OSCAR VOTERS LACK DIVERSITY

Al Sharpton is angry that for two years in a row, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences did not nominate any black actors. "Hollywood is like the Rocky Mountains," he said, "the higher up you get the whiter it gets." He added that Hollywood has a "fraudulent image of progressive and liberal politics and policies."

Is Sharpton right? We know from a *Los Angeles Times* poll that Oscar voters are 94 percent white. We also know that they are 76 percent male and that their average age is 63. They are also heavily Jewish. Writing in *the Jewish Journal*, Abe Fried-Tanzer said, "It is no secret that there are Jews all over Hollywood." Indeed, the Jewish *Forward* said it is merely a "sociological observation" to note that "Jews run Hollywood."

Is there a problem that Oscar voters are mostly older Jewish guys? Yes, but not because they are older, or white, or Jewish: it's because their values, which are decidedly liberal-left, are not representative of the American public. As such, traditional-minded persons are severely underrepresented in the voting process.

When we speak of diversity, too much attention is given to anatomy and ancestry. What counts is diversity of thought, not sex or race. The same problem exists on college campuses: those who hold conservative values are in small supply.

Regarding the Jewish element, Bill Donohue would personally prefer a Hollywood run by Jews such as Michael Medved and Dennis Prager than he would one run by Catholics such as the Cuomos, Pelosis, or Kennedys.

Sharpton was right to complain about the lack of diversity in Hollywood, but he was wrong to focus on biological criteria—the real problem is in the mindset of the voters. Only when we can be sure that practicing Catholics,

evangelical Protestants, observant Jews, Mormons, and others have a representative seat at the table can Hollywood escape the rap that it is hypocritical.