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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Trump on His Favorite Topic

**Latest Book Offers a Primer On Becoming More Like Him;
Rise Early, Read Socrates**

By DAN ACKMAN

March 30, 2004; Page D1

Who among us -- ex-wives, former mistresses and spurned business partners excepted -- does not love The Donald? He first entered our world, and allowed us into his, more than 20 years ago, and he has never left. Now the idea of Donald J. Trump not being around seems difficult to imagine. Mr. Trump always saves us the trouble of having to try.

Though he has declined to serve as our president -- he considered a run in 2000 but decided against it, partly because of his aversion to shaking hands -- he is now more iconic than ever, the star of his own reality television show, "The Apprentice." It's a tremendous success, as Mr. Trump will tell you. There is probably no truth to rumors that Mr. Trump will appear in a Broadway musical, "Trump!" But if it doesn't happen, it's because Mr. Trump doesn't want it to happen.

For now, Mr. Trump has returned to an earlier love, literature. His new book is called "Trump: How to Get Rich." It's not exactly the sequel to his first book, "Trump: The Art of the Deal" (1987), because there have been a couple of sequels already. His first book was an autobiography -- how Mr. Trump built the Grand Hyatt Hotel and Trump Tower. His second was about how he succeeded some more; the third was about how he briefly faltered, then succeeded even more. It was Trump, Trump and more Trump. This time Mr. Trump is focused on you: How can you be more like him?

He begins by quoting "The Art of the Deal": "I don't do it for the money.

I've got enough, more than I'll ever need." It sounded good in 1987; it sounds good now. "I could have written these words yesterday," Mr. Trump says. Then why go on to write so many new words today? Mr. Trump says that he wrote "How to Get Rich" because "whenever I meet people, that's usually what they want to know from me." While how-to-get-rich books by millionaires are a dime a dozen, he notes, "billionaire authors are harder to find."

What does he advise? Command your employees like a general, he says. Stay focused, he adds. Get a great assistant. (Mr. Trump employs Norma Foederer, whom he calls "indefatigable.") Other lessons: Don't equivocate; when you present an idea, make sure it's the right idea; keep your door open; play golf (especially at one of his courses); think big and live large. Certainly Mr. Trump embodies the last lesson. "I am the creator of my own comic book, and I love living in it."

Some of Mr. Trump's advice is what you might expect: "Subtlety and modesty are appropriate for nuns and therapists, but if you're in business you'd better learn to speak up and announce your significant accomplishments to the world -- nobody else will."

But other advice is more surprising. Mr. Trump tells his readers that they should budget quiet time: For Mr. Trump it's between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m., when he reads seven newspapers and catches up on the dozen magazines he receives daily. He also says that you should read books a lot. Mr. Trump does it "in the evening, after a black tie dinner," while munching pretzels. He enjoys biographies. But "now and then I like to read about philosophers -- particularly Socrates, who emphasizes you should follow the convictions of your own conscience, which basically means thinking for yourself, a philosophy I tend to agree with."

I am not a name-dropper, but my good friend Donald Trump is. The book's longest chapter is a week in the life of the author, which he includes because his fans expect it. It's rich in references to Mr. Trump's friends and business associates, from Regis Philbin (perhaps his favorite) to Woody Allen and Arnold Schwarzenegger. But he is not above mentioning names not in his life that week. When he tells of a photo session with a photographer named Platon, it reminds him of an earlier time with Richard Avedon. He leaves the office early on Friday, reluctantly, to play golf with Bill Clinton.

The book reads as if it had been dictated in the back of a limousine on the way to a helicopter, which is exactly what you'd want from a Trump production. (Meredith McIver, one of his executive assistants, is his co-author.) And he generally delivers the goods, which he summarizes as "some good advice, some wisdom, a little bit of gossip, and a glimmer of

fame." He sometimes comes up short: The chapter on gossip has sex -- but no names. And the stuff on "The Apprentice" seems tacked on.

Should you read this book? You could read Socrates instead, but he was never as rich as Mr. Trump and not as much fun.

Mr. Ackman is a senior columnist for forbes.com.

Shooting Pool in Grand Central

By DAN ACKMAN
October 7, 2004; Page D12

If the the rat race has a starting line, it might well be Grand Central Terminal. There, 700,000 commuters scurry daily from the baronies of Westchester and Connecticut to their places of gainful employ. There are those who opt out. Danny Basovich, a professional pool player and unabashed hustler, is one. But last weekend he, too, was at Grand Central. And Mr. Basovich, aka Kid Delicious, stayed to work.

This year, with title sponsorship from Michelob and a telecast on ESPN, the two-year-old World Summit of Pool, part of the U.S. Professional Poolplayers Association (UPA) tour, took place in the terminal's Vanderbilt Hall. (Last year it was held in a billiard room.) It attracted 68 of the world's top players, including Johnny "The Scorpion" Archer, the No. 1 player in the UPA; Charlie Williams, number three; and three former world champions, including six-time world champ Earl "The Pearl" Strickland.

Mr. Archer, 35, won the event last year, and was looking to reclaim the \$12,000 top prize. But Mr. Strickland, 43, who has feuded with tour organizers, wasn't on hand last time. Mr. Archer would also face stiff challenges from Cory Deuel, another standout returning from a recent absence, and from Mika "The Iceman" Immonen, a former world champion from Finland who now lives in New York, not to mention Mr. Basovich.

Like all UPA events, the World Summit would be a contest of nine-ball, in which players must strike the cue ball into the lowest numbered ball on the table. The player who sinks the nine-ball wins the game; first player to win 11 games takes the match. Compared to straight pool, nine-ball is faster-paced, with a tad more luck involved. Even after a good break, it's easy to be snookered -- that is with the low (or target) ball impossibly blocked off from the cue. Since players alternate breaks, even the best man may be taken down by a few bad rolls or by a lesser player on a hot streak.

