



The Bunny Years: The Surprising Inside Story of the Playboy Clubs: The Women Who Worked as Bunnies and Where They Are Now

Kathryn Leigh Scott

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A remarkable range of bright and ambitious women launched their careers while working as Playboy Bunnies. Kathryn Leigh Scott's memoir is based on over 250 interviews with former Bunnies and her own recollections of working in the New York Club while studying to be an actress.

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Boris Raul Ibanez says

Great book, fun book to read, made me wish the playboy clubs were still open, and that i was there.

Andy says

Loved the insights into what it was like in the beginning all the way to the end from the very women who lived it!!!

Lani says

SUPER fun accounts of working at the Playboy Clubs. Much of this book was a 'where are they now' style collection from various starlets, and a notably absent commentary is one from Gloria Steinham. In fact, this book seems to almost be in response to her famous account of her own few days as a Bunny. Rather than falling into her exploitation paradigm, these women are grateful for the experience (and money) they got from their time at the Clubs.

Many of these women formed lifelong friendships and business partnerships from their experience. While these are probably somewhat selected based on their positive experience, there are certainly more stars and corporate higher ups than I expected to find wearing a tail.

The Clubs are clearly a relic of the not-so-distant past, they operated with a combination of titillation and class that would seem almost passe if they opened today. However, at least according to this account, they were a place where women could earn good money by being good waitresses - like a upper-class Hooters, if you will. Many of these women used the Club as a starting point for their careers, and look back fondly at a place where they were able to exert some power as women.

Definitely a fun read with lots of interesting details about club policy, training, and guests. There is some sleaze when talking about the club owners (Hefner and others), but mostly just a gleeful recitation of girls playing at being naughty and nice.

Doris Jean says

I liked the book and it is accurate. The author interviewed a random sample of a small number of the women who had worked as bunnies and so it was a collection of very short post-bunny mini-biographies. I liked that she included photos. The author had worked in the New York Playboy Club for a time and so she had a good understanding of this unique waitressing job.

It was waitressing in a scandalous (at the time scandalous) sexy costume shortly after women started using the birth control pill which liberated many of them sexually. Imagine scantily-dressed fresh, young beauties agreeably working for tips, serving alcohol in a private club with dim lights and hormones flowing.

At the time, many were sure horrible debaucheries were rampant, and many daring men were lured to buy a key to the club and may have been surprised at the security and strict rules once they got inside.

The clubs were revolutionary at the time and I heard it said "the bunnies were pioneers in the sexual revolution". Many had nice success stories, and some were briefly recounted here. So far, this is the best book I have read dealing with the Playboy Bunnies.

Diane Cogswell says

I went to the Playboy Club in NYC after my prom back in 1978 and what a night it was. How did I get into such an exclusive place? I was in awe of the Bunnies then, and still am. I was delighted to read some of their stories and learn how hard it really was to be one of them; and how successful some of them became. I heard they are trying to bring some of these clubs back, but they will never have the respect and admiration as the originals. I'm glad Kathryn Leigh Scott wrote this; it leaves a legacy of a bygone era that needs to, and should be, remembered.

Me says

Forget the new books with playboy or bunny in the title, many of them are about playmates NOT BUNNIES, and in our age of reality TV want to spin their experience into something controversial and negative because controversy gets people talking, tweeting, etc.

This book gives a view of Bunnies that is unique. Unless you worked for Playboy corporation, or knew well someone who did, you probably have a lot of misconceptions about the ladies who worked as waitresses, casino dealers, cigarette girls, photography, coat check, etc, etc. Bunnies could be in the magazine, but that was not their main job, always their choice and not that common.

After all the clubs were closed and there were no Bunnies to go on promotional appearances, centerfolds (called Playmates) were fitted with bunny costumes to cut ribbons, give awards and the other sorts of things we did on promotions - and further confused the issue of who the Bunnies really were. If you want to know what it was like to be a Bunny, read this book. This is the only one you want. You'll be surprised at the positive tone all the alumni have and amazed at the different places Bunnies ended up when their "Bunny Years" were over.

