issue would not be delivered. Could I do something?

(It happened I could. I had arranged with the information officer of the Treasury Department, Chuck Schwartz, with whom I had a friendly relationship, for him to ghost an article for the secretary, the dignified Henry Margenthau, on some angle to the government's interest as war drew near.

(So first I informed Schwartz that if ~~it came out~~ ^{the ban stuck} the secretary would be identified

with public indecency found out to be that by his cabinet mate, the Postmaster General. J/S/

(Then I spoke to a friend who was Number 2 in the Office of War Information, my good friend Katherine C. Blackburn. She had been known as "Casey" from before I was born. She saw the political problems for the administration immediately. She sent me to see Oscar Cox, whose high rank in the Department of Justice then I do not remember. He today is best remembered as having been fired by Richard Nixon when he was the first Watergate Special Prosecutor.

(It took no time at all for the Department of Justice to find that magazine was not indecent and to persuade the post office it was not.

(Not that friends deal with each other on a pay-back basis, but the morning after Pearl Harbor I gave Casey all the research for an article that had appeared three months earlier in the then ^{third} largest picture magazine whose Washington correspondent I was, Click, in which I had accurately predicted not only the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor but all else it then did. Our government not only had not anticipated that, it also was not ready with any propaganda to expose Japan. Casey used my work for that and soon I was seeing where she had planted it.)

(How our concept of right and wrong, of what is decent, moral and ethical other than in sex pictures have changed since then. In those days the Schillers would not have been rich and famous and hiring the pens of established writer. They would have been pariahs, outcasts, making their living more decently and honestly or not at all. Or if they did not they'd have faced or been in jail.)

Schiller's entrepreneurship with sex and Mailer's involvement in their selling of it dates to an accident in 1962. Before getting to that Schiller told Friedman of his:

Concept: "*Marilyn Monroe had to be loveable, huggable and fuckable.*" This rather crass concept was the guiding

principle behind Schiller's book *Marilyn*. "I conceived the project in 1972," he recalled, pulling from the box a *Time* magazine cover featuring Monroe and Norman Mailer, who wrote the book. "I knew from the very beginning we were going to have a *Time* cover. And I understood from the very beginning the *concept*, of a cover, okay. Marilyn had to be alive, not dead. I didn't want a book about just another dead movie star. You follow what I'm saying?"

What he is "saying" is what has become important enough "news" to make the cover of a major news magazine and that he understood that and expected to exploit it for money.

Friedman returns to Monroe later.

The camera, if it is pointed in the right direction at the right time, also has the power to make the person behind the lens famous. In 1962, Schiller got his first real break. Marilyn Monroe gave it to him. He was on the set of George Cukor's *Something's Got to Give*, a film that was never completed, taking pictures of Monroe for *Paris Match*. In the middle of a pool scene, she took off her bathing suit. Cukor's cameras continued to roll and Schiller snapped away. Only one other photographer was on the set. "I went over to him," Schiller recalled, "and said, 'Two sets of pictures will only drive the price down.'" They entered into a partnership on the set. But he had to get Monroe's approval before he could sell anything.

"I would sit in her T-bird down the block from Schwab's and show her the prints," he said. "She would drink Dom Perignon and edit the pictures with pinking shears. She had the right to destroy a negative if she didn't like it. One day I showed her a beautiful *tusshie* picture--a beautiful ass shot. I knew she'd love it, okay. And she said with a laugh, 'Why do you think I should release this picture?' I looked at her and said, 'You're already famous, Marilyn, now you can make me famous.'" Monroe released the pictures and Schiller promptly sold a set of them to *Life* magazine for \$10,000. It was his first big sale.

Monroe loved the attention of the camera; Schiller gave it to her. It was exploitation by mutual consent. But sitting in her Thunderbird, cutting negatives with her pinking shears, she never dreamed that the overweight photographer with the *tusshie* shots would get her on the cover of *Time* magazine ten years after her death.

So, Schiller's career of successful exploitation began with his deal to sell pictures of

Marilyn Monroe's backside--and that made TIME's cover.

Then Schiller got the marketing idea he called "The Legend and The Truth":

"...that would offer by catalog a number of full-color remembrances of Marilyn Monroe," including the picture book *Marilyn*, with text by Norman Mailer, a series of eighteen by twenty-four-inch posters, a calendar, a datebook, a jigsaw puzzle and a deck of playing cards with her picture on the backs.

Schiller was understandably defensive about The Legend and The Truth when he pulled the brochure from the bottom of the box. He was no longer the photographer exploiting an image on the set of *Something's Got to Give*; he was now a big-time promoter. "I was offered a lot of money to do a lot of things I thought were in very bad taste," he said. "Marilyn's whole life was based on exploitation and she condoned it. She enjoyed seeing herself on pillowcases and ashtrays. But I felt it was in bad taste. I turned down offers to do T-shirts, shoes, endorsements for nylons and for sheets with her nude body on them."

This is where Mailer started with Schiller in their joint merchandising of the nude Marilyn Monroe after she was dead. That was not "in bad taste."

In his personal comment on this Friedman says,

The Marilyn Monroe concept was a pinnacle of good taste compared with the last item Schiller dragged out of the carton at the end of the afternoon. It was a copy of a paperback book, published by New American Library, entitled *The Killing of Sharon Tate*. "More chilling than Helter Skelter," the cover promised. "The bizarre story of the Charles Manson blood orgies, including the confession of Susan Atkins, participant in the murders." The author was Lawrence Schiller.

