

AMENDED Exhibit 19

PLAINTIFFS' OMNIBUS OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANTS' MOTIONS FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

Case No.: 4:22-md-03047-YGR

MDL No. 3047

In Re: Social Media Adolescent Addiction/Personal Injury Products Liability Litigation

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

IN RE: SOCIAL MEDIA ADOLESCENT) MDL No.
ADDICTION/PERSONAL INJURY) 4:22-md-3047-YGR
PRODUCTS LIABILITY LITIGATION)

-----)
SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
SPRING STREET COURTHOUSE

COORDINATION PROCEEDING)
SPECIAL TITLE [RULE 3.400]) Lead Case No.
) 22STCV21355

SOCIAL MEDIA CASES)
-----)

This Document Relates to:)

)
STATE OF TENNESSEE,)
ex rel. JONATHAN SKRMETTI,)
ATTORNEY GENERAL and REPORTER,)
v.)
META PLATFORMS, INC., and)
INSTAGRAM, LLC,)
Case No. 23-1364-IV)
-----)

Tuesday, January 28, 2025

CONFIDENTIAL - PURSUANT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER
Video-Recorded Oral Deposition of WENDY
GROSS PhD held at the offices of Covington &
Burling LLP, 3000 El Camino Real, 5 Palo Alto
Square, Suite 1000, Palo Alto, California,
commencing at 9:04 a.m. PST on the above
date, before Michael E. Miller, Fellow of the
Academy of Professional Reporters, Certified
Court Reporter, Registered Diplomate
Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter and
California CSR #13649.

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1 skills in performing and evaluating research,
2 right?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. And skills in data analytics?

5 A. Yes, that is part of a research
6 PhD.

7 Q. And before your time at Meta,
8 you held professional roles in which you
9 conducted research and surveys, right?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Including your time as a senior
12 research manager at GfK?

13 A. Yes, ma'am.

14 Q. And as a statistics specialist
15 for Apple?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. So overall, you consider
18 yourself to have expertise in designing,
19 conducting and analyzing market research,
20 right?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And in designing, conducting
23 and analyzing public opinion surveys, right?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And as we just discussed, you

1 currently work at Meta, right?

2 A. I do.

3 Q. You're the head of marketing
4 insights for creators and Threads?

5 A. Yes, ma'am.

6 Q. Can you tell me briefly about
7 that role and your responsibilities?

8 A. So I support a team of
9 researchers who are tasked with understanding
10 the needs of creators as it relates to our
11 platforms and then how we tell our brand
12 story of how we support creators across the
13 family of apps. So that includes Facebook,
14 Instagram, WhatsApp and Threads.

15 Q. Before this role, you were the
16 head of marketing insights for Threads?

17 A. At Meta we often wear multiple
18 hats, so when -- there was a period in time
19 where I was supporting Threads as the only
20 marketing insights person. Now I'm
21 supporting Threads with a couple of other
22 people who work on it.

23 The reality of how
24 cross-platform and cross -- cross-app
25 collaboration works, like there was a period

1 of time where the role that I was working on
2 for Instagram was separate from the role that
3 I was working on for Threads.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. So I kind of held both hats at
6 the same time.

7 Q. That's fair.

8 Just kind of moving backwards
9 in time, before these roles that we were just
10 discussing, your profile, at least, says that
11 from September 2021 to April 2024, you were
12 marketing insights lead for the Instagram
13 brand experiences and creators?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Is that right?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. I know that's a mouthful.

18 A. It is.

19 Q. I guess, could you talk about
20 how your role and responsibilities in this
21 position differed, if at all --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- from your current position?

24 A. Over -- starting in September
25 of 2021, I transitioned from an independent

1 contributor role, meaning that nobody
2 reported to me, I wasn't anybody's boss,
3 essentially, into a people manager where I
4 was supporting a team of researchers.

5 Between September of 2021 and
6 about April-ish of this -- of 2024, last
7 year, the scope and the remit of my team kind
8 of grew and changed as business needs grew
9 and changed.

10 What we mean by brand
11 experiences are the product features within
12 the Instagram app that ladder into our
13 overall brand for Instagram around connecting
14 people over the creativity that they see on
15 our app.

16 So there are parts of the
17 Instagram app that are clearly linked to that
18 and things like if you're -- if we want to
19 connect people with their friends, like you
20 talk to people, you know, using DMs, and you
21 reshare content that you see on the app.

22 There are other parts of the
23 app that exist that my team doesn't really
24 touch or doesn't touch in nearly -- in quite
25 as big of a way. So, for example, the ads

1 experience, that's not part of the remit of
2 my team.

3 As part of -- so that's kind of
4 the brand experience portion.

5 The creators and the Threads is
6 really like where I kind of bifurcated the
7 remit of my team at the beginning of this
8 year, so that was on top of thinking about
9 the Instagram product experience from the
10 perception of the consumers that use the app.
11 We think about the product experience and the
12 brand story from the perspective of the
13 creators that use our apps, and we are
14 supporting Threads.

15 Q. And I guess moving backwards
16 again, you mentioned briefly that you --
17 before this position, you were a marketing
18 researcher for Instagram, and that was from
19 November 2018 to September 2021; is that
20 correct?

21 A. Yes. That was my first role at
22 Meta. I was brought on to support what we
23 called the community product pillar at the
24 time for our marketing XFN counterparts.

25 So at the time that we

1 called -- our community pillar had three
2 basic components. One was around the size of
3 the community and how we help it grow, which
4 I didn't really do that much work related to.

5 One was around how we connect
6 Instagram users in really positive and
7 meaningful ways to their in-real-life
8 community. So things like donation stickers
9 and fundraising on Instagram or
10 get-out-the-vote efforts.

