

Editor files discrimination suit against The New York Post.

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By [Katie Robertson](#)

A former high-level editor at The New York Post claimed in [a discrimination lawsuit](#) filed on Tuesday that she had endured “several years of sex-based harassment” during her more than two decades at the tabloid, saying that its longtime editor in chief had retaliated against her after she reported to company officers that he had sexually harassed her.

The former editor, Michelle Gotthelf, who joined The Post as a reporter in 2000 and was the editor in chief of its website until she was dismissed last week, said in the suit that she had been fired without cause. Ms. Gotthelf’s suit names News Corporation, the Rupert Murdoch-owned company that operates The Post, and New York Post Holdings. It also names [Keith Poole](#), the current editor in chief of the New York Post Group, and [Col Allan](#), the former longtime top editor of The Post who spent more than 40 years leading Murdoch publications in Australia and the United States.

In the legal complaint, Ms. Gotthelf said that Mr. Allan began to harass her in 2013, claiming that he “delighted in degrading Ms. Gotthelf, and women generally, in front of her mostly male peers.” She complained at the time to The Post’s then-publisher and chief executive, [Jesse Angelo](#), who told her there was not much he could do, according to the suit.

She also accused Mr. Allan of propositioning her for sex in 2015, saying, “We should sleep together.” She rejected his advance and made a complaint to two New York Post editors the next day, according to the suit, and later reported his behavior to the human resources department and Mr. Angelo.

[Mr. Allan retired](#) from the tabloid in 2016. After spending some time in his native Australia, he returned to The Post in 2019 as an adviser. Several Post employees said that, despite his adviser title, he effectively ran the newsroom.

After his return, Ms. Gotthelf says that she was sidelined “in retaliation for her complaints about Mr. Allan’s sexual harassment,” according to the suit. In 2019, when she was the editor of the tabloid’s website, he ordered her to remove an article on an accusation of rape against former President Donald J. Trump by the writer E. Jean Carroll. After she disagreed, he became abusive, according to the suit.

Ms. Gotthelf complained to Robert Thomson, the chief executive of News Corp, and the company’s head of human resources, and was told that “if Mr. Allan ‘tells you to do something, you do it,’” according to the suit.

Ms. Gotthelf says in the complaint that in November 2021 she told the current editor, Mr. Poole, who joined the paper last year, about her experiences with Mr. Allan when they were discussing her contract, which was up for renewal. Two months later, Mr. Poole fired her, according to the complaint. On Tuesday, Mr. Poole announced Ms. Gotthelf's departure in an email to the staff, writing, "I hope you will join me in wishing her the best for the future."

A spokeswoman for News Corporation and The Post said in a statement: "Any suggestion of wrongdoing related to the management changes announced today is meritless." Mr. Allan did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Ms. Gotthelf is represented by Wigdor LLP, a New York firm specializing in employment law led by Douglas Wigdor, who has sued Fox News, the cable news channel led by Mr. Murdoch, on behalf of more than two dozen people alleging discrimination. One group of those suits resulted in a \$10 million settlement between 18 plaintiffs and the Fox News parent company.

The Post faced a lawsuit similar to Ms. Gotthelf's in 2009, when the journalist Sandra Guzman accused the paper and Mr. Allan of firing her after she had complained about a hostile workplace environment. The suit was settled in 2013, and the terms were not disclosed.