

Rush & Molloy

NYDAILYNEWS.COM

DAILY NEWS

Pro Sports Pick'em

Sign Up Now!



Rush & Molloy

Regan may out-Fox Rupe

Thursday, July 12th 2007, 4:00 AM

Judith Regan has secret tapes of phone calls and meetings that provide explosive evidence in her \$20 million lawsuit against **Rupert Murdoch's** News Corporation, sources tell us.

After attempting to publish **O.J. Simpson's** memoir "If I Did It," Regan was fired by HarperCollins' CEO **Jane Friedman**.

The tapes "not only bolster her position against News Corp, but may prove damning to more than a few Fox executives," one source, who characterized the recordings as "juicy," told us.

Regan brought Murdoch \$80 million a year with best-selling authors as diverse as **Michael Moore** and **Jenna Jameson**.

Ironically, her books are still bringing Murdoch profits with "The Martha's Vineyard Diet Detox" by **Dr. Roni DeLuz** and **James Hester** hitting No. 2 on Amazon, behind a little book called "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows." And "Outrage," by **Dick Morris** and **Eileen McGann**, is No. 5 on The New York Times' best-seller list.

Sources claim that Friedman, in an attempt to Etch A Sketch all memory of her nemesis from the company, wanted to cancel Morris' book after Regan's firing. A HarperCollins spokeswoman told us: "I know nothing about that."

Regan, who recently made a media deal in China, where Murdoch has a satellite TV business, is now in Brazil on another deal-making jaunt.

She's hired Everestian lawyers **Bert Fields** in Hollywood and **Larry Shire** in New York to sue not only for wrongful termination, but for defamation.

News Corp executives claimed Regan used the phrase "Jewish cabal" in one conversation, a charge she denies.

She also claims the executives falsely put out a story that she had replaced the mezuzahs (prayer scrolls hung from doorposts) in her building with dollar bills - which, according to her divorce papers, was something she'd accused her former husband of doing.

Side Dish

Hmmm ... **Claire Danes** has been chosen to play Eliza Doolittle in "Pygmalion" for the Roundabout revival come October. She's never been on Broadway before. Did it help that director **David Grindley** directed boyfriend **Hugh Dancy** in "Journey's End"?

Annie Leibovitz got a tongue-lashing and a stare worthy of an ice queen when she asked England's **Elizabeth II** to remove her crown during a portrait session, the BBC documentary "A Year With the Queen" shows. QE II was in full regalia in Buckingham Palace when the Vanity Fair photographer told her, "I think it will look better without the crown because the [Order of the] Garter robe is so ..." The riled royal cuts her off, saying, "Dressy [?] What do you think this is?" The 81-year-old then marches off, with a servant running after her holding her train.

Billion-heir **Brandon Davis** was moping at Mokai in Miami last weekend after being dumped by his model girlfriend, known only as **Caroline**, after three months. Decidedly happier were pals **Wilmer Valderrama**, **Damon Wayans** and **Carlos Slim Domit**, whose dad was just named the richest man in the world. Davis was chipper back at the club Tuesday as he chatted up an Australian model named **Cheyenne** and sang "Roxanne" as Sting sat nearby.

What pint-size pop star likes to pop Adderall? She's even tried to foist the prescription zinger on female friends.

"Dancing With the Stars" **Ian Ziering** could barely keep his mind on the swag at the ESPY Style Studio in L.A. Tuesday. "He was all jittery because he'd just had a call-back to replace **Bob Barker** on 'The Price Is Right,'" said our spy from the ESPN awards. "He really, really wants it." Also at the gifting suite, "Captive" star **Elisha Cuthbert** and N.Y. Rangers boyfriend **Sean Avery** were spooked by paparazzi and quit canoodling in public.

Bono and U2 bandmate **The Edge** got their own applause during intermission at "Spring Awakening" the other night. They'd ducked backstage to see musical director **Kim Grigsby**.

Looks like former jailbird **Paris Hilton** paid tribute to herself with a Warhol-inspired tee in Malibu on Tuesday. Hey, somebody's gotta do it ...

Rosie O'Donnell took the mic to entertain guests on her family cruise this week, with an act featuring the requisite mockery of Elisabeth Hasselbeck: "I can't fight with pregnant people. Just go have your baby and have a nice life." Ouch!

Jacked jocks **Braylon Edwards**, **Dhani Jones** and **Kerry Rhodes** steam up the cover of Essence's August "Do Right Men" issue, on stands today. If readers can take their eyes off the guys' pecs, they can read about the charitable and environmental projects that got the three on the cover. Here's hoping ...

Don't dis **Beyoncé** - or you'll catch it from **Michelle Williams**. The Destiny's Child triplet joined

her former bandmates Tuesday night at Home nightclub for a party celebrating the new CD by **Kelly Rowland** - and told us that TMZ was "pathetic" for saying Beyoncé needed a new stylist because she performed in a "RoboHo getup" at the BET Awards. Williams railed: "It's downright mean. You can write me word for word. What has Beyoncé done to deserve being called a 'ho'? No one should be called a ho!"

With Patrick Huguenin and Sean Evans. Edited by Lance D. Debler.