

# 'Do You Want to F\*ck Her? You Can, She Works for Me': Lawsuit Claims Sexism at Steven Cohen's Hedge Firm

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## BOYS' CLUB

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"Do you want to fuck her? You can, she works for me."

Those words were allegedly said by a high-ranking consultant at Point72, the investment firm run by billionaire Steven Cohen, according to a 32-page lawsuit filed on Monday by a female executive at the \$11-billion firm.

Cohen, now 61, is widely considered to be the inspiration for the lead character in Showtime's *Billions*. He is not accused of specifically inappropriate behavior in the lawsuit.

However, Associate Director Lauren Bonner claims that women at the company are, in general, subject to a hostile "boys' club" in which they were belittled, demeaned, underpaid, and objectified. Bonner said women at Point72 are routinely denigrated and disparaged for their weight. One top executive sometimes announces that there are "no girls allowed" in advance of meetings, the complaint alleges.

Monday's suit names Cohen and the company's president, Douglas Haynes. Bonner seeks a variety of damages and an injunction to prevent further discrimination. She filed the suit in U.S. District Court in Manhattan. Point72 is based in Stamford, Connecticut.

“In his capacity as president of Point72, Haynes believed it was both acceptable and appropriate for him to write the word ‘PUSSY’ on the whiteboard hanging in his office and leave it there for weeks,” the complaint says.

“Male executives flout gender discrimination laws and openly subject their female subordinates to abhorrent bias,” the suit claims.

SAC Capital Advisors, Cohen’s former firm, closed its doors in 2014 after pleading guilty in an insider trading investigation. Cohen was barred for two years from managing public money. That ban expired six weeks ago.

Point72 denied the allegations in a statement on Monday to *The New York Times*.

“The firm emphatically denies these allegations and will defend itself in a more appropriate venue than the media,” it said. “We stand by our record of hiring and developing women. In an industry where women are historically underrepresented, the hundreds of women at Point72 are vital members of every part of our organization.”

Dave Black, a Point72 consultant and business associate of Steven Cohen’s, attended a 2017 fundraiser, according to the suit. During a conversation in front of several employees, including Bonner, a woman who had accompanied Black to the event walked away and a high-ranking portfolio manager at the company asked who she was.

“Why? Do you want to fuck her? You can, she works for me,” Black allegedly responded.

Bonner, according to the lawsuit, stood with her mouth agape in horror.

Haynes has allegedly openly referred to a former female executive as “a dumb blonde” and “brazenly disparaged” her weight.

Another female employee was made to create a PowerPoint presentation “less than 48 hours after giving birth,” the complaint claims.

Male executives allegedly “openly discuss” reasons women are not succeeding at the company, including because “women want to have children, are too emotional and can be ‘hysterical,’ care more about ‘work life balance’ issues, and, perhaps most upsettingly, do not work as hard as men.”

“The structural sexism at Point72 also causes women to be routinely denied promotions and regularly forced out after male executives accuse them of being ‘too emotional,’ ‘too sensitive’ or simply, ‘women,’” the lawsuit claims. “As long as Point72 is allowed to do so, it will continue to abuse its female employees and operate in a manner allowing them to resort to dirty, illegal tactics to keep women from succeeding.”

“This lawsuit proves that #MeToo is just getting started, and Wall Street will not be spared,”

Jeanne Christensen, an attorney for Bonner, told the *Times*.

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