**Sandy and Nora**

**Episode 19: To be not a man online**

Nora: Hey Sandy

Sandy: Hey Nora

This is the second time I’m talking to you today.

N: Yeah, we had a nice little check in on the airways of Desmond Cole’s show and in that conversation it struck me that we actually haven’t talked about this, what we’re about to talk about.

S: Mhmm.

Nora: In the introduction Desmond mentioned that we’d talked about this on our show last week and of course we had actually recorded before and it felt very prescient editing and listening again to that tape after the news of what happened in Toronto last Monday had broke.

Sandy: Yeah, so thanks Desmond for having us on today on his radio show on Newstalk 1010 which airs every Sunday at 4. For some reason I, ugh, it feels like we were talking about it. Everything just feels so related that it does feel like we’ve talked about it, but we haven’t talked about this. So we are going to be talking about the mass murder that happened in Toronto just one week ago by a man named ------- who struck several people with a rental van that he was driving attempting to hit as many people as possible. Many were killed, many were/are still in the hospital and it’s all related to some of the stuff that we’ve been talking about in the last couple of weeks. You know we’re going to focus on misogyny and the manosphere, I assume. Or we’re going to talk about the ways that the organizing online, especially in respect to the anti-women stuff has serious real life consequences if we don’t take that shit seriously.

Nora: So Alek Minassian we know now probably hates women, probably targeted women in the attack. Certainly 8 our of 10 of the victims were women. I think it’s also important to note that 3 of the victims were very old and I can just imagine like people obviously unable to get out of the path of a speeding van fast enough being more at risk of death. Of course his trajectory was a full kilometre along Yonge Street up around Finch and he has since been celebrated by communities online of men who believe that women who have scorned them deserve violence.

Sandy: And this of course replicates that Elliot Rodger was celebrated again online by these hateful men when he committed mass murder and subsequently killed himself in California. He killed his roommates and a bunch of people and left a video behind explaining that he was doing this because of women who refused to give him sex.

Nora: And despite all of the evidence that we have that suggests that Minassian was driven by similar ideals of Eliot Rodger and in fact he even referenced Eliot Rodger in a Facebook post just before he committed the murder, there’s still a lot of people, a lot of national columnists who are trying to do there best to make what happened in Toronto be an isolated incident. And I think that that is what I find most troubling, the number of prominent voices who still refuse to listen to women, listen to racialized people, listen about our experiences online and how none of this is random actually, that everybody is influenced by something, that forces in the world touch all of us. In this case there was a force that convinced Minassian to organize and commit mass murder. I’m really shocked actually, I say I’m shocked I’m actually not at all shocked, what do these folks like, and I guess I can name a bunch of them but I don’t really know if it’s that worth it, but what do people get from such aggressive defence of the status quo?

Sandy: Why don’t you just explain exactly what you’re referencing, like what was said that is so objectionable.

Nora: Well there’s a couple of national columnists that insist that it is to play politics to talk about the role that misogyny played in this or the role that, well they’re mostly focusing on the role of his misogyny. I haven’t really seen anyone call out conversations about urban planning and making that intersection more safe. I just wrote an article about all of the other forces that really create social isolation and that seem like Minassian was caught up in, like precarious work and tuition fees for college students and how expensive it is and how hard it is to find good work. I haven’t seen anyone say that that’s playing politics but it is apparently playing politics when we say that Minassian who is part of this Involuntary Celibacy movement quote unquote, of men who feel scorned by women, that he in that name went out and committed mass murder.

Sandy: Right. Are you talking about the Kays? Barbara Kay and Jonathan Kay’s articles?

Nora: There’s the Kays, there’s Steven Marsh…

Sandy: Michael Enright.

