

BY STEPHANIE ZACHAREK, ELIANA DOCKTERMAN
AND HALEY SWEETLAND EDWARDS



MOVIE STARS ARE SUPPOSEDLY NOTHING LIKE you and me. They're svelte, glamorous, self-possessed. They wear dresses we can't afford and live in houses we can only dream of. Yet it turns out that—in the most painful and personal ways—movie stars are more like you and me than we ever knew.

In 1997, just before Ashley Judd's career took off, she was invited to a meeting with Harvey Weinstein, head of the starmaking studio Miramax, at a Beverly Hills hotel. Astounded and offended by Weinstein's attempt to coerce her into bed, Judd managed to escape. But instead of keeping quiet about the kind of encounter that could easily shame a woman into silence, she began spreading the word.

Judd says she was sexually harassed by Harvey Weinstein when she was 29 years old.

"We need to formalize the whisper network. It's an ingenious way that we've tried to keep ourselves safe. All those voices can be amplified. That's my advice to women. That and if something feels wrong, it is wrong—and it's wrong by my definition and not necessarily someone else's."

Weinstein said in a statement he "never laid a glove" on Judd.



"I started talking about Harvey the minute that it happened," Judd says in an interview with *TIME*. "Literally, I exited that hotel room at the Peninsula Hotel in 1997 and came straight downstairs to the lobby, where my dad was waiting for me, because he happened to be in Los Angeles from Kentucky, visiting me on the set. And he could tell by my face—to use his words—that something devastating had happened to me. I told him. I told everyone."

She recalls one screenwriter friend telling her that Weinstein's behavior was an open secret passed around on the whisper network that had been furrowing through Hollywood for years. It allowed for people to warn others to some degree, but there was no route to stop the abuse. "Were we supposed to call some fantasy attorney general of moviedom?" Judd asks. "There wasn't a place for us to report these experiences."

Finally, in October—when Judd went on the record about Weinstein's behavior in the *New York Times*, the first star to do so—the world listened. (Weinstein said he "never laid a glove" on Judd and denies having had nonconsensual sex with other accusers.)

When movie stars don't know where to go, what hope is there for the rest of us? What hope is there for the janitor who's being harassed by a co-worker but remains silent out of fear she'll lose the job she needs to support her children? For the administrative assistant who repeatedly fends off a superior who won't take no for an answer? For the hotel housekeeper who never knows, as she goes about replacing towels and cleaning toilets, if a guest is going to corner her in a room she can't escape?

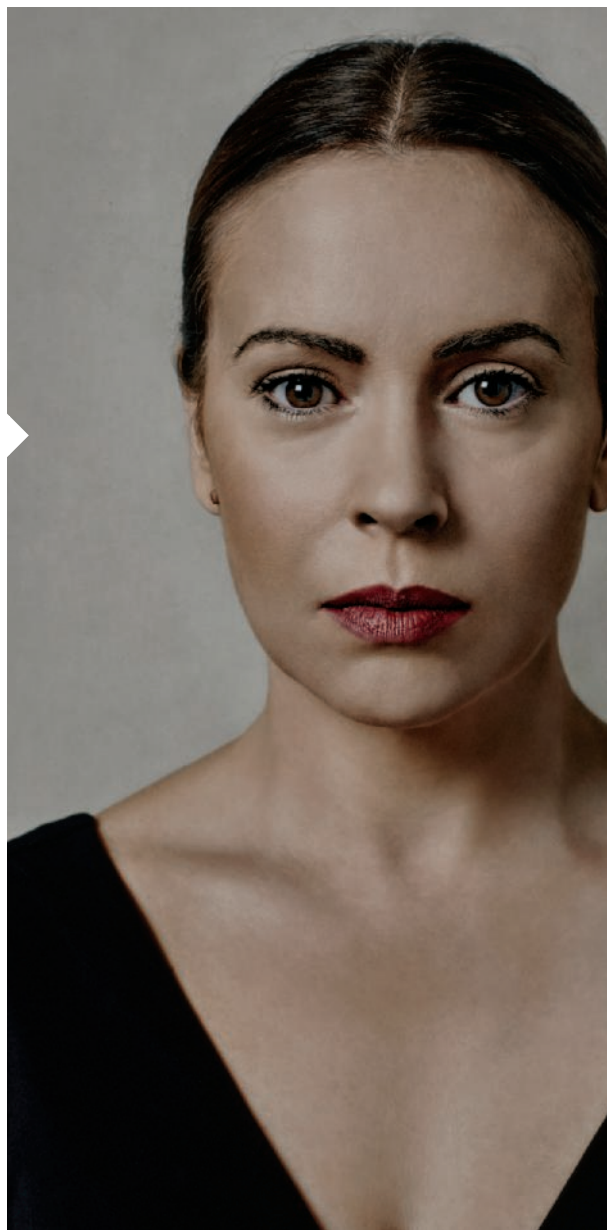
Like the "problem that has no name," the disquieting malaise of frustration and repression among postwar wives and homemakers identified by Betty Friedan more than 50 years ago, this moment is borne of a very real and potent sense of unrest. Yet it doesn't have a leader, or a single, unifying tenet. The hashtag #MeToo (swiftly adapted into #BalanceTonPorc, #YoTambien, #Ana_kaman and many others), which to date has provided an umbrella of solidarity for millions of people to come forward with their stories, is part of the picture, but not all of it.

This reckoning appears to have sprung

Millions of people responded with the hashtag #MeToo when Milano urged them to post their experiences on Twitter.

"It's affected me on a cellular level to hear all these stories. I don't know if I'll ever be the same. I have not stopped crying. I look at my daughter and think, Please, let this be worth it. Please, let it be that my daughter never has to go through anything like this."

