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## Academic receives “death threats” from far-right after crowdfunding campaign to sue her

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By Sam Bright and Kate Plummer

An academic is reportedly receiving death threats from members of the far-right, after a crowdfunding campaign was set up to sue her for defamation.

Nicole Prause (pictured above), an American neuroscientist who studies porn and sexuality, has said that she started to receive death threats after Alexander Rhodes (pictured below), an anti-masturbation campaigner, set up a [crowdfunding campaign](#) using fundraising platform Donorbox to sue her for “defamation”.

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Rhodes is the founder of NoFap, a website that claims to help people with porn addiction, while Prause has researched porn addiction and claims that she has found no scientific basis for it. Rhodes has said this research is tantamount to defamation and is suing Prause.

Writing on his campaign page, Rhodes says he’s been “targeted by an unprecedented campaign of defamation from entities who appear to be closely associated with the porn industry.”



Alexander Rhodes/Facebook

But as well as denying claims that she is associated with the porn industry, Prause has said this campaign has now led to far-right harassment from Rhodes' supporters, including "death threats" and "misogyny".

Prause claims that Rhodes' fans have tried to hack her Facebook and email, while directing a string of harassment at her. Indeed, a number of online comments in support of the crowdfunding campaign use violent language towards Prause – including one tweet that reads: "I hope there's bloodshed".



Adding to this, Prause believes she is being stalked, and that her address has been posted online.



The No Fap crowdfunding campaign, targeting Prause, has received a range of positive coverage from far-right "news" sites, including [The Daily Stormer](#), which accompanied their story with an anti-Semitic cartoon. It has also been featured on [Infowars](#), run by far-right US commentator Alex Jones, and forum [Poal](#).



As a result, it's no surprise that one comment on the crowdfunding page calls for "groypers" to "rise up". Groypers is a [far-right meme](#) based on an image similar to Pepe the Frog. Prause also claims several other far-right messages were posted on the page, though they appear now to have been deleted.



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Porn is the route of most if not all problems in society today. It makes you lazy, fat, anxious, and frankly I wonder if my life would have been significantly better if I had never typed in sex in google at the age of 7. Those who profit off destroying countless families and lives of young men like myself should frankly be in jail if not taxed 200% of their income. Stay strong brothers in Christ. Groypers rise up

[Speaking to VICE](#), Prause said: "Alexander Rhodes and NoFap's lawsuit has no merit nor do his libelous and unfounded assertions regarding me, my character, or my business."

"He is entitled to his opinions, however he is not entitled to spread complete falsehoods about me to profit himself and silence speech."

Making all this possible is [Donorbox](#), an online donation system that profits by hosting user's campaigns.

But unlike many other services, Donorbox has been embroiled in [controversy](#), due to the clients it hosts.

The platform has been criticised for allowing the far-right to fundraise, including [Tommy Robinson](#), James Goddard and the [now-defunct](#) far-right "news" platform Politicalite.



Donorbox is well aware that it hosts characters who could be generously described as unsavoury. Last year, BuzzFeed asked Donorbox founder Charles Zhang why his company platformed hate figures, receiving little response.

It seems possible that Rhodes was aware of his campaign's controversial nature and that, to avoid being no-platformed, he needed to choose a payment system with laissez-faire rules. A Q&A section on his crowdfunder says:

### Why aren't you using GoFundMe, Kickstarter, etc, and instead hosting it on this page?

Unfortunately, based on past observations, we're concerned that if we hosted the fundraiser on one of those websites, somebody would work hard to ensure that it gets taken down using frivolous complaints or legal intimidation. We're self-hosting our own crowd funding campaign to be more resilient to censorship from the porn industry and its supporters. However, because it's hosted right on our homepage, you know that this campaign is authentic. All payment pages are encrypted and donating here is just as safe as it is on other traditional crowd funding websites.

But while Donorbox is more relaxed about its clients than other platforms, it would appear that Rhodes' campaign could still be violating its terms and conditions. Indeed Donorbox says it blocks "campaigns that are fraudulent, misleading, inaccurate, dishonest, impossible or imitating any other person or fundraising campaign without permission."



Rhodes' No Fap page suggests that his campaign is fighting the "porn industry" – an industry Prause insists she has absolutely no ties to. It could be argued that Rhodes is being deliberately misleading.



The crowdfunder has raised \$84,000 so far. Donorbox will earn **1.5%** of what is fundraised, meaning it has earned \$1260 and will gain \$3000 if the crowdfunder reaches its \$200,000 target.

A very healthy return.

## TAKE ACTION

DONORBOX SHOULDN'T BE MAKING MONEY FROM HATE AND FAKE NEWS: SIGN THE PETITION NOW

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