

[December 28, 2016]

Actress Helen Mirren has been quoted as saying that 2016 has been "a pile of shit". While I'm sure the Queen of the Moonbats was speaking politically, fact is, 2016 has been absolutely-brutal for her fellow celebrities. I can't recall a year when so many household names dropped like so many flies: Muhammad Ali, David Bowie, Fidel Castro, Patty Duke, John Glenn, Merle Haggard, Florence Henderson, Gordie Howe, Harper Lee, Arnold Palmer, Prince, Nancy Reagan, Elie Wiesel, Gene Wilder. Even Zsa Zsa Gabor and the guy who played R2-D2 decided to check out.

Singer George Michael died on Christmas Day. Actress Carrie Fisher died yesterday after suffering a heart attack four days earlier. Michael had a history of substance abuse. Fisher, who called Donald Trump "a coke head", made a second career out of milking her stints in rehab. I have a silly question for those offering tributes to Michael and Fisher: when Charlie Sheen - who makes Michael look like a choir boy - dies of AIDS, having contracted HIV by plowing every two-legged being unfortunate enough to cross his path, how much compassion will they show for him? Just curious.

Billie Lourd issued a statement following her mother's death: "She was loved by the world and she will be missed profoundly". The character she created, Princess Leia, is loved by acne-ridden fanboys, and thanks to Disney (aka The Evil Empire) will never be missed. But Carrie Fisher the person never elicited any public affection, unlike her mother, Debbie Reynolds, whom Carrie saw fit to trash in her autobiographical novel *Postcards From the Edge*. Father Eddie Fisher's misadventures with booze and blow did nothing to curb her Wild Child ways. And she went under the knife so many times, she looked like Caitlyn (Bruce) Jenner's twin. Oddly, she railed to Craig Ferguson in 2012 about "rumors" she had gone under the knife (in stark contrast to Papa Eddie, who turned his 1989 face lift into a televised freak show!), and took to Twitter to try to quash rumors of having a "coke nail". In her one-woman show/pity party *"Wishful Drinking"*, Wild Child whined about her father leaving her mother, her mother's ex-husbands, her father's ex-wives, her ex-husband (singer Paul Simon), being a cog in the most lucrative franchise in movie history, and the father of her daughter leaving her for a man. Can anyone blame him?

George Michael followed the androgynous Teen Idol trail blazed by David Cassidy, Bobby Sherman, and Donny Osmond, cranking out sugary-sweet confections for delirious tweeners. He disbanded his two-boy band Wham! in 1986 as he fancied himself an *Artiste Sérieux*. He adopted a Sleazy Bad Boy persona, complete with skin-tight jeans, leather jacket, 3-day growth, Sleazy Bad Boy songs ("I Want Your Sex"), Sleazy Bad Boy videos, and Sleazy Bad Boy Behavior. Finally, after years of stringing the ladies along with the hope one of them may someday become Mrs. Georgios Panayiotou (his real name), on April 7, 1998, Sleazy Bad Boy went where no Teen Idol dared thought of going before, busted in a restroom by a male

undercover cop at Will Rogers Memorial Park, giving the sometimes-cowboy's quote "I never met a man I didn't like" a whole new meaning! He responded to the ruckus with a song mocking his would-be "pardner". And the "hits" kept on coming: DUI (2006); drug possession while playing "giddy-up" in another public restroom (2008); plowing his car through a photo shop window (2010); falling out of his car while zipping along England's version of the Autobahn (2010); being hospitalized for "pneumonia" (2011). The shenanigans culminated in an ignoble end, found dead in his bedroom at age 53.

Michael and Fisher are cautionary tales of The Wages of Sin: stupid, selfish people who had it all and threw it all away. Recognize what they achieved, but don't glorify them or hold up their lives as worthy examples to follow. And don't make them out to be anything but victims of their own poor decision-making. Those posting tributes to Michael huff that it doesn't matter how he conducted his personal life. Of course it matters because it is the reason why he is dead! Even Elton John marvels at how he is still upright and breathing despite having, as he put it, "slept with half the Western World". Wham! partner Andrew Ridgeley didn't follow Michael's poisonous path in pursuit of greater fame and fortune, and found the inner peace, happiness, and fulfillment his childhood pal never knew. The great irony is in the video for "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go", Michael and Ridgeley sport cut-off t-shirts which scream "CHOOSE LIFE!". Michael and Fisher ultimately chose a spiritual, psychological, moral, and literal death.

I am reminded of the Righteous Brothers song "Rock and Roll Heaven", a tribute to rock stars who had passed, 99% of whom, like Michael and Fisher, took the occasional hit (to put it charitably). The lyrics go: "If there's a rock and roll heaven/Well you know they've got a hell of a band". No doubt, they've also got a hell of a rehab, too.

UPDATE: Debbie Reynolds died of a stroke. Her son told the AP they were discussing funeral arrangements for Carrie when she was stricken. Charlie Sheen reacted to her death by tweeting: "Dear God: Trump next, please!" [December 28, 2016]