

CAUSE NO. 2021-15324

ASHLEY SOLIS, a/ka/ Jane Doe	§	IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF
	§	
<i>Plaintiff,</i>	§	
	§	
VS.	§	HARRIS COUNTY, T E X A S
	§	
DESHAUN WATSON,	§	
	§	
<i>Defendant.</i>	§	113 th JUDICIAL DISTRICT

DEFENDANT DESHAUN WATSON'S ORIGINAL ANSWER

Since March 16, 2021, when the first of twenty-two lawsuits was filed against Deshaun Watson ("Mr. Watson"), he has been adamant that he did not engage in any of the improper conduct that has been alleged. At the same time, he and his defense team have insisted that they adamantly oppose, condemn, and disapprove of any type of sexual misconduct against women. Legitimate claims should be reported to authorities, taken seriously, and their proponents treated respectfully.

However, in the few days since Mr. Watson has learned the identity of his accusers, his legal team has already uncovered evidence that numerous allegations in this onslaught of cases are simply not true or accurate. For example:

- After the massage therapy sessions with Mr. Watson, 8 plaintiffs bragged about, praised, and were excited about massaging Mr. Watson;
- 7 plaintiffs willingly worked or offered to work with Mr. Watson after their alleged incidents;
- 3 plaintiffs lied about the number of sessions they actually had with Mr. Watson;
- 3 plaintiffs lied about their alleged trauma and resulting harm;
- 5 plaintiffs told others they wanted to get money out of Mr. Watson; and
- 5 plaintiffs have scrubbed or entirely deleted their social media accounts.

It was not until the plaintiffs saw an opportunity for a money grab that they changed their stories to convert therapy sessions they bragged about to friends and family to something much more nefarious. Innocent questions about whether the therapists were comfortable with the therapy Mr. Watson sought evolved into sexual innuendo that the plaintiffs used to bolster their claims for money. For example, in the first lawsuit filed, Plaintiff Ashley Solis implies that Mr. Watson’s question—asking if she “was comfortable with certain areas [his] organization is making him get worked on”—was somehow sexually suggestive. That same question, however, posed to a therapist not seeking to exploit Mr. Watson, was perceived as it was intended: a legitimate therapeutic inquiry.¹ Ms. Solis’s skewed perception of Mr. Watson’s legitimate and innocent query became a prototype for the assembly line of similar allegations in subsequent lawsuits.

These lawsuits are replete with mischaracterizations of Mr. Watson’s conduct. These range from being misleading, to fraudulent, to slanderous. Importantly, only two of the twenty-two lawsuits allege that Mr. Watson forced any type of sexual activity—an allegation Mr. Watson again vehemently denies. And even at this early stage of the litigation, the evidence obtained by the defense clearly supports Mr. Watson’s denial of these allegations of force. As Plaintiff ██████████ ██████████ business manager put it, this is “not extortion. It’s blackmail.” Unfortunately, twenty-one other women have decided to join her.

¹ See Exhibit 1.

PROBLEMS WITH THE PLAINTIFFS' ALLEGATIONS

Mr. Watson received the plaintiffs' names less than a week ago. Based on what we have been able to determine so far, these plaintiffs are not victims of any type of misconduct, much less sexual misconduct:

A. After the massage therapy sessions with Mr. Watson, Plaintiffs bragged about, praised, and were excited to massage Mr. Watson.

- Plaintiff ██████████ claims in the lawsuit that she is “disgusted” by Mr. Watson. Yet, after her therapy session with him, she bragged to friends and family members about massaging Mr. Watson and told them that she thinks he is a kind person.
- A security guard at the spa where Mr. Watson received a massage stated that Plaintiff ██████████ was happy and laughing after her interactions with Mr. Watson. She was excited about having worked on him and did not want any other therapist to work on him.
- According to a security guard present at the spa, after one of Plaintiff ██████████ sessions with Mr. Watson, Ms. ██████████ was laughing and appeared in good spirits. Another witness characterized Ms. ██████████ as “jolly” after working with Mr. Watson. And Ms. ██████████ told multiple family members that she would massage Mr. Watson again. She even told people that while she was not “into men,” “his body is beautiful and soft” and that if she were not a lesbian, she would have “jumped on” Mr. Watson.
- Plaintiff ██████████ fails to explain that after the first two therapy sessions—which she alleges were increasingly “uncomfortable”—she willingly invited Mr. Watson to come to her house for the last two therapy sessions.
- Plaintiffs ██████████ and ██████████ omitted that after their sessions with Mr. Watson, they told him that they would gladly work with him again. In fact, ██████████ reported to a close relative that she was thrilled to have had the opportunity to massage Deshaun.
- Plaintiff ██████████ claims that after the initial therapy session, Mr. Watson hounded her about setting up another session. She fails to explain that she eagerly showed up to Mr. Watson's house to give him another massage before he even had a chance to book an appointment.

B. Plaintiffs willingly worked, or offered to work, with Mr. Watson after the alleged incidents.

- At least five of the plaintiffs chose to work with Mr. Watson even after they claim he acted offensively and aggressively in prior sessions: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. This, of course, raises the question of why they would agree to follow-up therapy sessions when they claim their experiences made them feel like they “wanted to vomit” and caused them to “no longer accept massage clients, for fear of a repeat of this type of harassment.”
- Plaintiff [REDACTED] claims she was “fearful” and felt “violated, terrified and disgusted” after her therapy sessions with Mr. Watson. She does not explain why then, on more than one occasion, she messaged him after his football games to check in on him and asked to massage him again.
- Contrary to Plaintiff [REDACTED] claim that she was so “disturbed” by what allegedly occurred that she chose not to contact Mr. Watson about receiving the rest of the payment for the session, the evidence shows that after the alleged incident she did attempt to contact Mr. Watson and even asked to work with him again.
- In stark contrast to Plaintiff [REDACTED] statement that after the alleged incident she told Mr. Watson that she “would not work for him” and “has not been able to move on from these experiences,” she contacted Mr. Watson multiple times telling him that she was attracted to him and wanted to go out on dates with him.

