

How Big Tech Smeared Brett Kavanaugh and Protected Jeffrey Epstein

While the *New York Times*' Robin Pogrebin's and Kate Kelly's [The Education of Brett Kavanaugh](#) turned out to be a giant dud, it did expose Silicon Valley's complicity in the false smears against the Supreme Court justice.

Reid Hoffman, co-founder of Microsoft's LinkedIn, and Zynga founder Mark Pincus [lent a private jet](#) to Christine Blasey Ford to testify at Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing last year. "We believed then, as we do now, that it's important to take seriously accusations of violence against women," Hoffman said.

Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg [helped find](#) a lawyer for Ford and advised her on how to sell her story to the public. Any tech exec who appeared to differ from the accepted opinion was reprimanded. Facebook [apologized for one of its execs](#), Joel Kaplan, after he attended the Kavanaugh hearing because it appeared that he was supporting the judicial nominee. The company hosted an internal town hall to quell employee anger over Kaplan's attendance.

Big Tech exhibits serious hypocrisy on sexual misconduct, and there's no better exemplar of this than Hoffman himself. He claims not to tolerate violence against women, yet he helped rehabilitate Jeffrey Epstein's image.

Hoffman invited Epstein to [fundraise](#) for MIT Media Lab in 2015. That kind of elite support allowed Epstein to return to polite society and continue with his heinous crimes. The Microsoft exec also [defended](#) then-MIT Media Lab director Joi Ito, who took several donations from Epstein. Hoffman attacked reporters for investigating Ito and his ties to the

pedophile.

Hoffman apologized for his Epstein association earlier this month, but his apology is too little too late. The damage is already done.

The Microsoft associate's relationship with Epstein contrasts sharply with the image he has tried to cultivate.

Hoffman promoted the "Decency Pledge" in 2017, which said that investors should "refuse to do business" with accused sexual harassers. He was particularly incensed by the "outrageous and immoral behavior" of execs who'd abused the power relationship between boss and employee. Yet he did not seem incensed by accusations that Epstein had abused his power to exploit the most vulnerable.

Moreover, taking this pledge seriously would blacklist most Big Tech monopolies. Consider the [allegations against top Google lawyer David Drummond](#). Drummond was accused by a former employee in August of abusing his power and having multiple affairs with women he supervised. Drummond still works as Google's senior legal chief in spite of the allegations. Microsoft, meanwhile, is [facing a lawsuit](#) for failing to act on 238 internal complaints of rape, sexual harassment, and sex discrimination.

Big Tech is desperate to attract women to its ranks, but Hoffman's actions likely hurt that cause. Microsoft CEO Brad Smith writes in his new book that more women need to work in Big Tech and argues that tech companies are partially responsible for the dearth of women in the industry since they haven't done enough to recruit them.

He writes: "[T]he world of technology remained stubbornly slow in recognizing and creating opportunities for women more broadly. At most tech companies, women still represent 30 percent of the workforce, and an even lower percentage of technical roles."

What do those women think of a Microsoft associate helping out Jeffrey Epstein? Do they think that's a culture they want to join?

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