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## **VANITY FAIR**

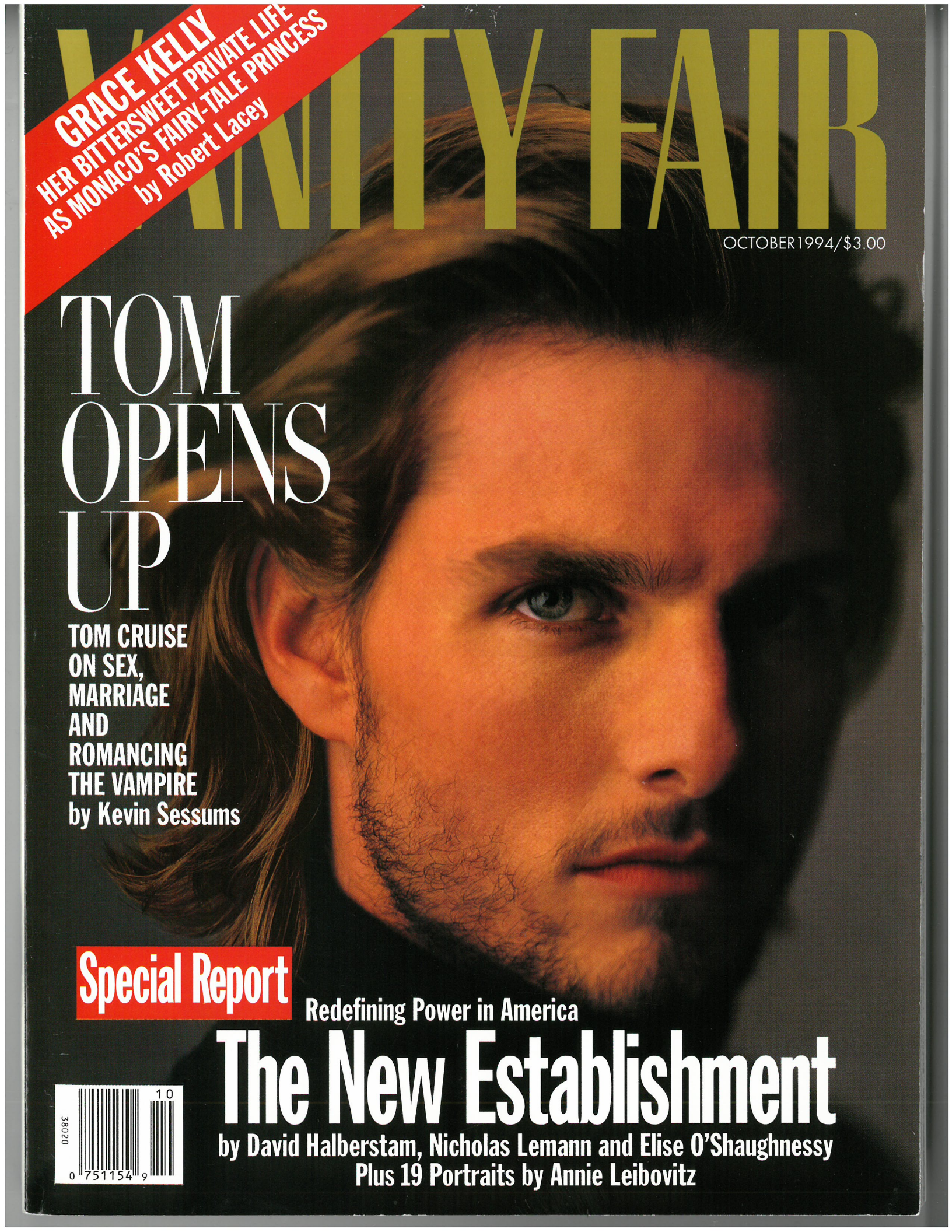
Thank you for your recent letter to *Vanity Fair*.  
Readers' responses are one of the most valuable  
guides we have in shaping future issues.  
We regret that we can't answer each letter  
individually. However, we do print a selection of  
letters each month. In the event that we can publish  
yours, we will contact you by telephone or telegram.

