

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

FILED

JAN 20 2022

JOHN T. FREY
Clerk of the Circuit Court
of Fairfax County, VA

John C. Depp, II,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.)
)
 Amber Laura Heard,)
)
 Defendant.)
)
 _____)

Civil Action No.: CL-2019-0002911

[UNDER SEAL]

PLAINTIFF JOHN C. DEPP, II'S OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANT AMBER LAURA HEARD'S MOTION TO COMPEL PRODUCTION OF PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL DEVICES AND OPERATING SYSTEM DRIVES AND CLOUD BACKUPS OF THESE ORIGINAL DEVICES AS REQUESTED IN DEFENDANT AND COUNTERCLAIM-PLAINTIFF'S 14TH, 15TH, AND 16TH REQUESTS FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

This Motion represents nothing more than an improper attempt by Ms. Heard and her counsel to retaliate against Mr. Depp for obtaining a limited forensic imaging of Ms. Heard's devices. Ms. Heard has now filed two motions for a forensic imaging of Mr. Depp's devices, and has twice failed to articulate any nexus between her demand for an imaging and the issues in this case. That is because there is none. The Motion was filed for an improper purpose and lacks any valid basis. The Court should deny the Motion and award fees.

I. The Motion Is a Continuation of Ms. Heard's Improper "Tit for Tat" Tactics

Proving this is more about tit for tat than trial preparation, Ms. Heard's motion marks her second attempt to obtain discovery that she has previously argued she does not even need. "*Ms. Heard is not requesting devices be ordered for forensic and then third party review unless the Court holds that Mr. Depp is permitted that access to Ms. Heard's devices.*" (Exhibit 1, p. 5). So argued Ms. Heard this past October, when Mr. Depp sought a forensic imaging of Ms. Heard's devices to explore one of the essential theories of his case (that Ms. Heard had manufactured false photographic and other evidence of abuse). In other words, Ms. Heard openly argued that she did not need a forensic imaging in this case – but that she wanted Mr. Depp to have to do whatever she had to do.

The Court granted (in part) Mr. Depp's motion in October, requiring a forensic imaging of certain categories of photographs relevant to Ms. Heard's alleged injuries, and finding that there was a legitimate nexus between that limited forensic review and the issues, since Mr. Depp contends that Ms. Heard's photographic evidence of abuse is staged or otherwise manufactured. At the same hearing, the Court *denied* Ms. Heard's Cross-Motion to make that order mutual, because Ms. Heard had not established a nexus between Mr. Depp's devices and the issues:

THE COURT: In this matter as far as mutuality goes, because it's ordered in one case for one side, I'm -- I'm going to deny that request at this time. There

still has to be a nexus shown when -- when you're asking for those types of items in discovery. (Exhibit 2, p. 68, emphasis added).

Shortly after arguing to the Court that it was unnecessary for either party to have their devices imaged, Ms. Heard served her 14th-16th RFPs on Mr. Depp, all of which, as framed in this *de facto* motion for reconsideration, boil down to a demand for a forensic imaging of virtually the entirety of Mr. Depp's devices, as well as the devices of certain nonparties that happen to be in possession of Mr. Depp's attorneys. Ms. Heard offers only flimsy pretexts for seeking discovery that she very recently described as "unnecessary," "scorched-earth," "extraordinary," and "far beyond what the Virginia Rules allow." (Exhibit 1). The Court should put an end to these brazen "tit for tat" tactics.¹ Enough is enough.

II. Ms. Heard Has Not Even Attempted To Establish a Nexus Between the Imaging She Seeks and The Issues in This Case

The law is clear that forensic imaging ought not be ordered absent a nexus between the issues in the litigation and the devices to be imaged. Ms. Heard fails to establish any such nexus.

Genworth Financial Wealth Management, Inc. v. McMullan, 267 F.R.D. 443, (D. Conn. 2010):

"Courts have been cautious in requiring the mirror imaging of computers where the request is extremely broad in nature and the connection between the computers and the claims in the lawsuit are unduly vague or unsubstantiated in nature. For example, a party may not inspect the physical hard drives of a computer merely because the party wants to search for additional documents responsive to the party's document requests."

Conversely, "in cases where a defendant allegedly used the computer itself to commit the wrong that is the subject of the lawsuit," a forensic imaging may be appropriate. *Id.* In this case,

¹ This is far from the first time that Ms. Heard has sought openly retaliatory discovery. After Mr. Depp sought discovery into her alleged charitable donations from the parties' divorce settlement, Ms. Heard sought discovery into all of Mr. Depp's charitable donations. When Mr. Depp sought an IME of Ms. Heard, Ms. Heard turned around and filed a cross motion for an IME of Mr. Depp. When Mr. Depp previously sought a forensic imaging, Ms. Heard filed a cross motion in which, she argued that the relief sought was unnecessary, but should be ordered mutually. At the recent hearing on Mr. Depp's Eleventh and Twelfth RFPs, Ms. Heard spent considerable time arguing that the Court should make the order on Mr. Depp's RFPs mutual.

there was a very simple, straightforward reason that Mr. Depp sought a partial forensic imaging of Ms. Heard's devices, and the Court granted Mr. Depp's Motion – Mr. Depp contends that Ms. Heard did, in fact, use her devices to perpetrate her lies. The authenticity and veracity of Ms. Heard's photographic evidence of alleged "abuse" is at the core of her case, and Mr. Depp is contending that Ms. Heard literally manufactured her evidence, either through staging photos, digitally manipulating them, or both.² A forensic inspection of the devices and photographs to test that theory was therefore appropriate.

But the same logic does not apply in reverse. Ms. Heard is *not* contending that Mr. Depp manufactured evidence of the injuries he suffered at her hands. Indeed, *Ms. Heard does not deny* that Mr. Depp suffered a serious injury when she partially severed his finger in Australia; she merely claims (falsely) that he actually did it to himself. Similarly, *Ms. Heard does not deny* that Mr. Depp suffered an injury from an incident when she put out a cigarette on Mr. Depp's face; she merely claims (again, falsely) that he actually did it to himself.³ Given the nature of Ms. Heard's allegations, there is no reason why she should ask for a forensic imaging of photographs depicting those injuries. There is no nexus between this Motion and the issues.

III. Ms. Heard's Manufactured Complaints about Mr. Depp's Document Productions Are Utterly Bogus

Unable to point to a nexus between this Motion and the issues, Ms. Heard resorts to a shockingly misleading argument that there are supposed problems with Mr. Depp's document production, which Ms. Heard attempts to characterize as evidence of manipulation. *See* Heard Motion at 1-3. Not so. As to the six audio recordings cited in her Motion, Ms. Heard's only "evidence" of purported manipulation is that she thinks the recordings must be "partial" because

² Indeed, a number of Ms. Heard's photographs were run through a photo editing program.

³ Ms. Heard testified to that effect with respect to both Mr. Depp's finger injury and the cigarette burn on his face in her recent deposition.

they “begin and end in the middle of a sentence.” *See Id.* at 2. First, Ms. Heard’s assertion that they all “begin and end in the middle of a sentence” is wrong as to three of the recordings she cites. Second, and more importantly, starting or ending mid-sentence does not suggest manipulation – *it simply suggests that that is when Mr. Depp or Ms. Heard hit the record button.* Ms. Heard also argues that data for two of the recordings (DEPP9046 and 9047) indicate the recordings were created in September 2015 and then “modified” twice: in June 2016 and one day before production in this case (August 13, 2020), and claims that this is evidence of manipulation by Mr. Depp.⁴ Again, these are outrageously disingenuous arguments. As experienced litigators such as Ms. Heard’s attorneys well know, when a file is copied or transferred from one digital location to another, that establishes a new “Creation Date” and/or “Modified Date.” *See* Ex. 3 (Neumeister Declaration). *Even Ms. Heard’s counsel previously acknowledged this uncontroversial fact*, acknowledging at oral argument before this Court: “But if you, you know, make a copy of a photo on your phone and send it, then that can show up in the metadata as it’s been somehow manipulated when it hasn’t been.” *See* Ex. 2 at 24:4-7.

As Ms. Heard well knows, the existence of these creation dates or modification dates is not evidence of manipulation, but merely evidence of the fact that the recordings were transferred from client to counsel and produced in litigation. Mr. Depp has confirmed again that the recordings produced were not edited, but have been reproduced in this action in the same form that they were previously produced in the UK.⁵ *See*, Ex. 4 (Rich Declaration). Establishment of new Creation Dates caused by transferring or copying of files is incredibly common in discovery – and many of Ms. Heard’s documents have the same issue.

⁴ *One of the clips appears to be a portion of another recording that is believed to have been used in Ms. Heard’s deposition in the divorce action. Ms. Heard already has both.*

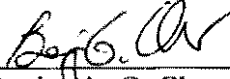
⁵ Mr. Depp is also working to confirm that there are no other relevant recordings that have not been produced.

Ms. Heard's attempt to manufacture a complaint about photographs produced by Mr. Depp fares no better. She cites to two photos (DEPP7303 and DEPP9916) showing Mr. Depp lying on a hospital bed following his finger injury in Australia and argues they have "Creation Dates" in 2019 and 2020 when the incident occurred in 2015. *See* Heard Brief at 2-3. Once again, all that means is that the photos were transferred between different locations on those dates – reflecting a transfer to counsel, and production in litigation. There is no evidence whatsoever that Mr. Depp manipulated any photos (*unlike Ms. Heard's photos where there was evidence that they had actually passed through a photo editing program*). And as noted above, the existence of Mr. Depp's injuries and the date they occurred are **not** in dispute. Ms. Heard and her counsel should have known better than to raise these arguments, which cannot withstand even brief scrutiny, and are merely a thin pretext to bring a retaliatory motion.

IV. Ms. Heard's Requests Are Grossly Overbroad

Ms. Heard is seeking full-scale forensic imaging of numerous devices (*including devices that do not even belong to Mr. Depp, but third parties to this litigation*). Her requests are grossly overbroad, have no nexus to the issues, and far exceed what the Court ordered against her. For instance, Ms. Heard has not even attempted to justify her demand for every single piece of multimedia featuring Mr. Depp or multiple identified properties for a nearly four-year period. Nor has she shown why these requests warrant the full forensic imaging she claims is necessary, arguing only "Ms. Heard is entitled to all multimedia of Mr. Depp, just as Mr. Depp compelled from Ms. Heard." *See* Heard Motion at 3-4. But Ms. Heard is asking for far more than Mr. Depp received (Mr. Depp received only photos of Ms. Heard during the specified time periods when she was supposed to have suffered serious injuries), and, unlike Mr. Depp, has not articulated a reason that a forensic imaging is necessary. The parties are not similarly situated.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: January 19, 2022

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

JOHN C. DEPP, II,

Plaintiff and Counterclaim-Defendant,

v.

AMBER LAURA HEARD,

Defendant and Counterclaim-Plaintiff.

Civil Action No.: CL-2019-0002911

FILED
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JOHN T. FREY
CLERK, CIRCUIT COURT
FAIRFAX, VA

**DEFENDANT AND COUNTERCLAIM-PLAINTIFF AMBER
LAURA HEARD'S MEMORANDUM SUPPORTING CROSS MOTION TO COMPEL
MR. DEPP'S PRODUCTION OF FORENSIC EVIDENCE AND FOR SANCTIONS**

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SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT & BACKGROUND

I. Discovery Requests Served by Ms. Heard

On July 24, 2020, Ms. Heard requested Mr. Depp produce all “videos, photographs, audio recordings, and transcripts relating in any manner to the claims or defenses in this litigation, including all metadata and original source information.” **Att. 1**, Request No. 8. On September 14, 2020, the Court entered a Consent Order - agreed to by Mr. Depp to resolve before Court hearing - requiring Mr. Depp to produce these documents. **Att. 2**. Yet Mr. Depp has inexplicably refused to comply.

