

**From:**

**To:**

**Cc:**

**Subject:** DAILY BEAST; How Did Trump and Clinton Pal Jeffrey Epstein Escape #MeToo?

**Date:** Fri, 22 Jun 2018 20:08:44 +0000

**Importance:** Normal

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# How Did Trump and Clinton Pal Jeffrey Epstein Escape #MeToo?

Call him Weinstein 1.0: The billionaire with famous friends (Kevin Spacey, Woody Allen) was a secret pervert who used his power and influence to groom teens for abuse.

As the Harvey Weinstains of the world [get their comeuppance](#) in the press and in court, another serial predator walks free.

Last month, after a flood of allegations by Hollywood actresses, Weinstein was indicted on rape and criminal sex act charges in New York. The disgraced Hollywood executive stands accused of assaulting one woman in 2004 at Miramax headquarters in TriBeCa and raping another woman at a Midtown hotel nine years later. He has pleaded [not guilty](#) to these crimes.

Since Weinstein's reign of terror was exposed and ignited a #MeToo reckoning, [other powerful men](#) have found themselves publicly censured or [even toppled](#) over their dark pasts and allegations of [sexual misconduct](#).

But the Weinstein Effect seems to have spared one Jeffrey Epstein—a 65-year-old billionaire and convicted sex offender who's palled around with [former President Bill Clinton](#), [Prince Andrew](#), [Kevin Spacey](#), [Woody Allen](#), and other high-flying friends whose names were [revealed in his "little black book"](#) and flight logs for his private jet. Many of them enjoyed jaunts to Epstein's private Caribbean island and mansions in Manhattan and Palm Beach, Florida.

Even President Trump was among the deviant philanthropist's admirers. "I've known Jeff for fifteen years. Terrific guy," Trump [told New York](#) in 2002. "He's a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side. No doubt about it—Jeffrey enjoys his social life."

Jeffery's "social life," according to police and a score of lawsuits, involved a pedophile ring of dozens of underage girls, whom he groomed and then loaned out to powerful friends. But aside from a minor conviction in Florida—for which he served a mere 13 months—Epstein has emerged remarkably unscathed. New York authorities have never charged him with any crime, and he still drops into his [Upper East Side mansion](#), where women have been photographed [coming and going, according to tabloid reports](#). His sex offender registration lists his primary address as St. Thomas.

The mysterious financier's sick world was unmasked in March 2005, when the stepmother of one 14-year-old victim phoned police and said a wealthy man had molested her child. She'd received a call from a schoolmate's mom, who overheard her own daughter discussing "how [the victim] had met with a 45-year-old man and had sex with him and was paid for it," a police report said. Around that time, a teacher found \$300 in the girl's purse.

Palm Beach detectives would soon unearth five girls who claimed that Epstein had lured them into a ring of sexual abuse. By the time Epstein inked his plea agreement, the feds had identified 40 victims. Police said Epstein was enlisting his employees and other young women to recruit underage girls—many of them underprivileged or [from broken homes](#)—for massages at his home. One recruiter told police that Epstein advised her, "The younger, the better."

"'I've known Jeff for fifteen years. Terrific guy,' Trump told New York in 2002. 'He's a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side.'"

The teens, some as young as 13, were ordered to remove their clothes. During the massages, Epstein would masturbate himself and molest his victims, according to both lawsuits and police reports. Sometimes, according to court records, he forced them into intercourse with him or into performing sex acts with an assistant, whom he allegedly bragged of purchasing as a sex slave from her parents in Yugoslavia. Afterward, the victims said, Epstein usually paid them \$200 or \$300 and as much as \$1,000.

"He's never denied girls came to the house," Jack Goldberger, Epstein's defense attorney, told the *Palm Beach Post* in July 2006. But Epstein didn't know the girls' ages, Goldberger said, and took a polygraph test to prove it. "He passed on knowledge of age," the lawyer said.