11 And then the third component
12 was how we protect our community from harms
13 that can happen on the app, so this is things
14 like bullying and social comparison and
15 mental health sorts of questions.

16 Q. And taking a look at your
17 description of the role for this particular
18 role on the second page of your profile, you
19 wrote that you established the learning
20 agenda for new markets, target audiences and
21 product areas.

22 Could you explain what
23 established learning agenda means?

24 A. Yes. So as we were
25 thinking about, you know, whether -- this was

1 a new market, so one -- one instance that
2 comes to mind is when Instagram -- Instagram
3 marketing team was looking towards India, for
4 example, a country that we hadn't really
5 spent a whole lot of time understanding or
6 targeting with our marketing efforts,
7 different target audiences. So in the course
8 of 2020, Instagram marketing started thinking
9 about young adults through get-out-the-vote
10 efforts, and as we spun equity, the equity
11 team started having a much more deeper focus
12 on the experience of black Americans
13 specifically, or product areas, again, with
14 the equity team being a -- one example.

15 Another example is the mental
16 well-being team. As we think about how the
17 Instagram marketing team or the Instagram
18 product is moving, what are the questions
19 that we want to have answered from a
20 marketing perspective as we think of how to
21 support the businesses' objectives within
22 those new areas.

23 So that learning agenda is
24 really just like a really big question around
25 what are those foundational questions that we

1 want to have an understanding of before we,
2 as a marketing org, feel comfortable.

3 The learning agendas that I put
4 forth, you know, and established within those
5 areas were then copied to other parts of the
6 marketing insights organization, so from
7 Instagram to Facebook or to Reality Labs.

8 Q. And you mentioned in that
9 description target audiences. Target
10 audiences included teens, right?

11 A. In my -- so in my entire time
12 at Instagram, teens have been a focus.
13 Instagram is a teen-centric brand, and to
14 ignore the fact that, you know, teens and
15 young people use Instagram is to ignore kind
16 of the heritage and the DNA of the app.

17 Q. And, Dr. Gross, you're part of
18 the marketing insights team, correct?

19 A. Right.

20 Q. And just to be clear, you've
21 been part of that team your entire time at
22 Meta?

23 A. Yes, ma'am.

24 Q. I want to show you another
25 document. So you can put that one away. B1.

1 Peerless Insights?

2 A. Yes, ma'am.

3 Q. This e-mail, as you
4 mentioned --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- also involves e-mail
7 addresses from Peerless Insights, right?

8 A. Yes. Young is managing
9 partner.

10 Q. And what is Peerless Insights?

11 A. They're a third-party
12 quantitative research firm.

13 Q. If you look at the second page
14 of the document, you see an e-mail from
15 Ms. Mehta, and if you look at the second
16 paragraph, she says she's also cc'ing you and
17 that you are the research lead on this
18 project, right?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. And that's correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Let's move
23 to another e-mail. This is D1, and it
24 will be Exhibit 5, and it's
25 Bates-stamped 014-00255268.

1 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-5,
2 E-mail(s) re: Teen Well-being Survey,
3 META3047MDL-014-00255268 -
4 META3047MDL-014-00255273, was marked
5 for identification.)

6 THE WITNESS: Can I clarify a
7 previous response?

8 MS. O'NEILL: Of course.

9 THE WITNESS: I became the lead
10 researcher on this project. It was
11 one that [REDACTED] had kicked off and
12 started before I joined and then
13 transitioned to me.

14 BY MS. O'NEILL:

15 Q. And at the time of the e-mail,
16 that's when you became lead?

17 A. Yes. Thank you for letting me
18 clarify.

19 Q. Of course.

20 So take a look at this
21 document, and let me know if you recognize
22 it.

23 A. Yes, it looks like it is an
24 e-mail chain that I had with a number of
25 folks at Peerless who were working on that

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1 same mental -- or sorry, the same teen
2 well-being survey that we just chatted about,
3 in addition to somebody else who was at
4 Instagram and helping me at the time.

5 Q. And this was from March 2019,
6 right?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. And if you look at the very top
9 e-mail, Catherine Wertz from Peerless sent
10 you updated reports, right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And one of those reports was
13 the US report?

14 A. That's what it says, yes.

15 Q. And, in fact, that was attached
16 as the Detailed Findings US?

17 A. Yes.

18 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Let's take
19 a look at that attachment, which is D2,
20 and it will be Exhibit 6. And it's
21 014-00255333.

22 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

23 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-6,
24 Presentation: Instagram Teen
25 Well-being Study: US Topline Findings,

1 META3047MDL-014-00255333, was marked
2 for identification.)

3 BY MS. O'NEILL:

4 Q. Dr. Gross, do you recognize
5 this document?

6 A. Yes. This is -- or this
7 appears to be the US topline report that the
8 vendor prepared for me that was referenced in
9 that previous e-mail chain.

10 Q. And just to be clear, the
11 vendor is Peerless --

12 A. Peerless, correct.

13 Q. And it's dated February 2019?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. Okay.

16 MR. HALPERIN: Ms. O'Neill, it
17 looks like I have two documents. Are
18 these both Exhibit 6? Are we
19 attaching them together?

20 MS. O'NEILL: Yes. I apologize
21 it's not actually stapled together,
22 but it's just -- this was produced
23 natively so it's the cover.

24 MR. HALPERIN: We can clip them
25 afterwards. I just wanted to make

1 sure the record is clear.

2 MS. O'NEILL: Thank you.

3 MR. DOWNING: This is 6?

4 MR. HALPERIN: The entire thing
5 is 6, both the deck as well as the
6 native slip sheet.

7 BY MS. O'NEILL:

8 Q. Dr. Gross, before we dive into
9 the specifics of this research, we
10 established earlier that you received a PhD
11 from Stanford University, right?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And as part of that program,
14 you gained skills in performing and
15 evaluating research, right?

