

Don Johnson: Oh, the Stories we Could Tell

By Gary Geyer

Don Johnson was born December 15, 1949 on a farm in Flat Creek Missouri. He grew up pretty fast.

Women

Rumor has it that Don, at the age 12 seduced his babysitter, at 16 moved in with a woman who was 25 years old and that during his college days seduced his female drama teacher.

Clearly, Don has lived his life in the fast lane. He has been called the Warren Beatty of the '90s.

His name has been linked with many famous women -- Barbara Streisand, Oprah Winfrey, and Cindy Crawford, to name but a few.

His lips are sealed

Don said, "In all of the years in my relationships with a number of women, I have never spoken an ill word about any woman or any person, and I'm not starting now."

He met Melanie Griffith when she was 14 and he was 22, and they later married for six months, got divorced, then remarried years later, and stayed together about six years.

"Monsterring"

[Don and his buddy Glenn would refer to "gettin' down and partyin' real good," as "monsterring." He said, "Your face changes after you've been up for two or three days and it gets all contorted and stuff when you're trying to speak"]

Don tells of a profound thing that happened to him when he returned home after a weekend of some serious "monsterring." His son (who was 10 months at the time) was sitting at the breakfast table and his mother was feeding him. Don described what happened: "I walked in—and of course, he looked up and saw Daddy's face all monstered out. And I recognized the look in his eye and I said, "Okay, that's it. Boom. Done. Next!"

Not long after, a Hollywood magazine ran Don's picture on the cover and it read, "Don Johnson: Making Sobriety Sexy".

Don's body

Some years ago, when asked about some nude scenes he had done, Don said, "I'm an exhibitionist on some levels. I'm very proud of my body. I'm pleased with the way I carry myself. I feel that it's all there to be used—the looks and everything. Some people have great minds, and they were given them for a reason. I've never been accused of having that great a mind, but I do have my looks, and I think that they should be used—see what I mean?"

Tabloid talk

"I believe that everyone is entitled to privacy on some level, even a public person. And I think that we have overstepped our boundaries into their bedrooms, into their living rooms, into their bathrooms, into places that we do not belong."

"I made up my mind a long time ago to live by a really simple code: What other people think of me is none of my business -- only what I think of myself, and only how I feel about what I'm doing. I don't usually read any of the things that are written or said about me."

A little philosophy

"I think that if you don't have a sense of humor in life, you've pretty much lost about half of the experience, if not more than that. I'm certainly not trivializing anybody's pain, and certainly not my own, but I don't necessarily think that you need to dwell on it."

Don has said that he does just about everything he wants to do, but does it in moderation. He believes that anything you do in excess is bad for you. "Anything!," he emphasized.

He admits to having a very, blessed life. "The Chinese have a saying: 'May you live in interesting times.' That's one of the greatest betrothals of good fortune that the Chinese would give you. And if that's the case, then I have had an abundance of interesting times (laughs)."

A belief system

Don thinks that if you believe in what you're doing, and if you totally commit to it, there isn't anybody that can put you down.

"I can more or less accept everybody's trip," he has said, "the lowest junkie—I can understand his trip, not because I'm a junkie, which I'm not, but because I can relate it to other things that I am a junkie for. I can understand that need—that desire for something.

I feel that I'm a super-complicated being. I mean, I live a very simple life, but complicated in that I feel a lot of different things all the time. I just accept the fact that I have certain emotions that even I don't understand. But they're mine. I was endowed with them.

If he wasn't an actor...

Don has said that if he didn't make it as an actor, he'd probably be in jail by now. He claims that he is not qualified for anything else. "I would imagine that I'd either be doing something larcenous or I would have already been caught. (Laughs again)"

"I'm not really an actor's actor. I do it because it's the only thing where I really do Grade-A, thoroughbred stuff without really feeling like I'm working at it, and I hate to work."

"Maybe tomorrow," he says, "I'll find out that this isn't really what I want after all, and I'll just split into the mountains somewhere and spend the rest of my life playing my guitar. I'll just go away and get into a whole different lifestyle."

"You know, I've always thought that I'd like to go back and live on a farm, and raise my own food, and just shut out everything else in the world."

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About the Author

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