My only regret is that the book stops just a little before the last club shuts down (later others were reopened but as far as I know London and a club in Mexico have the only current Bunnies). It would have been a nice ellipsis to follow it from start to end.

As a former bunny myself I can testify that this really gives the most honest assessment of the experience - no other interview or article I have EVER read had EVER approached the reality.

Jack says

An interesting look into a bygone era. It is part history, part anecdotal; however, if you are interested in either Playboy or the empowerment of women, I would recommend it.

The book tells the story of the rise of the Playboy Clubs from the point of view of the Bunnies who worked there. Each Bunny relates her experiences both in and outside the clubs. There are also contributions from celebrity Bunnies Deborah Harry and Lauren Hutton, among others.

Darlene Ferland says

Interesting to see, as an outsider, what it was like to be a "BUNNY."

Katieemoore says

its sort of a big middle finger to gloria steinhem

Devon says

Got a bit long towards the end, but mostly an interesting collection of personal recollections.

Jeanette says

Nostalgic easy, name dropping read. It was a fair and accurate detailing from the mouths of the women who lived and/or worked within Playboy clubs as Playboy Bunnies. Most of the stories are from the original groups in New York and Chicago during the mid-1960's. The costuming methods, rules and training were especially interesting. Overall there was just too much reference and following of the few Bunnies, like Gloria Steinem, who worked for very short periods of time, did it for investigative reasons, or to access a particular key holder for another job.

Overall I did think it was a good look into a specific window of time in the 1960's when most women did not or could not go to college full time and were barely breaking in to any good salary business or service positions at the ages of these girls. Most of them were under 20. But never more so than in the particular detailing of those Bunnies' stories that had some poignant "getting away from a rude customer" tactics or specific method. Also, in the aspect of seeing how this was purely a 2 or 3 year gig for most of them to get into other sales or public relations or entrepreneurial fields. Because there were huge association and access benefits, far beyond the fantastic tips.

I was not surprised to read that most ('60's /'70's) and many very successful in life former Bunnies looked

upon these memories very positively and with almost no regrets. On the other hand, this book made me sadder than I ever thought it could. So many of the Chicago stories were exactly where I was and at the very same times. And I do know and remember those places and how the audition and interview "felt" for many jobs where dress/poise/looks of upmost importance, and eating in spots just like that for 15 or 23 cents a meal. So different from now in respect levels in good intent too. So very different, sometime with more conflict and less advantage for women then, but always with far more hope to reach the moon than young have today! Bunny work was never looked upon as anything but a short term bridge to something else and this book supports that completely. So much between the line too in the demerit and fired rigmarole cycle.

So much more in these pages than just complaints about costume comfort or difficulty that bunny dip serving puts on the back and the legs as in Steinem's article. Sexy looks was essentially the packaging, but joy was part and core of the finished effect.

Ladyknightstar says

How did I come to read this book? It was on a list of unexpected feminist books, regarding exploitation of women. I found it to be very anthropological, as in it was written ethnographically, with accounts from the women on their own real experiences. I would say that I was surprised there wasn't much criticism from behind the scenes, as that would have sold well. The main conflicts recorded seem to have been along the lines of the bunnies protesting, sure, but remarkably one incident was about not being able to date who they wanted at the clubs. This is sort of the anti-Gloria Steinem Bunny Experience, with many of the women going on to be executives or own their own businesses or successful in some way or other. It does not, in fact, make much mention of the personal lives of the women after being a Bunny and or any challenges they may have faced. I feel this was missing for it to be a true ethnography. Not every woman could have had some magical fairy land existence. It's not so much questioning these women's veracity, as the feeling a lot has been left out.

T. Natalia says

Kudos for this book...too bad these bunnies don't exist anymore, too bad times have changed and not necessarily for the better. The bunnies will always be an awesome sisterhood of sexy gals. Glad I found this book, really inspiring.

Anne says

This book was an eye opener!! I absolutely loved it!! If you have never read it, don't put it off any longer!!! Cudos to the Bunnys who worked so hard and got such a bad rap!! Amazing job, Kathryn!!

Ashley says

The inside scoop on the waitresses of the Playboy clubs. Interesting

