Bryan Freedman Targets Reality TV NDAs

The feared Hollywood litigator, representing Bethenny Frankel and other Bravo stars, is demanding that everyone who works on the shows be able to speak freely about unlawful workplace conduct.

Litigator Bryan Freedman has been waging war for possible unionization on behalf of Bethenny Frankel and other Bravo stars. *Photo: Rob Latour/Getty Images*

MATTHEW BELLONI   August 21, 2023

S ome quiet movement this week in the battle over working conditions for reality TV performers. Litigator **Bryan Freedman**, who's been waging war for possible unionization on behalf of **Bethenny Frankel** and other Bravo stars, sent *two* nasty letters to NBCUniversal general counsel **Kim Harris** demanding that employees of the company and its outside producers "are released from any contractual provisions that interfere with their ability to freely disclose unlawful conduct in the workplace."

Freedman means NDAs, which are typically used in reality TV to prevent leaks of spoilers, but which also can be wielded "like a sword" (his words) to keep quiet unsafe or oppressive conditions. "This culture of fear and silence is no doubt responsible, in part, for the disproportionate rate of suicide among reality TV participants," Freedman writes in a scathing letter sent today.

Would NBCU release its reality stars from NDAs? A rep declined to comment when I asked, but back in 2019, amid the **Matt Lauer** scandal and the #MeToo reckoning at NBC News, the company **allowed** employees to break NDAs if they believed they experienced sexual harassment. It's a little different here because many NBCU reality stars are actually contracted with third-party producers, but… producers are made to comply with NBCU policies, and NBCU entities are often named in the production company agreements. It's all bluster until Freedman actually sues, but he's threatening a class action or multi-plaintiff lawsuit for injunctive relief, so let's see how NBCU responds.

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