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ANDY DICK, THE UNPREDICTABLE AND HILARIOUS CO-STAR OF "NEWSRADIO," TALKS ABOUT THE DEATHS OF HIS COLLEAGUES PHIL HARTMAN AND CHRIS FARLEY -- AND WHY HE THINKS IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN HIM.

BY HARIETTE SUROVELL | Andy Dick, the irreverent co-star of NBC's comedy series "NewsRadio," arrived an hour late for our interview -- exhausted, he said, from having partied too intensely the evening before with a "bitchy" Penthouse Pet. Alternately engaging and aloof, Dick, who made headlines when he checked into rehab earlier this year for drug and alcohol addiction, wasn't inclined to discuss his upcoming movie, "Advice from a

Americans didn't want to hear



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A Merry War

Reviewed by Charles Taylor
Richard E. Grant and Helena Bonham Carter shun middle-class mediocrity in the film adaptation of George Orwell's "Keep the Aspidochelone Flying" (09/18/98)

Rush Hour

Reviewed by Charles Taylor
A pale imitation of Jackie Chan's Hong Kong hits (09/18/98)

The Young Girls of Rochefort

Reviewed by Stephanie Zacharek
Romantic fantasies are indulged in Jacques Demy's touchingly outmoded musical love letter (09/18/98)

BROWSE THE ENTERTAINMENT

Caterpillar." Instead, he talked about his relationship with the late [Phil Hartman](#), his "NewsRadio" colleague who was murdered in May by his wife, Brynn (who then shot herself to death).

Uneasy about the future of "NewsRadio," which begins its new season Wednesday, Dick talked about how the season premiere pays tribute to Hartman's character, news anchor Bill McNeal, who is supposed to have died of a heart attack. (The second episode will introduce Hartman's replacement, Jon Lovitz.) Dick also talked about the death of his good friend Chris Farley, being bisexual and what it's like to live with his ex-wife, his kids, his girlfriend *and* the occasional male lover -- all in the same household.

You're 32 and already you've lost so many people who were close to you.

It should have been me -- that's what I think. Sometimes I feel ... what's that phrase? But for the Grace of God, there I go. I've never understood it.

Do you feel guilty about that?

I don't feel ... guilt is a weird thing to me because I don't have a lot of it. But I definitely know that I played a part, however big or small, in the deaths of at least two people.

How so?

I told Phil when I got out of AA that I was going to take Brynn to meetings, because I knew she was always drunk. I never did it.

Was Phil Hartman a "father figure" for you?

Yeah. He was the kindest man. I wanted to emulate him. He had this family, everything was ideal. But look what happened.

Well, what did happen?

Just another addiction gone astray.

Do you think he stayed in the marriage for the kids or did he have this "white knight" complex?

No, it's not that way. He loved his kids, he just like, he loved this whole package he had going.

Did you emulate him as a father for your own children?

I wanted to be like that, but I couldn't. I remember asking him, "You don't like that I'm not going out with Maria, their mother?" He said, "No, I don't." I felt bad because I wanted him to approve.

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So what do you think "NewsRadio" is going to be like without Phil, for you?

No good. No good.

What kind of a void is it going to leave?

As far as I'm concerned, it's over. We'll just ride this year out. But I can't do anything about it, I can't leave without being sued. I already called them up and said, "Why Jon Lovitz?" They don't listen to me, they don't care about me.

To me he's going to detract from your character instead of enhance your character, which Phil did.

We all needed Phil; we all bounced off his hard-ass character. He was fucked up and that was the best. The show is going to hell, I guarantee you.

How resilient are you? First Chris Farley dies ...

That sobered me up for about five months. And then I just fell hard off the wagon. It was only a week or three days or ... I don't even know how long it was -- you know how time flies when you're having fun, and that's when I called into Howard Stern and created a national scandal for myself. I was doing lines while I was talking on the phone.

How are you dealing with Hartman's death?

Ever since, I've had people around me ... I don't think I've been alone. My friend Ryan, my son, my ex-wife ... and those people are all sober.

Are you sensitive about your bisexuality?

It makes other people sensitive. Straight people say, "C'mon, you know you're just gay," and gay people say, "C'mon, you know you're just gay," and everybody just wants to make me gay! There is such a thing as bisexual. People want black and white. And I enjoy being bisexual. I enjoy being with men and I enjoy being with women, but tonight I will be with one of each and I'll be on the outside on the sidelines watching, having fun. Something happened to me sexually when I was a child that tweaked my reality.

Do you think your sexuality is related to what you have called your abusive childhood?

My parents just neglected me, I wasn't abused or anything. Neglect is a form of abuse. I was being neglected, not taught etiquette or proper things like what's appropriate, and no boundaries were drawn.

You were adopted. Is this extended family lifestyle you live a reaction to that? Is this your way of creating an extended biological family?

Oh yeah, I definitely know that ... I had no blood relatives till I made some, I guess. But now I have a blood mom [whom he met last summer], and that definitely closed and opened a lot of doors for me.

Chris Farley seemed like one of the sweetest people on earth ...

His heart was so kind and sweet and lovable and loving. I was angry, I mean, I still feel that the world in a lot of ways ... killed him. The world is so gross! That's how I feel about Chris and Phil Hartman. It's completely creepy.

Do you think you have some kind of strange karma?

I have a spiritual advisor I call up, when I just feel lost. Lately, I've been talking to God. I developed this dialogue in rehab, this dialogue with God, and every day I talk to God.

Do you talk to Phil?

Sometimes. I talked to him a lot right after he died, because I read that Tibetan book about how when someone is killed really harshly, their soul is kind of stuck on the earth saying, "What's happening?" I was talking out loud, I felt like I was really helping him, that he was really confused, I felt like I was helping him, I was telling him, "You have to go on ..."

You said in one interview that he was funniest off-camera.

He was so cynical, but he loved life. He'd say, "This is the money shot," things like that. He loved pretending that it was all about him, which is the way we all feel, but he'd say it out loud. I got a lot of that "Watch and learn!" kind of stuff from him. I say it all the time now. I said it on the set this week. He was just so ... carefree, he was so real, he was authentic, he loved being a celebrity, yet he loved seeing one, too. He would come back and say, "I just hung out with Jim Carrey." He was still a little kid, like I was. He loved his toys, which were airplanes and boats. He was like a little kid, and yet he had great responsibility.

Do you think you were blessed to have known Phil and Chris, these two sweet people?

Yes. That's what you have to focus your attention on, instead of, "This world sucks, I should die too ... it's no fun, they're gone." Now, I'm like, "Hey, at least I got to learn from them, at least I got to know them."

I read that people think you're not emotional.

They just think that I'm very hard and that nothing can affect me. But they don't really get who I am, which is highly, highly sensitive. I'm very truthful, and they misinterpret that as being a cold, callous asshole who isn't affected by anything. But I'm really ultra-affected by things. I feel things deeper, and I cry at the drop of a hat.

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Hariette Surovell's last piece for Salon was "[Poor Little Rich Thugs.](#)"

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