Then on August 3, 2021, Ms. Heard served a Request for Mr. Depp to produce the devices and ESI specifically identified by Mr. Depp in an interrogatory response as all relevant devices and ESI in his possession, custody, and control for inspection and copying, including an iPhone, iPad, MacBook Pro, iCloud account, and devices and data belonging to Stephen Deuters and Nathan Holmes. **Att. 5**, Request 7. Yet despite Mr. Depp being unable to plausibly contend these devices are irrelevant based on his own sworn interrogatory response, Mr. Depp still asserted his usual gamut of boilerplate objections, and refused to produce any of the devices or ESI for inspection and copying, *id.*, yet is demanding all of this from Ms. Heard in his Motion.

II. Relief and Alternative Relief Sought by Ms. Heard

Unlike Mr. Depp, Ms. Heard only initially seeks the production of computer forensic evidence for specifically identified documents and for specifically identified, evidentiary-supported reasons. Ms. Heard does not seek to burden the parties with the extensive, expensive, and unlimited full-scale forensic review proposed by Mr. Depp, followed by paying a third-party to review every single email, text message, and photograph that exists on any of the parties’ devices over a seven-year period, regardless of whether any such documents were requested,

objected to, ruled on previously by the Court, subject to the attorney client and work product privileges, containing private, sensitive and confidential information, or even whether relevant to this proceeding. In this Cross-Motion, Ms. Heard initially seeks the following relief:

- The full and complete audio recordings previously produced as DEPP8271 and DEPP17814, which are conversations Mr. Depp recorded between Mr. Depp and Ms. Heard. The transcripts of the two partial recordings are attached as **Att. 3**. The produced recordings were only portions of the conversations, although the Court Order required production of all recordings, including the full recordings. Mr. Depp should produce these full audio recordings in native form with all associated metadata, along with an excerpt of the forensic image of both the full and previously produced partial recordings. Because these were required to be produced under Court Order, **Att. 2**, and were not, Ms. Heard seeks sanctions for the willful contempt of the Court Order as well.
- Ms. Heard seeks the native versions, all metadata, and portions of the forensic images of all devices containing any evidence Mr. Depp contends support his allegations that he was abused or suffered any injuries as a result of any such abuse, so she may forensically test this multimedia. Throughout this case, Mr. Depp has falsely alleged Ms. Heard committed domestic violence against Mr. Depp, as opposed to the reality of Mr. Depp repeatedly abusing Ms. Heard, and contends that this falsely alleged abuse “is documented” by photographs and other evidence. *See, e.g., Att. 4.*

These requests are sufficiently specific and narrowly tailored, and should have been produced long ago, in response to discovery requests and Court Order. In spite of multiple requests by Ms. Heard’s counsel to Mr. Depp’s counsel, Mr. Depp has simply refused to respond or explain why the full recordings have not been produced.

Mr. Depp simultaneously seeks to have Ms. Heard produce all her original electronic devices over a seven-year period. As will be addressed fully in Ms. Heard’s Opposition to Mr. Depp’s Motion, there is no basis in Virginia law for such an unduly burdensome and unlimited request, and is nothing but an unbridled, harassing wild goose chase, designed to supplant our discovery process, the Rules of the Virginia Supreme Court, and the Court’s myriad of prior Orders denying Mr. Depp’s pursuit of many of these documents.

Should the Court grant all or part of Mr. Depp’s Motion, however, Ms. Heard

respectfully requests that any Court Order be applied mutually. There would be no reason to provide Mr. Depp unfettered access into Ms. Heard's electronic devices, while not providing Ms. Heard the same. Indeed, Mr. Depp admitted that these issues are "mutual," and Mr. Depp would agree to produce images of his devices and ESI if the parties reach an agreement on timeframe and subject matter (of if this Court so rules). While Ms. Heard does not believe either side should be allowed such access, fundamental fairness would require the parties be treated equally.

ARGUMENT

I. Mr. Depp Should Be Re-Ordered to Produce Complete Recordings in Native Form, All Metadata, and Portions of the Forensic Images of all Previously Produced Partial Recordings, and Should be Sanctioned for his Contempt of the Court's Prior Orders

DEPP8271 and DEPP17814 are selected excerpts of recorded communications between Mr. Depp and Ms. Heard recorded by Mr. Depp, and the full recordings should have been produced long ago. As reflected in the transcripts of both these recordings, the conversations begin in the middle of a sentence, and abruptly cut off. **Att. 3.** Mr. Depp cannot cherry-pick his production, or selectively produce portions of a recording, especially where he is under Court Order to produce the full recordings. Ms. Heard is entitled, as Ordered by the Court, **Att. 2,** to receive the full recordings in native form with all associated metadata,¹ along with an excerpt of the forensic image of both the full and previously produced partial recordings.

These recordings should have been produced over a year ago, under the Court's September 14, 2020 Order. **Att. 2.** And, in spite of multiple follow up requests, Mr. Depp has simply ignored and refused to respond to all requests to produce the full recordings. The "degree

¹ Mr. Depp has already produced the metadata fields of Date Sent, Time Sent, Date Last Modified, File Name, File Extension, SHA1 Hash, and File Path for the partially produced recordings, and should produce the same for the full recordings, along with producing any additional associated metadata for both the partial and full recordings.

of punishment for contempt is within the sound discretion of the trial court.” *Mihnovets v. Mihnovets*, 2004 Va. App. LEXIS 410, at *15 (Va. Ct. App. Aug. 31, 2004); *Arvin, Inc. v. Sony Corp. of America*, 215 Va. 704, 705 (1975) (*per curiam*) (The punishment is “adapted to what is necessary to afford the injured party remedial relief for the injury or damage done by the violation.”). Ms. Heard should not have had to bring this Motion to obtain these full audio recordings, especially where Mr. Depp has been under Court Order for a year to produce them, it is obvious these are partial recordings, and counsel for Ms. Heard has made multiple follow up requests, only to be completely ignored. Under the circumstances, Ms. Heard should be awarded her attorney’s fees and costs. *Arvin*, 215 Va. at 705 (“The punishment may include “attorney’s fees incurred in the investigation and prosecution of the contempt proceedings.”); *Mayfield v. Southern Ry.*, 31 Va. Cir. 229, 236 (Richmond 1993) (“Where, as here, a litigant deliberately withholds relevant information in the face of a clear, direct, and unambiguous request for such information, sanctions not only should, but must, be awarded.”).

II. Ms. Heard Further Seeks All Native Versions, Metadata, and Portions of Forensic Images of all Documents and Multimedia Mr. Depp Contends Show Any Abuse by Ms. Heard

Attempting to change reality, Mr. Depp falsely alleges Ms. Heard committed domestic violence against him, and has produced “photographs” to demonstrate this alleged abuse. *See, e.g., Att. 4; see also Compl.*, ¶¶ 24-31. But these photographs, produced by Mr. Depp as DEPP11757-59 and DEPP11814, are in PDF format, contain no original metadata, and do not allow Ms. Heard to review their authenticity. *Id.* Therefore, Ms. Heard seeks the native versions, all metadata, and portions of the forensic images of all devices containing any evidence that Mr. Depp contends support his allegations that he was abused or suffered any injuries, including but not limited to DEPP11757-59 and DEPP11814, so that she may forensically test this specifically identified multimedia for authenticity and manipulation.

III. In the Alternative, if the Court Grants Mr. Depp's Motion to Compel, Any Ruling Should Apply Equally to Ms. Heard's Cross Motion to Compel

For the reasons stated in Ms. Heard's Opposition to Mr. Depp's Motion, Ms. Heard maintains that the relief sought by Mr. Depp is wildly overbroad, unduly burdensome, and would require significant unnecessary and unwarranted expense for Ms. Heard. Contrary to Mr. Depp, Ms. Heard only initially seeks the very specific forensic evidence for the specific reasons identified in this Motion. *Albertson v. Albertson*, 73 Va. Cir. 94, 100-02 (Fairfax 2007) (MacKay, J.) ("unfettered access to Plaintiff's computer files would be improper" and unduly burdensome, and instead identifying three specific categories for forensic review).

But in the alternative, if the Court grants all or part of Mr. Depp's Motion, Ms. Heard respectfully requests that any Order entered by the Court be applied mutually to both parties, as Ms. Heard also requested that Mr. Depp produce his identified devices. **Atts. 5-6**. Yet Mr. Depp refused to produce the devices or ESI for inspection and copying, even though he simultaneously seeks these very same from Ms. Heard, but without any specificity whatsoever. Id.

Ms. Heard is not requesting devices be ordered for forensic and then third party review unless the Court holds that Mr. Depp is permitted that access to Ms. Heard's devices. Mr. Depp agreed during the meet and confer call that the issues are mutual, and confirmed this position in his own Motion. *Memo*, at 3 ("Mr. Depp's counsel proposed a procedure...whereby *the parties each* proffer the Requested Material for forensic imaging; negotiate parameters for the extraction of relevant data; and jointly select a neutral attorney to oversee the process") (emphasis added). Surely Mr. Depp cannot reasonably object to such an Order applying mutually to both parties.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, Defendant and Counterclaim-Plaintiff Amber Laura Heard respectfully requests that the Court grant the Motion and the relief requested herein.

October 15, 2021

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on this 15th day of October, 2021, a copy of the foregoing was served by email, by agreement of the parties, addressed as follows:

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V I R G I N I A:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

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JOHN C. DEPP, II, :

Plaintiff, :

v. : Civil Action No.

AMBER LAURA HEARD, : CL-2019-0002911

Defendant. :

- - - - -x

HEARING Before the Honorable

JUDGE PENNEY AZCARATE

Fairfax, Virginia

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Job No.: 405663

Pages: 1 - 82

Transcribed By: Alicia Greenland

1 HEARING Before the Honorable JUDGE PENNEY
2 AZCARATE, held at the offices of:

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FAIRFAX COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

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Pursuant to agreement, before Miles Tag, Notary

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Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

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A P P E A R A N C E S C O N T I N U E D

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C O N T E N T S

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E X H I B I T S

(No exhibits marked or admitted.)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

THE COURT: All right. Good morning.

MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Good morning, your Honor.

MR. CHEW: Good morning, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. This matter -- this goes on your motion. Yes, ma'am?

And I -- just for the record, I have read everything that you have sent me.

MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: And we can go from there. Go ahead.

MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: And may I remove my mask?

THE COURT: Yes. Yes.

MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I am fully vaccinated.

THE COURT: Yes, ma'am.

MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you, your Honor.

Good morning, your Honor. Elaine Bredehoft

1 together with Ben Rottenborn and Clarissa Pintado.
2 We represent the defendant and counter-plaintiff,
3 Amber Heard.

4 This is here on our motion for certification
5 of the August 17, 2021 order denying the
6 supplemental plea in bar pursuant to Virginia Code
7 section 8.01-670.1, asking that the Court permit the
8 filing of the petition for appeal to the Virginia
9 Supreme Court on an interlocutory basis.

10 Now, there are several critical points that
11 I think should be noted at the outset after going
12 through the briefs, working through the cases, and
13 everything, that I think are important issues here.

14 The first of them is, this has nothing to do
15 with whether the Court was correct or incorrect on
16 the ruling of the supplemental plea in bar. That is
17 explicitly not a standard in Virginia Code section
18 8.01-67 -- 60 -- 670.1, and how could it be? If
19 that were the case, then every time the Court ruled
20 in some manner, they would say, "No. I got it right
21 so I'm not going to give you the interlocutory
22 appeal." That's not the standard and it's

1 deliberately not the standard.