In court filings responding to victims' lawsuits, Epstein said each teenager "consented to and was a willing participant in the acts alleged" and that he "reasonably believed" they were 18 years old during the "alleged acts."

Epstein eventually walked free with a slap on the wrist, even after Florida cops took their case from state prosecutors to the FBI and U.S. attorney's office.

In June 2008, Epstein pleaded guilty to two state charges: solicitation of prostitution and procurement of minors for prostitution. In an unusually [sweet deal](#) with federal prosecutors, [he served 13 months](#) of his 18-month sentence in the private wing of a Palm Beach county jail and was permitted to leave six days a week, for 16 hours

each day, for “work release,” [according to local press reports](#). Epstein agreed to register as a sex offender for life, as well as fund attorneys for more than 40 victims who filed lawsuits against him for damages.

“Epstein’s high-powered legal team, which included Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, supplied prosecutors with dossiers on the alleged victims in an effort to discredit them.”

Epstein has continued to make headlines in the decade since his conviction, as his alleged victims pursue him in court. One accuser, [REDACTED] came forward to the [Daily Mail in 2011](#) to claim that Epstein flew her across the world to “meet” Prince Andrew when she was 17 years old. The litigation from [REDACTED] and other Jane Does has untangled more sinister layers of Epstein’s operation—including alleged sex crimes that occurred in New York but apparently went unprosecuted. (In depositions for the civil cases, Epstein has pleaded the Fifth when asked about his sexual activity with underage girls.)

His name resurfaced during the 2016 election season, when a woman using the pseudonym [REDACTED] filed a lawsuit against Trump, claiming he raped her at one of Epstein’s parties when she was just 13 years old. She [dropped the suit](#) months later.

Trump called [REDACTED] claims “not only categorically false but disgusting at the highest level and clearly framed to solicit media attention or, perhaps, are simply politically motivated.”

“There is absolutely no merit to these allegations. Period,” [Trump concluded](#), while lawyers for Epstein didn’t appear to comment on the lawsuit.

Epstein came up again during Trump labor secretary nominee [Alexander Acosta](#)’s Senate confirmation hearing. Acosta was the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida who oversaw the pervy money manager’s plea deal.

“Protesters on both sides of the political aisle are now using Epstein’s reputation as ammo.”

[In a 2011 letter](#), Acosta said the negotiations came after a “year-long assault on the prosecution and the prosecutors” and added that “the defense in this case was more aggressive than any which I, or the prosecutors in my office, had previously encountered.”

Epstein’s high-powered legal team, which included Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz (who is now [working for Weinstein](#) and is a [legal ally](#) of President Trump), supplied prosecutors with dossiers on the alleged victims in an effort to discredit them. The counter-investigation included copies of some of the girls’ MySpace.com profiles which showed drug and alcohol use, according to cops. Epstein’s strategy included hiring private eyes to follow witnesses, including one victim’s father, police said.

Last month, [the FBI released](#) heavily redacted memos on the Epstein probe, and one offered a hint as to the reason for his lenient treatment: “Epstein has also provided information to the FBI as agreed upon.” It’s unclear what dirt he might have given the feds. Epstein was [once a limited partner at Bear Stearns](#) and abruptly quit in

1981. Around the time of his plea deal, the investment bank's role in the subprime mortgage crisis could have been of great interest to the feds. [Epstein reportedly lost \\$57 million](#) in the subprime meltdown.

Protesters on both sides of the political aisle are now using Epstein's reputation as ammo. On June 6, a Philadelphia Trump supporter interrupted Bill Clinton at his book event to shout, "Why did you fly on Jeffrey Epstein's Lolita Express 26 times? Twenty-six times, Bill. Why, what were you doing on Jeffrey Epstein's plane?" The activist, Howard Caplan, was referring to the press' nickname for Epstein's private jet. "Look it up. Jeffrey Epstein!" [Caplan yelled before security](#) took him away.

