1	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT				
2	FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE NORTHERN DIVISION, AT KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE				
3					
4	United States of America, :				
5	Government, :				
6	Vs. : CR				
7	: 3-08-142 David C. Kernell, :				
8	Defendant, :				
9					
10	Transcript of Chris Poole before the Honorable				
11	Thomas W. Phillips on April 22, 2010.				
13	APPEARANCES:				
14					
15	ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT:				
16	D. Gregory Weddle Mark Krotoski				
17	Assistants U.S. Attorney				
18					
19	ON BEHALF OF THE DEFENDANT: Wade V. Davies				
20	wade v. Davies Ann E. Passino Attorneys at Law				
21	Mecorneys at haw				
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11:12:00

11:11:34

- Q. And if a user of your site wanted to contact you by e-mail, what is one of the e-mails they might do that?
 - A. moot@4chan.org.
 - Q. Please tell the jury what is 4chan.org?
- A. 4chan is a forum. It's an image board, so it's just kind of a forum that the primary focus is the posting of images.
- Q. So you say an image forum. Is there a requirement that participants, when they submit an original post, include an image?
- A. Yes, all threads, all new threads require an image to be posted.
- THE COURT: Mr. Poole, you need to move a little closer to the microphone so the jurors can hear your testimony.
- 17 BY MR. KROTOSKI:
 - Q. Is there a fee charged for users of the 4chan site?
 - A. No.
 - Q. Does 4chan have advertisements?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And are they on nearly every page?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. Is 4chan considered a popular site?

	I	April 22, 2010/Poole/Direct
	1	or United States law.
	2	Q. Now, are there moderators that assist the
	3	4chan site?
	4	A. Yes.
	5	Q. What is their role?
	6	A. Moderators are tasked with the deletion of
	7	rule infringing content and banishment of users who
	8	break these rules.
	9	Q. And what ability do the moderators have to
11:13:44	10	remove content from the site?
	11	A. They can delete it. They can delete offending
	12	posts and they can block users from using the website.
	13	Q. In front of you in one of the books there, if
	14	you can please turn to what has been marked as
	15	Government Exhibit 125. Do you recognize that exhibit
	16	marked Government Exhibit 125?
	17	(Exhibit No. G-125 was marked for
	18	identification.)
	19	A. Yes.
11:14:16	20	Q. Does it fairly and accurately show some of the
	21	pages of the 4chan site, as they were used in September
	22	of 2008?
	23	A. Yes.
	24	MR. KROTOSKI: The government moves into
	25	evidence Government Exhibit 125.
		5

THE COURT: It will be received. 1 2 (Exhibit No. G-125 was received 3 in evidence.) BY MR. KROTOSKI: 4 5 I would like to see if we can display that on the terminal next to you. Now, this page that is 6 7 depicted here, 4chan, is this the home page? 8 Α. Yes. 9 And can you describe the various sections of Q. the page, and if you would like you can circle it on the 11:14:52 10 11 screen or designate which portion you are talking about. 12 Α. The top of the page has an introduction that 13 displays the first time when you visit the page. Under that are the links to the individual boards. 14 15 bottom area is all dynamic content. When you refresh the page, it will show you recent images and recent 16 posts that have been made. At the bottom there is 17 navigation for other pages contained on www.4chan.org. 18 Pretty good. You indicated this portion is 19 Q. 11:15:40 20 where the boards are. Within that portion, where is the 21 Random /b/ board? 22 Α. It's under the misc. (18+) right there. 23 And so the portion that you have underlined 24 says "Random"? 25 I believe so. It's kind of small. It's where Α.

The first field that you can enter is the name

Α.

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what is the mechanics and how do they get that image to the 4chan site.

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would bring up a file browser on your computer. Yo

You would click the "Browse" button.

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would select the image file. You would hit "Ok" and the

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Then you would go ahead and click the "Submit" button.

location of that file would be populated right here.

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Q. Now, as the user connects to their own

11:19:10

Q. Now, as the user connects to their own computer and selects an image that is going to be uploaded, what is the naming convention to enter this file field? Does it adopt the name from the computer or

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how does that work?

Α.

time stamp.

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would be the original file name. When it's uploaded to

The name that would be displayed in this field

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the site, it's renamed and it's renamed using a Unix

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Q. Is that a sequence of numbers?

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A. Yes.

11:19:32

Q. Turning to the next page. This is from the slide two slides ago, a larger example. Can you explain what is depicted here?

