



The Hollywood Gospel: And its War on American Culture

For over a century, Hollywood has served as the showcase for American culture. For generations, patriotism, hard work, fair play, and even religious fervor permeated the *big screen* because it was good business to give the public what it wanted. Whether a glamorous Broadway opening or in the weekend movie house in thousands of hamlets across America, Hollywood promoted the hopes and dreams of millions of Americans. It was the guardian of American culture. That is no longer true.

AN AVATAR OF CHANGE

Hollywood has become an avatar of cultural change, a far cry from its traditional role of providing family entertainment. According to his book, *Hollywood vs. America: Popular Culture and the War on Traditional Values*, film critic Michael Medved attributes this dramatic change to the 1960s invasion of a Marxist Ivy League elite.

As a whole, the entertainment industry no longer reflects the religious, patriotic and political views of the American people. Hollywood has been dominated by a cynical, nihilistic cultural elite who despises religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular for its long opposition to the *secular virtues* of fornication, adultery, divorce, abortion, and homosexuality.

Echoing cultural Marxist Antonio Gramsci's *long march through the culture*, it has employed its big screen in its relentless pursuit of a sociological experiment, designed to change the very fabric of American cultural life. Ironically to fill the void left by Hollywood's disdain for religious truth and family values, the studios have created their own *Gospel of Truth*. The transition was quick. In 1965, the Academy Award for *Best Picture* went to the lyrical The Sound of Music. Four years later Midnight Cowboy, a bawdy tale of a male hustler in New York City, became the only X-rated film to win the award.

DOLLARS AND SENSE

This new trend started near the end of the 1960s when Hollywood replaced the declining star system that gave the world Bogart, Stewart, Cagney and Wayne, with an inexhaustible supply of car chases, sexual perversions, violent shoot-outs,

and profanity that painted America as a self-loathsome place. Patriotic films, such as Sergeant York, Mr. Smith Goes to Washington and It's a Wonderful Life have given way to Scarface, Show Girls, and Natural Born Killers. Critics of the *Hollywood Gospel* are quick to point out that the *R Rated* movie with its disturbing combination of sex, violence, and blatant disregard for human life, seldom makes money at the American box office.

Paradoxically, Hollywood's studio executives seem to have placed ideology over finance. But these critics are missing the point that the global public loves anything that undermines American power and influence. According to Michael Medved, in 1970 more than 70% of Hollywood's revenue for the major studios came from the United States. This has declined to less than 30%. It all makes perfect sense when one realizes that Hollywood relies on marketing its movies and DVDs to an ideological-driven world with an ambivalent need for American culture, especially movies that portray American life in a critical light. To the delight of dictators and terrorists around the world, Hollywood's constant emphasis on the dysfunctional nature of American life has misled the world as to the extent of the degeneracy and evil of the American people.

CITIZEN PENN

No one better symbolizes the arrogance and naivete of the *Hollywood Gospel* than the actor Sean Penn. A star since his debut as the foul-mouthed, drug-ingesting teenager of Fast Times at Ridgmont High (1982), Penn has metamorphosed into an *investigative reporter of his emotional life and our world*. He has made several trips as a *reporter* to the Middle East to Iraq, Jordan, and Iran in the last four years. According to New Yorker Magazine, Penn is a *roiling combination of rage, buoyancy, tenderness, and hurt*. Most of his characters, in films such as The Assassination of Richard Nixon, Casualties of War and Mystic River are angry, violent, and prone to self-destruction.

It appears that his alcoholic mother, actress Eileen Ryan, and his blacklisted father, actor/director Leo Penn, inspired his iconoclastic fury against the real world. While the elder Penn was not named in the House Committee on Un-American

Activities investigations, his refusal to testify earned him a *fellow-traveler* label and virtually ended his Hollywood career.

With such parents, it is not surprising that Penn has established himself *on the world stage as a sort of one-man Citizen Watch*. At the 1991 Cannes Film festival, Penn spoke of the *great rage in this country because its people relished fear-based religion, corrupt government and an entire white population living on stolen property they murdered for, and that is passed on from generation to generation*. Like Jane Fonda, Tim Robbins, and Susan Sarandon before him, Penn is a leftist icon who preaches the *Hollywood Gospel*.