Nora: I’m not sure if it was Wente or if it was the other one Christie Blatchford but there was another trash women columnist that said some garbage, I think DiManno said some trash as well. Just naming (laughing)…

Sandy: Yeah, you just named a bunch of people that I couldn’t bring myself to read this week because I was so upset by that. But I’ve seen some of the commentary, I’ve seen excerpts certainly of some of the articles and it is like really strange the amount of hoops that people will jump through to try to deny that this has no connection to misogyny when it’s so very clear, it’s right in front of our faces, it’s right here. And I’m not really sure what purpose that serves beyond wanting to believe that what, that it’s not possible here? That misogyny hasn’t been gwaan here. I just really don’t understand why that weird frame of reference beyond our society just supports, or does not support believing women taking women seriously when we’re saying “uh hello this thing is happening here. It makes me wonder what it’s going to take, as you say this is connected to so many things that have happened, you know in the past. Today on Desmond’s show I was referencing what some people online have begun to call the manosphere, which is like the hateful corners of the internet where misogynist men in particular tend to organize. And this world of incels it is related to the world of MRAs, the Men’s Rights Associations, the pick up artists, and all of these gross online groups who target women both online and off. There’s countless examples of this happening so I don’t know why we would try to jump through hoops to pretend that misogyny doesn’t play a roll here. I just, what the fuck?

Nora: Part of it is that women are more free than we have been in relative terms I think in a lot of ways, like we’re more represented in the workforce, and our earning capacity is higher, and you know pregnancy isn’t a death sentence or a life sentence.

Sandy: For some. Some.

Nora: I was going to say for everybody it’s obviously not the case. It’s getting better. So I wonder how much of this is just to consistently try to remind us of our place, and enforce, enforce patriarch on women in every aspect of their online lives, which is increasingly more their lives.

Sandy: Mhmm.

Nora: So you have public policy that ravages women still, you have a murder crisis of Indigenous women and girls, especially, but of other racialized women, there’s a labour crisis of undocumented women and other crisis within border services that disproportionally harms women, especially if they’re coming to Canada and they’re fleeing domestic violence and the state is like well domestic violence, you know it happens here too so we’re going to deport you. (Laughs.)

Sandy: Yup.

Nora: So you’ve got all these things happening at the macro and we, you and I, know about them and can talk about them. But this intense targeting online is the micro, is to make sure that for every woman who might feel more liberated than they would have felt a generation ago, that every instance of everything they do online is actually the new location of policing, and is the new location of making sure that we do not step out of line. And for most people, I think, it’s enough to not want to get attacked to say “OK well I will self censor, I will be careful about what I write online”. Not careful because I’m going to say something that is offensive or incorrect or something like that, but careful just to not put myself out there to get all of this hate that is relentless and that you can see other people experiencing all the time.

Sandy: Oh yeah. I was asked to write something this week for a publication and the editor I was working with sent back at one point “you tell this story about women of colour who were organizing against Men’s Right’s Associations can you just name some of the names so that we can just put that in the article?” And it was like oooo no I don’t think that I can. Yeah, I don’t think that I can. I understand what you are trying to do here, to make sure that people know who were the folks who were organizing, but to be quite frank those people went through a lot during that time after being targeted and you know I’m already feeling like well OK when this article comes out, if it comes out, I’m probably gonna be subject to some attack for a little bit if the guys in the manosphere find it and I don’t want to just put other people’s names in there without talking to them first because I don’t know what supports they have to be able to deal with something like that. So absolutely that’s part of the chill that is driving these men to really try to terrify women out of speaking about, speaking about or living just freely. And it’s actually it’s quite terrifying. You know for someone like myself, the first time I encountered this kind of vitriol from men who organize on the internet was when Men’s Right’s Associations were organizing at the University of Toronto. And surprise, surprise it wasn’t students that were really doing the organizing, they had somehow through some loophole managed to exploit some policy of the University of Toronto and a bunch of men who were not students, who had no connection to the campus set up an official campus group to organize a Men’s Right’s Association. And we were alerted by a student who had heard of one of their events and had gone to one of their events where they were talking about forms of acceptable rape, and in fact saying that rape was justified if a woman in “mind rape” first, so like if a woman dresses “suggestively” (their words obviously not mine), yeah if a woman dresses “suggestively” and then turns a man down who asks for sex or whatever, turns a man down, rebuffs a man, then that is what they called like “mental rape” and so it is justifiable at that point to then rape her in response.

Nora: (Deep sigh.) Oh my god.

Sandy: So this is what we’re hearing, that was the first thing that we heard and it’s like they’re having events on campus about this.

