

Did Zina Bash Flash a White Supremacist Sign During Kavanaugh Hearing? Husband Calls Accusation a ‘Vicious Conspiracy Theory’

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September 5, 2018

The husband of Republican attorney Zina Bash has condemned those spreading a "vicious conspiracy theory" that his wife had made a white supremacist gesture with one of her hands as she sat behind Supreme Court nominee [Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing on Tuesday](#).

Throughout the hours-long hearing, Bash was one of many who could be seen occasionally changing positions while seated.

Being seated directly behind Kavanaugh, however, the attorney was featured on camera throughout the proceedings and at some point, came under the scrutiny of a number of prominent Twitter users after she appeared to make an "OK" sign with one her hands while crossing her arms.

Twitter personalities and accounts including Eugene Gu, Amy Siskind and the Palmer Report accused Bash of having flashed a "white power" symbol, with Siskind writing: "If you watch the video you'll see she held it in place for a long time. It's not a natural resting position."

John Bash, the U.S. attorney for Western Texas, called the accusations against his wife "repulsive," writing: "Zina is Mexican on her mother's side and Jewish on her father's side. She was born in Mexico. Her grandparents were Holocaust survivors."

"We of course have nothing to do with hate groups, which aim to terrorize and demean other people—never have and never would," he said.

"Everyone tweeting this vicious conspiracy theory should be ashamed of themselves," John Bash wrote. "We weren't even familiar with the hateful symbol being attributed to her for the random way she rested her hand during a long hearing."

Hate symbol or hoax?

In fact, the "OK" hand gesture, which sees the thumb and forefinger form a circle, with the remaining three fingers held up, is not considered a hate symbol by groups like the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which has said that the notion that the gesture could be considered a white supremacist symbol was born out of a hoax.

The ADL has attributed the hoax to members of the notorious website 4chan, an anonymous discussion board with what the ADL calls "an outsized cultural impact on the Internet."



The 'OK' gesture is not considered a hate symbol by the Anti-Defamation League, which says its connection to white supremacy was born out of a hoax.

"There is little that 4channers like so much as a hoax and in recent months they have served up a number of fakeries with white supremacist themes to largely credulous online audiences," the ADL said in a May 1, 2017 post seeking to debunk conspiracy theories, titled "No, the 'OK' gesture is not a hate symbol."

The "OK" hand gesture's association with white supremacy began in February 2017, according to the ADL, when an anonymous "4chan" announced "Operation O-KKK," calling on other members to "flood Twitter and other social media websites...claiming that the OK hand sign is a symbol of white supremacy."

The user also provided a graphic showing how the letters WP, standing for "white power" could be traced within an "OK" gesture, according to the ADL.

Trolling liberals

While the symbol began as a hoax, Senior Research Fellow at the ADL's Center on Extremism Mark Pitcavage has acknowledged that the gesture has since "evolved into a symbol used by the alt-right (and occasionally, other white supremacists), the alt lite, and also various MAGA-type Trump supporters."

However, he said that "most still use it to troll" or "to 'own the libs'."

In fact, 4chaner who started the initial hoax apparently sought to target "leftists" with the hoax, in a bid to fool them into believing that that the "OK" hand gesture was a white supremacist symbol.

"Leftists have dug so deep down into their lunacy," the user wrote, "We must force [them] to dig more, until the rest of society ain't going anywhere near that s***."

In Bash's case, it appears hoaxers may have succeeded, with many continuing to spread the accusation that the attorney made a "white supremacist" symbol on social media.

Many who know Bash have also taken to Twitter, however, to come to her defense and condemn the "hateful" claims.

"My friend Zina Bash, whose father is a Polish-American Jew (whose parents escaped the Holocaust and mother immigrated from Mexico is not a white supremacist Senior Fellow in Constitutional Studies at The Cato Institute, Ilya Shapiro, wrote on Twitter.

CNN political commentator Alice Stewart also weighed in, writing: "To all of you hateful people saying hateful things about my intelligent, kind, dedicated and beautiful friend, Zina Bash, you would be ashamed for saying that if you were fortunate enough to know her."