

Kevin Spacey defence completes evidence in sexual assault trial in London

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Kevin Spacey's defence team led by Patrick Gibbs has completed presenting its evidence for the actor at London's Southwark Crown Court.

Spacey, who was artistic director of London's Old Vic Theatre from 2004 to 2015, denies 12 sexual assault charges involving four men.

In testimony to the court last week, July 13 and 14, Spacey rejected allegations that he was a "big sexual bully" who abused his fame and power to make his alleged victims "feel powerless and uncomfortable," arguing that he was "just a big flirt". He also objects to their central claim that his "trademark" or "preferred method of assault has been to grab aggressively other men in the crotch."

He insisted, "I did not have a power wand that I waved in front of people's faces whenever I wanted someone to go to bed with me" and "I've never made a pass at anyone by crotch grabbing."

Instead, "Sometimes conversation happens, you see someone across the room, your eyes meet and maybe they're held a little too long.

"Then you end up sitting down with that person, getting to know them and engaging with them.

"I'm an affectionate person."

"Every experience I have had with a person is unique, the circumstance is unique, I cannot give you a rundown of what always happens, it is always different."

"I find being intimate with another human being remarkable and beautiful, if you want to use the word thrilling then okay.

"I have been fortunate, I have also fallen in love, been loved, remarkable friendship."

Asked if he became lonely and sought solace in sexual encounters, Spacey replied, "Welcome to life."

He said that he could have had lots of sex with lots of people all the time, but he didn't, was attracted to masculine men but was unable to tell if someone was straight or not.

When Spacey first took to the witness stand last Thursday, he described the terrible consequences of the unproven accusations made against him in 2017 when another US

actor Anthony Rapp became the first man to accuse Spacey of sexual misconduct, alleging he got on top of him whilst drunk at a party in 1986 when Rapp was just 14.

"My world exploded... There was a rush to judgement and before the first question was asked or answered, I lost my job, I lost my reputation, I lost everything in a matter of days", Spacey explained. He says he is now bankrupt.

Spacey had to endure a five year wait before a New York jury in October 2022, deliberating for little more than an hour, rejected Rapp's civil lawsuit and accepted Spacey's defence that the alleged encounter never happened.

In several exchanges with prosecutor Christine Agnew, Spacey accused the prosecution of having a "weak" case and at one point of "making stuff up". He then addressed each of his four accusers' claims.

Spacey's first accuser alleged that Spacey had fondled him on multiple occasions while he chauffeured for him. The driver claims he refused to continue working for Spacey after he was grabbed "so hard I almost came off the road" on the way to a White Tie and Tiara Ball party hosted by Elton John and his husband David Furnish to raise money to fight AIDS.

Spacey admitted he would touch his accuser who was "a lads' lad... funny and charming and flirtatious," but insisted it was consensual. "It did not happen in a violent, aggressive, painful way. It was gentle... and it was in my mind romantic."

Asked by Gibbs if his accuser objected, Spacey said, "No. The only thing he made clear is he did not want to go any further than we were going and I respected that."

Furnish appeared as a defence witness Monday. He also remembered Spacey's accuser as a young, handsome, cheeky, engaging London East Ender who "engaged in playful banter" and was "relaxed in gay company".

Furnish had checked photographs of all the Balls and was certain Spacey had only attended the party once, several years before his accuser said he was attacked, which if true would run contrary to his stated reason for breaking contact with Spacey at the time he did.

Elton John had no recollection of meeting the driver. Both Furnish and John rejected the complainant's earlier claims, supposedly backed up by a photograph, that he acted in some sort of capacity as John's personal driver or provided security for him.

A second complainant says Spacey, drunk and dishevelled, subjected him to a barrage of "lewd questions directed towards my race, size and character" at a gala event at a West End theatre in 2005, and later grabbed him "like a cobra" backstage.

Spacey declared, "I never said any of those things he claimed I said to him, and wouldn't, and never have, to anyone in my life", adding, "It's madness. It never happened."

"I wouldn't do anything to embarrass myself in such a way," he said. "I won't accept a single word that comes out of his mouth."

When asked by Agnew why his accuser would make up such claims, Spacey replied, "Money, money and then money," before adding, "And I believe he has anger towards me. Maybe I wasn't as lovely to him as he hoped."

Julie Kate Olivier, who produced the event, appeared in court, saying she had not found Spacey dishevelled or that his breath smelt of alcohol, which would have been "a matter of concern."

Spacey responded to the most serious sexual assault allegations—of causing a person to engage in penetrative sexual activity (in this case oral sex)—made by his third accuser, a young actor who had written to him asking for mentoring advice.

The accuser agreed to go to Spacey's apartment late one night after Spacey unexpectedly called him. He claims Spacey drugged him and performed oral sex on him while he was asleep.

Spacey said, "We had a consensual and, I believe, a very nice and lovely evening. If he regretted it immediately I don't know, I can't speak for him, but something was weird—it was strange."

"I have a clear idea of what mentorship can be and that's not what he was focused on."

"He may have had an idea of what that evening was going to be about and I had a different idea."

"It's beautiful people can meet in the work space, it's a wonderful thing," Spacey concluded.

Spacey said he kept in touch with the man for months afterwards.

He told the court that he would accept the allegation made by a man who claims the actor kissed his neck and fondled his crotch at a holiday apartment he was staying at in the Cotswolds in 2013. He told the court, "We all had some drinks... I made a pass and I'm only happy that he testified

that the moment he told me he was not interested, I stopped."

At the end of his evidence, Spacey also told the court about the pressure he was subjected to by members of the LGBTQ+ community, who had been pressuring him to come out as gay. He issued a press release at the same time as the Rapp allegations emerged saying, "I have had relationships with both men and women. I have loved and had romantic encounters with men throughout my life, and I choose now to live as a gay man."

It was disastrous. Various celebrities condemned Spacey for "choosing to hide under the rainbow" to deflect from the allegations.

Spacey continued, "Maybe now that the allegation against Mr Anthony Rapp has been proven to be false, maybe people will read [the statement] with a little bit more understanding now."

On Monday afternoon Gibbs read out ten character statements from less well known people who have worked with Spacey.

Christina Temple-Morris, the Old Vic Theatre's head of events and development from 2006 to 2011, described Spacey's role in turning the Old Vic into the "award-winning theatre it is today" and how he was 'committed to ensuring theatre should be accessible for all'. Temple-Morris said that at show after-parties, "There was drinking, laughing and flirting on those occasions, but I never witnessed anything I believed to be untoward."

Denzel Keim, who also worked at the Old Vic, said Spacey was "polite and courteous, not just to the important people... but also to [him]". He was "generous, fun, sometimes serious, professional and inspiring... a good and honest man."

Make-up artist Tania McComas insisted Spacey "would fight for the underdog" in the film industry.



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