

## Babe's Aziz Ansari piece was a gift to anyone who wants to derail #MeToo

Over the weekend, a story broke at the online publication babe detailing a sexual encounter between Golden Globe-winning “Master of None” star Aziz Ansari and an anonymous woman who went by “Grace” for the purposes of the report. The title? “I went on a date with Aziz Ansari. It turned into the worst night of my life.”

In it she detailed how they met (at an Emmy after-party), how they flirted for the next few days (over texts), how they got together (she came over for drinks at his apartment, then went for dinner and drinks at a fancy restaurant down the street, then came back to his house for more drinks), and how it ended in tears (Ansari moved in aggressively and awkwardly, they had oral sex, she went along with it all until he pushed for intercourse, she rebuffed him, they made out a bit more, she became uncomfortable and asked to leave, he called her an Uber and she left).

The story quickly went viral and social media did what social media does: explode into outrage. Grace’s tale slid into the unfolding narrative of #MeToo and #TimesUp; indeed, the whole thing came about because Ansari, a noted male feminist, wore a #TimesUp button on the Golden Globes red carpet last week. The calls swiftly and mercilessly came: for Ansari to lose his show, for him to be shunned, for his career to end. He was one of the good ones, it’s always the good ones, this is why we can’t have nice things, #YesAllMen, etc.

The only issue with all this is that this story about Ansari is nothing like the ugly tales of sexual abuse that have wafted out of Hollywood over the past six months or so. Not really. From Harvey Weinstein’s decades of sexual assaults and use of blacklists to Kevin Spacey’s predatory behavior toward young men to Louis C.K.’s masturbating in front of people without asking, these were all stories that were both criminal in nature and involved an abuse of power over underlings. The #MeToo movement’s story has been a relatively straightforward one that garners support from both sides of the aisle and all decent people, because it is a tale of how powerful people humiliate and subjugate those who want nothing more than a chance to chase their dreams.

## Aziz Ansari Is Guilty. Of Not Being a Mind Reader.

I'm apparently the victim of sexual assault. And if you're a sexually active woman in the 21st century, chances are that you are, too.

That is what I learned from the “exposé” of Aziz Ansari published last weekend by the feminist website Babe — arguably the worst thing that has happened to the #MeToo movement since it began in October. It transforms what ought to be a movement for women's empowerment into an emblem for female helplessness.

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Except, increasingly, they are. The article in Babe was met with digital hosannas by young feminists who insisted that consent is consent only if it is affirmative, active, continuous and — and this is the word most used — enthusiastic. Consent isn't the only thing they are radically redefining. A recent survey by The Economist/YouGov found that approximately 25 percent of millennial-age American men think asking someone for a drink is harassment. More than a third of millennial men and women say that if a man compliments a woman's looks it is harassment.

To judge from social media reaction, they also see a flagrant abuse of power in this sexual encounter. Yes, Mr. Ansari is a wealthy celebrity with a Netflix show. But he had no actual power over the woman — professionally or otherwise. And lumping him in with the same movement that brought down men who ran movie studios and forced themselves on actresses, or the factory-floor supervisors who demanded sex from female workers, trivializes what #MeToo first stood for.

I'm sorry this woman had this experience. I too have had lousy romantic encounters, as has every adult woman I know. I have regretted these encounters, and not said anything at all. I have regretted them and said so, as she did. And I know I am lucky that these unpleasant moments were far from being anything approaching assault or rape, or even the worst night of my life.

But the response to her story makes me think that many of my fellow feminists might insist that my experience was just that, and for me to define it otherwise is nothing more than my internalized misogyny. There is a useful term for what this woman experienced on her night with Mr. Ansari. It's called “bad sex.” It sucks.

The feminist answer is to push for a culture in which boys and young men are taught that sex does not have to be pursued as if they're in a pornographic film, and one in which girls and young women are empowered to be bolder, braver and louder about what they want. The insidious attempt by some women to criminalize awkward, gross and entitled sex takes women back to the days of smelling salts and fainting couches. That's somewhere I, for one, don't want to go.

*The Atlantic*

# The Humiliation of Aziz Ansari

Allegations against the comedian are proof that women are angry, temporarily powerful—and very, very dangerous.

CAITLIN FLANAGAN | JAN 14, 2018 | CULTURE

Sexual mores in the West have changed so rapidly over the past 100 years that by the time you reach 50, intimate accounts of commonplace sexual events of the young seem like science fiction: You understand the vocabulary and the sentence structure, but all of the events take place in outer space. You're just too old.

This was my experience reading the account of one young woman's alleged sexual encounter with Aziz Ansari, published by the website Babe this weekend. The world in which it constituted an episode of sexual assault was so far from my own two experiences of near date rape (which took place, respectively, during the Carter and Reagan administrations, roughly between the kidnapping of the Iran hostages and the start of the Falklands War) that I just couldn't pick up the tune. But, like the recent New Yorker story "Cat Person"—about a soulless and disappointing hookup between two people who mostly knew each other through texts—the account has proved deeply resonant and meaningful to a great number of young women, who have responded in large numbers on social media, saying that it is frighteningly and infuriatingly similar to crushing experiences of their own. It is therefore worth reading and, in its way, is an important contribution to the present conversation.

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I thought it would take a little longer for the hit squad of privileged young white women to open fire on brown-skinned men. I had assumed that on the basis of intersectionality and all that, they'd stay laser focused on college-educated white men for another few months. But we're at warp speed now, and the revolution—in many ways so good and so important—is starting to sweep up all sorts of people into its conflagration: the monstrous, the cruel, and the simply unlucky. Apparently there is a whole country full of young women who don't know how to call a cab, and who have spent a lot of time picking out pretty outfits for dates they hoped would be nights to remember. They're angry and temporarily powerful, and last night they destroyed a man who didn't deserve it.