Meanwhile, at [a rally in Duluth](#), Minnesota, on Wednesday, President Trump booted a protester who hoisted an old photo of him with the accused sex fiend. The text on the demonstrator's poster simply asked: Who is Jeffrey Epstein?

Now two cases could propel Epstein back into the spotlight—including one where ██████████ who claimed Epstein kept her as his "sex slave," is expected to testify against him in a Florida trial.

If Epstein appears, it would be the first time he has to face his alleged victims in court.

According to the fine print of his once-confidential plea deal, Epstein could have been charged with federal offenses involving sex acts with minors. If convicted of such crimes, he could have spent decades or even life behind bars.

Instead, he's continued to enjoy the fruits of his wealth, flitting between the Virgin Islands and New York City, [where tabloid shutterbugs have captured him](#) strolling the Upper East Side with different women. One *New York Post* report said Epstein houses [Russian models](#) at his 51,000-square-foot palace on East 71st Street.

At a sex offender registration hearing in 2011, a Manhattan assistant prosecutor asked a judge to go easy on Epstein by making him a Level 1 fiend, or the lowest on the scale. The assistant DA claimed Epstein shouldn't be forced to register at Level 3, which indicates a high risk of repeat offense, because "there was only an indictment for one victim" in Florida, the *New York Post* [reported](#). The judge disagreed and labeled him Level 3, a decision that was upheld on appeal. "I'm not a sexual predator, I'm an 'offender.' It's the difference between a murderer and a person who steals a bagel," Epstein [told the Post](#) a month later.

Meanwhile, last year, a woman named ██████████ sued Epstein in Manhattan federal court, claiming he trafficked her for sex from October 2006 through April 2007—all while his attorneys were waging war against the federal charges in Florida. ██████████ originally identified under the pseudonym ██████████ differs from other Epstein victims who've filed lawsuits in that she was ██████████ when he allegedly sexually abused her. "I'm not a sexual predator, I'm an 'offender.' It's the difference between a murderer and a person who steals a bagel," Epstein told the *Post*."

When asked about ██████████ allegations, and whether Epstein would be investigated for sex-trafficking, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York said they do not comment on

people who haven't been charged. The office also does not comment on whether someone is under investigation.

The Manhattan District Attorney's Office declined to comment.

██████████ complaint was filed in the same district where Harvey Weinstein and his companies face a pair of [class-action lawsuits](#) accusing the ex-mogul and his associates of running a mafia-like operation that perpetuated and [covered up his sexual harassment](#), assault and rape of women seeking work opportunities.

Young, vulnerable girls and women likewise say they sought opportunities with Epstein. A ██████████ native

██████████ dreamed of attending ██████████. Then she met ██████████ whom she alleges was Epstein's recruiter. ██████████ said she'd introduce ██████████ to "a wealthy philanthropist who regularly used his wealth, influence and connections to help financially poor females like ██████████ achieve their personal and professional goals and aspirations," court papers allege.

Her case is pending U.S. District Judge ██████████ ruling on motions to dismiss filed by Epstein and his fellow defendants. The complaint is against ██████████ British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell, who was accused by ██████████ of helping Epstein procure girls and of molesting the girls herself, and Epstein's assistants ██████████ and Lesley Groff. (██████████ and ██████████ were listed as co-conspirators in Epstein's federal plea deal. At the time of the alleged crimes, ██████████ was in her late twenties; ██████████ is also believed to have been an adult during ██████████ alleged abuse.)

"According to ██████████ Epstein didn't quit his sex-abuse operation. Instead, he allegedly transported young women from other U.S. cities and abroad to his residences in New York and the Virgin Islands."

During Epstein's plea negotiations, he departed Palm Beach for New York and the Virgin Islands "in order to convey an image to prosecutors that he and his co-conspirators had stopped committing sex crimes," her lawsuit states.

