

# Lawsuit Against Fox News Accuses Ed Henry of Rape, Tucker Carlson and Sean Hannity of Sexual Harassment

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By Ryan Bort

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Fox News host Ed Henry was fired earlier this month after the network concluded an internal investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct. Now, the former *America's Newsroom* anchor is at the center of a lawsuit filed in New York federal court on Monday, one which also names hosts Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity, Howard Kurtz, and Fox News.

The complaint was filed by former Fox Business producer Jennifer Eckhart and Fox News guest commentator Cathy Areu. It alleges that Henry attempted to force Eckhart into a sexual relationship, that he sexually assaulted her in the office, and that he raped her in a hotel room. Henry's attorney has denied the allegations.

The complaint also alleges that Areu was sexually harassed by Henry, Carlson, Hannity, and Kurtz. The complaint includes an allegation that Hannity offered \$100 to staffers to date Areu, and that Carlson stopped inviting Areu on his show as much as he had in the past after she declined one of his advances.

Fox News has claimed that all of Areu's accusations are "false, patently frivolous, and utterly devoid of any merit." They did not deny Eckhart's claims against Henry, instead arguing they already took "swift action" by firing Henry. Fox News wrote in a statement that Eckhart and Areu should leave the network out of their litigation and instead pursue Henry personally.

But included in the suit filed Monday is a claim that Fox News "intentionally downplayed the severity of the situation" when it fired Henry earlier this month, in order to avoid taking responsibility for its employee's actions. In a company email announcing Henry's firing, Fox News CEO Suzanne Scott and President Jay Wallace wrote only of unspecified "sexual misconduct." The details presented in the lawsuit, however, are horrifying.

The suit read: "Mr. Henry not only leveraged this imbalance of power for control over his victim, Ms. Eckhart, but asked her to be his 'sex slave' and his 'little whore,' and threatened punishment and retaliation if Ms. Eckhart did not comply with his sexual demands."

It goes on to accuse Henry of sexually assaulting Eckhart on company property, and raping her while she was handcuffed in a hotel frequented by company employees. "Prior to violently assaulting Ms. Eckhart, Mr. Henry took photos of Ms. Eckhart on his iPhone

while laughing, as Ms. Eckhart pleaded with Mr. Henry to stop, and to remove the handcuffs, and to delete the naked pictures he took of her without her consent,” the suit reads.

The suit alleges that Eckhart reported the “toxic work environment” to human resources in February, that her termination in June was an act of retaliation, and that the network had protected Henry from multiple allegations of misconduct until his firing earlier this month. “Fox News knew that Mr. Henry had engaged in sexual misconduct as far back as early 2017. At that time, when Fox News was conducting a companywide investigation into issues of sexual harassment, multiple women came forward to complain that Mr. Henry had engaged in sexually inappropriate conduct towards them.”

In a statement circulated to multiple news outlets, Henry’s lawyer, Catherine Foti, claims her client’s relationship with Eckhart was consensual, and that it was initiated by Eckhart. “The Me Too movement has helped to bring to light a number of injustices in our society, and everyone that has suffered deserves to be heard,” the statement reads. “This is not one of those cases.”