

Destroyed lives

written by Sandy | March 17, 2019



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By Sandy . . . In 1969, a man named [Peter Yarrow](#), a musical pop star, opened the door of his dressing room to two sisters, ages 17 and 14, who were seeking his autograph. He was nude and proceeded with sexually suggestive and apparently aggressive remarks and behavior toward the girls.

Mr. Yarrow is the “Peter” of the '50s and '60s musical group Peter, Paul, and Mary. He served three months in prison and in 1981 was granted a pardon by President Jimmy Carter.

Mr. Yarrow’s career was not totally destroyed, but over the years, his past has surfaced as regularly as clockwork. He has lost jobs and been refused appearances due to it. [Protests erupt](#) every time he is invited to perform or appear or receive an award. His critics are quick to point out that if he or anyone did what he did today, he would be on a sexual offense registry as a sexual criminal.

In 2012, [Luke Heimlich](#) was convicted of sexual molestation by inappropriate touching of a young female relative. It was not

a one-time occurrence. Luke was 12 or 13 when it happened, 15 when convicted. He successfully completed a period of probation that included a diversion program and therapy designed specifically for children who have been sexually inappropriate. He was registered as the lowest level offender in Washington State.

At Oregon State University, Luke was a top-ranked, winning pitcher for the college baseball team and a shoo-in for first-round draft pick in the MLB Draft. That all came crashing down around his head in 2017 when his status as a registered sexual offender, always known by the university, was unearthed by a reporter and widely publicized.

It was all over. Luke did not play in the play-offs; [he was not drafted](#) in 2017 or 2018 by any MLB team. Later in 2018, he was scouted by a team with the [Chinese Professional Baseball League](#). He was signed and then terminated the same day with the league citing zero tolerance for players with criminal records.

Where he is now, and what he is doing is undetermined. *

Actor [Steven Striegel's](#) role in *The Predator* film was not large, but he was working in his chosen field and happy to be doing so. Before the film was released (2018), his inclusion on California's sexual offense registry for the attempted luring of a teenage girl was discovered and publicized, and he and his scene were cut from the film as though they had never existed.

The stigma and blame for hiring him in the first place fell heavily on Striegel's long-time friend and the film's director Shane Black, and the criticism was so severe that one couldn't be faulted for wondering if Shane's own career would be in ruins before it was all over.

Nothing can be found to indicate that Mr. Striegel has found work in the film industry since.

The art gallery of the University of Maine in 2018 displayed a variety of works by Maine artists depicting Maine's industrial history. Among them were three canvases by highly regarded artist [Bruce Habowski](#). [His scenes](#) depict an overpass, a large truck, and an earlier era's industrial complex.

Mr. Habowski also has the distinction of, in 1999, having a conviction for unlawful sexual contact and having served a short prison term for the offense. When a person knowing of this history saw the art with Habowski's name on it, a complaint was made to the college. The pieces were removed.

One would hope that this did not end Habowski's continuing in his art, but the impact on his having a continued successful career is undetermined.

[Jensen Seifert](#), a stage actor in Alaska and a registrant on Alaska's sexual offense registry, is dealing with turmoil involving his inclusion among the cast of a play being produced by Cyrano's Theater Company in Anchorage.

His conviction in 2009 was for sexual abuse of a teenage boy, a student of his where he taught. Upon his release after eight years of imprisonment, he joined the tight-knit theater community in Anchorage, working at Cyrano's as well as the other live theaters there. While his history was known by some, it became openly publicized on Facebook in the fall of 2018. A controversy erupted that is still in progress, and Mr. Seifert is teetering on the precipice of becoming *persona non grata* in the only world that matters to him.

And now, breaking news reveals yet another sexual scandal involving a public figure. In late February of this year, billionaire owner of the New England Patriots [Robert Kraft](#) was charged with two counts of solicitation of a prostitute resulting from a police sting operation at a massage parlor.

This is very much still under investigation, but [repercussions from the NFL](#) were discussed almost immediately, including the

[possibility of a suspension](#) that would bar him from Gillette Stadium and from contacting any team personnel.

Six men. Six different situations ranging from statutory to very serious, ranging in age from 12 or 13 to 77, and spanning five decades.

Five have successfully completed whatever legal penalty was imposed upon them. What will occur with the sixth will play out in the coming weeks and months.

There is no evidence whatsoever that any of the five have re-offended, gone astray of the law since, or pose a risk of harm to anyone. Each of them has expressed regret, dismay, or horror at their past behaviors.

Why are we as a society so willing to forgive and embrace those who run afoul of the law in virtually every way but sexual, up to and including murder, and yet are so willing, nay, eager, to ruin the lives and the careers of these men and so many others, both well-known and unknown, whose indiscretions were of a sexual nature?

It is because, of all types of crimes with victims, it is only the victims of sexual crime who are believed, even expected, to suffer for a lifetime. Every other victim "gets over it." Even when the victim is dead, murdered, the remaining family and friends are encouraged to move past it and get on with their lives.

We do not tell victims of sexual crime to get over it and get on with their lives. To do so, we are told, would be cruel and insensitive and belittling the trauma they suffered. We ignore the fact that some sexual crimes have no direct victims and that some who are labeled "victims" do not consider themselves victims at all. And we ignore the fact that many who were indeed victims, and truly harmed, choose to move past it, embracing recovery and often forgiveness.

We insist that sexual victims are “ruined,” “destroyed,” will “never be the same,” will “never get over it.”

Therapists and legitimate victim service providers know this is the opposite of what victims need to hear, but the all-knowing public persists in that belief. Once that belief is accepted, it logically follows that the person who caused the destruction of that life must have his own destroyed. Therefore, nothing that can be done to bring him grief and shame and ostracism is too extreme. His career is in ruins? Good. He ruined her life; why shouldn't his be ruined? She will suffer for a lifetime; so should he.

And thus, we have a system, complete with its own, unique registry, that says to the world that those on it have destroyed the lives of others in a special and distinctive way and deserve to have their own destroyed, and no punishment, consequence, or restriction heaped on them is enough to repay the victim for what he or she has lost.

This is not criminal justice; it is no kind of justice.

This is a vehicle with which to express our indignation at a segment of society we find repugnant and abhorrent.

This is revenge. This is cruelty. This is a lifetime of punishment that does not go away.

**** Since this was written, Luke is reported to have signed with a league in Mexico.***