16 A. Yes, ma'am.

17 Q. And when you worked on research
18 at Meta, you made best efforts to ensure that
19 the research was of a high quality?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. And that was true whether you
22 performed the research yourself or if you
23 commissioned it from others, right?

24 A. Yes, ma'am.

25 Q. That was important because the

1 goal of performing research for Meta was to
2 provide insights that were valuable to the
3 company, right?

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. So here, when you commissioned
6 research from Peerless, you had a perspective
7 that Peerless would deliver quality research,
8 right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Research that would deliver
11 valuable insights to the company?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And part of your role was to
14 ensure that Peerless met those standards of
15 quality, right?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Okay. Let's look at the actual
18 research. If you can turn to page 2, there
19 are very small page numbers on the bottom
20 right.

21 This page describes the
22 methodology of the research that Peerless
23 undertook, right?

24 A. Yes, it does.

25 Q. The research looked at teens

1 BY MS. O'NEILL:

2 Q. And the report also says that
3 one-third of teens reported feeling this way
4 often, right?

5 A. Yes, that's what it says.

6 Q. Let's move to page 32.

7 The study made findings about a
8 number of negative experiences teens had on
9 the app, right?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So I want to go through some of
12 those percentages here on the right.

13 The Peerless Insights
14 researchers reported that 32% of teen monthly
15 Instagram users experience feeling like they
16 have to look perfect, either often or very
17 often, right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And that 23% of those users
20 feel like they waste too much time often or
21 very often?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And 19% feel like they're
24 missing out on life often or very often?

25 A. Yes.

1 I've not been part of.

2 Q. Let's get back into the
3 documents and your research and what you work
4 on.

5 MS. O'NEILL: This is going to
6 be F1, which will be Exhibit 8, and
7 that's Bates 003-00091410.

8 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-8,
9 E-mail(s) re: Teen MH Debrief
10 (Hurrarh!), META3047MDL-003-00091410 -
11 META3047MDL-003-00091413, was marked
12 for identification.)

13 MS. O'NEILL: Apologies, it
14 appears this one didn't get stapled.

15 MR. HALPERIN: Give me a
16 second. We may have a stapler in
17 there.

18 (Technical comments off the
19 stenographic record.)

20 BY MS. O'NEILL:

21 Q. Okay. Dr. Gross, do you
22 recognize this document?

23 A. Yes. It looks like it is an
24 e-mail exchange that I had with Connie Flude
25 at Creatures of Habit in the fall of 2019.

1 Q. And in particular,
2 September 2019, right?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And you're discussing research
5 that you commissioned from an organization
6 called Creatures of Habit?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And this is still part of your
9 teen mental health research project, right?

10 A. This is part of a deep dive
11 that we did into teen mental health, yes.

12 Q. And what is Creatures of Habit?

13 A. Creatures of Habit is an
14 independent research firm that we
15 commissioned to do the qualitative research
16 for us.

17 Q. And you can see in this second
18 e-mail on the front page that Connie Flude
19 attached an MH debrief, which you then
20 forwarded to Caroline Fearon, right?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Let's look at that attachment.

23 MS. O'NEILL: This is F2, and
24 it will be Exhibit 9. It's Bates
25 003-00091414.

1 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-9,
2 Presentation: Teen Mental Health,
3 Creatures of Habit - Aug/Sep 2019,
4 META3047MDL-003-00091414 -
5 META3047MDL-003-00091504, was marked
6 for identification.)

7 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

8 BY MS. O'NEILL:

9 Q. Okay. Dr. Gross, do you
10 recognize this document?

11 A. Yes. This was the initial
12 report that Creatures of Habit prepared for
13 us. Okay.

14 This is the -- this is the
15 initial debrief that Creatures of Habit
16 prepared for us following qualitative work
17 that we did with them in August of 2019 with
18 teens in US and the UK.

19 Q. And this report is dated
20 August-September 2019?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. And as with other research you
23 did or commissioned, you made best efforts to
24 ensure that this research was of a high
25 quality, right?

1 A. Yes. All of the research that
2 we do, I ensure that it's of high quality.
3 When I partner with vendors, I look for
4 specific areas of expertise.

5 For Creatures of Habit
6 specifically, the reason that we brought them
7 on to work with us in this project is just
8 their expertise in talking with teenagers
9 about very sensitive issues.

10 Q. So you believed that they would
11 deliver high-quality research, right?

12 A. Holistically, yes. Again,
13 every vendor that I've worked with has their
14 own unique strengths and unique places where
15 we need to hold their hands a little bit
16 more.

17 Q. Okay. Let's go to page 91419.
18 So this and the next page convey the topline
19 headlines from this report, right?

20 A. Yes. These are the topline
21 headlines that the vendor pulled out from our
22 conversations with a small number -- I think
23 the total number was 40 teens -- across two
24 different markets.

25 The individuals that we talked

1 to were very purposefully designed to be a
2 nonrandom subset of teenagers, and so it's
3 incredibly important as we look at the
4 toplines to remember that not only were
5 these -- what teens reported to us, but it's
6 not the general teenage Instagram user that
7 we talked to in this research.

8 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. I'm going
9 to move to strike that as
10 nonresponsive after you affirmed that
11 these are the topline headlines.

12 BY MS. O'NEILL:

13 Q. Let's look at the fifth bullet
14 down. It starts: Teen talk of.

15 So one of the topline headlines
16 of this report was that: Teens talk of
17 Instagram in terms of an addict's narrative,
18 spending too much time indulging in a
19 compulsive behavior that they know is
20 negative but feel powerless to resist.

21 Right?

22 A. Yes, this is how Creatures of
23 Habit summarized the specific language that
24 this nonrandom subset of teens used when
25 talking about their Instagram usage.

