

Former aspiring actor claims Harvey Weinstein sexually assaulted her at 16: Lawsuit

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A former aspiring actor and model has claimed in a new lawsuit filed Thursday that disgraced movie mogul Harvey Weinstein sexually assaulted her when she was 16.

Kaja Sokola said the alleged assault occurred in 2002 and is actionable because of a new New York law that largely eliminates the statute of limitations for sex assault claims.

The lawsuit names Harvey Weinstein; his brother, Bob Weinstein; Disney and Miramax, the production company formed by the Weinsteins. Disney is the parent company of ABC News.

Sokola's attorney Douglas Wigdor said his client would not participate in a recently announced settlement. Weinstein inked a \$47 million settlement with a number of accusers last week, but did not admit fault as part of the agreement.

"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," Wigdor said. "Kaja Sokola, who was sexually abused by Harvey Weinstein when she was only 16 years old, is entitled to justice, and we intend to see that she gets it."

Sokola said she was 16 when she came to New York from Poland to work as a model and to try to become an actor.

"Not long after I arrived in New York, I was sexually abused by Harvey Weinstein," she said in a statement. "I have been living with the trauma of that day ever since."

A spokesperson for Weinstein did not immediately return a request for comment. He has always denied all accusations of nonconsensual sex.

Sokola filed her original claim in 2018 under a pseudonym as part of a class action, but is now filing separately to avoid the proposed global settlement.

Ben Brafman, Weinstein's lawyer at the time, called her accusation "patently false" at the time it was filed, according to The New York Times.

Her lawsuit claims Harvey Weinstein and some of his enablers, including Robert Weinstein, Miramax and Disney, could have and should have stopped him "before he made me another of his victims."

Disney acquired Miramax in 2003 and sold the company in 2010. Harvey Weinstein and his brother left Miramax in 2005. Disney has not yet responded to a request for comment.

"I have long since moved on from modeling and, because of Harvey Weinstein, gave up on my dreams of acting," she said.

"I am grateful to do important work as a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist. As part of my professional education and experience, 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."

Weinstein is facing criminal charges in New York due to accusations he raped a woman in a hotel room in 2013 and committed a forcible sex act on a second woman in 2006. He has pleaded not guilty and is expected to go on trial in January.