

IN STEP WITH:



BY JAMES BRADY

Paulina Porizkova



BRADY'S BITS

Here is a 20-year-old beauty who makes other America and all those movie stars look slightly dowdy. And what she really wants to be is Dr. Seuss.

BORN: April 9, 1965, in Czechoslovakia.

PERSONAL: Single.

HAIR: Light brown.

EYES: Gray-blue.

HEIGHT: 5 feet 9½.

WEIGHT: 120 pounds.

VITAL STATISTICS: 35-23½-35½.

and at the age of 15 was a leading model in Paris. Whatever they feed children in Czechoslovakia and Sweden must be exceedingly nutritious. When Paulina was 17, she was discovered, flew to America and became a "star." She did not invent the swimsuit, but she certainly has done nothing to discourage its development.

Paulina is 5 feet 9½, has light brown hair and is rescued from perfection by a slightly chipped tooth. She lives in New York now, a city she at first disliked, and has a cat called Mephisto. Her English is slangy but pretty good, her French is fluent, she rides horseback in Central Park and has been known to attend the occasional disco.

I know, I know—so what? Just another beautiful, airhead model. Well, not quite. Paulina claims that she fled from behind the Iron Curtain for "political reasons." She tried for a time to be a serious painter but dropped the palette and the brushes when she realized "I would never be Picasso Junior." She doesn't enjoy modeling all that much, but it is a quick way to make money, lots of money, so that she can do what she really wants to do—which is, get this, to write children's books.

In the meantime, she has been on the cover of just about every magazine we have but the *National Geographic*, does commercials for soft drinks and (surprise!) swimsuits, and adorns the covers of calendars on the walls of half the gas-station garages in America. She probably makes a million dollars a year just by looking good, and she is as friendly as a puppy.

Paulina thinks America is wonderful. America apparently thinks she's OK too. This is the difference between Iron Curtain countries and the free-enterprise system. They put people in jail, and we put them on magazine covers. Paulina will be 21 years old in April. I'm shopping around for a Hallmark card already. I think it's important that we encourage young people in their careers.

She didn't invent the bikini, but this month she proved all over again that she knows what to do with one. Check out "Sports Illustrated" yourself if you don't believe me.

IN VERY FEBRUARY, A MAGAZINE CALLED *SPORTS Illustrated* brightens our wintry gloom (and stirs up frenzied protest) by publishing its annual swimsuit issue. The magazine sells out, college boys hang its pages on dormitory walls, and outraged parents write letters to the editor complaining that their Little Leaguers are being debauched.

For the last few years, much of the excitement has been stirred up by a young woman named Paulina Porizkova, who spends more time in swimsuits than Mark Spitz. I do not know whether she can even tread water, but let's not quibble. With the arguable exceptions of Brooke Shields and Christie Brinkley, Paulina is now the most celebrated cover girl in the world. She was born in Czechoslovakia, moved to Sweden,