

Is time up now for the #MeToo Movement?

Decrying offenders is not enough: focus on supporting victims, argues [Emily Taylor](#)

Tuesday 13 February 2018



Image:Surdumihail

If you saw the name of a celebrity in a headline in 2016 you'd assumed they had died. If you have the name of a celebrity in a headline in 2017 it meant they had probably just been outed as a sex offender. Or maybe they're dead and a sex offender. In response the internet has collaborated to compile a blacklist of celebrities who must vanish from the public eye. Unfortunately the plan to do this is to smear their name and picture all over the internet so we know definitely to ignore them. New websites like Rotten Apples will warn you if a film is associated with someone accused of sexual misconduct from the obvious targets of Weinstein and Kevin Spacey to the likes of Ben Affleck, Jeffrey Tambor, Ed Westwick, and most recently Aziz Ansari – in a very peculiar exposé – that has started a backlash questioning the legitimacy of the #MeToo movement.

The Ansari article also brought up the question of journalistic integrity in reporting these stories, as they do sell. But it also calls up wider questions about how useful creating this hit list of men is. Firstly, this attitude paints all these offenders with the same brush, when there's a vast gulf in crime between Weinstein's systematic abuse of power over decades and Aziz Ansari being a dick on a date. Secondly, it also hasn't worked in the past. These issues have surrounded Woody Allen and Roman Polanski for decades but they still continue to make films. It takes more than just hurling abuse around the internet for something to happen.

Unfortunately there is also a decent chance now that some of these allegations are untrue, an argument

already co-opted by misogynistic rhetoric to try and devalue the movement as a whole. However, false accusations – though rare – should be treated seriously and I doubt the internet mob have done their research. The mob mentality of the court of Twitter isn't where the fates of these men should be decided. Unfortunately, it was the only place where these women and men could get their voices heard but very little beyond an initial reaction can be achieved there.

The focus of the #MeToo campaign has shifted from the voices that have been silenced onto the men who have committed these crimes. Furthermore, onto questions about how we consume media produced by, to put it mildly, dodgy individuals. But the question of separating the artist from the art has been going on for centuries with no actual answer. At the end of the day it's personal preference as to where the line is drawn, but again, the focus shouldn't be on this. We're not the victims because we might have to feel a bit bad while watching House of Cards or, god-forbid, not watch it at all. Efforts shouldn't be focused on eradicating these men, but instead on building a platform and support network for those who have spoken out. Though, this route of long-term change is more difficult; so not as attractive to an internet mob where social movements can become akin to fashion accessories. The movement from #MeToo to #TimesUp is hopefully showing a move away from singular stories towards systematic change. The outpouring of voices of the #MeToo movement was important, but creating a list of anyone who has had allegations against them to be banished from Hollywood is only a band-aid solution. And when the list starts to dry up – as it already has – the campaign will begin to lose some momentum. If it takes more allegations to create more action then what would have been the point of it all?

As the Time's Up campaign itself argued, "Access to prompt and comprehensive legal and communications help will mean empowerment for these individuals and long term growth for our culture and communities as a whole." Maybe these men might go to an actual court for their crimes if the victims have legal advice, as opposed to just having to disappear from the public eye for their sins – perhaps only temporarily – with only millions of dollars to wipe away their tears.

The outcry of the general public is still focused on tearing down men as opposed to building up their female and male victims. The names seared in people's minds are still the names of the offenders; the people whose voices who are apparently being heard for the first time are being swiftly forgotten.



2 comments

Jane

23 Feb '18 at 5:44 am

This metoo thing is stupid. Due process is dead!!!!

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Gigi2434

23 Feb '18 at 5:47 am

Agreed I'm not supporting strangers who say they were harrassed 20 years ago. He touched my knee help lol.

[Report](#)

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