

Hollywood-izing Harassment

Count on Hollywood to highlight a real threat to human dignity (sexual assault, power abuse, a la Harvey Weinstein) only to distort its threat to the point of mockery. If Heather Lind's accusation of 93-year-old George HW Bush's sexually assaulting her does not provoke an SNL sketch, I'll never watch it again.

If you recall, actress Lind accused the former president of placing his hand on her bottom as they posed for a large group photo. Wheel-chair bound Bush insists that the position of his hand was the best he could do in light of his lowered seat. Intentional or not, his alleged 'assault' seems inflated. Are we ready to describe the brush of a hand (or another body part) against another's vulnerable area as an 'assault', in the same category as rape? Ludicrous, of course, but 'any type of sexual contact that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient' is how we now define sexual assault.

This from an industry that rewards feminine sex appeal above all else. Yes there are bad powerbrokers. And yes there are scads of beautiful women who contribute to this exploitation by consenting to a host of vulgar scenarios. Kate Winslet who can hardly keep her clothes on in film self-righteously noted that she did not thank Harvey Weinstein when she won an Oscar for a film he produced. How noble. Another actress now accuses director Oliver Stone of touching her breasts; the only film footage that played in the background as she cried on cue was of her ample breasts displayed for a vulgar/comic moment on a sitcom. Enough said.

In spite of some women's mixed messages, nothing warrants or excuses sexual assault. I would add to that: wise up and take responsibility. Mayim Bialik wrote a funny, smart essay on 'Being a Feminist in Harvey Weinstein's World' in which she implores young actresses to invest more in brainpower than bra power. ([NY Times op-ed Oct. 13, '17](#)) Bialik was dissed for collaborating with the enemy. It reminds me of 'gay' activists who in the eighties decried HIV-related discrimination while they actively spread the disease by refusing to play it 'safe.'

Miss Lind, I urge you use your 'power' to remove the misplaced hand from your behind. Assume that a 93-year-old unwell man is innocent before declaring him guilty. For the sake of justice, stay off social media. We make heroes felons through virtual kangaroo courts. Let's also acquire language that allows us to distinguish between 'brushes' with another's sexual intention and actual sexual violation. If everyone has been sexually assaulted, has anyone? We serve justice to those impacted by life-threatening coercion when we calibrate our language and discern proper forums for addressing sexual assault.