Nora: That’s unbelievable.

Sandy: Like they’re teaching, trying to teach this new way of thinking about how to engage with women. This man, a young student came to my office at the students’ union being like “oh my god Sandy I went to this thing, I had no idea what it was I just thought it was like this… you guys really need to know that this is happening on campus.” I’m like OK. So we alerted the administration who just though it was ridiculous that we would be concerned about this, you know that this is a campus, free speech, they’re allowed to say whatever they want, they’re mostly on the internet, they’re mostly not even Canadian, like why are we worried about these groups? They just really didn’t take us seriously. And while this is happening some of our actions against this group start to get more physical. They bring a rape apologist to campus for a huge speech and a rally is organized by feminists on campus and women’s groups and allies and supporters and these men’s rights associations took as many pictures as they could at this event and started putting photos up of the women who were rallying and saying “these women are in Toronto, they live near the University of Toronto campus, find them, stalk them, take photos, report back.” And that’s what they did.

Nora: Oh my god.

Sandy: That’s what they did. I remember I was so afraid because I was getting phone calls everyday, I was getting emails, I was getting my social media was being attacked from these people, and like I had a job and I had to go to class and I had to walk home at night when class finished at like 10, 11 o’clock at night. And often time you would open the door and there would be a man there with a camera or a man with a camera would just walk into the office and sit in the hallway taking pictures of all the women.

Nora: Mhmm.

Sandy: Or they would just follow us down the street when we were walking to the library. It was ridiculous. And what is the purpose of that beyond, exactly as you say, trying to say “OK women, if you say anything about this there are going to be consequences, wouldn’t it be better if you just shut up?” That’s the chill that they were trying to bring to us.

Nora: Exactly.

Sandy: And quite frankly I think that it worked on some folks.

Nora: How could it not?

Sandy: And of course, people were afraid. People were afraid for their safety, I was afraid for my safety, it was terrifying.

Nora: Yup. I was struck on Wednesday or Thursday and I was seeing a bunch of male politicians and journalists posting pictures of their children. You know really proud and cute children. And I was just like, I cannot post pictures of my children on Twitter, ever, because I do not want someday a picture of one of my kids coming back with some sort of message. It’s like that level of normal life that’s affected by it and thinking about the person that that does influence to change the way that they interact with politics, or interact with their surroundings, or their work, or their colleagues. At one level you can’t blame them obviously, we all have to take safety precautions that are ones that we think we need to do to protect ourselves, but what a shame. What about their free speech? What about their right to security? And this of course all connects to questions of terrorism and how people were wringing their hands, the Barbara Kays of the world, hoping that it was Islamic terrorism and being sad that it wasn’t.

Sandy: Jesus. What an awful fucking person. What type of piece of shit do you have to be that that is one of your first thoughts. Among your first thoughts is that you want it to be Muslim terror… Like go fuck yourself. What the hell?

(Exasperated sigh.)

Nora: Well what kind of trash editor looks at that and is like “very good, we’re going to publish this and be completely liable?”

Sandy: And what kind of trash newspaper fucking publishes it? It’s like trash all around. Jesus.

Nora: Well, let’s not forget that the head of CBC opinions is a former men’s right association you know speaker right? (Laughs.)

Sandy: (Clears throat loudly.)

Nora: You can find her speaking at one of these events and it’s trash as well. It’s available on the internet.

Sandy: Yeah, ain’t that something? Ain’t that something? You know how I feel about her.

Nora: (Laughs.) Well, you know. I think the most important thing we can do after a crisis like what happened is point to all of the mainstream ways that it’s acceptable to do this to women, to terrorize women. That it’s acceptable to silence women, or silence critics, and not of the free speech bizzaro world level critics, but actual critic that criticize power. The political spectrum is kind of meaningless. It’s not really left vs. right, it’s those who have proximity to power and who maintain the status quo with their writing or their thinking or their work and those of us who don’t.

Sandy: Mhmm. I like that.

Nora: That’s the political spectrum.

Sandy: That’s an excellent way to put it. Yeah, 100%. I like that a lot.

