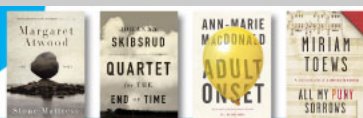


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News / GTA

## Jian Ghomeshi: 8 women accuse former CBC host of violence, sexual abuse or harassment

One woman, actor Lucy DeCoutere, alleges she was slapped and choked without her consent.

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### Inside the Star



Author Reva Seth accuses Jian Ghomeshi of assault

Lucy DeCoutere details the time she spent with the former CBC host and the shocking behaviour she says she encountered.

By: Kevin Donovan and Jesse Brown Staff Reporter and Special to the Star, Published on Wed Oct 29 2014

Eight women from across Canada now accuse former CBC host Jian Ghomeshi of abusive behaviour ranging from allegations of beating and choking without consent, to workplace sexual harassment.

The allegations the Star is probing range from 2002 to the present.

One of the women, popular Canadian television actor Lucy DeCoutere, has agreed to be identified. DeCoutere, who plays Lucy on *Trailer Park Boys*, recalls an incident in 2003 when she alleges Ghomeshi, without warning or consent, choked her to the point she could not breathe and then slapped her hard three times on the side of her head.

"He did not ask if I was into it. It was never a question. It was shocking to me. The men I have spent time with are loving people," said DeCoutere, who, when she is not acting on the television show, is a captain in the Royal Canadian Air Force in New Brunswick.



Analysis: 20 lessons from the Rob Ford era



Racist, sexist Chow cartoon cause for outrage: Honderich



Ghomeshi, 47, was fired Sunday from his job as host of *Q*, a flagship radio show of the publicly funded broadcaster. Ghomeshi has alleged in a lawsuit filed the next day that CBC made a "moral judgment" that his practice of a bondage-sadism sex life was wrong. He is suing the CBC for \$55 million for defamation and breach of trust and the corporation has said it will "vigorously" defend itself against Ghomeshi's lawsuit.

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The Star has presented Ghomeshi, his lawyers and his public relations staff with the allegations in this story and they have yet to respond.

He met some of the women during his 2012 tour to promote *1982*, his best-selling memoir about a year in high school in Thornhill. Others he met at film festivals, at music or CBC events, or at the CBC workplace.

Two of the women who allege they were physically assaulted also say that before the alleged assaults in his home he introduced them to Big Ears Teddy, a stuffed bear, and he turned the bear around just before he slapped or choked them, saying that "Big Ears Teddy shouldn't see this."

One of the new women to come forward is a woman in her mid-20s who was a CBC producer in Montreal who dreamed of being on *Q*. He met her at one of his book signings. Ghomeshi allegedly took her to his hotel room, threw her against the wall and was very "forceful" with her. She said she performed oral sex "to get out of there." The woman, who still works in the media but not at CBC, said she decided not to complain about his behaviour because she feared he was too powerful.

"I felt like Jian was CBC god," she told the Star in an interview. She is the second CBC woman to come forward with allegations of sexual harassment by Ghomeshi. The CBC has announced they are investigating the first case, where Ghomeshi allegedly told a CBC staffer he wanted to "hate f---" her.

Generally, the stories the women have told the Star describe a man obsessed with his image and power, and someone who they say has little or no respect for barriers.

Over the course of the Star's investigation, women who say they were victimized said they did not feel comfortable putting their name to the allegations. Some say they feared retaliation from Ghomeshi, online harassment and a negative impact on their careers.

DeCoutere said it was time for someone to speak publicly about the matter.

She first met Ghomeshi at a barbecue at a Banff television festival in 2003. They chatted and, in time, she visited Toronto and they had dinner at a restaurant on the Danforth. She recalls him telling her how famous he was and "how lucky you are to be with me." They went back to his house in Riverdale. DeCoutere said they began making out and then she alleges he pushed her against the wall, choked her with his hands around her neck and then slapped her three times.

"That was something I had never experienced before," DeCoutere said. She left his house shortly after that in a taxi. "It did not escalate; it stopped," she said.

