

## PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT



# Why Was Larry Flynt Shot?

I am sitting in a hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, nibbling on a slice of banana bread baked by a cop's wife, while Althea Flynt is listening to the compassionate advice of George Wallace. Al Goldstein, who has been sued by the Alabama governor, is mulling over a bit of religious literature so he can improve his bedside manner with Larry Flynt—who thinks we should publish color photos of his born-again, torn-apart stomach, shredded like a Watergate memo. Dick Gregory is concerned that his own missing address book has been lifted by an operative for the CIA.

In addition, Gregory is suing the FBI because it wanted to "neutralize" him. He interprets that as "kill." It certainly does not mean that the FBI planned to lighten the pigmentation of his skin by rubbing on lemon juice.

*Neutralize*—what a nice, clean word. Ten years ago, according to FBI documents, the intent was "to expose, disrupt and otherwise neutralize the activities of the New Left," meaning the anti-war movement. Agents were told "to remain alert for and to seek specific data depicting [New Leftists'] depraved nature and moral looseness..."

Although the First Amendment guarantees freedom of assembly, FBI instructions stated that when a student's participation in a demonstration "is accompanied by the use of or engagement in an obscene display, this infor-

mation is to be promptly incorporated into an anonymous letter which can be directed to his parents"—plus "neighbors and the parents' employers."

Another suggestion: "The use of articles from student newspapers and/or the 'underground press'... showing advocacy of the use of narcotics and free sex are ideal to send to university officials, wealthy donors, members of the legislature..."

Moreover, "since the use of marijuana and other narcotics is widespread among members of the New Left, you should be alert to opportunities to have them arrested by local authorities on drug charges."

The insidiousness of FBI counterintelligence ran the gamut from "the creating of impressions that certain New Left leaders are informants for the Bureau or other law-enforcement agencies" to the noting of an actual informant who "advised that the Students for a Democratic Society... is now considering a weekly trip via automobile from Detroit to Chicago to secure films. Detroit plans harassment of the individuals traveling in the SDS vehicle..."

Significantly, whenever there was friction between groups or individuals, the order was: "This hostility should be exploited wherever possible."

Whoever shot Larry Flynt was encouraged—if not assigned—by the

insane priorities of a legal system that uses pornography as an excuse for political persecution.

Free speech has always been an irritant to the Establishment. One FBI memo from late 1970 proposed the disruption of the physical plant of the Radical Education Project: "The Bureau is requested to prepare and furnish... in liquid form a solution capable of duplicating a scent of the most foul-smelling feces available. In this case, it might be appropriate to duplicate the feces of the species *Sus scrofa* [that is, pig shit]. A quart supply, along with a dispenser capable of squirting a narrow stream for a distance of approximately three feet, would satisfy the needs of this proposed technique."

Larry Flynt's mission to uncover the truth about assassinations in this country may have been the ultimate motive behind his shooting, even if the act was inspired by publicity surrounding a trial that could have ended with an acquittal. According to two jurors, the jury heavily favored a verdict of not guilty.

Larry Flynt was shot because he wanted to show there is no conflict between spirituality and sexuality. There is, however, a conflict between spirituality and cruelty. But neither tax-supported stink bottles nor the climate they have helped to create for bullets will stifle freedom of the press.

—Paul Krassner



# FEEDBACK

On March 6, Larry Flynt was in Lawrenceville, Georgia, defending our First Amendment rights. Larry has always expressed a willingness to die for his beliefs, but that made the news of his being shot during a court recess no less shocking or disgusting. At press time, as he lay fighting for his life, we compiled this sampling of condolences. The response is a far cry from *Time's* quote of Lawrenceville Mayor Rhodes Jordan: "Somebody was sending Flynt a message, that they don't want his type of filth around."

**Bullets and a Free Press:** Georgians from all walks of life were shocked and stunned by the vicious and senseless assault directed at you while you were in our midst. We can only condemn the perpetrators of the wanton act of violence and hope for a quick arrest. As a peace-loving, law-abiding people, Georgians deplore and despise this kind of lawlessness. Resources of state government are being made available to assist in the investigation. Meanwhile, our prayers are with you for a speedy and complete recovery.