ALYSSA MILANO | 44 | ACTOR



up overnight. But it has actually been simmering for years, decades, centuries. Women have had it with bosses and co-workers who not only cross boundaries but don't even seem to know that boundaries exist. They've had it with the fear of retaliation, of being blackballed, of being fired from a job they can't afford to lose. They've had it with the code of going along to get along. They've had it with men who use their power to take what they want from women. These silence breakers have started a revolution of refusal, gathering strength by the day, and in the past two months alone, their collective anger has spurred immediate



T A R A N A B U R K E | 44 | A C T I V I S T

Burke, founder of a nonprofit that helps survivors of sexual violence, created the Me Too movement in 2006 to encourage young women to show solidarity with one another. It went viral this year after actor Alyssa Milano used the hashtag #MeToo.

“Sexual harassment does bring shame. And I think it’s really powerful that this transfer is happening, that these women are able not just to share their shame but to put the shame where it belongs: on the perpetrator.”

and shocking results: nearly every day, CEOs have been fired, moguls toppled, icons disgraced. In some cases, criminal charges have been brought.

Emboldened by Judd, Rose McGowan and other prominent accusers, women everywhere have begun to speak out about the inappropriate, abusive and in some cases illegal behavior they’ve faced. When multiple harassment claims bring down a charmer like former *Today* show host Matt Lauer, women who thought they had no recourse see a new, wide-open door. When a movie star says #MeToo, it becomes easier to believe the cook who’s been quietly enduring for years.

The women and men who have broken their silence span all races, all income classes, all occupations and virtually all corners of the globe. They might labor in California fields, or behind the front desk at New York City’s regal Plaza Hotel, or in the European Parliament. They’re part of a movement that has no formal name. But now they have a voice.

II

IN A WINDOWLESS ROOM AT A TWO-story soundstage in San Francisco’s Mission District, a group of women

from different worlds met for the first time. Judd, every bit the movie star in towering heels, leaned in to shake hands with Isabel Pascual, a woman from Mexico who works picking strawberries and asked to use a pseudonym to protect her family. Beside her, Susan Fowler, a former Uber engineer, eight months pregnant, spoke softly with Adama Iwu, a corporate lobbyist in Sacramento. A young hospital worker who had flown in from Texas completed the circle. She too is a victim of sexual harassment but was there anonymously, she said, as an act of solidarity to represent all those who could not speak out.

From a distance, these women could not have looked more different. Their ages, their families, their religions and their ethnicities were all a world apart. Their incomes differed not by degree but by universe: Iwu pays more in rent each month than Pascual makes in two months.

But on that November morning, what separated them was less important than what brought them together: a shared experience. Over the course of six weeks, TIME interviewed dozens of people representing at least as many industries, all of whom had summoned extraordinary personal courage to speak out about sexual harassment at their jobs. They often had eerily similar stories to share.

In almost every case, they described not only the vulgarity of the harassment itself—years of lewd comments, forced kisses, opportunistic gropes—but also the emotional and psychological fallout from those advances. Almost everybody described wrestling with a palpable sense of shame. Had she somehow asked for it? Could she have deflected it? Was she making a big deal out of nothing?

“I thought, What just happened? Why didn’t I react?” says the anonymous hospital worker who fears for her family’s livelihood should her story come out in her small community. “I kept thinking, Did I do something, did I say something, did I look a certain way to make him think that was O.K.?” It’s a poisonous, useless thought, she adds, but how do you avoid it? She remembers the shirt she was wearing that day. She can still feel the heat of her harasser’s hands on her body.

Nearly all of the people TIME interviewed about their experiences expressed a crushing fear of what would happen to

them personally, to their families or to their jobs if they spoke up.

For some, the fear was borne of a threat of physical violence. Pascual felt trapped and terrified when her harasser began to stalk her at home, but felt she was powerless to stop him. If she told anyone, the abuser warned her, he would come after her or her children.

Those who are often most vulnerable in society—immigrants, people of color, people with disabilities, low-income

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— SELMA BLAIR



SELMA BLAIR | 45 | ACTOR

After director James Toback denied accusations by dozens of women that he had sexually assaulted them, Blair spoke out about her encounter with him.

"I decided to go on the record when I saw his denial. He called the women liars. But their stories were so similar to mine, and they were such credible women. There was no agenda other than they wanted to share this story, be free of this story. And in a magazine interview, he called the people who said this about him 'c-nts' and 'c-cksuckers.' That was just wrong. And I wanted to give a face to these now more than 300 women who have come out."

Toback has denied all allegations of harassment.





PLAZA HOTEL PLAINTIFFS

From left: Veronica Owusu, Gabrielle Eubank, Crystal Washington, Dana Lewis, Paige Rodriguez, Sergeline Bernadeau and Kristina Antonova filed a suit against New York City's Plaza Hotel for "normalizing and trivializing sexual assault" among employees there.

"I am a single mother. I have an 11-year-old daughter, and she's depending on me," says Lewis, who still works at the hotel to make ends meet. "My entire life revolves around her. I wasn't really left with the option of leaving. I'm not left with the option of giving up. I want to show her that it's O.K. to stand up for yourself. If you keep fighting, eventually you'll see the sun on the other side."

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, which owns the Plaza, said it takes remedial action against harassment when warranted.

After the Oregon state senator accused her fellow legislator Jeff Kruse of sexual harassment, the statehouse launched an investigation and stripped him of his committee assignments.

"We can't pick and choose based on whose political beliefs we believe in. And that means we have to be willing to speak out when it's a member of our own party."

Kruse said in a statement that he never touched Gelser inappropriately.

SARA GELSER | 43 | STATE SENATOR



workers and LGBTQ people—described many types of dread. If they raised their voices, would they be fired? Would their communities turn against them? Would they be killed? According to a 2015 survey by the National Center for Transgender Equality, 47% of transgender people report being sexually assaulted at some point in their lives, both in and out of the workplace.

Juana Melara, who has worked as a hotel housekeeper for decades, says she and her fellow housekeepers didn't complain about guests who exposed

themselves or masturbated in front of them for fear of losing the paycheck they needed to support their families. Melara recalls "feeling the pressure of someone's eyes" on her as she cleaned a guest's room. When she turned around, she remembers, a man was standing in the doorway, blocked by the cleaning cart, with his erect penis exposed. She yelled at the top of her lungs and scared him into leaving, then locked the door behind him. "Nothing happened to me that time, thank God," she recalls.