Nora: So anyone, the further away you are from power the more difficulty you have challenging power. That is a classic and basis litmus test of where you stand politically.

Sandy: Mhmm, mhmm.

Nora: And it’s the folks who are maintaining the status quo who often are complaining about censorship the loudest. As if they are being censored, which they are obviously not.

Sandy: (Laughs.) Yeah.

Nora: It’s like a beachhead right? You have someone like, here’s a Québec example, you have someone like Lise Ravary who write a column in the Journal de Montréal about hijab day and how disgusting it is that there’s this celebration of this oppressive symbol at a school event and how dare the school board do this. And so she puts this into a newspaper and it becomes legitimate and then the fair right organizes to effectively, which is just to threaten the school board, that the event gets cancelled.

Sandy: Oh shit.

Nora: So this has just been in today’s news in Montréal. And so it’s like you’ve got these little shit writers, shit thinkers, were paid to shit nothing out of their minds and put it on paper and shitheads will read it. (Laughs). And it’s the small slices of justification for the far extreme violence that we see. And as you talk about a lot, these expressions of violence they’re shocking and they’re horrible, but they are far from our biggest concern. Our biggest concern is the structural violence that is happening all the time against people that often gets ignored.

Sandy: Mhmm. Well and it makes this type of violence possible.

Nora: Of course.

Sandy: It creates the conditions for this type of violence to occur. You know, the rhetoric that’s been coming out since the attack on Monday in the news a lot from American media of this being such a weird thing to happen in Toronto, in Canada. No, not just from American media actually, it’s been like everywhere, it’s been like the Canadian mythology of like “oh this type of stuff doesn’t happen here”, is just so offensive. It’s like sorry this type of stuff is happening here, like, misogyny is killing people here maybe not as quickly and as concentrated as in this particular event but this whole society doesn’t take women seriously and so allows things like a fucking crisis of murdered and missing Indigenous women to happen. It allows for the terrible ways that women in the last few months, as you’ve talked about before, have been killed in domestic disputes, I can’t even call it that, domestic violence fucking just hateful shit in their families in the last few months that hasn’t been discussed as a crisis, but it is one. These things happen here and it’s just so, many commentators are using it to be a political thing in another way, to say that this is something that doesn’t happen here, or that this is so strange, or you know like in Canada these types of things are never seen. That’s a political way of talking about this as well, in order to make it seem as though the experiences that many women who live here go through but just aren’t valued enough to show up on television, you know, that’s a way of erasing those experiences and quite frankly our society is structured so something like this can happen. It is. And that’s something we need to grapple with.

Nora: And it can happen because of bad urban planning, which is also a thing that people have been fighting against for years in Toronto. It can happen because people are completely starved of community in real life and the internet is often the only way that you can meet people who have similar interests to you. Like to what extent was Minassian radicalized by a forum of people who were all looking for this downward spiral of self-reinforcing anti-women sentiment. And as you say as well, these myths of Canadian exeptionalism, that are just not true no matter how you cut it. Like the number of people who were talking about how remarkable it was that Minassian wasn’t killed when he was arrested. It’s like sorry let’s think about the last three mass murderers in Canada, who was killed when the police were taking these people out. Marc Lépine killed himself, and Alexandre Bissonnette turned himself in. So this is not exceptional, this is quite in line with a white man killing, a targeted terror attack against an identifiable group of people and the police don’t kill him. And there a lot of reasons that police shouldn’t be killing people, mostly that that’s not their job. They’re not the judge, jury, and executioner. But that narrative that arose last week as well. Like part of it I get that people are looking for a good news story because of how horrible the news was on Monday, but in times of crisis we really do need to be sharp with our emotions and our critical thinking. You know, people who are in direct mourning absolutely should be dealing with that taking all of the time and the space that they need to do that work. But people who are sad that this was an attack on their city. I heard someone say imagine after Ecole Polytechnique the message that come out was Montréal Strong and not what we know it to be today which is a day of action and commemoration against violence against women. But of course even that was a massive fight for feminists to make December 6 into what we understand it to be today.

Sandy: Mhmm. Hmmmmmm. Yeah you’re absolutely right. I think, you know (sigh) the desire to have a good news story is something that does affect part of this. The desire to see some goodness in humanity, or something in response to what happening, and that is happening. You know.

