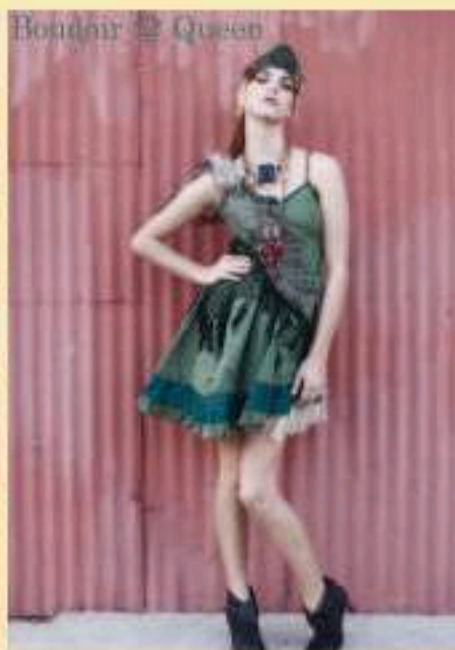


## Judge Allows Twitter-Libel Suit Against Rocker Love



Rocker Courtney Love's attempt to squelch a first-of-its-kind libel lawsuit by portraying herself as a consumer watchdog has failed as a judge ruled that her incendiary Twitter postings about a fashion designer are not speech about a public issue.

In a [motion](#) to dismiss the suit, Love, the first celebrity to be sued for Twitter-libel, said she spoke out about [Dawn Simorangkir](#), aka "Boudoir Queen," because she "believe[s] strongly in the right of consumers to publicly warn other consumers about unscrupulous vendors." The Twitter postings described the designer, among other things, as an "asswipe nasty lying hosebag thief."

California's anti-SLAPP law protects "any written or oral statement or writing made in a place open to the public or a public forum in connection with an issue of public interest."

But after a hearing today, Los Angeles Superior Court [Judge Aurelio N. Munoz](#) denied the motion, agreeing with Simorangkir that Love's statements did not affect a large group of people and involved only a "discrete private dispute" between her and Simorangkir.

"That Love is a celebrity does not transform anything Love says, especially about others, into matters of public interest," plaintiff's counsel [Bryan J. Freedman](#) (Freedman & Taitelman, Los Angeles) argued in a [brief](#). "At best, Love[ ] has commented on a private dispute that ... does not affect the public at large."

Munoz also found that even if Love had satisfied the "public issue" requirement of the anti-SLAPP law, the case could proceed to discovery since Simorangkir had demonstrated a probability of prevailing on her claim that the Twitterings were malicious statements of fact and not merely "rhetorical hyperbole."

"The judge definitively said that we were going to be able to prove our case of libel," Freedman tells *On Point*.

Simorangkir sued Love in March over a Twitter-ranting that included no fewer than 10 allegedly defamatory tweets posted within the space of 21 minutes. The lead singer of the band Hole had apparently believed that Simorangkir would provide her with custom clothing for free — and went ballistic when she billed her for it.

"Whether caused by a drug induced psychosis, a warped understanding of reality, or the belief that her money and fame allow her to disregard the law, Love has embarked [o]n what is nothing short of an obsessive and delusional crusade to terrorize and destroy Simorangkir, Simorangkir's reputation and her livelihood," the [complaint](#) said.

Love also argued that her statements were protected under the anti-SLAPP law because "Matters involving a celebrity's personal life constitute matters of public interest if the celebrity herself is the subject of widespread public interest." But according to Freedman, Munoz concluded that "Under that theory, no celebrity could ever be found liable for defamation."

Freedman predicts that Love will appeal the ruling. "They'll try to delay [the case] as much as they can," he said.