

# 2017 in review: This year's absolute worst of the worst

By [Julia Breakey](#)

22 Dec 2017

This year has been a whirlwind of racist scandal after sexist scandal after "How have they been running a business? Holy sh!t" scandal.

So if you think you made poor choices in 2017, grab yourself a bottle of red, slap on a face mask, and let's indulge in the unhealthiest form of self care there is: relishing in the relief of not having made that mistake.

This is Memeburn's list of the perpetrators of the dumbest public mistakes of 2017. This is part three, involving heinous individuals who intentionally physically hurt other human beings — and this year finally received their reckoning.

#ICYMI: See parts 1 and 2 below...



## 2017 in review: The public mistakes you smashed on social this year

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## 2017 in review: The heinous horrors that got you angry this year

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## DaddyofFive



YouTube channel DaddyOFive, headed by dad Mike Martin, consisted of videos in which the parents “pranked” their five children — often pushing them to the point of mental breakdown. The account accrued 765,800 subscribers.

The pranking family had long been called out as abusive, but [things came to a head](#) in April when YouTuber Philip DeFranco made a video presenting evidence of the alleged abuse.

Such evidence included a video in which Martin and his wife spilled invisible ink on the floor and screamed at their son for doing it. The son freaks out, crying until he's red in the face — and only once he's calmed down do they tell him it's fake. Another video showed Martin encouraging one of his sons to slap his daughter.

The channel's videos were quickly deleted.

In May, the parents lost custody of two children to their biological mother. Mike Martin now runs a YouTube channel called FamilyOFive, where they focus on gaming rather than pranks. He has 108,000 subscribers.

## The Mugabes



The Mugabes have had... a year.

We'll start with Grace: the then-Zimbabwean first lady was [accused of assault](#) earlier this year when she was down in SA for a medical trip. Young model Gabriella Engels told [News24](#) she was with Mugabe's two sons Robert and Chatunga in a hotel room when a bodyguard asked her to step into a separate room. Engels says Mugabe then beat her with an extension cord.

Grace was due to appear in court in August, but failed to pitch. She was subsequently granted diplomatic immunity.

Her moment of reprieve didn't last long, though, because in November, the military began what is still debated as [perhaps a coup d'état, perhaps not](#). They took control of the national broadcaster and placed then-president Robert Mugabe under house arrest until he [finally resigned](#) a week later. He'd been in power for 37 years.

The lesson? If you wanted a dignified exit that doesn't involve being forced from your post at 93, maybe try *not* gripping to

power for decades at the detriment of your people?

## Harvey Weinstein and his fellow predators

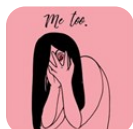


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Harvey Weinstein has been messing up since the day he was born it seems, but 2017 was the year that his disgusting behaviour finally caught up with him.

On 5 October, [The New York Times](#) broke the story of the powerful Hollywood producer's decades-long cover-up of sexual assault and harassment. The piece opened the floodgates, the likes of which Hollywood hasn't seen in quite some time (if ever).

Woman after woman came forward to speak about their own experiences, either through op-eds or the [#MeToo hashtag](#).



#MeToo trends in SA as women share stories of sexual harassment

Julia Breakey 17 Oct 2017



Powerful men lost their jobs, vulnerable women (and men) gained the courage to speak up. Optimism grew as women allowed themselves the hope that maybe this time things will get easier.

And all it took was one predator's downfall.

## Kevin Spacey



Image © Paul Hudson via Flickr (CC BY 2.0, edited)

Kevin Spacey is among the many men revealed to be a sexual predator this year — but his response is what places him squarely on this list.

When *Star Trek: Discovery* actor Anthony Rapp accused the *Oscar*-winning actor of coming on to him when he was just 14 (and Spacey 26), Spacey denied memory of the event. But instead of simply apologising — the bare minimum he could do — Spacey [came out as gay](#) in a PR spin so gross it made Dr Pimple Popper look like rainbows and sunshine.

Did Spacey think everyone would forget the pedophilia if we got confirmation he's gay? Not likely.

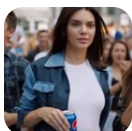
Spacey has since been fired from *House of Cards*, recast in *All the Money in the World*, and has been laying low as [more and more assault allegations](#) are thrown his way.

### Notable f-ups

I couldn't list everyone who had messed up, so here are a few (dis)honourable mentions:

- [Equifax](#)
- [Bonang](#) and her typo-laden book
- [That racist guy](#) who tweeted his email
- [YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki](#) and her terrible handling of the adpocalypse and Elsagate
- [PewDiePie](#)'s antisemitism
- [Helen Zille](#) for her comments about colonialism

View parts 1 and 2 below:



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### ABOUT JULIA BREAKKEY

Julia is a junior writer at Memeburn; a UCT film graduate with a passion for dogs, media, and dog-centric media. If she's not gushing about the new television show that you need to watch, she's rewatching *The Good Place* (which you need to watch).

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