Nora: Mhmm.

Sandy: One of our listeners Saron Gebresellassi who’s a lawyer has set up a pro bono helpline to assist people who have been affected. Some of the people who organized a vigil straight away. You know I wasn’t able to attend though I really did want to because it was a community that I grew up in. You know some of the photos coming out of that, the ways that people were coming together. Those are things we can talk about. But to say things like oh you know Officer Ken Lam is a hero because he didn’t kill this man doesn’t (sigh). Not only does it not make sense, it’s just, it is so frustrating as someone who is a Black Lives Matter activist, who talks a lot about the police, to see an attack like this, a mass murder like this used to politically spin support towards the police. Like it’s just so frustrating for me. That’s not, that shouldn’t be the take away. No, of course you know it’s not the job of the police to execute people without them going through whatever process they’re supposed to go through. And as I’ve been saying t many people this week, I was reminded by another listener othat officer Ken Lam was on the stand during the Andrew Loki inquest and made statements to try to justify the use of force that was used against Andrew Loku, in which Andrew Loku was killed. (Laughs.) Ok so the comments that Ken Lam made were highly anti-Black, talking about his hair in ways that did not make sense, you know like referencing a Black man’s hair as dishevelled, and by that clarifying that it wasn’t shaved down properly or something like that, and calling him childlike in reference to perhaps his mental health status I’m not sure. It was outrageous. The people who were there witnessing the inquest at the time were really frustrated. This very man, those of us who are paying attention in community and know what’s going on, have to see people talking about him as a hero after he justified the killing of a Black man in Toronto in this city for merely not killing someone else, which is like the standard, it is what he should not be doing.

Nora: It’s a baseline.

Sandy: There’s no above and beyond there, it’s adequate and satisfactory behaviour.

And to use this situation to erase the concerns that other people have been bringing up about the ways that the police don’t keep us safe is really concerning to me. It’s like, oh man all the ways that this thing has been used to contribute to the myth making of what Canada is. But this happened in Canada. Police killing Black people happens in Canada, police killing Indigenous people happens in Canada without cause, without whatever. This mass murder happens in Canada, it happens.

Nora: Yup.

Sandy: And this is not the first time that it has happened, it happens as a result of a society that allows for the type of organizing that Alek Minassian was exposed to work on someone like him.

Nora: Because they need legitimacy, they need to see themselves as being having a legitimate position from a lot of the perspectives that you would see in the mainstream though right wing news sphere.

Sandy: Unpack that.

Nora: Well, I mean, a lot of the, especially anti-feminist rhetoric, a lot of the rhetoric around a woman’s role, and around what it’s like to be a real man, these are all forces that distort the perspective of an individual such that they can find themselves other individuals with the same distortions and even distort themselves even further. One of the statistics that I found very interesting, in an article that I wrote for the National Observer last week was that at the age of 18 in Canada women and men diverge quite a lot and women hit life goals faster than men, so life goals are like they move out, education, they might get married or have a child. And so it’s quite uneven in the 20s, but then everything closes in the 30s that men and women catch up to each other with life goals in their 30s. And you can imagine all of the reasons that you might think that is. For someone whose, for a young man whose like 19 and is pissed that he can’t get a girlfriend and he’s seeing girls ignore him or date older men or whatever the fuck bizarre thing that they are projecting onto the world as their own internal issues. It’s a reminder to me that for left… for people on the left, how do we contend with this stuff. I’m not interested in the narrative, a lot of the right wing narrative that is “how could we have saved him or helped him or got him a girlfriend” or anything like that. But it’s like we’re so…

Sandy: That’s not the concern.

Nora: No, no, no, no. Unless we could have stopped him from murdering people but that’s a frame that I think is again far too restricted to the individual. But what are we doing to society that is transforming the way that young people come into the world? And it’s anything from, you know, lying to them about going into higher education, you know university or college, and paying tonnes of money and then indebting them. Not being able to get them to move out of their parents’ house because it’s just too expensive so you’re just kind of stuck with mum and dad and that sucks. Or the lies about what it is to be a “real man.” It is so multi-layered and I am a little bit in despair about how ill equipped progressives are to talk about these issues.