While guests come and go, some



The mother of two told the HR department at the hospital where she worked that an executive there repeatedly came on to her.

"I thought, What just happened? Why didn't I react? Why couldn't I force words out of my mouth? When I got home, I crumbled. I kept thinking, Did I do something, did I say something, did I look a certain way to make him think that was O.K.?"

ANONYMOUS | 28 | HOSPITAL WORKER



LINDSAY MEYER | 31 | ENTREPRENEUR

Meyer says that Justin Caldbeck, a venture capitalist who invested in her first company, harassed her. After six other women reported harassment by Caldbeck, he resigned from his firm.

"I wanted it to stop. I wanted to be able to get back to running my company and not have the daily distraction of being constantly emailed, called, text-messed. That took a lot of energy to deal with and to process and to try to bury—because I didn't want it to be a big deal. For so long, I went around harboring this ridiculous belief that because I was a nonwhite woman in my 20s that somehow it was expected that I would have to be treated this way. And now I see that that is so silly. I am a person with dignity."

Caldbeck apologized in a statement to the women he "made uncomfortable."

employees must continue to work side by side with their harassers. Crystal Washington was thrilled when she was hired as a hospitality coordinator at the Plaza, a storied hotel whose allure is as strong for people who want to work there as it is for those who can afford a suite. "Walking in, it's breathtaking," she says.

But then, she says, a co-worker began making crude remarks to her like "I can tell you had sex last night" and groping her. One of those encounters was even caught on camera, but the management did not properly respond, her lawyers say.

Washington has joined with six other female employees to file a sexual-harassment suit against the hotel. But she cannot afford to leave the job and says she must force herself out of bed every day to face the man she's accused. "It's a dream to be an employee there," Washington says. "And then you find out what it really is, and it's a nightmare." (Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, which owns the Plaza, said in a statement to *TIME* that it takes remedial action against harassment when warranted.)

Other women, like the actor Selma

Radio DJ David Mueller groped Swift during a photo op in 2013. She reported him to his radio station, KYGO, and he was terminated. He said her accusations were false and sued Swift. She countersued for \$1 and won.

“When I testified, I had already had to watch this man’s attorney bully, badger and harass my team, including my mother ... I was angry. In that moment, I decided to forgo any courtroom formalities and just answer the questions the way it happened. This man hadn’t considered any formalities when he assaulted me ... Why should I be polite?

I’m told it was the most amount of times the word *ass* has ever been said in Colorado federal court.”

Mueller’s lawyer did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

TAYLOR SWIFT | 27 | SINGER-SONGWRITER



Pezqueda filed a suit alleging that her supervisor at the Terranea Resort, a luxury retreat in Southern California, pursued her for months. When she rebuffed him, he changed her schedule and cut her hours.

“Someone who is in the limelight is able to speak out more easily than people who are poor. The reality of being a woman is the same—the difference is the risk each woman must take.”

Attorneys for the staffing company that employed Pezqueda deny her allegations. Terranea Resort declined to comment except to say that the suit involves an outside agency.

Blair, weathered excruciating threats. Blair says she arrived at a hotel restaurant for a meeting with the independent film director James Toback in 1999 only to be told that he would like to see her in his room. There, she says, Toback told her that she had to learn to be more vulnerable in her craft and asked her to strip down. She took her top off. She says he then propositioned her for sex, and when she refused, he blocked the door and forced her to watch him masturbate against her leg. Afterward, she recalls him telling her that if she said anything, he would stab her eyes out with a Bic pen and throw her in the Hudson River.

Blair says Toback lorded the encounter over her for decades. "I had heard from others that he was slandering me, saying these sexual things about me, and it just made me even more afraid of him," Blair says in an interview with TIME. "I genuinely thought for almost 20 years, He's going to kill me." (Toback has denied the allegations, saying he never met his accusers or doesn't remember them.)

Many of the people who have come forward also mentioned a different fear, one less visceral but no less real, as a reason for not speaking out: if you do, your complaint becomes your identity. "Susan Fowler, the famous victim of sexual harassment," says the woman whose blog post ultimately led Uber CEO Travis Kalanick to resign and the multibillion-dollar startup to oust at least 20 other employees. "Nobody wants to be the buzzkill," adds Lindsey Reynolds, one of the women who blew the whistle on a culture of harassment at the restaurant group run by the celebrity chef John Besh. (The Besh Group says it is implementing new policies to create a culture of respect. Besh apologized for "unacceptable behavior" and "moral failings," and resigned from the company.)

Iwu, the lobbyist, says she considered the same risks after she was groped in front of several colleagues at an event. She was shocked when none of her male co-workers stepped in to stop the assault. The next week, she organized 147 women to

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sign an open letter exposing harassment in California government. When she told people about the campaign, she says they were wary. “Are you sure you want to do this?” they warned her. “Remember Anita Hill.”

Taylor Swift says she was made to feel bad about the consequences that her harasser faced. After she complained about a Denver radio DJ named David Mueller, who reached under her skirt and grabbed her rear end, Mueller was fired. He sued Swift for millions in damages. She countersued for a symbolic \$1 and then testified about the incident in August. Mueller’s lawyer asked her, on the witness stand, whether she felt bad that she’d gotten him fired.

“I’m not going to let you or your client make me feel in any way that this is my fault,” she told the lawyer. “I’m being blamed for the unfortunate events of his life that are a product of his decisions. Not mine.” (Mueller said he would appeal.)

In an interview with *TIME*, Swift says that moment on the stand fueled her indignation. “I figured that if he would be brazen enough to assault me under these risky circumstances,” she says, “imagine what he might do to a vulnerable, young

artist if given the chance.” Like the five women gathered at that echoing soundstage in San Francisco, and like all of the dozens, then hundreds, then millions of women who came forward with their own stories of harassment, she was done feeling intimidated. Actors and writers and journalists and dishwashers and fruit pickers alike: they’d had enough. What had manifested as shame exploded into outrage. Fear became fury.

