



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on September 13, 2018

## “60 Minutes” Chief Fired After Texting Threat to Reporter

The blade fell again at CBS, this time on the neck of veteran Jeff Fager, the executive producer of *60 Minutes*.

CBS fired Fager, also under investigation for sex shenanigans on the job, because he sent a threatening text message to a reporter covering that story.

Fager’s is the second head to roll in less than a week. On Sunday, [Leslie Moonves quit](#) after the second of two stories in the *New Yorker* detailed the allegations of several women who said Moonves molested them.

### Fager’s Text

Fager’s trouble began in July, when Ronan Farrow, [writing in the \*New Yorker\*](#), detailed multiple allegations of sexual misconduct at CBS. The story targeted Fager and Moonves, suggesting that CBS resembled an out-of-control “frat house.” More allegations surfaced in Sunday’s story that sent Moonves out the door.

Jericka Duncan, a reporter at CBS covering the accusations, “reached out to Fager for his response to allegations in the *New Yorker* that he had groped or touched CBS employees at company parties,” [CBS reported](#).

Fager mustn’t have liked the inquiry given the text he sent: “If you repeat these false accusations without any of your own reporting to back them up you will be held responsible for harming me. Be careful. There are people who lost their jobs trying to harm me and if you pass on these damaging claims without your own reporting to back them up that will become a serious problem.”

Thus ended of the tenure of Jeff Fagers at CBS. News president David Rhodes [delivered the pink slip](#), “effective immediately.”

Rhodes also wrote that Fager’s exit “is not directly related to the allegations surfaced in press reports, which continue to be investigated independently. However, he violated company policy...”

Rhodes did not specify which policy Fager had violated, but Fager told *CBS News* that his contract was ended “for a harsh text I sent to a CBS employee.” In a statement, Fager said that CBS “terminated my contract early because I sent a text message to one of our own CBS reporters demanding that she be fair in covering the story.”

“My language was harsh and, despite the fact that journalists receive harsh demands for fairness all the time, CBS did not like it. One such note should not result in termination after 36 years, but it did,” Fager said.

### The Allegations

As with Moonves, Farrow’s many allegations in the *New Yorker* paint the picture of a privileged





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executive who drank copiously, pawed the woman he wanted, and permitted his newsroom under his charge to resemble a *National Lampoon* movie of a certain era: “While inebriated at company parties,” [Farrow reported](#), Fager “would touch employees in ways that made them uncomfortable.”

One former *60 Minutes* producer told me, “It was always ‘Let’s go say hello to Jeff, ’cause you have to pay homage to him, but let’s do it early in the evening, before he starts getting really handsy.’” In one incident, at which several employees were present, Fager allegedly made drunken advances to an associate producer, commenting on her breasts and becoming belligerent when she rebuffed him. (Fager denied the allegations, saying that “they never happened.”)

Fager also “protected men accused of misconduct,” Farrow reported, quoting another woman who said Fager “enabled the other men on the floor to do whatever the heck they wanted.”

Many of the women described the atmosphere at *CBS News* specifically as a “frat house.” One former employee said, “I had several producers and editors over the age of sixty who would greet me by kissing me on the mouth. I had people touch my butt a couple times.” She added, “Fager seemed to encourage that climate.”

[Farrow’s second piece](#) detailed the experience of Sarah Johansen, a producer who said Fager “groped her at a work party.”

## **Moonves and Rose**

Before Fager was fired, [it was Moonves](#) who “resigned” after accusations that included forcing women to perform oral sex. Before him, the #MeToo guillotine [dispatched Charlie Rose](#), a leftist voice of gravitas at PBS as well. When Rose was romancing the ladies, he skipped the flowers and candy, the [Washington Post reported](#), and went straight to “lewd phone calls, walking around naked in their presence, or groping their breasts, buttocks or genital areas.”

Image of Jeff Fager: Screenshot from a [YouTube video by CBS Evening News](#)



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