

Feminism's Injustice

Doctrinal

by Christopher DeGroot (June 2018)



Les Femmes d'Alger (O Version), Pablo Picasso, 1907

In the wake of the [essay](#) in *The American Interest*, fittingly

called “The Warlock Hunt,” Claire Berlinski captured this concern:

It now takes only one accusation to destroy a man’s life. Just one for him to be tried and sentenced in the court of public opinion, overnight costing him his livelihood and social respectability. We are on a frenzied extrajudicial warlock hunt that does not pause to parse the difference between rape and stupidity. The punishment for sexual harassment is so grave that clearly this crime—like any other serious crime—requires an unambiguous definition. We have nothing of the sort.

In recent weeks, one after another prominent voice, many of them political voices, have been silenced by sexual harassment charges. Not one of these cases has yet been adjudicated in a court of law. Leon Wieseltier, David Corn, Mark Halperin, Michael Oreskes, Al Franken, Ken Baker, Rick Najera, Andy Signore, Jeff Hoover, Matt Lauer, even Garrison Keillor—all have received the professional death sentence. Some of the charges sound deadly serious. But others—as reported anyway—make no sense. I can’t say whether the charges against these men are true; I wasn’t under the bed. But even *if* true, some have been accused of offenses that aren’t offensive, or offenses that are only mildly so—and do not warrant total professional and personal destruction.

Close students of human nature will not be surprised by this turn of events, for it is the way of men and women, in the face of a profound moral evil, to react in an extreme fashion, thereby producing new problems to deal with. For indeed our moral values, being *essentially* affective in their

experiential character, lend themselves to such irrational conduct. Believing, as of course is only just, that women should not be sexually harassed or sexually assaulted, it is only too easy, passionate creates that we are, for us to overlook the fact, though so logical, that the accusation of a thing is not proof that it occurred.

What is more, sexual assault and sexual harassment are exceedingly difficult issues because in our culture as in all others there is a natural and powerful paternalism. Protecting women is a kind of instinctive biological imperative, and so it is that most people, albeit unwittingly, tend to side with women when it comes to accusations. That this would be so is reflected in other areas of life: women tend to receive lighter prison sentences than men, for example, and we have all heard stories about women getting out of speeding tickets where men are not so lucky.

Still more, feminism in the last few decades has become a kind of willful self-abasement or psychological masochism to which feminists *must* adhere. That is why they want us to conceive of ordinary men as sexual predators. After all, if men are not forever sexually assaulting women and keeping them back generally, then feminists will have nothing to oppose. They will be out of a job, and may have to turn to a serious field, in which a [#MeToo movement](#), a mere accusation is now widely considered to be tantamount to evidence of sexual harassment or of sexual assault. In an [rotten universities](#), where feminism is a sacred cow. Ideas and values, having become popular in the academy, eventually spread throughout the culture. Irresponsible feminist academics, therefore, exercise an immensely harmful influence. And they have been doing so for quite some time. Indeed, it took the backlash to #MeToo to shed light on what is by no means a new phenomenon: the

reflexive bias toward men, so built into the culture that few even notice it, it being most people's normal, as it were. We find a representative example of this type of irresponsible feminist academic in the writer Becca Rothfeld. Though a PhD candidate in Philosophy at Harvard, she does not appear to be a lover of Sophia. In an [deep ingratitude](#) and unrealistic expectations. So it is with Rothfeld. "Smugness and entitlement." Here is a bourgeois woman's revealingly ungenerous and ironically smug and entitled perception of a type of man who is "always expounding on how identity politics detract from the real issues," having "witnessed too many of his intellectual peers succumb to caring about lesser things such as gender and postcolonialism." It is as if a man owed Rothfeld a commitment to "identity politics," and failing that, he's a bad guy. In a [rather unwilling](#) to do.