As it happened, Mr. Archer was defeated twice by Saturday afternoon.

(Tournaments are double elimination; players who lose are then placed in a one-loss, or losers', bracket.) Mr. Deuel immediately became the favorite. But he lost, too, to Santos Sambajon, a Filipino now based in Seattle, and in the loser's bracket to Mr. Strickland.

Meanwhile Mr. Basavich, ranked No. 32, was still alive, on the strength of a victory over Mr. Williams. Unlike most players on the professional tour, who tend to act like, well, professionals, the portly Kid Delicious is a throwback. After dropping out of high school in Manalapan, N.J., Mr. Basavich, now 26, hit the road, hustling games all across the contiguous U.S. "In the last six years, I have not been beaten for \$1 playing pool," he says. How much did he win in his best year? "I don't know -- \$200,000," he surmises.

It's fair to say that no one makes that much money on the UPA tour and no more than a half-dozen players earn half that sum (excluding exhibitions and sponsorships). Most players eke out a living traveling event to event, perhaps gambling on the side.

Still, Kid Delicious is going straight, in part because he has become too well-known. His eyes are on prize events, sponsorships and instructional videos. This weekend, he was still playing late on Saturday, but beaten by Mike "Still Working on a Nickname" Davis, he didn't make it to the semifinals on Sunday and wound up tied for ninth.

Mr. Davis did make it, along with Mr. Sambajon in the winner's bracket semifinal, and Mr. Strickland in the loser's bracket. Mr. Strickland faced Danny Harriman in a classic match. Each man took turns running the table to the point where the "race to seven" match (last-day matches are shorter to accommodate TV) was tied 6-all. In the deciding game, Mr. Harriman played a "safety," putting the cue ball behind three balls, giving Mr. Strickland almost no conceivable shot at the two-ball. But Mr. Strickland banked to cue off two bumpers into the two. The cue then caromed into the nine-ball, which fell into the corner pocket, giving The Pearl a 7-6 win.

In the winner's bracket, Mr. Sambajon (putatively 95 pounds) beat Mr. Davis (6-foot-3, 220 pounds), also 7-6. That meant Mr. Davis would face Mr. Strickland for a place in the finals against the 44-year-old Filipino. With Mr. Strickland playing well, he seemed a sure bet for the title. But Mr. Davis beat him easily, 7-1.

The finals rematch was another nail-biter. Mr. Davis and Mr. Sambajon traded wins for a 5-5 tie. Mr. Sambajon took advantage of a Davis mistake for his first lead, 6-5. In the 12th game, Mr. Davis missed on the one-ball, and Mr. Sambajon made him pay by running the table for his first major

title. The smallest man in the field was atop the world summit.

Mr. Ackman is a senior columnist for Forbes.com.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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LEISURE & ARTS

The Other Wrestling

By Dan Ackman

New York -- For years, he was invincible. In college at Iowa State, he won and won again, trashing records in his wake. On his way to four NCAA wrestling championships, he won 101 straight matches, breaking the record for consecutive wins set by the sport's icon Dan Gable. Then he kept going, winning another 58. His final record -- 159 victories, zero defeats -- made Cael Sanderson arguably the most successful college athlete in any sport ever.

But when Mr. Sanderson competed internationally after his 2002 graduation, something new happened: He lost, not often, but often enough to notice. Mr. Sanderson lost twice to Cuban world champion Yoel Romero and twice more to Russians. Each loss was by a single point, but still, there were pockmarks on the Mona Lisa. Prior to the World Freestyle Championships, the most important wrestling competition other than the Olympics, Mr. Sanderson was in an unusual position: underdog.

But the annual Worlds were held in the U.S. this past weekend -- at New York's Madison Square Garden. And Mr. Sanderson was still the main event. Whenever he stepped on the mat at the Garden, fans turned from other matches, and observers -- even Alexander Medved -- crowded around. Mr. Medved, who won three Olympic Gold Medals for the old Soviet Union, is considered the greatest wrestler of the modern era. His assessment: "He's a very talented boy. He's very powerful and has internal guts."

If Mr. Sanderson, 24, who wrestles at 85 kilograms (185 pounds) is the latest thing, Kerry McCoy is U.S. wrestling's touchstone. Mr. McCoy, a

heavyweight, is the longest-serving member of the U.S. team and its unofficial spokesman. In eight years, Mr. McCoy, 29, had never won a world medal, though he had come close, placing fourth at the world championships in 1998 and in 2001. Indeed, the U.S. team had only one world medalist going into the championships, 163-pounder Joe Williams. Still, having missed last year's tournament, which was held in Iran, due to a security threat, and wrestling one day after the anniversary of 9/11, the team was confident of great things.

The first day promised just that. The U.S. men won 13 matches. The one loss was Mr. Williams's; he fell to Hadi Habibi of Iran 3-1 in overtime. Mr. Habibi, also 24, was a reminder that other countries have their Cael Sandersons, too. He had never wrestled in international competition, but he beat a reigning world champion just to make his national team.

The Iranian team itself won the team title on its home turf in 2002 and in New York was backed by passionate Iranian-American fans who occupied a small corner of the Garden, but who often accounted for half the noise. As one fan, Kayhan Sarab, a restaurateur from Great Neck, Long Island, explained, the entire Caspian Sea region is wrestling mad. In Iran it's not just the national sport; it is also deeply "spiritual." Before a match, Iranians show their devotion by kissing the mat or looking skyward. They figured to be tough competition for the U.S., as would the always-formidable Russian squad.

