

'60 Minutes' Producer Alleges CBS News Ignored Boss' Misconduct

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An associate producer at CBS News' "60 Minutes" alleges in a new lawsuit that she was "ostracized, isolated and penalized" after reporting inappropriate behavior by one of the venerable newsmagazine's senior producers, and now wants a jury to decide whether she is owed damages.

Cassandra Vinograd logged stints at the Associated Press, The Wall Street Journal and NBC News before being hired in June to join the London office of "60 Minutes." But within weeks, she alleges, she was confronted with inappropriate behavior from Michael Gavshon, a longtime "60 Minutes" producer. She alleges Gavshon often drank to excess during company hours and claims in September he texted her an old photo of him and some friends urinating on a smoldering fire. But, she alleges, she was removed from much of her daily work after asking CBS for an investigation into the matter as well as protection from retaliation.

The photo is included in the lawsuit, which was filed Tuesday in New York State Supreme Court.

The allegations surface after CBS News, and its former parent, CBS Corp., have spent months grappling with scrutiny of its workplace culture in the wake of the departure of former CBS CEO Leslie Moonves in the fall of 2018, and the ouster of former "CBS This Morning" anchor Charlie Rose in the fall of 2017. Both men were accused of inappropriate sexual behavior, and both have denied the charges.

A CBS News spokesperson could not be reached for immediate comment.

"We look forward to holding CBS accountable for its unlawful conduct as alleged in the complaint by our client Cassandra Vinograd," said Jeanne M. Christensen, a partner at Wigdor LLP, the law firm representing Vinograd. "Contrary to CBS's claims that it is doing the right thing when female employees report gender-related misconduct, as alleged, it appears that no meaningful changes to the culture at CBS have been made. It appears that CBS continues to protect senior male talent at the expense of junior women – business as usual."