Neither Lin nor Dierks, it should be said, was ever charged with sexual assault (not to imply it didn't happen). In 2014, E.R. Kennedy, a "transman," [really a woman](#), and these highly implausible circumstances suggest [Dierks' case](#), one sees, what Camille Paglia has often observed, that in many cases of alleged sexual assault, young women simply don't know what they are doing, unaware of the *symbolic* meanings of their actions, and too passive, too immature to be in the sexual arena. One of Dierks' two accusers is a woman named Sophia Katz. By [academia's "affirmative consent,"](#) sex is [second accuser](#) is a woman who goes by the name of Tiffany (whether that is her real name is unclear). One night she got drunk and went back to Dierks' apartment. She claims that she "protested" his advances, but like Katz, she remained with Dierks. In her own words:

Stephen kicked off his shoes, lowered himself onto his bed and crawled over to me. He began caressing my arm and

pressed his mouth against mine with feverish urgency. I protested, but it immediately became clear that my attempts were futile. I lay still and stared at the ceiling as he groped and fondled me. Eventually, as Sophia did in her story, I began to do things that I thought would make him finish faster. He used my body off and on all night until he fell asleep. I willed the sun to rise faster. After a few hours that felt more like an eternity, he told me that he had to go to work. I nodded, and he kissed me one more time before getting up to go shower. As soon as I heard the water running I gathered all my things as fast as I could and left his apartment.

. . . I didn't know how to process what had happened, so I coped by lying to myself and to everyone else. When my friends expressed their concern I told them that everything was fine, that we hooked up, that it was whatever. I never fully believed that but I managed to convince myself and everyone else that I did. I began to avoid Stephen both online and in person, but after some time I convinced myself that what had happened was an isolated incident of misunderstanding. Months passed and it blew over. I rebuilt a friendship with Stephen on the pretense that everything was okay. Out of sight, out of mind.

In the course of the 12 hours since I found out about the existence of Sophia's piece my life feels like it's been turned on its head. Instead of worrying about the mountains of homework my professors have been steadily piling on week after week, or where my friends and I will bicker over going out to eat tonight, I'm grappling with crushing fear and anxiety. Stephen took so much from me and I will be damned if I'm complicit in letting him take

anything from anyone else.

If you read the whole of Tiffany's account, you will probably notice the usual unwitting confusion of a young woman who just doesn't know what she's doing, as it were. Although it was surely a bad idea for Tiffany to get drunk and go back to Dierks' apartment, it would still be wrong, of course, for him to sexually assault her. But is it clear that that is what happened? Perhaps, indeed, Tiffany's "protests" were "futile." Perhaps, for example, Dierks overpowered her. To be sure, though, we are not told *what* made those protests futile, according to Tiffany. And anyway, a horny young man, with a brain affected by alcohol, is certainly no mind reader.

Whatever may have happened, Tiffany later thought it was "an isolated incident of misunderstanding." But then she learns of Katz' story, and suddenly has a very different interpretation. Now this is rather like the morning after a drunken hook up at many a university: it is not until she has been in touch with another woman that a woman [my columns](#) in *Taki's Magazine*, women tend to be highly susceptible to the beliefs (read: feelings) of other women. On the whole, women are less independent-minded than men and [noted](#), throughout history mass hysteria has been almost entirely a female phenomenon.

As far as I can tell, Dierk has not responded to Tiffany.

Anyway, no matter what happened, these three cases are certainly too different and too complicated for Rothfeld to be justified in her presumption of guilt across the board. We can also see, in the Dierk example, the prudence of the old custom

of not going home with a man, or going to a man's home, unless you intend to sleep with him. Though she is liberal-minded indeed, Paglia, with her usual good sense, endorses such traditional prudence, which, of course, was much less needed when sex out of wedlock was socially unacceptable. When it was reported that the Pences don't meet alone with the opposite sex, feminists were predictably outraged. Yet ironically, they have much to learn from that conservative couple.

Memory, thanks to [well-documented](#) that this happens in abundance. From the universities to the workplace to Hollywood, a great many men have had their lives ruined by female lying and manipulation. "I can't tell you how many times," says attorney Justin Dillon, "I've seen this in my Title IX-accusers embellishing details and ultimately convincing themselves of things that did not happen." By assuming that Tao Lin and Stephen-Tully Dierks are guilty, Rothfeld is a representative feminist hypocrite: she purports to stand for fairness, while in truth her aim is to propagate a sense of victimization, even if that should entail smearing the reputations of potentially innocent men. Now this is a perfect example of what often happens when one is committed to an *a priori* perspective. Even if your intention is good (as Rothfeld's probably was not), evil may still result.

As long as it remains biased by definition, feminism is sure continue to be a frequent source of injustice in allegations of sexual harassment and of sexual assault-matters which by their very nature call for the most scrupulous nuance and objectivity. We ought, then, to follow the lead of Paglia and Hoff Sommers and call public attention to the actual function of feminism today, it having become a hypocritically unjust doctrine.

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