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Julia Ormond 'Nearly Disappeared' From Hollywood. Now We Know Why.

#METOO

Stories about Julia Ormond abandoning Hollywood read very differently now that she is suing Harvey Weinstein for sexual battery, as well as "enablers" CAA and Disney.

Laura Bradley
Senior Entertainment Reporter

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Over the years, actress Julia Ormond recently told *Variety*, journalists have often asked her, “What happened to you?” Now, we appear to have gotten our answer. In a lawsuit filed Wednesday in New York Supreme Court, [Ormond](#) alleges that [Harvey Weinstein](#) sexually assaulted her—and that afterward, she “nearly disappeared from the public eye” thanks to his retaliation.

In addition to Weinstein, Ormond is suing [Miramax](#), the Walt Disney Company, and Creative Artists Agency (CAA)—all of which she called “enablers” in an interview with the magazine. While Ormond’s star was on the rise in the mid-1990s, her lawsuit claims that the damage to her career “because of Weinstein’s assault and the aftermath was catastrophic both personally and professionally.” Looking back on profiles of the actress from that era, the tension she’d begun to feel within the industry seems readily apparent.

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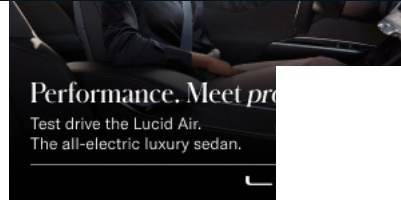
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Representatives for CAA, Miramax, and Disney did not immediately respond to Daily Beast reporter Pilar Melendez’s request for comment on the lawsuit. Imran H. Ansari, a lawyer for Weinstein, told Melendez in a [statement](#) that he “categorically denies the allegations made against him by Julia Ormond and he is prepared to vehemently defend himself. This is yet another example of a complaint filed against Mr. Weinstein after the passing of decades, and he is confident that the evidence will not support Ms. Ormond’s claims.”

Julia Ormond Sues Harvey Weinstein for Sexual Assault



| NEW ALLEGATIONS |

Pilar Melendez

After getting her start as a classically trained English theater actress, Ormond’s



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with the British TV series *Traffik*. A few years later, she



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Sabrina—and not long after that her career suddenly seemed to shrink into what the AV Club once described as “more colorful supporting roles.”

Profiles of Ormond from 1995 capture a thoughtful actress struggling to retain control over her brand and her career—an impulse that even she admitted at the time had earned her a dreaded, often sexist industry label, “difficult.”

In April of that year, the *New York Times* published a lengthy deep dive on Ormond’s rapid rise to fame that scrutinized the “Hollywood machinery now determined to make her a star.” The article also probed the young actress’ relationship with that behemoth; given what all it entails, reporter David Blum wondered, did she even want this kind of stardom at all?



Harrison Ford and Julia Ormond dancing in *Sabrina*.

Getty Images

Like other profiles from the time, the piece offers a fascinating window into the

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Patricia Marmor, told the Times. "She's beautiful and she's talented, and that always works."

Regarding Ormond supposedly being "difficult," another source described only as a "high-placed Hollywood wag" said, "Let's just say the word is out." Meanwhile, Jerry Zucker—who directed Ormond in First Knight—refuted that idea. "If you respect Julia, and her right to say what she wants, she'll treat you great in return," he said. Ormond herself told the Times that she first began to notice her growing reputation after creative differences arose on the set of the TNT miniseries Young Catherine.

"Every interview that I went up for the next year, they asked me what I was like to work with," Ormond told the Times. "It's not necessarily about being bosom buddies. It doesn't have to be easy. It can be really aggravating and frustrating and yet deeply satisfying."



Julia Ormond and Brad Pitt laying in Legends of the Fall.

©Dimension Films/Courtesy Everett Collection

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One person who gave Ormond a glowing review?



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story sense or any young actress in America today.” The Times added that Ormond was “one of a brain trust of actors, directors and producers” the mogul and now-convicted rapist would trust to look over new material.

And yet, “someone very close to Ormond” who remained anonymous also ominously told the paper, “Ten years from now, you—or some reporter—will be asking me, ‘Whatever happened to Julia Ormond?’... You know how it is. The process never ends.”