2 Now, Mr. Depp's counsel does argue that
3 throughout and it's a reoccurring theme throughout
4 the opposition, but, you know, it's more, your
5 Honor, a standard that I would say was an attempt to
6 flatter the Court as opposed to actually argue the
7 professional standards that we need to.

8 Instead, the rule is asking the Court to
9 take a step back from the earlier rulings, review
10 the standards carefully, keep an open mind and
11 ensure that all parties are treated fairly and
12 equally in applying these standards and determine if
13 an interlocutory appeal may be appropriate under the
14 circumstances applying the criteria from 8.01-670.1.

15 Now, there's no -- the second point, the
16 overarching point here, is there is no delay. That
17 is a primary argument as well in the opposition.
18 But not only did Ms. Heard not request a stay, your
19 Honor, but 8.01-271C specifically states there is no
20 stay of the proceedings. We keep going full speed
21 ahead.

22 And if the Court -- the Virginia Supreme

1 Court were to grant the petition, they would have
2 granted it at the end as well and we would have
3 saved all the time in between. So in other words --
4 let me rephrase that.

5 It makes sense to do it now because, if the
6 Virginia Supreme Court believes there is merit, they
7 grant it, they hear it, we get this decided before
8 the trial, and we save ourselves an enormous amount
9 of witnesses, expense, motions, aggressive motions
10 practice, depositions, experts. An enormous amount.
11 Millions of dollars. And that's not an under --
12 that's not an overestimate here.

13 But, if the Court waits and it's appealed
14 after the trial and it's decided --

15 And by the way, here's the other unique
16 situation here. We have an unusual situation here
17 because, as of January 1, the Virginia Court of
18 Appeals becomes the next court on the appeal of
19 right. So after that, we have an appeal of right to
20 the Court of Appeals. Then there's the whole issue
21 of discretionary which is going to cost everybody a
22 lot more and it's going to delay things much more if

1 it's later. So it makes sense.

2 Number three, which I have sort of just gone
3 into, is there was no cost to Depp. Now, when I
4 wrote the initial brief, your Honor, I was thinking
5 that he had to file an opposition to our petition.
6 He does not. I went back and re-read everything and
7 looked at the procedures. We would, within 15 days,
8 file a petition for appeal.

9 There is no opposition. The Court just
10 looks at it, decides whether they're going to grant
11 it or not, and that's the end of it. So there's no
12 downside whatsoever. No cost, no delay. Those are
13 all the things that Mr. Depp is arguing are extreme
14 for why your Honor should deny.

15 The last point is -- and I've already sort
16 of touched on that -- an interlocutory appeal in
17 this case makes sense. It's a very unique, unusual
18 situation. We have a full scale trial that happened
19 in the UK on exactly the same issues; whether
20 Mr. Depp domestically abused Amber Heard. He had
21 his full opportunity there for examination,
22 cross-examination, putting his witnesses on, three

1 weeks of trial. What he urged as, you know, the
2 well-reasoned decision of a judge over just a jury
3 verdict. He had his rights to appeal.

4 And this is important, your Honor, because
5 I'm going to take your Honor through the cases on
6 these and from the Virginia Supreme Court talking
7 about how to consider these.

8 He had all of that in this case and it was
9 found against him on 12 incidents of domestic abuse.
10 Then we come to this case. All we -- and the burden
11 of proof was on The Sun; the defendants, not the
12 plaintiff.

13 Then we come here and we have exactly the
14 same issue; whether Ms. Heard was domestically
15 abused by Mr. Depp. She only needs to prove one
16 time. Not 12. Not 20. Not however many there
17 really were. And the burden of proof is on
18 Mr. Depp. He has to prove that she's lying and that
19 it was not. But that's already the identical issue
20 that was issued in the other case.

21 So Virginia Code section 8.01-670.1 allows
22 for the interlocutory appeal under certain

1 circumstances and these are the certain
2 circumstances, your Honor.

3 Now, I'm going to address the specific
4 standards set out by the legislature under Virginia
5 Code --

6 THE COURT: I'm very familiar with the Code
7 and I know the four factors. All four have to be
8 met.

9 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Okay.

10 THE COURT: Let's go to -- can we just go
11 right to that? Because this is only an hour motion
12 and you only get 30 minutes.

13 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: You know -- and I'm
14 sorry, your Honor. I thought your Honor indicated
15 on Friday that we could have more time if necessary.

16 THE COURT: But nobody --

17 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I may have
18 misunderstood that.

19 THE COURT: Well, but nobody said that
20 they -- nothing was needed, so we're still at an
21 hour is what I was told.

22 MR. CHEW: And a half hour is fine for us,

1 your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Okay.

3 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: And my apologizes.
4 I wrote my -- I re-wrote my outline all weekend
5 long, your Honor, and went in a little more detail.
6 I will try to move it along --

7 THE COURT: Okay.

8 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- but I did -- I
9 did anticipate that I would have more time.

10 THE COURT: Okay.

11 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: And I apologize.

12 THE COURT: All right.

13 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I misunderstood
14 that.

15 THE COURT: Okay. That's fine.

16 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Okay. I will go
17 right away to the substantial grounds of differences
18 of opinion and no clear controlling precedent
19 governs issues of law presented in the supplemental
20 plea in bar.

21 And here's where -- we've combined the two
22 of those, your Honor, and I think it's very, very

1 important that we make certain points on what the
2 case law is from the Virginia Supreme Court and why
3 there is no controlling precedent here.

4 THE COURT: Now, are you talking about
5 comity? Because you did -- you briefed two
6 different ones; the comity and then the non-mutual
7 defense of collateral estoppel. So which one are we
8 talking about now?

9 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you, your
10 Honor. We're going to start with the defensive
11 non-mutual collateral --

12 THE COURT: Okay.

13 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- estoppel.

14 THE COURT: All right.

15 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you for --

16 THE COURT: I just want to make sure. Okay.

17 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- asking for that
18 clarification.

19 I'll take comity at the end of that, your
20 Honor.

21 THE COURT: Okay.

22 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: And I think that's

1 a much briefer argument.

2 THE COURT: Okay.

3 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: The first point on
4 the defensive collateral estoppel --

5 THE COURT: Right.

6 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- is there is no
7 Virginia Supreme Court that's on point with this
8 case. I think we all agree on that now.

9 The plaintiff tried to cite Rawlings and we
10 distinguished that and explained to your Honor why
11 that's not even close. It's not a defensive
12 non-mutual collateral estoppel case. Facts aren't
13 even close. Different parties, different issues.
14 Not a plaintiff who lost and is trying to get on the
15 same facts.

16 Second, the Virginia Supreme Court has made
17 it crystal clear and has never backed off that the
18 principles of collateral estoppel are grounded in
19 public policy and therefore, there will always be
20 exceptions and the Court must always review the
21 application of the principles including mutuality
22 and privity -- and they're very specific on those

1 two -- on a case-by-case basis. They cannot be
2 rigidly or mechanistically applied.

3 We are asking for the Virginia Supreme Court
4 to apply the consistently reserved exception of
5 defensive non-mutual collateral estoppel to this
6 case where Mr. Depp chose his forum. He could have
7 brought the action anywhere in the world because
8 The Sun was a worldwide publication, but he chose
9 England and he chose it because of the burdens of
10 proof and because he perceived that it would be more
11 friendly to him.

12 And he made it clear -- and we've cited it
13 in the briefs so I'm not going to keep repeating it,
14 your Honor. But we made it clear that, even at the
15 last moment when he was faced with sanctions and
16 dismissal, he said he wanted that forum, not -- over
17 this one. He wanted that one because he believed it
18 would be a well-reasoned decision rather than just a
19 jury verdict and that they had mass evidence. Now,
20 it's the exact same issue in both cases. And I've
21 already covered that so I'll keep moving on.

22 Second, there have been two defensive

1 non-mutual collateral estoppel Virginia Supreme
2 Court decisions. Eagle Star and Angstadt. Now,
3 Lane v. Bayview sort of touched on it and I'll cover
4 that in a little bit, but I don't think that that's
5 a genuine defensive collateral estoppel non-mutual.

6 So I'm going to cover the first two of
7 these. And I think it's really important to cover
8 these because these are the most relevant. Eagle
9 Star is tremendously supportive of our position and
10 Angstadt simply does not apply because there are too
11 many differences in the facts.

12 In Eagle Star, Heller was convicted of
13 arson, then turned around and sought insurance
14 coverage for the fire he was convicted of
15 intentionally setting. The Virginia Supreme Court
16 laid significant groundwork for applying exceptions
17 to the general rule on res judicata and collateral
18 estoppel and urged rational thinking when applying
19 the exceptions.

20 Some significant quotes from Eagle Star
21 which have never been overruled and are often quoted
22 by the U.S. Supreme Court as well. Quote, "This is

1 a case in which a rigid adherence to the general
2 rule and to some judicial expressions would be a
3 reproach to the administration of justice."

4 In addressing mutuality, the Court explained
5 the rationale and said, "The rule of exclusion is a
6 shield for the protection of those who have had no
7 opportunity to assert their defense. To apply it
8 here would be to convert it into a sword in the
9 hands of ones who had such an opportunity, to be
10 used by him for the effectuation of the same fraud
11 which had been established, condemned, and punished
12 in the criminal case. If there be a rule which
13 cannot stand the test of reason, it is a bad rule."

14 Applying that here, your Honor, Amber Heard
15 has not had the opportunity to assert her claims,
16 call her witnesses, examine and cross-examine, and
17 appeal. But Mr. Depp has fully utilized all of
18 those tools and he lost. The mutuality exclusion is
19 to protect Amber Heard, not Mr. Depp, after he has
20 fully accessed the system. He is using this case as
21 a sword under the thinking process of the Virginia
22 Supreme Court in Eagle Star.

1 The Court further noted, quote, "We confess
2 our inability to perceive, however, why the accused
3 person himself should not be held either as bound or
4 affected as a result of the prosecution, if adverse
5 to him. He had his day in court, with the
6 opportunity to produce his witnesses, to examine and
7 cross-examine the witnesses for the prosecution, and
8 to appeal from the judgment. So that the chief
9 reason for holding that the plaintiff in a civil
10 case is not bound by the prosecution fails as to the
11 defendant, who has once litigated the identical
12 question and had it adversely decided under
13 conditions most favorable to himself -- that is, in
14 a prosecution in which he could have not have been
15 convicted unless the decisive fact, his guilt, had
16 been shown beyond a reasonable doubt."

17 The Court further explained, quote, "These
18 views are not novel, even if contrary to the general
19 rule of decision, because all of the precedents on
20 the subject are not consistent with the general rule
21 which Mr. Freeman has stated. There are, as he
22 shows, exceptions, limitation and contrary

1 decisions." And it cited on Freeman on judgments
2 for this.

3 Now, applying that here, your Honor,
4 Mr. Depp chose his forum, had more favorable burden
5 of proof, litigated the identical issues here -- his
6 abuse of Amber Heard -- had full discovery, three
7 weeks in court, full examination and
8 cross-examination including of Amber Heard for four
9 days, full opportunity to produce his witnesses,
10 full rights of appeal which he exercised and lost.

11 The Virginia Supreme Court in Eagle Star
12 concluded, "We have gone thus far into the question
13 because we are of opinion that the cases which we
14 have cited and the reasons we have indicated clearly
15 bring this case within an exception to the general
16 rule." We believe the same is true here, your
17 Honor. Eagle Star is still good law.

18 Now, I'm going to address Angstadt because
19 that's the only other non-mutual defensive
20 collateral estoppel case from the Virginia Supreme
21 Court which was still decided 26 years ago. But
22 significantly, Angstadt did not overrule any of the

1 holdings from Eagle Star. Instead, it involved a
2 suit brought in Utah by a man injured from a
3 microwave installation.

