



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on September 10, 2018

## Women Say Leslie Moonves Assaulted Them

Leslie Moonves might have been the genius who made CBS the number one network for the last two decades, but to the women who worked for and around him, he was just another dirty old man.

Ronan Farrow's two reports on the former CEO of CBS describe women whom Moonves utterly terrorized during what the women thought were business meetings, much as Harvey Weinstein terrorized women unfortunate enough to be alone with him.



Moonves resigned on Sunday, leaving the network a second black eye less than year after the departure of another media masher, Charlie Rose.

### Farrow's First Story

[The New Yorker](#) published Farrow's first salvo at Moonves on August 6, detailing the recollections of 30 people. Six claimed Moonves molested them.

One of them was Emmy nominee [Illeana Douglas](#), who appeared in *Cape Fear* and *Goodfellas*. She considered Moonves a "father figure."

When Douglas met with Moonves in 1997 to discuss a script, he asked if she was single. Douglas tried to talk about the script, but Moonves asked to kiss her. "It'll just be between you and me," he told her. "Come on, you're not some nubile virgin."

Then Moonves pushed himself on her, Farrow reported, "'violently kissing her,' holding her down on the couch with her arms above her head.... 'The physicality of it was horrendous.' She recalled lying limp and unresponsive beneath him."

"What happened to me was a sexual assault," she told Farrow.

Farrow also described Moonves' meeting with screenwriter Janet Jones, where he used much the same approach. Jones was "really prepared" to discuss the business of writing, but Moonves had risky business on his mind:

Moonves surprised her by asking if she wanted a glass of wine. She declined, sat down on the couch, and began pitching her screenplay. Suddenly, Jones told me, "he came around the corner of the table and threw himself on top of me. It was very fast." Moonves, she said, began trying to kiss her. Jones said that she struggled, and then shoved Moonves away hard, yelling, "What do you think you're doing?" Moonves, appearing startled, got up. "'Well, I was hitting on you. I wanted a kiss,'" she recalled him saying. Jones began to leave. "He said, 'Oh, come on, it's nothing,'" she said. "'Calm down, don't be so excited.'"

Another victim of Moonves was producer [Christine Peters](#), Farrow reported. While they met sometime in 2006, he sat down on a couch next to Peters and "he just put a hand up my skirt."

### Farrow's Second Story



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[Yet not until Farrow fired again](#) did Moonves quit CBS.

The second story contains the allegations that Moonves forced [Phyllis Golden-Gottlieb](#) to perform oral sex, a crime she reported to police last year. Golden-Gottlieb, who had been a top hand at NBC, MGM, and Disney, told Farrow that Moonves assaulted her in 1986. “You sort of just go numb. You don’t know what to do,” she told Farrow. She didn’t report the crime, Farrow wrote, because she was a single mother who feared he could ruin her career. At the time, Moonves was an executive at [Lorimar-Telepictures](#). Moonves also tossed the woman against a wall in a rage, and then tried, in the end, to do what she feared: wreck her career.

Moonves hid the police probe for several months, Farrow reported.

Moonves was informed of Golden-Gottlieb’s complaint to the Los Angeles Police in the fall. He did not disclose the existence of the criminal investigation to a number of CBS board members until several months later. The full board was not informed, and Moonves was allowed to continue running the company.

Farrow described another victim who suffered a panic attack while Moonves attempted to have sex with her in 1994, and yet even more whom Moonves ambushed by, for instance, suddenly exposing himself. Moonves even tried to molest massage therapists, Farrow reported. Their harrowing experiences were such that they refused to go to his room.

CBS has hired two law firms to investigate the accusations.

Another top man at CBS who faces sex accusations is [Jeff Fager](#), executive producer for *60 Minutes* and former chairman for CBS News. Women accuse Fager not only of groping but also of protecting other men who did so. [Farrow recounted](#) the story of an intern who claims Fager grabbed on her behind.

In November, [the network fired](#) veteran on-air talent Charlie Rose after several women accused him of sexual harassment.

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