

Culture Warrior of the Year: Ronan Farrow



It's been quite some time since anyone (other than President Trump) has taken Time Magazine's annual *Person of the Year* issue particularly seriously. Once a renowned recognition of highly influential individuals, this industry hallmark has lost much of its luster over the years.

Part of the reason is the decline in popularity of print-publications, especially in the realm of the news media where – thanks to the Internet – national stories now become old news within a matter of hours. *Time* is an *old media* institution fighting to stay relevant in a *new media* world, where it's competing with everyone from 24/7 cable channels to popular blogging websites. And in a market so saturated, the advantages of nostalgia and tradition can't always be relied upon.

Unhelpful to the situation has been *Time's* rather eye-rolling selections for their marquee issue over the years, especially when the magazine chooses to go the composite (and somewhat

lazy) route of romanticizing *movements* rather than settling on an individual. In 2005, it was “The Good Samaritans.” In 2011, they went with “The Protester.” My personal favorite was 2006’s “You”.

Riveting.

Still, I’ve always liked at least the *concept* of *Time’s* Person of the Year, which has long been billed as the recognition of who “has done the most to influence the events of the year...for better or for worse.” It’s a premise I find intriguing. And for that reason, I have shamelessly stolen it, and used it for a new annual feature here on BernardGoldberg.com: *Daly’s Culture Warrior of the Year*.

This column will be kind of like the *Time* issue, except that no one has ever heard of it, would pay money for it, or will remember it by next week. Also, instead of determining the most influential person in the world, I have gone the *nationalist* route of focusing on America – specifically American culture, and who has influenced it the most in 2017.

Determining this person was no easy task. The country saw a cultural tsunami during the 2016 election cycle – one that has certainly carried over into this year. Our new political landscape has changed the hearts and minds of millions of Americans. Behavior once deemed unacceptable by one side of the political divide is now rationalized and even emulated in those quarters, while the other side watches helplessly (but not silently) as years of politically-correct overreach and cultural gains blow up in their faces.

But there was a different, more noble revolution that boldly planted its flag in 2017. It has transcended American politics (though political figures have by no means been immune to it), and it continues to rattle dominant industries to their very core.

Some call it the #MeToo movement. Others frame it as a war on

institutionalized sexual harassment. I see it as a *draining of the swamp* – a swamp filled with sexual-predator entitlement.

I'm talking about the highly-publicized chain of events that arguably began with Ronan Farrow's groundbreaking exposé on Harvey Weinstein, which detailed the experiences of 13 women with sexual misconduct accusations (including rape) against the famed Hollywood producer. And I use the word "entitlement" because this is a component of the problem that I don't think people like me previously grasped.

Women have had a better understanding of it, and for some time. According to a recent Quinnipiac poll, 60% of women in America have faced sexual harassment, in one form or another.

Most men, on the other hand, tend to think of sexual predators as faceless lowlifes who peep through windows and wait outside women's apartment buildings under a hood. While we've long understood, of course, that sexual malfeasance also goes on in the workplace, the discovery that industry titans have been engaging in such behavior, with "open secret" impunity (over a span of decades, in some cases), was a real awakening.

In fact, listening to the audio of Weinstein pressuring model Ambra Battilana Gutierrez into a sexual situation was so shocking to me that it made me physically ill.

When the Bill Cosby accusers came forward, I think most people viewed the entertainer as an aberration (or maybe that's what we *hoped*). When Roger Ailes and others at Fox went down, the political hits came, but society was largely unfazed. It wasn't until the Weinstein story came along that a cultural sea-change began.

Farrow's fearless reporting (in the face of lawsuit threats and his network not wanting to feature the story) thoroughly exposed an enormously powerful man whose years of sexual deviancy killed the careers and altered the lives of dozens of women... all while that man amassed more power under the

protection of Hollywood and the political class.

That reporting let actresses (who'd kept their stories secret for years) know that they finally had a voice – not just in Farrow, but also in Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, whose piece about Weinstein paying off sexual harassment accusers ran in the *New York Times* just a few days earlier. This gave more and more victims the strength to come forward against Weinstein, with the count currently standing around 80.

Of course, the momentum didn't stop at Weinstein. Credible charges of sexual harassment have since been leveled against dozens of powerful men, including high-ranking politicians, A-list celebrities, national journalists, and corporate CEOs. And that list seems to grow almost daily.

Additionally, the political ramifications of the story recently led to the discovery that potentially millions of dollars of taxpayers' money have been used to secretly settle sexual harassment charges against members of the U.S. Congress.

Make no mistake about it: This is a watershed moment in this country.

What we're witnessing is a societal awakening, and it's a very good thing for the cultural fabric of our nation. Using positions of power for sexual exploitation should never be tolerated, and as Peggy Noonan wrote in a recent piece for *The Wall Street Journal*, "sexual predators are now on notice."

And it was all made possible by exactly the type of gutsy, quality journalism we often complain no longer exists in this country. Perhaps more ironically, it came from a journalist who many (especially conservatives like me) previously considered a lightweight: Ronan Farrow.

The women who've been brave enough to speak out about their ordeals are the real victors in this story, but without

Farrow's steadfast work, I'm not convinced that what we've been seeing over the past several weeks would have ever come to fruition.

For that reason, Ronan Farrow wins this year's prestigious *Daly's Culture Warrior of the Year* nod, and I'm hoping more people in his profession follow his lead in taking genuine risks to speak truth to power.

