

Explaining Hollywood Liberalism

I was recently asked the following:

“I don't get why everyone in Hollywood is far-left crazy. I just don't get it. Can you help me understand?”

I started to respond in a brief e-mail, but then decided I needed more than a few sentences. Here is the cause of “Hollywood liberalism,” in my opinion:

First, Hollywood is full of people who never had real jobs... jobs where they actually had to lift, carry, measure, hammer, manufacture, file, sort, type, multiply, divide, or sweat. Many of the creatures of la-la land were spoiled as kids. They now have jobs where they receive a boatload of money for doing nothing more than "play acting." As children, we all played “cops and robbers” and “cowboys and Indians” (which is probably outlawed now), but most of us eventually grew up and got “real” jobs. Hollywood never grew up.

The Hollywood stars subconsciously feel guilty because they have unconscionable amounts of money and they know they don't deserve it. They can't actually admit that to themselves, of course, because that would destroy the entire charade of their lives. (Just like O.J. Simpson probably convinced himself that he didn't really slice his ex-wife's head off.)

Meanwhile, the stars and starlets get undeserved, fawning admiration everywhere they go. People hold doors for them, make sure they have their favorite bottled water backstage, and sort out their M&Ms for them because they don't like the green ones. No one ever tells them, “Sorry, we're out of Evian, you'll have to drink Poland Spring,” let alone “No!” Michael Jackson ran out of money and no one told him, "Hey, Michael, you're running out of money. You might want to get rid of your private zoo." Or, when someone does tell the awful truth to a celebrity, the information is so impossible for them to believe that they ignore it and hope the problem will go away.

Toss in over-inflated egos, and the problem gets worse. (Oprah's face has appeared on the cover of *every* issue of her magazine. *Every one!*) Deep down inside, people like that have got to know they don't deserve what they've got. And they know they can lose it as easily as they got it, because Hollywood and the public are fickle. Hence the face-lifts and the Botox treatments - they can't afford to lose their looks, because for many of them that's all they ever had in the first place.

Most people need to have some kind of purpose in life – even Hollywood crazies. It's not enough to have a successful career, or a business, or a skill, or a hobby. They need to "make a difference." And for them, the difference has to be *big* - just like their egos and their careers. They can't just quietly give \$100,000 to a charity, they have to make sure everyone knows they gave it - so they hold lavish fundraisers in order to can get the public recognition. It's not enough for them to donate to charity; they have to be reminded of how wonderful and generous they are. They have to make sure the paparazzi

know where they will be at all times (even though they publicly complain about the celebrity press), so their faces can remain in the spotlight. The recognition has to be continuing and continuous; they can't afford a minute without it, or they run the risk of a moment of self-reflection in which they might again feel guilty for what they have and for not doing more.

In politics, the Hollywood elites can't be conservatives, because conservatives (the true conservatives, not the "Republicans in name only") stand for hard work, adherence to principle, and rising or falling on your own efforts. The stars can't follow that philosophy, because they know they aren't capable of doing the heavy-lifting of the average American. They don't consciously believe that they *earned* what they have, so life must be inherently unfair. That they received a bigger piece of the economic pie may seem unfair, but they can't admit that they don't really deserve it. So they have to extend that concept of unfairness to the entire world. *Everyone* who is poor is poor because they were cheated out of their slice of the economic pie. There is no room for the celebrity to accept that some people are simply failures who don't deserve success - because that would force them to admit that they have success that perhaps they did not themselves earn.

The celebrity thus has to believe that many people were simply cheated. The poor and destitute can't be responsible for their own actions, because they know the poor work harder than they do. "I make \$10 million per movie. That truck driver works hard but makes only \$60,000 per year. I *know* I work hard making a movie - hell, I get up at 5 a.m. for make-up - and I deserve what I get paid, so the "system" must be cheating that poor truck driver. I feel sorry for him."

The celebrities can't afford to feel overpaid, because they certainly don't want to give up what they have, so somehow the "little guy" must be given a break. (It is the same for most Americans with minimum wage laws. *No one* thinks they are overpaid; only that others are *underpaid*.)

Add into the mix that the Hollywood elites tend to have taken college classes in things like community theater, rather than economics 101, and that most college professors are leftists, and you realize that the Hollywood elites have never been exposed to the art of critical thinking. The thinking never goes beyond, "Just raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour to make people better off." Their critical thinking skills have never been developed to look ahead to the small business that has to lay off five workers to give the other 45 the wage increase.

During the primaries, Barack Obama told a group of Iowans that he couldn't believe the high price of arugula. (He actually said, "Anybody gone into Whole Foods lately and see what they charge for arugula? I mean, they're charging a lot of money for this stuff.") I didn't even know what arugula was and had to look it up. (No, I'm not going to tell you, Google it yourself!) Needless to say, the Iowans he spoke to probably had no idea what he was talking about, and probably don't spend much time in Whole Foods stores. That was an example of an out-of-touch elitist.