1 MS. O'NEILL: I'll move to
2 strike as nonresponsive after "Yes."

3 BY MS. O'NEILL:

4 Q. And you would agree, Dr. Gross,
5 that some teens talk about not being able to
6 stop using Instagram even when they feel that
7 it's bad for them?

8 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form,
9 foundation.

10 A. The teens that I have talked
11 to -- and again, they've not always been a
12 representative or meant to be representative
13 of the general Instagram teenaged user -- use
14 language that is in the teenager vernacular
15 and words that teens -- like I hear my own
16 teenaged children use some of these same
17 words.

18 There's some -- and hearing
19 teens talk about them, they are somewhat
20 divorced from how people in the medical
21 industry and the mental health profession
22 might use these same words.

23 BY MS. O'NEILL:

24 Q. You would agree that some teens
25 in this research project talked about not

1 being able to stop using Instagram in terms
2 of an addict's narrative, right?

3 MR. HALPERIN: Asked and
4 answered.

5 A. Some of the teens that we
6 talked to did use some of that language.

7 BY MS. O'NEILL:

8 Q. In looking at the next bullet,
9 one of the topline headlines of this report
10 from Creatures of Habit says that: The
11 pressure to be present and perfect is a
12 defining characteristic of the anxiety teens
13 face around Instagram.

14 Right?

15 A. Yes. Again, this is a
16 reflection of what these teenagers told us.

17 Q. And you agree that the pressure
18 to be perfect and present are issues that
19 some teens face on Instagram, right?

20 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form
21 and foundation.

22 A. These are some of the things
23 that teenagers have told us.

24 BY MS. O'NEILL:

25 Q. Okay. Let's move to 91428.

1 language and the words that teens are using
2 to describe their experiences to us.

3 As part of the marketing team,
4 you know, as we talked about earlier, part of
5 my role is to understand the language that
6 teens themselves use to talk about their
7 experiences so that we can situate our own
8 communications within that language to ensure
9 that we're actually using words that teens
10 themselves would use.

11 MS. O'NEILL: I'll move to
12 strike as nonresponsive after "That is
13 what the report says."

14 BY MS. O'NEILL:

15 Q. Looking at the bottom right,
16 the language in bold, the researchers also
17 state that: Time-spend was one of the worst
18 aspects of teens' relationship to the
19 platform.

20 Correct?

21 A. That is what we heard in this
22 research of the teens' own self-reported
23 experiences.

24 Q. Let's move to 91442.
25 On the top left, the

1 language on the right, the researchers
2 reported to Meta that Instagram: is a recipe
3 for low-level mental anxiety that, unchecked,
4 can ladder up to something more serious.

5 Right?

6 A. Yes, that is what this says.

7 Q. And you agree that some teens
8 feel anxiety about their use of Instagram,
9 right?

10 A. Yeah, some teens have told us
11 that they feel anxiety around their Instagram
12 usage.

13 Q. I want to go back to 91418.
14 You discuss the criteria for
15 participation in this survey, right?

16 A. So this -- these are
17 qualitative conversations, but yes.

18 Q. I want to just go through the
19 criteria here, the Secondary Criteria.

20 A. The actual -- the criteria is
21 actually a bullet above that underneath
22 Themes.

23 Q. And can you explain that for
24 us, please?

25 A. Yes. Because we were -- we

1 people on the phone, enable to -- enable to
2 coordinate those really positive social
3 experiences.

4 And teens are using social
5 media in that same way, which is -- which is
6 contributing to this idea that it's part of
7 their social life.

8 MS. O'NEILL: Let's move to a
9 different document, H. This will be
10 Exhibit 11, and it's 003-00109173.

11 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-11,
12 Presentation: Teen Mental Health Deep
13 Dive, META3047MDL-003-00109173 -
14 META3047MDL-003-00109239, was marked
15 for identification.)

16 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

17 BY MS. O'NEILL:

18 Q. Dr. Gross, do you recognize
19 this document?

20 A. Yes. This is the final report
21 that I put together from the qualitative
22 research that we partnered with Creatures of
23 Habit to conduct along with a survey of about
24 2,000 or 2400 Instagram users in the US and
25 the UK. This would have been in the fall --

1 early fall of 2019.

2 Q. And just to be clear, you
3 coauthored this presentation with Caroline
4 Fearon, right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And this postdated the initial
7 thoughts that we just discussed?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And as with other research --
10 I'm a broken record on this. But as with
11 other research you did or commissioned, you
12 made your best efforts to ensure that the
13 research was of a high quality, right?

14 A. Yes, that the research was of
15 high quality and that the findings were
16 communicated in a way that addressed the
17 needs of the stakeholders that I was working
18 with.

19 Q. Your aim was that this research
20 would deliver valuable insights to the
21 company, right?

22 A. Right. And as I say underneath
23 the objectives, it's to inform outreach teams
24 of how to talk to teens and build meaningful,
25 you know, marketing campaigns in this space

1 and to inform product teams on decisions.

2 Q. And along those lines, I see
3 you've moved to the next page, the second
4 bullet under We Conducted Market Research
5 shows that this research was conducted in
6 order to get a nuanced understanding of
7 teens' perceptions of how Instagram affects
8 their mental health, right?

9 A. Yes. As I mention on the top
10 of this slide, that popular and academic
11 press, you know, there's a wide variety of
12 research that has been published and
13 information that has come out of -- you know,
14 some salacious headlines around, you know,
15 what the effect and the impact is of social
16 media on young people.

17 In our review of that
18 literature, we found that there are some
19 consistent themes. One of the unfortunate
20 consistent themes is that there isn't a lot
21 of consistency, that there is a lot of
22 nuance, and that a lot of the research that
23 was done might have been about teens, but it
24 wasn't necessarily with teens.

