

EXHIBIT I

(Plaintiff's Trial Exhibit 452)

Gawker's Nick Denton Once Had Risqué Photos Stolen – And Says They're Fair Game For Publication

The founder of Gawker Media told BuzzFeed News that three years ago his iPhone — which contained suggestive photos of him — was stolen. Considering his company is in a legal battle with Hulk Hogan over publication of the wrestler's sex tape, he said his photos should be fair game for publication.

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Mary Ann Georgantopoulos
BuzzFeed News Reporter



Bloomberg / Getty Images

About three years ago, Nick Denton, the founder of Gawker Media, spent a sleepless night worrying about the possibility that his own risqué photos would be leaked online.

He had recently lost his cell phone, and someone contacted Gawker's then-editor, A.J. Daulerio, claiming to have photos of his boss. The person didn't describe the shots.

"Aw, fuck, they're from my iPhone," Denton remembers thinking.

That night, Denton said he stayed through the evening drafting an "artful" blog post

about the suggestive photos in an effort to get ahead of the story in case they were leaked.

“I didn’t like it, obviously,” he told BuzzFeed News at Gawker’s headquarters in Soho on Tuesday. “It would have been deeply embarrassing and there’s nothing you can really say that will take away from the embarrassment. I’m not on camera much. I don’t post semi-naked for publicity shots.”

Nothing ever came of those photos, Denton said. The next day with “fake casualness” he asked Daulerio for any updates. Daulerio said there was none and that he thought it might be a hoax.

“I had the post ready,” Denton said, “in which I note the irony of my embarrassment as a result of a lost iPhone.”

The irony refers to the ongoing legal battle between Gawker and professional wrestling legend Hulk Hogan — real name Terry Bollea — that is set to go to trial Monday in Pinellas County, Florida. In 2012, Gawker posted a sex tape between Hogan and Heather Clem, the wife of Bubba the Love Sponge Clem, a friend of the wrestler. Considering Gawker published the video — since removed on the order of a judge — Denton told BuzzFeed News he thought it would be newsworthy to publish his risqué photos.

“In the modern world, if you’re in the public eye and you’ve opened the door yourself, and I’ve opened the door myself to pretty much any discussion of my life, really, you have to own it,” Denton said. “You have to own up to it and do it with as much grace as you can. Just don’t fight it.”

“Given our reputation for what we publish, that’s what would make” the publication of his own photos interesting, Denton said. “The fact that we have run these kinds of stories about other people and we aren’t [ashamed] about it, the irony is not lost on me.”



Chris O'Meara / AP

Denton said he plans to be in St. Petersburg for the duration of the trial and will testify. The case has become a media sensation not just because of who the parties

are but because Denton has implied that if the jury returns a verdict for Hogan — he is asking for \$100 million in damages — the future of Gawker Media or his control over the sites would be thrown into question. (On Tuesday, BuzzFeed News reported that a sex-tape broker who was courted by both parties estimated the tape has no financial value.)

“If we lost this case, then it would be extremely hard to do the kind of journalism that we do,” Denton said.

Denton said he is glad that he is fighting for this story in particular, because “occasionally there is a story you feel shaky about, and I don’t feel shaky about this at all.”

Still, he said, going into it he didn’t “know how litigious [Hogan] was ... and the intricacies of the Florida court system. If we had known that maybe we’d be more cautious, but we didn’t know that.”

Denton believes Hogan’s tape was worth publishing because it has news value. “If he hadn’t talked about [his sex life] so much, there would be less interest.”

“He wants to talk about his sex life, but no one else is allowed to. You don’t get to do that in this country,” Denton said.

If Hogan didn’t discuss his sex life so much, Denton said, he wouldn’t have published the tape. The same goes with any celebrity, he said, even an A-lister: “Would we publish just the sex tape? No. Would we publish a story about the sex tape? If it was interesting. If there was some discrepancy between the image that was being put out by the celebrity and the reality that was revealed by the tape.”

Sex-Tape Broker Says Hulk Hogan’s Video Is Worth Nothing

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Mary Ann Georgantopoulos is a reporter for BuzzFeed News and is based in New York. Contact Mary Ann Georgantopoulos at maryann.g@buzzfeed.com

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