After the promise of the first day for the Americans, the wheels started to come off on day two. Jamil Williams lost by a technical fall to Serguei Pedroso of Cuba. Three more defeats were punctuated by displays of poor sportsmanship. First, at 60 kilograms (132 pounds), Eric Guerrero, wrestling in a tie match against Damir Zakhartdinov of Uzbekistan, twisted his opponent's knee, injuring him. While the hold was not illegal, the Uzbek was in obvious agony.

John Smith, Mr. Guerrero's coach and himself a former Olympic gold medalist, screamed at the referee, "He ain't hurt! Make him wrestle!" When the Uzbek did just that, he gained two points on a disputed call to win 5-3. Mr. Guerrero refused to stop his protest, and U.S. national coach Kevin Jackson had to push him from the mat.

Soon after, Daniel Cormier, coming off a spectacular pin a round earlier, faced Ali Reza Heidari, a world champion from Iran at 96 kilograms (211.5 pounds). Though Mr. Cormier was behind the whole way, he blamed Mr. Heidari, a former world champion, for stalling and violently shoved him after the match. "I made a big mistake," Mr. Cormier said later.

The U.S. still had Mr. McCoy and Mr. Sanderson wrestling for gold in the finals. Mr. Sanderson faced a Russian, Sajid Sajidov, age 23, who had beaten Mr. Romero en route. With the match tied at one, Mr. Sanderson attacked.

Though he had a firm hold on the leg, Mr. Sajidov countered and threw him. The referees paused, apparently to consider whether to award the Russian one point or two.

This time the American got the benefit of the doubt: The referee awarded each wrestler two points, stunning the crowd into silence, and keeping the match tied. With 15 seconds remaining, the American tried another trademark ankle pick. Mr. Sajidov countered with an ankle pick of his own, to win 4-3. It was Russia's third gold medal of the night, out of a total of seven. (Little Uzbekistan, population 26 million, won two golds, part of a clean sweep by Russia and the former Soviet Republics; Georgia won the men's team title, followed by the U.S. and Iran. Japan won the women's tournament with five gold medals.)

In the heavyweight final, the sculpted Mr. McCoy was tied 1-1 with the equally chiseled Artur Taymazov of Uzbekistan. But just 12 seconds into overtime, Mr. McCoy lost his footing and found himself on his back and on the wrong side of a 4-1 score. He would have to settle for the silver medal and a chance to wrestle again next year at the Olympics in Athens.

Mr. Sanderson will in all likelihood be in Athens, too. A takedown short this weekend, for U.S. wrestling he remains the future. Mr. Sajidov and the Russian middleweights, though, are the worldbeaters right now.

Mr. Ackman, a senior columnist for Forbes.com, last wrote for the Journal about the decline of shooting in the NBA.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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The Muppets Come Home

By DAN ACKMAN

In "The Muppet Movie," a 1979 minor classic produced by Jim Henson, Kermit the frog is pursued by the rapacious Doc Hopper (Charles Durning), who would force him to shill for his chain of fast-food frog's leg restaurants. Kermit and his fellow Muppets elude Hopper and his henchmen (including an evil German scientist played by Mel Brooks), make it to Hollywood, and become stars on their own terms.

Something like that happened in real life last week when the Henson family bought back Jim Henson Co. from EM.TV & Merchandising AG, a German media firm. The deal is a cause for joy for the Hensons, and for everybody else.

For the Henson family, it is a homecoming. "Emotionally and psychologically we feel something has been put right," said Lisa Henson, who started running the Henson production company just after the original sale. Family patriarch Jim Henson created the Muppets in the mid-1950s, later invented the Sesame Street characters, and was the voice of Kermit before he died in 1990 at age 53.

Family members say they rallied and decided to bid just 16 days before the deal was announced. A big part of the motivation was the chance to honor their father's legacy. Meanwhile, the Muppets will be repatriated from a land whose most famous children's stories are from the Brothers Grimm.

Press reports on the sale focus on the price: The Hensons paid just \$78 million for the company they sold in February 2000 for about \$680 million in cash and EM.TV stock. But the two numbers standing alone are misleading. First, before it sold the company back to the Hensons, EM.TV unloaded the Sesame Street characters and Henson Co. stakes in three cable networks for a total of \$293 million. Second, about half the original price was paid in EM.TV stock. Those shares soon lost most of their value as EM.TV imploded. Deduct the Sesame Street and cable sales and account for the decline in EM.TV shares, and the 2000 and 2003 sale prices come out fairly even.

Henson Co. still includes film and licensing rights to the Muppet characters -- Miss Piggy, Fozzie Bear and Dr. Bunsen Honeydew among them -- as well as The Fraggles, Bear in the Big Blue House and others. It also holds a library of 450 films and TV episodes; the Jim Henson Creature Shop, which builds puppets and creates special effects; and a top music-recording studio in Hollywood.

With assets like that, \$78 million does seem awfully cheap. Why didn't a media conglomerate, **Walt Disney** in particular, snap it up? The answer is part of the good news, too.

First, EM.TV itself is in awful straits. The Haffa brothers, who controlled the company when it bought Henson, were forced out soon after. Once globe-straddling, race-car-owning multibillionaires, their fortune is all but gone. Other German media moguls have suffered similar fates. "Three or four years ago, the vogue was to sell to the Germans. They were going to control Europe," says Porter Bibb, a New York investment banker who specializes in media properties. That process has reversed itself, with the Germans conducting a fire sale.

