

## Allegedly Racist Fox News Finance Head Accused Of Mocking Breast Cancer Survivor's 'One Boob'

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*(Drew Angerer/Getty)*

A third woman is suing Fox News and its recently fired head of accounting over claims of racist abuse as well as, in the case of the new complainant, mockery over her physique after surgery for breast cancer. The development comes as several major advertisers have pulled ads from Bill O'Reilly's primetime show over revelations that O'Reilly and Fox have paid about \$13 million in settlements, some secret, over claims of sexual and other harassment dating back to 2002.

Monica Douglas runs the credit and collections department at Fox News and started work there in 1999, around the same time as now-former controller and senior vice president of accounting Judith Slater. Two other African American employees first sued Fox and Slater last week over allegations that Slater subjected her employees to a near-constant stream of racist abuse. Douglas's additions to the lawsuit contain many similar claims, as well as new allegations that she and other employees complained about Slater's behavior to top management and nothing was done.

Among other accusations, Douglas claims that:

- Slater allegedly lamented that New York City is home to "so many more black people now than when I was a kid."
- She allegedly described Douglas as having "black eyes," and contrasted them with the blue eyes of the "Aryan race."
- Slater allegedly complained about the "problem" of people of Indian descent moving to her town in New Jersey and turning the train she rides into the "Bombay Express."
- She allegedly called Brooklyn, Douglas's home borough, the "murder capital of the world" (Brooklyn, home to 2.5 million people, had 127 murders in 2016, or about 5 per 100,000 people. This is below the national average of 5.7 for cities in 2015, the latest year for which national data is available. Even Brooklyn's most dangerous neighborhoods have murder rates on par with Chicago, which, despite the national headlines, trails Baltimore, St. Louis, and New Orleans, among others.)
- She allegedly told Douglas, who is of Panamanian ancestry, that she would not let her dog eat the foods Panamanians eat.
- Slater allegedly ridiculed Douglas's accent and, as she allegedly did with the other two plaintiffs, mocked her pronunciation of certain words that she said black people pronounce incorrectly.
- At least twice, Slater allegedly kicked Douglas in the rear as she was walking down the hall, and she "regularly" rubbed Douglas's hair to feel the "texture."

Douglas also survived breast cancer and had part of a breast removed during treatment. This too allegedly was a subject of Slater's abuse. Slater allegedly told Douglas, among other things, "Your boobs look like they are different sizes—oh, that's right, you only have one boob." She allegedly called Douglas, "boobs girl," the "one-boobed girl," "and cancer girl," and regularly complained that Douglas's treatment drove up the office's healthcare premiums.

All of this behavior was sanctioned by Fox bosses at the highest levels, according to the employees' lawyers, who note in the lawsuit that they and Slater worked on the second floor alongside now-

former CEO Roger Ailes. Ailes was pushed out and given \$40 million last year after more than two dozen women accused him of sexual harassment.

Douglas alleges that Slater told her not to complain to human resources because, "I am HR." After Douglas complained in 2014 to Dianne Brandi, the legal affairs executive who handled at least some of the Ailes complaints, Douglas says that Brandi took no action. In mid-2015, she says Brandi talked to her about a separate complaint by now-former payroll director Natasha Beekharry about Slater, and Brandi allegedly said that Slater couldn't be fired "because she knows too much." Brandi is named as a defendant in the latest complaint.

Beekharry is one of four former employees who the suit says quit or were fired after they complained about racist treatment by Slater or two of her associates. She declined to comment when reached by Gothamist last week.

Fox fired Slater in late February as the first two payroll workers, Tichaona Brown and Tabrese Wright, were discussing a settlement with the company. When they rejected an offer and proceeded with a lawsuit, they say Fox fired Brown and demoted Wright. Now, according to Douglas, an outside law firm hired to investigate complaints against Slater is "interviewing some people and asking if they could say something nice about Judy."

Over the weekend, the New York Times reported on the \$13 million in settlements, three of them previously unreported, paid out to women who alleged sexual harassment and mistreatment by host Bill O'Reilly. Two of the settlements came after Ailes's departure. Those cases included claims that O'Reilly repeatedly called a producer on his show while masturbating and described his sexual fantasies involving her, that he promised women he worked with jobs, then reneged when they declined to sleep with him, and that he stormed into the newsroom and screamed at another producer in front of coworkers.

Here is O'Reilly losing his cool in his pre-Fox days:

O'Reilly's top-rated commentary show brought in \$178 million in ad revenue in 2015 and has gained viewers since the election, according to the Times. O'Reilly makes around \$18 million a year.

In a statement, O'Reilly did not directly deny the allegations, but said that his celebrity makes him "vulnerable" to "individuals who want me to pay them to avoid negative publicity."

All the news comes at a turbulent time for Fox, which is under federal investigation for its handling of payouts to Ailes's accusers. Adding to the Slater and O'Reilly claims and those already leveled against Ailes, Fox News contributor Julie Roginsky sued Ailes, Fox News, and network co-president Bill Shine on Monday, saying Ailes hamstrung her career for rebuffing his advances. Roginsky claimed that during meetings in his office, Ailes would make her "bend down to kiss him hello," and that he told her she should have sex with "older, married, conservative men." She claims her refusal to sleep with Ailes, and later her refusal to defend him against the claims by personality Gretchen Carlson that broke the company's dam of silence, is why Ailes denied her a hosting position and all but kept her from hosting segments on a show where she appears.

Ailes's lawyer called the latest allegations "hogwash."

The O'Reilly developments have spurred a growing skittishness among advertisers. So far, at least eight companies have pulled ads from the family-values-preaching Levittown native's show. They

include carmakers Mercedes-Benz, BMW, and Hyundai, the pharmaceutical company GSK, Constant Contact, the men's clothing seller Untuckit, the consumer healthcare company Sanofi, and Ainsworth Pet Nutrition. The renewed attention seems to have prompted this memo from new HR head Kevin Lord:

Brandi and Slater couldn't be reached for comment.

In an email, a Fox News spokeswoman wrote, "We take complaints of this nature very seriously and took prompt and effective remedial action in terminating Judy Slater before Ms. Brown, Ms. Wright and Ms. Douglas sued in court and even before Ms. Wright and Ms. Douglas complained through their lawyer. There is no place for conduct like this at Fox News, which is why Ms. Slater was fired."