

Call for paper for a special themed edition of *Journalism Practice*
“Journalism and Sexual Violence”

Guest editors:

Andrea Baker (Monash University) & Usha M. Rodrigues, (Deakin University)

Theme rationale and scope: Beginning in 2006, the #MeToo hashtag was created by African American civil rights advocate Tarana Burke to deal with sexual violence (sexism, misogyny, sexual harassment, assault and rape) amongst the black community in the US. In October 2017 allegation by Hollywood actor, Alyssa Milano, against prolific film director Harvey Weinstein, co-owner of US Entertainment Company (Miramax Films), led to the revitalisation of #MeToo. #MeToo sparked a movement across the US, UK, Canada, Israel, India and Australia, with more than 85 million people sharing the hashtag (Kunst, Bailey, Prendergas & Gundersen, 2018). Since then other hashtags, such as #MeNoMore; #TrustWomen; #BelieveWomen; #BeenRapedNeverReported; #YesAllWomen; #HimToo, #BlackLivesMatter, #TimesUp and #NowAustralia have emerged, each reflecting an intersectionality between sexual violence, identity politics, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, language, poverty and human rights in our daily lives (Rodino-Colocino, 2018; Menzies, Ringrose & Keller, 2018).

Research in the post #MeToo era has been tied to film studies, feminist media studies, (Rodino-Colocino, 2018; Marghitu, 2018), criminology (Mack & McCann, 2018), psychology (Jokic, 2018) or studies examining digital hashtags (Menzies et al., 2018). Post #MeToo, minimal academic research has explored how the journalism industry has reported on the sexual violence and the impact of such reportage on journalism practice and society as a whole (Mack & McCann, 2018). Historically, reports of sexual violence made the news when it was related to a known personality (for example, Weinstein) or was so extreme in nature that it was categorised as having ‘unusual’ news value (Gilchrist 2010; Rodrigues 2013; Rodino-Colocino, 2018). As Ursula Macfarlane's hard-hitting documentary *Untouchable*, which premiered at Sundance Film Festival in January 2019 notes, Weinstein often said to his victims and the press investigating the allegations: “Don’t you know who I am!?” (Cited in Debruge, 2019). However, as film critic, Peter Debruge (2019, p.1) from *Variety* magazine adds, “separate from the issue of Weinstein’s influence was the fact that news outlets have a legal and journalistic responsibility to get victims to go on the record before running such an incendiary story”. Reportage by US journalists, Ronan Farrow from *The New Yorker*, and Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey from *The New York Times* about abusers, have been painful, but important pieces of journalism (Cobb & Horeck, 2018). As the #MeToo hashtag went

viral, the Weinstein scandal became a trial by media with the public “blaming and shaming” of more than 200 powerful men “from a range of sectors, including the film, music, literary, media, sports, fashion and the food industries...for their predatory, abusive behaviour” (Cobb & Horeck, 2018, p.1). The post Weinstein #MeToo era has also resulted in increased level of reporting of sexual violence cases by the mainstream and social media. However, scholars have raised concerns that some of the media coverage for being misogynistic, sensational and insensitive. Questions remain whether journalism can help mitigate threats of sexual and physical violence trolled against women who speak up about #MeToo (Cole, 2018).

The guest editors of *Journalism Practice* invite rigorous empirical scholarly work related to the theme of journalism practice, sexual violence, pre or post the #MeToo era. Papers need to delineate their use of the concept of sexual violence and examine how it is reported on, or distributed by legacy or social media. Research should be based around either quantitative, qualitative, computational and/or mixed research methods. Papers are also encouraged to assess the implications or impact of such reportage, and where appropriate offer recommendations to improve journalism practice vis-à-vis reporting of sexual violence. **Possible areas of interest include, but are not limited to:**

- Journalism, sexual violence, race and ethnicity;
- Journalism, sexual violence and the gendered culture;
- Journalism, sexual violence and human rights;
- Journalism, sexual violence and ethics/legal considerations and guidelines;
- Journalism news values, news language, news traditions and sexual violence;
- Solution Journalism and sexual violence reporting; and
- Reporting sexual violence and journalism training/education.

INFORMATION ABOUT SUBMISSION:

We invite research articles between 7000 to 8000s words, (including references, notes, tables) relating to this themed issue, and an abbreviated author(s) bio. **Deadline for full papers to *Journalism Practice*'s [Scholar One](#) by 18 June 2019.** Following the blind peer review process, accepted articles will be notified by mid-August 2019 for final revisions. Revised articles need to be ready by 1 December 2019, to be published in the *Journalism Practice, 2020, Vol 14, No 1*.