# Sean Penn on playing gay, Madonna, and the single life.



Actor Sean Penn has stated that in the current cultural and creative climate, it would be impossible for him to portray a gay character, referencing his role in the 2008 film "Milk." Speaking to The New York Times on June 25, 2024, Penn described the environment as one of "tremendous overreach" and criticized what he sees as a "timid and artless policy toward the human imagination." "Milk," directed by Gus Van Sant and written by Dustin Lance Black, was a biopic of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay politician to win office in California, played by Penn, for which he won an Oscar.

In the same interview, Penn also reflected on his past marriages, particularly with Madonna from 1985 to 1989. He recounted a specific incident where a SWAT team entered their home after Madonna reported guns in the house. Penn expressed gratitude towards Madonna for her support in a 2015 defamation case against director Lee Daniels. Penn has gone through three marriages, the latest with actress Leila George from 2020 to 2022. He expressed contentment with single life, describing feeling "thrilled every day."