

The United States Of Weinstein: Complicity, Greed, & Corruption Is The Status Quo

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Hollywood Oligarch Weinstein: some are more equal than others.

[Authored by Charles Hugh Smith via OfTwoMinds blog.](#)

If integrity means more than any of these baubles, then prepare to fail.

The theme this week is The Rot Within.

The sordid story of Harvey Weinstein is being presented as an aberration. It is not an aberration; it is merely a high-profile example of how the status quo functions in the USA, a.k.a. *The United States of Weinstein*, in which complicity, greed and corruption reign supreme in every sector and in every nook and cranny of power.

The dirty secret of America's status quo is that power and wealth are both extremely concentrated, which means there are *gatekeepers* who must be bribed, sated or serviced if you

want to claw your way up the wealth-power pyramid. Mr. Weinstein's alleged conduct and payoffs of those he exploited is par for the course in the corridors of power in the USA.

As a *gatekeeper* in Hollywood, Mr. W. could make or break careers with absurd ease.

Gatekeepers are the key functionaries in a *rentier economy* in which the few at the top skim the wealth of the many. Want to play in the big leagues of Hollywood, Washington D.C., the Pentagon, or the various HQs of Global Corporate America? You have to pay the Gatekeepers what they demand.

It might be the casting couch or a slice of the profits, or a vote in committee, but the price of admission will always include complicity—silence about the crimes committed and the endemic corruption, and a sacrifice of moral standards. This is the minimal price of “success” in the elite circles of wealth and power in America.

If you doubt this, dig deep into any concentration of power in America and see what you find. Outsiders won't find anyone willing to talk, of course; that's how complicity works.

The overheated engine of complicity is greed. Hollywood kept quiet about Mr. Weinstein because insiders and wannabes alike hoped to score a plum role in Mr. W.'s next hitmaking production, or secure a couple of points of the gross. (1 point = 1%.)

This is the evil fruit of a system that ruthlessly concentrates power and wealth, not just in Hollywood and Washington D.C. but in the judiciary, in higher education, in Big Pharma, the National Security State, Corporate America and yes, the Deep State, which is comprised not of the bureaucratic functionaries (sorry to pop your balloon) of the state but those one level above the gatekeepers.

Every American has a simple but profound choice. Either place your integrity above all else, and refuse to climb the putrid pyramid of wealth and power, **or succumb to greed and become complicit in an empire of greed, complicity and corruption.**

If “success” means a fat salary, points of gross, invitations to A-list parties, access to the inner circle, being the right-hand boy/girl of someone powerful, a seat on the private jet, etc., then you will be required to service the gatekeepers and sacrifice whatever integrity you once possessed.

If integrity means more than any of these baubles, then prepare to fail. You won't clamber up the putrid pyramid, you won't get past the gatekeepers, and you won't be invited to join the elite skimming the nation's wealth for its own gratification and greed.

But you will still have yourself, your pride, and your integrity.

It's not an easy choice. Choose wisely. As Orwell observed about a totalitarian oligarchy, *some are more equal than others.* But the sacrifices required to become more equal than than the bottom 99.5% are irrevocable—you will have to sacrifice everything but your greed, your appetite for corruption and your willingness to hide the truth from the outside world.

True success lies outside the empire of greed, complicity and corruption.

Chris Pizzello/Invision, via Associated Press; NYT.com



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