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Weinstein victim lawyer: Don't let Diddy case fool you. MeToo is alive and well

Gloria Allred says MeToo movement should not be judged by criminal cases as lawsuits are settled behind closed doors

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Gloria Allred (left) and her client Thalía Graves who has filed a lawsuit against Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs claiming she was drugged and raped by him 10 years ago Credit: Rodin Eckenroth/2024 Getty Images

[The Sean “Diddy” Combs verdict](#) does not mean MeToo is dying as most sexual assault cases are settled privately, America’s most prominent female lawyer has said.

The music mogul was this week [acquitted on charges of sex trafficking](#) and racketeering after two of his ex-girlfriends, including the R&B singer Cassie Ventura, testified he coerced them into having sex with male escorts.

Combs, 55, was convicted on two lesser charges of transportation for prostitution.

But Gloria Allred, who is representing several of Combs's alleged victims, including two who have filed civil lawsuits, said the outcome is symptomatic of a [waning MeToo movement](#).

"Nobody should judge the MeToo movement based on what happens in a criminal case," Ms Allred, who also represented a number of Harvey Weinstein's accusers said.

"Criminal cases are rare, and most of the civil lawsuits that we do and the confidential settlements never result in a criminal case."



Gloria Allred (right) with her client Teala Davies who claims to be a victim of sexual abuse by Jeffrey Epstein Credit: TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AFP

Speaking exclusively to The Telegraph, she added: "There are many, many more civil lawsuits than there are criminal cases. In addition to that, we do many more confidential settlements without a lawsuit than even civil lawsuits, so it's [MeToo] alive and well."

Around [70 lawsuits have been filed against Combs](#), including two by Ms Allred's clients: Joi Dickerson-Neal, who alleges the star drugged and sexually assaulted her in 1991, and Thalia Graves, who claims she was drugged and raped by Combs 10 years later.

Combs has denied all the allegations against him.

During her famed career spanning more than 50 years Ms Allred has represented alleged victims of the rich and powerful, including Bill Cosby, Donald Trump, R Kelly and Mohamed Al-Fayed.

Her clients include an unknown number of Weinstein's accusers, including Miriam Haley, who the disgraced film mogul [was found guilty of sexually assaulting](#) in his New York criminal retrial last month.

When Mr Trump won the election in November, some feared electing a man who had been found liable for sexual abuse marked the end of the MeToo movement, which sprung up after more than 80 women came forward claiming they had been raped or sexual assaulted by Weinstein.



Ms Allred represented Miriam Haley (right) in Harvey Weinstein's sexual assault trial

Following the latest Weinstein verdict, which acquitted the disgraced producer of one count of sexual assault and resulted in a [mistrial for his rape charge](#), Ms Allred, said: "For those of you in the press who have predicted that the MeToo movement might be dead, that obituary was obviously premature."

Ms Allred insists victims are still contacting her firm Allred, Maroko & Goldberg, which she describes as the most prominent women's rights law firm in the country, every day.

"We won over a billion dollars in the years that we've been in practice for victims, so I am not concerned that this is going to deter victims," she said.

"Maybe they won't want to perhaps report to law enforcement, but they still want accountability, they still want justice, they can all get that through a civil case, lawsuit or a confidential settlement," she added.

Several of the witnesses who testified against Combs had pending civil lawsuits against the mogul, including Dawn Richard, who is represented by Ms Allred's daughter Lisa Bloom.

Ventura, 38, settled her civil suit against Combs within 24 hours of filing. She was paid \$30 million by the Bad Boy Entertainment founder.



Cassie Ventura and Sean 'Diddy' Combs at the Met Gala in 2015 Credit: Charles Sykes/Invision

Last year, lawyer Tony Buzbee, who is representing dozens of Combs's alleged victims, claimed several high-profile celebrities had settled with victims quietly before to avoid being named in a public lawsuit.

This week a judge dismissed a lawsuit filed by Jay-Z, real name Shawn Carter, accusing Mr Buzbee of trying to blackmail him with false claims of sexual misconduct.

Carter sued after Mr Buzbee contacted the star about a complaint from an anonymous accuser who alleged that Carter and Combs sexually abused her.

Mr Buzbee then filed a lawsuit accusing Carter and Combs of [raping the alleged victim when she was 13](#). The lawsuit was later withdrawn by the accuser.

There is still a separate lawsuit pending which Carter filed against Mr Buzbee in federal court in Alabama.

Following the Combs trial, which included showing the Manhattan court [CCTV footage of the star beating Ventura](#) at the InterContinental Hotel in Los Angeles, Ms Allred said she plans to propose legislation stating that women cannot legally consent to sex if they are beaten before or after the act.



Ms Allred proposes new legislation Credit: ANGELA WEISS/AFP

“We all saw the video, he beat her, he dragged her back, and if that’s not force, if that’s not coercion, I don’t know what is,” she said.

Discussing her recommended legislation, she said: “In the same way that if... a woman is under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, she could not, from a legal point of view, does not have the capacity to consent to a sex act.”

She added: “I’m proposing that if a woman is beaten, a victim of domestic violence before or after the sexual assault, it should be considered that she couldn’t consent to it.

“And so that’s what I’m going to propose to legislators to change the law, so hopefully something good can come out of this.”