

Boundary Breakers or Makers?

Hollywood's award season is in full swing and will be dominated by actresses insisting on a new moral order in which men treat them with deference and respect. Right on. You witnessed Hollywood's best on the Golden Globe Awards wearing black to honor those deadened by misogyny; most female winners will remark on overcoming sexual misconduct as Hollywood's number one priority.

Time Magazine chose as 2017's 'Person of the Year' the 'silence-breakers': women--some entertainers--who refused to be the dirty little secrets of men in power. Writers of the tribute raised a good point: 'While anger can start a revolution, it cannot negotiate the more delicate dance steps needed for true social change...there's a great deal at stake in how we assess these new boundaries, for men and women together.'

What are the new boundaries? Is Hollywood capable of covering and protecting its beautiful flesh? Renowned for pushing limits until they shatter, can the entertainment industry tow a line, any line that refuses sexual 'freedom'?

Case in point. At the same awards ceremony where Jessica Chastain insisted that Hollywood clean up its act (the Palm Springs Film Festival), the young actor Timothee Chalamet won an award for playing a 17-year-old boy having an affair with a 24-year-old man in the film *Call Me By Your Name*; he thanked his costar's wife for 'letting me crawl all over her husband for two months.' Huh.

In its yearend edition (Dec. 18th, 2017) featuring the 'silence-breakers', Time chose this romantic tale of sexual abuse as its sixth best film of the year. Times critic Stephanie Zacharak gushed over the film--as a 'rapturous, bittersweet seduction. To fall into its arms is bliss.' No mention that its story centers on a classic Hollywood hunk seducing a teen, and performing a host of orgasmic sexual acts with him. It is soft porn with literary pretensions. Breaking emotional, spiritual, and physical boundaries with other men cost Kevin Spacey his career. It will make the careers of the actors in *Call Me By Your Name*. So Hollywood says 'Me Too' to some, and 'Not You' to the films that seduce us.

Having seen the film (please don't, as its explicit content is disturbing), I marveled at the lack of moral tension contained in it. The boy's father consoles his distraught son by blessing this most special friendship and even expressing his regret over not ever having had such a same-gender affair. (Adding to the irony: the seducer was the father's academic assistant whom 'Dad' invited into the home to share a room next to his son!) Even worse is the lack of tension experienced by Hollywood over the film. Have you heard any outcry against it?

Apparently Hollywood is selective in protecting human dignity. The industry must become

consistent in her moral revolution. That must apply first and foremost to children. If Hollywood wants to create new boundaries then it must also repent for breaking good ones. Hollywood abuses everyone by applauding Call Me By Your Name.