*The Editors*

*Gregory M. Canale*

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**GRACE KELLY**  
HER BITTERSWEET PRIVATE LIFE  
AS MONACO'S FAIRY-TALE PRINCESS  
by Robert Lacey

# VINTAGE FAIR

OCTOBER 1994/\$3.00

## TOM OPENS UP

**TOM CRUISE  
ON SEX,  
MARRIAGE  
AND  
ROMANCING  
THE VAMPIRE**  
by Kevin Sessums

**Special Report**

Redefining Power in America

## The New Establishment

by David Halberstam, Nicholas Lemann and Elise O'Shaughnessy  
Plus 19 Portraits by Annie Leibovitz

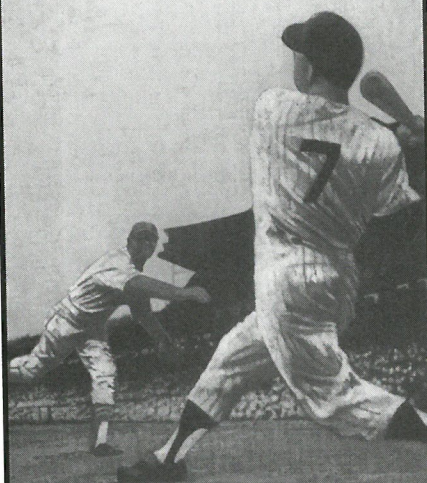




# DAVID HALBERSTAM

*Summer of '49*  
was a #1 bestseller.  
Now its author  
gives us a new book  
about one of the  
most dramatic seasons  
of all time.

## October 1964



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## Letters

(Continued from page 70) most dramatic bad news.

This social deterioration, Mr. Bennett believes, "is due in large part to the enfeebled state of our social institutions and their failure to carry out a critical and time-honored task: the moral education of the young."

Mr. Bennett's conclusions will not please all tastes, but he is saying things that are proven, significant, and momentous. Those who take refuge in simpler resolutions to less sticky issues will pale in contrast.

MICHAEL LEVINE  
Los Angeles, California

It was thrilling to read in your August issue that Bill Bennett is considering running for the presidency—it's about time we had a mensch for a leader.

C. A. SPILLER PARESKY  
Marblehead, Massachusetts

## Bret Noir



*Ellis's island: Author Bret Easton Ellis incites passionate reactions in his fans and detractors alike. Some claim he is the voice of his generation; others see a crass literary prankster.*

Thank you for your sublime article on novelist Bret Easton Ellis ["Who's Afraid of Bret Easton Ellis?" by Matthew Tyrnauer, August], a man too brilliant to be understood by just anyone.

LACEY LEVITT  
Baltimore, Maryland

During the pinnacle of the Ellis controversy, Tammy Bruce, the president of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Organization for Women, made the com-

ment that *American Psycho* is "a how-to novel on the torture and dismemberment of women." She gave it far too much credit. It is actually a how-to manual on torturing readers. I don't know which was more painful, reading Ellis or reading about him.

KENYA McCULLUM  
Albany, New York

Finally a quasi-revealing profile (as much as we'll ever know, I'll bet) of one of the most talented writers of our time. As a senior studying creative writing at the University of Arizona I can say that Mr. Ellis is among the most revered authors of my generation, admired for the fluidity of his prose style and his eye for context and detail, which, on the surface, appear ordinary enough but are really, under Mr. Ellis's microscope, threatening and truly unnerving. I quiver with anticipation for the arrival of his latest masterpiece.

JAIME CLARKE  
Phoenix, Arizona

Bret Easton Ellis belongs in a locked attic room with Jay McInerney, Tama Janowitz, and the entire cast of *Less than Zero*, where we can dust them off occasionally and say, "Weren't we silly to have bought into this crap?"

