



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 30, 2020

Biden Says New York Times Exonerated Him. Times Says It Didn't.

Democrat presidential contender Joe Biden, [who says](#) we must believe women when they lodge sex-assault claims, now says we must not believe one such woman, Tara Reade.

The former Biden staffer, of course, [claims Biden assaulted](#) her in 1993, and now, [BuzzFeed has reported](#), Biden's desperate information ministry has sent out "talking points" that say the *New York Times* has proven that Reade is a liar.



The pro-Biden *Times* threw shade on Reade's claims, the campaign says, and that is the end of the matter.

Unhappily for Biden, the hate-Trump newspaper does not share his opinion of its effort. No, it says, it did not exonerate the former vice president.

Reade's story

Reade, who also accused Biden of garden-variety sex harassment [with several other women](#) last year, [says a superior](#) in the office ordered her to deliver a gym bag to the handsy man somewhere on Capitol Hill. Where it happened, Reade doesn't remember.

When she handed the bag to him, he pinned her against a wall and assaulted her.

When Reade rejected him, she claimed, he unleashed verbal abuse: "You're nothing to me," he angrily said.

And when the man she considered a father figure walked away frustrated, she claimed, he added this grace note: "You're OK, you're fine."

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Of course, Reade wasn't "fine." She was devastated, she says, and, not surprisingly, told friends and family about the ambush.

The story [all but died](#) after the [Times and Washington Post claimed](#) to have done due diligence.

But then last week, video of Reade's late mother discussing her daughter and Biden [went viral](#). Jeanette Altimus called CNN talker Larry King's live program to say her daughter worked for a prominent senator. What should she do about her difficulties with the man if she didn't want to alert the media?

Then early this week, [two women said Reade](#) told them about the assault after it happened.

Talking Points

That was bad enough for Biden. But [BuzzFeed reported](#) late Tuesday that his campaign has "circulated talking points among top Democratic supporters shortly after the *New York Times* published a story earlier this month about the allegation by Tara Reade, a former staff assistant in Biden's Senate office who says he assaulted her in 1993":



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The messaging shows that while Biden has stayed quiet on the allegations on the eve of his nomination, aides were taking the claims seriously enough behind the scenes to coordinate messaging among other Democrats to try to cast the matter as one that's been thoroughly vetted and determined to be unfounded.

"Biden believes that all women have the right to be heard and to have their claims thoroughly reviewed," the talking points read, according to a copy sent to two Democratic operatives. "In this case, a thorough review by the New York Times has led to the truth: this incident did not happen."

"Here's the bottom line," they read. "Vice President Joe Biden has spent over 40 years in public life: 36 years in the Senate; 7 Senate campaigns, 2 previous presidential runs, two vice presidential campaigns, and 8 years in the White House. There has never been a complaint, allegation, hint or rumor of any impropriety or inappropriate conduct like this regarding him — ever."

The "guidance," as *BuzzFeed* amusingly calls it, "cast Biden as a lifelong 'fierce advocate for women' and the claims as unequivocally untrue, leaning heavily on the April 12 report by the New York Times outlining the allegations by Reade."

The assault "did not happen," the talking points claim, although the *Times* didn't conclude that and the newspaper did what it could to discredit Reade:

"All four of the people Mrs. Reade says were notified of an official complaint told the New York Times on the record that they have absolutely no recollection of any such conversation," the Biden campaign told Democrats, echoing testimonials from former staffers who have painted the claims as "so wildly out of character for Joe Biden."

In other words, Reade is lying. The *Times* says so.

The campaign touted Biden's backing the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, a year after what Reade claims was violence against her, [BuzzFeed reported](#).

"Violence against women is a huge problem, and especially right now," Biden said, calling domestic violence prevention "one of the leading causes of my life."

If Reade's story is true, Biden would certainly have known that violence against women is a "huge problem."

Paper Did Not Exonerate Biden

The pro-Biden *Times* says the campaign is lying. It concluded no such thing.

"*BuzzFeed* reported on the existence of talking points being circulated by the Biden campaign that inaccurately suggest a *New York Times* investigation found that Tara Reade's allegation 'did not happen,'" a [spokesman said](#).

"Our investigation made no conclusion either way."

Image: [Gage Skidmore/Wikimedia Commons](#)

R. Cort Kirkwood is a long-time contributor to The New American and a former newspaper editor.



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