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U.S. Army Special Forces;
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Weapons: Fact or Fiction

Wolf Whistles Offend – Killing the Unborn Does Not

- ❌ Wolf whistles offend some but killing the unborn does not. One such person is Princeton philosophy professor Elizabeth Harman who was offended by this billboard. She posted it on Facebook, someone blogged about it, which then prompted Holly Kearl, founder of the Washington-based organization "Stop Street Harassment" to start a petition drive to have it

removed. And, sure enough, the mall management agreed to remove it.

According to Miss Kearl's website, street harassment is "catcalls, sexually explicit comments, sexist remarks, groping, leering, stalking, public masturbation, and assault. Most women (more than 80% worldwide) and LGBTQ [by the way, I have no idea what the "Q" stands for] folks will face gender-based street harassment at some point in their life. Street harassment limits people's mobility and access to public spaces. It is a form of gender violence and it's a human rights violation. It needs to stop."

And these women somehow equate public masturbation and assault with this dopey billboard? It's absolutely ridiculous.

But, I want to get back to Prof. Harman who started the brouhaha about the "offensive" billboard.

This is the same Prof. Harman's who wrote a paper on "Creation Ethics: The Moral Status of Early Fetuses and the Ethics of Abortion" in which she espouses the "Actual Future Principle," which says, "an early fetus that will become a person has some moral status. An early fetus that will die while it is still an early fetus has no moral status." In that paper she says, "I believe that nothing morally significant happens in an early abortion" and concludes, "while there is nothing wrong with having an abortion on a whim, there is something gravely wrong with allowing a pregnancy to continue without moral deliberation."

Then in 2008, at a symposium, "Is It Wrong to End Early Human Life" at Princeton, she compared unborn babies with plants, "Look, when we think about ending an early human life, this is something that is really bad for the embryo or early fetus that dies, it's losing out tremendously—I agree with that as I already said. And then you said that it's one of the things that we should care about. And, um, I think that I should have

said before that I think it's really dangerous to slide from noticing that something is bad for something, to thinking that that gives us a moral reason. And just to prove that that doesn't follow, think about plants. So lots of things are bad for trees, and plants, and flowers, and often that gives us no reasons whatsoever, certainly no moral reasons. In my view, fetuses that die before they're ever conscious really are a lot like plants: They're living things, but there's nothing about them that would make us think that they count morally in the way that people do."

So, Prof. Harmon (thank God I'm not in school anymore), on the one hand, is offended by a billboard about wolf whistles which she claims is an affront to her dignity, but, on the other hand, won't recognize the dignity which should be afforded to an unborn child who she equates to a plant.

I wonder if proponents of abortion ever feel lucky that their parents didn't believe in abortion.

Prof. Harmon's stupidity is offensive to me and her status as a professor lecturing young people is shocking. To whom do I complain?

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.

LMFAO is Getting a Bad Rap

☒ I turned on the radio the other day and the host and his cohorts were talking about a news story out of Aurora, Colorado, where a first-grader was given a three-day suspension from school after being disciplined for what the school called "sexual harassment" for singing LMFAO's song, "Sexy and I Know It" to a female classmate, not once but

twice!!! (OMG! The world is coming to an end!)

If you're not familiar with this very catchy tune, it's featured in the M&Ms commercial that aired during the Super Bowl game. If you haven't seen the commercial, you can listen to the song here. Even Elmo from Sesame Street has done a parody of this song with almost 2 million hits on youtube. (LMFAO's other song, Party Rock, is used in the Kia commercial featuring the hamsters.)

I have to agree with the radio host on this one. This is not sexual harassment. The term is overused and when it is, it diminishes what really is sexual harassment. Now, if you want to say that the kid was disturbing the class, that's ok. Maybe it wasn't the time and place for the kid to audition for America's Got Talent. But sexual harassment? Really?

According to his mother, this was the little boy's "awkward attempts to impress a girl." The male gender has been doing this since the beginning of time. I'm sure the cave boy threw little pebbles at the cave girl who lived nearby to get her attention. Guys have been trying to get girls' attention since day one. How is this any different from sticking a girl's pony tail into an ink well back when desks actually had ink wells?

According to the article I read, "the school district pointed to its anti-bullying program, saying that examples of sexual harassment include 'sexually oriented "kidding" or inappropriate references to sexual matters, continued or repeated verbal remarks about a person's body (and) making sexual or lewd gestures.'"

This little guy was singing a song that's featured in a candy commercial and parodied by a beloved Sesame Street character, and he's now labeled as a sexual harasser? This is just ridiculous.

The people on the radio, each growing up in different decades,

pointed to songs that have been far more explicit than "Sexy and I Know It." The oldest guy reminded his listeners of the Raspberries tune, "Go All the Way" and the youngest gal said that she and her friends sang George Michaels' "I Want Your Sex" and made up dances to it. The other guy said that Rod Stewart's "Da Ya Think I'm Sexy" was far more explicit than "Sexy and I Know It." That one reminded me of "Tonight's the Night" which was even more explicit. And can anyone my age forget Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin) singing "Black Dog" or "Whole Lotta Love." And I'm positive kids heard all these songs on the radio over the decades and sang along. Do they know exactly what they're singing about? I doubt it. "Sexy and I Know It" seems tame compared to what I grew up with.

Boys/men have been trying to impress girls/women any way they can. Sometimes they're successful; sometimes not. This was just a little boy's attempt to impress a girl in his class. To label his behavior as sexual harassment is just plain nuts.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.