



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on May 9, 2023

Jury Finds That Trump Sexually Assaulted Newspaper Columnist in Dept. Store

A federal jury found former President Donald Trump “liable” for a sexually assaulting a former gossip columnist almost 30 years ago, yet didn’t find him responsible for raping the woman, as she claimed he did.

The jury also found that Trump defamed E. Jean Carroll when he called her claims a “hoax” on his social-media network, Truth Social.

The nine-member panel also ordered Trump to pay her \$5 million in damages for the two offenses.

Empaneled in hate-Trump, navy-blue Manhattan, the jury was unlikely to find for Trump and against his accuser, as leftist lawyer and constitutional scholar Alan Dershowitz explained about the [bogus 34-count indictment](#) that accuses Trump of falsifying business records.



AP Images
E. Jean Carroll

Breaking News: A jury has reached a verdict in the case of E. Jean Carroll, who has accused Donald Trump of raping her in a dressing room at the Bergdorf Goodman department store in the mid-1990s. Follow live. <https://t.co/7sMT6iO8aY>

— The New York Times (@nytimes) [May 9, 2023](#)

The Case

Carroll’s allegations, again, go back almost 30 years to 1996. In 2019, when Carroll sued Trump under a New York’s Adult Survivor’s law that allowed a victim a one-time shot to file claims, the statute of limitations of a crime regardless, [she explained](#) the events of the day to CNN’s Anderson Cooper.

The former newspaper columnist said she was leaving the ritzy Bergdorf Goodman department store when Trump was entering. He waylaid Carroll and asked to help her pick out a gift for a woman. When the pair went to the lingerie department, Trump asked her to try on “a filmy see-through body suit in lilac gray.” She told Trump to try it on. Then the two entered a dressing room, where he pinned her against a wall, penetrated her with his finger, then raped her.

“I always think back and think that was the stupidest thing I’ve ever done. I should never have done it,” she said. “That was just a dumb thing to go into a dressing room with a man that I hardly know. And have him shut the door. And then be unable to stop him.”

Carroll didn’t “freeze” and “it did not last long,” she told the homosexual star as the somewhat bizarre interview continued:



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CARROLL: And that's why I don't use the word [rape] you just used. I use the word "fight."

COOPER: You don't use the word rape?

CARROLL: Sexual violence is in every country in every strata of society, and I just feel that so many women are undergoing sexual violence. Mine was short. I got out. I'm happy now. I'm moving on.

And I think of all the women who are enduring constant sexual violence. So, this one incident, this one, what, three minutes in this little dressing room, I just say it's a fight. That way I'm not the victim, right? I'm not the victim.

COOPER: You don't feel like a victim?

CARROLL: I was not thrown on the ground and ravished. Which the word "rape" carries so many sexual connotations. This was not — this was not sexual. It just hurt. It just —

COOPER: I think most people think of rape as a — it is a violent assault. It is not —

CARROLL: I think most people think of rape as being sexy.

In court, the [jury heard](#) from 10 witnesses, only one of whom was Carroll. Two of them were friends who corroborated her story, though Carroll told Cooper that the store was empty at the time of the alleged rape.

In video testimony, [Trump called](#) Carroll's allegations "the most ridiculous, disgusting story."

Though Trump claimed he had never met Carroll, she produced a photo of the two with their ex-spouses. That photo doesn't mean Trump remembers that meeting.

"The jury ... said Ms. Carroll had not proved, by a preponderance of the evidence, that Mr. Trump had raped her, as she had long claimed, but they did find he had sexually abused her," the [New York Times reported](#). "Jury members had the option of finding Mr. Trump liable for sexual abuse or for forcible touching, which are less serious charges than rape under state law."

The jury did not, and could not, find Trump guilty of a crime. The standard for its verdict was that a "preponderance of the evidence" showed that Carroll's charges were "more likely true than not true," the *Times* explained. A criminal case requires proof "beyond a reasonable doubt."

Because Trump defended himself publicly by calling Carroll's allegations "a complete con job" and "a Hoax and a lie," the jury found him guilty of defamation.

The award for the sexual abuse is \$2.3 million in punitive and compensatory damages and \$2.7 million for the defamation.

Could Trump Get a Fair Trial?

Trump's getting a fair trial was unlikely given what [Dershowitz said](#) about Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's 34-count indictment.

"There's no possibility he can get a fair trial in Manhattan, a borough that went, you know over 80, close to 90 percent against Trump," the Biden-voting law professor said in April:

The case has to be moved to a place like Staten Island or upstate New York, where judges and jurors won't come home to their family and be worried that their family will never talk



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to them again because they're responsible for letting Trump run for president.

Happened to me when I represented Trump in front of the Senate [on impeachment]. Lost many, many of my friends, associates. My wife lost her friends, just because I was perceived as being on Trump's side. (I was not on his side politically.) Imagine if a judge has to face that kind of a pushback — or jurors — so you're never going to get a fair trial in New York City and Manhattan.



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