THE MARXIST TRIANGLE

As if in the vortex of a Marxist triangle, more dangerous than anything this side of Bermuda, Hollywood's elite has slated the major pillars of American society for complete destruction. Tinseltown once revered strong families and well-adjusted children, whose love for their parents and a pet or two exuded a uniquely American quality. Its films usually praised the American family for instilling the civic virtues of hard work, self-discipline, respect for others, politeness and patriotism.

In today's Hollywood, movies dish out an unhealthy diet of violence, sexual experimentation, and disrespect for all authority, and anti-religious bigotry – all which serve to undermine the moral and sociological importance of the family. According to the *Hollywood Gospel*, the one-size family does not fit all. The *designer family* must come in all shapes, sizes, arrangements, and tastes.

The Best Picture for 2000, *American Beauty*, best illustrates how Hollywood views the traditional family. The movie is the sordid tale of an embattled family caught in an aimless web of deceit, oppression, and despair. Kevin Spacey plays the *protagonist*, a dysfunctional father, who cannot quell his lustful feelings toward his daughter's cheerleading cohort. His dalliance with drugs while his business-driven wife has a fling with her boss is silenced by the homophobic violence of a retired Marine neighbor. Like most Hollywood American husbands and fathers, Spacey was an incurable dolt, with a callous disregard for the feelings of his desperate wife and the growing pains of their children. The only normal people in the film were the homosexual couple next door.

Other prevailing impressions dramatized in the movies include the belief that religion is for weak-minded people. Love is never saying *no* to any desire. According to its Gospel, America is an evil empire of greedy white males who have oppressed minorities, women, and homosexuals. The colonists were environmental rapists in the movie, *Pocahontas*; insensitive louts won the West; *Dances with Wolves* depicted oppression of Native Americans and the slaughtering of their food supply. White racism was pervasive in *Mississippi Burning* and *A Time to Kill*.

The United States military is often viewed as a malignant force that is forcing its will on a defenseless world. The FBI, the CIA and religious conservatives alternate as the *evildoers* in

American political life. In *The Contender*, an evil conservative plots maliciously to keep a liberal woman from becoming the country's vice-president. In *A Few Good Men*, the Marine Corps is disgraced by the prejudices of one of its veterans.

CHOIR BOYS

Several years ago, Harvard University's Arthur Schlesinger said that anti-Catholicism was *as American as apple pie*. In his 2004 book, *The New Anti-Catholicism*, religion professor Philip Jenkins points out that enlightened American tolerance *has strict limits where the Catholic Church is concerned*. This new wave of anti-Catholicism is no longer based on the know-nothing, nativist, and xenophobic fear. It has taken on a more subtle appearance.

With its relative loss of influence, the Church has been a constant in Hollywood's crosshairs. As a result it is not surprising that Hollywood has played a leading role in this new kind of anti-Catholic bigotry. Its Marxist-oriented elite is not interested in the theological debates that fomented the Protestant Revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries. Hollywood's attack on the Church stems from a modernist mindset which condemns any institution that opposes its secular gospel. Its pictures have persistently targeted the Church for its failure to accept the liberal worldview which is at the core of its progressive approach to making films. It thinks more in terms of sociological issues, such as population control, homosexual unions, and women priests. Tinseltown will use whatever means necessary to force the Church from the public marketplace of ideas. While Evangelical Christians get this same treatment, Hollywood has an easy time in portraying the mainline Protestant denominations which offer little or no resistance to Hollywood's pagan crusade to unseat Catholicism from its exalted position.

The public is the ultimate loser in this ideological struggle. *The Movie Theater* has lost much of its entertainment value and now serves as another battleground in the culture war.

Hollywood now treats the Church with a more cynical eye, magnifying its every flaw. *The Hollywood Gospel* painted most Catholic priests as perverted, alcoholic or deeply troubled by the Church's antiquated celibacy rules. It did its most slanderous job on the Church in Francis Ford Coppola's 1990 film *Godfather III*, which amalgamated conspiracy theory with myth, rumor and innuendo to paint the Church hierarchy as a sinister mob of unredeemable murderers and thieves who made the Mafia look like choir boys by comparison.

