

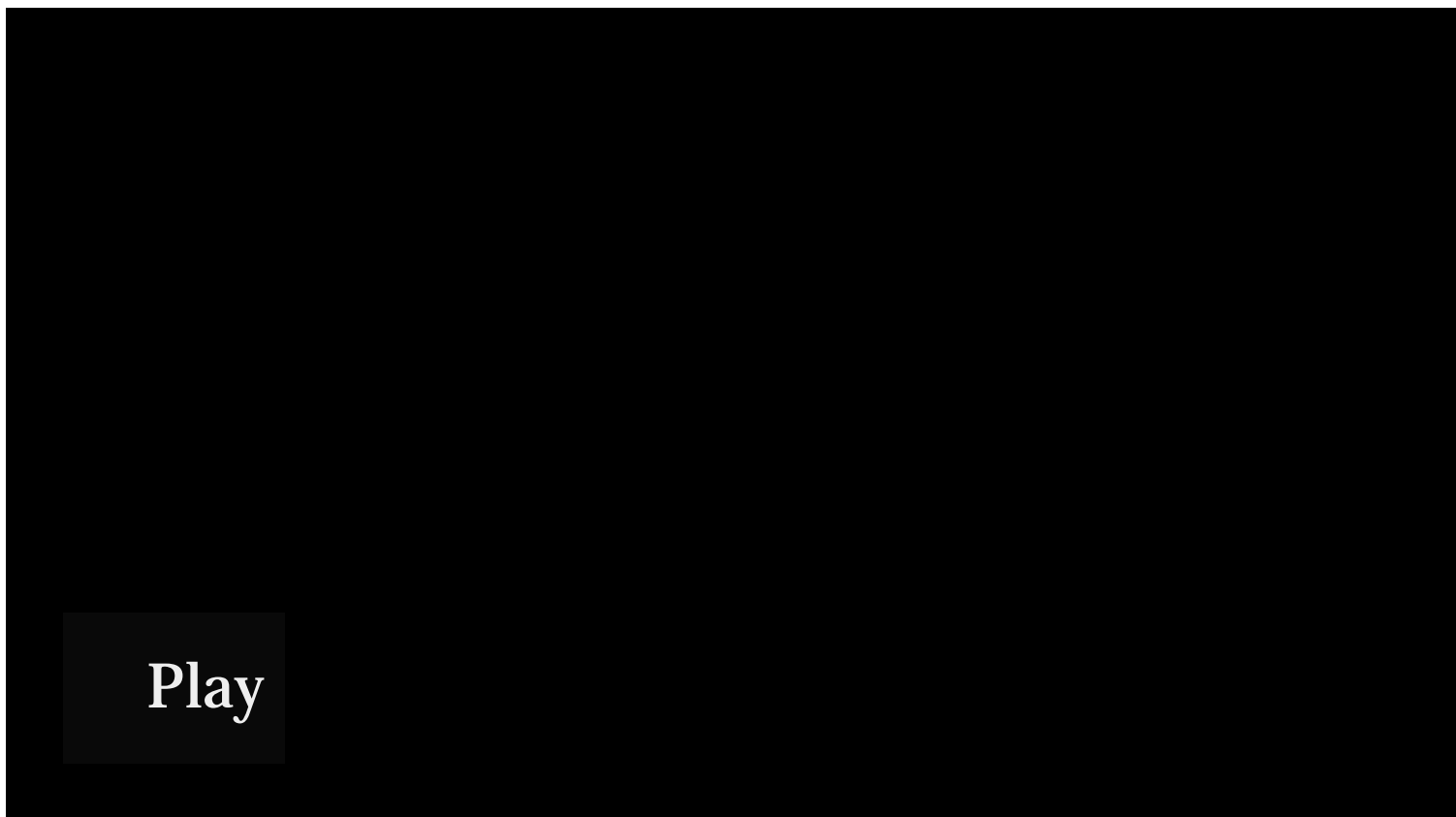


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## Kevin Spacey is arraigned in Nantucket sexual assault case; not guilty plea entered



By [Maria Cramer](#) and [Matt Rocheleau](#)

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NANTUCKET — It was a cinematic scene — a fallen movie star appearing in a packed courtroom to face charges of sexually assaulting a teenager after plying him with drinks.

Kevin Spacey, a two-time Academy Award winner and one of the most prominent celebrities accused of sexual misconduct during the #MeToo movement, pleaded not guilty Monday to groping the 18-year-old son of former WCVB-TV news anchor Heather Unruh in a Nantucket bar on July 7, 2016.

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“It would be a bit of an understatement to say that we have at least one case today that is garnering some media attention,” said District Court Judge Thomas S. Barrett.

