

The Field: In Survivors' Words

Analysis of Respondents' Written-In Suggestions

Regarding Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian
Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries

SPOTLIGHT REPORT

aftermetoo

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- **Aftermetoo** is creating Canada's first national digital platform centralizing the laws around sexual harassment, breaking down information about what to expect if you report, how to protect yourself and how to prepare.
- **Aftermetoo** is there to help you navigate how legal systems work and where to find help. We make the information clear and straightforward, so you understand your rights.
- **Aftermetoo** empowers you to stay safe, healthy and in control.
- More information: aftermetoo.com



- Based on findings from *The Change You Want to See: Rosa Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*
 - First-ever survey of workplace sexual harassment in these industries
 - Survivor-centered and trauma-informed approach throughout the survey design and outreach process
- **Survey goals**
 - Paint a picture of what arts workplaces looked like before #MeToo (late 2017 or earlier) and post #MeToo for contract arts workers (specifically: performing arts, film, and television)
 - Understand changes that arts workers want to see from employers, unions, agents, managers, associations, and funders in order to keep workers safe and able to focus on doing their best work.
- **Survey design and analysis by Hill Strategies Research**
 - Rigorous and reliable research on the arts and culture + clear and effective communications
 - Custom surveys, *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series, *Arts Research Monitor* series, and much more



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“Do you have any other suggestions for how to ensure that workplaces within the performing arts, film, and television industries are safe and respectful for all workers?”

228 suggestions

Key themes

- Training
- The need for an independent reporting system or independent body
- Policies and accountability
- The need to address issues related to vulnerability, including power dynamics, hierarchies, equity, diversity, and culture change
- Unions, funding, and human resources
- Beyond harassment



Consistent theme:
the need for more and better training

Key issues

- Training that is inadequate and / or not taken seriously
- Different training (or none) for senior positions compared with rank-and-file workers
- Need for harassment training as a part of pre-professional training and at early career stages



Inadequate training

“Stop assuming that any arts sector worker who takes ‘specialized training’ will still be qualified to intervene. They will not be.

The sector does not have the needed competencies, but still has the arrogance of believing it does.”

“I think that the way that [training] is approached for film and tv needs to change. Currently it’s a thrown together seminar that everyone makes fun of and doesn’t pay any attention to.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Inadequate training

“I like the idea of training, but the reality is that it would become the performing arts version of WHMIS [workplace hazards training] in food-service establishments – clinical, rushed through by someone who makes fun of it, and disliked by the people who are forced to take it because it feels useless and time-wasting. If there was a way to implement in-person training from people who prioritize communication, problem solving, respect, and actual PRACTICE for participants, then I would really like to see it in all levels of the performing arts world.”

“In my opinion, the key is continuous training for the entire sector by an independent body, but for it to work it has to reach all the workers.”

Author’s translation of « À mon avis, la clé est dans la formation continue, pour tout le milieu, par un organisme indépendant; mais pour que ça marche il faut que ça rejoigne tou.te.s les travailleu.r.se.s.. »

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Different training or accountability for people in senior positions

(e.g., producers, directors, senior staff, board members)

“Most of all the harassment I have received was from males in positions of power. Producers, Production Managers, Directors. All untouchable... All the bullying and harassment seminars DO NOT APPLY TO PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS. **They can be as dismissive and unprofessional as they like.**”

“Board members have historically dodged a great deal of accountability in the perpetuation of unsafe workplaces.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Need for early-career training

“All training institutions [should] have a course/class that covers these elements in a way that promotes self-advocacy and agency whenever possible, so that everyone knows what the expectations of their rights and responsibilities are and what are best practices. What things they can look for, ask for, best practices, ways to support people as a witness/active bystander, etc.”

*“Education is paramount: students in performing arts, film and television schools need to understand that this is **absolutely not tolerable in the community.**”*

Author’s translation of: « L'éducation est primordiale; il faut que les étudiant.e.s dans les écoles des domaines des arts de la scène, du cinéma ou de la télévision comprennent que ce n'est absolument pas tolérable dans le milieu. »

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Suggestions for an independent reporting body

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- Strong support for an independent body to handle reports and investigations of workplace sexual harassment
- Concerns with reporting to employers or others who are potentially in charge of future hirings and firings
- Independent body to track complaints and share information regarding people who have repeatedly caused harm



Independent body to remove conflicts of interest

“We need to create a safe, unbiased, nonjudgmental way for people to report and know that there will be punishment for reprisals of any kind against those reporting. Why should women be frightened that they'll lose their job, or that the abuser tells a different story to ruin a woman's career and reputation? Women should be able to report this to an independent organization that is there for them.

