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Sexual exploitation exists not because it's hidden, but because it's tolerated

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As headlines fixate on the Jeffrey Epstein case, the public narrative of sexual exploitation has narrowed to a familiar tableau: private jets, hidden islands, underage girls, powerful men insulated by wealth.

The exploitation of minors is devastating. And abuse of power with impunity, whether by elites or anyone else, is a profound societal failure.

But the idea that sexual exploitation is primarily a story of billionaire excess distorts the reality that sexual exploitation is common and often operates in ordinary settings.