

CELEBRITIES GET A PASS ON SEXUAL RECKLESSNESS

The Catholic League has long suspected that, in many quarters, the outrage over priestly sexual abuse has had more to do with the status of the accused than the crime itself. The evidence became indisputable when we saw Hollywood defend and lionize Roman Polanski and David Letterman. Clearly there is a major difference between the two: Polanski is a child-rapist who drugged, penetrated and sodomized a teenage girl; Letterman is a philanderer who has admittedly had sex with female staffers.

How Polanski kept his hero status after fleeing the country following the rape of a teenage girl in the 70s is astonishing. But when Polanski was recently arrested in Zurich, and faced extradition to the U.S., he was defended by the Hollywood elite.

When actress Debra Winger showed up at the Zurich Film Festival—at which Polanski was scheduled to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award—she said she came “to honor Roman Polanski as a great artist, but under these sudden and arcane circumstances, we can only think of him today as a human being.” She was not alone: the festival’s jury proudly displayed red badges reading “Free Polanski.” Woody Allen, a man who speaks from experience, also came to Polanski’s defense.

Whoopi Goldberg showed her ignorance when she declared that Polanski’s crime “wasn’t rape-rape.” And noted photographer Otto Weisser agreed: “He made a little mistake 32 years ago.” That’s right—it’s only a big mistake when priests do it.

Richard Cohen of the *Washington Post* noted that it’s been “over 30 years” since Polanski molested the girl. Similarly, movie critic Tom O’Neil exclaimed that it was “mind-boggling

why they're still pursuing this." Yet there is no statute of limitations afforded priests—men long dead have been accused of crimes extending back to the 1920s.

Movie executive Harvey Weinstein also chimed in to defend his friend: "We're calling on every film-maker we can to help fix this terrible situation." The terrible situation, of course, wasn't what Polanski got away with—it was his pursuit by the authorities.

The week after news broke about Polanski's arrest and possible extradition, David Letterman opened the week laughing about the situation; he ended the week laughing and joking about his own sexual exploits.

Letterman's fans, of course, didn't care. "We love Letterman no matter what he does. He brings us joy," said a fan in New York. CBS quoted a Hollywood publicist who said "the star wouldn't be hurt by the revelations and might even be helped by them."

It certainly didn't hurt Letterman's career when he laughed at the Church for what happened in 2002. That summer a man and a woman had sex in St. Patrick's Cathedral. They did so in plain view of men, women and children and had their performance described on the radio as part of some sick contest. Most of the people were aghast, the radio hosts who rigged the event were fired, and apologies were issued by the radio station. Letterman, however, found it so hysterical that he used the story to tell jokes about it for three nights.

There was a time, not long ago, when feminists would demonstrate in the street demanding Letterman be fired for sexual harassment. As defined by feminists, sexual harassment typically kicks in whenever a boss, usually a man, uses his position of power to initiate sex with his subordinates. But Letterman didn't have to worry.

The National Organization for Women lists six different issues

as “Key Issues” and twenty more as “Other Important Issues.” Sexual harassment is not one of the six hot issues, nor is it one of the twenty “Other” issues.

But the ultimate hypocrites were those from the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU). This London-based organization condemned the Vatican for not dealing responsibly with the issue of sexual abuse. We noted that IHEU is an ethical disgrace. Consider that Vern Bullough, a noted world humanist, was past vice president of the organization. He was also a man who held Alfred Kinsey in high esteem, despite the fact that Kinsey was a sado-masochistic, child-abusing, voyeuristic pervert.

When Bullough died in 2006, he was fondly remembered by William A. Percy, a gay activist who unsuccessfully offered a bounty of \$20,000 for the outing of a living American Cardinal. Percy maintained that Bullough “never denounced NAMBLA,” the organized group of gay child molesters. Moreover, he rushed to support the infamous Rind study that put a sweet gloss on man-boy sex. Dr. Judith Reisman explained why: Bullough was the “self-confessed pedophile editor of *The Journal of Paedophilia*.”

Catholics don’t need any advice from IHEU on the subject of child sexual abuse. The organization so fully discredited itself that it forfeited the moral right to point fingers at any person or institution.