Women need to be supported through that experience, not bullied or made fun of.”

“Workers need a resource that is confidential for reporting and advice on how to proceed with a complaint. I don't think we should be required to file a complaint to the person doing the harassing if they are the person who hired you or if they have the power to fire.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to
*The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in
the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Independent body to track complaints and share information about people who have repeatedly caused harm

“Because of privacy laws the sector is not communicating with each other about shared members who are have had formal complaints about them. ACTRA and Equity cannot share with each other or anyone in the sector that they have disciplined their members. **There needs to be a central reporting agency for the entire sector, funded by the sector and the government to ensure that the behaviour stops or the perpetrator is re-educated, so that they don't just move across the country and start working somewhere else in Canada.**”

“I think having an independent body that monitors harassment claims against an individual is important because often a person can get fired off of one show, only to be rehired on another one later. It feels like currently there are no long-term consequences.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Suggestions regarding policies and accountability

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Support for policies and systems of accountability that could help protect workers from sexual harassment

- Police checks
- Surprise visits by supervisors
- Gender parity policies
- Harassment prevention details included in contracts between employers and workers
- Ensure policies have “teeth”
- Changes to policies and procedures: unions, funding, and human resources



Surprise visits / Police checks

“I believe that all theatres should require police checks for their staff, especially directors, choreographers, and actors.

If I'm being asked to be intimate with another actor, or if I'm being directed by someone to be intimate, I deserve transparency about their prior police record. When I've expressed this to teachers and bosses in the past the most common reaction is skepticism that anyone in the industry has a criminal record.”

“Implement surprise visits by supervisors to arts workplaces.”

Author's translation of « Qu'il y ait des visites de surveillants surprises sur les lieux de travail du monde des arts. »

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to
The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries

Harassment prevention policies

“I would like harassment prevention policies to be included and signed by both the employer and employee with each new contract, outlining in detail the consequences or recourse should a breach of this policy occur.”

Author’s translation of « J’aimerais que les politiques de prévention contre le harcèlement soient incluses et signées à chaque nouveau contrat par l’employeur et l’employé. Précisant les conséquences ou recours en détail si un manquement au respect de cette politique advenait. »

*“A member of the company trained in sexual harassment policies and mitigation **should be required to be IN THE ROOM at all auditions.**”*

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Policies: zero tolerance and healing

“Policies should include methods to heal and reform not just to exclude and punish. **Organizations and individuals should look for systemic biases that act as enablers to harassers.**”

“Zero tolerance policies cannot simply be a catch phrase with no action behind it.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Union changes

“Offer counselling to the victims provided by the union for the individuals who experience and are affected / traumatized by the harassment.”

“Arts unions should ensure their sexual harassment policies are read and enforced at all auditions prior to beginning the audition process.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Union changes

“Unions (especially ACTRA) investing their resources and money towards implementing systems that are equitable and respectful to QTIBPOC communities, instead of enlisting volunteer-based committees composed of people within those communities who have to do all the leg work (i.e., drafting how-to documents, glossaries, compiling resources, etc.) without any assistance or access to resources.”

*“Our union reps need to have limited short terms to eliminate bias and acting in the producers favour over and over again. **Harassment training does nothing.** Enforcement and unbiased lawyers as suggested would certainly help but it isn’t entirely a solution.”*

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Funding changes

“Tie grant applications to safety plans in general!

No plan, no money! Employer certification. No one can open a new arts organization without being trained in their roles and responsibilities as per harassment obligations.”

“Abusers should not receive arts funding or work opportunities for a minimum one-year period, and not until they have become fully educated in harassment and abuse at their own expense. Further, should they be rehired after this time period, their work should be supervised, and probationary.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Human resource changes

“I would like to see [anti-harassment] become a job.

Just like we have stunt coordinators on set, we have workplace safety coordinators.”

“Workplaces that implement a quick beginning of the day/project chat reminding workers that it’s a safe space are VERY effective. Senior workers should have policy to check in with junior workers about whether they feel safe.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Vulnerability and power structures

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Suggestions regarding the industry's power dynamics and the need for culture change to address equity and diversity issues

- Contract-based precarious work makes it difficult to report or address inappropriate behaviour
- Changing the power dynamics
- Instituting a culture change toward greater equity



Vulnerability of performers / contract workers

“There is no safe place to call out sexual harassment, as you’re a contract worker whose contract does not have to be renewed.

I’ve sat through a sexual harassment seminar where the people we were supposed to report to – the executive producers – made jokes and laughed throughout.”

