



## Fresh from Hollywood!

Lot is happening in Hollywood now a days!

Everyday I wake up, a new news keeps coming! Not so good! But it happens!

Today I woke up, Harvey Weinstein is in the news.

And now, as it has hit the headlines, Roy Price, the head of Amazon Studios, has resigned as a result of a sexual harassment firestorm that's come out because women in Hollywood finally feel like they can have their voices heard.

End result? Amazon Studios Chief Roy Price decided to cancel "Good Girls Revolt" just about a month after its debut. Set in 1969, the partially fact-based drama followed a group of women journalists fighting for equal opportunity and fending off inappropriate bosses in the workplace; one of the real-life figures it portrayed was Eleanor Holmes Norton, who helped write the first government regulations against sexual harassment.

On Tuesday, Price resigned from Amazon Studios amid his own sexual harassment scandal.

Even in the dizzying two-week period brought about by a devastating pair of reports in the New York Times and New Yorker alleging decades of sexual harassment and assault by Oscar-winning film producer Harvey Weinstein, it was a jaw-dropping event

Weinstein's fall was swift and precipitous; since the original Oct. 5 story, he has been fired by his company, dumped by his wife, expelled from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and the Producers Guild and is newly under investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department for a rape allegation.

Price, who'd partnered with the Weinstein Company on high-profile TV projects from Matthew Weiner and David O. Russell, fell even faster. It only took hours for Amazon to put him on a leave of absence after producer Isa Hackett went on the record with graphic details about Price's behavior, and just days to fire him.

All good that was done in long employment career is over just in few hours!

This particular cultural moment, which feels at times like a national consciousness-raising session, has actually been more than a year in the making. Weinstein and Price are just the latest in a series of titans, including Bill Cosby, Roger Ailes, Bill O'Reilly and L.A. Reid, who have been brought down by allegation of sexual misconduct.

The nonstop sordid and horrifying stories told about Weinstein did, however, provoke a collective catharsis. At public events, women including Reese Witherspoon and Jennifer Lawrence have now spoken of enduring harassment and/or assault, while on social media thousands of women, including Gabrielle Union, Lady Gaga and Olympic gymnast McKayla Maroney joined the hash tag campaign #MeToo.

Meanwhile, men in the entertainment industry felt compelled to post statements denouncing Weinstein and supporting the women who have come forward. As the accusations increased, a few, like screenwriter Scott Rosenberg and director Quentin



Tarantino, admitted they were part of the problem for staying silent when they knew Weinstein had mistreated women.

“For the legions of women who have worked in this field as advocates and professionals for decades and decades, it’s about time,” says Toni Van Pelt, president of the National Organization for Women. “What allows this to thrive is the culture of silence, men protecting men, that’s just so ingrained in this society.”

All I can say that this is not merely an issue taking place at American society only. It happens all over the world! It's a global issue!

Catharsis, however, is not the same as change.

As many have pointed out as the Weinstein scandal unspooled, an eerily similar scenario played out a year ago, when the Washington Post uncovered the now-infamous “Access Hollywood” tape of Mr. Donald Trump boasting about groping women. In the days following that exposé, a dozen women came forward to say that Trump had groped or forcibly kissed them. While the candidate dismissed the claims as “totally made up nonsense to steal the election,” Republican politicians scrambled to distance themselves from Trump, and there was semi-serious talk of replacing him on the ballot.

A month later, Trump won the election with the support of 42% of women in the electorate — and 53% of white women.

So, is there more to the story?

Even so, Trump’s inauguration was a wake-up call. At the women’s marches in January, many participants carried signs that explicitly referenced Trump’s alleged mistreatment of women. Actress Ashley Judd, who would be one of the first major Hollywood stars to accuse Weinstein by name, read from a poem written by a 19-year-old: “Our ... ain’t for grabbing.”

