



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 6, 2012

## Court: Anti-Romney Journalist Beat His Wife

The leftist [Politico](#) reporter [who](#) made racist and sexual remarks about GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney is a wife beater, a court in Maryland has ruled.

Joe Williams, whom the leftist website [Politico](#) fired for the controversial remarks, pleaded guilty to beating his wife, and is not allowed near her, it was reported earlier this week by [FishbowlDC](#), a subsidiary website of [Mediabistro.com](#).



### Wife Beater?

The court order on Williams left no doubt that the writer was in trouble. [FishbowlDC](#) noted:

There's another side to Joe Williams. ... On May 24 of this year, he pled guilty to second degree assault against his ex-wife, paid a \$200 fine and received six months of probation. His probation ends on November 24, 2012.

Other charges he pleaded out include disorderly conduct and affray (i.e. a public order offense that consists of fighting in a public place). His ex-wife, author [Amy Alexander](#), obtained a year long court order against him that began in February, 2012. The pair has two children whom he regularly sees. According to Silver Spring court documents obtained by FishbowlDC, Williams is to abide by the following:

On February 6, 2012, there was a hearing at the District Court in Silver Spring, Md. (pictured above). Case type: Domestic Violence. Plaintiff: Amy Alexander. Defendant: Williams Joseph P Jr. The result was as follows:

COURT ORDERS:  
SHALL NOT ABUSE  
SHALL NOT CONTACT  
SHALL NOT ENTER RESIDENCE  
SHALL STAY AWAY FROM SCHOOL  
SHALL STAY AWAY FROM CHILD CARE PROVIDERS  
CUSTODY

On February 10, 2012 there was a second hearing. Same plaintiff and defendant. The result was as follows:

COURT ORDERS:  
SHALL NOT ABUSE  
SHALL NOT ENTER RESIDENCE  
SURRENDER FIREARMS

Williams said that his wife started the fight, and that he settled the matter quickly in the interest of his autistic son. He also blamed a "right-wing noise machine" for attacking him. [He released](#) this statement to FishbowlDC:



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The facts: Amy Alexander, my ex-wife, confronted me in February when I came to pick up our autistic son for a therapy appointment. My wife accosted me in front of him and I defended myself. In retaliation to my protective order against her, she wrongfully filed charges against me — several days after the incident. In the best interest of my children, and Amy, I chose to avoid an acrimonious, embarrassing trial.

Sadly, this is the latest incident in a difficult post-divorce relationship; I've contacted police and social services several times because of my former spouse's behavior. Most people want above all to keep these matters private; I'm no different.

Yet earlier this week, my former spouse threatened several times to create with a "PR disaster" for me without a clear reason, vowing I "won't work in this town again" if she chose. As a result, the right-wing noise machine decided to add fuel to the fire by publishing half truths taken out of context. ...

Last Monday on the Bill Press Show, I anticipated conservative reporters would come at me again for pointing out their dubious credibility. Unfortunately, they have, proving my larger point: the right-wing noise machine will relentlessly bully anyone who publicly disagrees with their narrow world view.

With this story, they've also crossed the line from questionable reporting into full-blown hack journalism.

## **Attack on the Romneys**

[Politico fired](#) Williams after [he called](#) GOP contender Romney a racist. Williams did use code, [dog-whistling](#) to the audience of MSNBC's [Martin Bashir](#). [Bashir was discussing](#) the many times the Romneys have appeared on Fox, suggesting the candidate appears on the network because it is ideologically friendly. Williams agreed that Romney is comfortable on the network, adding that Romney's appearances on Fox are the only ones that seem to be unscripted. "It's the only time they let Mitt off the leash," [he remarked](#).

[Williams](#), who is black, then brought up the subject of racial politics, noting that while Romney can't relate to the common man, he is "very very comfortable, it seems, with people who are like him. ... When he comes on *Fox and Friends*, they're like him, they're white folks who are very much relaxed in their own company."

Williams tweeted about a variety of topics, most notably those he perceived as racist. He told a penis joke involving Ann Romney, the candidate's wife, according to [BigJournalism.com](#).

[He also called NASCAR](#) a racist organization, and accused his own employer of racial bias. On March 30, the [Daily Caller reported](#), he tweeted thusly: "What's most irritating is the overlay of blatant racism. that's the secret sauce in the Politico s\*\*\*burger."

The Twitter account [was deleted](#) after Williams' remarks surfaced.

## **Williams Fired**

It wasn't long before Williams' career at Politico was over. First, [the publication suspended](#) him, and founding editors John Harris and Jim VandeHei wrote:

Regrettably, an unacceptable number of Joe Williams' public statements on cable and Twitter have called into question his commitment to this responsibility.



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His comment about Governor Romney earlier today on MSNBC fell short of our standards for fairness and judgment in an especially unfortunate way.”

Joe has acknowledged that his appearance reflected a poor choice of words. This appearance came in the context of other remarks on Twitter that, cumulatively, require us to make clear that our standards are serious, and so are the consequences for disregarding them. This is true for all POLITICO journalists, including an experienced and well-respected voice like Joe Williams.

Following discussion of this matter with editors, Joe has been suspended while we review the matter.

[Harris and VandeHei emphasized](#) that “POLITICO journalists have a clear and inflexible responsibility to cover politics fairly and free of partisan bias.”

After that review, [Williams](#) was fired by Politico. “After some cordial discussions, Joe Williams and I mutually decided that the best step for him is to begin a transition to the next phase of his career,” [Harris explained](#), adding:

Joe is an experienced and respected journalist, with keen insights into politics. After nearly 30 years in the business, he has the authority and is ready to give voice to his insights and conclusions in a new setting.

Politico reported that Williams had this to say about his firing: “While I’m disappointed at the circumstances of my departure, I’m grateful to John Harris for giving me an opportunity to work with him at Politico.”



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