

# Patricia Heaton's Husband Accused of Inappropriate Touching on Set of CBS' *Carol's Second Act*

David Hunt "did not remember the details as described," his lawyer told the *New York Times*

By **Georgia Slater** | November 16, 2019 07:30 PM



Two female writers on *Carol's Second Act* left their jobs on the show after David Hunt, star Patricia Heaton's husband and an executive producer on the sitcom, allegedly exhibited inappropriate behavior on set.

Writer Broti Gupta "complained to human resources" about Hunt allegedly touching her inappropriately during her time on set, according to the *New York Times*. Co-executive producer Margee Magee also had a complaint to human resources.

Gupta, 25, went to human resources with complaints of Hunt inappropriately touching her on two separate occasions, one of which she claimed he put his hand on her thigh and the other when he allegedly grabbed her shoulders.

Heaton and Hunt's lawyer Bryan Freedman told the *Times* that Hunt "did not remember the details as described" and that Hunt "does not recall rubbing anyone's thigh or leg and he disputes that characterization of it." In his statement, Freeman added that Hunt "remembers looking for a script but does not remember the detail of touching anyone's shoulders, and if he did that, it was not intended to be offensive."

Freedman and reps for Heaton did not immediately respond to PEOPLE's request for comment.



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Gupta allegedly told human resources that she did not want Hunt to be fired, but to go through sexual harassment training instead, which CBS said Hunt had "cooperated fully with the process," according to a statement obtained by PEOPLE.

"A claim of unprofessional behavior was made by a writer regarding one of the show's executive producers. The complaint was reported by a producer to the showrunners, who immediately alerted the production company and the Studio. The matter was promptly investigated by human resources, and appropriate action was taken to address the complaint. The executive producer cooperated fully with the process," the network said.

Hunt completed a sexual harassment training on Oct. 1, the *Times* stated.



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However, after sharing her complaint with human resources, Gupta claims she was "stripped of her responsibilities" and wasn't allowed to be a part of certain rehearsals. "That gave me no option but to leave the show," she told the *Times*.

Magee, 43, shared she felt similar consequences at work. While she "did not want to leave," she claims she felt as if she was not given her usual writing responsibilities.

CBS denied both women's claims in the statement, saying the network "looked into allegations of retaliatory conduct by the showrunners at the time they were raised, and we found no evidence of retaliatory intent in their interactions with the writer or the producer," adding, "In particular, their decisions about the writers' procedure during rehearsals and tapings were creatively motivated to streamline their production process and were already being discussed prior to the complaint."

In addition, Magee claims the network did not "enforce the new protocol" of sexual harassment training after raising their complaints. "In truth, the people who are there to enforce the new protocol just don't do it," she told the *Times*. "All we wanted was for him to watch like a 45-minute harassment video. None of this had to happen."

According to the *Times*, the network sent Hunt a "closure letter" that read: "Your behavior caused the individual who raised the concerns to feel genuinely uncomfortable in the workplace and it reflected a disregard for CBS' policies and guidance in the matter. You are hereby cautioned not to engage in such behavior."

In its statement to PEOPLE, CBS also said, "Our human resources team always endeavors to address issues in a professional and sensitive manner, and we must clarify that certain allegations about them have either been misstated or taken wholly out of context. The writer and producer decided to leave the show of their own accord."

Both women are to be paid for the remainder of their guaranteed episodes and are contractually able to speak about their experiences on the show, according to the statement from CBS.

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