This was the great unleashing that turned the #MeToo hashtag into a rallying cry. The phrase was first used more than a decade ago by social activist Tarana Burke as part of her work building solidarity among young survivors of harassment and assault. A friend of the actor Alyssa Milano sent her a screenshot of the phrase, and Milano, almost on a whim, tweeted it out on Oct. 15. “If you’ve been sexually harassed or assaulted write ‘me too’ as a reply to this tweet,” she wrote, and then went to sleep. She woke up the next day to find that more than 30,000 people had used #MeToo. Milano burst into tears.

At first, those speaking out were mostly from the worlds of media and entertainment, but the hashtag quickly spread. “We have to keep our focus on people of different class and race and gender,” says Burke, who has developed a friendship with Milano via text messages. By November, California farmworkers, Pascual among them, were marching on the streets of Hollywood to express their solidarity with the stars.

Women were no longer alone. “There’s something really empowering about standing up for what’s right,” says Fowler, who has grown comfortable with her new reputation as a whistle-blower. “It’s a badge of honor.”

III

DISCUSSIONS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT in polite company tend to rely on euphemisms: harassment becomes “inappropriate behavior,” assault becomes

“misconduct,” rape becomes “abuse.” We’re accustomed to hearing those softened words, which downplay the pain of the experience. That’s one of the reasons why the *Access Hollywood* tape that surfaced in October 2016 was such a jolt. The language used by the man who would become America’s 45th President, captured on a 2005 recording, was, by any standard, vulgar. He didn’t just say that he’d made a pass; he “moved on her like a bitch.” He didn’t just talk about fondling women; he bragged that he could “grab ‘em by the pussy.”

That Donald Trump could express himself that way and still be elected President is part of what stoked the rage that fueled the Women’s March the day after his Inauguration. It’s why women seized on that crude word as the emblem of the protest that dwarfed Trump’s Inauguration crowd size. “All social movements have highly visible precipitating factors,” says Aldon Morris, a professor of sociology at Northwestern University. “In this case, you had Harvey Weinstein, and before that you had Trump.”

Megyn Kelly, the NBC anchor who revealed in October that she had complained to Fox News executives about Bill O’Reilly’s treatment of women, and who was a target of Trump’s ire during the campaign, says the tape as well as the tenor of the election turned the political into the personal. “I have real doubts about whether we’d be going through this if Hillary Clinton had won, because I think that President Trump’s election in many ways was a setback for women,” says Kelly, who noted that not all women at the march were Clinton supporters. “But the overall message to us was that we don’t really matter.”

So it was not entirely surprising that 2017 began with women donning “pussy hats” and marching on the nation’s capital in a show of unity and fury. What was startling was the size of the protest. It was one of the largest in U.S. history and spawned satellite marches in all 50 states and more than 50 other countries.

Summer Zervos, a former contestant on *The Apprentice*, was one of roughly 20 women to accuse the President of sexual harassment. She filed a defamation suit against Trump days before his Inauguration after he disputed her claims by calling her a liar. A New York judge is

expected to decide soon if the President is immune to civil suits while in office. No matter the outcome, the allegations added fuel to a growing fire.

By February, the movement had made its way to the billionaire dream factories of Silicon Valley, when Fowler spoke out about her “weird year” as an engineer at Uber. “I remember feeling powerless and like there was no one looking out for us because we had an admitted harasser in the White House,” Fowler says. “I felt like

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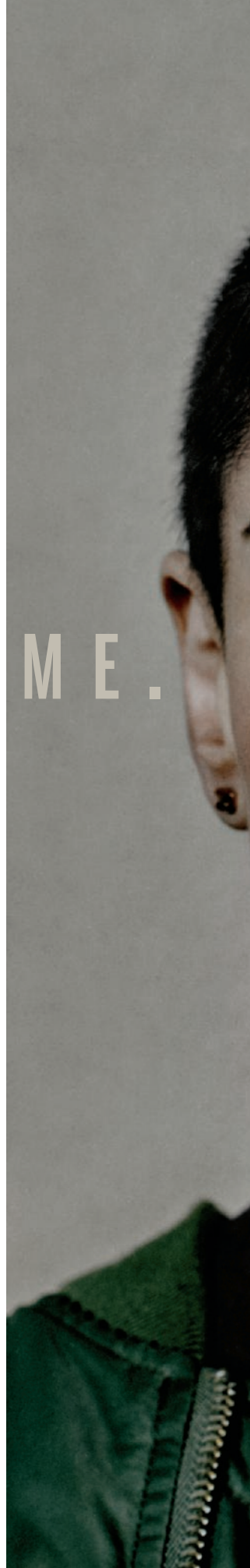
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O U T O F T I M E .

I D O N ’ T H A V E T I M E

T O P L A Y N I C E . ’

— R O S E M C G O W A N





ROSE MCGOWAN | 44 | ARTIST AND ACTIVIST

McGowan reached a settlement with producer Harvey Weinstein in 1997 after accusing him of sexually assaulting her in a hotel room. McGowan's decision to speak to the press this year helped expose Weinstein as a serial harasser.

"The number of people sharing their stories with me is so intense, especially since all of this is incredibly triggering for me as well. People forget a lot that there's a human behind this, someone who is very hurt. But that's O.K. It fuels my fire. They really f-cked with the wrong person."

Weinstein has denied all allegations of non-consensual sex.



After Walsh and other women accused Bill O'Reilly of sexual harassment, Fox News fired him.

"In the early '90s, as a news anchor, I wore buttoned-up suits, skirts to my knees, sensible shoes. I dipped out of the industry. When I came back, I was put in a sausage dress. The hair got blonder and the cleavage got deeper and the heels higher. Fox had created a sort of Snapchat filter: any woman, even a woman with advanced degrees, would be turned into what looked like an office sex toy. Part of what happened to the women at Fox News started in the makeup room."

O'Reilly has denied harassing colleagues.