Governor George Busbee

I am praying for you that the Lord will be close to you and comfort you during this time of suffering. Your Brother in Christ,

Charles W. Colson

I was shocked and almost in tears when I learned from the evening news that Larry Flynt was shot. The fact that anyone could even think of shooting this dedicated man, a man who has done more to open our eyes to the problems of sexual inadequacy and in-

hibitions since Sigmund Freud, is ghastly!

His courage couldn't break, so someone decided to murder him; haven't things gone far enough?! For God's sake, the world needs its Larry Flynts.

Monty Edwards  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

My wife Nan and I pray for your quick recovery. Your spirit is indomitable.

Gay Talese

Today, on my way home from work, I stopped off at the local gin mill for a few beers with my friends. After quenching our thirsts and hashing over the day's events, I went next door to a small store and picked up my monthly copy of *HUSTLER*, which I leafed through as my neighbor drove me home. I got home, kissed my wife and two small kids, and sat down to supper. After the usual good meal and mellow conversation, I tuned in the TV news. No one can imagine the disgust and shock I felt as—there in my own living room—the ultimate obscenity put the damper on an otherwise perfect day.

Some motherfucking asshole has gunned down Larry Flynt! As yet I don't know all the specifics. Was it some fucking Jesus-freak who would not share his God with a despicable smut-peddler like Larry Flynt? Or was it a disgruntled liberal who was incensed at Larry's pursuit of religious belief? It doesn't really matter.

What does matter is that Larry Flynt has given birth to an honest, unbiased magazine in which the views of all types of cockamamie assholes such as the above-mentioned

are expressed in his *Feedback* column. Larry got caught in the middle, as so many great men do.

I have always felt that Larry Flynt is a great man with a great magazine and a sense of reality few Americans have. I am not afraid to make this statement or publish my name for all you goddamned religious fanatics and bleeding-heart, phony "liberals" to see. I am not afraid because, first, I am a member of the military machine that defends the rights of all you fucking assholes out there. Secondly, I am not afraid because I doubt if there is one individual in either one of the above-mentioned groups who has the balls to dispute me face to face without a weapon in hand. As a defender of your freedom (which, I might add, few of you deserve), I subscribe to the right to bear arms. So screw you guys!

I am not a religious man, and I cannot say that my prayers are with Larry. If I could pray, I would; but suffice it to say that my best wishes are with Larry, and my sincerest sympathy goes to Mrs. Flynt.

J. Michael Brigham  
Rochester, New York

We at *Playboy* wish you a quick recovery. We stand firmly behind you and your Constitutional right of free speech, no matter whether it is attacked by appointed officials or self-appointed vigilantes. May you return to Columbus and to your presses soon.

Hugh M. Hefner

Last night was the first time I ever watched the news with tears in my eyes. I



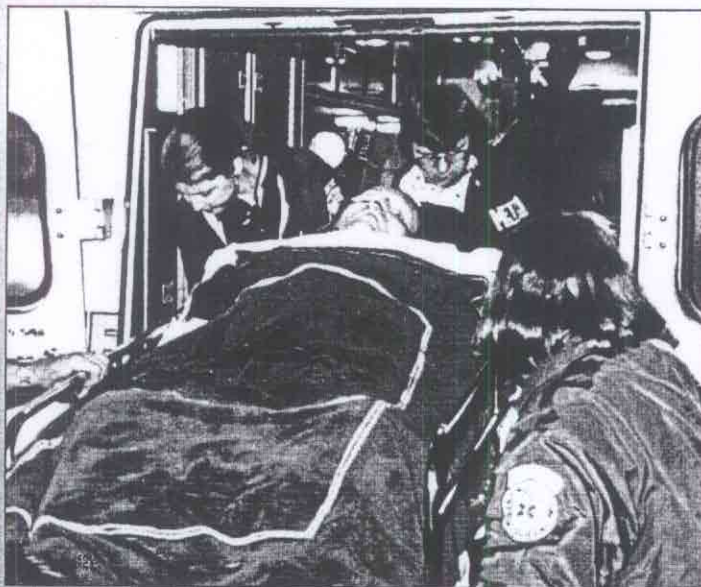
Paramedics and hospital workers rush Larry Flynt to surgery after his transfer from the hospital in Lawrenceville. His condition had worsened in the three days following the shooting.