J. ALEXANDER GREENWOOD  
Midwest City, Oklahoma

At last, an interview with an author who doesn't force-feed us the "happy ending" novel. Bret Easton Ellis gave me the truth and a sense of realism in his first three novels. Censorship should be of no concern. After all, don't drug abuse, violence, rape, murder, and the aimless wandering of the twentysomethings exist? I keep reading Ellis because I know I won't get a perfect, happy, Danielle Steel version of my generation. *The Rules of Attraction* is a perfect depiction of what college kids are dealing with now. Thanks for the new novel, Bret.

JENNIFER KURELLA  
Clearwater, Florida

To say that I simply adore Bret Easton Ellis would be the biggest understatement I could ever make in my life. Mr. Ellis is a personal god to me. *Less than Zero* has made an indelible mark on my being. I have read it at least a hundred times, and when the movie version came out I was shattered. I literally cried hysterically when I saw the travesty that took place on film. Mr. Ellis is a literary genius who draws people into the (Continued on page 84)

RICHARD J. BURBRIDGE



(Continued from page 74) worlds that he creates and no one leaves these worlds untouched.

To me, Bret Easton Ellis epitomizes truth. He is not afraid to show the way people truly are, and he chronicles their actions and feelings in his books vividly, starkly, and without apology. Mr. Ellis is a man who feels things so deeply and acutely that there can be no question in my mind that he is one of the most magnificent writers of all time.

When I was a college student in Vermont, I would drive down to the Bennington campus and pay homage to the man who had brought so much into my life. I felt that he understood me perfectly and I secretly hoped that he would be there for some odd reason on the day that I was so that I could thank him for his words. Being a 21-year-old writer myself, I hope to meet Mr. Ellis one day, but I hope to have better luck in conversing with him than I did with Donna Tartt when I met her at a reading she gave in Northampton, Massachusetts. I was so in awe of the fact that she and Mr. Ellis were friends that I was struck mute as she spoke to me. Finally, I found my voice and gushed about how much I adored Mr. Ellis and how I thought her book was fabulous. She was the sweetest person, but my embarrassment over the situation has not diminished in the two years since I met her. I hope to have better luck with Mr. Ellis one day. I will always carry a piece of him with me wherever I go.

JANINE WILKINS  
Watkins Glen, New York

## In Sol We Trust

Unfortunately the otherwise riveting article "Love and Obsession" [by Linda Wolfe, August], about the bizarre behavior of New York's top judge, ended with the words "mental illness." Those should have been the first words.

His madness has a name, which went unmentioned in the article—Judge Sol Wachtler has been diagnosed as a manic-depressive. This disorder affects about 1 percent of the population. Two of the four presidents depicted on Mount Rushmore, Abraham Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt, were likewise afflicted. So too were Ernest Hemingway and Virginia Woolf.

A brilliant jurist, Judge Wachtler has added much to the development of the

common law in this country. I hope when the scales of justice hold him in the balance, he will be found to be not depraved but, rather, ill.

CARL BROWN  
Louisville, Kentucky

## That Hamilton Man

George and Alana Hamilton ["George and Alana," by George Kalogerakis, August] are like Zsa Zsa Gabor, famous only for being famous. They have enjoyed more than their 15 minutes.

COLLEEN WHALEN  
Arlington, Virginia

George Hamilton has been my favorite actor/movie star since *Where the Boys Are*, and I say this without smirking or blushing. He plays Hollywood to the hilt.

Now, why did you people not mention *Zorro*, *The Gay Blade*, his tour de force?

SISSY WHITE  
New Orleans, Louisiana

## Worth the Risko



*Women of the air: Vanity Fair illustrator Robert Risko depicts the dominant female broadcasters of our day—Barbara Walters, Diane Sawyer, Connie Chung, Jane Pauley, and Katie Couric.*

I want to congratulate Risko for his illustration of the female anchors ["Kiss of the Anchorwomen," by Lloyd Grove, August]. It is incredible!

A. D. McCAFFERTY  
St. Petersburg, Florida

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: The Editor, *Vanity Fair*, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017. Address electronic mail to vfmil@vf.com. The letters chosen for publication may be edited for length and clarity.

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