Other processes are moving in reverse, too. Three years ago, media giants like **AOL Time Warner Inc.** and **Vivendi Universal SA** were triumphant. Since then, their share prices have fallen 75% -- not as bad as the Germans, but not good. Other media companies like **Viacom Inc.** and **News Corp.** are still buyers, but not like the old days.

When the big companies were getting bigger, smaller outfits were running scared. Join a major or die -- that was the fear. Media titans "wanted to deal with a company they owned 100% of," says Brian Henson. Why broadcast a show (like the Muppets) when they could choose some other show and own the merchandising and everything else? Today cable and broadcast networks are more ready to deal. The change leaves more room for niche players.

When they bought the company, the Haffas promised to invest \$150 million on marketing to build the brand. "It never happened at all," says Mr. Henson. Instead the company has been for sale nearly continuously since 1999. That state of affairs wreaked havoc on operations.

If the company has been on the block for four years, Walt Disney Co. and CEO Michael Eisner have been trying to buy it off and on for three times as long, since before Jim Henson died. In March, Mr. Eisner suggested he was near a deal "finally culminating years of romance."

Mr. Eisner, Doc Hopper come to life, was left at the altar, but why? Sources close to Disney blame Allen & Co., the investment bank, for the

way it conducted the sale. They also say that the vagaries of German bankruptcy law made closing the deal too risky. It's highly unlikely Disney would have been dissuaded by such trivia back in the day.

What happens next isn't certain. The Hensons will have to maneuver among giants, and while the Muppets are a global franchise, Henson isn't Disney. Of course, in showbiz nothing is ever a given. As Kermit himself said when he and his friends were stranded in the desert on the way to Hollywood, "I never promised we'd make it; I never promised anything." Kermit was a dreamer. So are the Hensons, and they like their chances.

Mr. Ackman, a writer at Forbes.com, last wrote for the Journal on Frank Quattrone.

VIEW

February 7, 2003

Desperately Seeking Screenwriters

By DAN ACKMAN

"Adaptation," the movie voted best screenplay by the New York Film Critics Circle, contains a subplot concerning Robert McKee, the famed screenwriting guru, and a debate about whether Mr. McKee's rules -- or principles -- are helpful to fledgling screenwriters. Mr. McKee is the leader of the pack in preaching screenwriting precepts to the masses, but the pack is large and growing.

Last October, for instance, 1,866 screenwriting aspirants converged in Austin, Texas, in order to be encouraged and inspired for a fee.

Austin is the home of the Austin Heart of Film Festival and the associated Writer's Conference. Now in its ninth year, the conference is a perfect example of a growing cottage industry now selling services to writers who want to hone their craft and gain entry to Hollywood.

The industry fuels and is fueled by a growing interest in writing screenplays. In 2001, more than 40,000 scripts were registered with the Writers Guild of America. Meanwhile, just 4,525 Guild members reported earnings, and overall membership in the Guild is stagnant at best. (Most Guild members work in television, not feature films.)

Despite the long odds, the legions of aspiring scriptwriters keep multiplying. A record 5,489 scripts were submitted to the Nicholl Fellowship competition, an amateur screenplay contest run by the Motion Picture Academy. The Nicholl is the most prestigious of the screenwriting competitions. But more than 200 others share the stage. Dozens of consultants will take a fee to "analyze" scripts. At least 30 how-to books on screenwriting have been published in the last four years alone.

Key to Everything

Beyond Austin there are more than 100 seminars, workshops and conferences scattered around the country. The conferences assemble panels

of successful writers, producers, agents and consultants, who lure the aspirants.

Austin, in particular, promises "unique access to the most tremendous talents" and "networking with the many producers, development executives and agents." Indeed, it attracts an all-star cast of screenwriters including Bill Broyles ("Cast Away"), John Lee Hancock ("A Perfect World") and Ed Solomon ("Men in Black"), among the many who attended the last conference.

Aspiring scriptwriters pay anywhere from \$295 to \$695 to attend. In return, they sit in on panels on such topics as "writing action that works," script coverage, development, and the role of the producer. But whatever they're called, all the panels tend to focus on two questions, Mr. Broyles says: "how to do it and how to sell it."

The second question, unfortunately, remains a puzzle -- apparently even to the most successful writers, to hear them talk. Mr. Broyles, for one, declares, "It's just a mystery to me how you ever get a movie made or a script sold."

One of the keys, everyone in Austin agreed, is to write a great script -- an obvious enough qualification. Still, nobody present claimed any capacity to teach just how to go about doing that in the course of the long weekend. Nonetheless, the would-be scriptwriters moved hopefully from ballroom to meeting room in search of rules or tips.

If anyone can crack the code it would seem to be Shane Black, whose influence derives, in part, from writing "Lethal Weapon," and, in part, from his 1996 sale of "The Long Kiss Goodnight" for an eye-popping \$4 million. Perhaps more than any single individual, Mr. Black has helped fuel the upsurge in screenwriting ambitions.

Like other speakers, Mr. Black praised the festival for providing a place for learning and the exchange of information -- though as he suggested, there were limits to the information he could impart. There are no hard and fast rules, he said, except to stop looking for the (expletive deleted) rules.

The search for rules proceeded, nonetheless, abetted by Mr. Black who could not resist, throwing one out to the hungry crowd from time to time. "OK, here's the key to everything," he announced, "The best movies you'll ever see are ultimately about discovering friendship." Films, he said, like "Star Trek" and "The Odd Couple." "That, to me, is eternally moving."

There would be no keys, from him, though, about ways to market a screenplay. That was because -- the highly successful and exceedingly well-

paid Mr. Black told his audience -- the relentless and self-defeating pursuit of commerce had led to "homogenized" movies that are "not about anything."