REVEALING  
**#metoo**  
AS **#weto**  
IN JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE:  
AN EVENING OF DISCUSSION AND ACTION

**JEWISH WOMEN'S  
FOUNDATION OF NEW YORK**

*GENDEROSITY: it's up to us*

## *The Woman Who Created #MeToo Long Before Hashtags*



In 1997, Tarana Burke sat across from a 13-year-old girl who had been sexually abused. The young girl was explaining her experience, and it left Ms. Burke speechless. That moment is where the Me Too campaign was born.

“I didn’t have a response or a way to help her in that moment, and I couldn’t even say ‘me too,’” Ms. Burke said.

“It really bothered me, and it sat in my spirit for a long time,” she added.

Ten years after that conversation, Ms. Burke created Just Be Inc., a nonprofit organization that helps victims of sexual harassment and assault. She sought out the resources that she had not found readily available to her 10 years before and committed herself to being there for people who had been abused.

*Tarana Burke created a nonprofit organization to help victims of sexual harassment and assault.* And she gave her movement a name: Me Too.

On Sunday, those two words burst into the spotlight of social media with #metoo, a hashtag promoted by the actress Alyssa Milano. Amid the firestorm that ignited, some women of color noted pointedly that the longtime effort by Ms. Burke, who is black, had not received support over the years from prominent white feminists.

Ms. Milano was seeking to give a voice to sexual abuse victims, after accusations of sexual harassment and assault were leveled against the Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein.

Me too. i

Suggested by a friend: "If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote 'Me too.' as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem."



**Alyssa Milano** ✓

@Alyssa\_Milano



If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet.

3:21 PM - Oct 15, 2017

♡ 53.4K 💬 92.9K people are talking about this

# babe

## I went on a date with Aziz Ansari. It turned into the worst night of my life

by [Katie Way](#)

Whether Ansari didn't notice Grace's reticence or knowingly ignored it is impossible for her to say. "I know I was physically giving off cues that I wasn't interested. I don't think that was noticed at all, or if it was, it was ignored."

Ansari wanted to have sex. She said she remembers him asking again and again, "Where do you want me to fuck you?" while she was still seated on the countertop. She says she found the question tough to answer because she says she didn't want to fuck him at all.

"I wasn't really even thinking of that, I didn't want to be engaged in that with him. But he kept asking, so I said, 'Next time.' And he goes, 'Oh, you mean second date?' and I go, 'Oh, yeah, sure,' and he goes, 'Well, if I poured you another glass of wine now, would it count as our second date?'" He then poured her a glass and handed it to her. She excused herself to the bathroom soon after.

Grace says she spent around five minutes in the bathroom, collecting herself in the mirror and splashing herself with water. Then she went back to Ansari. He asked her if she was okay. "I said I don't want to feel forced because then I'll hate you, and I'd rather not hate you," she said.

# The Guardian

#MeToo isn't enough. Now women need to get ugly

*Barbara Kingsolver*

In each of my daughters' lives came the day in fifth grade when we had to sit on her bed and practise. I pretended to be the boy in class who was making her sick with dread. She had to look right at me and repeat the words until they felt possible, if not easy: "Don't say that to me. Don't do that to me. I hate it." As much as I wanted to knock heads around, I knew the only real solution was to arm a daughter for self-defence. But why was it so hard to put teeth into that defence? Why does it come more naturally to smile through clenched teeth and say "Oh, stop," in the mollifying tone so regularly, infuriatingly mistaken for flirtation?



Women my age could answer that we were raised that way. We've done better with our daughters but still find ourselves right here, where male puberty opens a lifelong season of sexual aggression, and girls struggle for the voice to call it off. The *Mad Men* cliché of the boss cornering his besotted secretary is the modern cliché of the pop icon with his adulating, naked-ish harem in a story that never changes: attracting male attention is a woman's success. Rejecting it feels rude, like refusing an award. It feels ugly.

Now, all at once, women are refusing to accept sexual aggression as any kind of award, and men are getting fired from their jobs. It feels like an earthquake. Men and women alike find ourselves disoriented, wondering what the rules are. Women know perfectly well that we hate unsolicited sexual attention, but navigate a minefield of male thinking on what "solicit" might mean. We've spent so much life-force on looking good but not too good, being professional but not unapproachable, while the guys just got on with life. And what of the massive costs of permanent vigilance, the tense smiles, declined work assignments and lost chances that are our daily job of trying to avoid assault? Can we get some backpay?

I think we're trying to do that now, as the opening volleys of #MeToo smack us with backlash against backlash. Patriarchy persists because power does not willingly cede its clout; and also, frankly, because women are widely complicit in the assumption that we're separate and not quite equal. If we're woke, we inspect ourselves and others for implicit racial bias, while mostly failing to recognise explicit gender bias, which still runs rampant. Religious faiths that subordinate women flourish on every continent. Nearly every American educational institution pours the lion's share of its athletics budget into the one sport that still excludes women – American football.

# billboard

## Halsey Delivers Emotional Speech About Sexual Abuse, Rape at New York Women's March: Here Is Her Full Poem

1/20/2018 by Ashley Iasimone



here is my entire "A Story Like Mine" poem from today's [#WomensMarch2018](#) in NYC tw: rape / assault. Thank you.

3:08 PM - Jan 20, 2018

301K 159K people are talking about this

It's 2009 and I'm 14 and I'm crying  
Not really sure where I am but I'm holding the hand of my best friend  
Sam

In the waiting room of a Planned Parenthood  
The air is sterile and clean, and the walls are that not grey, but green  
And the lights are so bright they could burn a whole through the seam  
of my jeans

My phone is buzzing in the pocket  
My mom is asking me if I remembered my keys 'cause she's closing the  
door and she needs to lock it

But I can't tell my mom where I've gone  
I can't tell anyone at all

You see, my best friend Sam was raped by a man that we knew 'cause he  
worked in the after-school program

And he held her down with her textbook beside her  
And he covered her mouth and he came inside her

So now I'm with Sam, at the place with a plan, waiting for the results of a  
medical exam

And she's praying she doesn't need an abortion, she couldn't afford it  
And her parents would, like, totally kill her

It's 2002 and my family just moved and the only people I know are my  
mom's friends, too, and her son

He's got a case of Matchbox cars and he says that he'll teach me to play  
the guitar if I just keep quiet

And the stairwell beside apartment 1245 will haunt me in my sleep for  
as long as I am alive

And I'm too young to know why it aches in my thighs, but I must lie, I  
must lie

It's 2012 and I'm dating a guy and I sleep in his bed and I just learned  
how to drive

And he's older than me and he drinks whiskey neat and he's paying for  
everything

This adult thing is not cheap

We've been fighting a lot, almost 10 times a week

And he wants to have sex, and I just want to sleep

He says I can't say no to him  
This much I owe to him  
He buys my dinner, so I have to blow him  
He's taken to forcing me down on my knees  
And I'm confused 'cause he's hurting me while he says please  
And he's only a man, and these things he just needs  
He's my boyfriend, so why am I filled with unease?