In addition to her work as an actor, DeCoutere is a captain in the air force and a training development officer, ensuring that people in the service are receiving appropriate training.

What follows are seven more cases that, including DeCoutere's allegations, bring to eight the total number of women who have come forward with stories of abuse. Of these eight stories, four were included in the Star's original story published on Monday. Four of the women have come forward this week.

Ghomeshi, in a Facebook posting Sunday evening, wrote in an emotional statement that he has "done nothing wrong." He said it is not unusual for him to engage in "adventurous forms of sex that included role-play, dominance and submission." However, he said it has always been consensual. His lawyers echoed this in the statement of claim filed as part of his lawsuit.

In his posting, Ghomeshi writes: "Let me be the first to say that my tastes in the bedroom may not be palatable to some folks. They may be strange, enticing, weird, normal, or outright offensive to others. . . . But that is my private life. . . . And no one, and certainly no employer, should have dominion over what people do consensually in their private life."

In 2002, Ghomeshi, then 35, was the host of *Play*, a culture and arts television show on CBC Newsworld. He struck up a conversation with a woman who was roughly his age and invited her to a taping of the show. The first time she came to the CBC headquarters, they ended the evening at a local pub and then he drove her to her car. She alleges that as soon as they were in the car Ghomeshi reached over to the passenger seat, grabbed her hair and "yanked it hard."

"I was completely shocked," she said. "He asked if I like it rough. Quite honestly I don't remember what I said. I was so shocked."

Though she regrets it now, she returned to a taping of the show two weeks later. He asked her to his home in Riverdale. Once there, she alleges that without consent he grabbed her hair and pulled her down to the floor. Then, she alleges, he delivered three sharp punches to the side of her head while she lay on the floor.

"I was crying. Just crying. He stood there looking at me and said, 'You should leave.'" The woman said she called a taxi and left the home.

The CBC program *As it Happens* also interviewed this woman and broadcast an account

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of her allegations Wednesday.

In 2005, Ghomeshi, then 38, was at a Toronto music and dance event in a park in Toronto. He ran into a woman he knew from the arts and culture scene. The woman, 34, had gone on a few dates with Ghomeshi but they had never been intimate. They went for a walk when the event was over and, according to the woman, Ghomeshi attacked her while they were sitting on a bench. He began kissing her forcefully and then “put his hands around my neck and choked me.”

“He smothered me,” she said. She alleges Ghomeshi then grabbed her arms hard and “bit” her, then pushed her down on the park bench and “groped” her.

“I pushed him away. It really scared me. He was so aggressive,” the woman said. The next day, she said Ghomeshi contacted her and “acted like nothing had happened.”

“There was absolutely nothing consensual about what happened to me,” the woman said.



A CBC employee in her late 20s alleges that in 2007 Ghomeshi was sitting with her and other producers at a story meeting for his radio show *Q*. After their colleagues stood up and left, she alleges Ghomeshi leaned in close to her and quietly said “I want to hate f--- you”.

Later, as the two were walking in to the *Q* studio, she alleges he laughed to her and quietly said, “Wasn’t that funny when I told you I wanted to grudge f--- you?”

Three years later, she alleges that on his way out of the *Q* studio, Ghomeshi approached her from behind and cupped her buttocks.

The woman later complained about Ghomeshi to her union representative at the CBC, who told her he reported her complaints to a CBC manager and to the executive producer of *Q*. She did not file a formal grievance.

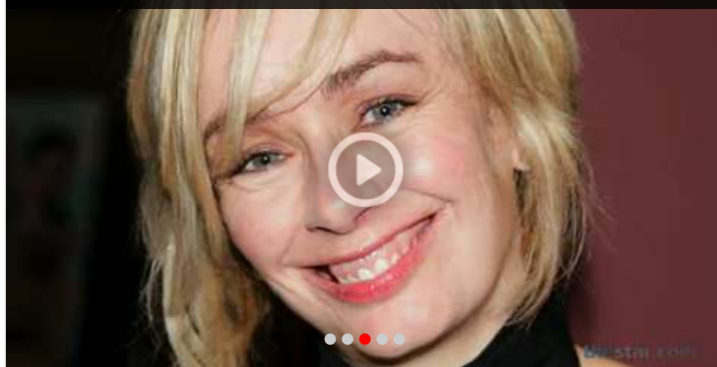
She says she was called to a meeting with *Q*’s executive producer to discuss her complaints, whom she says asked her “what (she) could do to make this a less toxic work environment?”