Sandy: Yeah. And you know what there’s a lot of misogynists in the progressive world too. (Laughs).

Nora: Well yeah.

Sandy: Let’s not forget about that even in the types of things you were going through last week there were people who I would believe would call themselves progressives, maybe, who didn’t get it, who didn’t understand it. And every single time I’ve been through something like this, there’s always people who are progressive who don’t take this seriously. Like don’t think that this is a real issue. It’s a real… like, ugh.

Nora: Yeah.

Sandy: It’s something we have to contend with. (Laughs.) It’s something that we have to grapple with and in the progressive left men still rule the day, despite what people might think who are not in this world who have been tweeting at you and I in this last couple weeks. Men still rule the day. And so I think that’s part of the reason that we don’t have an effective way to talk about it. We have a common way to talk about it. There are the right notes that you need to hit if you’re at a conference or if you’re being interviewed or if you’re talking somewhere. But we don’t have any sort of plan to deal with these things. And even just from an institutional stand point, if you work in some sort of institution, whether that be you know like a workplace, a union, a school, a hospital, something, you should have some sort of plan as to how to deal with something like this, some misogynist behaviour and how to support women who are experiencing misogynist behaviour. That should exist. But in many of the institutions that I interact with, I know that these things do not exist in any real way. Maybe there’s a policy written somewhere that’s like “women are welcome” or some really nice flowery language, right? But no actual institutional way to support women who are experience some sort of targeted attack. And you know that’s, this is what we mean when we say that these things need to be grappled with.

Nora: Yeah. And I don’t even know where you start, because part of it’s the leadership part of it is the dominance of a lot of voices. There’s a bit of a generational thing too because, you know, the internet’s a bit of a weird place and we interact with it differently based on who we are an our location to the internet. I don’t really understand much of what I’ve read about the incel movement (laughs) I feel kind of like “oh finally I’m a little bit old” (laughs). I don’t get the way the internet’s being used by 25 year olds, maybe. I saw one guy on the left make a big point on Facebook last week about how ridiculous it is to talk about the fact that mass murderers tend to be men and how inappropriate that is, and “what’s the point of even talking about that? That’s not progressive, that’s just identity politics.”

Sandy: Ohhhhh my god.

Nora: Seriously! And so like… Men, men, if you are listening to this episodes let’s just spend the next 5 minutes, because I think that’ll be probably all of the time that we have, talking to the men.

Sandy: (quietly) Do we have to? Sorry, sorry go ahead.

(Both laugh.)

Nora: No, we don’t have to. Men, what are you doing to talk to other men about this stuff? What are you doing to talk to young men about this stuff, or what are you doing… How are you organizing to talk about these things or is it always just about power and how you can find a way to get that job or to get that position or to ignore some of these difficult issues. You can ignore some of these difficult issues because you can ignore them because they don’t affect you everyday. What are you doing guys? (Laughs.)

Sandy: The question is so important, because there are other men out there who are doing a lot. They’re doing a lot, and they’re starting incel movements and they’re starting pick-up artist stuff where they’re like travelling the world and having events about being a pickup artist, or they’re doing the men’s rights thing where they’re publishing the names of women who like tell lies about men and their photos online and go find them, go find her. There’s a lot of men talking to each other on the internet, and they’re doing a whole lot of organizing. So like where’s the other men at though?

And also if you think that this is all like “some identity politics type thing” that we shouldn’t be talking about, that’s really great. Instead of telling Nora that, why don’t you tell the incel people that. Why don’t you just focus ya thoughts there? Like I just don’t understand what you think you’re doing by being like “Nora, Nora that’s the wrong way to think about this, let’s not think about this this way. This isn’t about men.” Just go tell some men who are on the internets to stop, you know, doing there thing (Nora laughs). Do that, focus… if you’re one of the people who are like “identity politics blah blah blah blah blah blah blah” just do that to the Reddit, to the 4chan and you tell them men to stop seeking each other out, that’s what we need you to do.

