

Epstein and Entertainment: What Happens When Your Favorite Actor Is on the List?

Fewer legal proceedings have been as scrutinized, memed, and heatedly discussed as those involving the late, infamously well-connected human trafficker Jeffrey Epstein and his girlfriend and accomplice, Ghislaine Maxwell. From social media infographics declaring, “Epstein didn’t kill himself,” to demands to have Epstein’s client list unveiled so its members can be prosecuted to far-fetched conspiracy theories, society is eager to learn more about the buyers in Epstein and Maxwell’s illicit transactions. Now, following a December [federal court ruling](#), the names of [over 150 individuals](#) linked to Epstein and Maxwell are being [unsealed](#).

The documents, which are [gradually being made public](#), come from a lawsuit by Virginia Giuffre, a masseuse who accused Epstein of both sexually abusing her and pressuring her to perform sexual favors for several high-profile politicians, billionaires, and others. The most well-known of these is Prince Andrew of the United Kingdom, who [settled out of court](#) with Giuffre in 2022.

The documents also contain references to other persons whom Giuffre met while employed by Epstein, but whom she claims did not force her into sex, such as the former President [Donald Trump](#).

Despite the general lack of information at the time, some interested parties elected not to wait for more facts before making accusations of association with Epstein. Aaron Rodgers took to an [ESPN sports analysis show](#) to call out one public

figure in particular by name: “There’s a lot of people,” the New York Jets quarterback said, “including Jimmy Kimmel, really hoping [the Epstein client list] doesn’t come out.” This is the latest in a long series of barbs traded between Rodgers and Kimmel; Kimmel has previously made fun of Rodgers’ political views on issues such as the COVID-19 vaccine and UFOs.

This time, however, Kimmel chose stronger words than sarcastically suggesting that the NFL should “revisit the concussion protocol.” The TV host [tweeted](#):

... for the record, I’ve not met, flown with, visited, or had any contact whatsoever with Epstein, nor will you find my name on any ‘list’ other than the clearly-phony nonsense that soft-brained wackos like yourself can’t seem to distinguish from reality. Your reckless words put my family in danger. Keep it up and we will debate the facts further in court.

While Kimmel’s name has never actually surfaced in connection with Jeffrey Epstein, those of other high-profile entertainers have. Larry Vioski, Epstein’s former pilot, [testified](#) that actor Kevin Spacey ([acquitted](#) last summer of unrelated sex crimes) was among many famous persons whom he had flown on Epstein’s behalf. Filmmaker Woody Allen; actors Alec Baldwin, Dustin Hoffman, and Ralph Fiennes; musicians Phil Collins and Mick Jagger; comedian and convicted rapist Bill Cosby; and studio executive Bob Weinstein (brother of the more infamous Harvey) are also [known](#) to have associated with Epstein to some degree.

The revelation of the 150-plus names may cause political shake-ups as former presidents, Congressmen, foreign monarchs, and celebrity business moguls all find themselves in hot water. And the release of Epstein’s flight logs would surely only reveal more well-known names. But while the eyes of the world are on the more overtly powerful figures whose names are

announced, what will become of the entertainment industry powerhouses listed right next to them?

Eagle-eyed media consumers are often notorious for leaping at any chance to “cancel” a celebrity whom they find distasteful, whether for unproven misconduct allegations (as with Spacey) or for unpopular political stances (as with Mark Hamill and Gal Gadot for their [support of Israel](#)). For many, it is imperative that the artists whose pictures, songs, and comic acts they consume are aligned with certain, often progressive, values.

Will they expect the same values from proven associates of child sex traffickers when all the names are revealed? Or will they dismiss the whole matter as a right-wing conspiracy?

While “cancel culture” is often criticized as being antithetical to free speech and honest discourse (which it is), it’s worth remembering that there is a difference between bullying people who have a different worldview and holding people accountable for causing irreparable harm to children. If your favorite actor or singer is on that list, ask yourself: What would I want the consequences to be if I wasn’t their fan?

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