



Written by [Steven J. DuBord](#) on September 1, 2009

Carrie Prejean Files Discrimination Suit

Former Miss California USA Carrie Prejean has filed a religious discrimination lawsuit against the franchise that operates the Miss California Organization, K2 Productions, naming specifically co-executive directors Keith Lewis and Shanna Moakler and publicist Roger Neal, Fox News reported August 31.



Andrew Breitbart's [Big Hollywood](#) website said that "the complaint cites damages to Miss Prejean including libel, public disclosure of private facts, religious discrimination, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and negligent infliction of emotional distress." Donald Trump is not named in the suit.

The controversy began when Prejean was a runner up in the April 19 Miss USA pageant. Perez Hilton, one of the judges, asked her about Vermont legalizing same-sex marriage and part of Prejean's answer was definitely not politically correct: "I think that I believe that a marriage should be between a man and a woman. No offense to anybody out there, but that's how I was raised and that's how I think that it should be between a man and a woman."

Later a controversy arose over some photos of Prejean, but Donald Trump decided in favor of letting Prejean continue as Miss California. Finally in June, the Miss California Organization fired Prejean, claiming she had failed to live up to her obligation to attend certain events.

According to the Milwaukee Examiner website, Prejean's lawsuit counters by saying the organization "fabricated a fraudulent list of some 50 public appearances allegedly missed by Prejean which they released to the media in order to justify her termination as Miss California USA." [TMZ.com](#) adds that Prejean's suit also says organization officials attempted to "set up Prejean to have her dismissed as Miss California USA by asking her to do a *Playboy* photo shoot for \$120,000."

Fox News mentions that Prejean's complaint describes Lewis, Moakler, and Neal as joining Hilton in a "conspiracy to attack" that caused Prejean "emotional distress, anxiety, depression and loss of sleep." Prejean has consequently been subject to "public ridicule, scorn and humiliation, lost earnings," and the need for stress-related medical treatment. Prejean also says that Lewis and Moakler illegally revealed private medical data when they allegedly told the media about her cosmetic breast surgery.

"If Carrie had not answered the question in support of traditional marriage ... she would most certainly still be Miss California," Prejean's attorney Charles S. LiMandri told Fox News. "Over the past two months we have worked hard to provide overwhelming evidence that Carrie Prejean did not violate her contract with Miss California USA and did not deserve to have her title revoked by Keith Lewis. We will make the case that her title was taken from her solely because of her support of traditional marriage. She did not want to sue, but people need to know the truth."



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Big Hollywood includes this portion of a statement released by LiMandri: "Keith Lewis has refused to clear her good name or even to admit any wrongdoing. Therefore, Carrie Prejean is left with no alternative but to take her case to court where she expects to be fully vindicated."

Shanna Moakler is apparently eager to take the battle to court. A representative for Moakler told TMZ.com that "Ms. Prejean's unfortunate and bigoted statements are responsible for any public humiliation or damages to her reputation that she has claimed to have suffered. Ms. Moakler strenuously denies that she did anything wrong and looks forward to proving that in a court of law."

Keith Lewis told Fox News that he plans to file a counter lawsuit: "It appears that suits from both sides are now inevitable against the other. I would guess Carrie sees it as a chance to get publicity for her upcoming book because in the interviews I have seen, she talks about the suit and the book in the same breath."

But a public service announcement made by the Miss California Organization shortly after the question & answer incident, presumably with Lewis' full consent and knowledge, shows that he is no stranger to wasting breath on saying one thing while doing another. The "I Believe" PSA features a parade of Miss USA beauty pageant winners stating how they believe some of the following things, among others:

I believe every American has a right to their own opinion.... I believe when I express my opinion, I have the responsibility to do it respectfully.... I believe Californians may disagree on some things, but we all take pride in our state's diversity.... I believe when two people with opposite views communicate with love and respect, both sides can be heard.

In case the Miss California Organization has forgotten, it was Perez Hilton who immediately posted a video blog after the pageant saying that Prejean gave "the worst answer in pageant history," and that she lost because "she is a dumb b***h." Prejean was the one who attempted to show respect with her answer, while Hilton resorted to vulgar language. (Perez Hilton's video blog can be seen on YouTube by clicking [here](#), but be warned that it contains the aforementioned crude language.)

Hilton is the one who needs to watch the "I Believe" PSA, not Prejean, yet it was Prejean who was fired. If the Miss California Organization really believed that "every American has a right to their own opinion," they wouldn't have made sure Prejean suffered for expressing hers.

In case anyone wonders where the sentiments of the majority of Americans lie, look again at the video of Prejean answering Hilton's question. While there is a smattering of applause when Hilton mentions Vermont becoming the fourth state to legalize same-sex marriage, there is a much greater volume of applause after Prejean says she thinks marriage should be between a man and a woman.

I believe ... she's right.

Photo of Carrie Prejean: AP Images



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