

BOOKS



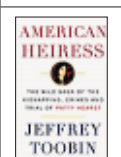
Defiant: Emily Harris and Hearst (with sunglasses) raise their fists as they leave San Francisco's Federal Building after their arraignment, 1976

How to brainwash an heiress

Paranoid revolutionary or just a great pretender? *Duncan White* is still perplexed by Patty Hearst's blank gaze

AMERICAN HEIRESS

Jeffrey Toobin



384PP, DOUBLEDAY, £21.85

★★★★★

On May 16 1974, Tony Shepherd, an assistant at Mel's Sporting Goods in Los Angeles, saw a customer hiding something inside his jacket. A trained cop, Shepherd tackled the shoplifter as he tried to flee. The store manager and several passers-by piled on. Without warning, a burst of gunfire came from a van parked across the street, shattering the storefront window but, incredibly, killing no one.

Wielding the submachine gun was the most sought-after woman in America: Patty Hearst, granddaughter of the newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst.

Three months previously, this listless 19-year-old student trapped in a tedious relationship had been kidnapped by a gang of bedsit radicals from her flat in Berkeley. She was stuffed into the boot of a car and driven to a hideout where she was kept in a closet for several weeks. What happened next is contested: Hearst later maintained that she only joined the Symbionese Liberation Army, as the gang called themselves, because she was raped, threatened and feared for her life, but members of the SLA said she joined the organisation willingly and all sex was consensual.

In *American Heiress*, Jeffrey Toobin argues that the shoot-out "marked the crossroads" for

Hearst. Previously, the group had released a photo of her wearing a beret and clutching a machine gun – but that could have been taken under duress. She had also been caught on security camera taking part in a bank robbery; again, that might have been coerced. But on May 16, she had been left alone in the van while the shoplifter and his wife – Bill and Emily Harris of the SLA – went to buy supplies. The key was in the ignition. Hearst could have driven home, or to hospital, or to the police. Instead, she stayed and helped shoot her supposed captors to freedom. There was no doubt. Patty Hearst had joined the SLA.

Unpicking all of the competing evidence is tricky business but Toobin does it with characteristic clarity. He trained as a lawyer at Harvard before moving into a career as a journalist with *The New Yorker*. He has written books about the most contentious legal cases of recent years, the most famous of which is *The Run of His Life* (1997), about the OJ Simpson trial, which was recently adapted into a successful miniseries.

For Toobin this is more of a historical project. He paints the backdrop to the Hearst affair as a "hallucinogenic moment" in American history: the OPEC oil crisis, gas rationing, wild inflation, rising unemployment, the Black Panthers, the Watergate scandal. San Francisco, intoxicated by idealism in the late Sixties, was now suffering from a countercultural hangover. Random white people were being shot down in the street in what became known as the Zebra murders, while the Zodiac serial killer taunted law enforcement with cryptic letters.

Amid all this, the SLA seemed a ridiculous organisation: half-digested Marxism mixed up with the paranoid fantasies and grandiose delusions of their leader, Donald DeFreeze, a former convict. He wanted to lead a black revolutionary movement but could only muster white middle-class

The SLA seemed ridiculous, with their slogan 'Death to the fascist insect'

BETTMANN ARCHIVE



dropouts as his followers. They stitched themselves a flag with a seven-headed cobra and signed off their communiqués: DEATH TO THE FASCIST INSECT THAT PREYS UPON THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE. But despite their posturing, the SLA were a dangerous crowd. Before kidnapping Hearst, they had murdered Marcus Foster, a popular African-American school superintendent in Oakland, for his

supposed complicity with the establishment. They used bullets laced with cyanide.

Hearst's father, Randy, initially tried to meet the demands of the SLA by running a food giveaway. But when it was clear that his daughter had joined the SLA, his sympathy evaporated. California had just elected Ronald Reagan as governor and there was a growing feeling that the hippie Haight-Ashbury crowd had been indulged

too long. To these ascendant conservatives, Patty Hearst symbolised a spoil generation.

After shooting up Mel's Sporting Goods, Hearst and the Harrises left an unpaid parking ticket in the van when they ditched it, which led the FBI to the SLA hideout. What followed was the "biggest police gun battle ever to take place on American soil". The six other members of the SLA were heavily armed and equipped with military-

Emotionless: the SLA leaked this image of Patty Hearst in captivity

grade gas masks. Some 5,300 rounds were fired into the building and 83 tear gas canisters before the house caught fire. Those who survived the shooting perished in the flames. A crowd of 4,000 watched from behind police barriers and, thanks to a local news station's fancy camera, it was also one of the first breaking news stories broadcast live on American TV.

