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Why are Entertainment Leaders Defending A Child Rapist? Support for Polanski Shocking Spectacle of Misguided Hollywood

September 30, 2009 – New York, New York. Hollywood has increasingly blurred the lines between sex and violence in movies in recent years. Now it appears the real life filmmakers of some of Hollywood' biggest hits have taken the laissez faire attitude towards rape to a shocking level.

“This outpouring of support for a man who used his position in Hollywood to gain access to child, then drug her and have sex with her is shocking and deeply misguided,” said Sonia Ossorio, president of the National Organization for Women in New York City.

Some entertainment industry leaders are enthusiastically defending Roman Polanski, a man and colleague who has admitted and been convicted of having unlawful sex with a 13-year-old girl.

“This may be the most startling example yet of how the Hollywood culture trivializes rape by blurring the lines of consent,” Ossorio said. “There is no circumstance in which an adult male having sex with a 13-year-old girl isn't rape.”

Roman Polanski, who was recently apprehended in Switzerland for possible extradition to the United States, fled Los Angeles in 1978 just before he was to be sentenced for having sex with a 13-year-old girl. Initially indicted on six felony counts, including rape by use of drugs, child molesting and sodomy, he agreed to plead guilty to the lesser charge of unlawful sexual intercourse. Polanski was accused of giving the 13-year-old girl champagne and Quaaludes during a modeling shoot he said was for French Vogue Magazine.

“What does it say about the beliefs and character of Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese, Pedro Almodovar and Harvey Weinstein that they are outraged that Roman Polanski is having to account for his crime of having sex with a 13-year-old girl,” Ossorio said. “It says they don't think having sex with a child is so bad.”
“Clearly Hollywood continues to foster a culture where sexual violence against women and girls is a fact of life not a crime,” Ossorio said.

The National Organization for Women is the nation's largest organization working to advance women's rights and improve women's lives. The New York City Chapter of NOW, founded in 1966, is the largest chapter in the country with 5,000 members locally and 35,000 statewide. NOW-NYC works to protect reproductive freedom, end violence against women and eliminate discrimination.

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