Other rules came from other authorities. Asked about the problem of theme in screenwriting, Lem Dobbs ("Kafka") said, "It seems to me all great films are about aging.... 'To Kill a Mockingbird' is about aging."

Inspired at the Bar

It was left for Mr. Black, though, to express the consensus view that, even if one couldn't teach people to write, one could -- he could -- "teach them to be inspired to write."

Most in the crowd seemed satisfied with that. Asked what they learned, many responded that they picked up "nuggets" or "subtle craft points." Others reported that they had, indeed, been inspired not just by the sessions, but by hours at the bar with Hollywood writers and producers.

The producers, meanwhile, claim to enjoy Austin for all sorts of reasons: They like getting away from Los Angeles, they like "giving back," they feel good about celebrating writers and writing, and so forth. To be sure, some admit that the writers they really want to hang out with aren't those in the audience -- the ones hoping to learn the route to screenwriting success and the big time. What's better, noted Matt Gross of Kopelson Entertainment, is the chance to cultivate the A-listers doing the talking.

About events like the Austin festival, one attending novelist noted, "they're selling something that's not for sale." Not officially, anyway. The something being sold is access -- and the buyers continue to line up.

Mr. Ackman , who writes for Forbes.com, last wrote for the Journal on "White-Collar Boxing."

TOP OF THE NEWS

How The Matrix Ruined Movies

Dan Ackman, 05.19.03, 9:10 AM ET

The Matrix Reloaded generated \$93.3 million at U.S. box offices over the weekend. That's not a record total, but it's close. *The Matrix* phenomenon hasn't quite ruined movies--but it's close on that score, too.

The sequel to the 1999 science-fiction hit didn't quite match the \$114.8 million three-day gross delivered by *Spider-Man*, a **Sony** (nyse: [SNE](#) - news - people) release, even though it was shown on a record 8,517 screens across the U.S., all according to studio estimates. It did beat the \$90.3 million total put up by *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. It broke the box-office gross record for the first four days (besting *Spider-Man*), for an R-rated releases (besting *Hannibal*), for sequels, for its star [Keanu Reeves](#) and for movies where the characters are mostly dressed in black (besting *Men in Black II*). It beat *X2: X-Men United*, released two weeks ago by **Fox**, a unit of **News Corp.** (nyse: [NWS](#) - news - people). The movie is also believed to have broken the record--though this is unofficial--for the number of ways to slice box-office records.

The Matrix Reloaded represents a trend where movies are opened on more and more screens, with more and more hype, where more of that hype is linked to product tie-ins, and where more releases are based on sequels, remakes or comic books. To see what's happening, it's only necessary to compare the *The Matrix Reloaded* to the original *Matrix*.

The first movie was released by **Warner Brothers**, a unit of **AOL Time Warner** (nyse: [AOL](#) - news - people), in 1999, written and directed by the then little-known **Larry** and **Andy Wachowski**. (They had made *Bound*, another noir thriller--but with lesbians--three years earlier.) It wasn't exactly a sleeper, but nine other movies took in more in their opening weekends that year, including *Tarzan*, *The Mummy*, and *Pokemon: The First Movie*, according to [Boxofficemojo.com](#). But the movie had staying power and proved mightily popular as well as a cult favorite. It grossed \$171.5 million in the U.S., the fifth-highest that year.

The first *Matrix* movie itself was hailed for its inventiveness. Its plot melded cyberspace, fear of authority, state-of-the-art Hong Kong-style fight scenes and, of course, a leather-clad heroine. **Roger Ebert**, for instance, called it "visually dazzling cyberadventure, full of kinetic excitement." This time the special effects are, by most accounts, even more special, but the movie itself is much worse. **David Edelstein**, the movie critic for **Slate**, was a big fan of the original. But he calls *Reloaded* "as messy and flat-footed as its predecessor is nimble and shapely. It's an ugly, bloated, repetitive movie that builds to a punch line that should have come an hour earlier (at least)."

Still, as Morpheus (**Laurence Fishburne**) said in the first film, "The Matrix is everywhere; it's all around us." *Reloaded* opened with huge fanfare, primed by product tie-ins with **Cadillac**, a unit of **General Motors** (nyse: [GM](#) - news - people),

Heineken (otc: [HINKY](#) - news - people), **Samsung** and **Ducati** (nyse: [DMH](#) - news - people). The marketing budget is reportedly \$50 million. Fans can buy the sunglasses. In another sign of the times, the film is showing on two screens at Angelika Film Centers in Houston and New York, venues normally devoted to low-budget and non-U.S. releases.

Reloaded is not the first production to rely on over-the-top publicity, but it accelerates the trend where more and more of the major releases are based on comic books or old television shows or movies already made--whether sequels or remakes. In 1993, just one of the top ten grossing movies, *The Fugitive*, was based on an old television show. In 1998, there were two remakes among the top ten, *Doctor Doolittle* and *Godzilla*.

Last year, the top ten included five sequels and one comic book.

Hollywood, of course, has long been about giving the people what they want. If there wasn't a huge demand for *The Matrix Reloaded*, it wouldn't be in 8,500-plus screens. But even a short time ago, Hollywood was better at selling what was new. Now it is repackaging the old, and with no end in sight. The third *Matrix* is already slated for November.

A Star Is Porn

By DAN ACKMAN

August 27, 2004; Page W13

Jenna Jameson is famous for being famous. Plus naked. Even those who are unfamiliar with her body of work know Ms. Jameson as the biggest name in adult entertainment, which is how she bills herself and which undoubtedly she is, at least for the moment.

