

# Hollywood And Silicon Valley Are a Sex-Grooming Gang

By [Kyle Smith](#)

| Tributes to Stan Lee

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Harvey Weinstein (right) speaks with Les Moonves (left) during a forum titled "Beyond Primetime, will media help grow healthier kids" in New York, February 6, 2007. (*Chip East /Reuters* )

Where the 'price of admission' is stripping on camera, or worse.

If you're tempted to turn away from the torrent of squalid news that continues to flow out of Hollywood, resist the temptation. The more of these revolting exposes you read, the more clearly you will see the underlying monstrosity in Hollywood, as clearly as the hero of John Carpenter's *They Live* sees aliens disguised as everyday people when he puts on the sunglasses.

Former CBS chief Les Moonves's career had already ended in disgrace for repeated instances of alleged sexual harassment and assault uncovered last summer by *The New Yorker*. Yet until this week the board that fired him for preying on women was planning to beg His Majesty's forgiveness for decoupling him from his kingdom, pressing into his hands a \$120 million payoff.

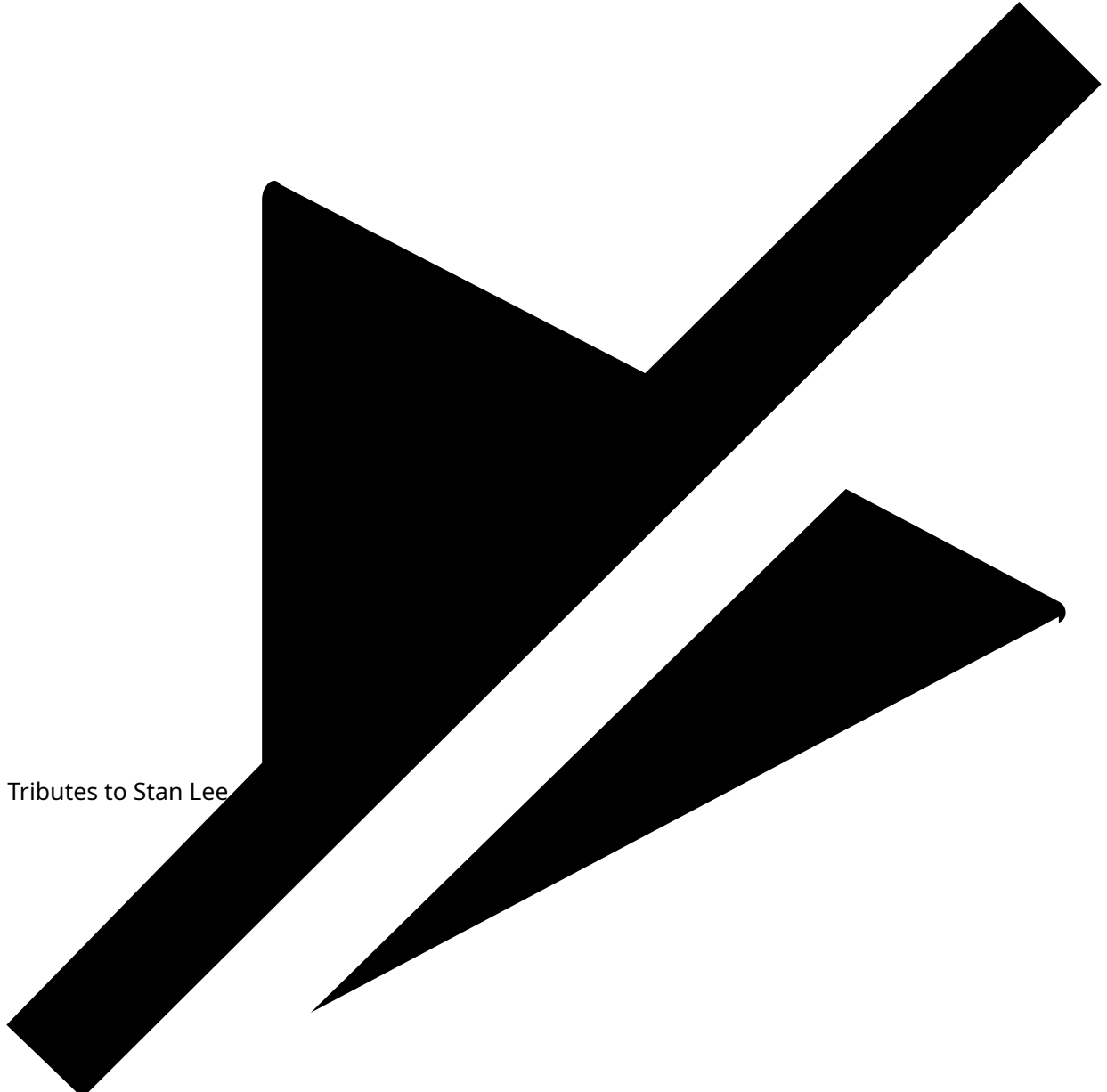
Maybe not anymore.