25 And so as we were thinking

1 through, you know, what are the products --
2 what are -- how can product teams support
3 teens in this space, how can outreach teams
4 talk about it, there's actually a
5 startling -- at this time, that there was a
6 lack of information on how teens perceive it
7 themselves, and how teens talk about it,
8 which is what this research was designed to
9 answer.

10 Q. Okay. If you move to the next
11 page on Methodology. This study was
12 conducted on teens age 13 to 17, right?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And there were three parts to
15 the study, right?

16 A. Yes. The first part was the
17 qualitative portion that we've talked about,
18 that vendor deck earlier. That included the
19 second follow-up video call. I believe that
20 in the e-mail -- one of the e-mails that we
21 reviewed, that Connie at Creatures of Habit
22 mentioned the difficulties in setting these
23 up, so these were part of that same
24 qualitative research process -- research
25 part.

1 And then the final was an
2 online survey that we did amongst Instagram
3 users.

4 Q. And to make sure I'm
5 understanding, those themes that we talked
6 about with the in-person qualitative portion
7 of this study, those were not requirements to
8 participate in the online survey, correct?

9 A. Correct. The online survey was
10 meant to be a cross section of Instagram
11 users.

12 Q. It was meant to be a
13 representative sample, right?

14 A. A representative sample to the
15 best of our ability, yes.

16 Q. The next page lists several key
17 takeaways, right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. I want to look at a few of
20 these, starting with number 3.

21 This key takeaway states that:
22 Teens say Instagram has had a positive impact
23 on their mental health, but those who are
24 unsatisfied with their lives are more
25 negatively affected by the app.

1 A. Yes. So first -- the question
2 that leads into this is the question that's
3 listed on the previous page of the number
4 ending in 186.

5 In the past month, have you
6 felt or experienced any of the following?
7 This was a "select all" question.

8 For teens that had said I have
9 experienced this, they were asked the
10 follow-up question of that specific issue, do
11 you -- did it start on Instagram.

12 Q. And I want to go through those
13 statistics.

14 So the research found that
15 39% -- and I'll back up, actually.

16 I'm just going to talk about
17 the US statistics so we can concentrate on
18 the slightly darker red color here, if that's
19 helpful.

20 So 39% of teens who had felt
21 that they needed to a create perfect image
22 said that that feeling started on Instagram,
23 correct?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And 41% of teens who felt not

1 attractive said that that feeling started on
2 Instagram, right?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. 42% of teens who felt like they
5 didn't have enough money said that the
6 feeling started on Instagram, right?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. 32% of teens who said they did
9 not have enough -- or felt they did not have
10 enough friends said that feeling started on
11 Instagram?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. 24% of teens who felt that they
14 were not good enough said that that feeling
15 started on Instagram?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. 24% of teens who felt that
18 their friends were not really their friends
19 said that that feeling started on Instagram.

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. 17% of teens who said they felt
22 that they have to be happy said that feeling
23 started on Instagram?

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. 21% of teens who said they felt

1 alone or lonely said that that started on
2 Instagram?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. 10% of teens who said they were
5 down, sad or depressed said that that feeling
6 starting on Instagram?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. I'm going to skip this next one
9 because it is cut off. I don't want to deal
10 with that.

11 6% of teens who said that they
12 felt that they wanted to kill themselves said
13 that that feeling started on Instagram.

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. And 9% of teens who said that
16 they felt that they wanted to hurt themselves
17 said that it started on Instagram?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. And just to back up, the title
20 of this slide is: The perfect image, feeling
21 attractive and having enough money are the
22 most likely to have started on Instagram.

23 Right?

24 A. Yes, those are the issues that
25 the highest proportion of respondents who

1 they did reference an addict's narrative.
2 Most of the time this is an extrapolation of
3 how the teens themselves were talking about
4 their Instagram use.

5 Q. The survey also concluded that:
6 Teens recognize that the amount of time they
7 spend online isn't good for them but that
8 they lack the willpower to control the time
9 spent themselves.

10 Right?

11 A. Yes. This is a reflection of
12 the qualitative research that we did with
13 teens.

14 Q. And that qualitative research
15 showed you that teens didn't like the amount
16 of time that they spent on Instagram, right?

17 A. The teens themselves said that
18 they did not like it.

19 Q. And that teens wanted to spend
20 less time on Instagram, right?

21 A. I'll actually rephrase what I
22 said before.

23 It wasn't that teens didn't
24 like it. It's that they didn't think that it
25 was good for them. The teens that we talked

1 to said that they wanted -- that they thought
2 that they should be controlling it. They
3 didn't think that they could.

4 Q. These findings also must have
5 alarmed you, right?

6 A. Of course.

7 Q. You'd agree that a teen having
8 an addict's narrative about Instagram is a
9 serious problem?

10 A. I think that teens feeling this
11 way is a serious problem. Whether the idea
12 of the -- I don't want to pass judgment on
13 the specific language that teens use. Their
14 perceptions of how they're feeling is
15 concerning regardless of what the language --
16 the specific language is.

17 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. We can put
18 that document away.

19 MR. HALPERIN: We've been going
20 for about an hour.

21 MS. O'NEILL: Yeah, it's a good
22 time.

23 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: The time is
24 11:12. We're off the record.

25 (Recess taken, 11:12 a.m. to

1 word externally with people who aren't
2 familiar with this space within the Instagram
3 context.

4 MS. O'NEILL: Let's move on to
5 another document, document L. This
6 will be Exhibit 14, and it's Bates
7 003-00001846.

8 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-14,
9 Presentation: Social Comparison
10 Exploratory Research,
11 META3047MDL-003-00001846 -
12 META3047MDL-003-00001889, was marked
13 for identification.)

