

Huffington Post, AOL face lawsuit from blogger

12 April 2011, By BARBARA ORTUTAY , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- A blogger and labor activist has filed a lawsuit against AOL and the Huffington Post for not paying freelance bloggers while benefiting financially from the content they create.

Jonathan Tasini's suit, filed Tuesday, seeks class-action status on behalf of more than 9,000 writers and other [content providers](#) and asks for at least \$105 million in damages.

The suit names Huffington Post co-founders [Arianna Huffington](#) and Kenneth Lerer as defendants. AOL bought the Huffington Post for \$315 million last month, which Tasini said prompted the lawsuit.

The suit claims the Huffington Post has been "unjustly enriched" by luring contributors with the prospect of exposure but keeping the financial gain from their articles.

AOL said the lawsuit is without merit.

"As we've said before, our bloggers use our platform - as well as other unpaid group blogs across the web - to connect and help their work be seen by as many people as possible," said [AOL](#) spokesman Mario Ruiz in a statement. "It's the same reason hundreds of people go on TV shows to promote their views and ideas. HuffPost bloggers can cross-post their work on other sites, including their own."

But Tasini's lawsuit claims that the Huffington Post sets an "artificially low price" on the content its unpaid contributors create by not sharing the profits it brings, "depressing the market for such content."

Tasini started blogging for the [Huffington Post](#) in 2005 and stopped in early 2010. His lawsuit says he created 216 pieces of content for the website.

The suit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the

Southern District of New York.

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