

HOTSHOT EPSTEIN NOT SO HOT: VF

PAUL THARP. *New York Post*. New York, N.Y.: Feb 4, 2003. pg. 036

Abstract (Document Summary)

[Jeffrey Epstein], a 50-year-old Ralph Lauren lookalike who claims to manage a billionaires-only fund, has made headlines for his high- society lifestyle; among his attention-grabbing moves was flying President Clinton and Kevin Spacey to Africa on a private jet.

The article says that when Epstein worked for [Steve Hoffenberg], he cooked up some of Hoffenberg's questionable financing deals - a claim Epstein has denied.

Full Text (249 words)

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Jeffrey Epstein - a self-proclaimed billionaire who hobnobs with moguls and pledged \$25 million to Harvard - is actually a small potatoes ex-bounty hunter with a questionable financial background, says a report.

Epstein, a 50-year-old Ralph Lauren lookalike who claims to manage a billionaires-only fund, has made headlines for his high- society lifestyle; among his attention-grabbing moves was flying President Clinton and Kevin Spacey to Africa on a private jet.

But a report in the March issue of *Vanity Fair*, on newsstands this week, unmaskes Epstein's mystery image.

Epstein wasn't exactly the top gun at Bear Stearns, as he claims - and left the firm amid a swirl of rumors and an SEC violation, the article said.

His mentor in high finance was Steve Hoffenberg, the bill collector turned hustler now serving 20 years in prison for running the nation's costliest Ponzi scheme, the report says.

The article says that when Epstein worked for Hoffenberg, he cooked up some of Hoffenberg's questionable financing deals - a claim Epstein has denied.

Epstein has also been involved in numerous lawsuits, including one in which Citibank is suing him for defaulting on \$20 million in loans from its private banking arm.

Epstein and his lawyer, Jeffrey Schantz, couldn't be reached for comment on the article.

The article said that Epstein keeps all his deals and clients secret, except for one - retail magnate Leslie Wexner, who calls Epstein "smart . . . [with] high standards . . . and a loyal friend."

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People: Epstein, Jeffrey, Hoffenberg, Steve

Section: *Business*

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