It's 2017 and I live like a queen  
And I've followed damn near every one of my dreams  
I'm invincible and I'm so fucking naive  
I believe I'm protected 'cause I live on a screen  
Nobody would dare act that way around me  
I've earned my protection, eternally clean  
Until a man that I trust gets his hands in my pants  
But I don't want none of that, I just wanted to dance  
And I wake up the next morning like I'm in a trance and there's blood  
Is that my blood?  
Hold on a minute

You see I've worked every day since I was 18  
I've toured everywhere from Japan to Mar-a-Lago  
I even went on stage that night in Chicago when I was having a  
miscarriage  
I mean, I pied the piper, I put on a diaper  
And sang out my spleen to a room full of teens  
What do you mean this happened to me?  
You can't put your hands on me  
You don't know what my body has been through  
I'm supposed to be safe now  
I earned it

It's 2018 and I've realized nobody is safe long as she is alive  
And every friend that I know has a story like mine  
And the world tells me we should take it as a compliment

But then heroes like Ashley and Simone and Gabby, McKayla and Gaga,  
Rosario, Aly  
Remind me this is the beginning, it is not the finale  
And that's why we're here  
And that's why we rally  
It's Olympians and a medical resident and not one fucking word from  
the man who is President  
It's about closed doors and secrets and legs and stilletos from the  
Hollywood hills to the projects in ghettos  
When babies are ripped from the arms of teen mothers and child brides  
cry globally under the covers  
Who don't have a voice on the magazine covers  
They tell us take cover

But we are not free until all of us are free  
So love your neighbor, please treat her kindly  
Ask her story and then shut up and listen  
Black, Asian, poor, wealthy, trans, cis, Muslim, Christian  
Listen, listen and then yell at the top of your lungs  
Be a voice for all those who have prisoner tongues  
For the people who had to grow up way too young  
There is work to be done  
There are songs to be sung  
Lord knows there's a war to be won

# COSMOPOLITAN

## Aly Raisman Sues USA Gymnastics, U.S. Olympic Committee Over Sexual Abuse

She alleges that USOC "was aware, at the highest levels of its organization."

**By Laura Beck, March 4, 2018**

Olympic gymnastics gold medalist Aly Raisman is suing USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Olympic Committee, alleging the USOC was aware that Larry Nassar, the former team doctor, sexually abused her and others.

According to USA Today, Raisman filed the lawsuit in Santa Clara Superior Court earlier this week. On Friday, her attorney's office released a statement saying Raisman couldn't "wait any longer for these organizations to do the right thing."

"My highest priority has been to push for change, so future generations of athletes will be safer," she said.

"It has become painfully clear that these organizations have no intention of properly addressing this problem. After all this time, they remain unwilling to conduct a full investigation, and without a solid understanding of how this happened, it is delusional to think sufficient changes can be implemented. Meanwhile, thousands of young athletes continue to train and compete every day in this same broken system.

"I refuse to wait any longer for these organizations to do the right thing. It is my hope that the legal process will hold them accountable and enable the change that is so desperately needed."



# TIME

## First Male Victim of Disgraced Gymnastics Doctor Larry Nassar Speaks Out

March 6, 2018

The first male victim to accuse disgraced USA Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar of sexual abuse is speaking publicly in an interview for the first time.

Jacob Moore, who is 18 and a freshman at the University of Michigan, said he was 16 when Nassar abused him during medical treatment for a shoulder injury, using acupuncture treatment on his pubic area, and asking a female gymnast who was there if she had ever seen a male body part.

“I wasn’t a dumb kid, I knew what medical practices were, and that one was out of the ordinary,” Moore told NBC News’ Stephanie Gosk Tuesday. “Coming out of the treatment I felt very uncomfortable.”

Moore, who has filed a lawsuit against Nassar, had detailed the allegations in a press conference on Monday, but spoke with NBC News on Tuesday.

“I hope he rots in hell,” Moore told NBC News.

Moore’s sister Kameron also alleges she was abused by Nassar; she was among the hundreds of female victims who provided testimony at his sentencing in January, and mentioned her brother. “Me and my sister shouldn’t be able to relate over the fact that we’ve both been abused,” Moore told NBC News.



By Chelsea Gohd, Mar. 2, 2018

### Awesome Features

LegalFling is launched with everything you need to have safe sex. Amazing features to make it fun for everyone. Check them out!

#### No hassle

Don't ruin the moment. Asking to sign a contract to have sex can be awkward. Get sexual consent with a single tap.

#### Easy messaging

Requesting consent should be easy. Send a Fling with WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook Messenger or SMS.

#### Privacy guaranteed

#### Consent with sexual intercourse



#### Personalize

It's up to you how far you want to take it. Set boundaries and configure your personal preferences.

#### Penalty clauses

Escalate a breach with a single tap, triggering Cease and Desist letters and enforcing penalty payments.

#### Group Flings

# Who is the real hero of Purim? In the #MeToo era, we should reconsider the Bible's female icons.



ESTHER BEFORE ACHASUERUS.





# *Frozen*



**Kristoff: I could kiss you! I could. I mean, I'd like to. I. May I? We me? I mean, may we? Wait, what?**

**Anna: We may.**



# Sing-a-Long: CONSENT!

Да!

