



Written by [James Murphy](#) on September 26, 2018

Bill Cosby Sentenced to a Minimum of Three Years in Prison for Sex Crimes

Once known as “America’s Dad,” 81-year-old actor and comedian Bill Cosby was sentenced to three to 10 years in state prison for the 2004 sexual assault of Andrea Constand, a former employee of Temple University, Cosby’s alma mater.



Despite an 11th-hour appeal for house-arrest by Cosby’s attorney, Joseph Greene, the convicted actor was remanded immediately to custody and taken out of the courtroom in handcuffs. Greene had cited Cosby’s advanced age and blindness as reasons to keep him out of prison, but Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Judge Steven O’Neill was having none of that.

“This was a serious crime,” O’Neill said. “Mr. Cosby, this has all circled back to you. The day has come, the time has come.”

The State of Pennsylvania has classified Cosby as a sexually violent predator based on psychological reports, which say that Cosby has a mental disorder that involves urges toward non-consenting women.

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Cosby, who was [convicted in April](#) of three counts of felony aggravated indecent assault, burst out laughing briefly after the sentence was read, but said nothing else as sheriff’s deputies took his belongings, handcuffed him, and led him away. Cosby was taken to Montgomery County Correctional Facility for processing prior to being taken to his home for the next three years: SCI Phoenix, a new state prison outside of Philadelphia. Staff at the prison will assess Cosby’s medical needs. It is possible, due to his advanced age and physical condition, that Cosby will serve his sentence in a long-term medical care unit.

Cosby has been accused of various degrees of sexual assault, up to and including rape, by dozens of women. Thus far, this is the only conviction, although previously, he had been forced to pay Constand \$3.4 million in a civil suit. Cosby is still facing at least three other civil suits from other accusers. More than 60 women in total have accused Cosby of sex crimes, dating back at least five decades.

Constand offered a [written statement](#) to the court in advance of the sentencing. In it, she stated, “Bill Cosby took my beautiful, healthy young spirit and crushed it. He robbed me of my health and vitality, my open nature and my trust in myself and others.”

Judge O’Neill cited Constand’s statement when offering reasons for the sentencing. “I have given great weight to the victim impact testimony in this case, and it was powerful,” O’Neill said.

Several of Cosby’s accusers were present for the sentencing, including former supermodel Janice Dickinson, who accused Cosby of drugging and raping her in a hotel room in 1982. Dickinson nearly



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had to be removed from the courtroom for laughing as the sentence was read and saying directly to Cosby, "See, I got the last laugh, pal."

Cosby's publicist, Andrew Wyatt, blasted everyone connected with the trial in a statement after the sentence was handed out. "I believe it is important to point out that this has been the most racist and sexist trial in the history of the United States," Wyatt said. "You know what this country has done to black men for decades."

Wyatt relayed that Cosby was in good spirits and added, "He knows that these are lies."

The conviction and sentencing of Cosby signal the beginning of the penultimate chapter in a long life that included many groundbreaking successes. Cosby was the first African-American to be a lead actor on a major network television show when he was cast as Alexander Scott on NBC's *I Spy* in 1965. The comedian and actor was a fixture on television from the 1960s through the 1990s, with his biggest success coming on the 1980s sitcom *The Cosby Show*, which ran from 1984 until 1992. His run as Dr. Cliff Huxtable, the well-to-do, no-nonsense patriarch of an African-American family, was hailed for the breaking of racial stereotypes in Hollywood.

Unfortunately, that legacy is gone. In its place is the sad mugshot taken of Cosby before his internment in the State of Pennsylvania's prison system. Once known as "America's Dad," Cosby is now known as "America's serial rapist."

Photo of Bill Cosby: [U.S. Navy via Wikimedia](#)



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