New Accusers Expand Claims Against Weinstein Into the 1970s

By JONATHAN A. KENT

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LOS ANGELES TIMES

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NEW YORK TIMES

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NBC NEWS

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New Accusers Expand Claims Against Weinstein Into the 1970s

By ELLEN GABLER, MEGAN TWOHEY and JODI KANTOR

HOPE EXINER D’AMORE said Harvey Weinstein raped her in a hotel room in the 1970s, when he was a young concert promoter in Buffalo. Cynthia Burr said that during this time, he assaulted her in an encounter that began in an elevator and ended with forced oral sex in a hallway. Ashley Matthau, a dancer with a bit part in one of his movies, said that in 2004, he pushed her down on a bed and masturbated while straddling her. Days later, she said, he paid her to remain silent.

Three weeks after complaints of sexual harassment and misconduct by Mr. Weinstein were first reported in The New York Times, women from different continents, fields and generations have come forward with allegations of rape, sexual assault and groping. New accounts include one previously undisclosed settlement with Mr. Weinstein and expand the time frame of alleged wrongdoing to the 1970s.

Together, the accounts provide a widening tally of alleged abuses, and illustrate the toll on women who say they felt ashamed and isolated as they watched the Hollywood producer walk red carpets, pile up Oscars and showcase his ties to prominent figures.

“This has haunted me my entire life,” said Ms. Exiner d’Amore, now 62, who was in her early 20s at the time of the alleged rape.

She and three other women who spoke to The Times described Mr. Weinstein as inappropriate and unrelenting. Some said that he used the pretext of work to lure them to hotels, that he touched them or forced them into unwanted sexual activity and that he wouldn’t stop when they said no.

Ms. Matthau, the dancer who reached a settlement with Mr. Weinstein, said she was willing to break its confidentiality clause even if it meant that he might pursue legal damages. “I want to do my part to help bring this to light so it doesn’t happen with other people in Hollywood or anywhere else,” she said in an interview.

The allegations add to those previously documented in The Times, The New Yorker and elsewhere.

Last week, the actress Dominique Huett filed a lawsuit claiming that in 2010, Mr. Weinstein forcibly performed oral sex on her. The same day, Mimi Haley, a former production assistant of Mr. Weinstein’s, appeared at a news conference in New York accusing him of the same behavior in 2006.

The New York Police Department is conducting a wide-ranging investigation of allegations against Mr. Weinstein. Detectives with expertise in old cases are reviewing complaints that have come through the department’s hotline, according to a law enforcement official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

In New York, the statute of limitations for prosecuting rape and other sex crimes depends on the force alleged and the charges considered, but it can range from two years to no time restrictions for the most serious offenses. Ms. Burr, the woman involved in the hallway encounter in the 1970s, said that she contacted the New York police in recent weeks and that they told her the alleged assault had happened too long ago to be prosecuted.

Women have also spoken to law enforcement authorities in London, Los Angeles and...
elsewhere in the United States. The London police are investigating three sexual assault cases involving Mr. Weinstein, ranging from the 1980s to 2015.

Mr. Weinstein's spokeswoman, Sallie Hofmeister, said in a statement that "any allegations of nonconsensual sex are unequivocally denied by Mr. Weinstein."

**Cynthia Burr**

For 40 years, Cynthia Burr has almost never talked about the time she met Mr. Weinstein. But she didn’t forget how he greeted her in the lobby of a beautiful old building in New York City. How he tried to kiss her in the elevator. And how, she said, he unzipped his fly and forced her to perform oral sex in a hallway.

"It was just him and me alone," she said. "I was fearful I didn't have the wherewithal to get away."

It was the late 1970s, and Ms. Burr was an actress in her early 20s. Mr. Weinstein was in his mid-20s and a "real up-and-comer," Ms. Burr remembers. Her manager said they should meet.

After the encounter, she recalls feeling ashamed. "The way he forced me made me feel really bad about myself," she said. "What are you going to do when you are a girl just trying..."
to make it as an actress? Nobody would have believed me.”

Ms. Burr, now 62, went on to build a career in Hollywood. She appeared in “Scarface” and the first two “Lethal Weapon” films, and in soap operas and other television shows.

Eventually, she told her husband, now deceased, and a close friend, Lee Chavez, what happened. Mr. Chavez confirmed that she had told him her account about 10 years ago.

“I’m really sad for everybody, but I’m really glad it’s out in the open,” Ms. Burr said about learning of the other allegations against Mr. Weinstein. “I finally felt like I had a voice.”

Hope Exiner d'Amore

Ms. Exiner d'Amore had worked for Mr. Weinstein for just a few weeks when he asked if she’d like to take a trip to New York City. Both of them were in their 20s, living in Buffalo in the late 1970s.

She was working for Mr. Weinstein’s concert promotion company, Harvey and Corky Productions, doing odd jobs. She was interested in film, so when Mr. Weinstein asked if she wanted to come to New York City to meet with people in the industry, she agreed.