**YES!**

JA!

ええ!

**OUI!**

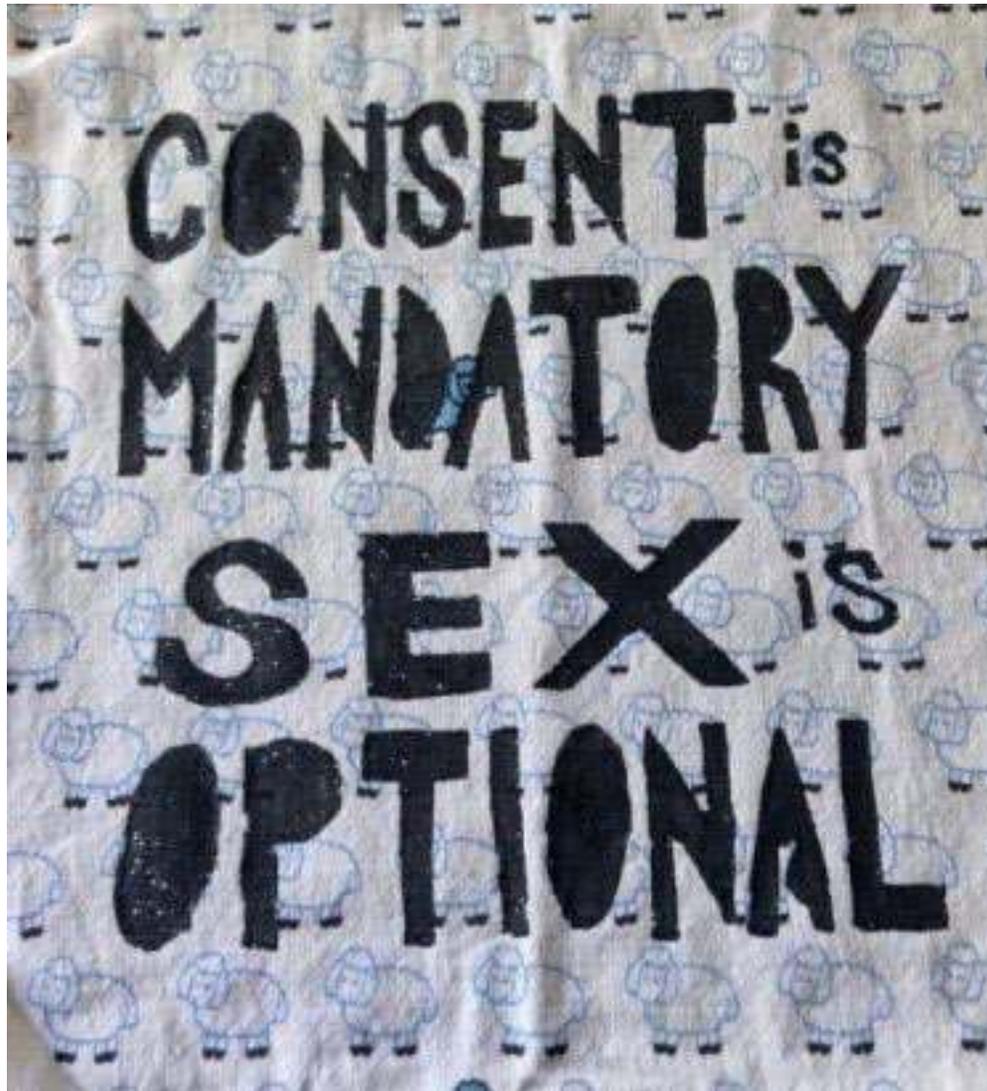
العرف م عن

**SI!**



# CONSENT [VERB]

To make a mutual, voluntary, informed decision between clear-minded, of age participants before ANY and EVERY sexual act.



**CONSENT** is  
**MANDATORY**  
**SEX** is  
**OPTIONAL**

# **TIME'S<sup>TM</sup> = UP**

The clock has run out on sexual assault, harassment and inequality in the workplace. It's time to do something about it.

We write on behalf of over 300 women who work in film, television and theater. A little more than two months ago, courageous individuals revealed the dark truth of ongoing sexual harassment and assault by powerful people in the entertainment industry. At one of our most difficult and vulnerable moments, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas (the National Farmworker Women's Alliance) sent us a powerful and compassionate message of solidarity for which we are deeply grateful.

To the members of Alianza and farmworker women across the country, we see you, we thank you, and we acknowledge the heavy weight of our common experience of being preyed upon, harassed, and exploited by those who abuse their power and threaten our physical and economic security. We have similarly suppressed the violence and demeaning harassment for fear that we will be attacked and ruined in the process of speaking out. We share your feelings of anger and shame. We harbor fear that no one will believe us, that we will look weak or that we will be dismissed; and we are terrified that we will be fired or never hired again in retaliation.

JANUARY 1, 2018

# Dear Sisters,

We also recognize our privilege and the fact that we have access to enormous platforms to amplify our voices. Both of which have drawn and driven widespread attention to the existence of this problem in our industry that farmworker women and countless individuals employed in other industries have not been afforded.

To every woman employed in agriculture who has had to fend off unwanted sexual advances from her boss, every housekeeper who has tried to escape an assaultive guest, every janitor trapped rightly in a building with a predatory supervisor, every waitress grabbed by a customer and expected to take it with a smile, every garment and factory worker forced to trade sexual acts for more shifts, every domestic worker or home health aide forcibly touched by a client, every immigrant woman silenced by the threat of her undocumented status being reported in retaliation for speaking up and to women in every industry who are subjected to indignities and offensive behavior that they are expected to tolerate in order to make a living. We stand with you. We support you.

Now, unlike ever before, our access to the media and to important decision makers has the potential of leading to real accountability and consequences. We want all survivors of sexual harassment, everywhere, to be heard, to be believed, and to know that accountability is possible.

We also want all victims and survivors to be able to access justice and support for the wrongdoing they have endured. We particularly want to lift up the voices, power, and strength of women working in low-wage industries where the lack of financial stability makes them vulnerable to high rates of gender-based violence and exploitation.

