



Jeffrey Epstein

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A-list names in Epstein documents cache but what prospect of charges?

No one beyond Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell is directly implicated in the sex-trafficking conspiracy - and that seems unlikely to change

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From beyond the grave, the disgraced financier [Jeffrey Epstein](#) still has a sinister power to make headlines.

But despite scores of names of Hollywood stars, politicians and celebrities scattered across once-sealed documents released in New York this week, little new information has been added to the broad sex-trafficking conspiracy at the center of the Epstein story.

Documents released overnight focused on the sex trafficking conspiracy's recruitment of young women, including Ruslana Korshunova, a Kazakh-Russian model who killed herself two years after being flown to Epstein's island.

They also mentioned an [alleged visit](#) by Bill Clinton to the offices of Vanity Fair in an attempt to get a profile on Epstein killed. An editor who worked at the magazine at the time said: “Bullshit. Didn’t happen. Everyone would have known about it.”

But if the documents released so far tell one powerful story, it is that in the 1990s there was no lack of high-profile guests from across the globe who would gleefully accept the lavish hospitality of a corrupt financier with a private jet and a very private Caribbean island.

Prominent figures such as the former US president Bill Clinton and the British royal Prince Andrew were named among the records that emerged from a defamation lawsuit filed against the British socialite and Epstein’s partner-in-crime [Ghislaine Maxwell](#) by the victim Virginia Giuffre. But no one beyond Epstein and Maxwell is directly implicated in the conspiracy and that is very unlikely to change.

So the question remains: given the vast nature of Epstein’s glamorous circle, will Epstein’s victims ever receive justice beyond Maxwell’s imprisonment and Epstein’s 2019 jailhouse suicide?

“The public has wondered and many have rightly demanded to know how Epstein operated his vast, global sex-trafficking enterprise and got away with it for decades,” said Sigrid McCawley, the lawyer representing Giuffre.

“Some of those questions have been answered; many have not. Some justice for the survivors has, indeed, been achieved; not nearly enough as hoped for and deserved,” McCawley added.

Showcased in the documents are Maxwell’s efforts to undermine the victims of the conspiracy - teenage girls who had been induced to give sexualized massages to Epstein and, Giuffre alleged, trafficked to members of his circle, including Prince Andrew and other men.

The documents contain allegations that Andrew participated in an “underage orgy” on Epstein’s private island. They allege that an underage girl, identified only as “Jane Doe 3”, was “forced to have sexual relations with this Prince when she was a minor in three separate geographical locations”.

Buckingham Palace has said the allegations are “categorically untrue” and the British prince has always strongly denied wrongdoing. Clinton too has denied any knowledge of Epstein’s crimes. So has virtually everyone named in the documents.

Maxwell claimed Giuffre, who had worked as a 16-year-old spa attendant at Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago resort in 2001, lied about the abuse, prompting Giuffre to sue for defamation in 2015. In her deposition, Maxwell claimed “I don’t recall meeting her” at Mar-a-Lago.

But Maxwell, 62, remains the only person to be convicted of any aspect of the conspiracy. She is serving a 20-year sentence in Florida for recruiting and grooming underage girls for Epstein.



📷 Geoffrey Berman, then the US attorney for the southern district of New York, at a news conference announcing the arrest of Epstein in July 2019. Photograph: Jason Szenes/EPA

On Tuesday, Maxwell's lawyer Arthur Aidala [told NewsNation](#) that his client had nothing to say about the document dump "except maybe that if you look at this crime, this overall crime, it's all about men abusing women for a long period of time ... and it's only one person in jail - a woman."

For her part, Maxwell continues to maintain the incriminating photograph of her and Prince Andrew, with his arm around Giuffre, is a fake. "I don't believe it is real for a second; in fact, I'm sure it's not," she said [in a televised interview last year](#).

Some of the names mentioned in deposition transcripts of another Epstein accuser, Johanna Sjoberg, who worked for Epstein for five years, are largely second-hand. Leonardo DiCaprio, Cameron Diaz, Cate Blanchett and Bruce Willis are mentioned by Sjoberg but she acknowledged that she never met them and they were probably just the elaborate boastings of a celebrity-mad Epstein.

"When I was massaging him [Epstein], he would be on the phone a lot of the time, and one time he said, 'Oh, that was Leonardo', or 'That was Cate Blanchett', or Bruce Willis. That kind of thing." Her questioner asked: "So, name-dropping?" To which Sjoberg replied: "Yes."