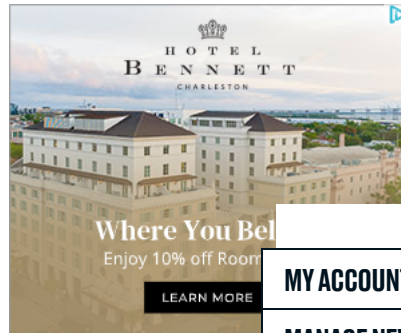
Months later, The Washington Post published a profile from Paula Span that named the dynamic Ormond seemed to be facing more directly. “And of course,” Span wrote, “there’s the Gender Thing.”

According to Span’s profile, Ormond was “about to sign a deal with Miramax” at the time that would have allowed her to “develop, produce or direct movies of her own.” (Weinstein was still in charge of the company at the time.)

Span observed that during roundtable interviews promoting 1995’s Sabrina, in which Ormond played the title character, director Sydney Pollack and Harrison Ford both referred to the

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“girls.” Earlier that year,



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vanity Fair alongside actresses including [Jennifer Jason Leigh](#), [Nicole Kidman](#), and [Uma Thurman](#)—all of whom she respected. As Span noted, “nearly all of them stripped to their skivvies” for the cover image.

“This is the new generation of women in film,” Ormond told Span. “This is what they do: They pose on magazine covers in their underwear.”



Sean Connery and Julia Ormond on horses in *First Knight*.

© Mary Evans/Ronald Grant/Everett Collection

Ormond has spoken before about her sudden shunning from Tinseltown, but according to *Variety*—which first reported the lawsuit—she had not discussed her allegations against Weinstein with anyone beyond her agents until now. Back in 2007, Ormond told *The Daily Mail* that the backlash she faced within the industry was “really predictable.”

“I could see it coming as a reaction to the hype,” she said at the time. “I was at the center of the hype, but I didn’t agree with it, either. I

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period, though.”



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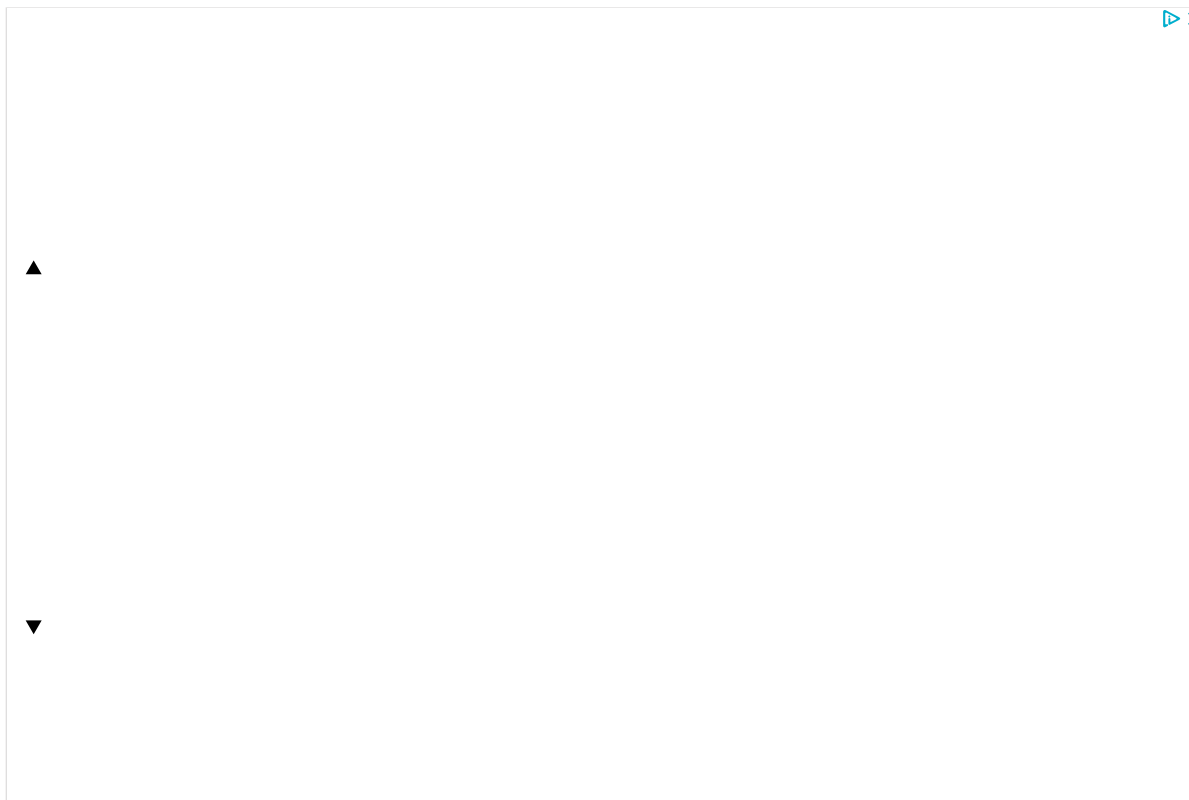


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a documentary about
Bosnian women in Serbian
detention camps, I did a
radio play, I worked with
Harold Pinter... and I threw a
ton of time into personal stuff
and fell in love and had a
baby.”

