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Massachusetts District Court
Case No. 1:11-cv-12000-RBC
Greenspan v. Random House, Inc. et al

Document 77, Attachment 10



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[PROPOSED] EXHIBIT J
November 6, 2011 C-SPAN Interview Excerpt Transcript
“In Depth with Ben Mezrich”

[Video available at <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/BenMe/start/9104/stop/10800>]

02:31:47

Neil Greenspan: I just wanted to say that I don't really think you should be using the word "non-fiction" for his books. I think they're non-"non-fiction."

Host: What does that mean, Neil?

Neil Greenspan: It means that the research isn't very careful, and there's lots of mistakes--and why doesn't he just call them fiction? I mean, you know, he can write thrillers and not make a claim that he can't really substantiate.

Host: Could you give an example of what you think is, is uh, not accurate?

Neil Greenspan: You say that when Zuckerberg started Facemash he, um, crashed all the computers at Harvard. It's just not true.

Host: Well--

Neil Greenspan: He crashed his own computer.

Ben Mezrich: No... Well, okay, go ahead.

Host: Now, I mean, Neil, where do you get your research?

Neil Greenspan: My son was at Harvard at the time. He started a web site that Zuckerberg was aware of...

Host: Your son did?

Neil Greenspan: Yes, that had numerous features of use to Harvard undergraduates and graduate students. It was started in August of 2003, months before Facemash or Facebook. He met with Zuckerberg before Facebook went live, and Zuckerberg visited his site which had a component--just one component of his site--which was called "The Facebook." This is all documented in my son's book, called "Authoritas."

Host: Authoritas.

Neil Greenspan: Yes. And all the documentation is available on-line. E-mails, server logs, documents, etc.

Host: Okay. What's your son's name, Neil, if people want to research this?

Neil Greenspan: Aaron Greenspan.

Host: Aaron Greenspan. Thank you, sir.

Ben Mezrich: Yeah, his son is mentioned in the book, actually, in my book. Um, uh, first off, it's a crazy discussion, but, yes, the way it is in the book is correct. My books are non-fiction, and I am very accurate about what happened in the Facemash incident. The computer servers were stopped, were crashed, I use the word "crashed." Mark's computer froze. I think we all know what it means when we say a computer "crashed." And as it is in the book and the movie, that's exactly how it happened. Um, the discussion about his son--ended up suing Facebook, I believe. I think there's some litigation going on. I don't know the details of it.

Host: People really care.

Ben Mezrich: Yeah. I mean, well, you know, this happened at college recently. It wasn't that long ago, so there were kids who were there. There's been a lot of lawsuits, not just Eduardo and the Winklevosses, There's that other big one, there's his kid, who was involved in some sort of lawsuit, about the name "face book." I don't remember how that worked out. I stand by the books.

And, you know, the things that people point out, like, this is a perfect example of it. It's a person who has a personal beef--with Zuckerberg or with Facebook, and they're bringing it out in the way they can in this conversation. It really has very little to do with my book.

The fact that I say the computers crashed, because his computer froze, and the network slow today the point where--slowed to the point where the person who ran the network had to come in--just like it is in the movie--Mark had to go in front of the Ad Board. How are you not saying that the computers crashed? I don't get where that is inaccurate.

How, I mean, this is what always boggles my mind about the attack on my book. There's nothing inaccurate about that. And yet someone will say, well, the computers didn't crash. But the computers crashed. We know it crashed. He was called in front of the Ad Board. He had--he almost got kicked out of school. That's how the Winklevosses saw him, they saw him in the newspaper. So what are you arguing with? I don't get it. Maybe you have a definition of what a computer crashing than I do. Um, but, it goes on and on like this. My books will get attacked, people say, "it's not true, it's not true, it's not true," and you'll say, well, what's not true? And they'll point to some tiny thing on page 273 where something was blue instead of it was red.

You can pick up any book in the world and turn to page 273, and find something that was blue that was actually red. That's not what we mean when we say "non-fiction" and "fiction." What we mean when we say "non-fiction" and "fiction" are the facts of story correct or not. It's non-fiction if the story is true. These are true stories. It would be inaccurate to call them fiction. If I published these as fictional thrillers, the audience would be losing something because they wouldn't realize that these are true stories.

The only people who would benefit are the characters in the stories who don't want them told. Right? The character who doesn't want this story told would benefit by it being called fiction. The character who does want it told is benefited by its being called non-fiction.

I as a writer have to write the, a book as truthfully as I can, and the publisher has to decide whether they want to call it fiction or nonfiction. And that's really it. And me and my publisher sit down with my books, we vet every page.

The lawyer edit is the largest edit of my books. We sit there for hours going through every page of this to make sure it's all, you know, we have documentation for it all. I mean, do we argue about what it means to crash a computer? If a computer screen freezes, is that a crashed computer? I think so. I mean--

[Laughter]

You know, you just can't go down this line of questioning. It just goes on and on, and you don't know where to go with it.

02:37:51

Caller: Now, regarding the people protesting about your books being "non-fiction," if you called them fiction, people would be protesting just as much saying it's about them.

Ben Mezrich: Yeah, you're right. You know, it's a funny discussion, and it keeps coming up, and I don't mind talking about it.

The controversy is good. It's good for me, it's good for everybody to talk about what is fiction and non-fiction.

I just think in the end, you know, people just have to realize that if you're open and honest about how you write...this is how I write...don't read it if you don't like it! You know? You know what you're getting into.

I'm not trying to trick anybody. This is a true story, but it's written like a movie. If you have a problem with that, go read an encyclopedia. That's my opinion.

I like the way I write, and I like to read books like this, and I think a lot of people agree with that. Um, and, you know, you can pull open the book and turn to a page and find, you know, uh, somebody describes his shirt as gray and maybe it was off-gray. I'm sorry. But the reality is, this is a true story.

2:38:59

Caller: I think some of the controversy about the fiction / non-fiction, I think it's ultimately jealousy. Mark Zerk--Zuckerberg, people are jealous at, and I think maybe some of that jealousy is directed towards the author. What do you think?

Ben Mezrich: I mean, uh, you know, it's interesting. I always, uh, you know, uh, no author really loves the critics of their books. No author really likes to read critiques of their books, but I do think--it's jealousy, but it's also, you know, there are a lot of journalists who are looking for, uhm, a story.

And for a long time it was very easy to write a story about a non-fiction book that may or may not have true elements. And so it's very easy to write an article that gets printed in a newspaper if you can point out something wrong with a book. So I think that's where it all comes from, it comes from journalists looking for a story--more than necessarily professional--I mean, all writers are jealous of each other. We're all jealous of each other. We're all filled with envy. Every time you read the newspaper about some big advance, you feel envious. Every writer does; it's like part of being a writer. It's part of our birthright. It's like, oh, that guy got a million dollars for that? I hate him. But you don't really hate him. *Schadenfreude*, is that what it is? It's that whole feel.

I don't know what it is specifically. I think that I have become a lightning brand for a certain form of writing, um, and uh then people will, you know, some people will hate it, and some people will like it.