Famous porn stars are, of course, nothing new. Linda Lovelace, who died in 2002, is still a well-known name. But while her fame, based on "Deep Throat," was scandalous and the product of an underground culture, Ms. Jameson is celebrated by the biggest media outlets going. And while pornography was once shown in backstreet theaters, it is now beamed into hotel rooms and living rooms, to say nothing of the Internet -- all phenomena that put Ms. Jameson into a league of her own.

Pornography is now big business -- though not as big as is often claimed -- and, more important, part of mainstream culture. While Ms. Lovelace wound up broke and renounced her career, Ms. Jameson is rich and presents pornography as a means to "empowerment." She is a regular guest on Howard Stern's radio show, which has helped her develop the kind of stardom that has made her a fixture on Hollywood's A-list party circuit -- and elsewhere, too. She showed up recently on a massive Times Square billboard and on CNN's "Anderson Cooper 360." The culture doesn't just shrug at her celebrity; it embraces it.

Ms. Jameson is now on tour to promote "How to Make Love Like a Porn Star: A Cautionary Tale." It will undoubtedly move her into the mass market even further. The book tells the tale of Ms. Jameson's rise, from teenage stripper in Las Vegas to the zenith of the adult film world, where she now has her own production company. It includes stories of her sexual abuse, rape, drug addiction and numerous heartbreaks. But as the story is ultimately a "celebration of survival and victory on your own terms," it is not quite clear where the caution lies. The memoir is 579 pages (including pictures), despite the fact that the author is just 30 years old. That's about as long as the autobiography of 59-year-old Gen. Tommy Franks, which is published by the same imprint, ReganBooks, a unit of News Corp., also this month.

As an author, Ms. Jameson is enjoying the kind of exposure about which others may only dream. She is the subject of an hour-long documentary on

VH1 and has appeared on NBC, CNBC and Fox News, along with CNN. Her publicist says that she has turned down Bill O'Reilly and Greta Van Susteren but is planning to visit with Jimmy Kimmel on ABC next month.

Her fame has burnished her career in adult films, which in turn has increased the rate she charges to dance in strip clubs, where the real money is. By the time she was in her mid-20s, Ms. Jameson could make \$25,000 a night, according to her husband and business partner Jay Grdina, who is also a veteran adult-film producer-director.

In 2000, Mr. Grdina and Ms. Jameson started Club Jenna Inc., a company that produces videos and Web sites as well as managing the Web sites for other adult stars. Not the types to sell and tell, they won't say what the business makes. But Mr. Grdina does claim that they sign up 500 new members every day. Members pay anywhere from \$8.50 to \$35 a month to view videos, and more to purchase merchandise. The company also distributes films on video and DVD. Mr. Grdina says that Ms. Jameson's movies (in which he now co-stars) sell 100,000 copies on average, much more than the run-of-the-mill adult film, which does well to sell 5,000. (On the other hand, such films might be shot in a single day. Ms. Jameson's recent productions, according to Mr. Grdina, took as much as 12 days to film.)

Ms. Jameson's individual star is rising as her industry sinks into the twilight of porn's age of innocence. Icons of an earlier era like Bob Guccione and Al Goldstein have fallen on hard times. Mr. Guccione, the founder of Penthouse, has lost his Manhattan townhouse and his Hudson River mansion to creditors. Mr. Goldstein, once the publisher of Screw, is on probation and is reportedly penniless.

While the Internet was supposed to usher in a heyday for pornographers, in fact it has driven the price of still pictures of naked people to historic lows. This trend has made it harder for even Hugh Hefner to make a buck: Playboy Enterprises hasn't earned a profit since 1998, and its share price has been cut in half in the past year.

On the other hand, it is now respectable for Fidelity and Janus, the mutual-fund giants, to own Playboy shares, and they do. Media titans like Comcast, Time Warner and EchoStar are all in the porn business in the sense that they all distribute at least soft-core films via their cable and satellite systems. The major hotel chains participate in soft-core porn distribution through On Command Corp., the unit of Liberty Media that supplies the pay-as-you-go movie packages for hotel-room television screens.

It's impossible to know how much the major media companies earn from pornography. Certainly it cannot be more than a tiny sliver of their total

revenues. But none appear willing to forgo porn profits, as meager as they may be in the scheme of things.

The overall size of the porn business is a subject of wild speculation. Statistics with no basis in reality tend to be repeated over and over. It is often said, for instance, that Ms. Lovelace's "Deep Throat" has grossed \$600 million, which would put it ahead of "Terminator 2" and "The Empire Strikes Back," a totally preposterous idea. My best guess, based on careful estimates, is that the entire adult-entertainment industry (not counting strip clubs) grosses something like \$3 billion a year. It's a substantial sum but not more than Pfizer takes in from selling the antidepressant Zoloft.

Still, a \$3 billion industry with widening distribution certainly affords stars like Ms. Jameson the opportunity to earn millions. Her book, co-authored by former New York Times writer Neil Strauss, is on its way to becoming a bestseller. All alone, she is displaying the kind of synergy that eluded AOL Time Warner and Vivendi.

On the Web at least, Ms. Jameson is as famous as Jennifer Aniston or Sandra Bullock, though not quite as celebrated as Paris Hilton. All told, she has entered the mainstream to the point of capsizing the old rules, at least most of the time. "There is an air of conservatism," Mr. Grdina says, referring to the mixed blessing of such success. "We get a push back for every step we move forward." Maybe so, but lately the leaps forward have been much longer than the steps back.

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The New York Times

The City

New Yorkers & Co.:

The Big Man in Shrimp

By DAN ACKMAN

07/02/00

YEARS ago, Donald Julich Sr. was eating lunch at Sweets, the famous South Street restaurant, now defunct, when a man came up behind him and said, "Excuse me, I understand you're the shrimp king of the Fulton Fish Market, and I'd like to shake your hand." The voice was familiar, and when Mr. Julich looked up, so was the face. Burt Lancaster was smiling at him.