To her knowledge, Ghomeshi was never reprimanded for the incidents.

The CBC announced Tuesday that in the wake of a Toronto Star story describing this woman’s allegations it has launched an investigation.

#### Related videos

Jian Ghomeshi choked and slapped me, actress says



In 2012, a CBC producer in her mid-20s attended a book signing by Ghomeshi in Montreal. She waited in line to have her book signed, and once standing in front of Ghomeshi, she recalls telling him that her dream was to work on his radio show, *Q*. He

asked her if she would like to join him and his friends for drinks after the event, she says. She agreed, and later remembers meeting him at the lobby of the Opus Hotel, where he was staying. He arrived alone and embraced her, she says.

“This isn’t a professional meeting,” she recalls Ghomeshi saying to her on the way to McKibbins Irish Pub. Seated in a booth, she says he rubbed her legs with both hands, explaining, “I have anxiety. Touching helps.”

“The two worlds can co-exist,” she alleges he told her. “I’ve done it before.”

She remembers telling Ghomeshi, “I want to work for you, not date you.” She said Ghomeshi kept complaining that his eyes were dry and he had to get his contact lenses out.

They left the pub and went to Tim Hortons, where Ghomeshi bought a panini and later invited her to his hotel room, saying he had to take his contact lenses out.

“I feel like a big moron now,” said the woman, who is no longer with the CBC. “I should have seen it coming.”

In the hotel room, she recalls going to the bathroom and, as she was leaving it, discovering the lights were dimmed.

She alleges Ghomeshi roughly threw her against the wall and kissed and fondled her forcefully. She states that she then performed fellatio on Ghomeshi “just to get out of there.”

“I was saying to him, “I don’t want to do this, I want to work for you.”

As she was leaving the room crying, she says, she heard Ghomeshi say, “I’ll talk with my executive producer about you.”

The next morning she received a text from Ghomeshi. “Happy Thursday,” it read. She was shocked.

She says she did receive an invitation to a job interview from Ghomeshi’s executive producer shortly thereafter. In Toronto, she recalls, she was surprised to find Ghomeshi present at the interview.

Immediately after she left the CBC building, she says Ghomeshi texted her to say that she looked sexier than ever in the interview, and he invited her out that night for drinks.

She declined.

“I feel gross about the whole thing. I feel used,” the woman said.



In 2012, a fan of Ghomeshi’s in her mid-20s came to his book event in a small city in Eastern Canada. She stood in line to get her copy of his memoir signed, and she recalls him being overwhelmingly friendly, asking her name and many questions about herself. The next day, she received a private Facebook message from him containing his phone number and an invitation to call him.

The two corresponded online, and Ghomeshi allegedly introduced violent sexualized language into their conversation, assuring her it was all fantasy and encouraging her to participate through email, which she did. She says he invited her to visit him in Toronto. She came, she says, but wouldn’t stay at his house. They went out for dinner, then back to a dorm at the University of Toronto where she was staying in the room of a friend who was out of town.

She alleges that in the stairwell, Ghomeshi slammed her against a cement wall and she dropped her belongings. When she knelt to pick them up, he choked her from behind and struck her across the head. He demanded that she stand, and he marched her up the stairs into her friend’s empty dorm room.



She says he demanded that she kneel, then hit her repeatedly about the head while she stared up in shock. She asked him about bruising, and he laughed and replied that he knew how to hit her so there wouldn't be any. He hit her again, and she stared in disbelief and shock. She remembers feeling that he then lost interest and left, hugging her on his way out of the building. She later sent him an accusatory email, and he responded by email. The Star has copies of the correspondence.

"it IS about sex," wrote Ghomeshi in an email to the woman, asserting that she had consented, "it WAS. . . that you've decided to turn this ugly is disappointing. i wish for good karma into 2013."



