

Ex-New York Post Editor Sues For ‘Years Of Sex-Based Harassment’

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[Anna Kaplan](#)

Topline

The former digital editor-in-chief of the *New York Post* filed a lawsuit Tuesday alleging she was demoted for complaining about sexual harassment from a then *Post* editor, and fired two months after she was questioned by a new editor about the alleged harassment, the latest high-profile allegation of sexual harassment in the media world controlled by Rupert Murdoch.

Key Facts

In the lawsuit filed in Manhattan federal court, lawyers for Michelle Gotthelf allege the *Post*'s former editor-in-chief, Col Allan, propositioned her for sex in 2015 after “several years of sex-based harassment.”

After she complained about the harassment, the suit alleges Allan was forced to retire, and then her “responsibilities and authority were steadily eroded” and her complaints about retaliation and harassment were “largely met with indifference.”

The suit alleges in 2021, Gotthelf was “effectively demoted” after the *Post* hired Keith Poole as editor-in-chief of the *New York Post* Group, and that he fired her two months after he questioned her about what happened between her and Allan.

The lawsuit names News Corp., owned by media mogul Rupert Murdoch, and NYP Holdings, along with Allan and Poole.

A spokesperson for the *Post* and News Corp. said in a statement to *Forbes* that “Any suggestion of wrongdoing related to the management changes announced today is meritless.”

In an email sent to staff on Tuesday and obtained by *Forbes*, Poole announced Gotthelf's departure on January 15 and thanked her for her “20-plus year tenure” at the paper.

Crucial Quote

“While I never intended to become the news, the truth of what happened to me deserves to be heard,” Gotthelf said in a statement.

Key Background

Allan was a long-time “lieutenant” of Murdoch, going back decades. Murdoch’s Fox News also has been a source of blockbuster sexual harassment complaints. Over a dozen Fox News employees, including host Megyn Kelly, accused Roger Ailes, the founder and head of the network, of sexual misconduct in 2016, leading to his resignation in July (and inspiring the 2019 film *Bombshell*). Top-rated Fox News host Bill O’Reilly, along with the network, settled at least five sexual harassment claims in 2017, the *New York Times* reported, leading to the loss of dozens of advertisers on his show. A few weeks later, the network announced O’Reilly would not be returning to his show following a vacation.