LINDSEY REYNOLDS | 32 | FOOD-BLOG EDITOR

When she quit her job as social-media manager at the restaurant group of celebrity chef John Besh, Reynolds sent an email to her bosses complaining about the company's culture of sexism. She later filed a complaint with the EEOC. Besh has since stepped down.

"After I sent that email, I burst into tears and felt sick to my stomach and was shaking. I was nobody. I'm just a person from a small town in Texas. I have no money, no power, no social standing. And they have more power and money than I will ever have. I felt extremely vulnerable and scared. Then I heard from women I had never met—they worked as line cooks while I worked in corporate—who had experienced the same toxic culture."

The company said it is working to enact policies to create a culture of safety and respect. Besh has apologized for "unacceptable" behavior and "moral failings," and resigned.

In the wake of the revelations about Harvey Weinstein, Pascual spoke out at a march in L.A. about being stalked and harassed in order to give voice to her fellow agricultural workers.

"I was afraid. When the man was harassing me, he threatened to harm my children and me—that's why I kept quiet. I felt desperate.

I cried and cried. But, thank God, my friends in the fields support me. So I said, Enough. I lost the fear.

It doesn't matter if they criticize me. I can support other people who are going through the same thing."

**Pascual's name was changed to protect her family.*

ISABEL PASCUAL* | 42 | STRAWBERRY PICKER



I had to take action."

Barely two months later, Fox News cut ties with O'Reilly. Over the next several months, media outlets reported that O'Reilly and Fox News had spent more than \$45 million to settle claims with women who alleged harassment. Wendy Walsh, a psychologist and former guest on the network, was one of the first women to share her story about the star anchor—but she was initially reluctant to go on the record. "I was afraid for my kids, I was afraid of the retaliation," she says. "I know what men can do when they're angry."

Eventually she allowed her name to be used. "I felt it was my duty," Walsh says, "as a mother of daughters, as an act of love for women everywhere and the women who are silenced, to be brave."

The downfall of O'Reilly, who has denied all allegations of harassment, would prove to be just the beginning of the reckoning in media and entertainment. In June, Bill Cosby was brought to trial on charges that he had drugged and sexually assaulted a woman named Andrea Constand, one of nearly 50 women who have accused Cosby of sexual assault over



Hotel guests have propositioned and exposed themselves to Melara while she was working.

“One time when I was cleaning, a guest asked me if I knew how to massage. I said, ‘No, I don’t even do it to my husband.’ The way he was looking at me wasn’t friendly. I rushed to finish the room as fast as I could and get out of there. It’s crazy that people think that if they pay for the room, they are paying for sexual service.”

The hotel declined to comment.

JUANA MELARA | 52 | HOUSEKEEPER



SANDRA MULLER | 46 | JOURNALIST

In France, Muller started the Twitter hashtag #BalanceTonPorc (Expose Your Pig), which helped inspire women to march in the streets to protest sexual harassment.

“France is a country of love, but there is love and love, you know? There are ways to approach a woman, and if it’s done with respect, it’s O.K. Without respect, it’s not good. Now if men want your love, they have to ask themselves how to be, how to approach a woman. They are scared. We must restart all relationships from the beginning. We have to cleanse society to find a better way. I’m sure the road will be long and difficult, but it will be positive in the end.”

several decades. Although the case ended in a mistrial—it is scheduled to be retried in April—the fact that it happened at all signaled a shift in the culture, a willingness to hold even beloved and powerful men accountable for past misdeeds.

Complaints at the University of Rochester helped expose harassment in academia. The chief executive of SoFi, the \$4 billion lending firm, resigned following a lawsuit over claims of sexual harassment. Then, in early October, the dam finally broke.

On Oct. 5, the *New York Times*

published the first story to expose Weinstein, one of the most powerful men in Hollywood and a leading Democratic political fundraiser, as a serial sexual predator. The revelation was quickly followed by *New Yorker* investigations that widened Weinstein’s list of accusers and showed the incredible lengths he went to cover his tracks. Weinstein denied the allegations, but the levers that he had long pulled to exert his influence suddenly were jammed. Fellow chieftains refused to defend him. Politicians who once courted him gave away his donations. His

company's board fired him.

Within days, the head of Amazon Studios, an influential art publisher and employees at the financial-services firm Fidelity had all left their jobs over harassment claims. By the end of the month, the list of the accused had grown to include political analyst Mark Halperin, a former TIME employee; opinion-shaping literary critic Leon Wieseltier; and numerous politicians and journalists. The Oscar-winning actor Kevin Spacey was scrubbed from a completed movie.

The response to the Weinstein allegations has shaped the way people view women who come forward. In a TIME/SurveyMonkey online poll of American adults conducted Nov. 28–30, 82% of respondents said women are more likely to speak out about harassment since the Weinstein allegations. Meanwhile, 85% say they believe the women making allegations of sexual harassment.

The movement—and fallout—quickly spread around the world. Michael Fallon, Britain's Defense Secretary, quit the Cabinet after journalist Jane Merrick revealed that he had “lunged” at her in 2003, when she was a 29-year-old reporter. In France, women took to the streets chanting not only “Me too” but also “*Balance ton porc*,” which translates roughly to “Expose your pig,” a hashtag conceived by French journalist Sandra Muller. In the week after #MeToo first surfaced, versions of it swept through 85 countries, from India, where the struggle against harassment and assault had already become a national debate in recent years, to the Middle East, Asia and parts in between.

“Suddenly,” says Terry Reintke, a German member of the European Parliament, who discussed her own harassment in a speech on Oct. 25, “friends from primary school or women that I know from completely different surroundings that would never call themselves feminists were starting to share their stories.”

By November, the spotlight was back on American politicians. A woman named Leigh Corfman told the *Washington Post* that Roy Moore, the Alabama Republican nominee for the Senate, abused her when she was 14 and he was a 32-year-old assistant district attorney. Nine women have come forward to describe inappropriate encounters with Moore, including

several who say he pursued them when they were teenagers. Moore has called the allegations “false” and “malicious.” “Specifically, I do not know any of these women nor have I ever engaged in sexual misconduct with any woman,” he said in late November.

