

Wigdor LLP Partner Jeanne Christensen Writes About the Momentum Building for the ASA in the New York Daily News

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Momentum is starting to build for the New York Adult Survivor's Act (ASA) which opens on November 24, 2022. This landmark Act allows victims to sue in civil court for their harm, no matter when the assault happened. Just as important, it allows them to potentially sue third parties, such as an employer, school or other organization that enabled or covered up the misconduct. This new law will finally create the accountability and closure that has often been out of reach for far too many who were 18 or older at the time of their sexual assault.

The ASA goes even further in attacking and tearing down the culture of silence and outright enablement that too often allows sexual abusers to continue their crime sprees. Weinstein may have been deservedly brought low, but those who enabled him are still very much in business.

Historically, the courtroom has not been a welcoming place for survivors. It wasn't in 2011, when Wigdor represented Nafissatou Diallo, a housekeeper at a luxury hotel in New York City who said she was sexually assaulted by Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the frontrunner to unseat Nicolas Sarkozy in the 2012 French presidential election. Tragically, the Manhattan district attorney dismissed the criminal indictment and Strauss-Kahn walked.

That case showed how far our legal system was from believing survivors, especially when powerful men were on trial. Since then, Wigdor LLP successfully has represented many women in civil actions against predators, including numerous Weinstein victims, the reality is that far too many women remain on the sidelines, afraid to tell the truth, because of the fear of revictimization. We now know that survivors process the trauma of sexual assault in all different ways and on all different timelines, sometimes even normalizing it or denying that it happened. The ASA takes these factors into account.

Weinstein's first conviction felt like a turning point, and the case helped unleash the loud chorus of voices that fueled the #MeToo movement but there is still more work to be done. Wigdor client Tarale Wulff, who testified about her assault at the Weinstein trial in New York, said recently when asked what her message to survivors would be at this moment, "The ASA is an invitation to you to tell your story. There are people who are waiting to hear your story and hold your abuser accountable because it should have never happened to you."

[Read the Full OpEd by Jeanne Christensen Here:](#)