"I'm happy to shake your hand," Mr. Julich recalls saying. "But as far as I'm concerned, you're the king. I'm just a peasant."

A king he may not be, but Donald Julich does have a throne, albeit a modest one, and a crown. The crown is Crown Fish Inc., his seafood business at the Fulton Fish Market. His throne is a bar stool on the sidewalk on South Street where for 52 years this square-shaped man with a hawkish face has presided over Crown Fish, buying shrimp and shellfish by day and negotiating with customers by night.

The Fulton Fish Market dates from 1869, when the first permanent building was erected on South Street. While fish that used to come in by boat is now trucked and flown in, the buying and selling continues as it has for decades. Fish is displayed in the open air on stands and in boxes that spill onto the sidewalk. Buyers and sellers meet face to face, without a fax machine or Internet connection in sight.

Mr. Julich, 70, the big man in shrimp, has witnessed as much of the market's history as any man alive. With the city considering plans to move the market to Hunts Point, in the Bronx, it is a history that may be coming to an end. Mr. Julich, though, is less concerned with history — "Don't put me down as an adviser to Abe Lincoln" — than with his part in what the city estimates is a billion-dollar industry.

His employees arrive about midnight to display the shrimp in sidewalk stalls. Mr. Julich shows up about 4 a.m., when the buyers start arriving.

On one recent morning, he faced off with a customer named John Kim, who owns a fish store in Queens. They spent a half hour haggling over a box of lobster tails. Mr. Kim wanted to pay \$17.25 per pound. Mr. Julich held his ground at \$17.50.

"Go on, get out of here," Mr. Julich said in an accent that betrayed his Newark roots. "Come back tomorrow and you'll pay \$18 and feel lucky to get it." When Mr. Kim left, he said, "Don't worry, he'll be back." Sure enough, he was, an hour later. He paid \$17.50 and grouched when Mr. Julich told him he had just one box left to sell him.

Mr. Julich and Mr. Kim both finished with the deal, Mr. Julich's son, Donald Jr., marked the box with a black crayon and alerted a journeyman, as they are called, who grabbed the box with a cargo hook and hauled it to the parked trucks. In a concession to modernity, some of the journeymen use forklifts, which whiz by at a frightening pace.

By dawn, buyers are gone back to their stores and restaurants and Mr. Julich and his men are cleaning up and making calls to make sure that they have fish to sell the next morning.

Mr. Julich's father, Fred, once a restaurateur, started the family in this day-for-night existence in 1946. The son joined a year later after graduating from high school. In 1955, he took over the company, and the next year, his brother, Richard, joined him after a stint in the Navy. They worked as partners until Richard retired in 1992. When Donald sells his last shrimp, Crown Fish will go to his son and nephews, David and Richard, who joined in their late teens and who are now in their mid-30's. Dynasties of this sort are the norm on South Street, where businesses tend to stay in families for three and even four generations.

From the beginning, the Julichs specialized in shrimp, which has become "the No. 1 seafood item in the world today," Mr. Julich said. It is also, pound for pound, one of the most expensive, an important consideration in a business where sales space is at a premium.

OVER the years, Mr. Julich has expanded the line to include oysters, clams, scallops and lobster tails. Crown Fish has never dealt in fish, though, and the company name remains a mystery. "Why he called it Crown Fish, I'll never know," Mr. Julich says. Asked how much shrimp he sells in a week, Mr. Julich says, "Ask the I.R.S." Mr. Julich doesn't look rich. But then maybe people who work in the dead of night surrounded by the smell of fresh fish rarely do.

Buying and selling small marine crustaceans may seem a simple thing, but it is not without complexity. The 15 to 20 varieties of shrimp Mr. Julich sells come not just from the southern United States but from a dozen countries in Central and South America, along with other types of shellfish from as far away as Australia. In addition to knowing from where to buy at a given time of year, Mr. Julich has to anticipate what size shrimp his customers may want.

One of the major changes on South Street is the emergence of Asians like John Kim as a buying force. Depending on which owner is doing the estimating, Koreans and Chinese make up 60 to 80 percent of the buyers. One thing hasn't changed: the market remains a man's world. Almost no women work there. "Would you want your girl to work with these animals, these gorillas?" he says.

Mr. Julich and his fellow merchants complain that margins have shrunk in recent years. Since 90 percent of his sales are on credit, it's crucial that he know his buyers and keep after them for payments. For that reason, he says he has many acquaintances in the business but just a few friends.

"If they're a friend and you have a problem, it's harder to fix it," he says.

While the Fulton market looks a lot as it always has, Mr. Julich has seen it, like other central markets, decline in importance in the industry. He says that more buyers buy direct from sellers at the piers, sidestepping the market. Mr. Julich acknowledges the change and doesn't begrudge it when the buyer is making a substantial order. But he shows some anger at dealers who sell mostly to wholesalers like him but will sell a single box of shrimp or a single bag of clams direct to a restaurant. "I know why they do it, but in the end they're hurting their own business," he says.

While the market may not be the hub it once was, Mr. Julich agrees with his friend Dan, a fellow merchant, who says that it still sets the tone for the whole country.

Dan would not give his last name. People at the market are circumspect, knowing as they do that nearly every writer who visits focuses on its supposed domination by the Mafia. Mr. Julich says he has never had a problem with organized crime and adds, as do most people interviewed there, that allegations of mob rule are way overblown.

"I've been here 50 years and I've gotten to know pretty much everybody," he says. At other times, though, he cautions, "Be careful what you say because people could get annoyed."

