

# 5 lessons Harvey Weinstein can teach us about Hollywood

Harvey Weinstein is an overweight, crude, sex-addicted creep. But a powerful creep. At least until one week ago.

Weinstein is the co-founder of the production-and-distribution companies Miramax and the Weinstein Company. He has shared the credit for more than 300 Oscar nominations and after Steven Spielberg and God, has been thanked more times than anyone else at the annual Academy Awards. He is the kind of guy who can super-charge your career – or torpedo it. And he used his power to coerce young women into a “protégé with benefits” relationship.

Now he has come unstuck.

First there was a damning [New York Times exposé](#) on October 5 with allegations that he had been harassing women in Hollywood for three decades. He had reached settlements with at least eight women, all with strict non-disclosure agreements. Two days later [The New Yorker](#) published another exposé. Thirteen women alleged that he had harassed or assaulted them, including three who said that he had raped them. No doubt more revelations are on the way.

What lessons are to be learned from the fact that a sexual predator was one of the most famous men in Hollywood, one of its most admired producers, a man who was courted by the glitterati and politicians – without being publicly denounced?

1. *Hollywood justice is quick and efficient.* Last Tuesday Harvey Weinstein was powerful and famous. By Wednesday of this week, Harvey Weinstein was pathetic and despised. He has been fired from the company he co-founded; his company is changing its name; his wife has announced that she will divorce him; his lawyer has quit; nearly all his friends have tweeted nasty things about him. Harvey Weinstein has become an unperson in the space of just one week. Justice has been done.

2. *Hollywood moves as a herd.* Last Tuesday, Harvey Weinstein was everyone's friend. Now he is everyone's punching bag. The crowds in China's Cultural Revolution who rushed to denounce the enemies of Mao could have learned a trick or two about groupthink.

3. *Hollywood stands strong and united to denounce injustice – whenever it's safe.* As Ewan McGregor tweeted to the world: "It's about time this came to light ... Heard rumours over the years but this is awful. Bye Bully!" Why did it take so long?

Where are Hollywood's heroic whistleblowers? It's not that they didn't have role models. Hasn't anyone watched *Erin Brockovich*? It won an Oscar, for heaven's sake.

4. *Hollywood actually believes in the super-villains of the Marvel Universe.* Loki-Harvey is evil. Get rid of Loki-Harvey and Thor will make everything hunky-dory. Marvel characters don't ask many questions about structural injustice. But this is wrong. There needs to be an inquiry into Weinstein's Willing Panderers. Why does the system operate this way?

5. *Hollywood has created a corporate tyranny.* Despots and their underlings make or break careers and govern by fear. This week's news about the Weinstein scandal was like *The Great Escape*, with prisoners smashing their mind-forged manacles, scaling the walls and running for freedom. It's as if they had been toiling away in a claustrophobic prison hidden away from the sunlight of democracy and operating according to its own rules.

Hillary Clinton, who pocketed Weinstein's donations to her campaign, issued a [statement](#): "I was shocked and appalled by the revelations about Harvey Weinstein." She was channelling *Casablanca*'s Captain Louis Renault: "I am shocked-shocked-to find that gambling is going on in here!" (as he pockets his winnings).

Perhaps the news did come as a shock. But the bigger shock is that Hollywood, from top to bottom, kept mum all these years. Shouldn't the state of California insist on a deep and wide-ranging investigation of this corrupt industry?

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Michael Cook is editor of MercatorNet. [This MercatorNet article](#) was republished with permission.

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