Sjoberg said she overheard Epstein on the phone talking about the hairdresser Frédéric Fekkai. “Can we find some girls for him?” Sjoberg testified he said. Fekkai, whose name has come up previously in connection with Epstein, has also previously denied being aware of Epstein’s conduct.

Asked if Epstein had ever talked about Clinton, Sjoberg said: “He said one time that Clinton likes them young, referring to girls.”

Still, the employment of young masseuses at Epstein’s Palm Beach home - a house that Maxwell referred to as “hers” - was hardly a secret. At least 15 girls from just one of three area high schools, Royal Palm Beach, were recruited to perform nude massages for money, according to police and court records - massages that often ended with sexual assault.

The Palm Beach Post reported in 2021 that school administrators turned a blind eye to what was an “open secret” at the school. Epstein’s masseuses, it said, “endured teasing and classmates called them prostitutes”.

Horrifically, the outlet said, the school transcript of one student was found in the drawer of Epstein’s bedroom desk not far from a massage table and a wooden closet filled with sex toys.

But while the rich and powerful figures so far mentioned in the released court filings are not accused of any wrongdoing, the fact of their proximity to Epstein will certainly damage reputations and pose uncomfortable questions. All of which could provide a fresh boost to the crisis PR industry.

“The names that have come out weren’t much of a surprise to anyone,” said the New York crisis PR manager Juda Engelmayer. “I would make sure they’re prepared to respond, particularly if they believe they have done nothing wrong.

“Jeffrey Epstein was a hedge-fund guy, and wealthy people did business with him outside of what he’s now known for. It wasn’t uncommon for people to be in touch with him and mingle with him. Just being there, being in his book, doesn’t mean anything, and people need to maintain that.”

But the sensitivities to any approximation to Epstein are acute. On Wednesday, the US late-night talkshow host Jimmy Kimmel threatened to sue the New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers for suggesting Kimmel’s name might come up in the documents. It didn’t.

According to Engelmayer, those mentioned in documents should not protest that their names have come up. “They can’t say I’ve done nothing wrong, my name shouldn’t have been there, I’ve done nothing wrong ... because it looks like you’re covering up. If you deny it happened you look like an idiot,” he said.

“Jeffrey Epstein was who he was, and there was a time in the United States when people like that would sit around a restaurant or a hotel and control the room. People wanted to be his friend because that’s how you did business,” he added. “It was *in* to be seen with him because it would help your own business, but it doesn’t mean you were complicit with the bad behavior.”

But some of those mentioned in the documents believe Judge Loretta Preska should have gone further and released everything related to the Giuffre-Maxwell defamation case.

One of those is Alan Dershowitz, the constitutional rights attorney whose name appears a total of 137 times in the documents, including allegations that Epstein forced a minor girl - Jane Doe 3 - to have sex with him on several occasions and witnessed other girls being abused.

“Epstein required Jane Doe 3 to have sexual relations with Dershowitz on numerous occasions while she was a minor, not only in Florida but also on private planes, in New York, New Mexico, and the US Virgin Islands,” the filings say.

Dershowitz, once part of Epstein’s legal team that made a 2008 deal for the financier to avoid prison time on solicitation of a minor charges, has always strongly denied allegations in 2015 that he had sex with an underage girl. Flight logs show he frequently flew on the “Lolita Express” - Epstein’s private plane - and he has admitted receiving a massage at Epstein’s home, but says that it was carried out by a middle-aged woman named Olga.

Reached by phone on Thursday, Dershowitz said he was campaigning for all the documents to be released.

“Judge Preska released selectively some of the documents, but she did not release all of the documents that raise the questions about the credibility of some of the accusers, and that’s unfair,” Dershowitz said.

In November 2022, Giuffre **dropped her allegations against Dershowitz**, saying she “may have made a mistake” identifying him as one of her abusers, explaining that she was young at the time and in a “very stressful and traumatic environment”.

Dershowitz told the Guardian that while he felt his name had been “cleared”, court documents provided a shield for false accusations that if they appeared in the media could be subjected to legal action. “I want everything out so the public can judge who is telling the truth,” he said.

In her statement, Giuffre’s attorney McCawley said: “The public interest must still be served in learning more about the scale and scope of Epstein’s racket to further the

important goal of shutting down sex trafficking wherever it exists and holding more to account. The unsealing of these documents gets us closer to that goal.”

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