Also in 2012, another fan of Ghomeshi's, also in her mid-20s, went to his book event in a small city in Eastern Canada. She stood in line to get her copy of his memoir signed, and when she stood before him, she recalls him asking her name and many questions about herself. She recalls that he wrote down details on a Post-it note, and later that evening he found her on Facebook and sent her his phone number and an invitation to get in touch. She did, and says she and Ghomeshi had dinner that evening, kissed and parted. They corresponded, and Ghomeshi allegedly introduced violent sexualized language into their conversation, assuring her when she failed to respond that it was all fantasy and encouraging her to participate, which she did. She recalls him assuring her these things would not happen in real life.

Ghomeshi invited her to visit him in Toronto at his house in Cabbagetown, she says, and she did.

When she arrived at his house and greeted him, she says Ghomeshi answered the door and stared at her. Without speaking, she alleges that he threw her against the wall and demanded that she get on her knees and perform fellatio. She alleges that when she kneeled down he struck her repeatedly about the head, "hard enough that (her) vision was blurred."

She says he took his belt off, tied it tight around her neck, "yanked" it, and led her around by the belt. They had intercourse, she said, and during it she alleges he whipped her back with his belt and hit her about the head. She alleges he put his full body weight on her face during fellatio, to the point where she gagged, couldn't breathe, and felt she would vomit. A subsequent encounter, she alleges, left her with deep bruising on her body.

She alleges that when she later confronted Ghomeshi and showed him pictures of her bruising, he told her that he found her bruises to be "hot."

The woman told the Star that during this visit to his house she noticed he had a teddy bear in his room. She said he turned the teddy bear around so that the bear was facing away from them.

**Jian Ghomeshi**

hi ms. forgive the unsolicited lamebook interruption but i had to look you up and say hello. twas nice meeting you last night. i mean, especially because you know the lyrics to my old song better than i do. although, i WAS a little pissed that i didn't get the invite to tag along to [REDACTED]...even though i have the eyes of an arabian princess. harsh. x j.

A woman alleged Ghomeshi began by charming her.

Last year, in 2013, a woman in her mid-20s says she had been on a few dates with Jian, but they never had sex. After they had been out of touch for weeks, she recalls Ghomeshi inviting her to his new house in Toronto's Beach area because he "needed" to see her to discuss something important. When she arrived, she says Ghomeshi sat her down for an intimate conversation. She says he told her that she might be "the one" for him, that he "didn't buy this big house to throw parties, but to raise a family."

He then kissed her, she says, and while kissing he "pulled (her) hair so hard my neck flew backward, and when it did," she alleges, "he smacked me." She objected and asked why he did this. He laughed, she says, and explained to her that in order for him to build a future with her, he would need to see if they were sexually compatible, and she would have to "let (him) enjoy this the way (he) wants to." She says that he then turned his teddy bear around on his bed, telling her the bear "shouldn't see this."

Ghomeshi began kissing her again, she says, and struck her in the face once more, harder than before. He pointed out his erection, she says, as proof that she was "the one" for him. He then allegedly demanded she kneel in a constrained position, allegedly grabbed her by the neck and hit her in the face hard, and allegedly engaged her in fellatio, forcefully. She says Ghomeshi bit her, leaving marks on her breasts, inner thighs and back. Later, Ghomeshi called her a degrading term. She objected, she says, and told him, "don't talk to me like that."

She says Ghomeshi shrank away from her at that moment, sulking. "You're making me feel like a weirdo," she recalls him saying. He then said, "You need to go," and left the room. She dressed and walked downstairs, where she found Ghomeshi on his couch, absorbed in his computer screen, checking Twitter. She left the house, she says. He did not say goodbye.

Months later, she confronted him in an email, suggesting that details of his behaviour might go public. "i'm shaking as I read this," he responded, "can we please talk?"

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jian Ghomeshi <[REDACTED]>

Date: 2014

Subject: Re: Dear J

To: REDACTED

i'm shaking as i read this. can we please talk?

----

jian ghomeshi  
Jian Ghomeshi Productions Inc.

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