

Far-Right Journalist Sues Fusion Reporter for Calling Her White Supremacist



Summary: Pro-Trump writer Cassandra Fairbanks is suing journalist Emma Roller for insinuating she was a white supremacist.

Far-right journalist Cassandra Fairbanks threw up the "OK" hand signal and was called a white supremacist online. Now she is suing the writer of the tweet for \$100,000.

On Thursday, Fairbanks filed a defamation lawsuit in Washington D.C. against Fusion journalist, Emma Roller. In the lawsuit, Fairbanks' pro bono lawyer Robert Barnes portrays the case like a David versus Goliath situation, with Fairbanks being the little guy. *Buzzfeed* reported that in the suit, "independent, outsider writers, scribes, advocates, and journalists... a new media" are fighting against an "increasingly distrusted elite-backed press."

The case stems from a viral Tweet that Roller had sent from her personal account. She had taken a photo of Fairbanks and conservative freelance writer, Mike Cernovich, holding up their hands doing the "OK" gesture at the White House. Roller interpreted the gesture as a signal of "white power."

"Just two people doing a white power hand gesture in the White House," Roller said in her April 28 Tweet that can be seen below.



Emma Roller ✓
@emmaroller

just two people doing a white power
hand gesture in the White House



Cassandra Fairbanks ✓
@CassandraRules



with @Cernovich



When the photo was taken, Roller worked at the website *Sputnik*, which is owned by the Russian government. Now she writes for *Big League Politics*, a conservative website founded by a former staff member of *Breitbart News*. Cernovich is a freelance journalist who is known for his pro-Trump and alt-right views.

When Fairbanks tweeted the photo, she was showcasing her press access to the White House, which has famously been contentious to more established media sources such as *CNN* and the *New York Times*.

Fairbanks told *Buzzfeed News* that it is falsely rumored that the "OK" sign is a white power symbol.

"There was a troll meme going around saying that it meant white power," Fairbanks said when Roller's tweet first went viral. "But it was a joke because Trump supporters are always being called Nazis even when it isn't true."

Fairbanks' lawsuit said that Roller's tweet, which was shared more than 6,000 times before its deletion, caused her emotional distress. However, a legal expert told *Buzzfeed News* that Fairbanks' case may not hold because Roller can show that she was given false information that claimed the symbol was one of white supremacy.

"If there was an active campaign to provide her disinformation and she was reasonable in relying on that information then that could certainly cut against liability," litigation director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, Katie Towns said to *BuzzFeed News*.

Roller did not comment on the litigation, but Fusion has shown its support for their writer, even offering to pay for her defense.

Fusion Editor-in-Chief Dodai Stewart wrote in a statement, "Our reporter Emma Roller has not actually been served, but the complaint provided to us by BuzzFeed is clearly frivolous. This suit is an obvious publicity stunt and an attempt to intimidate reporters who scrutinize the activities of the extreme right. We fully support Emma and will defend her."

Barnes said that he took Fairbanks' case pro bono "to send a message that people are here and listening."

"I've been disturbed by people using the leverage of institutional media to harass new media," Barnes said to *BuzzFeed News*. "I've been looking for the right case to help advocate for changing that."

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- [Melania Trump and Daily Mail Settle Defamation Lawsuit for \\$3M](#)
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Source: Buzzfeed

What do you think of Cassandra Fairbanks' lawsuit? Let us know in the comments below.