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Although Ormond was
working hard to open up her
image when she spoke with
the *Post*—as the actress put it
at the time, she’d come across
“as terribly serious” in
previous profiles—she also
couldn’t help but share an
ambition for women in
Hollywood, as it related to
the Miramax deal she was set
to sign.

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“take the responsibilities and



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one who does the sex scene.

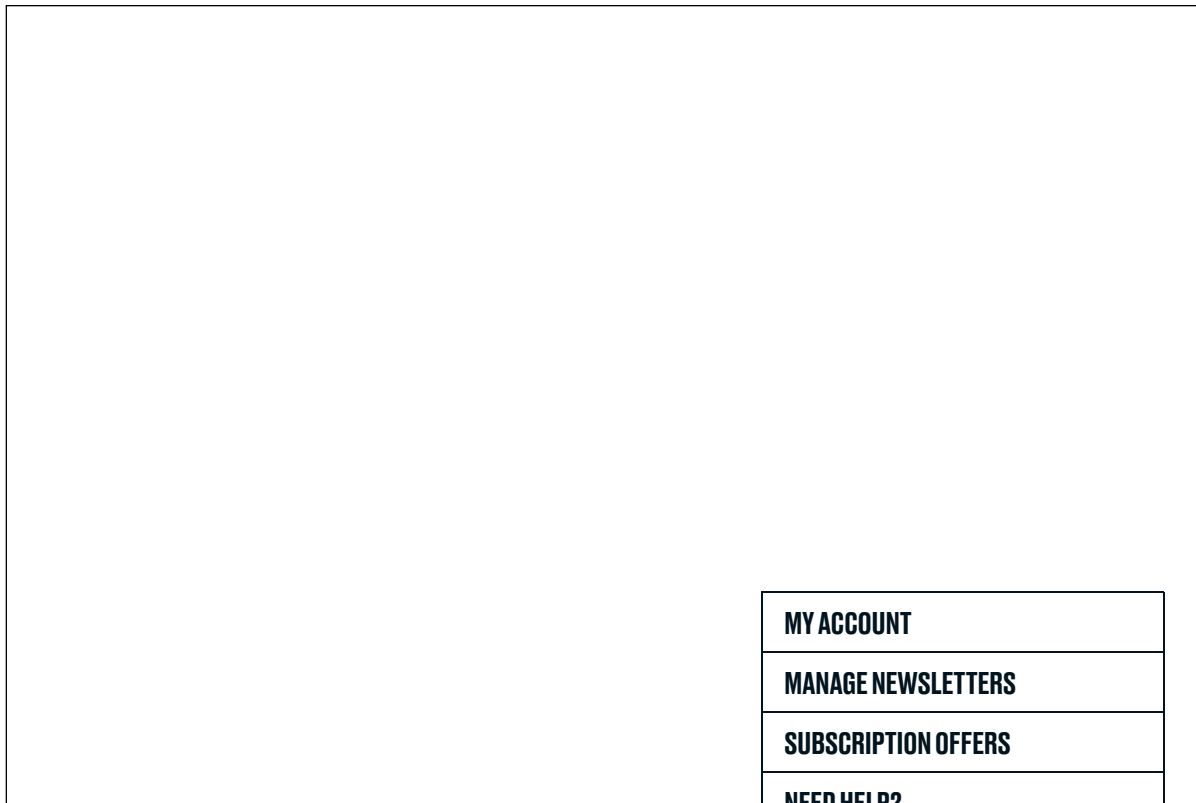
“I can no longer sit back and say, ‘Oh, there are so few good parts for women,’” Ormond continued, “when I’ve been given this opportunity.”

Juror Who Convicted Weinstein Predicts His Final Downfall



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Pilar Melendez



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Laura Bradley
Senior Entertainment Reporter
@lurabardley
Laura.Bradley@thedailybeast.com

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