

Entertainment Weekly Staffer Says Fired Boss Joked About the Holocaust and Eating Disorders

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Brittany Kaplan has accused Entertainment Weekly's fired top editor, J.D. Heyman, of joking about the Holocaust and engaging in racist and sexist behavior in a lawsuit against the magazine and its owner DotDash Meredith.

Among the other allegations in the lawsuit filed Tuesday by Kaplan, a senior editor at EW, Heyman is said to have called singer Jewel "snaggletooth" while insulting her for previously being homeless. Kaplan also says Heyman argued against putting Black talent on the Black History Month edition of EW because he wanted the cover to be "joyous." The lawsuit also states Entertainment Weekly tried to keep complaints against Heyman out of public view.

Kaplan shared numerous other allegations about Heyman mishandling EW covers. She says he made unspecified "jokes about the Holocaust" and intentionally disregarded Kristen Stewart's request that she not be featured on the June 2020 Pride Month magazine cover. Kaplan also says Heyman "torpedoed" a potential Ryan Reynolds cover "because Mr. Reynolds wanted his diverse costars on the cover with him."

"As the ongoing wave of civil unrest flooded the United States in the Summer of 2020, Mr. Reynolds graciously attempted to use his fame to amplify his diverse co-stars' name, image and likeness," the lawsuit states. "Mr. Heyman claimed that the cover would be too complicated to pull off with the three stars."

Instead, the cover "featured six white people" and one member of the BIPOC community.

Later that year, Heyman put the late Chadwick Boseman on a cover of EW "over the express objection of his family's representative," the suit alleges.

Kaplan says she "made various internal complaints" about Heyman's behavior. While no action against Heyman was taken at the time, Kaplan says she "was sidelined and stripped of virtually all of her responsibilities," and "was denied a promised title promotion and pay increase."

"Today's filing is the unfortunate result of not only EW's alleged discriminatory and retaliatory conduct, but also its utter unwillingness to take accountability for its conduct," Kaplan's lawyer, Wigdor LLP Partner Michael Willemin, said in a statement on Wednesday. "Ms. Kaplan has attempted for years to resolve the subject of today's lawsuit short of litigation, but her internal complaints, even those made after we were retained to represent

her, fell on deaf ears. Thus, Ms. Kaplan was left with no choice but to file this action and hopes that EW will engage in the introspection necessary to remedy the continuing wrongs outlined in the complaint.”

A representative for Entertainment Weekly and DotDash Meredith did not immediately respond to TheWrap’s request for comment.

Earlier this month, Heyman was fired after multiple senior staffers filed complaints with the company’s human resources department accusing Heyman of creating a hostile workplace by belittling staffers and making “inappropriate” and “racially insensitive” comments.

According to several individuals with knowledge of the events, at least eight senior EW employees banded together to file complaints over the last several months and several documented their case with emails as well as recordings.

Tensions had been building at EW for some time. A former Meredith employee who worked with Heyman told TheWrap that Heyman’s blunt management style created an immediate “culture clash” from the moment he took over as EW’s editor in chief in June 2019 from beloved longtime editor Henry Goldblatt. The individual said the staff felt “whiplash” from Heyman’s “cynical” demeanor following Goldblatt’s more “earnest” approach.