The following week, radio host Leeann Tweeden wrote that Minnesota Democratic Senator Al Franken groped her on a

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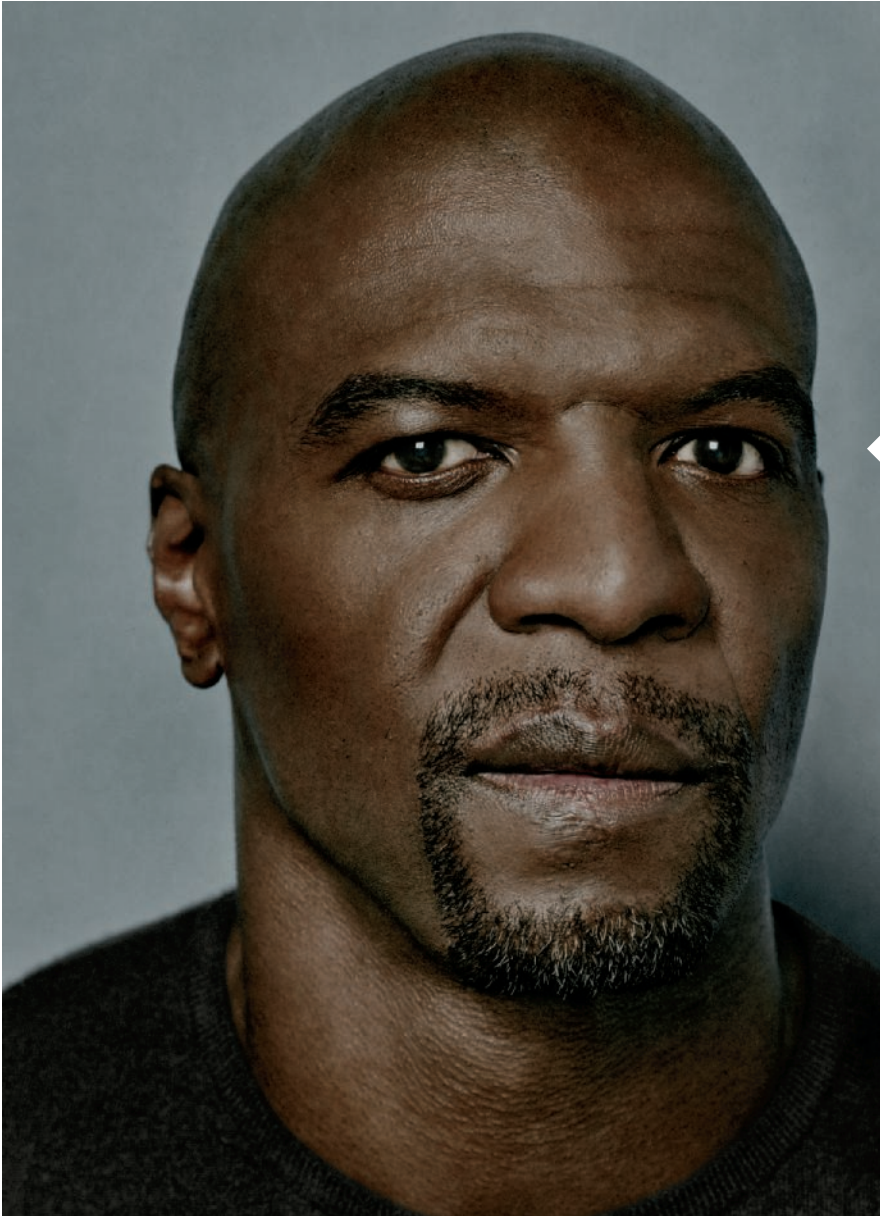
— SUSAN FOWLER



SUSAN FOWLER | 26 | FORMER UBER ENGINEER

Fowler's February blog post about the harassment she experienced as an engineer at Uber went viral. Uber then launched an investigation that led to the ousting of its CEO Travis Kalanick and more than 20 other employees.

"When other women spoke out, they were retaliated against. So there were certain things that I thought I could avoid: 'I'm not going to sue, because they'll make me sign a non-disclosure agreement. I'm not going to do press right afterward, because they'll say I'm doing it for attention. I can't have any emotion in my blog. I have to be very, very detached.' And I had to make sure that every single thing that I included in there had extensive physical documentation, so it couldn't be 'he said, she said.' And that's what I did."



TERRY CREWS | 49 | ACTOR

Crews is suing agent Adam Venit and William Morris Endeavor for sexual assault. Crews says Venit groped him in front of his wife at an industry event. Venit was briefly suspended from the agency.

“People were saying, ‘You should have beaten him up.’ I’m like, Why is nobody questioning him? Nobody questions the predator. You know why? Because they just expect it. And I expect it. And I just said, ‘No more.’ Why are you questioning the victim here? Let’s flip it. Let’s talk about what the predator is doing.”

The agency said it had suspended and demoted Venit, who declined to comment.

USO tour in 2006, before he was in office. Several other women have since come forward with similar harassment allegations against Franken, who has called on the Senate Ethics Committee to investigate his own behavior. On Dec. 5, Michigan Democratic Representative John Conyers resigned amid allegations that he had made sexual advances toward the women on his staff. He has said that the allegations “are not accurate; they are not true.”

Texas Republican Representative Blake Farenthold has also found himself in the crosshairs after media reports that he used \$84,000 in taxpayer dollars to settle a sexual-harassment lawsuit with a former aide in 2014. Farenthold denies that he engaged in any wrongdoing and

has vowed to repay the settlement.

The accused were both Democrats and Republicans, but the consequences thus far have been limited—and often filtered through a partisan lens. In politics, at least, what constitutes disqualifying behavior seemed to depend not on your actions but on the allegiance of your tribe. In the 1990s, feminists stood up for accused abuser Bill Clinton instead of his accusers—a move many are belatedly regretting as the national conversation prompts a re-evaluation of the claims against the former President. And despite the allegations against Moore, both President Trump and the Republican National Committee support him.