The *New York Times*, with the cooperation of a washed-up talent manager who, at 75, decided to open his mouth about Moonves, [reported](#) on how the triangular sex trade works in Hollywood. Innocent young sweet pea from some place like South Carolina hits town, desperate for a break. Managers and agents and suchlike human succubi latch on to her with an eye toward turning her out. Knowing very well what will happen, they send her in to "take a meeting," alone, behind closed doors, with some old lech in a designer suit. After two minutes of pleasantries, the expensive pants are suddenly down around the ankles. The young thing has just about two seconds to grow up. She has to decide on the spot whether to react with the expected sangfroid, and advance to the next step in the game of Hollywood, or, do what Bobbie Phillips did and react adversely. She contemplated picking up a baseball bat and going all Al Capone on her attacker, but instead merely "ankled," as the trades would put it.

Phillips says Les Moonves, then the head of Warner Bros. television just as its shows *Friends* and *ER* were becoming blockbusters, grabbed her and forced her to perform oral sex when she met with him to seek an appointment with a casting director. She fled the office. Then she had to decide whether to say something, which would brand her a "troublemaker." If so, nothing good would happen. She'd be ushered out to pursue the career opportunities at Denny's, and another young honey would take her place.

Phillips's life was pretty much ruined. Going to audition meetings made her queasy. Once she vomited in an alley at the prospect of running into Moonves. No one cared. She was another expendable female body. Twenty-three years later, Moonves was suddenly interested in casting her again. Texts between Moonves and Phillips's manager, as reported by the *Times*, are frankly transactional: The manager needed to get back in the game, Moonves needed the manager to keep schtum with the *Times* reporters who kept calling him, Phillips would be expected to remain silent in exchange for a lousy \$1,500 one-day gig. "A central teaching in my life is forgiveness," Phillips told the *Times*. But this was insulting. And she was upset that Moonves was still denying, even in private, what she says he did. Moonves says "I strongly believe" the encounter was consensual. Which is a bit different from saying, "It was consensual."

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“Nobody knows anything” was the Hollywood mantra popularized by the late screenwriter William Goldman. Yet in a town that does nothing more assiduously than it does gossip, we’re expected to believe nobody knew anything about what was happening in Les Moonves’s office, and in Harvey Weinstein’s, and in Bryan Singer’s? It beggars belief. They knew. They all knew. The men knew. The women knew. The potted plants certainly knew. Nobody said anything. They didn’t want to jeopardize their next gig. “Nobody *says* anything” is more like it. It’s show-merta. “Hollywood mafia” isn’t a joke anymore: These acts alleged by so many actresses are *crimes*. This was a systematic criminal enterprise in which untold numbers of people either abetted felonies or did not report them, with money clawed away from publicly traded corporations repeatedly used to buy silence.

When you see a lot of movies and TV shows, you do a lot of wondering about what happened behind the scenes. Why did that actress get so many parts? Why did this one rise so quickly? Why did that one disappear? Wasn't that nude scene gratuitous? Put on the magical sunglasses and you see the ugliness. Salma Hayek said Weinstein came to the set of her 2002 film *Frida* and threatened to shut it down unless she filmed an out-of-nowhere nude lesbian sex scene to put in the picture. Dewy young things are apparently told that this sort of thing is "the price of admission" by the male producer-director-agent nexus. Judging by her subsequent choices, I'm guessing the privately educated 21-year-old Reese Witherspoon wasn't thrilled to be told to go nude for the 1998 film *Twilight*. She came to Los Angeles to act, not to strip. But, hey: price of admission. Now those images are out there, forever.

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Ashley Judd was all set to play a big role in *The Lord of the Rings*. (The Liv Tyler part.) Then declined Weinstein's invitation to explore what was under his bathrobe. He spoke to director Peter Jackson. He didn't say, "She rejected my advances." He told Jackson that Judd was a nightmare to work with, in maybe 1998. He did the same with Mira Sorvino. These actresses were red-hot. Sorvino had an Oscar at 28. She never got a lead role in a major movie after 1999. Judd continued to work but not in big-budget movies. She might have been a superstar. Annabella Sciorra, who alleged that Weinstein raped her when she was at her peak in the early 1990s, said she couldn't get a role for three years after the encounter. (Weinstein has denied all charges of rape and sexual assault.) The producer simply moved on to the next young cutie. There are busloads of them arriving all the time. Agents and managers continued to send the girls to meet with him alone. Did they ever ask themselves if they were complicit in systematic criminal sexual abuse? Did it ever occur to them that even those actresses who played along with the sex game had been thrown into a lose-lose situation no one should ever have to face?

Hey, it's *show business*, they must have thought. It's not for prudes and hicks. Do you have some kind of sexual *hangup*? We're all *liberated* here. Liberation being defined as "turning unsuspecting young girls over to known sexual predators." Price of admission. . .