In the 1968 election, liberals were dumbfounded when Nixon beat Humphrey. They all remarked, "But I don't know *anybody* who voted for Nixon! How could he have won?" Hollywood is no doubt like that. They are liberals who drink fancy teas and are surrounded by "yes men" who never tell them anything about the real world. They are simply incapable of understanding why small businesses don't give 100 per cent health coverage to all their employees. They have no clue how little separates those small businesses are to financial ruin. (They will find out if they help elect Obama President and he raises their taxes.)

In the 1990s, when Bill Clinton was trying to get a national health plan, Hillary Clinton made a remark to the effect that owners of small businesses who didn't provide their employees with health insurance don't deserve to be in business! No doubt the Hollywood elites think like Clinton. They don't know that most people are squeaking by on \$40-50,000 per year.

The actors also "know" real life only from their films, which typically paint all businessmen as greedy and evil. You can't just have a "Towering Inferno," you need it to be caused by a shady contractor who ignored safety standards. The "Titanic" sinking can't be caused by a lookout who fails to see an iceberg, it has to be the fault of a greedy businessman who says "full speed ahead" at all costs. In "It's a Wonderful Life," Jimmy Stewart is "victimized" by the town's greedy banker when, technically, Stewart's entire situation was caused by an employee who loses a bundle of money. Why didn't Stewart fire that employee? Of course, the easy way out for the screenwriter is to paint the businessman or banker as the bad guy. It's lazy writing.

We see the same thing now in the financial crisis. It's incredibly easy to blame the Wall Street executives who received multi-million dollar golden parachutes. Granted, they seem pretty greedy - and stupid. But why not simply let them fail? Why bail them out? Regrettably, few reporters are going to take the time to go backward and trace the root problem to Carter and Clinton Administration demands that banks lend money to poor credit risks - or face enormous discrimination fines. And the politicians are as guilty and spineless as the reporters are lazy. Those who caused the mess by encouraging Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to buy sub-prime mortgages to "help the poor" (Frank, Dodd, Pelosi, Reid, et al) are now front and center claiming credit for saving the nation.

But let's get back to Hollywood. The elites in Beverly Hills can't accept that they don't deserve what they have, so they have to believe in an "alternate universe," where reality can't interfere. *Afraid to judge themselves, they extend that to fear of judging others.* Thus, the "anything goes" mentality. Gay marriage? Drugs? Alcoholism? Who am I to judge? They cannot afford to judge others, because they then risk being judged themselves. (Worse yet, they risk judging themselves.)

That explains the appeal of a Barack Obama. He doesn't judge anyone (except evil conservatives). No matter what your problem may be, you are not personally to blame. Your problems were caused by racism, by evil businessmen, by sexism, by ageism, or any number of other "isms" - but *you are never personally responsible for any of your*

problems. It's not your fault that you didn't get out of New Orleans in time to avoid the hurricane. It's not your fault you didn't understand what an adjustable rate mortgage was. It's not your fault you couldn't keep up the payments on your \$300,000 house with your \$40,000 salary. It's not your fault health care is expensive, even though you are 100 pounds overweight and smoke three packs of cigarettes per day.

If nothing is *their* fault, then nothing is *my* fault either. *That* is the appeal of a Barack Obama – and certainly not just for the Hollywood elites.

The average American does not have the personality to be a Hollywood star. Yes, children dream of being famous actors and actresses, but most grow out of it. But the person who is insecure is the type of person who becomes an actor or a politician. People who are uncomfortable with their own selves, and who perhaps don't even like themselves, gain satisfaction in being surrounded by adoring fans. A person who is secure with his own self doesn't need fame, he can be satisfied in any number of professions. But the person who is insecure *must* enter a profession where he can feel better about himself; if he enters the wrong profession, he makes everyone else miserable.

Bill Clinton may be a politician, but he is also, arguably, an actor. If Clinton is in a room with 500 adoring fans but learns there is *one* person present who does not like or admire him, Clinton will seek that person out in an effort to win him over. That is a sign of a serious psychological disorder, and it seems to affect many people in politics and Hollywood. A Denver convention center is good enough for Hillary Clinton and Teddy Kennedy to make speeches, but Barack Obama needs a stadium with 80,000 adoring fans. Winning the election is not enough; he must spend campaign money in states he is unlikely to win and certainly won't need for a victory, because he needs the adulation. The Hollywood star can't be happy with a box office hit; it must be bigger than everyone else's box office hit. Denzel Washington can make \$20 million per movie, but the "system" is racist if someone else earns more.

Some of Hollywood's elites are simply spoiled brats, young stars who haven't yet realized that luck was much more responsible than talent for their wealth and fame. But behind the biggest Hollywood egos are often some of the most insecure and self-loathing people in the world. That personality responds to the Barack Obama type because it offers a chance to feel less guilty. But that personality cannot accept traditional conservatism, because it cannot accept clear cut distinctions between right and wrong. It cannot accept making value judgments. It cannot risk making judgments, without exposing itself to judgment.

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