That political divide was revealed in

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UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

University of Rochester professors Celeste Kidd (*right*) and Jessica Cantlon (*left*), along with six current and former members of the brain and cognitive sciences department, filed complaints with the university and the EEOC, alleging harassment and retaliation.

"If they couldn't stop us from talking, they were going to stop everybody from listening," says Cantlon. "The administration went into our emails to try to find pieces of material that they could use to embarrass us or try to make other faculty members angry with us. But eight of us linked arms and continued to pursue the complaint. I think working together was powerful. It was hard to silence all of us."

The university has launched an investigation led by former U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White.

the TIME/SurveyMonkey poll, which found that Republicans were significantly more likely to excuse sexual misdeeds in their own party. The survey found that while a majority of Republicans and Democrats agree that a Democratic Congressman accused of sexual harassment should resign (71% and 74%, respectively), when the accused offender was in the GOP, only 54% of Republicans would demand a resignation (compared to 82% of Democrats).

As another election cycle approaches, Americans find themselves trying to weigh one ugly act against another in a painful calculus of transgression. Is a grope caught on camera more disqualifying than a years-ago assault that was credibly reported? What are we willing to forgive or ignore or deny if the violator shares our politics?

IV

IT WASN'T SO LONG AGO THAT THE BOSS chasing his secretary around the desk was a comic trope, a staple from vaudeville to prime-time sitcoms. There wasn't even a name for sexual harassment until just over 40 years ago; the term was coined in 1975 by a group of women at Cornell University after an employee there, Carmita Wood, filed for unemployment benefits after she had resigned because a supervisor touched her. The university denied her claim, arguing that she left the job for "personal reasons."

Wood, joined by activists from the university's human-affairs program, formed a group called Working Women United that hosted an event for workers from various fields, from mail-room clerks and servers to factory workers and administrative assistants, to talk about their own harassment experiences.

It was a proto-version of the social-media explosion we're seeing today, encouraging unity and reminding women that they were not alone. But even as public awareness about the problem of sexual harassment began

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— J U A N A M E L A R A

to grow, legal and policy protections were almost nonexistent. In the 1970s, most businesses and institutions had no policies on sexual harassment whatsoever, and even egregious complaints were regularly dismissed.

In 1980 the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency tasked with enforcing civil rights laws in the workplace, issued guidelines declaring sexual harassment a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. It was a victory, but with caveats: even after sexual harassment became explicitly illegal, it remained difficult to lodge a complaint that stuck—in part because acts of harassment are often difficult to define. What separates an illegal act of sexual harassment from a merely annoying interaction between a boss and his subordinate? When does a boss stop just being a jerk and become a criminal? Because the Civil Rights Act offered no solid legal definition, interpretation has evolved slowly, shaped by judges and the EEOC over the past 37 years.

In 1991, Anita Hill testified before the Senate committee confirming Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court, accusing him of sexual harassment and bringing national attention to the issue. But, she says, “The conversation was not about the problems in the workplace. It was about the fallout in politics.”

Even now, the contours of what constitutes sexual harassment remain murky. Some of the recent stories clearly cross the line, like a boss exposing himself to a subordinate or requiring that his researcher sit on his lap. But others feel more ambiguous. Under what circumstances can you ask a colleague about their marriage? When is an invite to drinks alone a bridge too far?

Jonathan Segal, a partner at the Philadelphia law firm Duane Morris, who specializes in workplace training, says he hears that confusion in the conversations men are now having among themselves. “It’s more like, ‘I wonder if I should tell someone they look nice, I wonder when it’s O.K. to give a hug, I wonder when



MEGYN KELLY | 47 | JOURNALIST

The host of NBC's *Megyn Kelly Today* and former Fox News anchor called out Bill O'Reilly for claiming that nobody at Fox News had complained about his behavior. She had. In 2016, Kelly revealed that she'd been sexually harassed by former Fox News CEO Roger Ailes.

"I always thought maybe things could change for my daughter. I never thought things could change for me. Never. I believed the system was stacked against women, and the smart ones would understand how to navigate it ... I'm starting to see it so differently. What if we did complain? What if we didn't whine, but insisted that those around us did better?"

Ailes denied Kelly's claims of harassment before he died in May. O'Reilly said he didn't know of any complaint by Kelly.

I should be alone with someone in a room," he says.

This uncertainty can be corrosive. While everyone wants to smoke out the serial predators and rapists, there is a risk that the net may be cast too far. What happens when someone who makes a sexist joke winds up lumped into the same bucket as a boss who gropes an employee? Neither should be encouraged, but nor should they be equated.

Companies, meanwhile, are scrambling to keep up. Most large U.S.-based corporations now have fairly complete policies on sexual harassment, and many have anti-sexual harassment training programs and claim to be "zero-tolerance workplaces." A 2016 EEOC report found

that a company's willingness to protect so-called rainmakers—high-performing men like Kalanick, Weinstein and O'Reilly—to be one of the most pernicious reasons C-suites and corporate boards overlooked harassment. It doesn't matter how good a company's policy is if its systems are ignored or don't work. "So much harassment training is like an episode of *The Office*," says Victoria Lipnic, the acting chair of the EEOC.

In some instances, sexual-harassment training has even been shown to backfire. In a 2001 study, Lisa Scherer, an associate professor of industrial-organizational psychology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, found that while training increased knowledge about

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Britain's Defense Secretary Michael Fallon quit his Cabinet position after Merrick said he "lunged" at her when she was a young reporter.

"I think we're all part of this movement. On Twitter, there aren't any country borders, because it's such a powerful thing. There are millions of women who have experienced harassment and assault in every country."

Fallon said in a statement that he's "behaved inappropriately in the past."

JANE MERRICK | 43 | JOURNALIST

Perkins broke the nondisclosure agreement she signed in 1998 when she accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual misconduct.

"My heart sinks when I think about the very bright women who should be at the top of their careers but aren't because they've had to deal with this. I think there would be hundreds more women in top positions. I really do."

