

Lawyers allege Cosby gets 'star treatment'

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - Lawyers for a woman suing Bill Cosby over an alleged sexual assault complained to a judge last week that the entertainer was getting "star treatment" in the court system.

Cosby has given at least three media interviews about the case and joked about it during a performance, yet has managed to keep damaging court filings sealed, the woman's lawyers argued.

"We are being prejudiced. Mr. Cosby went out and sought publicity," argued lawyer Dolores M. Troiani, who wants the files opened. "Mr. Cosby is not entitled to star treatment."

Cosby's lawyer said the

accuser wants depositions and other motions unsealed only to release "incriminating" and "salacious" information to the public.

"They're attempting to destroy a man's reputation before trial," lawyer Patrick J. O'Connor said.

U.S. District Judge Eduardo Robreno did not immediately rule. He previously denied Cosby's request for a gag order and the plaintiffs' request to shield the names of 12 other women who say Cosby assaulted them.

The Associated Press has asked the judge, too, to lift his temporary seal on certain court filings.

Troiani represents a

former Temple University employee who said Cosby — a friend and mentor — drugged and sexually assaulted her at his suburban Philadelphia mansion in early 2004.

Attorneys for the 68-year-old Cosby, a Temple alumnus and booster, say the comedian gave her Benadryl after she complained of stress and sleeping problems.

The plaintiff, who is in her mid 30s, now lives in her native Ontario, Canada.

The woman went to police about a year later, but

Montgomery County prosecutors declined to file criminal charges. She has been identified in court documents, but The Associated Press does not publish names of alleged sexual assault victims without their consent.

No trial date has been set in the civil suit.

Both sides have asked Robreno to order the other to cooperate during apparently acrimonious deposition sessions.

Meanwhile, lawyers for The National Enquirer were in court Monday to respond

to the accuser's attempts to learn if Cosby received any promises or pay in exchange for a 2005 interview about the case.

The woman's lawyers suggested the tabloid agreed to spike a planned story about another Cosby accuser in exchange for the interview. The Enquirer's lawyer, Paul D. Weller, said the paper might agree to release the terms of the interview, but not the reporter's notes or the supposed draft of the other woman's story.

O'Connor, Cosby's law-

yer, declined afterward to discuss the Enquirer interview.

Neither Cosby nor the accuser was in court.

Cosby, best known as a warm, funny TV dad, has sparked debate with blunt remarks on personal responsibility aimed at the Black community. In 1997, the year his son, Ennis, was murdered, the long-married Cosby acknowledged a brief affair with the mother of Autumn Jackson, a young woman convicted of extorting him.



Laurence Fishburne appeals for funds during Jazz at Lincoln Center's Higher Ground Hurricane Relief Benefit Concert in New York in this Sept. 17 file photo.

Laurence Fishburne sued by ex-assistant

LOS ANGELES (AP)-Laurence Fishburne's former personal assistant is suing him for allegedly firing her because she was pregnant and single, her lawyer said Wednesday. Kristal Crews filed the lawsuit against the actor in Superior Court on Tuesday, seeking unspecified damages. "He told her that he didn't think single women should have children," Crews' attorney Nikki Tolt said.

Fishburne's attorney, Lawrence Gartner, denied the allegations, saying in a statement that during Crews' employment "she was always treated in a fair and professional manner."

"It is unfortunate that the visibility of actors causes people to say all kinds of things about them for what we can only assume are their own purposes. We are confident that Mr. Fishburne will be vindicated in these proceedings," Gartner said in the statement issued by the actor's spokesman, Alan Nierob.

Tolt alleged that several months after Crews became pregnant and requested special accommodation for a film shoot in New Orleans, Fishburne told his assistant she would be fired. "He told her he was going to fire her on her due date. What a sweetheart," Tolt said.

Tolt said Crews worked for Fishburne on the day she gave birth, a month early, in November 2004, and that stress forced the woman to have an emergency Caesarean section. Crews' termination date was then extended to Jan. 17, 2005, the day she was supposed to return from her pregnancy leave, Tolt said.

Fishburne stars in the upcoming film "Akeelah," about an inner-city girl who makes it to a national spelling bee.

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