Attorney Herald Fahringer offers Althea Flynt a shoulder to cry on upon her arrival in Georgia.



## FEEDBACK



*Flynt is removed from the ambulance that transferred him to Emory University Hospital in Atlanta. Here he underwent his third and fourth critical operations.*



*Althea Flynt, in tears, rushes to Larry's side. She received the news at HUSTLER's executive offices in Columbus.*

felt completely helpless, but only for a second. I knew that Larry had the Lord at his side and therefore nothing to fear. I refused to believe that a man who has spent his life in a constant battle for freedom could possibly be shot like this. I could not sleep last night, so I prayed for Larry.

This is hard to say, but I believe it to be right: May God help the germ who shot Larry; the gunman is sick and in need of God's love. I've had more respect for Larry than anyone on earth.

James McCutcheon  
Tampa, Florida

All my prayers go with you.

Garrett Morris

I've written to you before on my views against the outdated, outmoded KKK and the so-called Nazi Party. Yesterday morning I heard about Larry being shot by some mentally deranged person, a terrible thing to happen. I'm sorry that such things still take place and that we live in a society with people who have such little intelligence.

I believe that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder and that what people term dirty becomes so to them. They will never learn. I am a sculptor; I see nothing but beauty in the human form. You have my deepest sympathy and that of my wife.

Norman Guyewski  
Galveston, Texas

The world of publishing has been shocked by the cowardly and tragic attempt on your life and on that of your associate, Gene Reeves. You have my sincerest wishes for a speedy and complete recovery and swift

justice for those who would burn books or harm those who would publish them.

Irvin J. Borowsky  
Bestsellers

We love you and please let us know if there's anything we can do.

All the Robbins

As an ardent supporter of the Bill of Rights and an adamant opponent of censorship, I am terribly sorry to see Larry Flynt and his attorney suffer this symbolic crucifixion by some misguided gunman.



*Ruth Carter Stapleton arrives to comfort Flynt. She had helped him discover his spiritual self.*

The sick minds that choose murder over freedom of the press are a disgusting commentary on the condition of our society! Out of this disorder I sincerely hope we can win our way through and again prove that the Constitution really means what it has always said. Let sick people keep their hands off issues of HUSTLER and the REALIST, and we will not censor *their* books. Surely, people must realize that we can all be free.

Paul A. King  
Kansas City, Missouri

It is difficult to express our feelings on this tragedy, which is not only yours but that of the American society itself. We look forward to your speedy recovery and wish we could be of greater assistance.

Jim and Carla Prescott

I have never written to any magazine before, although I read and buy several of them every month. HUSTLER is my favorite. This letter is dedicated to all self-righteous judges of other people's rights to freedom of expression.

These above-mentioned assholes are simply closet cases who are afraid to let their own emotions be known. Every human being has constant sexual urges; so why shouldn't they be shown? It is time for America to grow up. These same closet cases are generally the ones who commit sexual crimes or crimes of repression. The degenerate who shot Larry Flynt and his attorney is a typical example.

Assuming Larry Flynt was wrong (although I don't think so), that does not mean two wrongs make a right. So to the people who would condemn this man and deprive



## FEEDBACK

him of his livelihood and freedom of expression, I say: Search yourself and think about what you are doing to yourself.

I offer my sympathies to Larry and his staff. I saw the trial and heard about the shooting today and could not contain my emotions. I sincerely appreciate your magazine. Keep up the good work.

Rabon Smith  
Houston, Texas

Am praying for your complete recovery. Remember you belong to God. He has not forsaken you. Guard against bitterness. God Bless You.

