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Which Is Worse: Roman Polanski Banging A 13-Year-Old Or Hollywood Blindly Embracing Him Despite It All?



Tracie Egan Morrissey

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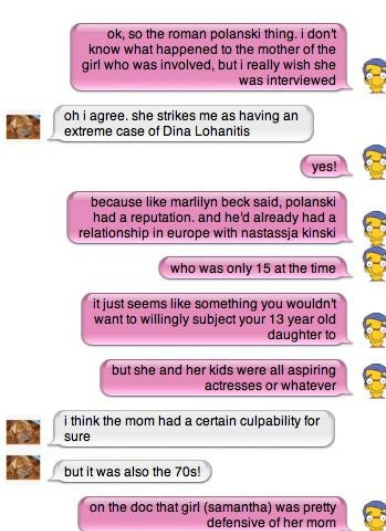


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Last night, HBO premiered the documentary *Roman Polanski: Wanted and Desired*, about the director's statutory rape case involving his alleged affair with a 13-year-old girl, and his subsequent fleeing of the country. Because of the channel's embedded copyright protection, I wasn't able to burn it off TV and post a clip here (which I'm really T.O.'d about), but I still wanted to discuss it here, since it touches on so many issues I'm interested in, like age of consent (I think it's a gray area) and celebrity culture (I think they often get away with murder, a la OJ). The documentary was totally enlightening, since it was so comprehensive, interviewing the prosecutor, the defense attorney, the arresting officers, the victim, and countless friends and acquaintances of Polanski. It painted a really accurate picture of exactly what was going on at the time (Polanski's sad past, his inappropriate behavior, the Dina Lohan-ness of the victim's mother, and a corrupt judge's shady agenda for fame). After the jump, Jessica and I break down the film.

I'm on the right; Jessica is on the left.



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but didn't really offer up any good excuses. she literally said "shut up"

I know! that was telling, I thought.

now, did he really fuck her in the ass or were the sodomy charges like one of those things where any intercourse outside of a marriage is considered sodomy

or did she just blow him

hahahahahaha. I think it was probably the legal definition of sodomy, not the colloquial. Which is to say: probably a BJ

And I guess I was sort of confused about how consensual it was

I know Samantha's testimony was that she said no initially

polanski said in his autobiography that the mother set up the daughter in her plan of a casting couch blackmail scheme

but the charges didn't seem to line up with that

It's so hard, because there were a lot of shady things, but still, I always want to believe someone who says they were raped

they weren't asking for money though, in the end

they just wanted probation and an apology

or at least that's what her lawyer said, right?

well, he said she asked for money, like off the record

but that wasn't in the movie

because the movie was all like an oral history

right

i mean i think there were a lot of issues at play

1. he was obviously not given a fair trial

that judge had it out for him

but 2. he didn't seem to feel bad at all that he fucked a 13 year old

he never apologized for it

now, i don't want to get all "blame the victim" but one of the things that really struck me was that she could identify, at 13, what a quaalude was, and polanski couldn't

it WAS the 70s

hhaahaha

also, i mean, he OBVIOUSLY did not behave properly

especially because this was a work thing

he'd been hired by vogue

so true!

but what the hell was vogue thinking, hiring a guy with his history to do that

well!! I think that has to do with celebrity culture

i just feel like everyone was an idiot that was involved in that whole thing

because people never want to say no to celebrities

and there is this aura of permissiveness around them

and after chinatown, polanski was IT

so Vogue Hommes probably just wanted his photographs, and they wanted to cater to his desires

however fucked up they might be.