Unfortunately, too many centers of power – from legislatures to boardrooms to executive suites and management to academia – lack gender parity and women do not have equal decision-making authority. This systemic gender-inequality and imbalance of power fosters an environment that is ripe for abuse and harassment against women. Therefore, we call for a significant increase of women in positions of leadership and power across industries. In addition, we seek equal representation, opportunities, benefits and pay for all women workers, not to mention greater representation of women of color, immigrant women, disabled women, and lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women, whose experiences in the workforce are often significantly worse than their white, cisgender, straight peers. The struggle for women to break in, to rise up the ranks and to simply be heard and acknowledged in male-dominated workplaces must end; time's up on this impenetrable monopoly.

We are grateful to the many individuals – survivors and allies – who are speaking out and forcing the conversation about sexual harassment, sexual assault, and gender bias out of the shadows and into the spotlight. We fervently urge the media covering the

disclosures by people in Hollywood to spend equal time on the myriad experiences of individuals working in less glamorized and valorized trades.

Harassment too often persists because perpetrators and employers never face any consequences. This is often because survivors, particularly those working in low-wage industries, don't have the resources to fight back. As a first step towards helping women and men across the country seek justice, the signatories of this letter will be seeding a legal fund to help survivors of sexual assault and harassment across all industries challenge those responsible for the harm against them and give voice to their experiences.

We remain committed to holding our own workplaces accountable, pushing for swift and effective change to make the entertainment industry a safe and equitable place for everyone, and telling women's stories through our eyes and voices with the goal of shifting our society's perception and treatment of women.

## In Solidarity

***Forward***

# Actually, Feminists, Vashti Was The Harvey Weinstein Of Persia

**By Joshua A. Krisch**

Feb 25, 2018

wikicommons

If Mordechai and Esther saw what 2018 had done to Purim, I like to think they'd be satisfied. The day is commemorated across Jewish denominations with celebration, exchanging of gifts, donations to the poor, and public Megillah readings—just as they requested. King Achashverosh, perhaps, would be less amused with how history remembered his reign.

But Vashti? She'd be dumbfounded. Because it's not every day ostensibly progressive folk reclaim a vicious anti-Semite and serial abuser of women, crowning her a liberated icon.

The truth is that Queen Vashti was a sexual predator who used her position to abuse Jewish women. She's no feminist.

And yet, you've probably heard the Vashti-feminist theory. It's a tired trope that haunts the pews of liberal synagogues each Adar. In this rendition, Vashti was a queen who, even in the ancient world, had no qualms about putting her husband in his place. When the king asked her to dance naked at a party she defied him, knowing it could cost her both crown and head.

Hence, Vashti Feminism.

But that simple reading ignores an entire corpus of Jewish thought and, indeed, a rich oral history that describes the details of how our people suffered at Vashti's hands. The Talmud tells us that Vashti was known for dancing naked at parties, and was notorious for sexual impropriety; her reticence to dance before the king was due not to virtue but to her humiliation at having developed a skin condition.

And Vashti was no champion of women's rights. She would summon Jewish women, force them to undress, and demand they work for her on Shabbat. In other words, Queen Vashti used her unchecked power to sexually harass her female employees.

Sound familiar? If Vashti is a feminist icon, so are Harvey Weinstein, Bill Cosby, and Matt Lauer.

**Forward**

In a recent op-ed headlined “Actually, Feminists, Vashti Was The Harvey Weinstein Of Persia” published by The Forward, Rabbi Joshua Krisch attempted to sever Vashti, a character from the Book of Esther, from the men and women who love her. His argument hinged on the idea that feminists ignored the Talmudic “facts” (namely the Talmud’s depiction of Vashti as a power-mad anti-Semite). Krisch even went so far as to argue that



true supporters of the women who have shared their #MeToo stories would feel only disgust for Queen Vashti. In fact, Krisch posited that Vashti, a character in an ancient story, is the same as real-life predators like Harvey Weinstein, Bill Cosby, and Matt Lauer.

We are not going to argue that everyone needs to love the character of Vashti. In fact, we’re not even going to argue that all feminists should love Vashti. But, after reading Krisch’s article, we felt compelled to respond. We made this choice not just because we disagree with him, but instead because we believe strongly that some of his assertions have dangerous and painful consequences. We have three main points to make:

First: The rabbis of the Talmud were not the “journalists” of their time. Journalism is the work of discovering and distributing truthful, factual information. The Talmud is a collection of opinions, knowledge, and insights that come from various schools of thought. It is a reflection of the men (and here, it is only men) who led and shaped our religion for generations...

Second: To suggest that the rabbinic tradition can be relied on to paint glowing portraits of Biblical women is to disregard a large swath of sacred literature. Even if we look only at the Rabbis’ opinions of the women that Krisch names in his article, we quickly encounter disrespectful and misogynist comments about these female heroes...

Third and most importantly: Jewish feminists don’t need Rabbi Krisch or anyone else to tell us who we should and should not regard as a hero. Some of us love the idea that a woman in the ancient world could defy her husband and smash the expectations of the patriarchy....Sincerely, Rabbi Rachel Bearman, Communications Committee, Women’s Rabbinic Network

MAUREEN DOWD

## This Is Why Uma Thurman Is Angry

The actress is finally ready to talk about Harvey Weinstein.

Yes, Uma Thurman is mad.

She has been raped. She has been sexually assaulted. She has been mangled in hot steel. She has been betrayed and gaslighted by those she trusted.

And we're not talking about her role as the blood-spattered bride in "Kill Bill." We're talking about a world that is just as cutthroat, amoral, vindictive and misogynistic as any Quentin Tarantino hellscape.

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"Harvey assaulted me but that didn't kill me," she says. "What really got me about the crash was that it was a cheap shot. I had been through so many rings of fire by that point. I had really always felt a connection to the greater good in my work with Quentin and most of what I allowed to happen to me and what I participated in was kind of like a horrible mud wrestle with a very angry brother. But at least I had some say, you know?" She says she didn't feel disempowered by any of it. Until the crash.