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Barrett released Spacey on personal recognizance and ordered him to stay away from the alleged victim.

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In documents filed Monday, Spacey’s lawyers denied the allegations as “patently false,” describing the encounter as “mutual and consensual flirtation, nothing more.”

“In spite of the high-profile nature of the allegations, and the fact that the complaining witness’ mother, Heather Unruh, has taken the unusual step of investigating and

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attempting to interview witnesses herself, no one has come forward to substantiate or corroborate” her son’s claims, his lawyers wrote in the court documents.

According to police reports, the alleged victim was in contact with his then-girlfriend via Snapchat, text messages, and phone calls during the incident with Spacey inside the Club Car bar. Spacey’s

lawyers, however, said the woman told investigators that the alleged victim did not say he was being sexually assaulted.

“The first time she ever heard of the allegations of sexual assault was when she saw the now-infamous press conference that [the alleged victim’s] mother, Heather Unruh undertook with her civil lawyer a year later,” lawyers Alan J. Jackson and Juliane Balliro wrote.



### Kevin Spacey’s lawyers: Encounter was ‘mutual and consensual flirtation’

Lawyers for Kevin Spacey Monday said the man at the center of a criminal sexual misconduct charge against the actor has made “patently false” allegations.

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Unruh has said her son didn’t go to officials sooner because of embarrassment and fear.

Spacey’s lawyers have said that the accuser told investigators he lied to Spacey by saying he was 23 and that he drank between eight and 10 drinks in the span of about 70 minutes.

In court, Spacey, 59, walked with a slight smile and hunched shoulders as walked to the front of the

courtroom. Dressed in a gray suit, lavender shirt with red flowers, and a navy tie with small dots, he mouthed “thank you” to a court officer who directed him to stand closer to the judge’s bench.

Spacey’s lawyers argued for the court to ask prosecutors to preserve all the texts and other phone communication between the accuser and his girlfriend.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Giardino argued that request was “too broad in scope” and more of a “fishing expedition” than a request for information that could help Spacey’s defense.

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Jackson argued the information was “not only potentially exculpatory but likely exculpatory for Mr. Spacey.”

“I simply don’t want to see any of that data deleted, destroyed even inadvertently . . . or in any way manipulated,” Jackson said.

The alleged victim, who has a different last name than Unruh, has been named in court records but the Globe does not identify, without their consent, people who allege sexual assault.

Prominent Boston attorney Mitchell Garabedian, who said he was representing the alleged victim for civil matters, although no lawsuit has been filed, said in a statement that his client’s actions would help sexual assault survivors.

“By reporting the sexual assault, my client is a determined and encouraging voice for those victims not yet ready to report being sexually assaulted. My client is leading by example,” said Garabedian, who has represented hundreds of victims of clergy sex abuse.

Barrett ordered prosecutors to preserve any electronic information between the accuser and his girlfriend sent in the six months after the alleged incident.

Outside the courtroom, drivers passing by the Town and County building on Broad Street held up their phones to snap pictures of the throng of photographers, shivering as they waited to get a shot of Spacey entering the courthouse. Inside, Barrett peered over his gold, wire-rimmed glasses and warned the audience any disruption would result in eviction from the room or even contempt charges.

“Sit, listen, and observe but don’t interrupt,” he said.

The courtroom spectators included three Barnstable women who hopped the ferry to this small island Monday morning to witness Spacey’s appearance. Lisa Sheehy, Bonnie Schulman, and Dede Kiely decided last week they simply couldn’t miss the arraignment

“We’ll shop afterward and make a day of it,” Kiely, a retired tour operator, said as she stood in the back of the courtroom with dozens of other spectators before the hearing.

Spacey, who was identified in court documents by his given name, Kevin Fowler, left the courthouse without speaking to reporters, through a door typically reserved for defendants in custody.

The judge set a further hearing in the case for March 4. Spacey will not have to appear at that hearing, though he must be available by phone if needed.

When Spacey left the courthouse, Nantucket resident Liam McNeil, 21, strained to get his attention over the news cameras and photographers snapping photos of the actor, known for playing the character Frank Underwood in the political drama “House of Cards,” which had its final season last year.

“Underwood 2020,” McNeil screamed as Spacey was led to a silver Ford Expedition that would go to the Nantucket airport, where a private jet waited to take him to Washington.

For the three women who had come from Barnstable, the hearing was a sobering reminder of the fragility of fame.

“He’s used to all the cameras — but that’s on the red carpet, not in a courtroom,” Kiely said.

In Washington, Spacey had another run-in with police.

He was pulled over for speeding as he was leaving Reagan National Airport in Virginia, said Athena Hernandez, a spokeswoman for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

He was given a verbal warning, she said. TMZ first reported the traffic stop.

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