But there have been so many false alarms that it’s hard to tell a cultural shift from a news cycle. Many famous men have faced grave allegations of misconduct toward the opposite sex — Trump, Woody Allen, Charlie Sheen, Mel Gibson, R. Kelly, Bill Clinton. Indeed, over the past decade, endemic sexual abuse and harassment has been exposed in seemingly every corner of American life, including Silicon Valley, the military, the National Park Service, the Catholic Church, women’s gymnastics, college football and elite East Coast private schools. Not coincidentally, these are largely male-dominated, hierarchical institutions full of vulnerable people intimidated into silence — a lot like Hollywood.

Gretchen Carlson’s lawsuit against Roger Ailes, filed in July 2016, was the tremor that set off the current tidal wave. Her legal action encouraged other women to come forward and ultimately brought about the professional demise of Ailes, a man once seen as untouchable. It also motivated journalists to pursue rumors that had plagued O’Reilly and Weinstein for years.

Carlson, a former Fox News host, says she was moved to take action “when I realized that my 26-year career of blood, sweat and tears and incredible hard work was going to come to an end at that particular establishment — and not because of my choice. I determined that if I didn’t speak up and do something, who would?”



Revelations about sexual harassment have been enabled by women's advancement in the workplace, Van Pelt says; greater economic security means less potential fallout for naming names. In Hollywood, she adds, "the women who have done this, by and large, who have made the headlines and brought it to the forefront, are women who are financially stable."

The term "sexual harassment" was coined by sociologist Lin Farley in the mid-1970s, a time when women, emboldened by the feminist movement, were on the rise in the workplace and often faced hostile treatment from their male colleagues. The 1980 blockbuster "Nine to Five" followed three women as they exacted extra-legal revenge on their caddish boss. Six years later, the Supreme Court officially ruled in *Meritor Savings Bank vs. Vinson* that sexual harassment was a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Sexual harassment scenarios are not new to America. It was law professor Anita Hill who in 1991 pushed the subject to the forefront of the national debate by accusing her former boss and Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of making crude comments and unwanted advances. Despite Hill's riveting testimony, Thomas was confirmed by the Senate and also won in the court of popular opinion: 58% of Americans at the time said they believed Thomas while just 24% believed Hill, who'd been accused of suffering from "erotomania." Yet the incident led to a surge in sexual harassment complaints and inspired what was then a record number of women elected to Congress in 1992.

And Hollywood made a documentary on Anita Hill in 2012 telling this story to the world, and once more informed of what they already knew.

Would sexual Harassment Training and education will fix the issue? Should the mind-set that needs to be addressed? Or it's an embedded problem when the value of a poorly behaving employee is deemed so high it's worth allowing them to do harm to others? May be all combined....?

The revelations about Weinstein have led to soul-searching — and some finger-pointing — in the entertainment community. Even before the scandal broke, the issue had clearly been on the minds of many women in the industry, as seen in "Good Girls Revolt" and recent story lines in women-led shows such as "Girls," "One Mississippi" and "Great News."

In an episode of Amazon's "One Mississippi," an influential producer masturbates in front of a woman during a business meeting. Following the dismissal of Price, Tig Notaro, the show's co-creator, said in a statement that every member of her show's all-female writing staff had experienced sexual harassment or assault, which "compelled us to try and shed just a little light on this epidemic."

But even among sorrow and scandal, there is humor. Last week, NBC's "Great News" offered a subversive gender-flipped take on the subject, with Tina Fey playing a predatory network executive who ogles and objectifies her employees in hopes of landing a multimillion-dollar exit settlement, like Ailes or O'Reilly.

For that matter, there is not a single day that goes by which does not cover a culture of harassment in Hollywood, and the complicit behavior that goes along with it. The newspaper reporters painted the picture of Harvey Weinstein as 'a goose laying golden eggs' that everyone coveted (and therefore kept their mouths shut even though they knew what was going on).



As I was writing this, the accusations against Halperin join the growing maelstrom of sexual harassment and assault charges, which have rocked the careers and reputations of former co-Chairman Harvey Weinstein, former Fox News anchor Bill O'Reilly, screenwriter James Toback, and others. As more women come forward to allege years of bad behavior, the roiling national discussion of workplace harassment shows no signs of abating

It would be desirable to see and address that how the 'old', centralized Hollywood model created the inevitability of all of this.

