New York Times' Bari Weiss Is a Victim of Workplace Bullying

By Alex Berezow, PhD — July 15, 2020

Bari Weiss, a New York Times opinion writer, quit her job following relentless defamatory, bigoted, anti-Semitic, workplace bullying from her super-woke colleagues. And workplace bullying is a lot more common than one might think.

Bari Weiss

Chronicling the ongoing, stunning decline of the New York Times from America's newspaper of record to a malicious, partisan rag unworthy of the paper it's printed on is something of a hobby of mine. Admittedly, it's because I suffer from New York Times Derangement Syndrome, a chronic condition I fully expect to be listed in the DSM-6.

The latest story that has angered me -- and really, it should anger every American who has even a basic sense of decency and respect for the freedom of expression -- is the resignation of Bari Weiss, an opinion writer who falls somewhere in the center or center-right of the political spectrum. In her resignation letter [1] (which is powerful and should be read in its entirety), she notes that she was hired specifically for the purpose of presenting a viewpoint that the NYT's subscribers aren't accustomed to reading. Yet, for the "crime" of doing her job, she was bullied to such an extent by her super-woke colleagues that she felt that she had to quit.

Her letter is jaw-dropping. Here are some excerpts:
“My own forays into Wrongthink have made me the subject of constant bullying by colleagues who disagree with my views. They have called me a Nazi and a racist; I have learned to brush off comments about how I’m ‘writing about the Jews again.’”

“My work and my character are openly demeaned on company-wide Slack channels where masthead editors regularly weigh in.”

“Still other New York Times employees publicly smear me as a liar and a bigot on Twitter with no fear that harassing me will be met with appropriate action. They never are.”

If her allegations are true (and having experienced this sort of bullying myself on Twitter, I have zero reason to believe otherwise), let’s call this what it is: Defamatory, bigoted, anti-Semitic, workplace bullying.

What Research Says About Workplace Bullying

Society has rightly shined a light on student bullying, either in person or online. But an area that gets far less attention is workplace bullying. Surveys on the issue show that anywhere from roughly 50% to 90% of employees have reported being bullied. (A CDC study [2] reported a far lower prevalence of 7%.) Whatever the actual number is, it’s a growing problem.

The effects of bullying are pernicious. It causes lost productivity [3] for the organization. It is associated with poor mental health for the victims [4], including trouble sleeping [5], undermining relationships with spouses [6], and triggering suicidal ideation [7]. Women are more likely to report being bullied than men, indicating that sexism plays a role, as well. Several organizational factors [8], such as authoritarian or laissez-faire leadership styles, were also associated with bullying.

Workplace Bullying at the New York Times

It's clear from Ms. Weiss's letter that NYT leadership was aware of the problem and chose to do nothing. She wrote:

“I do not understand how you have allowed this kind of behavior to go on inside your company in full view of the paper’s entire staff and the public. And I certainly can’t square how you and other Times leaders have stood by while simultaneously praising me in private for my courage. Showing up for work as a centrist at an American newspaper should not require bravery.”

She is absolutely correct, but bravery is exactly what certain jobs in media (and academia) now require. Stating a fact that people don't like can put one's career and reputation in jeopardy. Simply asking people to be more tolerant of alternative viewpoints [9] is itself a risky move, drawing the ire of the Twitter mob. And the very people who pretend to support free speech run away and hide the
moment the pitchforks come out.

Be forewarned: If this disastrous cultural trend does not change soon, the media and academia will be damaged irreversibly, and our country forever will be worse off.