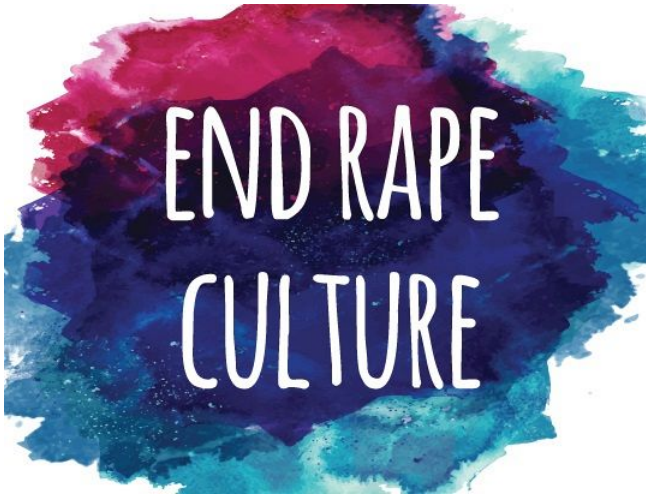


# #MeToo? The hard truth men must face

By Jonathon Ireland

20 October 2017



**Men must confront the facts: too many women are victims of sexual violence and the vast majority of their attackers are men known to them, writes [Jonathon Ireland](#).**

IF WE ARE being honest, the sexual harassment and assault allegations that have been made against [Harvey Weinstein](#) are hardly earth-shattering. There have been well publicised rumours about the pervasiveness of sexual violence and exploitation in Hollywood for decades. Where there is smoke there is fire. After all, this is an industry that celebrates and rehabilitates paedophiles like [Roman Polanski](#).

[#MeToo](#) breaks my heart. Women from around the world, with their own lives and stories. Women who will never meet or interact in passing. Millions of humans traumatically united by one common denominator — being the victims of sexual violence.

There is no one common story. Some perpetrators were family, others partners. Some were their friends or colleagues, others complete strangers. I have come to learn, however, that there are three inalienable truths about sexual violence and these are truths that us males all must confront.

The truths are relatively simple.

## TRUTH #1: SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS GENDERED

[#MeToo](#) isn't dominated by women because it isn't okay for males to be victims of sexual assault or harassment. It is dominated by women because [sexual violence is overwhelmingly committed by men, against women](#). In cases of sexual assault, 93% of offenders are male and 82% of victims are female.

You don't really see the significance of this until you flip the statistics. Only 7% of people who commit sexual assault are women and only 18% of victims are men.

On top of this, a male victim of sexual assault is more likely to have been assaulted by another male than a female. The problem is one dominantly caused by males and the victims are predominantly females.

An NYT reader's reaction to [#MeToo](#) messages from women that have flooded social media  
<https://t.co/5HfA8S61tR>  
[pic.twitter.com/qMLgi8X954](https://pic.twitter.com/qMLgi8X954)

— The New York Times (@nytimes)  
[October 17, 2017](#)

## TRUTH #2: SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS WIDESPREAD

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This is probably the most confronting truth about sexual violence. What if one in six women are the [victim of sexual violence before the age of 15](#). The victim should not consent to any of us. So if you posted on #MeToo, but she in a couple of days put a statistical



Was consent coerced? Plenty of my female friends have recounted stories about how they initially said no but ultimately said yes out of fear. Like it isn't our friends and loved ones who have been victims, but rather someone else's friends, somewhere else. The "one in six" statistic is almost sanitised and sexual violence repackaged into a less-confronting concept in the abstract—*Sometimes it is easier to just say "Yes" and not get hurt.*—dealt with in theory and ignored in the everyday.

I guarantee the man responsible for that comment has no idea that she had sex around us. These survivors are your mother, your sister, your friend, your colleague, that girl in the bar who just smiled at you, that girl in the bar who just told you to fuck off because you interrupted her conversation to introduce yourself. The "one in six" are reflection and introspection on how each of us as individuals approach sex and consent, keeping it out of sight and out of mind.

## TRUTH #3: YOUR FRIENDS MIGHT BE RAPISTS

paint a fairly obvious picture: too many women are victims of sexual violence and the overwhelming majority of their attackers are men who are "one in six" is that if the women all around us have been victims of sexual assault, then it is reasonable to deduce that some of the men around

us are ~~too~~ ~~high~~ ~~the~~ ~~percentage~~ ~~of~~ ~~us~~ ~~do~~ ~~ask~~ ~~this~~ ~~violence~~, ~~of~~ ~~ourselves~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~meantime~~? Self-abasing, Old-Testamentesque flagellation inspired [You can read alone from Jonathan Ireland on this.](#) Rather, [blog, This Young Contrarian](#) be victim [or follow him on Twitter.](#) [@ireland\\_jh.](#)

And these offenders are mostly men and they don't exist in the abstract. In light of #MeToo, a GREAT word is the type of the creep in the bushes at night is a gross mis-portrayal of sexual violence. [The truth is, sexual violence is so overwhelming intimate.](#) Three out of four sexual assaults [#StopRapeCulture](#) by people known [pic.twitter.com/dZljMu](#) beforehand: 45% [XOx](#) by a friend or acquaintance and 25% by a current or former partner. If ~~old~~ ~~SMC~~ ~~your~~ ~~friends~~ has posted [#meToo](#) on ~~the~~ ~~meat~~ ~~102~~ a decent chance [October 16, 2017](#) person who did it.

[#MeToo](#) This is so accurate it's scary to see it summed up so succinctly [pic.twitter.com/7YrR8xJdXi](#)

— jem (@kladoink) [October 17, 2017](#)