

Lawsuit Alleges Leon Black Raped An Autistic 16-Year-Old In Jeffrey Epstein's Manhattan Townhouse

F forbes.com/sites/johnhyatt/2023/07/25/lawsuit-alleges-leon-black-raped-an-autistic-16-year-old-in-jeffrey-epsteins-manhattan-townhouse

John Hyatt

July 25, 2023





Leon Black, pictured at the annual Milken Institute Global Conference in Beverly Hills, California, in 2013.

© 2021 Bloomberg Finance LP

The shocking allegations follow the private equity billionaire’s \$62.5 million payment to the U.S. Virgin Islands to settle any potential Epstein-related claims and a new U.S. Senate probe into the ex-Apollo CEO.

Private equity billionaire Leon Black is accused of raping a 16-year-old girl in 2002 in Jeffrey Epstein’s townhome, according to explosive allegations made in a lawsuit filed in Manhattan court today.

Jane Doe, the anonymous defendant who is autistic and has the rare genetic condition Mosaic Down Syndrome, claims she was first trafficked by Jeffrey Epstein and his partner Ghislaine Maxwell beginning in 2001, and that Epstein and Maxwell – as well as others – routinely sexually abused her.

The lawsuit, which was filed by her attorneys at Wigdor Law, allege that Epstein introduced the plaintiff to Leon Black in the spring or summer of 2002 and instructed her to “give [him] the same kind of “massage treatment” that she gives Epstein – meaning that it would involve sexual intercourse and she was expected to strip naked.”

The plaintiff claims Black led the defendant to a massage room on the third floor of Epstein’s townhouse, where he raped the then-16-year-old. “The violent and sadistic nature of Black’s rape left an indelible mark on her, both physically and psychologically,” the lawsuit alleges.

Commenting on the lawsuit, Susan Estrich of Estrich Goldin, an attorney representing Leon Black said, “This is a frivolous and sanctionable lawsuit. Mr. Black has never met this individual.”

According to Estrich, Wigdor Law “intentionally manufactured [these] vicious and defamatory lies, masquerading as allegations... as part of the firm’s vendetta against Mr. Black for vigorously and successfully defending himself over the past two years.”

“This sham proceeding will be promptly dismissed and will provide further ammunition for Mr. Black’s pending sanctions motion against the Wigdor firm,” added Estrich, referring to Black’s recent motion to sanction the law firm for “wantonly fil[ing] complaints without reasonable investigation.”

Law firm Wigdor also represents Cheri Pierson, who filed a lawsuit in November 2022 alleging that Black raped her in Jeffrey Epstein’s townhouse in 2002. That case is ongoing. Black has denied any wrongdoing, says he’s never met Pierson, and is seeking sanctions against Wigdor.

Wigdor also represented Guzel Ganieva, a former Russian model who accused Leon Black of raping her in a lawsuit filed in June 2021, which Black also denied. Ganieva and Wigdor parted ways in March, and the case was dismissed in May on the basis of legal flaws in the plaintiff’s argument and a previously signed non-disclosure agreement

New York County Supreme Court Justice David Cohen declined to sanction Wigdor in February – and also declined to sanction Black, in a competing motion from Ganieva – saying that “neither side has, at this point, engaged in the type of extreme behavior required to impose sanctions,” *Reuters* reported.

“Black’s broken record response is growing tiresome. He claims everyone is a “liar” except him, of course,” Jeanne Christensen, a partner at Wigdor, told *Forbes* in an emailed statement. “In an attempt to divert attention from his own despicable conduct, all he can do is hurl accusations at everyone else.”

Black, whose fortune *Forbes* estimates at about \$10 billion, was forced out of his positions as CEO and chairman of Apollo Global Management in 2021 after it was revealed that he had paid Epstein \$158 million for financial planning and tax services. Those payments are now the subject of an investigation led by the Senate Finance Committee.

Last week, the New York Times reported that Black paid \$62.5 million to the U.S. Virgin Islands to be released from any potential claims in connection to the island’s investigation of Epstein’s alleged sex trafficking on the island.

A spokesperson for Black told the Times that Epstein “engaged and made payments to Jeffrey Epstein for legitimate financial advisory services, which, based on everything now known, he very much regrets,” and that “consistent with settlements of other major U.S. banks, Mr. Black resolved the U.S.V.I.’s potential claims arising out of the unintended consequences of those payments.”

This story was updated after publication to include the emailed statement from Wigdor.



John Hyatt

In my role as Senior Wealth Reporter at Forbes, I've written about a wide range of topics, from cryptocurrency moguls and investment

...