4 The defendants, the company, and employee
5 failed to show up for a de bene esse deposition so
6 the Court entered a default judgment in favor of the
7 injured person. The insurance company later brought
8 a declaratory judgment action against the company
9 and employee for failure to cooperate because they
10 did not show up for the depositions.

11 The Virginia Supreme Court, abandoning none
12 of the principles established in Eagle Star and
13 subsequent collateral estoppel cases, held that
14 quote, "None of the requirements for the application
15 of collateral estoppel is met because the identity
16 of the parties is lacking, the factual issues
17 litigated are not identical to the issues sought to
18 be litigated to the present proceeding, and there is
19 no mutuality."

20 With respect to privity, the Court, however,
21 made it clear. Quote, "A determination of who are
22 privies requires a careful examination of the

1 circumstances of each case. Although the defendants
2 and Atlantic may have been privies at the outset of
3 the underlying tort action, a careful examination of
4 the circumstances of the case reveals that their
5 interest ceased to be identical, and instead became
6 adversarial, when Atlantic denied coverage and
7 withdrew its representation of the defendants."

8 So obviously Angstadt, your Honor, was
9 unique. Did not change any of the underlying
10 principles established by the Virginia Supreme Court
11 precedent on collateral estoppel principles.

12 Now, I'm going to address the Virginia
13 Supreme Court cases on defensive mutual collateral
14 estoppel because I think they provide some
15 significant dicta that's helpful here in showing the
16 first two prongs of 8.01-670.1. There are three of
17 them, your Honor; Bates v. Devers, Glasco v.
18 Ballard, and Nero v. Ferris.

19 While Bates v. Devers involves some complex
20 contract claims on mutual collateral estoppel
21 grounds, the Court espoused a number of significant
22 principles and rulings that have carried forth to

1 this day, never overruled, and quoted frequently by
2 the state and federal courts.

3 On res judicata, the Court made clear the
4 entire concept of res judicata and collateral
5 estoppel, quote, "are judicially created doctrines,"
6 end of quote, resting upon, quote, "consideration of
7 public policy which favors certainty in the
8 establishment of legal relations, demand an end to
9 litigation, and seek to prevent the harassment of
10 parties," end of quote.

11 The famous footnote, your Honor, from
12 Bates v. Devers upon which we have relied very
13 heavily as your Honor knows, and as your Honor also
14 knows, many a time in the U.S. Supreme Court and the
15 Virginia Supreme Court, a footnote ends up being the
16 most significant that carries on.

17 It says quote, "The policy underlying
18 mutuality is to insure a litigant that he will have
19 a full and fair day in court on any issue essential
20 to an action in which he is a party. But, as is the
21 case with any other judicial doctrine grounded in
22 public policy, the mutuality doctrine should not be

1 mechanistically applied when it is compellingly
2 clear from the prior record that the party in the
3 subsequent civil action against whom collateral
4 estoppel is asserted has fully and fairly litigated
5 and lost an issue of fact which was essential to the
6 prior judgment."

7 Bates v. Devers also cites Graves and Eagle
8 Star in that footnote.

9 Applying to this situation, your Honor,
10 Mr. Depp has had his full day in court with his
11 well-reasoned decision. It's difficult to
12 conceptualize that the Virginia Supreme Court would
13 not apply the exception here.

14 In Glasco v. Ballard, your Honor, a 1995
15 case, was a case with a patrol officer who was
16 seeking to stop a subject. His brake did not
17 engage. While he was engaging the brake, he
18 accidentally shot the suspect in the neck.

19 The defendant filed claims of excessive
20 force in federal court along with assault and
21 battery and gross negligence. The excessive use of
22 force was dismissed with the Court determining the

1 shooting was accidental. The Court applied
2 collateral estoppel for all the findings except for
3 the gross negligence in that case. In other words,
4 the Court honored and applied the federal court's
5 rulings.

6 In Nero v. Ferris, a 1981 case, this was,
7 again, an unusual case based on the facts. There
8 was an accident in California, the driver left the
9 scene. The Virginia court ultimately found that
10 neither Virginia resident was involved in the
11 California accident, did not recognize a California
12 default judgment.

13 Significantly, the Virginia Supreme Court
14 repeated some important holdings from past cases
15 including that mutuality and privity must be decided
16 on a case-by-case basis and that there are
17 exceptions. And they stated, quote, "But, to be
18 effective, the estoppel of the judgment ordinarily
19 must be mutual. Thus, a litigant is generally
20 prevented from invoking the preclusive force of a
21 judgment unless he would be bound had the prior
22 litigation the issue reached the opposite result."

1 With respect to privity, the Court noted
2 that the plaintiff quote, "misconstrued the concept
3 of privity in the context of these facts," end of
4 quote. And continued on, quote, "There is no fixed
5 definition of privity that automatically can be
6 applied to all cases involving res judicata issues.
7 While privity generally involves a party so
8 identical in interest with another that he
9 represents the same legal right, a determination of
10 just who are privies requires a careful examination
11 into the circumstances of each case," end of quote.

12 The bottom line, your Honor, is that the
13 Virginia Supreme Court cases involving defensive
14 collateral estoppel, whether mutual or non-mutual,
15 urge a case-by-case analysis, not the application of
16 a general rule. And that's important here because
17 the facts in this case do not fit any of the cases
18 that have been decided yet. Instead, they appear to
19 fit most closely with the dicta in the footnote of
20 Bates v. Devers. The Virginia -- we believe the
21 Virginia Supreme Court, your Honor, should be
22 permitted to weigh in on this and determine whether

1 those exceptions apply in this instance.

2 Now, I'm also going to just touch on -- and
3 I recognize your Honor would like me to move along
4 and I'll try to do it as much as I can, but I would
5 like to touch on the offensive non-mutual collateral
6 estoppel cases and the offensive mutual collateral
7 estoppels. But I'll try to make it brief and just
8 go into what's very similar there.

9 We have Norfolk Railroad v. Bailey, we have
10 Selected Risks, we have Godboh, and we have
11 State Farm Auto versus Wright.

12 Now, the Virginia Supreme Court in Bailey
13 made a significant point of distinguishing the
14 circumstances of mass claims, but that was offensive
15 collateral estoppel. Even then, they said quote,
16 "the principles of mutuality, to which there are
17 exceptions," end of quote. In other words, even
18 there, there would be exceptions.

19 Selected Risks, your Honor, I think we
20 covered pretty heavily in our briefs. And given
21 your Honor's desire for me to keep moving, I'm not
22 going to go into significant detail. But I think

1 the most important point that we were trying to make
2 there is it was a four/three decision with two
3 extensive -- well, I mean, extensive in terms of a
4 few pages, but they were significant dissents that
5 were written and they were all discussing in detail
6 all the different aspects that we're discussing in
7 this case, your Honor. About mutuality, about
8 privity, about where you apply it, where you don't,
9 and what the public policy is and what the
10 exceptions are.

11 And it was a four/three which clearly
12 suggests -- it should suggest to this Court that
13 this is not something that has been decided fully
14 and strongly by the Virginia Supreme Court.

15 And this -- remember the Selected Risks was
16 back in 1987. There hasn't been a significant
17 decision on collateral estoppel, much less defensive
18 collateral estoppel, in 26 years.

19 Now, in Godboh v. Brawley, that was another
20 case in a bar with an off-duty deputy serving
21 security detail and a fight occurred. There the
22 issue was whether the assault and battery conviction

1 applied, but what the Court found there was it was
2 not the identical facts so it didn't have an
3 applicability here.

4 On the State Farm v. Wright case, your
5 Honor, the issue was whether the passenger in the
6 vehicle was involved in an accident as a guest. And
7 the significance of that is, if it was a guest, then
8 the standard of proof was a higher standard. It had
9 to be gross negligence. They ended up back and
10 forth.

11 The Virginia Supreme Court ultimately said
12 there was gross negligence, then the plaintiff tried
13 to bring an action against the insurance company.
14 The insurance company tried to defend against it and
15 claimed something inconsistent. And the Court in
16 that instance, even though it wasn't privity and not
17 mutual, applied the rulings from the other.

18 And the Virginia Supreme Court said
19 specifically, "But that in such cases, on the
20 grounds of public policy, the principle of estoppel
21 should be extended, so as to embrace within the
22 estoppel of a judgment persons who are not, strictly

1 speaking, either parties or privies. It is rested
2 upon the wholesome principle which allows every
3 litigant one opportunity to try his case on the
4 merits, but limits him, in the interest of the
5 public, to one such opportunity."

6 Last, your Honor, on these cases, there is
7 Transdullies Centre, but that one really doesn't
8 apply here on facts at all so I'm going to just
9 breeze over that one. I won't discuss it.

10 But in Lane v. Bayview, your Honor, that's
11 the most recent Virginia Supreme Court and that's
12 the 2019 one. And there was -- and I know your
13 Honor addressed that earlier. We've addressed it
14 extensively, but the important part of that one was
15 that the Court specifically addressed the issues of
16 the concept of privity and that's very important in
17 this case, in my view.

18 It said, "Privity centers on the closeness
19 of the relationship in question. Privity as used in
20 the context of res judicata or collateral estoppel,
21 does not embrace relationships between persons or
22 entities, but rather it deals with a person's

1 relationship to the subject matter of the
2 litigation. Whether privity exists is determined on
3 a case-by-case basis of the relationship and
4 interests of the parties." And it cites the Raley
5 case as well. The U.S. -- the Virginia Supreme
6 Court on Raley.

7 So two years ago, your Honor, which is the
8 most recent that the Virginia Supreme Court has
9 addressed any of these concepts, the Virginia
10 Supreme Court has continued to emphasize that the
11 issues of privity and mutuality have to be on a
12 case-by-case basis, have to take public policy into
13 consideration, and cannot be applied rigidly.

14 Now, your Honor, I will move -- I think
15 clearly we meet -- there's no substantial ground --
16 there is substantial ground for difference of
17 opinion and there's no clear controlling precedent
18 on point in the decisions of the Supreme Court of
19 Virginia and I think -- that was my point in going
20 through of all these in detail.

21 It's very important to us and I thought it
22 was important to be able to lay that out. To be

1 able to show that it really does meet the first two.
2 But I will address comity now and I'm going to do so
3 briefly because I don't think I need to do it
4 extensively.

5 The real issue here that I'm understanding
6 from the Court and from our -- even our briefs is
7 that the Virginia Supreme Court has extended UK
8 decisions and judgments in Virginia. There is no
9 case in which they have declined to extend it.

10 The case of Oehl v. Oehl very specifically
11 sets out why they extended in the UK. Then there's
12 a Middleton case which was -- which dealt with a
13 superseding law relating to Uniform Child-Custody
14 Jurisdiction Act and it decided -- there was two
15 cases in Middleton. The first one, what they
16 decided was where was the home state for the
17 children? Where the home state was England, they
18 applied the UK and cited Oehl v. Oehl.

19 THE COURT: And all these cases deal with
20 child custody which makes sense, right? You want to
21 have one child custody order that is universal
22 throughout whichever country you go to. And the

1 Hague Convention and there's discussions about it.

2 It makes sense in a child custody cases.

3 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Absolutely, your
4 Honor. I totally agree with your Honor.

5 So the question then is whether it would be
6 reasonable to ask whether the Virginia Supreme Court
7 would be inclined to extend their philosophy and
8 their logic from Oehl v. Oehl and Middleton where
9 they say, "we are not reluctant to endorse an
10 international deferral to the courts of England
11 because Virginia's jurisprudence is deeply rooted in
12 the ancient precedence, procedures, and practices of
13 the English system of justice." And that's
14 Middleton citing Oehl v. Oehl.

