

# rear view

## indecent exposure

IF YOU WANT A HIGH-PROFILE CAREER, BEHAVE OR STAY AWAY FROM KODAKS, CAMERA PHONES AND CAMCORDERS **BY CLAIRE SULMERS**



There were few raised eyebrows when Paris Hilton's sultry sex tape appeared on Internet websites. We all seemed to shrug with collective disinterest as we saw yet another celebrity with glazed eyes and a crooked smile recording a very compromising, private and embarrassing moment.

It seems like too many very public figures leave their brains, consciences and moral meters at the door when climbing that large ladder to fame. Who can forget the sex tape that was found of R. Kelly, one of R&B's most accomplished and talented, that seemingly documented his illicit relations with underage girls? And boy were we shocked to see presidential hopeful Al Sharpton caught on tape engaging in a shameful drug deal in the seventies.

Plenty of notables have either damaged or ruined their reputations because they lacked the foresight to know and understand this simple rule: when you make it, all of your skeletons will come tumbling out of the closet. Everything you did in college, over spring break and at the club will come to light for the world to see. Don't sleep on your enemies either. Everyone you hate will try to taint your clean and pristine reputation. And your "friends" might be swayed too by the possibility of making some easy money by sharing some of your explicit experiences with the highest bidder.

You don't have to ruin your rep once you get your piece of the pie. Plan on seeing your name in bright lights one day? Then take these pointers and save yourself the disgrace:

**DON'T PUT IT ON WAX.** Last year Eminem was outed by rival Benzino for singing about his hatred of his black girlfriend in an interracial love gone wrong. Now you can hear samples of his distaste on [www.thesource.com](http://www.thesource.com). Not too good for the white-hope rapper who gives dap to hip-hop greats like Dr. Dre and Snoop. While most black women dismiss it as a slight lapse in judgment, Marshall Mathers has probably lost a couple friends and fans.

**DON'T LET THEM SEE THAT THONG.** Keep your clothes on, ladies! For some strange reason, the ladies get hit harder

than the fellas when it comes to career backlash. The Miss America pageant committee quickly dethroned their new cover girl, Vanessa Williams, once they discovered naked pictures of the young beauty. And we can't forget Frenchie, the voluptuous *American Idol* contender, who was denied her chance at stardom because of her naked participation on a porn site. Yes college is expensive, but there are other ways to pay those bills, bills, bills!

**DO RUN FROM THE CAMCORDER.** R. Kelly. 'Nuff said.

**DO SAY NO TO DRUGS.** How many fans hung their heads in shame when their favorite R&B diva, Whitney Houston, spat, "Crack is whack!" to a stunned Diane Sawyer? Ladies and gents, please leave the crack, weed, cocaine, or whatever alone. It kills your voice, shrinks your brain and impairs your judgment. Are you listening, Bobby Brown?

**DON'T LEAVE EVIDENCE.** This is the most important rule. Must we remember that infamous blue stained dress that led to the impeachment of President Bill Clinton? Hey, if you say you didn't have relations with your favorite intern, then make sure they can't show and prove.

Now let's use some common sense, people. Even if you don't plan on being a celebrity, be very careful about keeping your embarrassing stunts on the down low. Your mama doesn't need to see you drunk and shaking it on MTV. And you sure don't want random people rolling up to you at the mall talking about, "I know what you did last summer." Or have any potential employers catching your wilding out moments when you thought no one was watching.

Cool it with the taped spring-break freak fests and real-world catfights. Bottom line: if you're shady, don't document it. Your past always comes back to haunt you at the worst possible moments. *U*



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