that's true

the thing about it though, to me, was that the girl had taken her share of quaaludes in

the past, and had had a relationship with an older man before

right, again, i am so with you on the not blaming the victim and yet sort of thinking that maybe it was consensual

i really don't like when people are like, "we have to protect our girls!" because i feel like that takes away girls' power a bit. however she WAS 13 and that is like really young

because that girl was an aspiring actress, and she did look kind of older, and she seemed kind of experienced, and like, maybe she really did want to have sex

exactly, and what upset me was not only did Polanski NOT turn it down, but in that British interview later on, he was like men like little girls, so what

he had sort of a boys will be boys attitude

and yes, he went through horrible unspeakable things with the Manson murders and the holocaust

but that doesn't mean he is above the law

i know. and even though i thought that judge on the case was total bullshit, i thought it seemed like a good idea to have him psychologically evaluated

To get super nerdy, i feel like people treated him like a Hegelian uberman. Like he was a genius, so why SHOULD he be judged by laws that other, regular people have to live by

Oh i don't think he was a pedophile

just a sleaze

well, i think he may have had issues with dominance. he was kinda short

They did say that he couldn't connect with women after Sharon Tate died, and you never have to really connect with someone that young

napoleon complex at least

HA, true

Those clips of him in whatever movie that was, dancing around like a puppet were intense

yeah, what the hell was that from

I have no idea!

I don't think he should have been locked away forever for fucking a 13 year old, but i do think it's distasteful that Hollywood and Paris completely love him without reservation

you know, before i watched that documentary, i had no idea that the legal process had been going on for so long

the way that it is painted in like folk lore or oral history is that he fucked this girl and then bounced

TOTALLY

i had no idea it was so drawn out

he really wasn't treated fairly in the system. even the prosecutor said that

that judge was a shit

oh completely

even samantha said that the judge didn't care about her. he just cared about the publicity

and he had his own gould

who was 34 years his junior

YES

haha those ladies were kind of ridiculous

as someone who was 17 and had a relationship with a man 10 years older, i feel really strongly about age of consent laws

because i think they are such a gray area

i know that at 17, i was way more mature than guys my age, and the guy i was dating

and would've been PISSED if anyone challenged that

right, but 17 and 13

although, 13 is like this kind of cut off point

are very different

yeah

yeah

i am with you though

but the thing about laws is

they can't take into account every idiosyncrasy

thinking about myself

i was the same size i am now when i was 13 -- i had a fairly womanly body

and there is NO way i was mentally equipped for this sht

shit

but my mom also would not have left me alone with some sleazy old dude to take picture

s

oh totally

that's why i think that if roman polanski served time, i feel like the mother should've been charged with neglect

that's how judge judy would see it

HAHAHAHAHAH

WORD

well that's the thing too

What is the appropriate "punishment" for this sort of thing

and THAT i was really torn about

because if Roman Polanski had been a poor black man in the identical situation

you know he would have served time

a lot of time, probably

well, i did feel like 42 days or whatever he spent on janitorial detail at that one facility seemed like a punishment, even though it was supposed to be an evaluation

but the lawyers on both sides said that no one had served anytime in that jurisdiction for consensual statutory rape before

if they had pled guilty that is

right

but again: the 70s!

i think it's fair for the families of the victim to have a say, which they did. they recommended probation

i bet it's different now

true, true

but in the end, after watching that whole thing, and seeing samantha talk about how much more traumatic the legal process was vs. the actual sex, i really wonder how much good statutory rape laws are

and she publicly forgave him after he gave her a cash settlement

True -- but if there is no penalty for banging a 13 year old, then we get into sticky territory

you know what? now that i think about it, roman polanski is not all that different from michael jackson. he's just more normal looking

HA!

well, Michael's boys were younger...

but the thing about the parents letting these kids hang out with someone with a checkered past for this kind of thing

and then accepting money as an apology

oh yeah, parents should absolutely be held accountable

but what about this scenario

two working parents are away from the house from 3-6

and a 13 year old ends up having sex with some 30 year old scuzzball

yeah, that's like predator shit

i think the issue polanski was like a snake owner feeding mice to a snake in cage

like, "here, i know this is what you want. destroy it"

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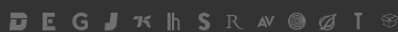
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