ALTERNATE REALITY

While attempting to save America from the tyranny of its religious past, Hollywood has fallen into the pond of its own narcissistic reflection. It has succeeded in creating an *alternate reality* that has nearly obliterated real life and real people. This was best illustrated during its 2006 Academy Award presentations. Hollywood's theme for its 2006 awards revolved around what can only be *called boilerplate*

homosexual propaganda. According to the *Hollywood Gospel*, love is too broad to be confined to one marital union and to one gender. As a class, actors who played homosexuals or transgendered people dominated the nominations. Their frequency added to the *Left Coast's* illusion that homosexuality was normal.

Jami Bernard of New York's *Daily News* loved Brokeback Mountain, the highly touted story about two cowboys in love, because the characters chose to experience *the love that dare not speak its name*, echoing the tormented thoughts of Irish homosexual writer Oscar Wilde. True to the *Hollywood Gospel*, Director Ang Lee, who garnered the Academy Award for this movie, portrayed their perverse form of male bonding as being far more satisfying than their respective marriages.

The use of the cowboy genre was an important step for Hollywood. Young virile cowboys have been an integral part of the sacred fabric of American society. Despite all of the pre-award hype Brokeback Mountain received, the Academy surprisingly voted the racially charged Crash as *Best Picture*. As a form of penitential consolation, the Academy cited Philip Seymour Hoffman as Best Actor for his one-dimensional portrayal of the late homosexual writer, Truman Capote.

ENEMIES OF STATE

On the political front, Hollywood has always shown a spontaneous revulsion for the late Senator Joseph McCarthy. In movie after movie, especially its two renditions of The Manchurian Candidate, based on notorious McCarthyphobe Richard Condon's book, they offered a sordid caricature of his fading memory. The 2005 film about Edward R. Murrow, Good Night and Good Luck, is a highly overrated film that returned to that same tired ground. With Murrow as its unflappable and driven hero, the movie savages McCarthy with a virulence that should have been reserved for the real enemies of state. While denouncing the Catholic Senator for his *methods*, true to Hollywood Marxist form, Murrow never considered the truth or accuracy of his charges.

Directed by actor George Clooney, who won the Academy Award for this picture, the movie is a black and white ode to liberal self-righteousness. Murrow cornered the market on smugness with his skillful editing of film clips that tied the over-stressed McCarthy up in a cinematic montage of embarrassing gestures, poses, and slurred speech on national television.

The movie's most callous disregard for truth revolves around the character *Hornbeck*, a veiled reference to Laurence Duggan who leaped from a hotel window in 1954. Ann Coulter reminds her readers in her columns and her book, *Treason*, that Murrow's good friend, Duggan, was a Soviet spy, responsible for having innocent people murdered. Yet in this movie, he is a tragic victim of *McCarthyism*. The allegedly brilliant and perceptive Murrow was not only unaware of the hundreds of spies running loose in the United States government, he apparently did not know that his close friend

was a true enemy of state. In the mid-90's, the astonishing revelations of the Venona Dispatches were made public. These dispatches were coded messages between Moscow and its agents in the West, including Harry Dexter White, Alger Hiss, Harry Hopkins (all in FDR's administration), and Murrow's good friend Laurence Duggan. The de-coding of the messages proved the scope and daring of the communist spy network that flourished for many years at the very highest levels of the US government. The Venona revelations also proved the *truth* of Sen. McCarthy's major charges, yet Hollywood desperately holds on to its tired canard about the evils of McCarthyism.

THE LAST CENTURION

The *Hollywood Gospel* is pervasive. It has entered all aspects of American life with its subtle poisonous visual pills. Americans have to stop resting on the pillow of indifference and become aware of the moral storms around them. It has been a man-made storm and can be changed, altered and even overturned by other men and women. Moviegoers must learn to watch between the lines for every movie they see and read accurate reviews before they attend.

For Catholics the task is daunting. Millions of Catholics unwittingly attend these movies that skewer their faith and mock the nation's traditional virtues which have allowed them to live in freedom. Hungry for entertainment, many of them check their Catholic principles at the box office. They fail to recognize that the Catholic Church is what Pope Benedict XVI called the *citadel of truth*, and that it has the responsibility to protect its faithful from the errors of secular society. In many ways it is the *Last Centurion* against a culture that is waist-deep in the moral waste of the *Hollywood Gospel*.

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