Still, according to ██████████ Epstein didn't quit his sex-abuse operation. Instead, he allegedly transported young women from other U.S. cities and abroad to his residences in New York and the Virgin Islands, the complaint says. When ██████████ met Epstein, he allegedly promised to get her into ██████████ or another school. She claims the other defendants "confirmed and reiterated this promise" and assured her many times that Epstein would advance her education. For her part, Maxwell told ██████████ she would need to give Epstein massages "in order to reap the benefits of his and Maxwell's connections," court papers allege.

Maxwell and Epstein allegedly warned ██████████ that she wouldn't obtain her education or modeling contracts without performing sex acts with Epstein and others. The sex was required to avoid the group's "threatened retaliation against her if [she] did not perform as demanded," the lawsuit adds.

██████████ said she tried to swim off Epstein's private island after one alleged episode, where Epstein, Maxwell and ██████████ ganged up on her with "verbal abuse and threats." But a search party led by Epstein and Maxwell

physically carried her back to his estate, she claims.

The trio is accused of keeping ██████████ so she couldn't escape. They had been providing ██████████ with housing, a phone and transportation so long as she continued to "service Epstein sexually," the complaint says.

In January 2007, Epstein sent ██████████ home to ██████████ to recruit an aspiring model as his latest personal assistant. ██████████ says she refused, realizing the new hire would "be forced into sexual servitude." But while she was abroad, Epstein and Maxwell warned ██████████ she couldn't return to New York unless she lost weight, dropping from about 125 to 114 pounds, the lawsuit states.

██████████ would allegedly monitor her weight loss and dangle the prospect of an ██████████ degree. ██████████ "attempted to comply with the order but, given her physical height and body structure and her already existing body weight, the diet imposed upon her placed her in serious physical jeopardy, including kidney malfunction and extreme emotional and psychological distress," the complaint says.

"At a sex offender registration hearing in 2011, a Manhattan assistant prosecutor asked a judge to go easy on Epstein by making him a Level 1 fiend."

According to ██████████ Epstein and Maxwell even phoned ██████████ parents in ██████████ to assure they'd take care of their daughter when she returned to ██████████—and that they'd use their connections to get her into school.

██████████ completed and delivered her ██████████ application and supporting essay to Epstein, believing they were a "done deal," court papers allege. When she returned to New York in February 2007, Maxwell allegedly ordered her to have sex with Epstein immediately. She claims the alleged traffickers kept pressing her to drop excessive amounts of weight and "offered her no opportunity to decline or resist their instructions."

Three months later ██████████ says, she left ██████████ to flee Epstein.

All defendants (excluding ██████████ who hasn't responded to the suit) say ██████████ claim for damages falls outside the statute of limitations for sex-trafficking victims—and that the relationship with Epstein was "consensual" in the first place.

In a motion to dismiss filed in November, lawyers for Epstein and ██████████ accuse ██████████ of suing for sex-trafficking violations in "a moment of stunning opportunism... allegedly because Epstein did not help ██████████ to gain admission to the ██████████ and advance her career."

Maxwell's camp, too, delivered a blistering rebuttal: "Rather than a Dickensian tale of a vulnerable, naïve, young women, forced into a life of slavery and sexual servitude, this case actually presents the end game of a sophisticated, ambitious woman, accustomed to an expensive lifestyle provided by numerous male benefactors." In response, ██████████ lawyers argued Maxwell "cannot run away from the fact that [the complaint] properly alleges that Maxwell was the mastermind behind convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein's sex trafficking scheme."

They say the socialite incorrectly argues the Trafficking Victims Protection Act doesn't apply to ██████████ case because she wasn't physically chained against her will; rather, traffickers are known to use psychological coercion to maintain control over their victims.

"This is not and never will be a sex trafficking case," Maxwell's team retorted in court papers last month. "It is the story of a brief, consensual relationship between two adults occurring more than ten years ago."

Allegations of Jeffrey Epstein exploiting young women in New York were surfacing well before ██████████ case.