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A. This is what a thread would look like on the boards page. You have got, this line contains the name right here, the anonymous, the date and the time as well as the number of the post. The numbers are all

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23

11:21:38

- A. Correct. If these replies were made to that thread, then, yes.
- Q. Now, you mentioned popularity. How popular is the Random /b/ board?
 - A. It is the most popular board on the site.
- Q. Now, is there a limit to the number of posts that can be displayed under a particular thread for someone viewing 4chan?
 - A. No.
- Q. Is there a limit in terms of -- what happens to the posts, if you have a hundred posts and then 160 posts and 161 posts. Do they remain viewable for everyone who visits 4chan, or what happens to those posts?
- A. The posts are, you know, remain in the thread until the thread is pruned.
 - Q. Pruned by whom?
 - A. Automatically by the board software.
- Q. And then how would the board automatically prune the thread? Does it have a capacity limit?
- A. Yeah. Every board has a maximum number of threads, say a hundred. Every time a new thread is posted, something has to be removed. Eventually all of the threads are cycled off and then pruned that way. It's time based and on some of the boards it's

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            contents of these posts. Does 4chan maintain business
            records of web logs, also audit logs and sometimes
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           banned entries as well, if a particular user has been
           banned?
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        5
                 A. Yes.
                 Q. Before you is a copy of Government Exhibits
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        7
           129, 130, 131 --
        8
                      I don't have anything under 131.
                 Α.
        9
                           MR. KROTOSKI: May I approach, Your Honor?
11:25:50
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                           THE COURT: You may.
           BY MR. KROTOSKI:
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       12
                 Q. -- 132 and 133. Do you recognize each of
           those exhibits?
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                           THE WITNESS: I do.
       14
                           (Exhibit Nos. G-129, 130, 131,
       15
                           132, 133 were marked for
       16
                           identification.)
       17
           BY MR. KROTOSKI:
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                      Government Exhibit 129, what is that, please?
       19
                 Q.
11:26:38
       20
                 A. An e-mail I sent to Special Agent Scott Wenger
           and I think it is the CD that he burned of the records I
       21
           sent him.
       22
                     And the e-mail, does it include the
       23
                 Q.
           attachments for 130, 131, 132 and 133?
       24
       25
                 Α.
                     Yes.
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		April 22, 2010/Poole/Direct
	1	keep and also maintain those records?
	2	A. Certain records, the bans and the deletions,
	3	yes. The access logs are pruned regularly.
	4	Q. And when you say pruned, are you saying that
	5	they are retained for a limited period?
	6	A. Yes.
	7	Q. And so after that passage of time they may no
	8	longer be available?
	9	A. Yes.
11:28:42	10	Q. In this instance in response to a law
	11	enforcement request were they available?
	12	A. The records that are provided here, yes.
	13	MR. KROTOSKI: The government moves into
	14	evidence Government Exhibits 129, 130, 131, 132, 133.
	15	THE COURT: They'll be received.
	16	(Exhibit Nos. G-129, 130, 131,
	17	132, 133 were received in
	18	evidence.)
	19	BY MR. KROTOSKI:
11:29:06	20	Q. I would like to show you what has been marked
	21	as Government Exhibit 126 in the book first, please.
	22	(Exhibit No. G-126 was marked for
	23	identification.)
	24	Q. Do you recognize that exhibit?
	25	A. Yes. It's a summary.
		16

4chan site?

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1:00:53 on September 16th. Α.

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If you can explain the first entry. What Q. activity is recorded in the 4chan records there?

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column is the request that is made. When it says "POST"

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that is the, you know, the user submitted something and that is the file that they submitted it through.

The first column is the time. The second

this case it's the /b/- Random board.

11:31:32

The "Referrer" shows the page they were 10 11 submitting from. In this case when it says

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"imgboard.html" it means they were posting a new thread.

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When it has a series of numbers before the .html, it's

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because they were replying to a thread.

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identifies the user's Web browser and operating system

The last column is a user agent string which

The last column, the user agent string, does

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version.

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11:32:02 20

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Α. Yes.

time had on their computer?

Ο.

Now, you mentioned that this user was

that show which browser operating system and other

information that this particular user at that date and

initiating a post. On the next line do you see this

thread number you referenced earlier?

- 1
- A. Yes.

Q. What is the thread number for this initiated post?

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A. 85525276.

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Q. Now, do these records on this page and continuing to the next page show that this user was on the site through 2:01:03 on September 16th, 2008?

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A. I am sorry, can you repeat the question.

Q. Absolutely. Do the 4chan records show that

11:33:02

this particular user at that IP address was on the 4chan

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continuing through to about 2:01:03 on the second page?

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A. Yes. There is an entry below that.

site starting with this post at 1:00:53 and then

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Q. Yes, there is another entry as well. During that continuous period of time this user was making

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posts and engaging in activity with 4chan?

down through some of these entries, please.

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A. Yes.

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Q. Turning back, please, to the first page. You mentioned 1:04. Does this user, as reflected in these records, continue on with this particular thread?

11:33:54

A. Yes.

Q. If you can briefly explain what is the activity that is going on with this user. Just walk us

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A. The entries -- the user is responding to the

Q.

Α.

1 2

thread 85525276 from, you know, 1:04 to all of the way down the page.

1:21:51, what do the 4chan records show was going on at

Now, going down the page to 1:21:47 and

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11:34:58

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11:36:04 20

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that time?