So, apparently Schiller did not get an established writer to do that one.

Or wanted to do it himself.

Mailer's chum of more than two decades has used many well-established writers over the years. It seems that Mailer was the most durable of them. Which he may soon regret if he ever allows himself to recognize what he has done to his reputation and the

esteem in which Pulitzers should be held. One of Schiller's many hired writers had several observations to make to Friedman about Schiller. The first Friedman uses in discussion of the Scavengers book:

"That would have been an appropriate title had it been Schiller's autobiography. Have you ever heard of anybody so completely committed to scavenging?" Wilfred Sheed, who had written *Muhammad Ali* for Schiller and who also had had a falling-out with him, warned me: "Larry Schiller is too unreal to hate."

Sheed also added a factor to Schiller's commercial success:

"Schiller symbolizes the photographer in our society," Wilfred Sheed observed. "He is attention personified. You want to be famous. He wants to make you famous."

Except for the backsides and the dead, this is what Schiller did and made money by doing as did those he used.

Mailer--as of this writing in any event--is one of the minority Schiller used who did not wind up detesting him, as Sheed reflects above and others did earlier in this considerable condensation of the comments of the Sheed-seeing majority. Friedman has this account of Schiller latching on to Gilmore's lover:

He was on the phone. A disarming grin spread over his bearded face. "Nicole, darling, how are you? I've been trying to get you for three days." He motioned me to sit down. The Nicole on the phone was Nicole Barrett, Gary Gilmore's lover and partner in a failed suicide pact. When she was released from a Utah mental institution, I later learned, Schiller brought her to Los Angeles and set her up in an apartment. "I want to take you out to dinner tonight. So get yourself a babysitter....Norman will be here next week..."

My eyes wandered around the office. I didn't see a typewriter, which didn't surprise me, since Schiller had described himself to me over the phone, rather grotesquely, I had thought, as a "writer without hands." On the wall opposite the Marilyn Monroe blowup was a poster of Dennis Hopper holding an automatic rifle in his left hand near the words: "Dennis Hopper is the American Dreamer and the camera is his weapon."

"...I don't want you going back to Utah for the divorce without me.... By the way, I just got a video tape of the press conference I gave after the execution..."

On a shelf, fourteen black loose-leaf notebooks were lined up impressively. Volume Five was marked "Nicole Barrett."

"...Yes, you can wear your Levis tonight."

That Schiller deal with ABC-TV for The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald it backed out on?

While Friedman was interviewing Schiller he learned that the deal was back on. Friedman provides another of his insights into Schiller in reporting this:

"...He had also demanded that for every negative statement about him in my article I included a positive statement. That, of course, I had refused to do. His desire to be interviewed obviously outweighed his fear of looking bad.

I soon learned that to interview Schiller I had to negotiate as well as ask questions. Every few minutes or so it seemed, he would stop my tape recorder and offer me a deal. Would I be interested in seeing the screenplay of *The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald*, a four-hour television movie he is producing for ABC? Then I would have to promise not to reveal what happens in the last ten pages. Would I be interested in knowing the true story of what he was doing covering the Patty Hearst trial for *Time*? The I would have to agree not to call *Time's* bureau chief in San Francisco. If I refused the deal, it was on to something else.

But for all his game playing, Schiller was remarkably open, answering all my questions admitting his foibles. Instead of the loathsome character I had imagined to go along with my Agent of Death concept, he was charming, almost likeable. No doubt he was aware that his reputation preceded him and he was trying his hardest to show me the other side of Larry Schiller. I felt like a reporter confronted by the leader of a death cult and accused of misrepresenting the group in the press, then told: "You have to understand that human sacrifices are only a small part of our total program."

Which is pretty much what Schiller said when I asked him early on why he was attracted to all these death stories. "I am drawn to unwarranted, uncalled-for deaths," he admitted. "Lenny Bruce didn't have to die that way, or the people in that little fishing village in Japan. [Schiller produce Eugene Smith's epic photography study *Minamata*, which chronicled mercury poisoning in a Japanese town.]

"There is always a mystery behind that kind of death, and there is no question that journalism feeds on deaths. That's what makes front page in the newspapers--not people being born."

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Newsweek dated October 3, 1977 gave The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald a little more than a full page. The heading reads, "Recipe for Paranoia." Its second paragraph says enough:

Now ABC had applied the docu-drama technique to an even more explosive subject. On this Friday and Saturday, ABC will broadcast "The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald," a four-hour film dealing with what might have happened had JFK's accused assassin lived to face prosecution. It's an engrossing notion but what emerges is a case study of the dangers of TV's pervasive new form. The docu-drama's creators maintain that they are offering America a salutary catharsis, an opportunity to discover whether Oswald would have been found guilty or innocent--and whether he acted alone or as part of a conspiracy. Yet by indiscriminately blending hard evidence with pure conjecture, ABC must stand accused of irresponsibility in the first degree. The verdict is guilty as charged.

Schuller being Schiller--and getting rich and famous, if not also infamous, doing it.

In most of his deals Schiller begins putting out money. He buys them, hardly any normal and accepted concept of journalism.

An obvious question is had Schiller bought the rights from the KGB?

Obviously from his long record but not from any review, interview, newspaper or magazine article or radio or TV appearance of which I know when Mailer was promoting his book or when it was written about.