Sister Sandra Segrest

Who did it? Who shot Larry Flynt? Who fired the shots that sent contempt, pain and sorrow into the hearts of millions?

What feeble-minded degenerate gloats with satisfaction that he or she has accomplished something of major importance? Who?! As you can see, one question leads to another. I, along with many other faithful readers of HUSTLER, grieve with the Flynt family.

I surmise that the person who conceived this atrocious vendetta against Mr. Flynt and HUSTLER Magazine is a hypocrite. Probably, he's a God-fearing person around his friends. I, however, am not a hypocrite, and I hope this brainless derelict rots in hell. I wonder if this person feels that he has saved the world from pornography?

I ask the asshole this: Did someone force you to buy your first issue of HUSTLER? I would truly hate myself if you bought it of your own free will and if it disgusted you enough to shoot someone.

Or are you just a Fascist/Communist pig from an Archie Bunker world? Does it bother you that the woman I love is white and that I am black?

Are you going to shoot us too?

Johnny R. D.  
Lawrence, Kansas

We share your pain and hope for your quick recovery.

Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda

I've just heard about the attempt on Larry Flynt's life, and I am appalled. This proves that Larry was right: Our society is sick. We condemn a person for masturbating by invoking ridicule and guilt, and through the telling of half-truths and old wives' tales. We intimidate those who are sexually aware and/or active with labels such as "promiscuous," "sinner" or even "whore." And when a person is aware of our society's problems and tries to educate us, we arrest him for printing "pornogra-



Attorney Gene Reeves, shot at the same time as Flynt, receives first aid on sidewalk.

phy." Then, when all else fails (when those of us who are enlightened cry "no!"), we resort to our oldest and sickest form of protest—violence.

When the gunman is tried and found guilty, it will no doubt be determined that he is sexually repressed and therefore the "victim" of what Larry is trying to crusade against. It's ironic that Larry was probably hurt by someone he was trying to help.

It has been said that HUSTLER is in bad taste. Bunk! Satire is never in bad taste!

Mike Thrasher  
Fresno, California



That morning in court: Reeves and Flynt discuss the case. A few hours later, bullets of repression ripped through the two men's bodies.

May the magic of our family in Marin bless you. Love, laugh and live.

Honey Bruce,  
family and friends

We, the convicts of the Marion Penitentiary, would like to send our sincere condolences in the matter of Mr. Flynt's shooting. It's a profound disgrace that shootings of this nature should take place in our country. But when we look back at Watergate, nothing should surprise us. Don't you often wonder who the real criminals are?

Names Withheld by Request  
Marion, Illinois

I have thought much about you and what you are going through. You are someone who has much to do, and it is important that you do it. Stick with it. I will help you to accomplish what you want as well as I know how. My prayers are with you.

Mary Calderone

My daughter was murdered a year and a half ago. Every condolence letter I received contained much the same kind of sentiment—"I know how little words can help at a time like this..." But those writers were wrong. Every word *did* help. The fact that so many people cared enough to write helped me enormously in my grief.

I care about the violence done to Larry Flynt. I am full of sorrow and indignation, and for Larry's comfort I offer the shortest, simplest theological statement I have ever read. It is by the American poet Ezra Pound; near the end of his long poem *The Cantos* he writes: "Pray. There is power."

It doesn't matter if you think the power is inside you, or outside—or both—or whether you call it Jesus, Buddha or ten other names. It doesn't matter whether you understand it or whether you are baffled by it. The important thing is this: Power is there and it can help. May Larry find that power, and use it well.

Robert Anton Wilson  
Berkeley, California

While whoever shot Larry Flynt may be some type of fanatic, we can't exclude the possibility that Larry was attacked by a professional hit man. The assassin's clean getaway and the absence of any witnesses has led to speculation that he was shot in an effort to silence a part of the free press that, among other things, is seeking new information on the JFK assassination. Larry's attempts to investigate what the press has ignored (and what the government has likely tried to hide) are the kinds of things that lead to violence more certainly than someone exposing a woman's body.