██████████ claimed she was 16 when Epstein sexually abused her in 2000 and vowed to boost her modeling career in exchange for sexual favors. Seven years later, when ██████████ [filed a lawsuit against him](#), her attorney (and boyfriend) said she was unable to consent because she was underage—and because she had a mental illness. ██████████ suit was dismissed after a judge ruled ██████████ was not insane during her encounters with Epstein and thus she could not circumvent the statute of limitations. According to [the court's decision](#), the only medical testimony came from a psychiatrist hired by the defense who said ██████████ condition was caused by substance abuse. Epstein, through both an attorney and a spokesman, denied the allegations.

Then there was ██████████

The 15-year-old girl was working a summer job at Mar-a-Lago when Ghislaine Maxwell allegedly recruited her for Epstein in 1998. The alleged madam invited ██████████ who now goes by ██████████ to make good money by learning massage therapy, according to a now-settled lawsuit ██████████ filed as ██████████ Maxwell has [denied the allegations](#), calling them "entirely false" in a statement released in 2011 after ██████████ spoke to British media.

██████████ was glad an older woman was offering ██████████ this opportunity and dropped her off at Epstein's mansion, her lawsuit said. Like the other victims, ██████████ claims she was sexually abused during the massage session. She claims Maxwell told ██████████ she had "lots of potential" and asked her to return the next day.

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Now, 20 years after she met Epstein, ██████████ may testify against him. The financier is facing a malicious prosecution lawsuit in Florida from Bradley Edwards, an attorney who says Epstein sued him in 2009 as punishment for representing the victims.

Edwards declined to comment on the case. But when asked why cops never busted Epstein in New York, he said, "New York authorities are familiar with the allegations that have been made by ██████████ against Jeffrey Epstein

and have shown no interest in investigating or prosecuting him or anyone else in New York.”

Two weeks after meeting Epstein, ██████ says she was flown to New York for “training” at his mansion. “It was basically every day and was like going to school. I also had to have sex with Epstein many times,” ██████ said in a 2015 affidavit. (The statement was submitted as part of a lawsuit two women [filed against the U.S. Department of Justice](#), saying prosecutors violated their rights as crime victims by failing to warn them of Epstein’s plea deal.)

█████ allegedly lived as Epstein’s teenage slave from 1999 through 2002, including at his home in New York. “In fact, my only purpose for Epstein, Maxwell and their friends was to be used for sex,” she said.

“New York authorities are familiar with the allegations that have been made... against Jeffrey Epstein and have shown no interest in investigating or prosecuting him or anyone else in New York.”

— Brad Edwards

Those friends allegedly included Alan Dershowitz and Prince Andrew, who was pictured in a photograph—taken at Maxwell’s London townhouse—with his arm around ██████ partially bare waist. Both the Trump-supporting academic and the royal have denied having sex with ██████ [and in April 2015](#), a federal judge struck the allegations from the court record. “At this juncture in the proceedings, these lurid details are unnecessary,” Judge Kenneth Marra ruled. “These unnecessary details shall be stricken.”

█████ claimed she was subjected to daily sexual abuse, including by Maxwell, whom she later sued for defamation in Manhattan federal court in 2015. ██████ argued the socialite called her a liar after she detailed her allegations in court papers. [The case settled](#) last year, preventing Epstein from taking the stand in what was expected to be an explosive trial.

In her affidavit, ██████ says she “observed Maxwell have sex with dozens of underage girls” and take explicit photos of them. “Maxwell had large amounts of child pornography that she personally made. Many times she made me sleep with other girls, some of whom were very young, for purposes of taking sexual pictures,” ██████ added.

Now ██████ said she was forced to sleep with Dershowitz for the first time in Epstein’s New York mansion, when she was 16 years old. She claimed she also had sex with Prince Andrew in New York when she was 17.

She claimed Jean Luc Brunel, a modeling [mogul now suing Epstein](#) for tarnishing his reputation and damaging his business, had sex with her multiple times when she was 16 to 19 years old. ██████ said some of those encounters occurred in New York, and that Brunel supplied Epstein with European minors who aspired to walk the runway.