When they got to the Park Lane Hotel, Mr. Weinstein went to the check-in desk while she waited elsewhere in the lobby, Ms. Exiner d'Amore recalled. He returned and said there had been a mistake with the reservations; there was only one room. They would have to share.

“I gave him a look like that was ridiculous,” she recalled. But she ultimately agreed, assuming it was harmless. When she got into bed that night, she said, he slipped in next to her, naked.

“I told him no. I kept pushing him away. He just wouldn’t listen,” Ms. Exiner d'Amore said. “He just forced himself on me.” She said he forcibly performed oral sex and intercourse on her.

She did not tell her boyfriend, feeling ashamed, but she did confide in her next-door neighbors in Buffalo. She did not specifically say she was raped, but the couple, David and Irene Sipos, told The Times that they remembered her being extremely upset and crying when she told them about Mr. Weinstein and the hotel room.

After the trip, Ms. Exiner d'Amore said, Mr. Weinstein kept asking her out and offered her credit cards to go on shopping sprees. She declined. Within three or four weeks, she was fired.

“It was a relief,” she said. “I hated being there.”

Ms. Exiner d'Amore never went into the film industry. She got a job administering an undergraduate program at Cornell, and later moved on to jobs in fund-raising.

Ashley Matthau

Ashley Matthau said that Mr. Weinstein was aggressive with her the moment they met in 2004. She was in Puerto Rico performing in “Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights” when Mr. Weinstein visited the set. As soon as he saw her, she said, he began pressuring her to come to his hotel room for a private meeting. Ms. Matthau, who then went by her maiden name, Anderson, said she tried to brush him off, explaining that she was engaged. She said he persisted.

When the cast broke for a meal, Ms. Matthau told some production members that Mr.
Weinstein was being pushy and she was afraid. No one offered to help, she said, and when she returned to the set, Mr. Weinstein instructed her to get into a car.

“Don’t worry,” Ms. Matthau, now 36, remembers him saying as they sat in the back seat. “Nothing is going to happen. We’re just going to discuss future projects.”

She said they went to his hotel room, where talk quickly became sexual: Mr. Weinstein told her that he had helped launch the careers of high-profile actresses who had slept with him, and that she should consider doing the same. When she declined, Mr. Weinstein pushed her onto the bed and fondled her breasts, she said. He then stripped, straddled her and masturbated on top of her.

“I kept telling him, ‘Stop, I’m engaged,’ but he kept saying: ‘It’s just a little cuddling. It’s not a problem. It’s not like we’re having sex.’”

Back in California days later, Ms. Matthau tearfully told her fiancé, Charles Matthau, a general description of what had happened. Mr. Matthau said in an interview that he was outraged. With his encouragement, Ms. Matthau retained John S. West, a partner in the law firm of Gloria Allred, who has a record of taking on powerful men.

Soon, Ms. Matthau recalled, she and Mr. West met at the Peninsula Beverly Hills with Mr. Weinstein and Daniel M. Petrocelli, who had represented high-profile clients including Jeffrey Skilling, the chief executive of Enron.

The experience, she said, was chilling. She had attended a couple of parties at the Playboy Mansion, and Mr. Petrocelli said she would be painted as promiscuous if she went public with her accusation against Mr. Weinstein.

“‘We’ll drag you through the mud by your hair,’” she recalled the lawyer saying. Mr. Petrocelli declined to comment.

Going up against such powerful men felt like more than she could handle. Ms. Matthau said she agreed to enter into a more than $100,000 settlement with Mr. Weinstein in exchange for a legally binding promise never to speak of the allegations again.

**Lacey Dorn**

Lacey Dorn moved to New York City in 2011, soon after graduating from Stanford University, where she had helped create two documentaries. Ms. Dorn, then 22, was introduced to Mr. Weinstein at a New York Film Festival party.

A few weeks later, Ms. Dorn attended a Halloween party at the Gramercy Park Hotel and ran into Mr. Weinstein, who asked for her email. He wanted to talk about her career over lunch, she said.

“Great meeting you,” he wrote in the subject line of an otherwise blank email sent to her at 12:26 a.m.

On her way out of the party, Ms. Dorn said goodbye to Mr. Weinstein. As she turned her back to him, he grabbed between her legs, touching her buttocks and crotch through her clothes.

“I was so naïve, I didn’t say anything. And he didn’t say anything either,” she said. “I just got out of the party as fast as possible.”

Ms. Dorn said she never heard from Mr. Weinstein and never spoke to him again. Ms. Dorn said that when she told friends what had happened, many seemed to shrug it off as if it were a “rite of passage,” an acknowledgment of how “awful” the entertainment business could be.

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*Al Baker, Katrin Bennhold and Stephen Castle contributed reporting. Grace Ashford contributed research.*