

## Interview: Director Leslye Headland Tries ‘Sleeping with Other People’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 17, 2015 - 5:11am

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CHICAGO – Leslye Headland is facing the new era head on, by putting a post modern Harry-met-Sally spin on her new film, “Sleeping with Other People.” Her question is how do people connect in the new age of hook-ups and online options? Jason Sudeikis and Alison Brie portray the couple trying to answer that question.

Leslye Headland came out of Connecticut, and graduated from the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University in 2002. She worked for four years as an assistant for producer Harvey Weinstein, and first gained notice as a playwright. One of her plays, “Bachelorette” (2012) became her first writing and directing effort in film. She adapted the screenplay for the remake of “About Last Night” in 2014, and premiered “Sleeping with Other People” at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year.



Alison Brie and Jason Sudeikis Have a Casual Moment in ‘Sleeping with Other People’

*Photo credit: IFC Films*

**HollywoodChicago.com:** You filmed some sex scenes, and in the age of the internet, everybody has to remain in some kind of clothing. Do you ever think the American film industry will ever get over its relative modesty when it comes to depicting sex on screen, or will it just get more clothed? Also, how difficult is it to choreograph a sex scene?

**Headland:** The choreography was a bit difficult, so I storyboarded those scenes and rehearsed them many times, even down to when certain clothing would come off. There was no improvisation in those scenes. As far as nudity goes, I’d always planned to not show anything. I come from theater, where people get naked all the time, and in college people were always putting nudity in their shows to be cool. Whenever I watched these, I would just think of the actor, and not the character. That’s why I wanted as little nudity as possible.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** How about America’s cultural dealings with nudity?

**Headland:** I think the industry has no problem objectifying women, or seeing them naked or getting raped, which you see on a regular basis on television crime dramas. We need to see more dick, I’d love to see more dick, and I’d also like to see women enjoying sex more on

screen. That is another problem. In conclusion, there are certain standards the industry is okay about, and others that they’re not.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** There is an ongoing debate in the movie business about the difficulties that woman have getting their films made and their voices heard. Do you have an example of an obstacle you had to overcome in your career, and what is the most sexist thing you’ve ever heard or experienced in the business?

**Headland:** I don’t know if we have time for the most sexist thing. [laughs] But I will say that female filmmakers, on average, get lower distribution deals. That was very difficult on both of my films, getting the distribution that I wanted. That never occurred to me, that it would happen to me as a female writer and director, that the attitude would be that I’m ‘happy’ with a certain situation.

For example, I wanted to push for a certain infiltration into the marketplace, and the push back was ‘don’t ask for more.’ – the point was I should be happy that they want it at all. I just think there is room to negotiate, and I am very happy with how IFC has handled the film. That’s why it took a little more time to sell it at Sundance.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What can you tell us about Harvey Weinstein that the rest of the world doesn’t know?

**Headland:** He wears sweatpants more often than you would think. [laughs] He very much believes in being comfortable.

*“Sleeping with Other People” is in select theaters, including Chicago on September 16th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Jason Sudeikis, Alison Brie, Amanda Peet, Jordan Carlos, Adam Scott and Natasha Lyonne. Written and directed by Leslye Headland. Rated “R”*



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