

# Pell guilty verdict and sentencing: MSM adds to trauma

*By Sophie Love*

*13 March 2019*



***Despite the mainstream media's defence of Cardinal Pell's shocking crimes, the victims and survivors of sexual abuse have finally been heard, writes [Sophie Love](#).***

SURVIVORS HAVE ENDURED many days of hell after the Pell [guilty verdict](#), as the mainstream media and other high-profile sympathisers have re-violated us with conservative commentary.

Nowhere have the victims or survivors of sexual abuse been given voice. But we are here and we have been re-traumatised day after endless day while the MSM deals with its disbelief in the face of faith.

"Triggered" doesn't begin to explain the riot of

emotions cavalcading through my body. I am so angry at the suffering men in power continue to inflict on children. I am so sad for the thousands (myself included) who will never have the satisfaction of facing their abuser or seeing them in court. I am one of many so frightened of my abuser and the ramifications of public accusation, that only my nearest and dearest and therapist know his name — 50 years on.

Defending Pell: Father Brennan and his Catholic Church have learnt nothing <https://t.co/yZ8L09KfY7> [@IndependentAus](#) so sad all this denial

— Mari R (@randlight) [March 11, 2019](#)

I weep for those of us who have had our lives smashed. Whose souls were splintered when our innocence was stripped from us, who never reached our potential, who have been deprived of hope and joy — the central tenets of a happy childhood. I weep for those who have traversed the darkest recesses of the psyche, journeyed in the realms of despair and self-loathing and paced the halls of hopelessness. My heart is so full for all of us who have lived in the shadowy underworld of shame and who can now speak our truth, and know we are not alone.

I am so glad that former PM [Julia Gillard](#) and key Independents, [Tony Windsor](#) and [Rob Oakeshott](#), had the courage and the conviction to swing open the door on childhood sexual abuse with the [Child Abuse Royal Commission](#). They have initiated a global conversation — a shining of the light into the dirty corners of predator behaviour, so we, the victims, can stand tall — if we are lucky enough to have survived.

I am sorry for the people of good faith – and in good faith – who have put their trust in institutions that have sacrificed their children on the altar of hubris, wealth and power. Jesus would be rampaging through Rome right now, raging at the men hiding in their frocks and gilded fortresses, who have allowed and enabled the desecration of children in His name.

Here's a preview of 'Guilty: The Conviction of Cardinal Pell', a truly riveting program from [@Milliganreports](#) coming up next week on [#4Corners](#) [pic.twitter.com/zq19hx5rHI](https://pic.twitter.com/zq19hx5rHI)

— Sally Neighbour  
([@neighbour\\_s](#)) [February 26, 2019](#)

The ABC *Four Corners* program, '[Guilty](#)' (Monday, 4 March), showed us that the Crown case against Cardinal Pell was strong – they would not have brought it otherwise – with multiple accounts across the years pointing to this man as a serial abuser of children.

It is easy for those who have not lived through such things to minimise the lifelong impact of a grope and fondle at a swimming pool. Yes, the crimes of which Pell has been found guilty are shocking — even unbelievable. But perhaps we need a man of this magnitude to be brought to his knees in order to show society that paedophiles lurk among us and we need to be watchful, we must be careful, we cannot trust too lightly, we must be on our guard.

Today, Cardinal Pell was [sentenced to six years](#) for his offences.

Whether he wins his appeal or not, we have now heard the voices of some of the people who Pell has harmed. We have seen their faces. It is hard for Catholics to reconcile this information with the image Pell has projected to the world. It is difficult to understand that you have been duped by an [arch-deceiver](#).

Trust me, there is no joy in

standing up and saying, "I have been sexually abused". This is not something one undertakes lightly. There is nothing to gain and everything to lose — friends, family and the way the world sees you.

It occurs to me that the cognitive dissonance that many Australians are collectively experiencing, highlighted in the mainstream media, is a faint shadow of what the victim feels as they try to calibrate a new normal: *How is it possible that this person I loved/trusted/respected and who should keep me safe, has done this terrible, incomprehensible, thing?* Compound that with the sense of un-scrubbable dirtiness, unrelenting shame, guilt that somehow this was my fault, a tsunami of grief and fear, and you will begin to understand what a victim has to try and live with.

The most important message here is to the victims and survivors of sexual abuse, wherever it happened and by whom:

***I see you.  
I hear you. I believe  
you.***

We are at a tipping point as these terrible crimes are being exposed. Hopefully, there is a future where no child will suffer as we have done. That's what we need to focus on now.

Those saying Cardinal Pell is not guilty need to understand how criminal law works  
[@IndependentAus](https://t.co/7GBOyXXwUC)

— Michelle Pini (@vmp9)  
[March 1, 2019](#)

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What I want to say

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