

# Hugh Hefner's Final Resting Place? The Plot He Bought Next To Marilyn Monroe

- 
- September 29, 2017



Laurel Wamsley



*Playboy* founder Hugh Hefner often spoke of how he would one day be entombed in the plot he'd bought next to Marilyn Monroe. Her crypt is at the Westwood Village Memorial Park in Los Angeles.

Mel Bouzad/Getty Images

Hugh Hefner [died this week](#) at age 91. And the *Playboy* founder managed, even in preparing for his death, to cultivate his celebrity and stoke controversy.

Over the years, Hefner mentioned to reporters where he planned to be buried: right next to Marilyn Monroe, at the Westwood Village Memorial Park cemetery.

The *Los Angeles Times* [reported](#) that Hefner paid \$75,000 to buy the drawer next to Monroe's in a Los Angeles mausoleum, where [her crypt](#) is often marked by the lipstick kisses of her fans.



## Remembrances

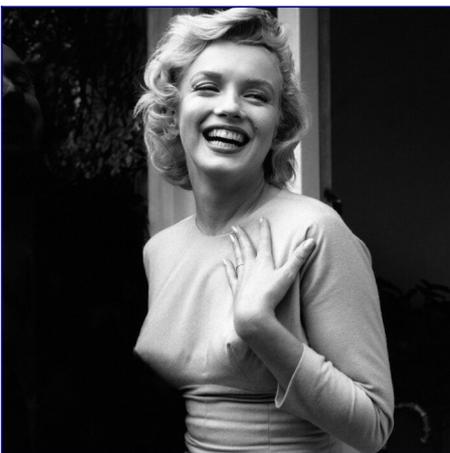
### 'Playboy' Founder Hugh Hefner, Champion Of Free Speech And 'Smut,' Dies At 91

"I'm a believer in things symbolic," Hefner told the newspaper. "Spending eternity next to Marilyn is too sweet to pass up."

Of course Monroe, [who died in 1962](#), didn't get a say in whether she would want to spend the hereafter next to Hefner. He might not have been her first choice.

Monroe was both the cover and centerfold for the very first issue of *Playboy*.

In 1948, as a young actress struggling to get a film career going, Monroe had posed nude for photographer Tom Kelley, signing the release form "Mona Monroe" to avoid association with the photos.



## Arts & Life

### Monroe's Legacy Is Making Fortune, But For Whom?

She did the shoot because she was broke and needed to make a car payment, according to [an account in a book](#) by her friend and photographer George Barris. She said she made Kelley promise that she wouldn't be recognizable in the photographs, and she was paid \$50 for the two-hour shoot.

The photos were sold to Western Lithograph Co., which [made a calendar](#) called "Golden Dreams" out of them. In the fall of 1953, a young Hugh Hefner, living in Chicago with a dream of starting a new kind of men's magazine, heard that a local company owned the photos. He drove out to the suburbs and [bought the rights](#) for \$500.

The cover of that first issue of *Playboy*, in December 1953, featured a photo of Monroe riding an elephant at Madison Square Garden, one arm stretched high. "FIRST TIME in any magazine FULL COLOR the famous MARILYN MONROE NUDE," it trumpeted.

The magazine had no date on the cover, in case copies struggled to sell, according to the *Times* [obituary](#). And while Monroe's name and body were splashed across the magazine, Hefner kept his own name out of the issue, in case the business failed.

Instead, it launched his empire. And Monroe was never paid anything more for the photograph than the original 50 bucks.

"The magazine, I was told, thanks to my photos, [was] an instant sellout all across the country, an instant success," she reportedly told Barris. "I never even received a thank-you from all those who made millions off a nude Marilyn photograph. I even had to buy a copy of the magazine to see myself in it."



## Remembrances

### Hugh Hefner On Early 'Playboy' And Changing America's Values

Hefner considered the nude photographs of Monroe a gutsy political statement — his own.

"Most people had heard about it but almost nobody had seen it and nobody had seen it because the post office had taken the position that you couldn't send nudity through the mail. And I'm the kid that didn't think the post office had that right," he [told](#) E! News in 2008. "So we published that picture and it caused a sensation."

Though they never met, Hefner said he felt a kinship with Monroe, as they were both born in 1926.

"My brother was in her acting class in New York," he [told](#) *Los Angeles* magazine in 2002. "And she was going to do another cover for our anniversary issue — she approved a pictorial drawn from the film she never finished for Fox that had some nudity in it. And then she was gone."

Hefner bought the plot from a private seller who realized that the spot in the crypt next to Monroe could fetch a good price from the right buyer, the magazine reported.

"I am very, very aware of my place in history," Hefner said. "I feel so connected to the pop culture of my childhood. My dreams come from the movies. That's why I live in Los Angeles."

### [Source](#)