

Ex-model accuses Harvey Weinstein of sexual assault in new lawsuit

 [theguardian.com/film/2019/dec/19/harvey-weinstein-kaja-sokola-ex-model-sexual-assault-accusations](https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/dec/19/harvey-weinstein-kaja-sokola-ex-model-sexual-assault-accusations)

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A former Polish model has accused disgraced movie mogul Harvey Weinstein of sexually assaulting her when she was a 16-year-old aspiring actor, according to a newly filed lawsuit.

Kaja Sokola had previously been known as “Jane Doe” in an earlier class action lawsuit. She is now removing herself from that suit and going public, motivated in part by news that Weinstein and his former film studio’s board have reached a wide-ranging settlement that includes a total of \$25m for more than two dozen actresses and former employees who claim Weinstein sexually harassed them.

“I cannot accept the proposed ‘global settlement’ as fair or just. There is no accountability for the perpetrators, insufficient compensation for all of the victims, and millions of dollars going to people that I believe enabled Weinstein,” Sokola said in a statement on Thursday.

“Therefore, today I am filing my own case, in my own name, under New York’s Child Victims Act,” she added.

Scores of women have accused Weinstein of sexual misconduct. He faces a 6 January criminal trial in New York on rape and sexual assault charges in state court, where he has pleaded not guilty.

Weinstein has vociferously denied any non-consensual sex allegations by his accusers.

In the new lawsuit Sokola recounts an incident in 2002 where she alleges Weinstein had promised to take her to lunch in New York to discuss her career but instead took her to his apartment. When there she alleges Weinstein “aggressively and threateningly demanded sex” and “instructed her to take off her clothes”, and forced her to touch his penis while he “grabbed at her breasts” despite her protestations.

Sokola said her experience caused her to leave acting.

“I have long since moved on from modeling and, because of Harvey Weinstein, gave up on my dreams of acting,” she said. “I have learned that some wounds never fully heal. Memories of sexual abuse are like a scar after a burn, but because the injury is to the psyche, it is invisible to everyone except the victim. By revealing my own scar, I hope to encourage others to speak up about their own experiences.”

Her lawyer, Douglas Wigdor, said: “While others may have decided to settle, albeit under

some of the most offensive and one-sided terms, we hope that the filing of this complaint encourages other victims and the New York attorney general to join us as we continue our efforts at holding Harvey Weinstein and his enablers accountable.”

Weinstein, 67, recently had spinal surgery and has used a walker when seen in public in recent court appearances. He also appears to have embarked on a campaign to win public sympathy by giving a rare newspaper interview in which he told the New York Post his “pioneering” work on “movies directed by women and about women” was being forgotten.

That prompted 23 women to sign an open letter saying Weinstein was “trying to gaslight society”. The letter added: “He will be remembered as a sexual predator and an unrepentant abuser who took everything and deserves nothing.”