

Lawyers sue Times, CNN, Fox News for racial discrimination

April 26, 2017 11:52pm

Three of the nation's largest media organizations are being sued — two by the same lawyer — for racial discrimination.

A half-dozen people have filed suits against the New York Times and Fox News, while as many as 175 current and former employees have contacted lawyers about joining a class-action suit against CNN.

The Times plaintiffs claim in a suit filed last year by New York lawyer Douglas Wigdor that “the Gray Lady” prefers to hire white employees to help target a white audience.

“Unbeknownst to the world at large, not only does the Times have an ideal customer (young, white, wealthy), but also an ideal staffer (young, white, unencumbered with a family) to draw that purported ideal customer,” a complaint states.

Staffers from the staid broadsheet charge that Times CEO Mark Thompson, hired in 2012, created an “environment rife with discrimination based on age, race and gender.”

The suit claims Thompson and Chief Revenue Officer Meredith Levien phased out older, nonwhite staffers in favor of “fresh faces,” which plaintiffs said was code for “younger employees without families, and who were white.”

Court papers also accused the Times of paying Latino and black workers significantly less than white counterparts.

The Times has said the action has zero merit.

Wigdor is also representing the plaintiffs in two racial-discrimination suits filed in the last month against Fox News.

One is a class-action complaint by 11 employees who accuse the network of “abhorrent, intolerable, unlawful and hostile racial discrimination.”

The second was brought by black ex-payroll employees Tichaona Brown and Tabrese Wright. They say their boss, who eventually was fired, trafficked in ugly stereotypes, including implying that black men were “women beaters.”

Fox has denied the allegations and the cases are ongoing.

The lawsuit against CNN, meanwhile, claims the company's Atlanta headquarters is rife with racism.

Minority employees had to endure bigoted remarks such as “It's hard to manage black people” and “Who would be worth more: black slaves from times past, or new slaves?,” according to a complaint by former workers Celeslie Henley and Ernest Colbert Jr. filed in Atlanta federal court.

Colbert Jr. also claims he was paid thousands less than white colleagues as a manager at the affiliated Turner Broadcasting System.

Henley, a former CNN executive assistant, says she was fired in 2014 for complaining that black employees were being paid less than white counterparts.

CNN said the allegations don't identify any specific racist policies or practices.

Henley and Colbert are being represented by attorney Daniel Meachum.

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