14 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

15 BY MS. O'NEILL:

16 Q. Do you recognize this document?

17 A. I do. This is a document that
18 Dr. Bhutada and I prepared together as an
19 output of joint qualitative research that we
20 did in March of 2020.

21 Q. And this is on social
22 comparison, right?

23 A. Correct. Specifically negative
24 appearance-based social comparison amongst
25 teen girls and young adult women.

1 Q. And as with all the other
2 research you did or commissioned, you made
3 your best efforts to ensure that this
4 research was of high quality?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. And that it would deliver
7 valuable insights to the company, right?

8 A. Yes. Because I partnered with
9 Dr. Bhutada on this, she was, in fact -- she
10 was a user researcher who was embedded within
11 the product team, and this joint effort was
12 meant to inform both product teams around the
13 well-being space as well as outreach teams in
14 communicating Instagram efforts to teen girls
15 and young adult women.

16 Q. Let's move to the page ending
17 1849, and I want to look at the fourth bullet
18 down.

19 You found that: Social
20 comparison is worse on Instagram. Right?

21 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form,
22 characterization.

23 A. The slide reads that: Social
24 comparison is worse on Instagram. I also,
25 similarly to the Teen Mental Health Deep Dive

1 A. Where they -- they work
2 together and kind of feed off of each other
3 to create conditions where young women who
4 are already feeling bad about themselves are
5 encountering content that they don't -- that
6 they might not necessarily like and kind of
7 keep going within that route.

8 BY MS. O'NEILL:

9 Q. Let's move to the next page.
10 You wrote that: Mental health
11 outcomes related to this can be severe.

12 Right?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And "this" means the perfect
15 storm of social comparison that we were
16 referring to before, right?

17 MR. HALPERIN: Object to
18 characterization.

19 A. So this is meant to reflect
20 that -- and why there are specific quotes
21 underneath it is that the teens that -- the
22 teen girls that we talked to very clearly
23 associated this spiral that they were
24 experiencing on Instagram with some, you
25 know, pretty real -- pretty bad outcomes.

1 They, of course, did not
2 necessarily talk about -- did not necessarily
3 label it the labels that we attached to it,
4 like we summarized data and leveled that up a
5 little bit. But they very clearly linked how
6 they were feeling about themselves, how the
7 platform -- their perceptions of how the
8 platform was contributing to it to these
9 long-term, pretty bad outcomes.

10 BY MS. O'NEILL:

11 Q. And I just want to go through
12 those outcomes. Those include -- the
13 outcomes that you identified as teens having
14 identified include eating disorders, right?

15 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form.

16 A. Yes. We -- we summarized the
17 responses from these, you know, teens and
18 young women as including eating disorders.

19 BY MS. O'NEILL:

20 Q. And body dysmorphia?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Body dissatisfaction?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Depression?

25 A. Correct.

1 Q. And loneliness?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Now, we saw earlier that you
4 determined that young people felt like they
5 lacked control over the time they spend on
6 Instagram, right?

7 A. Yes, that's what they told us.

8 Q. And this study identifies
9 several bad experiences that people felt that
10 they were having on Instagram, right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Pressure to be perfect, right?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Appearance comparison, right?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Spiraling into rabbit holes,
17 right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And you found that teens felt
20 that Instagram was exacerbating those issues,
21 right?

22 A. We found that the teen girls
23 and young adult women that we talked to felt
24 as if Instagram was exacerbating these issues
25 for them.

1 only experimental studies that I've done have
2 been effectiveness of marketing efforts on
3 sentiment. And it was designed to prove out
4 ROI, return on investment, for marketing
5 campaigns.

6 Q. Okay. So you have done an
7 experiment but that experiment related to a
8 marketing campaign?

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. You've not been asked and you
11 haven't done any experiments as it pertains
12 to teen mental health and the use of
13 Instagram, correct?

14 A. Correct. I have not been part
15 of any experiment in that way.

16 Q. There were a couple of terms I
17 want to make sure I understand. Let me get
18 to them.

19 Have you ever heard the term
20 "feeding the spiral"?

21 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form.

22 A. Yes.

23 BY MR. GOZA:

24 Q. Can you tell us what that is?

25 A. I believe that we talked about

1 the -- or this appears in other research,
2 other research documentation. The idea of
3 feeding the spiral, of how teen girls and
4 young adults refer to it as it relates to
5 negative appearance based on comparison is
6 this notion of, you know, teen girls not
7 feeling so great about themselves, and
8 particularly their looks or their body, and
9 then encountering content that made them feel
10 worse on Instagram.

11 Q. Do you have any knowledge or
12 understanding about whether or not
13 Instagram's algorithms can amplify the
14 content that is sent to teenage girls that
15 creates the potential risk of negative
16 appearance comparison?

17 MR. HALPERIN: Object to
18 characterization and foundation.

19 A. The knowledge that I have is
20 what teen girls and young adult women have
21 explicitly told me about their own
22 perceptions.

23 I am very tangentially related
24 to our ranking and recommendation systems or
25 what people broadly refer to as the algorithm

1 and how it works to bring specific content to
2 individuals.

3 BY MR. GOZA:

4 Q. Would the discussion of how
5 ranking and recommendations might amplify the
6 negative appearance content that is sent to
7 young teens -- is that something that is
8 outside your bailiwick?

9 A. All of the -- the overwhelming
10 majority of how our ranking and
11 recommendation systems work is outside of my
12 remit.

13 Q. Have you ever heard anyone in
14 the company raise the concern that the
15 ranking and recommendation algorithms of the
16 company amplify the amount of negative
17 appearance content that can be sent to
18 teenage girls?

19 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form.

