

Fox News Is Being Sued by Jennifer Eckhart and Cathy Areu, Who Claim Network Knew About Ed Henry's Behavior Going Back to 2017

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On July 1, Fox News fired anchor **Ed Henry** for “willful sexual misconduct in the workplace.”

The firing came after the network received a complaint about Henry from a former employee's attorney about the anchor's behavior. Fox News then hired outside counsel to investigate the allegation, and fired Henry the following day.

Nineteen days later, Wigdor LLP, a firm that has made a habit out of representing clients in harassment lawsuits against Fox News in recent years, filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of **Jennifer Eckhart** and **Cathy Areu**.

It appears Eckhart was the mysterious “former employee” whose complaint resulted in Henry's dismissal. Areu, on the other hand, was a frequent guest, but not a full-time staffer.

In the filing, it is being alleged that Fox News supported and even promoted Henry to America's Newsroom co-anchor despite the fact that multiple women had complained about his sexually inappropriate conduct going as far back as 2017. In the lawsuit, it is alleged that the real reason that Fox News terminated Henry is because it knew that this lawsuit was coming and wanted to “get out ahead” of it; not because the network was “doing the right thing.”

It is also alleged that Henry subjected Eckhart to sexual harassment, sexual assault and even rape. After Eckhart came forward, as detailed in the complaint, Fox News allegedly retaliated against her by, among other things, blindsiding her with Henry's termination and issuing what the lawsuit claims is “a completely misleading statement concerning his egregious conduct.”

Fox intentionally downplayed the severity of the situation by characterizing Mr. Henry's actions as merely “sexual misconduct.” Fox News was trying to avoid taking accountability for what actually happened; namely, that one of its most prominent on-air personalities — with a history of multiple sexual harassment complaints — sexually assaulted and raped Ms. Eckhart. This conduct on the part of Fox News is abhorrent, and, of course, has only served to greatly increase the trauma that Eckhart is experiencing as a result.

Jennifer Eckhart joined Fox Business in January 2013 as a producer and worked on Countdown to the Closing Bell. She also reported on the entertainment business, and would make appearances on the **Tom Shillue** Show on Fox News Radio and on Fox Nation.

Eckhart left the company on June 12, 2020.

“I stand for all victims who have been mistreated, harassed, assaulted, and even worse, at the hands of those in power, and the institutions that continue to support them,” Eckhart said in a statement. “My decision to speak out was not an easy one, but I refuse to let fear of retaliation, victim shaming and further attacks intimidate me into remaining silent. I am hopeful that my decision to file this action will result in positive change for women at Fox, and for all victims in the workplace, and I am honored that other women have come forward since my decision to do so.”

Areu, the second plaintiff in the lawsuit, says she received “wildly inappropriate, disturbing and sadistic sexual images and videos” from Henry. She claims Henry repeatedly suggested that he would help her obtain an anchor position with Fox News if she engaged in sexual acts with him.

Areu is the founding publisher of Catalina magazine, has served as a Washington Post Magazine contributing editor, and has appeared on Fox News programming sporadically over the years.

Areu’s most recent Fox News appearance was April 5 on MediaBuzz with **Howard Kurtz**.

Fox News opinion hosts have referred to Areu as “Liberal Sherpa” for her left-of-center political analysis.

Speaking of those opinion hosts, Areu alleges she was sexually harassed by multiple men at Fox News, including Henry, Kurtz, **Sean Hannity**, **Tucker Carlson** and Fox News political analyst **Gianno Caldwell**.

The details of Areu’s allegations are laid out in the lawsuit (shown below), and they include a photo that captures the image of a stack of cash on set that Hannity allegedly offered to his male staff, auctioning off Areu to anyone in the studio was “man enough” to take her on a Del Frisco’s date after work.

According to the lawsuit, Areu was hooked up to the studio equipment, to go on air live, and could not even walk away during the “auctioning.”

Areu added in a statement of her own: “Like Ms. Eckhart, I too was fearful to come forward. However, I simply could not stay silent given the tremendous harm that Mr. Henry and others at Fox News have caused for women affiliated with the company. I chose

to file this complaint because no woman should have to suffer the conduct to which I was subjected, much less the egregious conduct suffered by Ms. Eckhart.”

Fox News has provided TVNewser with the following statement concerning this lawsuit:

“Based on the findings of a comprehensive independent investigation conducted by an outside law firm, including interviews with numerous eyewitnesses, we have determined that all of Cathy Areu’s claims against FOX News, including its management as well as its hosts Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity & Howard Kurtz and its contributor Gianni Caldwell, are false, patently frivolous and utterly devoid of any merit. We take all claims of harassment, misconduct and retaliation seriously, promptly investigating them and taking immediate action as needed — in this case, the appropriate action based on our investigation is to defend vigorously against these baseless allegations. Ms. Areu and Jennifer Eckhart can pursue their claims against Ed Henry directly with him, as FOX News already took swift action as soon as it learned of Ms. Eckhart’s claims on June 25 and Mr. Henry is no longer employed by the network.”