15 So the question here is, is it a fair
16 extension? Would the Virginia Supreme Court be
17 inclined to extend the libel laws -- UK decision on
18 libel to the defamation actions in Virginia? And
19 there is no case that says they would not. And
20 that's very significant here, your Honor. It's
21 clearly something that they -- it is not
22 well-established. It hasn't been addressed. There

1 are no cases in Virginia that refuse to apply the
2 UK. We cited other cases from other jurisdictions
3 that have applied UK including ones that would be
4 more akin to the libel.

5 And let me just address very quickly, your
6 Honor's -- your Honor had indicated the concern I
7 think on the four factors. It's not discretionary
8 and your Honor I think agreed with that and cited
9 that in a footnote and in the opinion letter. But
10 there are four factors. Your Honor addressed the
11 one -- the second factor with respect to discovery.
12 And I think the answer to this one was in our
13 exhibits to the supplemental plea in bar.

14 You can see -- they had 16 months here to
15 conduct discovery. They used all that discovery in
16 the UK and the trial bundle which was Exhibit 1 to
17 the supplemental plea in bar hearing showed how many
18 of the depositions that have been taken in this case
19 were exhibits there. It showed how many of the
20 exhibits had -- were pictures and videos and audios
21 and things that had been produced in this discovery
22 that were used in the UK. Both sides. And so

1 obviously they had ample opportunity for discovery.

2 And the other issue is, the one time they
3 sought discovery with Ms. Heard over in the UK as
4 opposed to in all the ones here, what happened was
5 they had a full hearing and the Court found that
6 their request was overbroad and they hadn't proved
7 that it would lead to the discovery of admissible
8 evidence which is a reasonable and fair decision for
9 them to make.

10 So our argument on that is that this is a
11 perfect opportunity for the Virginia Supreme Court
12 to weigh in on will we extend it beyond child
13 custody matters which was Oehl v. Oehl and
14 Middleton.

15 Now, the next one that I'll go to, your
16 Honor, is determination of the issues will be
17 dispositive of a material aspect of the proceeding
18 currently pending before the Court and it's in the
19 parties' best interest.

20 The dispositive, I think, is an easy call.
21 It's "a material", not "all material". And I think
22 there was a misunderstanding on plaintiff's part

1 when they wrote their opposition that they said,
2 well, wait. There's still going to be at least some
3 aspects of the counterclaim that would go through
4 and, therefore, it doesn't dispose of everything.
5 But the rule says "a material" and we cited a case
6 that relates to that. And clearly it would. If
7 this applied, it would take out his entire complaint
8 which is clearly a material aspect of this.

9 So I will jump to the second part of this,
10 your Honor, and that is in the best interest. And I
11 almost have to go back now to my main points at the
12 very beginning of it. Why would it make sense to
13 deny the request for certification at this point?
14 There's no delay, there's no expense.

15 If the Virginia Supreme Court does not think
16 that this is sufficiently meritorious to grant the
17 petition, it won't and it's going to be appealed at
18 some point. It makes more sense for it to be now
19 than at the end of the case after we've gone through
20 all of this.

21 THE COURT: Which there still will be
22 appeals at the end of the case so I mean, it's

1 not --

2 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Well, yeah.

3 THE COURT: On different issues.

4 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Yeah.

5 THE COURT: You're not saving an appeal.

6 Let's get --

7 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I don't.

8 THE COURT: Let's --

9 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I don't disagree
10 with that at all, your Honor.

11 THE COURT: Let's be realistic about that.
12 Okay.

13 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Yeah.

14 THE COURT: I assume everybody will appeal.
15 Yes.

16 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I completely agree
17 with you, your Honor. Just given the nature of
18 this, there's --

19 THE COURT: Right.

20 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- no question this
21 is such a unique and bizarre --

22 THE COURT: Right.

1 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- case for lack of
2 a better characterization. So I agree with you,
3 but --

4 So there's no downside. And that's what we
5 said in the briefs as well. There isn't a downside
6 to granting it here because we -- we're the only --
7 we write an appeal -- a petition. We have to file
8 it within 15 days. Nobody else does anything.
9 We've got depositions, we've got motions, we've got
10 all kinds of things still moving forward. There's
11 no slow down here at all. Depp doesn't have to do
12 anything.

13 The Virginia Supreme Court, if they pass on
14 it, they'll give us a pretty good sign that it's not
15 worth us pursuing it at the end and we'll have a lot
16 more certainty here and we can move forward with
17 that certainty.

18 You know, some of the things that I thought
19 of, your Honor, in reading all these cases again
20 through the weekend -- I probably read them a
21 hundred times, but one of the things that came out
22 in one of the earlier cases was the problems with

1 jury instructions. And we're going to have a lot of
2 issues with jury instructions given this other case.
3 And it would be nice to have the certainty of where
4 we're going on that. It would be nice for all the
5 parties. It would just make a difference.

6 And we either say, okay. You know, put our
7 heads down and just move forward and that's it, or
8 we say, okay. There is an issue here. Let's let
9 the Virginia Supreme Court address it. They think
10 it has merit. Let's get it done now.

11 I think at the end of the day, your Honor
12 has the opportunity -- this is a very unique case.
13 There's no question about it. It's high profile,
14 it's very unique, but it also, remember, has issues
15 that are very, very unpleasant in this society.
16 Domestic abuse. Significant domestic abuse. And if
17 we can, in some way, get some certainty moving
18 forward, it's worthwhile.

19 The last thing I want to do, your Honor, is
20 address the sanctions motion. I think it's highly
21 inappropriate to be filed here. It's obviously a
22 "best defense is a good offense" and it also is

1 pandering, in my view, to the Court's, you know,
2 trying to -- you know, say, oh, you were right and
3 you know, not only did you, you know, make a
4 touchdown -- I'll use a football analogy -- but now
5 you should spike the football. And that has
6 nothing -- that has no place here.

7 The case that they cited, your Honor -- you
8 know, and we cited the rule 8.01-271.1 and we
9 clearly are asking for an extension and for what we
10 considered to be first impressions. But on top of
11 it, the case they cited was not even remotely close.
12 It was a non-interlocutory appealable order.

13 The Court told them not to do it a second
14 time and if they did, they would sanction them, and
15 then they did sanction them because they brought it
16 again and it wasn't -- it has nothing to do with
17 this case.

18 The most logical thing for us to do is to
19 file this motion. And frankly, your Honor, if your
20 Honor had decided the other way, Mr. Chew would be
21 up here instead of me making the same arguments on
22 his behalf.

1 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, ma'am.

2 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you, your
3 Honor.

4 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Chew?

5 MR. CHEW: Good morning, your Honor. May it
6 please the Court. Ben Chew for plaintiff,
7 Johnny Depp.

8 May I please remove my mask?

9 THE COURT: That's all right. Yes, sir.

10 MR. CHEW: I am double vaccinated.

11 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, sir.

12 MR. CHEW: May I also -- to take care of a
13 housekeeping matter --

14 THE COURT: Sure.

15 MR. CHEW: Mr. Rottenborn and I have reached
16 agreement on a proposed --

17 THE COURT: Okay. Order?

18 MR. CHEW: -- order.

19 THE COURT: From Friday? Sure. Thank you.
20 I'll enter that. Thank you.

21 MR. CHEW: Thank you very much.

22 Good morning, your Honor.

1 The Court should deny Ms. Heard's motion to
2 certify the August 17th, 2021 order for
3 interlocutory appeal. As the Court is aware,
4 Virginia law strongly disfavors interlocutory
5 appeals because they often result in inefficiencies
6 and unnecessary delay and expense as an
7 interlocutory appeal would in this case. If in fact
8 the Supreme Court were to accept it, Mr. Depp would
9 of course be exposed to substantial work and
10 expense.

11 Denial is especially appropriate here where
12 the Court's overruling of Ms. Heard's supplemental
13 plea in bar did not appear to be a close call. The
14 Court's letter opinion at page 10 states as follows:
15 Quote, "Defendant supplemental plea in bar was
16 misguided and only thinly supported by pre-existing
17 law," unquote.

18 It also bears noting that not only did the
19 Court grant Ms. Heard leave to amend her pleadings
20 yet again, to take a third bite at the dismissal
21 apple, allowing her to file her supplemental plea in
22 bar, but the Court also granted her oversize

1 briefing and allowed the parties virtually unlimited
2 time for oral argument on July 22nd, 2021, then took
3 the matter under advisement for almost one month and
4 thereafter issued a scholarly 10-page single-spaced
5 letter opinion citing no fewer than 30 cases from
6 the Virginia Supreme Court.

7 In this context, for Ms. Heard to seek the
8 extraordinary remedy of an interlocutory appeal only
9 a few months away from a trial already delayed
10 several times smacks of frivolity if not disrespect.
11 In applying the standard set forth in Virginia Code
12 section 8.01-670.1, the Court should deny
13 Ms. Heard's improvident motion.

14 As your Honor just stated, the Code provides
15 that leave should only be permitted when the moving
16 party can satisfy all four of the following
17 criteria. Not one or two, or even three, but all
18 four.

19 One, the order must involve a question of
20 law for which there is the substantial ground for a
21 difference of opinion, which is not the case here.

22 Two, there must be no clear controlling

1 precedent in the Supreme Court of Virginia or the
2 Virginia Court of Appeals. Here, the Court cited
3 abundant controlling authority from the Virginia
4 Supreme Court on Virginia's mutuality requirement
5 for collateral estoppel.

6 Three, determinations of the issues must be
7 dispositive of a material aspect of the proceedings
8 of the Court. And this is the only one that's
9 arguably in play. But Ms. -- at least in their
10 moving -- in their moving papers, defendant has
11 conceded that the appeal would not affect
12 Ms. Heard's \$100 million counterclaim so there
13 wouldn't be much efficiency.

14 Four, an interlocutory appeal must be in the
15 best interest of both parties. Clearly, in this
16 case it would not be in Mr. Depp's best interest.

17 Let's start, please, with the requirement
18 that an interlocutory appeal must be -- to be
19 certified, there must be no controlling precedent on
20 point from Virginia's highest courts. Here, the
21 Court's 10-page letter opinion of August 17th, 2021,
22 upon which the August 17th order at issue is based,

1 is chock-full of controlling authority from the
2 Supreme Court of Virginia supporting the Court's
3 order.

4 Indeed, the Court cited and analyzed no
5 fewer than 30 Virginia Supreme Court cases
6 supporting the Court's overruling of Ms. Heard's
7 latest plea in bar, several of which involve
8 collateral estoppel and Virginia's ongoing mutuality
9 requirement.

10 As the Court stated in its letter opinion,
11 quote, "This is not a matter of first impression.
12 It is a matter of stare decisis. Based on the
13 abundance of binding case law, holding mutuality is
14 still a requirement in Virginia, collateral estoppel
15 is not appropriate here," quoting the letter opinion
16 at page 5.

17 That's game over. The existence of that
18 abundant controlling authority should have stopped
19 Ms. Heard and her counsel in their tracks as they
20 knew, prior to filing Ms. Heard's motion to certify,
21 that she could not satisfy this threshold criterion.
22 That this be a case of first impression. It's not.

1 Those sanctions are appropriate under 8.01-271 and
2 necessary to discourage Ms. Heard and her counsel
3 from filing frivolous motions just because they have
4 a third-party insurance carrier footing the bill.
5 That's not the case for Mr. Depp.

6 And neither does Ms. Heard satisfy the next
7 criterion. As her proposed interlocutory appeal
8 presents no question of law as to which there is a
9 substantive grounds for difference of opinion.
10 Again, as the Court concluded on page 10 of its
11 letter opinion of August 17th, defendant's
12 supplemental plea in bar was misguided and only
13 thinly supported by existing law.