Hearst, who had not been at the hideout, was eventually arrested in September 1975. Her celebrity lawyer, F Lee Bailey, argued that she had been brainwashed, a term recently coined to explain behaviour by certain American prisoners during the Korean War. Although the hostage situation that gave rise to the concept of Stockholm syndrome had taken place in 1973, it was not yet common psychiatric currency.

Toobin is rightly sceptical of retrospective diagnoses that try to exculpate Hearst. He patiently lays out damning evidence of her complicity in a number of crimes. She has since become convinced of her own innocence, successfully securing a presidential pardon from Bill Clinton. "Rarely have the benefits of wealth, power and renown been as clear as they were in the aftermath of Patricia's conviction," Toobin writes.

Although his scepticism is sound, Toobin still can't get satisfactorily to the bottom of what motivated Hearst. He suggests that she acted with rational self-interest, which would help explain why she ditched her zealous political convictions so quickly after her arrest, effectively becoming an FBI informant. But there was nothing rational at play when she fired her machine gun at Mel's Sporting Goods, or when she chose to keep on living as an "urban guerrilla", in her words, for more than a year afterwards.

The enigma of Patty Hearst is all there in the photograph of her with beret and gun. Her stance is engaged, but her face is devoid of affect. Although there is so much that is obviously compelling about the Hearst saga, the hardest thing to forget is the puzzle of what was happening behind those blank eyes.

My dad, Lawrence of Burma

As a war hero's memory faded, his daughter pieced together the secrets of his past. By *Jane Shilling*

DADLAND

by Keggie Carew



432PP, CHATTO & WINDUS, £16.99, EBOOK £9.99

★★★★★

In 2000, an author calling himself Tom Carew published *Jihad!*, an account of his time with the SAS in Afghanistan during the Eighties. It became an

international bestseller. By what seemed at the time a curious coincidence, Keggie Carew's father was also called Tom Carew. He, too, had a background in special operations, having worked for SOE in wartime France and Burma. Naturally, everyone bought him a copy of *Jihad!*, which he threw away in disgust. "Bogus!" he exclaimed. "The man's a fake."

He was right. In November 2001, the author of *Jihad!* was exposed as a fraud and fantasist called Philip Sessarego who, after twice failing

the SAS selection process, had borrowed Tom's name and invented a heroic identity.

Soon after, the real Tom's own identity began to fragment. In 2003, after the death of his third wife, he started to lose his memory. Even as a child, his daughter writes in this powerful memoir, she had recognised his world as "a place where you never quite knew where you were". But this was a different kind of not-knowing. Many of us find it difficult to imagine our parents' lives before we existed. For Carew and her three siblings, the mystery of Tom's past, of which he rarely spoke, was compounded by his elusive, but still captivating, presence. When Tom died in 2009, aged 89, obituaries described his singular wartime daring. Parachuted into occupied France in 1944 as part of a three-man Jedburgh team – a unit specialising



Guerrilla: Tom Carew

in guerrilla warfare – he was awarded the Croix de Guerre. In Burma he worked with Aung San, father of the Burmese leader Aung San Suu Kyi, was awarded the DSO

and called "the Lawrence of Burma" in 1945 Indian newspapers.

Tom left the Army in 1958, and in a matter of weeks had moved his second wife Jane and their young children to a small house in Fareham, Hampshire, and invited his widowed father to live with them. It was the start of the half-decade left unrecorded by Tom's obituaries, and the beginning of the end of their family's happiness. "Dad's glory days are over," Keggie records in the historic present that she uses interchangeably with the past tense. The effect, at first disconcerting, has a breathless urgency that suits Tom's wartime exploits and rackets later life.

The problem, mostly, was money. Both Tom and Jane came from well-off families, but none of the wealth had come to them. The family was soon in debt. Holding the household together while Tom hunted in vain for jobs, Jane was

"mostly worrying, or cross, or at her 'wits' end". Crossness turned to rage, rage to breakdown. In passages almost too painful to read, Keggie describes her mother's violent rants at her children; her persecution of her father-in-law – "throwing bricks through his window... his Waterford crystal smashed; his grandfather clock heaved over". In 1974 she was admitted to a local mental hospital.

She recovered, eventually, but the family was fractured beyond repair. Tom had an affair and, after his divorce from Jane in 1975, married for a third time, without telling his children.

Keggie's "doomed, excruciating relationship" with this controlling stepmother wrought damage, "however unspoken", to the father-daughter bond. As soon as the stepmother died, however, Tom's mind began to unravel, an irony of

timing that Keggie felt "keenly and selfishly". Then, in his attic, she found diaries, letters, cassette tapes – that became the starting point of *Dadland*. Here was the youthful life she had known only in part – the time in which, perhaps, he was most fully himself: "If France was his pupation, Burma is his imago, breaking out to realise his full potential."

