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# FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

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We all have it inside but just without no reason we prefer to ignore it and choose something more convenient and safe.

TEXT: SAM SHEPERT

FOTO: ANNE BULLOCK

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She couldn't bear to see herself on-screen in *Dragon Tattoo* and famously resisted until she went to a theater near Manhattan's Union Square and bought a ticket with the general public. "I really wanted to go alone," she says, but her boyfriend, writer-director Charlie McDowell (the son of actors Malcolm McDowell and Mary Steenburgen), insisted on accompanying her. "He was wise to come with me because if anyone had recognized me, I would have been so embarrassed."

For Soderbergh, Mara has "the X factor that you can't really teach, that watchability that an actor needs. My job was to make sure my camera was in the right place to capture it, to get what she was putting across."

"It's all intuition for me," Mara confesses. "I never really studied-studied." Instead, she works privately with the acting coach Bob Krakower ("I didn't love being in a class—that's very hard for me") and otherwise learns by doing. "I think every job I do, I learn something new and get better," she says. "I hope, anyway, that I keep evolving. . . . I wouldn't want just one technique, because I don't think