20 A. In my own research, we bring up
21 that teens -- teen girls and young adults
22 attribute some of this to those -- to the
23 algorithms themselves.

24 BY MR. GOZA:

25 Q. Teen girls have reported to you

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1 that they believe that the algorithms amplify
2 the amount of material they get?

3 A. Correct. But since I've not
4 been on a product team and I have not studied
5 our algorithms myself, I cannot speak with
6 certainty about if there's a separation
7 between reality and perceptions here.

8 MR. GOZA: I move to strike
9 everything after "Correct."

10 BY MR. GOZA:

11 Q. You were asked a few questions
12 about the Wall Street Journal.

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Do you recall those?
15 I have a couple of other
16 questions for you.

17 Let me hand you what we've
18 marked as exhibit -- I'm sorry, what exhibit
19 is it? Tab 45, Exhibit 24.

20 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-24,
21 E-mail(s) re: WSJ Leaks -
22 Kids/Tweens/Teens,
23 META3047MDL-014-00266094 -
24 META3047MDL-014-00266096, was marked
25 for identification.)

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1 MR. HALPERIN: Are you going to
2 mark something else as Exhibit 26?
3 Give this back?

4 MR. GOZA: Yeah, sorry.

5 MR. HALPERIN: Go for it.

6 MS. QUINLAN: We have an issue.

7 MR. GOZA: Sorry, we do have an
8 issue. It has the same Bates stamp
9 number on it, but it's not the same
10 document, so I don't know how that
11 would happen.

12 Let's do this. Let's just plow
13 ahead and we'll get something -- and
14 we'll get that figured out at a break.

15 BY MR. GOZA:

16 Q. All right. Let me hand you now
17 what's been marked as Exhibit 26.

18 (Whereupon, Meta-Gross-26,
19 E-mail(s) re: Message Summary,
20 META3047MDL-044-00075012 -
21 META3047MDL-044-00075021, was
22 re-marked for identification.)

23 THE WITNESS: Great. Thank
24 you.

25 ///

1 BY MR. GOZA:

2 Q. That should be Bates stamp
3 META3047MDL-044-00075012. And go ahead and
4 take a moment, if you want, to read that, at
5 least acquaint yourself with it.

6 (Document review.)

7 THE WITNESS: Okay. Thank you
8 for giving me that time.

9 MR. GOZA: No problem.

10 BY MR. GOZA:

11 Q. First, let me ask you: Is this
12 an e-mail chain or another Workbooks...

13 A. This is a Workplace chat
14 thread. Workplace chat is kind of an
15 internal way that we can send what are
16 essentially instant messages or text messages
17 to one another through our internal systems.

18 Q. And I've seen you and others
19 use this format a fair amount. Was it
20 commonly used amongst Meta employees?

21 A. It is still commonly used
22 amongst Meta employees.

23 Q. Okay. So that was a common way
24 that you-all, as part of your work
25 responsibilities, would communicate with each

1 other?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. All right. So let's just go
4 through this.

5 This was after the initial leak
6 in the Wall Street Journal, and I refer to
7 leak meaning documents that were released to
8 the Wall Street Journal and they published.

9 A. Yes, this was after that.

10 Q. Okay. And there was actually
11 at this point some response by the company to
12 the leaks, true?

13 A. Yes, in reading this document,
14 it looks as if this conversation took place
15 after Facebook released -- or Meta released
16 the annotated text that had been reported in
17 the Wall Street Journal.

18 Q. And is it a fair
19 characterization to say that this was a
20 discussion amongst a variety of researchers
21 and how they felt that their work had been
22 misrepresented by Meta?

23 MR. HALPERIN: Object to
24 characterization.

25 A. This was a conversation

1 between -- it looks like four researchers,
2 about kind of the entire situation broadly.

3 Like, I'm sure that you can
4 imagine that tempers were running fairly high
5 or emotions were running fairly high, and so
6 we weren't just coworkers. Like we were
7 actually friends, and providing a safe space
8 to vent was part of this.

9 BY MR. GOZA:

10 Q. Got it.

11 Rather than going through the
12 whole thing, I just want to talk to you about
13 three or four entries and get your take on
14 it.

15 It says here on -- if we look
16 at the entry at 10:04:28 at the bottom of
17 page 1 -- well, let's actually start up a
18 little bit higher at 9:47:29. This is you
19 saying: I might perceive that I somehow felt
20 a little worse after that Q&A, but I can't
21 express causality.

22 First of all, the Q&A
23 references an open discussion that occurred
24 with some of the team leaders talking about
25 the leaks?

1 they are really criticizing you about and
2 acknowledging it and stop throwing your
3 researchers under the bus and double-crossing
4 journos so that this can all end, please.

5 Do you see that?

6 A. I see where she wrote that,
7 yes.

8 Q. Did you also feel like you had
9 been thrown under the bus to some extent?

10 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form,
11 assumes facts.

12 A. So I wasn't necessarily
13 thrilled with the idea that I was in this
14 situation in general. I -- for my own
15 leadership chain, I felt incredibly supported
16 by the person who is now my manager, by the
17 person -- you know, by the person who is now
18 my skip level around, you know, leaks happen.
19 Like this was a pretty big one, and, you
20 know, it is why we're all sitting here today.

21 But just the notion that leaks
22 happen and it was not a reflection on me
23 individually or my work holistically.

24 BY MR. GOZA:

25 Q. But -- and you'll see some

1 comments. I know you've already read ahead a
2 little bit. But they do make mention in the
3 annotations about some of the findings that
4 you made, and you reference it's not like I
5 made these themes up.

6 A. Yeah, there is one specific
7 comment that I reference within this document
8 that it is not the -- it's not the substance
9 that I took effect [sic] to. It was the
10 language, the specific language that they
11 used.