14 And Ms. Heard cites nothing new in her
15 motion papers. Not a single new case. Rather, in
16 her opening and reply briefs, and again, here today
17 in oral argument, Ms. Heard re-plows old ground and
18 badly misstates Virginia law.

19 There is, of course, no Bates exception.
20 And as your Honor recognized at page 4 of the letter
21 opinion, since Bates v. Devers in 1974, the Virginia
22 Supreme Court has re-examined the issue of mutuality

1 multiple times and reaffirmed the mutuality
2 requirement as it did 21 years later in Angstadt
3 versus Atlantic Mutual Insurance Company,
4 219 Va. App. 444(1995), where the Supreme Court of
5 Virginia reversed the Trial Court's application of
6 collateral estoppel on the grounds that, as is the
7 case here, there was no mutuality. That's
8 249 Va. App. 444.

9 And the Court dealt with Angstadt also in
10 its letter opinion. Referring the Court to page 4.
11 Find -- quoting at page 4. Finally the Virginia
12 Supreme Court again confirmed the mutuality
13 requirement in Angstadt versus Atlantic Mutual
14 Insurance Company, citation omitted, holding mutual
15 defensive collateral estoppel was inappropriate when
16 the non-mutual party quote, "would not be bound by
17 the prior litigation had the opposite result been
18 reached," unquote.

19 Similarly, in Rawlings versus Lopez,
20 267 Va. App. 4(2004), the Virginia Supreme Court
21 again dealt with the issue of defensive collateral
22 estoppel. The Supreme Court reversed the Trial

1 Court's sustaining of the plea in bar on collateral
2 estoppel and res judicata because, as in Angstadt
3 and in this case, the requisite mutuality was
4 missing.

5 In her reply, and again today, Ms. Heard
6 claims that the Court somehow should have ignored
7 Rawlings because Lopez prevailed as the defendant in
8 the prior action. But Rawlings clearly involved
9 defensive collateral estoppel which applies to any
10 situation where the defendant invokes it in the
11 second case as Ms. Heard did here. And Rawlings,
12 like Angstadt and other Virginia Supreme Court cases
13 cited by the Court, controls here.

14 Rawlings is directly on point because the
15 Supreme Court of Virginia found defensive collateral
16 estoppel did not apply because there was no
17 mutuality and did so even in a case where the
18 factual issues, i.e., whether the defendant in both
19 cases was negligent, were the same.

20 Your Honor, I wanted to address -- well, the
21 Court has already addressed Eagle Star so I will
22 just point the Court to its opinion at page 4

1 spilling over to page 5. And I'm just going to read
2 the topic sentences of each.

3 "However, Eagle Star is an exception to the
4 general rule." And the Court cites additional
5 cases, continues its analysis. Then starting on the
6 first paragraph of the next page, page 5 of the
7 letter opinion, "The case before this Court is
8 markedly different from Eagle Star and Bates." And
9 then the Court continues to explain why it's
10 distinguishable.

11 From there, Ms. Heard's argument becomes
12 even more frivolous, citing two dissenting opinions
13 in a case, Selected Risk Insurance Company 230 --
14 233 Va. App. 260 (1987), that upheld Virginia's
15 mutuality requirement. 233 Va. App. 264 and 265.

16 As to the dissents, I respectfully refer the
17 Court to pages 11 and 12 of Mr. Depp's opposition
18 brief, which I know the Court has read, rather than
19 repeating it.

20 Ms. Bredehoft mentioned comity briefly in
21 Lane v. Bayview. I would just point the Court to
22 its letter opinion, page 3, section A, privity,

1 where it cites Lane v. Bayview and concludes at
2 the end of that section, therefore, given Virginia's
3 narrow construction of privity, defendant and
4 The Sun are not in privity as they clearly weren't.

5 And I will be finishing up quickly.
6 Hopefully ahead of time, your Honor.

7 Concerning comity, the Court correctly
8 exercised its broad discretion finding that
9 enforcing the UK judgment would be contrary to the
10 public policy of Virginia. Again, see the opinion
11 letter at pages 7 through 9, citing Clark,
12 11 Virginia Court of Appeals App. 296 and 297.

13 In any event, Ms. Heard can only cite one
14 Virginia case which recognized a UK judgment under
15 the principles of comity. See her opening motion at
16 pages 10 through 12 citing Oehl v. Oehl,
17 221 Va. 618(1980).

18 And as the Court found in its letter opinion
19 and mentioned briefly today, this case is
20 distinguishable from the present circumstances
21 because it was a domestic law case and made sense in
22 that context. See opinion letter at 9.

1 This case is also distinguishable because
2 comity was applied where there was mutuality of the
3 parties in Oehl v. Oehl, which is not the case here.
4 See Oehl, 221 Va. 618.

5 One highly distinguishable case does not
6 create a substantial ground for differing opinions
7 on whether the UK judgment should have been afforded
8 preclusive effect in this action where the parties
9 to this action and the UK action were not the same
10 or in privity with each other.

11 See opinion letter at 9. Quote, "The Court
12 is hesitant to apply preclusive effect to the UK
13 finding, especially considering defendant was not a
14 party in the UK suit and was not subject to the same
15 discovery requirements in this suit."

16 Moving to the next criterion. Again, we'll
17 rest on our papers on that. We do think that there
18 is a possibility of both expense and delay. This is
19 a case, as your Honor knows, that under ordinary
20 circumstances would have been tried before March 1,
21 2020. We filed it March 1 -- and it's nobody's
22 fault. It was just COVID. But we're now going to

1 be trying the case three years after the case was
2 filed and there is a risk of delay despite what
3 you've heard.

4 Finally, your Honor, Ms. Heard cannot
5 satisfy the fourth conjunctive criterion because the
6 proposed interlocutory appeal would not be
7 dispositive of a material aspect in this case.
8 Ms. Heard's \$100 million counterclaim based on three
9 statements by Mr. Waldman, who is one of Mr. Depp's
10 attorneys, would not be affected by the appeal at
11 all.

12 In a rare, but refreshing acknowledgment of
13 Virginia law, Ms. Heard admits at page 4 of her
14 opening brief that a successful interlocutory appeal
15 would not allow Ms. Heard to use collateral estoppel
16 offensively against Mr. Depp with respect to the
17 counterclaim. So we'd have the same issues coming
18 in at trial whether what Mr. Waldman said was true.
19 Which -- it's kind of circular. It goes back to
20 whether Ms. Heard was lying about her allegations of
21 abuse as she's been found to lie about many other
22 things.

1 In any event, the subject matter of
2 Ms. Heard's counterclaim is so distinct that the
3 appeal would not be dispositive. And so for these
4 reasons, your Honor, we ask that the Court deny,
5 from the bench hopefully, this motion to certify and
6 impose a symbolic \$18,000 in attorneys fees.

7 And in that regard, the Court did not impose
8 sanctions last time, and we totally understand that,
9 but defendant was warned. It was warned when she
10 moved for leave to file the supplemental plea in bar
11 that it might be sanctionable.

12 In the Court's letter opinion, the Court
13 made clear that it was -- I want to get the words
14 right. "Misguided and only thinly supported by
15 pre-existing law." In both of those cases, the
16 Court was applying a more liberal standard. We're
17 now on a standard with these four criterion.

18 And Ms. Bredehoft is right. It's not
19 whether the Court, per se, was correct. Although it
20 was. It's whether each and all of those four
21 criteria were met. And there was no way, in good
22 faith, that Ms. Heard could have argued, for

1 example, that there was no law on point, which is a
2 threshold criterion. They try to gloss over it with
3 impossible and silly distinctions and I think
4 sanctions are appropriate here.

5 Thank you, your Honor.

6 THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

7 Yes, ma'am.

8 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you, your
9 Honor.

10 I listened very carefully to see if I could
11 get answers to the questions that I thought were the
12 most important to bring before the Court today and
13 the first of those was, why wait until the end? I
14 did not hear an answer to that, your Honor, and I
15 think that's a very significant issue before this
16 Court. We're going to know very quickly whether the
17 Court thinks this is of substantial merit or not.
18 With no cost to Mr. Depp, with no delay whatsoever.

19 Mr. Chew argues both that there will be
20 delay and cost, but he doesn't articulate how that
21 could be. Because we file a petition, nothing slows
22 down, nothing is stayed. The only way that the

1 Virginia Supreme Court will -- the only way that it
2 would even grant it is if it decides that it has
3 sufficient merit and then it still doesn't stay the
4 proceedings, your Honor. Under 8.01-671C, still
5 doesn't stay the proceedings. So there's no delay,
6 there's no cost.

7 This is solely an issue of if the Virginia
8 Supreme Court thinks that it makes sense to address
9 the defensive collateral estoppel for the first time
10 in 26 years and extend the footnote from
11 Bates v. Devers and say this is that case. This is
12 the opportunity.

13 And with respect to comity, your Honor --
14 and I want -- I know your Honor is -- that's a very
15 important issue to your Honor and I think that it's
16 important for me to make one additional point on
17 that.

18 With comity, there is no Virginia Supreme
19 Court case that has neglected -- has declined to
20 extend the UK judgment with the exception -- I know
21 your Honor cited Middleton, but that was different
22 because they extended it on the one. The other one,

1 the reason they didn't was because the home on those
2 people was Virginia.

3 THE COURT: But it is also clear that comity
4 is discretionary to the Court.

5 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I actually disagree
6 with that, your Honor. And we cited American -- we
7 cited in our brief, American -- Online I think it
8 is. Hold on a second, your Honor. My apologizes.

9 American Online v. Anonymous Publicly Traded
10 Company on this issue in our reply brief and
11 specifically the Court -- and we cited Oehl v. Oehl,
12 I think, in laying out that this is not -- this is
13 not a matter of discretion for the Court. This is
14 something --

15 And in fact, your Honor, given that there is
16 no case in Virginia that has not applied UK law --
17 and we've asked it several times in our briefs and
18 we asked it again today. For Mr. Depp to cite any
19 case that has rejected the UK decisions or judgment.
20 They -- it doesn't exist.

21 We do have some. Your Honor has made it
22 quite clear those extend to child custody and they

1 make sense. So at a minimum, we're asking for an
2 extension of the existing law of Virginia Supreme
3 Court with no contrary. None whatsoever.

4 So if the Virginia Supreme Court -- and
5 that's my point, your Honor. There's no downside
6 here. If the Virginia Supreme Court thinks this is
7 the time for them to speak to whether they should
8 extend the UK judgments or decisions beyond child
9 custody, this would be the opportunity for them to
10 do it.

11 There's no reason not to do that. And it
12 would be better for us to know that now, in this
13 next month or however long it will take, than to
14 know it after we've gone through the --

15 You know, we're dealing with, you know,
16 probably a hundred witnesses, Your Honor. And I
17 don't think I'm exaggerating at all. Between expert
18 witnesses and the laypersons in here. We're dealing
19 with just an enormous amount deposition de bene
20 esse's because most of these people are in
21 California.

22 We're dealing with just an extensive amount

1 of pretrial in this case. Motions in limine. We're
2 going to have a trial that's at least four weeks.
3 If we can get some certainty on that issue earlier,
4 it's worth it. What is the downside?

5 What I listened to carefully and I got and I
6 wrote it down was the same issues that I started out
7 with here. The first one is cost. There is no cost
8 to Mr. Depp for us to do that.

9 The second is delay. There is no delay.
10 There's no stay so there's negative there.

11 The third is -- and it's what I raised to
12 Your Honor right at the very beginning. It's not
13 about whether your Honor was right. I'm sure your
14 Honor believes that your Honor was right and we're
15 not -- and we absolutely respect this Court and
16 respect the Court's, you know, absolute ability to
17 be able to, you know, make the decisions they make
18 on this. What we're saying is to step back and
19 apply 8.01-670.1 which is different than whether the
20 Court was right. It's whether there are issues
21 here.

