

Trump's Sexual Assaults Spark Revival of Women's Movement

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Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's bragging about his sexual assaults on women appears to be sparking a revival of the women's movement.

Trump's remark that he could "grab women by the pussy"—followed by more women coming forward to describe his sexual assault on them over many years—has led to social media protests and to demonstrations in New York City and Washington, D.C.

Trump's outrageous remarks prompted women of all ages, races, and ethnicities who had been silent for years and even decades to speak out, sit-in, and protest. We seem to be at a "Women's Lives Matter" moment and perhaps at the beginning of a new women's movement.

While this is taking place in the context of a political campaign where Trump is challenging Democratic Party presidential nominee Hillary Clinton, women's comments have generally ignored politics as they have spoken up for full equality, for respect for women, and for an end to men's sexual accosting and assaulting of women.

After writer Kelly Oxford responded to Trump's remarks by describing her own first experience of sexual assault and invited others to describe theirs, thousands of women responded with their stories. As NPR described the responses, they told of being: "Groped. Penetrated. Rubbed against. Exposed. Masturbated on. Stalked. Slapped. Raped. Forcibly kissed."

The National Organization for Women (NOW) and an ad hoc group with the slogan "Pussy Strikes Back" held a small demonstration at Trump Tower and other Trump properties in New York. So too did a group of women survivors of sexual assault. Another group of 20 women sat in at the Republican National Committee headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Women-led protests against Trump are not brand new. A demonstration led by women in New Jersey last August protested against Trump's remarks and actions against women, but also criticized his denigration of immigrants, Muslims, and the disabled. But these latest protests, while not unconcerned about others, are all about women.

Donald Trump claims that while he made in appropriate claims about kissing and touching women, that he never did such things, but with more women coming forward everyday with their stories his credibility—which was never great—has been destroyed.

Republican leaders around the country have said that he should step down, or that they can't support him, or that they won't vote for him. Some 160 Republican leaders have abandoned their party's candidate, whose campaign appears to be crashing and burning—though in this wildly unusual campaign season it would not be wise to make predictions of his defeat and Hillary's victory.