"Personally, it has taken me 47 years to stop calling people who are mean to you 'in love' with you. It took a long time because I think that as little girls we are conditioned to believe that cruelty and love somehow have a connection and that is like the sort of era that we need to evolve out of."





## ***Fuller House* showrunner fired for being "verbally abusive" and "inappropriate" on set**

**By Danette Chavez, 3/01/18**

Variety reports that Netflix and Warner Bros. TV have ended their association with Fuller House showrunner Jeff Franklin after receiving complaints that he was “verbally abusive” and “inappropriate” on set.

Franklin created Full House and oversaw the Netflix spin-off for three seasons, but his contract won't be renewed in light of the allegations from his former writing staff. Apparently, he was “verbally abusive” and made “inappropriate statements” in the writers’ room, though Variety makes it clear that Franklin hasn't been accused of sexual harassment or physical misconduct. There were also complaints about Franklin's “habit of bringing women he dated to the set and sometimes giving them bit parts in the series.” Franklin's lawyer declined to comment to Variety.

In a statement, Warner Bros. TV said “We are not renewing Jeff Franklin's production deal and he will no longer be working on Fuller House,” but according to one of Variety's sources, the “TV executives received an anonymous letter more than two years ago with detailed allegations” about the ousted showrunner's behavior. The studio executives “were warned that Franklin ‘was a walking lawsuit waiting to happen.’” However, the studio did eventually “initiate a probe after receiving numerous complaints about Franklin's behavior.”

**Update, March 1 at 9:26 a.m.:** After declining to comment on Variety's story, Jeff Franklin has issued a statement of sorts via Instagram. The ousted showrunner doesn't actually address any of the complaints against him, just bids farewell to the cast he's worked with since 1987.



# Kelly Ripa Is 'Fully Supportive' of Ryan Seacrest Amid Sexual Misconduct Allegation, Source Says

ELIZABETH LEONARD and MICHELE CORRISTON February 28, 2018 03:13 PM

E! isn't the only employer standing by Ryan Seacrest as his former stylist accuses him of sexual harassment.

Seacrest's Live! co-host and close friend Kelly Ripa "is fully supportive and 110 percent behind him," a source tells PEOPLE. Spokespeople for both American Idol and iHeartMedia are also in full support.

Seacrest, 43, joined the ABC talk show in May 2017 after a lengthy search for Michael Strahan's replacement.

"He is just so professional and kind to everyone — and it's not just 'on-camera kind,'" Ripa, 47, told PEOPLE when he was announced as her co-anchor. "He doesn't turn it on and off. He's kind backstage, and he's kind first thing in the morning."

Stylist Suzie Hardy has accused the producer and TV host of sexually harassing and assaulting her over the six years that she was employed by E! from 2007-13, including grabbing her crotch multiple times.

Seacrest has staunchly denied Hardy's allegations, he's still set to host E!'s Oscars coverage Sunday.

In a statement to PEOPLE on Tuesday, Seacrest accused Hardy of attempting to blackmail him. "Much has been said about the #MeToo and Times Up movement(s) and the importance of providing women and men with the opportunity to share their stories of workplace misconduct, in an effort to change our culture and the systemic inequalities that exist. I absolutely support this cause unequivocally and applaud all the brave souls who have come forward to share their stories," Seacrest's statement begins.

"Sadly, last fall I became one of the accused, which I promptly revealed proactively to the network involved and to the public. And to be equally clear, those accusations were then investigated by an independent third-party over the course of a two-month process and involved dozens of interviews that included me, the accused and countless others. Ultimately, my name was cleared. I eagerly participated in the investigation in order to demonstrate my innocence because I know my truth, and I believe in due process."



# About That Secret Button in Matt Lauer's Office

The anchor's door-locking mechanism acts as a particularly vivid metaphor for the amount of power and protection many influential men enjoy.

DAVID SIMS NOV 30, 2017

Perhaps the single most horrifying detail from the litany of stories alleging sexual harassment and inappropriate behavior by Matt Lauer is his secret button. "His office was in a secluded space, and he had a button under his desk that allowed him to lock his door from the inside without getting up," according to a *Variety* story published Wednesday, only hours after NBC fired him, citing a detailed complaint it had received about the *Today* show host. "This afforded him the assurance of privacy. It allowed him to welcome female employees and initiate inappropriate contact while knowing nobody could walk in on him."

A second piece, published later that day by *The New York Times*, also acknowledged the button. In one instance, an unnamed former staff member said that Lauer summoned her into his office to discuss a story, and then locked the door from his desk before beginning to have sex with her; at some point, she passed out and woke up on the floor, after which Lauer had his assistant take her to a nurse.

The *Times* reported that the button is a "regular security measure installed for high-profile employees" at NBC. Whether it's a mundane precautionary tool or an accessory worthy of a Bond villain, it's also a concrete manifestation of a reality reflected in so many of these recent allegations: the unabridged power and protection that accompany celebrity. Even beyond that, the button is a potent metaphor for the way that systems—those seemingly disinterested institutional structures—can insidiously work in favor of the people who already wield the most influence.

In a memo sent to staff Wednesday morning, the NBC News chairman Andrew Lack suggested there had been no previous reports to management of misconduct by Lauer. "While it is the first complaint about his behavior in the over 20 years he's been at NBC News, we were also presented with reason to believe this may not have been an isolated incident," he said after firing the host, who was one of the highest-paid personalities on television with a \$25 million annual salary. In a later statement, the company added that "prior to Monday night, current NBC News management was never made aware of any complaints about Matt Lauer's conduct," wording that could imply awareness by previous management.



# USA TODAY American gymnasts detail sexual abuse to legislators on Capitol Hill

**A.J. Perez, March 1, 2018**

Three former elite American gymnasts who were among the 260 girls and women who alleged they were sexually abused by former team doctor Larry Nassar met with legislators on Capitol Hill on Wednesday night, representatives for two senators told USA TODAY Sports.