Weinstein has denied the allegations of harassment.

ZELDA PERKINS | 44 | PRODUCER

Reintke, the youngest female member of the European Parliament, spoke about her experience with sexual harassment during a debate in Brussels in October.

"We need to break these patterns that, when you are in a powerful position, you can do whatever you want and that sexism is something that women just have to endure if they want to climb up the career ladder."

The European Parliament has said it will hire external investigators to look into allegations of harassment among its staff.

TERRY REINTKE | 30 | PARLIAMENT MEMBER

In the U.K., Labour Party activist Bailey said she was raped at a party event in 2011 when she was 19. She said she was then discouraged from reporting the attack by a senior Labour official.

"It's pretty simple: Don't make women feel uncomfortable, don't touch them without their consent, and no means no."

The Labour Party appointed a human-rights attorney to lead an independent probe into Bailey's allegation.

BEX BAILEY | 25 | CHARITY WORKER

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UNITED STATES MINT

A publisher of *Artforum*, Knight Landesman, stepped down after Schmitt sued him for sexual harassment.

“The harassment started when I was at the beginning of my career and had just moved to New York City.

I was trying to figure out my place in the art world, my place in the city, my place as an adult in the workplace. The harassment began so early, and it was so accepted in the industry. When I finally spoke out publicly, I wondered why I hadn’t sooner. I was afraid that I didn’t have the strength to make it stop.

I don’t feel that fear anymore.”

Artforum’s other publishers say they took swift action to support Schmitt. Landesman could not be reached for comment.

AMANDA SCHMITT | 30 | ART CURATOR



Iwu organized an open letter signed by 147 women calling out harassment in California's capital, which launched a state-senate investigation.

"Young women told me about the same men who harassed me years ago. And all I did was participate in the whisper network: 'Here's what you can wear,' 'Here's where you can go,' 'Here's who to avoid.' But you have to address it head on and as a group. It's hard to call 147 women liars. We can't all be crazy. We can't all be sluts."





BLAISE GODBE LIPMAN | 28 | DIRECTOR

Lipman accused former agent Tyler Grasham of sexually assaulting him when he was 18. Grasham has since been dismissed by his agency and is being investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department.

"I experienced a little bit of victim blaming, victim shaming—people digging into my Instagram and pulling up sexy photos, as if that discredited me from speaking out against sexual violence. And gay men are often highly sexualized in the media, so coming out with a story of sexual assault, especially one that also involved alcohol and maybe drugs, there is an idea that 'Well, did you want it?'"

Grasham could not be reached for comment.

what constituted sexual harassment, it also sometimes had a corrosive effect on workplace culture. "What was disturbing was that the males who had gone through training showed a backlash effect," she says. "They said they were less willing to report sexual harassment than the males who had not gone through the training."

Employers are also girding for future allegations and lawsuits. The insurance company Nationwide reported a 15% increase in sales of employment practices liability insurances between 2016 and 2017. And Advisen, which tracks insurance trends, says that EPLI insurance price has increased 30% since 2011, which indicates that more companies are reporting losses.

Corporate boards, wary of alienating female employees and customers and of drawing bad press, have been among the quickest to make changes. Uber, for example, which built its reputation on a willingness to flout norms, used to be a guiding light for small startups. Now nobody is pitching their company as the next Uber, says Fowler. "There's a shift to, 'We're not disrupting anymore. We're trying to build something that's good for consumers and treats employees fairly.'" It's a start.

State and local governments have also taken some concrete steps. In October, the Chicago city council passed an ordinance requiring hotels to provide panic buttons to employees who work alone in

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hotel rooms. In Springfield, Ill., lawmakers passed a measure that will allow an investigation into a backlog of sexual-harassment complaints in the statehouse. In Arizona, pending legislation would void nondisclosure agreements signed by victims of harassment to keep them silent.

At the federal level, the House and Senate have passed new rules requiring members of Congress and their staff to complete mandatory sexual-harassment training. A handful of Senators have also introduced legislation to rein in what are known as mandatory arbitration agreements—legal clauses that can appear in employee contracts that prevent workers from suing their employers in court for any reason, including sexual harassment. Some 60 million American workers are currently bound by them.

V

WE'RE STILL AT THE BOMB-THROWING point of this revolution, a reactive stage at which nuance can go into hiding. But while anger can start a revolution, in its most raw and feral form it can't negotiate the more delicate dance steps needed for true social change. Private conversations, which can't be legislated or enforced, are essential.

Norms evolve, and it's long past time for any culture to view harassment as acceptable. But there's a great deal at stake in how we assess these new boundaries—for women and men together. We can and should police criminal acts and discourage inappropriate, destructive behavior.

At least we've started asking the right questions. Ones that seem alarmingly basic in hindsight: "What if we did complain?" proposes Megyn Kelly. "What if we didn't whine, but we spoke our truth in our strongest voices and insisted that those around us did better? What if that worked to change reality right now?" Kelly acknowledges that this still feels more like a promise than a certainty. But for the moment, the world is listening. —*With reporting by* CHARLOTTE ALTER and SUSANNA SCHROBSDORFF/NEW YORK, SAM LANSKY/LOS ANGELES, KATE SAMUELSON/LONDON, MAYA RHODAN/WASHINGTON and KATY STEINMETZ/SAN FRANCISCO

'I STAYED

ANONYMOUS

BECAUSE I LIVE IN A VERY SMALL

COMMUNITY. AND THEY

JUST THINK USUALLY THAT WE'RE

LYING

AND COMPLAINERS.'

—ANONYMOUS

After a co-worker allegedly began kissing and pressing himself on her, this young Native American woman says she felt trapped. Her office had no HR department. She didn't feel her colleagues or family on her small, conservative reservation would believe her. So she quit her job.

"On the reservation, we keep to ourselves and don't really put too much out there. I thought of all the other people that had no voice. They're scared to do something like this because their parents say, 'You're not supposed to do that. You're not supposed to speak up.'"

ANONYMOUS | 22 | FORMER OFFICE ASSISTANT



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