22 I thought it was significant that Mr. Chew

1 admitted at the end that it is not about what --
2 whether your Honor was right earlier down the line.
3 I spent a lot of time, your Honor, in this argument
4 and probably to the chagrin of your Honor for having
5 to hear me out on all this. And I apologize for
6 being so lengthy, but I spent a lot of time parsing
7 through every one of those cases on collateral
8 estoppel. And I pulled out the language on all of
9 those to show the Court how truly these issues are
10 still very much unsettled. There is no on point
11 cases.

12 Mr. Chew then cited Angstadt again. And I
13 think he just flat out ignored the fact that I read
14 specifically from Angstadt in my argument and quoted
15 specifically where they say a determination of who
16 are privies requires a careful examination of the
17 circumstances of each case and then went on to
18 discuss those.

19 And then, in that particular case, none of
20 the requirements were met. They didn't have the
21 same parties, they didn't have the same facts, it
22 wasn't the same issues, it wasn't the defensive --

1 none of those things applied and so they didn't
2 overrule anybody. They just said, look. This one
3 just doesn't do it, but we have to have a careful
4 consideration.

5 At the end of the day here, your Honor, this
6 is a very, very significant issue of whether the UK
7 decision should apply under these circumstances.
8 The Virginia Supreme Court has said over and over
9 again that this is public policy. The public policy
10 is to let a litigant have its day in court, but only
11 once and that's why it has urged the application of
12 collateral estoppel and the application of res
13 judicata to be not rigidly applied, not
14 mechanistically -- darn it. I almost made it
15 through the day without it -- applied and on a
16 case-by-case basis.

17 This is the case that Bates v. Devers has
18 described in that footnote and there is no case that
19 is on point with this one. This would be the time
20 for your Honor to allow us to be able to file that
21 petition. And if the Virginia Supreme Court says
22 no, we know the answer to it. If the Virginia

1 Supreme Court says yes, then there is some merit,
2 they do want to speak to it. This is important and
3 there's absolutely no downside to it.

4 Thank you, your Honor.

5 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, ma'am.

6 All right. For an interlocutory appeal to
7 be certified, Virginia Code 8.01-670.1 requires that
8 all four of the statutory criteria in the statute
9 must be met. So what I'm going to do is just go
10 through all four of the requirements for both of the
11 issues before us today.

12 So for defensive non-mutual collateral
13 estoppel, first there has to be a difference in
14 opinion. In this matter, defendant relies on
15 dissenting opinions to demonstrate a difference in
16 opinion regarding the application of non-mutual
17 collateral estoppel.

18 While the existence of dissenting opinions
19 indicates a difference of opinion, it's not
20 necessarily a substantial difference of opinion.
21 There is no difference in jurisprudence of the
22 Commonwealth. The Virginia Supreme Court has

1 decidedly held time and time again that mutuality
2 requirements is still controlling law. So there are
3 grounds for a difference of opinion, but those
4 grounds are not substantial, therefore, the first
5 prong is not met.

6 The second requirement is no clear
7 controlling precedent. As noted in the letter
8 opinion, the Virginia Supreme Court has not
9 retracted the mutuality requirement since its
10 seminal decision in Bates. Virginia has upheld the
11 mutuality requirement in varied factual
12 circumstances as outlined in the letter opinion and
13 in many cases.

14 Notably, the cases defendant relies upon in
15 her motion that potentially dispose of the mutuality
16 requirement are Bates and Selected Risks. But as
17 noted before from the Court, the Bates decision has
18 limited the discussion of mutuality to a single
19 footnote, and then defendant relies upon dissenting
20 opinions in Selected Risks.

21 So considering that no Virginia Supreme
22 Court has abrogated the mutuality requirement and

1 defendant only cites dissenting opinions, therefore,
2 it's clear and controlling precedence regarding
3 defensive non-mutual collateral estoppel mutuality
4 requirement, therefore, the second prong and second
5 requirement has not been met in this matter.

6 As far as determination of issues will be
7 dispositive, the third prong, the resolution of this
8 issue in defendant's favor would not be dispositive.
9 All issues in the case, however, it would be
10 dispositive of material aspect of the proceedings
11 and -- because plaintiff's claims would be precluded
12 which is a material aspect of litigation and so the
13 third prong is met.

14 As to the fourth requirement, parties' best
15 interest, the litigation is not in both parties'
16 best interest. While it is true that plaintiff
17 would save money if this case were dismissed, it
18 also ignores the reality that plaintiff still has an
19 impending claim against them and would not dispose
20 of defendant's counterclaim and thus, plaintiff
21 would still have to spend money defending himself
22 and the litigation would continue, therefore, the

1 certification is not in the best interest of both
2 parties and the fourth prong is not met as to
3 non-mutual collateral estoppel.

4 As to comity, prong one, the difference in
5 opinion, the Court found squarely in the letter
6 opinion that UK law and Virginia law as to libel
7 were significant enough as to deny a request for a
8 comity. Defendant states no new case law in her
9 motion to certify the interlocutory appeal that was
10 not discussed within the letter opinion and
11 defendant has shown no compelling or significant
12 differences in opinion that warrant an interlocutory
13 appeal of a judgment based on comity, which is in
14 the discretion of the Trial Court judge. So the
15 first prong is not met.

16 The second prong, no clear controlling
17 precedent. There are four factors that were
18 discussed in the letter opinion as to whether to
19 grant comity. Defendant claims that comity is
20 appropriate here.

21 Again, the Court believes the defendant
22 ignores settled law that the application of comity

1 is not obligatory and within the sound discretion of
2 the Trial Court. Defendant has not raised any novel
3 issues here. The law in comity is settled and I --
4 the Court had discussed all four comity factors in
5 detail in letter opinion. I won't go into them
6 here. So the second prong is not met.

7 As to the third prong, the same
8 determination as with non-mutual collateral
9 estoppel. The determination of the issues would be
10 dispositive in this matter, so that is met.

11 As to the fourth prong, again, for the same
12 reasons. It's not in both the parties' best
13 interest, therefore, I'll deny the motion for -- to
14 certify the interlocutory appeal on both counts.

15 As to sanctions, again, as noted in letter
16 opinion, there is dissenting opinions from Virginia
17 Supreme Court justices that have arguably called the
18 mutuality requirement into question. It's obviously
19 not the strongest argument, but it is an argument
20 that is grounded in law, therefore, I don't think
21 it's a sanctionable matter so there will not be
22 sanctions. All right?

1 MR. CHEW: Thank you very much, your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

3 If I can just get an order soon on that.

4 MR. CHEW: Your Honor, may we try to submit
5 that by the end of the week after we get the
6 transcript?

7 THE COURT: Sure. That'll be fine. Okay.

8 MR. CHEW: We can lay out the four prongs --

9 THE COURT: Okay.

10 MR. CHEW: -- for each.

11 THE COURT: That's fine.

12 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you, your
13 Honor.

14 THE COURT: Okay.

15 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: May I address just
16 another --

17 THE COURT: Sure. Housekeeping?

18 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- housekeeping
19 matter? Yes.

20 THE COURT: Sure.

21 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: We have a situation
22 that I don't honestly know how to deal with --

1 THE COURT: Okay.

2 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- and that is that
3 Mr. Chew filed a motion for the electronics and set
4 it down for October 29th. He did so -- and I'm
5 going to try not to argue here, but just explain to
6 you --

7 THE COURT: Okay.

8 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- that we believe
9 that we have a very legitimate motion to strike on
10 that because he didn't let us know in advance, which
11 was required under the order your Honor entered --

12 THE COURT: Right.

13 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: -- on September 7.
14 Didn't let the Court know in a non-ex parte manner.
15 And we would want to have both cross-motions and
16 briefing. We would like to have an evidentiary
17 hearing.

18 It's a very serious issue. They're asking
19 to have all of the electronics just turned over and
20 then have some third-party that we would all pay to
21 review all of these electronics. And it's a pretty
22 significant issue.

1 We were at the stage in the meet and confers
2 where we were suggesting having the two experts
3 speak so they could figure out what they really
4 needed so we could hone that down to a minimum and
5 that's when they filed this motion without our
6 knowledge.

7 So I don't know how to go about this, your
8 Honor, but obviously the motion to strike should
9 come before that motion. And then, if your Honor
10 denies the motion to strike, we would like to be
11 able to do cross-motions, we would like to be able
12 to do longer briefing, we would like to be able to
13 put it on as an evidentiary because we think we need
14 to call our IT expert, at a minimum.

15 So I'm not sure whether your Honor wants us
16 to do this in a calendar control call or how we get
17 this set up. I'm -- and my apologies for not
18 having --

19 THE COURT: Okay. No, that's fine. We can
20 try to figure out now. That's fine.

21 MR. CHEW: Your Honor, may I be heard --

22 THE COURT: Yes.

1 MR. CHEW: -- on that briefly?

2 Ms. Heard has relied on photographs and a
3 treasure-trove of evidence of very dubious validity
4 which came into England because they allow
5 everything in.

6 We have eyewitness testimony from the police
7 officers. Officer Science and Haddon said that she
8 didn't have any marks on her in the accident in May
9 of 2018. We have credible eyewitnesses after the
10 police left saying the same thing, and all of a
11 sudden, five days later she appears with a bruise.

12 We have very good reason to seek the
13 devices. If these are legitimate, actual
14 photographs, it shouldn't be a problem. And it's
15 not an uncommon request. We're open to reciprocal
16 requests from defendant. Although, unlike her,
17 Mr. Depp isn't using this kind of evidence to prove
18 his case.

19 We had been trying to get Ms. Bredehoft's
20 attention for two months on this and she kept
21 stiff-arming. Said she wanted to do the
22 supplemental plea in bar. She wanted to do her own

1 motions to compel.

2 Finally, in exasperation, I went to
3 Steve Cochran, the conciliator, and he wrote me back
4 and he said, file your motions. One was the motion
5 that we filed recently and your Honor heard on the
6 IME which the Court granted, and the second motion
7 he said in writing, the answer to your question is
8 yes and yes.

9 So the conciliator instructed us to proceed
10 to file the motion to compel the devices and the
11 original cloud mechanisms. And Ms. Bredehoft argued
12 that somehow she was surprised by this and
13 Mr. Cochran said this is what Mr. Chew is referring
14 to. So I can show the Court that correspondence. I
15 think I've actually sent it to your law clerk.

16 So Mr. Cochran has approved our filing of
17 this motion which we set for the 29th. And the
18 Court may recall that in appointing the conciliator,
19 even though normal day-to-day communications with
20 the conciliator as to what request he's telling
21 different parties that they may want to give in on,
22 the one unique power he has on the order, which I

1 respectfully -- I haven't insisted on because I'm
2 not in a position to insist. But one of the
3 provisions with which he agreed is that he,
4 Mr. Cochran, is the one who will decide who goes
5 next.

6 And he explicitly authorized us to file this
7 motion on the devices which is absolutely crucial.
8 We need these devices to get to our experts so our
9 expert can say, you know what? That photograph of
10 the bruise in London, that's a fake.

11 That's what we're asking. We're not -- we
12 don't have any problem with her filing a reciprocal
13 motion if she wants to get devices. We have asked
14 her, please let us know what specifically you need
15 and why you need it. We haven't said no. But it
16 can't just come in a vacuum. Oh, we want all of
17 Johnny's devices. There has to be some kind of
18 request and protocol with which Mr. Cochran can
19 deal.