The clouding of Tom's mind never eclipsed his charm. To the end, he saw the world from a point of view entirely his own: "If I left here, I'd only be in another here," he remarked. To find that "other here" is the task his daughter set herself, painstakingly assembling the fragments of his past. There is a whiff of Lear in the decline of a charismatic patriarch into a "foolish, fond old man". But *Dadland* is no tragedy, threaded as it is with forgiveness, love and a fine, fierce comic glitter.

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Eat, Sweat Play: How Sport Can Change Our Lives

by Anna Kessel

Eat Sweat Play is an inspirational work by sports writer Anna Kessel - a manifesto that is as informative as it is revolutionary. This is essential reading for anyone interested in what the future of sport will look like. We spoke to Anna about what prevents women from storming the pitch, and why we all need to take notice.

Who is this book for?

I wrote this book for every woman who ever felt uncomfortable in a PE lesson, or nervous going into a gym. And for all the girls for whom sport and exercise continues to be a minefield of body hang ups and self-doubt. By my count, that's most of us – even some of the sporty ones – and probably a fair few men too.

What are we missing when we talk about women in sport?

First, and most importantly, we are missing our audience. Because from the earliest age girls are told that being sporty, muscular, sweaty and strong is unfeminine. And so women and girls tend to switch off from sport, boxing it off as something they don't need in their lives – somehow alien and unhelpful to being a woman.

So when we do talk about sport, it's all a little bit sad. We talk about the awful statistics – that only 12 per cent of 14-year-old girls do enough exercise, that only two per cent of sports pages carry women's sport.

We don't talk about all the good stuff. Like how having a sports background fast-tracks you into the boardrooms of some of the most powerful businesses and institutions in the world, how sport tackles negative body image, liberates us from the drudgery of "beach body ready" slogans, lessens our period pains and menopausal symptoms and revamps our sex lives. We don't talk about how sport boosts female friendship, carries us through pregnancy and post-natal depression, or teaches us how to tackle failure and setbacks.

Most damningly of all, we don't talk about "playing" and all the fun and enjoyment that entails. Instead women have been lumbered with a punitive approach to our bodies that is all about hard work, correcting bodily flaws, and reaching an end goal. We have totally and utterly missed out on just having a laugh, with mates, having a kick around.

Who was your favourite person you interviewed while writing the book?

There were so many – from the absolute thrill of meeting my hero, Martina Navratilova (a surreal experience as the conversation lurched from cancer to Lady Gaga and Battersea Dogs Home) – to giggling with the

Spice Girls' Mel C, talking whoopee cushions with Judy Murray, and hearing the powerful stories of two Iraqi female football coaches whose lives had been turned upside down by ISIS occupying their home town.

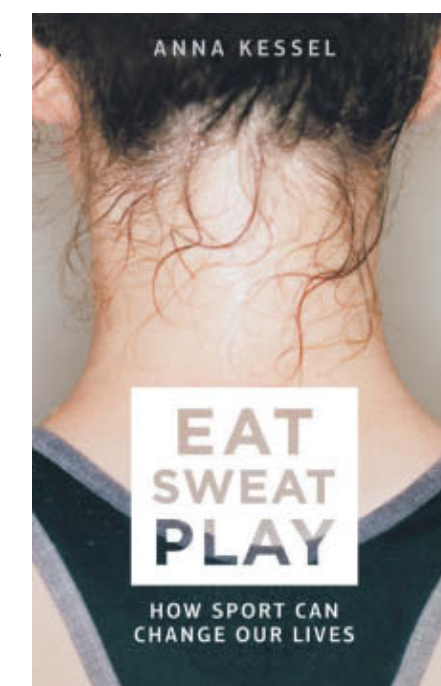
How can women being more involved and visible in the sports realm benefit everyone?

Sport is the final frontier. In an age where feminism is now widely accepted – even our current Prime Minister wore a "This is what a feminist looks like" t-shirt – it is ridiculous that sport still fosters such resistance to change. Whether that's golf clubs refusing female members, or global organisations such as the International Olympic Committee failing to include women on their boards, elite sportswomen earning less than their male counterparts, or schoolgirls being told they can't throw because their boobs get in the way. When women and girls have the opportunity to engage in sport, on a level playing field, we will know that we've finally cracked this equality thing.

What's the next step?

Getting out there and being part of the solution. Have you always wanted to know what it feels like to rugby tackle someone? Put on a wetsuit? Score a goal? Does it really feel as amazing as those Premier League footballers make out? Leaping all over the place? Try it. And in doing so you will be liberating someone else to do the same.

Eat Sweat Play by Anna Kessel is published by Pan Macmillan (£12.99)



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