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## Civil liberties ingrained in Playboy ideal

### Legends & Groundbreakers: Hugh Hefner

By JAIME NETZER

Hugh Hefner started his eponymous foundation in 1964 -- the same year the Civil Rights Act passed, and also the year before the Supreme Court ruled it was no business of the government's whether a married couple used the pill. (Unmarried people had to wait until 1972.)

Also in 1964, Hefner was publishing in each issue of Playboy a running series called the Playboy Philosophy -- a column in which he says he "made the case for the sexual revolution."

Though the social landscape has shifted dramatically, nearly 50 years later the Hugh M. Hefner Foundation is still funding organizations that support Hefner's original ideas -- the paramount importance of the first amendment, rational sex and drug policies, and the protection of fundamental civil rights and liberties.

"I started the foundation in 1964 to put my money where my mouth was," Hefner says. "And I think we played a major part in changing the laws related to sex and sexuality and I take great pride in that."

Hefner poured money into specific court cases as well as organizations. "Obviously I didn't do it in the dark," he says. "I did it in a very public way, and took some pride and credit in that. Along with it came controversy, but I think controversy is the way you change things."

Then on a visit to a Playboy club in London in 1966, Hefner couldn't help but notice the ubiquitous miniskirt and a conspicuous absence of bras. "I knew that the sexual revolution was about to arrive," he recalls, "and I came back to my offices in Chicago and stopped writing the philosophy and realized that we had won the war."

Hefner says his foundation's goals are ongoing, however. "It isn't a specific agenda," he says, "it's fighting the good fight continually."

In 1979, the foundation established the Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Award; today more than 100 individuals including high school students, lawyers, and librarians have been honored and awarded a \$5,000 cash prize.

Hefner, who was recently named Humanitarian of the Year by the charity organization Angelwish,

has also supported animal rights and the autism campaign Generation Rescue. He has donated millions to the USC's School of Cinematic Arts, creating an endowed chair and a course on censorship and film, and funding an archive. When the Hollywood sign was badly in need of repair in the late 1970s, Hefner took on the cause. "We were able to step in and play a part in reinvigorating the dream," he says. "That's what the Hollywood sign is all about. It represents the Hollywood dreams expressed by the movies in the Golden age, and those dreams are the American dreams; they are the notion of a free society and a free world."

### **Legends & Groundbreakers: Hugh Hefner**

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