20 And yes, we do think that Mr. Cochran may
21 have a role to play because when you're dealing with
22 the devices, for example, if the Court is inclined

1 to order some or all of what we're asking for and
2 say she has to turn over these cameras to see
3 when -- what the provenance of these photographs
4 were, we don't want to look at Ms. Heard's different
5 relationships that don't have anything to do with
6 Mr. Depp. Unless they involve violence. In which
7 case, we do.

8 But we think Mr. Cochran would be ideally
9 suited to be the gatekeeper, as it were. To look at
10 Ms. Heard's devices. And if she moves and the Court
11 is inclined or we agree and they get some of
12 Mr. Depp's devices, he's probably the best person
13 because he knows something about the case. He knows
14 a lot about the case by now. He can sift through
15 that and say, no, no, no. This has nothing to do
16 with this. And then I think we can get somewhere.

17 But if we don't get this tee'd up, as
18 Mr. Cochran explicitly told us to do, we're going to
19 run out of time with our experts because our experts
20 need time with those devices. We tried for two
21 months, your Honor.

22 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

1 Yes, ma'am?

2 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: I wasn't going to
3 argue but now I will, your Honor.

4 THE COURT: Okay.

5 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: This is very
6 important.

7 First of all, Mr. Chew sent me an e-mail on
8 a Friday afternoon when I was in Wisconsin with my
9 husband's family celebrating their 67th anniversary.
10 Demanded an answer by Monday. He sent an e-mail to
11 Mr. Cochran said, look, she hasn't responded to my
12 Friday e-mail. May I file these motions? He said
13 yes and yes. Didn't CC us.

14 After that, I came back and said, what? I
15 said, I haven't had a chance to even respond to him.
16 I was in Wisconsin over the weekend. Here -- we
17 want to do a lot of things here. We want to have
18 our expert talk to their expert. We think this
19 makes sense to do a meet and confer. We're going to
20 set it up so we can do a four by four. Mr. Cochran
21 came back and said, I would like you guys to try to
22 work this out. Please put your animosity behind

1 you. Let's try to work it out.

2 We scheduled a meet and confer with the
3 attorneys. We were present. There were three
4 lawyers from my side, three lawyers from his side.
5 We had a meet and confer and said, the next meet and
6 confer we'd like would be with a four-way with the
7 IT experts so they can talk about what they really
8 need because what's being proposed here is way more
9 expensive and way more extensive. And I think if we
10 get the IT people together, and we'll be on the
11 phone, I think we can really, really cut down on
12 this. They said, okay. Then we sent them an e-mail
13 saying let's get this set up. The next day he files
14 this motion. We're in the middle of meet and
15 confers.

16 I am positive we can prove that to your
17 Honor, that that's what was going on. That
18 Mr. Cochran, while he said that back in August when
19 I was out of town, he revoked that, came back and
20 said work this out. He knew we were in the middle
21 of meet and confers and we were in the middle of
22 meet and confers.

1 And your Honor, the important aspect of this
2 is, the reason we want to do the motion to strike is
3 because he violated your Honor's current order in
4 three different ways. And these orders have to mean
5 something. He has filed every single motion in this
6 case since I've been in the case without ever
7 consulting me. Every single one of them. And
8 that's wrong. And that's why we had that in the
9 conciliator's order. You have to consult with us.

10 That would have enabled us to say, what?
11 Why are you filing this? I thought we were doing a
12 four-way here with the two IT people. And it would
13 have been -- it would have enabled us to go to you
14 and say, your Honor, we think we should be able to
15 do a meet and confer or we'd like to do the motion
16 to strike first because we don't think they've
17 complied with it. They didn't tell us, they didn't
18 tell the Court, they didn't finish the meet and
19 confer process.

20 But then the other thing is, your Honor, is
21 we do think there should be cross-motions because
22 we're -- some things we're looking for that are the

1 same, but our IT person says you don't need to do
2 this whole huge sweep and then pay hundreds of
3 thousands of dollars to a third-party to look
4 through for attorney-client privilege, work product,
5 confidential information, irrelevant information.
6 There's other ways we can achieve this. Let me talk
7 to your IT person. We were setting that up.

8 Our IT person would be able to explain to
9 your Honor, very articulately, what the issues are
10 and what the best solution is and what the least
11 expensive solution is. We can't do that in a half
12 an hour on a motions day.

13 I am confident that we can prove to the
14 Court that they violated the conciliator order in
15 three ways. I'm confident when your Honor sees the
16 documents, your Honor will know that that's the
17 case.

18 Then second -- but in the meantime, frankly,
19 we'd still love to do the meet and confer. We'd
20 still love to get the two IT people and resolve
21 this. But we can't because he's got that on
22 October 29th and he is not talking to us about it.

1 MR. CHEW: Your Honor, I believe --

2 THE COURT: Yes, sir.

3 MR. CHEW: -- I have a proposed solution.

4 THE COURT: Okay.

5 MR. CHEW: Respectfully. Because I know the
6 Court has other probably better things to do. But,
7 your Honor, very briefly.

8 Ms. Bredehoft just admitted that the Court
9 told us to go forward back in August. Go ahead. Go
10 forth and file your motion to compel. And two
11 months later, we're still trying to work things out.
12 And finally, two months after we had authorization,
13 we went ahead and did it.

14 Secondly -- so there's no basis to strike
15 and there's no basis for the violation of the order.
16 And she's admitted that Mr. Cochran said in writing,
17 file your motion, sir.

18 So with that said, we have no problem with
19 continuing to meet and confer. We've continued to
20 meet and confer with Mr. Rottenborn and
21 Ms. Bredehoft after motions have been filed. We
22 want to work this out. We want these devices and

1 we're certainly willing to consider her getting some
2 of our devices if she would ever articulate why she
3 needs them and what she needs. So she's pushing an
4 open door. We want to get as much resolved as we
5 can, but if we don't have October 29th as the
6 deadline, it's never going to get done.

7 So what I would respectfully request is that
8 we continue the meet and confers, we keep the
9 October 29th date for our motion. If she wants to
10 file a reciprocal motion for devices and it's more
11 efficient for the Court to hear them both on the
12 same day, we don't have a problem with that. Or
13 extending it for an hour instead of half an hour.
14 But what we don't want is to get involved in some
15 silly thing about moving to strike when the
16 conciliator said go file your motion.

17 THE COURT: All right.

18 MR. CHEW: Thank you, your Honor.

19 THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

20 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Your Honor, may I
21 suggest that instead -- your Honor may recall I'm
22 not even in the country on October 29th, but may I

1 suggest this so that we get out of --

2 I don't want to do motions to strike either,
3 but I would like him to start adhering to the orders
4 and talking to us. But why don't we set an
5 evidentiary hearing for cross-motions and a briefing
6 schedule?

7 And I think your Honor had -- we'd indicated
8 that we were available on November 12 if your Honor
9 wanted to do --

10 THE COURT: I'm not going to set an
11 evidentiary hearing in this matter, okay? I'm not
12 going to. You can file your cross-motion on the
13 same day, for the 29th, and we can put it for an
14 hour. That's fine.

15 Between now and then, I want you to set up a
16 time with your IT people and I want there to be a
17 meeting with the IT people from both sides and with
18 the attorneys and to get that -- issues resolved.

19 MR. CHEW: Absolutely.

20 THE COURT: And that way -- I mean, I don't
21 need to hear from the IT people. You need to hear
22 from the IT people. And then we can see where we

1 are on the 29th. Okay?

2 MR. CHEW: Thank you, your Honor.

3 THE COURT: All right.

4 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you.

5 THE COURT: Let's do that.

6 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: Thank you very
7 much.

8 THE COURT: All right.

9 MS. CHARLSON BREDEHOFT: We appreciate it,
10 your Honor.

11 THE COURT: All right. The Court will be in
12 recess.

13 (End of recording at 11:13 a.m.)
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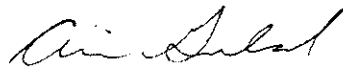


Miles Tag, Court Reporter

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Alicia Greenland
October 13, 2021

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VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

JOHN C. DEPP, II

Plaintiff,

v.

AMBER LAURA HEARD

Defendant.

Civil Action No.: CL-2019-0002911

DECLARATION OF BRYAN NEUMEISTER

1. My name is Bryan Neumeister.
2. I am a court certified video, audio, and digital photographic forensics and technical expert and the CEO of USAForensic LLC.
3. I have extensive experience collecting, analyzing, and producing electronically stored information (“ESI”) in law enforcement and legal proceedings, including approximately 600 cases in the last four years alone. I have over 41 years of audio/video professional experience, and twenty years of experience testifying and consulting for federal and state governments, agencies, prosecutors, defense attorneys, Fortune 500 companies, and individuals in a variety of aspects concerning analysis of photographs, audio and visual recordings, phone and text messages, and other digital data. My CV is attached hereto.

This declaration is based on my personal knowledge, years of experience, training, and education.

4. There are three basic types of computer date stamps: modified date, access date, and creation date (also known collectively as “MAC”).

5. A file’s last modified date refers to the date and time that a file is last saved. Typically, a file is modified or written to when a user opens and then saves a file, regardless of whether any

data is changed or added to the file. For this reason, the last modified date will generally indicate the last date and time that a file was saved.

6. Creation dates do not necessarily reflect when a file was originally created. Rather, creation date stamps indicate when a file came to exist on a particular storage medium, such as a hard drive. Creation dates can thus indicate when a user or computer process created a file or can also reflect the date and time that a file was copied onto a particular storage medium. Where a file has been copied, moved, or downloaded onto a new medium, its "creation date" indicates the later act of file transference, rather than the date the file originally came into existence.

7. For these reasons, just because a certain file of data has a creation or modified date after the original creation date when the file first came into existence, it does not follow that the data has necessarily been manipulated or altered in any way.

8. In my experience, it is very common in litigation for files to have creation or modified dates after the original creation date.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Submitted on this 18th day of January 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Neumeister", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bryan Neumeister

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

JOHN C. DEPP, II

Plaintiff,

v.

AMBER LAURA HEARD

Defendant.

Civil Action No.: CL-2019-0002911

DECLARATION OF JOELLE RICH

1. My name is Joelle Rich.
2. I am a Partner based in the London office of the law firm Schillings.
3. I represented Mr. Depp in the UK action titled *Depp v. News Group Newspapers Ltd.* (the "UK Action").
4. At the request of Mr. Depp's U.S. counsel, Brown Rudnick, I have reviewed the following six audio recordings produced by Mr. Depp in the Virginia Action: DEPP9046, 9047, 8259, 8260, 8297, and 8298.
5. Based on my review, I have confirmed (a) that each of the six audio recordings were previously reviewed and produced by Schillings in the UK Action; (b) that Schillings did not alter, edit, manipulate, or otherwise change the recordings in any way prior to producing them in the UK Action; and (c) that the recordings produced in the Virginia Action i.e., DEPP9046, 9047, 8259, 8260, 8297, and 8298 are the exact same length and content as the following six recordings produced in the UK Action: Trial Bundle references L138a, L138b, F154, F155, M140, and M141, respectively. They do not therefore appear to have been altered, edited, manipulated, or otherwise differ in any way from those produced in the UK Action.

6. Each of the recordings were produced to Brown Rudnick as part of the UK Trial Bundles, which we understand were required to be produced in the Virginia Action.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on this 19th day of January, 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joelle Rich', written in a cursive style.

Joelle Rich

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on the 19th day of January 2022, I caused copies of the foregoing to be served via email (per written agreement between the Parties) on the following:

Elaine Charlson Bredehoft (VSB No. 23766)
Adam S. Nadelhaft (VSB No. 91717)
Clarissa K. Pintado (VSB No. 86882)
David E. Murphy (VSB No. 90938)
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Counsel for Defendant Amber Laura Heard


Benjamin G. Chew