Jordyn Wieber (a 2012 Olympic gold medalist), Jamie Dantzscher (part of the the 2000 Olympic team that won a bronze in Sydney) and former national team member Jeanette Antolin detailed the abuse they suffered to Sens. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.). Lisa Lorincz, the mother of gymnast Kaylee Lorincz who was unable to attend because of a competition, was also part of the meeting.

“The young women’s stories we heard today reinforced our determination to root out abuse in youth sport governing bodies,” Moran and Blumenthal said in a joint statement to USA TODAY Sports. “We are hopeful for renewed commitment from all Olympic organizations to eradicate all sexual abuse and other misconduct, and to raise a generation of athletes who feel safe competing in the sports they love. As Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee with jurisdiction over USOC and other governing bodies, we intend to continue our thorough investigation.”

Moran and Blumenthal are leaders of a Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation subcommittee that launched an investigation into the U.S. Olympic Committee, USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University in the aftermath of Nassar’s convictions. Two committees in the House have launched similar inquiries.

The meeting was held shortly after it was announced that USOC CEO Scott Blackmun had resigned. Blackmun’s resignation was due to health issues as he undergoes cancer treatment.

Nassar has been sentenced to a minimum of 140 years in prison, sentences handed down in federal court and two Michigan courts. Blackmun forced the resignations of all 21 USA Gymnastics board members, and in the statement that announced his departure, the USOC vowed to institute more changes to protect athletes.

All three gymnasts had publicly come forward to detail the abuse they had suffered.

“I am angry with myself for not recognizing the abuse, and that’s something I’m struggling with today,” Wieber said at a sentencing hearing in January. “The people who are responsible need to accept accountability.”

Antolin alleged in a lawsuit that Nassar used his authority as team doctor to “fondle and grope Plaintiff’s feet, ankles, thighs, buttocks, hips, waist and neck,” and he touched without gloves for his own sexual gratification.



**Moira Donegan**

@MoiraDonegan

Follow

The more I examine feminist reactions to [#MeToo](#), the more convinced I become that there really is a divide among feminists, but that it's not the one people think.

1:27 PM - 22 Feb 2018

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60 868 3.0K

Tweet your reply



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

Roiphe et al are coming from a conception of feminism as a matter of choices by individual actors. I'm being reductive, but theirs is basically a worldview that aligns with capitalism; it's an argument for a feminism of pulling yourself up into male privilege by your bootstraps.

7 107 981



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

[#MeToo](#) and its proponents have taken a different course, asserting that women inherit certain disadvantages that are larger than our choices & that we can't elect out of. It's an analysis that treats women as a class, engaged in a gender class struggle at the structural level.

7 130 1.3K



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

These two ideas place responsibility in different locations: The Roiphes of the world put responsibility on the individual to navigate and overcome injustice, while the [#MeToo](#) movement puts responsibility on the society to eliminate injustice.

9 123 1.1K



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

The conflict between [#MeToo](#) and its backlash is actually between an analysis of structural forces versus an analysis of individual agency.

9 159 1.2K



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

This is gets recast as generational conflict—partly because of ageism and incuriosity, partly because of a misogynist effort to just not take feminism seriously as a site of political thought.

9 45 735



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

But the question is a real one: Do women have free will under patriarchy? Are we fated to be victimized by sexism? Is the deck stacked insurmountably against us, or can each woman make strategic choices to help her win the game?

17 100 845



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

The answer is more complicated than the current terms of the debate allow us to acknowledge. Of course individual women make choices, "and" of course those choices are constrained and curtailed by forces of structural sexism beyond our control.

14 69 1.0K



**Moira Donegan** @MoiraDonegan · Feb 22

Sorry to ramble! Just some inchoate thoughts. As always, I hope to learn more and have more thoughts on this in the future.

65 16 559

# **The New York Times** *Harvey Weinstein Paid Off Sexual Harassment Accusers for Decades*

By Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey,  
Oct. 5, 2017

Two decades ago, the Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein invited Ashley Judd to the Peninsula Beverly Hills hotel for what the young actress expected to be a business breakfast meeting. Instead, he had her sent up to his room, where he appeared in a bathrobe and asked if he could give her a massage or she could watch him shower, she recalled in an interview.

“How do I get out of the room as fast as possible without alienating Harvey Weinstein?” Ms. Judd said she remembers thinking.

In 2014, Mr. Weinstein invited Emily Nestor, who had worked just one day as a temporary employee, to the same hotel and made another offer: If she accepted his sexual advances, he would boost her career, according to accounts she provided to colleagues who sent them to Weinstein Company executives. The following year, once again at the Peninsula, a female assistant said Mr. Weinstein badgered her into giving him a massage while he was naked, leaving her “crying and very distraught,” wrote a colleague, Lauren O’Connor, in a searing memo asserting sexual harassment and other misconduct by their boss.

“There is a toxic environment for women at this company,” Ms. O’Connor said in the letter, addressed to several executives at the company run by Mr. Weinstein.

An investigation by The New York Times found previously undisclosed allegations against Mr. Weinstein stretching over nearly three decades, documented through interviews with current and former employees and film industry workers, as well as legal records, emails and internal documents from the businesses he has run, Miramax and the Weinstein Company.

During that time, after being confronted with allegations including sexual harassment and unwanted physical contact, Mr. Weinstein has reached at least eight settlements with women, according to two company officials speaking on the condition of anonymity. Among the recipients, The Times found, were a young assistant in New York in 1990, an actress in 1997, an assistant in London in 1998, an Italian model in 2015 and Ms. O’Connor shortly after, according to records and those familiar with the agreements.

In a statement to The Times on Thursday afternoon, Mr. Weinstein said: “I appreciate the way I’ve behaved with colleagues in the past has caused a lot of pain, and I sincerely apologize for it. Though I’m trying to do better, I know I have a long way to go.”