“Jeffrey Epstein has told me that he has slept with over 1,000 of Brunel’s girls, and everything that I have seen confirms this claim,” ██████ said in her affidavit, adding that she witnessed orgies with children in different cities and that Maxwell and Epstein’s New York-based assistant ██████ participated in them.

██████████ was allegedly trafficked to politicians, powerful business executives and other acquaintances of Epstein.

“Epstein required me to describe the sexual events that I had with these men presumably so that he could potentially blackmail them,” ██████████ said in her affidavit, adding, “I am still very fearful of these men today.”

“In her affidavit, ██████████ says she ‘observed Maxwell have sex with dozens of underage girls’ and take explicit photos of them.

██████████ fled Epstein’s clutches when he agreed to fly her to Thailand for massage training, she claims. ██████████

“Because of how often Epstein and others were having sex with young girls, and how much it was a centerpiece of their lives, I doubt they have just stopped,” ██████████ said in the affidavit. “It also seems to me that, when I knew them, they believed that they were above the law—too powerful to be prosecuted.”

Jack Scarola, an attorney for Edwards, expects the trial in Palm Beach to start no later than August and that the court will likely set a date early next month.

The upcoming trial will be the first time that Jeffrey Epstein—if he chooses to appear in court—will be forced to “sit there and be confronted with the truth about what he has done,” Scarola told The Daily Beast.

“He has thus far been able to avoid that experience and been able to avoid a detailed airing in a public courtroom about what has gone on, as opposed to filings that are buried in the records of the clerk’s office,” Scarola said.

██████████ is ready, willing, able and enthusiastic about the opportunity that she will have to confront Jeffrey Epstein face to face,” Scarola added. “There are other victims who are absolutely ready and willing to testify.” Included on the witness list are Prince Andrew, President Clinton, President Trump, David Copperfield and Leslie Wexner, the billionaire founder of the company that owns Victoria’s Secret and Epstein’s only known financial client. (Scarola said the boldfaced names are listed because they may have knowledge of the case, but that he doesn’t expect most of them will be witnesses.)

“He has thus far, for reasons that remain unexplained, been able to evade criminal responsibility for his wrongdoing.”

— Jack Scarola

The proceeding may be in Florida, but Epstein’s lifestyle and activities in all of his locations, including New York, are likely to come up.

“He has thus far, for reasons that remain unexplained, been able to evade criminal responsibility for his wrongdoing,” Scarola said. “It may very well be that the focus of public attention through this civil lawsuit on what he has done will create the kind of pressure necessary to see that he is appropriately criminally prosecuted.”

If the recently released FBI memos on Epstein are any indication, the feds have known about ██████████ claims for years. Among the press clippings included in the file were a *Daily Mail* story from March 2011, when ██████████

revealed her identity.

Soon after [REDACTED] went public, according to her 2015 affidavit, two FBI agents met her in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] “They seemed to be very professional and hard working. I thought to myself, ‘Wow, these people will do the right thing against the bad guys and protect me,’” [REDACTED] said.

In a second affidavit filed months later, [REDACTED] said the agents “seemed like they were being blocked from doing what they wanted to do—which I thought was to arrest Epstein and his powerful friends for all their illegal sex crimes.”

[REDACTED] hoped Epstein would be prosecuted. “But when nothing came of it, I got very upset,” [REDACTED] said. “I wanted to do something to stop Epstein and the other people he associates with from sexually abusing girls.” She added, “Law enforcement had taken my detailed statements, but nothing seemed to be happening.”

[REDACTED] said she contacted the FBI in April 2014, months after she moved [REDACTED] “But, it seemed like the hands of [assistant U.S. Attorney [REDACTED] and the FBI were always tied by someone else with more authority,” she said.

“I have never been able to figure out who was (and still is) stopping a prosecution,” [REDACTED] wrote in the affidavit.

[REDACTED]  
United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney’s Office | Southern District of New York  
[REDACTED]