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Hollywood Hypocrisy: Devilry in the City of Angels

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Over the past year, every gathering of the foremost elite of Hollywood has focused on the condemnation of Donald Trump as the principal sexual harasser. The now infamous Access Hollywood tapes, used by many as the ultimate bulwark against the alleged degeneracy of Trump, were deemed by the ruling class to be uniquely horrific, and thus they flocked by the dozens to object the moral depravity of the president, as though the alleged abuse of women by powerful men was so far removed from their scope of reality that it was made inconceivable for any American with half a conscience to elect such a man into the highest seat of the office.

Seizing the opportunity to act as moral arbiter to the country, every moment the camera was cast in their direction was a moment to castigate Trump and his enablers. They viewed themselves as protagonists in a tale of gross injustice, as champions in the war for America's moral backbone. Yet behind the glamour and spectacle, the silver screen stars of Hollywood shied away from a sexual deviant who blustered a much more tangible power over them and their careers.

With a career in film spanning over three decades and direct involvement in 81 Oscar wins, it is undeniable that Harvey Weinstein is responsible for the rise of some of the most prolific acts in modern film history. To add to this already unparalleled resume, a study by Vocativ that analyzed 1,396 Oscar acceptance speeches showed that Weinstein was placed second in number of the much revered Oscar name-drop, surpassed only by the iconic Steven Spielberg, and surpassing the likes of Peter Jackson, George Lucas, James Cameron, and



many women were so intimidated and discouraged to publicly condemn the man, saying “Everyone knew if you were in a Harvey movie, chances are you were going to win or be nominated for an Oscar. It’s a sick thing to be in a business where that was the collateral used to coerce women.” In retrospect of all that has been revealed about this magnate in the past weeks, one is forced to raise the questions: Where is Hollywood’s indignation? Where is America’s conscience?

Thus the cries of the supposed outrage of Hollywood’s upper echelon now ring hollow, in direct contradiction to their resolute moral code. All that has been revealed of Weinstein’s character has left not only his reputation but the entirety of the industry in tatters, and has opened to public perception a culture of fear and intimidation. The patricians of Hollywood, supposedly brave individuals who lambast the president at every opportunity for the sake of their own stardom, fall silent when a reprehensible man who systematically abused women is revealed in their very own social circles. This speaks volumes to the true nature of power, as public condemnation by any star like Weinstein would have required the risk of damaging one’s career and social status. A journalist for the *New York Times* addressed this directly in an article published on October 8th, saying, “I called more than 40 entertainment industry players, and almost all refused to speak for the record. Some said it was because their companies needed to approve anything they would say, while others have reasons that painted a picture of a community hobbled by fear, self-interest, and hypocrisy.” Their continued refusal to decry Weinstein, a man who once sat comfortable at the top of their own ranks, reveals a culture driven purely by self-preservation. Hollywood has chosen to direct their outrage at their ideological opponents, and to silently sweep under the rug their own demons.

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