12 Q. Right. Because it made it
13 sound like you did make some of it up.

14 A. Correct. And I called that out
15 here, right, that it's not -- you know, that
16 the specific language that I used is what
17 they -- what I took offense to, not the fact
18 that the company did these annotations or
19 that the -- or the specific comments on the
20 overwhelming majority of the deck of mine
21 that they commented.

22 Q. Got it.

23 And you ask, it says: How can
24 we design -- at 10:17:13 you say: How can we
25 design an experiment to identify the causal

1 mechanism?

2 Do you see that?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And, of course, that was never
5 done, right?

6 A. This was a tongue-in-cheek
7 question, so like we talked a little bit
8 earlier about experiments and how could we
9 design an experiment to identify the causal
10 mechanism. This is really a tongue-in-cheek
11 question --

12 Q. Right.

13 A. -- to both highlight like the
14 difficulties of designing that experiment,
15 but also some of the ethical concerns that we
16 might have in doing so.

17 Q. If we go -- okay.

18 If we go to the next page, if
19 we see at 11:05:05, Shruti Bhutada says:
20 Like MZ -- and I'm assuming there she means
21 Mark Zuckerberg?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- asked Cox -- and I'm
24 assuming she's talking about Chris Cox?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- and Adam, and I'm assuming
2 that's Adam Mosseri?

3 A. That's my assumption as well.

4 Q. Okay. To say research used
5 flowery language and asked research
6 leadership to ask their own ICs to flame
7 other ICs' research.

8 Do you see that?

9 A. I see where she said that, yes.

10 Q. And then Shruti says: Research
11 leadership, bahahahaha. Sorry, but I feel
12 like leadership needs to Google what
13 leadership means.

14 And then you say: I get the
15 impression that MZ --

16 Mark Zuckerberg?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- decided how to frame the
19 external narrative, that other teams fought
20 back hard and lost.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And how did you get the
23 impression that Mark Zuckerberg was the one
24 who decided this is the way we're going to
25 handle this?

1 A. The comment that I wrote at
2 11:05, which is where I quoted somebody as:
3 Ended up being basically an MZ call on how it
4 was handled.

5 There's no other context within
6 this document of a chat thread that's, you
7 know, almost four years old now. I don't
8 know where that came from. But it was
9 definitely something that was passed to me
10 that I passed along.

11 Q. If we go to the next page,
12 9/30/2021, 11:17, and you say: My example to
13 [REDACTED] was.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And again, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

16 A. [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

17 Q. Yes.

18 It says: For example, when
19 reporting on qualitative research results,
20 some conclusions, slash, statements may be
21 researchers' speculation versus what was
22 actually reported by participants makes it
23 sound like I was just guessing or making
24 things up rather than finding the common
25 themes across the qualitative groups.

1 Do you see that?

2 A. Yes. This is in reference to,
3 as I messaged, there was one specific comment
4 in the annotations on the deck that I took
5 offense to, and that was this comment.

6 Q. Okay. And it sounds like -- I
7 mean, you did your best to accurately
8 describe the themes that you were reporting
9 back on in your presentations, true?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And the reason you took offense
12 is because this tried to, in some ways,
13 demean or belittle or diminish the
14 significance of those findings, true?

15 MR. HALPERIN: Object to form
16 and characterization.

17 A. The thing that I actually
18 objected to with this statement was, you
19 know, kind of what I said at the end, right,
20 that it makes it sound like I was just
21 guessing, right?

22 So it wasn't that the company
23 was trying to contextualize the research
24 findings or that the company was trying to
25 properly caveat things that I would have

1 caveated in voiceovers, or that the teams who
2 were working on this would know the
3 limitations of the work, like all of those
4 annotations and caveats and
5 contextualizations, like I totally agreed
6 with.

7 And even just this notion of,
8 you know, researchers summarize and pull out
9 themes, like if they had framed it in that
10 way, would have been completely fine with it
11 too.

12 The specific thing was that
13 phrasing of maybe researcher speculation.
14 Like, that is the part that sat very unwell
15 with me then and kind of still does now.

16 The rest of it -- like it's one
17 comment in an entire deck full of comments.
18 BY MR. GOZA:

19 Q. Sure.

20 And you disagreed with the idea
21 that you were speculating or guessing about
22 the commonality of the themes, true?

23 MR. HALPERIN: Asked and
24 answered.

25 A. Yeah. Yes, I was -- you know,

1 as I mentioned, I was upset with this
2 phrasing of maybe speculation.

3 BY MR. GOZA:

4 Q. And you also gathered that
5 Shruti Bhutada and others were very upset
6 about some of the comments made about their
7 research, true?

8 A. Yes, I definitely gather that
9 Drs. Mody and Bhutada were upset with the
10 comments on their research.

11 Q. And you had worked with
12 Dr. Mody and Dr. Bhutada on many occasions?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. And, in fact, you had published
15 and done presentations together?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Thought they were excellent
18 researchers?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. Thought they did the best to
21 try to present to the company true and
22 accurate representations of the studies that
23 they did?

24 A. Drs. Bhutada and Mody are
25 excellent researchers.

CERTIFICATE

I, MICHAEL E. MILLER, Fellow of the Academy of Professional Reporters, Registered Diplomate Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, Certified Court Reporter and Notary Public, do hereby certify that prior to the commencement of the examination, WENDY GROSS PhD was duly sworn by me to testify to the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

I DO FURTHER CERTIFY that the foregoing is a verbatim transcript of the testimony as taken stenographically by and before me at the time, place and on the date hereinbefore set forth, to the best of my ability.

I DO FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither a relative nor employee nor attorney nor counsel of any of the parties to this action, and that I am neither a relative nor employee of such attorney or counsel, and that I am not financially interested in the



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Dated: February 6, 2025