The city has announced it is considering moving the fish market to Hunts Point. To Mr. Julich, the move would be a disaster. "You can't have the

market behind a locked gate where you need a badge to get in and out," he said. "Buyers have to be able to walk around and look at what they want. This is an open market." He concedes that conditions at the market are primitive, but insists that they are sanitary.

There used to be a half-dozen stalls specializing in shrimp at the Fulton Fish Market, Mr. Julich says. Now there are just two. Does that mean he is now the king, as Burt Lancaster said? "Well, Lancaster's dead, so maybe that moves me up a notch. But I'm still a peasant."



Top Of The News

Martha And The Mandelas

Dan Ackman, 07.20.04, 10:10 AM ET

As you may have heard, **Martha Stewart** was on trial recently on federal obstruction of justice charges. For some reason -- it remains a mystery to her -- she was found guilty of those charges after a trial in which she offered barely any defense at all. Many were left wondering: Why didn't Stewart's lawyers do something to help her? Why didn't they insist she testify instead of letting her hang out to dry?

Last night, in an interview with **Larry King** on CNN, Stewart, the former chief executive officer of **Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia** (nyse: [MSO](#) - news - people), answered, at least, the last question. She says she wants to write a book to answer the first.

KING: If this whole thing could go back to the whole thing? Would you just have not have sold the [**ImClone Systems** (nasdaq: [IMCL](#) - news - people)] stock, what?

STEWART: Well, that's a hard question, because I sold it for a specific reason -- it was going down. And I can't imagine, I mean it's just such a conundrum to decide what I could have done, what I should have done, what I should have done afterward. There's so many variables, Larry, in a thing like this.

KING: Like what? What made you sell when you did on the day before the company announced the one viable product in its pipeline had been rejected by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration?

Actually, I made that second question up. King never asked it, showing why his show has become a favorite vehicle for felons, like Stewart, contemplating appeal, and for alleged felons awaiting trial, like **Enron's Kenneth Lay**.

But had she testified, she would have been asked at least one follow up about her story that she sold her ImClone shares as a result of a prior arrangement with her **Merrill Lynch** (nyse: [MER](#) - news - people) broker, Peter Bacanovic, rather than because she was tipped off by her broker's assistant, as the jury found.

King moved on, soon enough hitting the topic of Stewart's potential appeal. Martha, on the advice of her trial lawyer Robert Morvillo and her newly retained appeal specialist Walter Dellinger, a former solicitor general of the United States, said she has three options: drop her appeal and go to jail; appeal while staying out of jail; or go to jail and appeal while inside.

The first option, simply serving the five-month sentence, is pretty good, not so much for her as for "business, Wall Street, advertising, they would like to see finality. They would like to see an end to all of this."

"Obviously," King said.

But wait, the second option is good, too. Again, Stewart wasn't thinking about herself, but about Justice. Stewart said: "I, as a person, with rights, with a belief in the judicial

system and fairness, think that an appeal is the way to go. So, what do I do, OK? What do you do? What would you do, Larry?"

King would not be tricked. **Time Warner** (nyse: [TWX](#) - news - people) pays him to ask questions, not answer them.

Stewart's third option is to go to jail and appeal while serving her sentence. This may be having her cake and eating it too, as serving her sentence would satisfy Wall Street and the Advertisers, and by appealing, she could still serve Justice.

There is one problem: winning her appeal means she would face another trial. She could be convicted a second time, and potentially face a stiffer sentence than the five months in prison **U.S. District Judge Miriam Cedarbaum** ordered her to serve, which is the minimum.

Given that she did order the minimum sentence, and given that she did dismiss the most serious charge against her, securities fraud, King asked what Stewart thought of Cedarbaum: "Judge Cedarbaum is an elegant lady. She happened to go to the same college I went to, do you know that?" Stewart replied. Stewart went on to imply that Cedarbaum's belief in jurors and the justice system might be a little naïve, given the obvious injustice that happened to Stewart.

This is where Stewart's book would come in: "And I think I'll write a book. Because I think it could be helpful to other people, just about -- just about what lawyer to choose, how to behave, how to attend an interview. I mean there's things that, you know, there's no how-to book about this," Stewart announced.

King responded: "You mean your lawyers never told you not to lie to federal investigators? Is that the kind of advice that would be in the book?"

Actually, I made that question up, too.

Instead, King mentioned some pals they have in common, like **Donald Trump**, of whom Stewart said: "Well, Donald Trump has been a very big supporter and a very nice source of comfort for me. And I've known him for quite a few years. And what he says about that is his opinion." In other words, keep it to yourself, Trump.

They went on to discuss another mutual friend, **Barbara Walters**, who had interviewed Stewart earlier. In that interview, Stewart said, "Many good people have gone to prison. Look at **Nelson Mandela**."

To some this sounded like Stewart was comparing herself to Mandela, who served 27 years in prison, most of it at hard labor, for his opposition to Apartheid in South Africa.

This comparison may seem arrogant, but Martha did not mean it that way: "And what I said, and I am so in awe and so -- I love Nelson Mandela so much. I said Nelson Mandela was able to survive 27 years in prison. I could survive five years [she meant months]. I wasn't comparing myself to Nelson Mandela. I am not a Nobel Prize winner. I am -- my -- our situations are -- well, it shouldn't have and it didn't. If you watch the tape. I watched it. I mean, I didn't seem like I was comparing myself to Nelson Mandela in any way. And I really don't want anybody to be confused about that."

OK, no one is confused. Mandela wrote a book, too, called Long Walk to Freedom.

Stewart did not reveal the title of her own book. She could call it: *Short Stay in Danbury, Or Not.*