“The industry is set up to see performers as disposable, instead of valued collaborators. This needs to change.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Precarity of arts workers

“Find a way to create better job/income security for precarious arts workers.

Part of the reason I did not report my sexual assault by a co-worker was the fear of losing work that I needed to support myself.”

“As long as the economics of our gig economy keep workers precariously employed, we will be at risk of reprisals for speaking out against harassment.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Changing the culture

“There is a culture of misogyny in the film and television industry that has deep roots.

This keeps women out of leadership positions throughout the industry. Female performers also have to deal with a general lack of respect for actors, as well as misogynistic scripts.... Without more women in leadership, behind the lens, writing the scripts, and literally calling the shots, sets will continue to be a tenuous place for women to work, no matter what workplace policies we adopt.”

“Hire more BIPOC women and decolonize the power structure.”

“We need real diversity and equity in the workforce - the less narrow the channels of power, the less opportunity for control freaks and abusive people.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Changing the culture

“Claims need to be taken seriously.”

In many cases that I have personally experienced or heard of the harasser in question is a person of status, who is beloved for what they do, the kind of art they produce, the fan base they bring in, etc etc etc. All basically amounting to immunity.”

“We somehow need to change the culture. I think this would be best achieved with more women in positions of power.”

“Mandatory gender parity.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to
The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries

- The ideal situation, as noted by many respondents, is that the sector thinks beyond sexual harassment and considers psychological, institutional, and other forms of harassment.

“Sexual harassment is the beginning of the conversation:
we have to talk about psychological and institutional harassment, abuse of power and the dangers related to our mental health due to our precariousness. The health crisis is a good context, in my opinion, to see how we can better protect ALL our colleagues, not just those whose faces and names are known to the public.”

Author’s translation of « Le harcèlement sexuel est le début de la conversation: il faut parler ensemble d'harcèlement psychologique et institutionnel, d'abus de pouvoir et des dangers liés à la santé mentale dus à notre précarité. La crise sanitaire est un bon contexte à mon avis pour voir comment mieux protéger TOU.TE.S nos collègues et non seulement ceux.celles qui dont les visages et les noms sont connus du public. »

Beyond harassment

“I have worked in many different industries including many that are male dominated and have a reputation for sexism. I was a plumber, a carpenter, a janitor, a construction labourer, a landscaper – the film industry was the most misogynist industry out of all of these by far. I was shocked at the degree and prevalence of sexual harassment. **We have a lot of work to do.**”

*“Don't focus solely on sexual harassment because **bullying is probably more pervasive.**”*

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Beyond harassment

“I think sexual harassment is the tip of the iceberg.

I have experienced far more often abuses of power and harassment from stage managers/ directors & teachers of a non-sexual nature that was almost as upsetting as the sexual assault I experienced. I think an understanding of power dynamics and training regarding appropriate use of self in positions of power would go a long way.”

“Make people aware of all aspects related to sexual harassment, including psychological harassment and intimidation.”

Author’s translation of « Sensibiliser les personnes à tout ce qui touche le harcèlement sexuel, autant le harcèlement psychologique que l’intimidation. »

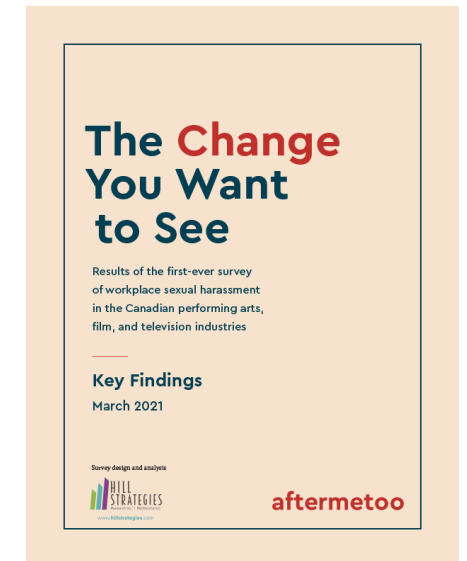
Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

Other Reports Available

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Reports available from “The Change You Want to See”, the first-ever survey of workplace sexual harassment in the Canadian performing arts, film, and television industries

- **Key Findings:** The Change You Want to See
- **The Status:** Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries
- **The Toll:** Impacts on Survivors of Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries
- **The Aftermath:** Reporting, Supports for Survivors, and Who Caused Harm Related to Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries (this report)
- **The Future:** Changes that Arts Workers Want to See Regarding Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries
- **The Field: In Survivors’ Words.** Analysis of Respondents’ Written-In Suggestions Regarding Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries



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