

Harvey Weinstein & Bill O'Reilly

With multiple sexual harassment allegations being made against American film producer Harvey Weinstein and American journalist, author, and television host Bill O'Reilly in recent times, it is no surprise that many women have been voicing their support for the females of the world who have been victimized by men in power, and coming out with their own personal stories on the matter as well. The world has, once again, been struck with the sad truth of the high numbers of victims of sexual assault and rape culture. Much controversy has surrounded the Weinstein and O'Reilly cases.

For over twenty years, now sixty-five year old Harvey Weinstein has allegedly been harassing women sexually, with various accusations from big-name actresses such as Gwyneth Paltrow and Angelina Jolie. He was accused of rape by three different women, and was accused of other forms of sexual harassment by numerous other women as well. Being a large name in film production for many years, he had unabridged control over the careers of countless young women who were just starting out in the entertainment industry. He used his authority to try and persuade women into engaging in sexual acts with him, threatening to end their careers should they choose to disobey. French actress and model Eva Green said in an interview that Weinstein had lured her to his suite in Paris for a meeting where he then sexually harassed her. She managed to escape despite his threats to destroy her professionally. Neither Green nor her then-boyfriend ever got a call for a role from him again. Green is just one among many women who have spoken up recently about their own similar experiences with Weinstein, many also recalling being lured into suites for supposed meetings then being assaulted by the widely condemned womanizer.

O'Reilly, like Weinstein, has been accused several times of sexual assault over the span of many years. Recently, the former Fox News host was reported to have paid Lisa Wiehl, a Fox News legal analyst, thirty-two million dollars to settle sexual harassment allegations. O'Reilly responded to these reports with immense anger, stating that he was mad at God for the lack of protection and for allowing his children to be exposed to and hurt by his alleged misdeeds. Over the past twelve years, O'Reilly or Fox News have paid a colossal forty-five million dollars in publicly known settlements for his sexual misconduct. Many argue that the actions taken by men such as these two do not have to do with sex so much as they have to do with power. Wayne State University psychologist Antonia Abbey stated her belief that "women feel a responsibility to be emotional managers of relationships and often want to keep things friendly," and that these roles are particularly shown when women are being sexually harassed or intimidated by a man in power.

Because of the increase in conversation about sexual harassment and keeping women safe, there has been a worldwide spur of people taking action on social media and in protests with campaigns such as the #MeToo campaign, a hashtag that went viral in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein scandals. Along with women using the hashtag #MeToo to give people a sense of the magnitude of the problems regarding sexual harassment by stating simply that they too have experienced unwanted attention from a man, men have started planning their own campaign in protest. The #IWILLSPEAKUP campaign is currently being launched by a violence prevention and male socialization group by the name of A Call to Men.

While there is clearly a strong opposition to the ostensibly lewd behavior of men like Harvey Weinstein and Bill O'Reilly who abuse their power, there is still a lack of knowledge

surrounding the best way to prevent things like this from occurring in the future, and how to keep our girls and women safe. Countless believe that men with a history of repeated sexual assault deserve a much more intensified punishment, and need to be removed from their positions of power immediately. With many speaking out, perhaps great societal changes will take place, and the voices of innumerable women around the globe will be heard.