## ***Six women accuse filmmaker Brett Ratner of sexual harassment or misconduct***

Natasha Henstridge was watching a movie on Brett Ratner's couch when she fell asleep. She was a 19-year-old fashion model; he was an up-and-coming music video director in his early 20s. They had been hanging out in front of the TV with friends at his New York apartment.

But when Henstridge woke up, the others had left. She was alone with Ratner. She got up to leave, Henstridge said, but he blocked the doorway with his body and wouldn't budge. He began touching himself, she said, then forced her to perform oral sex.

"He strong-armed me in a real way. He physically forced himself on me," she said. "At some point, I gave in and he did his thing."

Ratner, through his attorney Martin Singer, disputed her account.

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## **VANITY FAIR**

**Ratner's RatPac-Dune  
Entertainment has a co-financing  
deal with Warner Bros. that will  
end in 2018.**

**by EMMA STEFANSKY,  
NOVEMBER 12, 2017**

**Gal Gadot  
Reportedly Won't  
Return for *Wonder  
Woman 2* If Brett  
Ratner Does**

A REPORTER AT LARGE    OCTOBER 23, 2017 ISSUE

FROM AGGRESSIVE  
OVERTURES TO  
SEXUAL ASSAULT:  
HARVEY WEINSTEIN'S  
ACCUSERS TELL THEIR  
STORIES

*Multiple women share harrowing accounts of sexual assault and harassment by the film executive.*

**By Ronan Farrow**

Since the establishment of the first studios, a century ago, there have been few movie executives as dominant, or as domineering, as Harvey Weinstein. He co-founded the production-and-distribution companies Miramax and the Weinstein Company, helping to reinvent the model for independent films with movies including “Sex, Lies, and Videotape,” “The Crying Game,” “Pulp Fiction,” “The English Patient,” “Shakespeare in Love,” and “The King’s Speech.” Beyond Hollywood, he has exercised his influence as a prolific fund-raiser for Democratic Party candidates, including Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Weinstein combined a keen eye for promising scripts, directors, and actors with a bullying, even threatening, style of doing business, inspiring both fear and gratitude. His movies have earned more than three hundred Oscar nominations, and, at the annual awards ceremonies, he has been thanked more than almost anyone else in movie history, ranking just after Steven Spielberg and right before God.

For more than twenty years, Weinstein, who is now sixty-five, has also been trailed by rumors of sexual harassment and assault. His behavior has been an open secret to many in Hollywood and beyond, but previous attempts by many publications, including *The New Yorker*, to investigate and publish the story over the years fell short of the demands of journalistic evidence. Too few people were willing to speak, much less allow a reporter to use their names, and Weinstein and his associates used nondisclosure agreements, payoffs, and legal threats to suppress their accounts. Asia Argento, an Italian film actress and director, said that she did not speak out until now—Weinstein, she told me, forcibly performed oral sex on her—because she feared that Weinstein would “crush” her. “I know he has crushed a lot of people before,” Argento said. “That’s why this story—in my case, it’s twenty years old, some of them are older—has never come out.”

On October 5th, the *New York Times*, in a powerful report by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, revealed multiple allegations of sexual harassment against Weinstein, an article that led to the resignation of four members of the Weinstein Company’s all-male board, and to Weinstein’s firing.

The story, however, is complex, and there is more to know and to understand. In the course of a ten-month investigation, I was told by thirteen women that, between the nineteen-nineties and 2015, Weinstein sexually harassed or assaulted them. Their allegations corroborate and overlap with the *Times*’s revelations, and also include far more serious claims.

# The New York Times

By Valeriya Safronova,  
Jan. 9, 2018

## Catherine Deneuve and Others Denounce the #MeToo Movement

Just one day after Hollywood offered a show of support for the #MeToo movement on the Golden Globes red carpet and stage, a famous actress on the other side of the Atlantic lent her name to a public letter denouncing the movement, as well as its French counterpart, #Balancetonporc, or “Expose Your Pig.”

Catherine Deneuve joined more than 100 other Frenchwomen in entertainment, publishing and academic fields Tuesday in the pages of the newspaper *Le Monde* and on its website in arguing that the two movements, in which women and men have used social media as a forum to describe sexual misconduct, have gone too far by publicly prosecuting private experiences and have created a totalitarian climate.

“Rape is a crime. But insistent or clumsy flirting is not a crime, nor is gallantry a chauvinist aggression,” the letter, dated Monday, begins. “As a result of the Weinstein affair, there has been a legitimate realization of the sexual violence women experience, particularly in the workplace, where some men abuse their power. It was necessary. But now this liberation of speech has been turned on its head.”

They contend that the #MeToo movement has led to a campaign of public accusations that have placed undeserving people in the same category as sex offenders without giving them a chance to defend themselves. “This expedited justice already has its victims, men prevented from practicing their profession as punishment, forced to resign, etc., while the only thing they did wrong was touching a knee, trying to steal a kiss, or speaking about ‘intimate’ things at a work dinner, or sending messages with sexual connotations to a woman whose feelings were not mutual,” they write. The letter, written in French was translated here by The New York Times.

The passage appears to refer to some of the names on a growing list of men who have been suspended, fired or forced to resign after having been accused of sexual misconduct in the last several months.

One of the arguments the writers make is that instead of empowering women, the #MeToo and #BalanceTonPorc movements instead serve the interests of “the enemies of sexual freedom, of religious extremists, of the worst reactionaries,” and of those who believe that women are “‘separate’ beings, children with the appearance of adults, demanding to be protected.” They write that “a woman can, in the same day, lead a professional team and enjoy being the sexual object of a man, without being a ‘promiscuous woman,’ nor a vile accomplice of patriarchy.”

They believe that the scope of the two movements represses sexual expression and freedom. After describing requests from publishers to make male characters “less sexist” and a Swedish bill that will require people to give explicit consent before engaging in sexual activity, the women write, “One more effort and two adults who will want to sleep together will first check, through an app on their phone, a document in which the practices they accept and those they refuse will be duly listed.”

# Person *of the Year* TIME

## THE SILENCE BREAKERS

THE VOICES  
THAT LAUNCHED  
A MOVEMENT