Hollywood frankly is no exception as compared to any film industry in the world where so much power resides in the hands of a few select people – the power that makes or breaks a career, the power to green light (or kill) a project on a personal whim, the use of implied (or explicit) threat that results in 1000s of voices forced into silence (over decades!) Don't you think bad stuff is going to happen?

Actors feel like they have to endure unacceptable (and in some cases illegal) behavior otherwise they may not be able to fulfill on their dreams and bright success similar to others. Is it tempting to keep balance of both?

On writing side, it is very surprising that the writers who give 'voice' to so many great and inspiring characters, even bring undesirable elements of society in light thru their writing, unfortunately don't use their own voices to speak up since the career they worked so many years creating could be taken away in an instant by the hands of a powerful decision maker.

And studio kings, like Harvey Weinstein and Roy Price appear to live in their own bubble supported by the system– they keep making movies, they keep making money, everyone still wants their 'golden eggs'.

It is unfortunate though!

Because they lack a feedback loop from colleagues and friends who are willing to stick their neck's out and say, 'Hey man, it's not cool what you're doing, and you're hurting yourself and a lot of other people. What's going on with you and how can I help?' Where are those close friends who enjoyed a glass of Champagne with these folks and partied all night long? Not even one said anything to alarm their friends? Or perhaps they said and it was overlooked. Regardless, the end result is rapidly taking them to end of career!

If you want to know how and why this culture of fear permeates the 'traditional' entertainment industry, look no further than the Hollywood industry itself. The studio system (and the corresponding talent agency power centers) are highly centralized. Weather you like it or not, it puts power in the hands of the very few individuals.

And everyone else is paying homage and providing tribute to these elites.

I think you will find the story of Amazon Studios being most tragic. They started with an incredible intent and a decentralized model to use the crowd to create entertainment, a similar mission at Voyage. Unfortunately after a couple short years of struggling to make that work (even with the vast fortunes of Amazon behind them), they pivoted to a traditional model – throw money at the biggest projects from the biggest talent from the biggest agencies. I don't fault them for the pivot since, as such a large business, they 'had' to compete with Netflix and quickly capture as many subscribers and market share as possible. Did this business model worked out successfully?



There was inevitability to the Amazon Studios story. It's simply what happens within a system of power centralization. And it wasn't new! was it? I mean how many times you have seen it happening in corporate world?

Past records says loud and clear as to how many industries with this systemic centralization problem have already fallen! It includes the industries such as the music, book publishing, and even the taxi transportation. Now it is Entertainment industry's turn I guess. Entertainment industry is taking longer to fall because of the volume of money and number of people involved in it. In addition stake holders who create a movie or TV show play an important role. As compared to producing a song, or writing a book creating filmed content is more complex thus the entrenched power web is more difficult to untangle and deconstruct.

But as complex as it appeared to be, it's happening. The Weinstein uproar is indicative of that. A death throe if you will.

And if you look at the history of world, you will find that the relationship between a man and woman has changed the map of the world-frankly too many times and yet no one appeared to have any lessons. Under such situation, I still like to think positive unlike many. The optimistic thought still exist in my mind about the future. Bad things happen, but then the great things emerge from painful endings. It's just takes a while that's about it! But change is inevitable!

So what would take for Hollywood to restore? It's time for Hollywood industry to decentralize. We already paid too much price for the accusations, justifying, court rulings and frustration caused thereby! And it appears to be continued! So it's time for power to transfer to the hands of the filmmakers who spend so much energy in making, the artists who work day and night in making, and producers, writers, and storytellers. It's time for a heart-centered process to emerge - one that honors the magnificent sparks of inspiration from which all this work filmmakers do to share stories with the world actually originates.

We must lead our industry further into its heart and are reminded of the original inspiration of why we're playing this game!

So lesson to learn for Hollywood is: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely". -----John Dalber

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Reference: LA Times