C. Plaintiffs lied about the number of sessions they actually had with Mr. Watson.

- The following plaintiffs failed to mention they had more therapy sessions with Mr. Watson than what they pleaded: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Presumably, these plaintiffs minimized their interactions with Mr. Watson because these facts undermine their allegations.

D. Plaintiffs lied about their alleged trauma and resulting harm.

- Plaintiff Ashley Solis claimed during a news conference that she “can no longer practice the profession that [she] love[s] the most without shaking during a session.” Yet, publicly available information shows that she has provided multiple massages after the alleged incident with Mr. Watson. Indeed, not only is she still accepting clients, but according to those who have worked with her, she did not show any signs of trauma during these sessions.
- While Plaintiff [REDACTED] claims that “[b]y the end of the massage, she was sweating” and “there was nowhere for her to go,” she neglects to mention she had multiple family members in the home and nearby during both therapy sessions.

- Plaintiff ██████████ alleges that “she was alone at the spa and feared for her life” during her therapy sessions with Mr. Watson. However, a security guard hired by the spa was present at the spa at all times and capable of intervening if an incident had, in fact, occurred.

E. Plaintiffs told others they wanted to get money out of Mr. Watson.

- Plaintiff ██████████ told close family members that if Mr. Watson’s attorney had paid her, she would have supported him instead of suing him. She also told her family that she had contemplated blackmailing Mr. Watson.
- Plaintiff ██████████ told a witness that the only reason she was getting involved in the lawsuit was for money. She even laughed about it and stated that she wanted to “get in on the action.”
- Plaintiff ██████████ admittedly sought to “blackmail” Mr. Watson before she filed suit. She asked him to pay her \$30,000 for “indefinite silence” because her encounter would be “embarrassing” if revealed. More importantly, when Mr. Watson’s marketing manager, Bryan Burney, asked her whether she was claiming that something happened against her will, she confirmed that everything that occurred was consensual. Finally, she told Mr. Burney that she wanted a copy of the NDA that she and Mr. Watson signed because she did not want people in her industry to know she had provided oral sex to her massage client. Evidence of her concerns is contained in Mr. Burney’s affidavit and a contemporaneous tape recording of a phone conversation.
- Witnesses state that Plaintiff ██████████ has a history of “forcing herself on celebrities,” “chasing celebrities,” and “running behind high profile athletes.” They also describe her as being “out for money,” and “a money grabber.”
- During one of the press conferences Mr. Buzbee held regarding the case, Plaintiff Ashley Solis claimed that she was not filing suit for monetary reasons but rather because “[t]his is about having [her] voice heard. It is about having other survivor’s voices heard.” Belying her assertion though, Ms. Solis would have abandoned her voice and being the voice of other alleged “survivors” if Mr. Watson would agree to pay her \$100,000.

F. Plaintiffs have scrubbed, or entirely deleted, their social media accounts and the relevant evidence they contained.

Each of the plaintiffs’ petitions contain a paragraph warning Mr. Watson to preserve relevant evidence, including digital information. Without question, Mr. Watson has and will continue to do so. However, the plaintiffs have failed to heed their own warning. At least four plaintiffs, ██████████ and ██████████, have

altered the accounts where they advertised the services that Mr. Watson acquired. Before their names became public, their accounts contained pictures that are inconsistent with the image they portray through their petitions. These items are no longer posted to their accounts. Plaintiff ██████████ took the destruction of evidence even further by completely deleting her Instagram account, which again is the account she claims to use to market her services and the one that Mr. Watson used to contact her and hire her for a massage.

GENERAL DENIAL

Pursuant to Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 92, Watson generally denies the allegations and claims set forth in Plaintiff's Original Petition and demands strict proof thereof by a preponderance of the evidence and clear and convincing evidence, as required by the Constitution and laws of the State of Texas.

JURY DEMAND

Mr. Watson requests a jury trial and submits the applicable fee contemporaneous with this filing.

PRAYER

Because the Plaintiff's claims lack a basis in law or fact, Mr. Watson prays that she take nothing by reason of this suit, that all relief requested by Plaintiff be denied, that Mr. Watson recovers his costs of court and expenses, and for all other relief to which he is entitled.

Respectfully submitted,

RUSTY HARDIN & ASSOCIATES, LLP

/s/ Rusty Hardin

Rusty Hardin
State Bar No. 08972800
Letitia D. Quinones (Of Counsel)
State Bar No. 24008433
Lara Hollingsworth
State Bar No.00796790
Leah Graham
State Bar No. 24073454
Rachel Lewis
State Bar No. 24120762
1401 McKinney Street, Suite 2250
Houston, Texas 77010
Telephone: (713) 652-9000
Facsimile: (713) 652-9800
rhardin@rustyhardin.com
lquinones@rustyhardin.com
lhollingsworth@rustyhardin.com
lgraham@rustyhardin.com
rlewis@rustyhardin.com

*Attorneys for Defendant
Deshaun Watson*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing instrument has been served upon the Plaintiff by eservice on April 19, 2021, pursuant to Rule 21a.

/s/ Rusty Hardin
Rusty Hardin