N: It’s like that college statistic of how what is it like only 4 or 5 percent of men commit like 80 percent of the rapes or something. It’s just a huge disparency, uh discrepancy, between the… But from the perspective of the person who has been raped, it doesn’t really matter. Then it becomes yes all women, not not all men. So it’s like men, these men are acting on your behalf. Help us out, like identify what Iiiii, I don’t get. I’m actually, I’m in men’s world’s a lot more than women’s worlds just because of my extra curricular activities have brought me there (laughs). And so I do, I do know men interacting with each other, and I’ve seen interesting kind of correction of behaviour. In one instance where someone used homophobic language when he was really angry and stormed out of the space, and a couple of weeks later everyone was gathered around and he apologized to everybody. And it was so normal and basic, but I was like “wow, I did not expect that.”

Sandy: Mhmm.

Nora: And everyone else was like “that was cool. That was cool.” The apology could have been a little better but it didn’t matter because he apologized and I was like “OK cool.” But if I’m struck by that being out of the ordinary, god we really do have to pick up our game and especially men on the left who think that they’re major organizers. It’s like, if you’re organizing on a campaign that’s successful, like the Fight for 15, that’s great. Maybe you should think about how to use some of the tactics that you’re just doing basic organizing, to like focus on other men and talk about some of these issues.

Sandy: Honestly.

Nora: Where’s that?

Sandy: (Exasperated sigh.) Please do. Ahhhh man. It’s like the stakes are really high, like people get hurt. I keep coming back to this because I, I just ever single time I’ve been confronted with this I’m just struck by how many people think that it’s not a big deal, that it’s like “oh the internet, the internet, the internet. It’s not a big deal. It’s not a big deal. This stuff never, never becomes real.” Well it becomes real and we’ve seen how it becomes real. There’s countless examples of this type of internet organizing jumping into real life, and prior to the internet it jumped into real life all the time. And this stuff is reaaaaal and we have to take it seriously when people are saying “this is happening to me” or “this is happening online” or “hey I need some support here”. And we need to take it seriously when there’s a pile on that’s happening that’s meant to silence women.

Nora: Yeah, I have to say the most support I got from men was from men I didn’t, I don’t know. Were from strangers, who I interact with maybe on Twitter, maybe once or twice or maybe regularly. But it was, yeah, men man.

Sandy: That sucks eh? Like I’ve had that experience doing BLM stuff, doing students’ union stuff where like you think that it’d be people that you know who’d be the ones reaching out to support you and then you realize “oh, there’s a lot of people that I don’t know who are comin’ out to help and support and some of the people I do know I mean where are you (deep breath) your actions aren’t really jiving with how you talk about yourself, how you think about yourself. It’s really, it’s like such an awakening when that happens to you, so I’m sorry that you had to go through that.

Nora: Mhmm.

Sandy: Obviously it’s kind of painful to have that realization about people that you consider to be comrades but these people need to be better.

Sandy: We all need to be better.

Nora: Meh. And just for an example of how important all of this is, I do want to mention that Mathieu Murphy Perron did put out like the article that helped to give perspective on my situation after the Twitter storm and that was so helpful.

Sandy: Mhmm.

Nora: And there was only one. (Laughs.)

Sandy: Mhmm. And then David Gray-Donald.

Nora: And then David Gray-Donald of course, yes. But that was also straight up reporting, which is also great, and important, and helped to track exactly what was going on. But guys, a lot of you write, like what the fuck (laughs.) Anyway, we will continue this discussion for sure because there’s obviously other things to say. But this is obviously a moment where there is a lot of women talking a lot about misogyny and pretty much everything I’m seeing is great. There’s great introspection, there’s great calls to action, there’s great analysis. But, um, but guys don’t don’t leave the women to be the ones fighting violence against women. C’mon.

Sandy: I promise you will not get attacked as hard as we do online if you do say something.

Nora: (Laughs)

Sandy: I promise you, if that’s what it is like making you feel like mmmm maybe now’s not the time, then no you do it. I promise you, you will not…

Nora: Nope.

Sandy: …get attacked the way that we will get attacked when we publish our shit.

Nora: Yeah. You can keep posting pictures of your kids.

(Both laugh.)