

**Uncovering Hollywood:
The Real Case of Harvey Weinstein through the Lens of Truth**

Hosted by Ronan Farrow, *The Catch and Kill Podcast* recounts Ronan Farrow's strenuous battle to bring the true story of Weinstein as a sexual predator to light, emphasizing the difficult relationship between journalism and power systems.



By: Ashley Maldonado

The goal of *The Catch and Kill Podcast* is to investigate the crimes of men in power and reveal authoritative systems that directly protect them from getting exposed and sentenced. The host is Ronan Farrow, who is an American journalist, author, and former MSNBC investigative

correspondent. While not directly associated with his line of work, it is noteworthy to state he is the son of famous filmmaker Woody Allen and actress Mia Farrow. Despite this, he does not associate himself with his father. Although the book was published in October of 2019 and the podcast was first released in November of 2019, Farrow began his interviews and overall investigation in New York in early 2017. While Ronan Farrow is credited for the investigation of Harvey Weinstein and unmasking his true identity as a predator to the public, Farrow's podcast and journalism expands beyond Weinstein's famous name to bring a voice to the victims and further expose all of the contributing systems who helped him stay a free man.

Methods used to accomplish this goal involve interviews that include very important testimonies. In *The Catch and Kill Podcast*, Farrow utilizes the first 35 minute episode, titled "The Spy," to interview Igor Ostrovsky, a private investigator. In the second 48 minute episode, "The Producer," Farrow introduces Rich McHugh, one of his very close friends and colleagues who he worked with alongside the Weinstein investigation. In the third 38 minute episode, "The Wire," Farrow interviews Filipino-Italian model Ambra Gutierrez, his first guest who is a direct victim of sexual assault by Weinstein. After these three episodes, there are seven more. The fourth episode is 40 minutes, the fifth one is 42 minutes, the sixth one is 46 minutes, the seventh one is 49 minutes, the eighth and ninth one is 51 minutes, and the tenth and final episode lasts one hour. Farrow does an excellent job asking insightful questions to his interviewees during each episode. His introductions include personal stories, which help the listener familiarize themselves with the voices' backgrounds. Farrow lays the foundation of his investigative journalism with these three key witnesses, from inside perspectives of P.I., powerful media outlets like NBC, and Gutierrez's testimony: evidence which was never supposed to be brought to light.

Farrow first uncovered that he himself was being investigated for his reporting on Weinstein in 2017 through Igor Ostrovsky, who was unknowingly working for the Black Cube, an organization of Israeli intelligence spies that was hired by Weinstein himself. Once Ostrovsky found out who his secret client was, he realized that he was directly hunting down journalists. He quit the job and contacted Farrow. When Farrow was published in The New Yorker in October 2017, the target on his back as a journalist was amplified to greater heights. Speaking with Ostrovsky about his own investigation was an intuitive way to open the podcast and allows the listener to understand the threatening implications of being a journalist. It also shows how people in power, such as Weinstein, can hire covert but powerful organizations to manipulate systems and easily silence the voice of truth or even end the ones behind it permanently.

The second episode focuses on the corruption of media outlet NBC's executives and their relentlessness against Farrow's story coming out. This perspective is shown through Rich Hughes, who at the time, was an NBC correspondent alongside Farrow. These two worked together for 8 months, working on the Weinstein investigation. As Hughes later describes, what occurred when they pitched their story perfectly exemplifies an outlet's ability to "kill" a story and control what gets put out into the media. "We decided we needed to work quietly, and without alerting our bosses", stated Farrow in the second episode. Another vital piece of evidence which incriminates Weinstein and backs up Farrow and Hughes' work is the audio between Weinstein and model Ambra Gutierrez, which is presented in the third episode, alongside her interview with Farrow. "The reporting was getting stronger and stronger. I was getting more and more interviews with women with allegations and with people around Weinstein who had seen abuse. But I'd heard about one piece of evidence that might blow the whole thing open," Farrow said. Gutierrez details the very moment she met the abuser, as well as everything she had

to go through after. While Ostrovsky contacted Farrow and Hugh already worked alongside him, getting Gutierrez to speak with Farrow took a lot of persistence and waiting.

As the podcast episodes progress, there are more perspectives, such as other victims and journalists who in the past, attempted to publish and report on Weinstein's accounts of abuse. Giving a voice to silenced journalists gave the Weinstein case a timeline and history of more than 10 years. One of the most surprising parts of the podcast was the complicated orchestration behind protecting Weinstein. Although there are a few systems which may not seem surprising, the lengths in which the systems go through to never let a story of sexual abuse break is gut-wrenching and tragic. The overall thesis is about exposing the unprincipled morals behind power systems such as Hollywood and the FBI. While they continuously protect male predators in the industry, journalists seek to bring justice, spread awareness, and stop them from harming others. As Farrow tells the details of his journey in investigative journalism, it is revealed that there were many obstacles he faced that blocked the publicity of his story.

Podcasts as a medium allows the listener to garner information through tangible voices of real people expressing and engaging in all sorts of emotions. This is displayed through the delivery of all the different perspectives. It also allows the listener to hear audio evidence collected for the investigation itself. The disadvantages of this form of journalism may be that the listener cannot visually see the New Yorker story which broke open a case for Weinstein as well as the #MeTooMovement; however, overall, this is a very good platform to execute investigative journalism. After the podcast's last episode was released in February 2020, the demand for visual content by listeners placed the podcast onto the hands of HBO. The podcast was made into a documentary series in July 2021, which includes video footage of the interviews. I recommend this podcast because it is informative, educational, and completely

relevant to everyone. It also touches on worlds that are usually not spoken about, such as private investigation tactics and it uncovers the truth about Hollywood using key witnesses and evidence.