I'm sorry. Can you repeat that again.

Certainly. Directing your attention to Q. 1:21:47 and 1:21:51, what do the 4chan records show this user was doing on the 4chan site at this time?

A new post was made.

Ο. Do the records show whether an image was being submitted with this new post?

Α. Well, the line after the post, the request shows that the user's browser downloaded that thumbnail, the 122154 number right there ending in .jpg. That 12 number is the timestamp, the Unix timestamp where the files are renamed to that number. Accordingly, it's with the 1:21:43 which correlates with the post, the entry proceeding it with the arrow pointing to it.

- Q. So an image is referenced in this post. It has an original name and 4chan renames that image, is that correct?
 - Α. Yes.
- Q. And what image name did 4chan assign to that image reflected in this record?

- 1221542503664s.jpg.
- What is the significance to .jpg? Q.
- .jpg is the file format for the image file. Α.
- Turning to the second page at 1:30 and 1:31, Q. is there another image that is being posted at that time?
 - Α. Yes.
- Is the file name that 4chan assigned to that 12215543021404s.jpg?
 - Α. Yes.
- Similarly, at 1:34:20 and 1:34:11 do the 4chan Q. records show that an image was posted and it was assigned the name 1221543251305s?
- Yes. One thing, the "s" that trails the number, but prior to the file name, see the thumb, the proceeding thumb. That's the thumb file name. The file itself would be renamed that number, but without the "s." Only the thumbnails get the "s" in the file path. The thumbnails, the images are served out of a different directory from the thumbnails. The number would be the same. It wouldn't have the "s."
- Thank you. That number, again, is assigned by Q. the 4chan site?
 - Α. Yes.
 - Q. And then the same thing, another image at 1:48

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11:37:52 20

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reflected in the records?

A. Yes.

- Q. Turn to the last page, please. What do the 4chan records show that this user at this IP address was engaged in on September 17th, 2008, at approximately 12:57 Eastern time?
- A. The user posted a new thread and then responded twice to a thread.
- Q. Now, in this exhibit in the Referrer area, what is the significance of the number 85782652?
 - A. That's the thread number.
- Q. And how come there is one at 12:58 and another one at 13:00 or one o'clock?
 - A. There were two separate posts made.
- Q. All right. Showing you what has previously been admitted as Government Exhibit 1, were you able to make a comparison of this exhibit with those entries that you just referenced?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. So for the first time and thread number in Government Exhibit 1 starting with "hello, /b/, as many of you might already know" and continuing, is that reflected on the 12:57:23 entry and the next one on the

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11:39:40

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2324

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summary chart?

11:40:50

11:41:30 20

A. Yes.

- Q. Now, there is a slight couple of seconds variance in time. Can you explain that?
- A. Yeah. The server that has this image board, the .php file, that is the application, that server has a time that is different from the database server. So there is -- these logs came from the Apache Web server vis-à-vis the logs from the web server. That was using the time of the application server. What you see printed on I believe it's Exhibit 1, that timestamp is set by the database server. So there is a slight variance of a few seconds because the server times were a few seconds out of sync.
- Q. Notwithstanding that discrepancy just by a couple of seconds they are the same thread numbers?
 - A. Correct.
- Q. Showing you the bottom portion of Government Exhibit 1, were you able to make a comparison of this submission on the 4chan post with the last entry on the summary exhibit?
 - A. I am sorry. Can you show me exhibit 1 again?
- Q. Sure. It's in the book there as well, if you prefer to see it in that format.
 - A. You are referring the post made at -- that

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11:44:14 11:44:36

- A. I am 22.
- Q. We have seen some of the information that the site collects. Since people post anonymously there is really, you don't really have any data on the ages of the users of 4chan, do you?
 - A. No.
- Q. I am going to ask you a couple of questions about Government Exhibit 125 that you were shown. At the beginning when you sign on to 4chan it gives you a choice of a bunch of different kinds of boards to go to, is that right?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Those are boards that reflect different types of interests?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. People have like just, for example, the first one is "Japanese culture."
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. And the second one is "Anime." What is that?
 - A. Anime is a Japanese animation, cartoons.
- Q. Is that what some of the examples in this exhibit represent?
 - A. Yes, this was taken from the Anime board.
 - Q. It is called Animu & Mango?
- \blacksquare A. That is a misspelling, actually. It's Anime &

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11:47:00

11:48:00

people real active in putting things up on the board?

- A. Yes.
- Q. And the term "rickroll" you said it tries to make people go to a site where they think it is going to be one thing, but it is a video of Rick Astley, is that right?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. He was some kind of singer?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. It's a joke?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Now, the documents that you have provided in response to law enforcement requests, I think I believe the date, one of the dates of the response was February 13th, 2009. That is exhibit 129.
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And at that time you were able to provide a good deal of information with regard to what happened on your site September 16th, 17th, 2008, right?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. As reflected in these, for example, these IP addresses and Vtunnel proxy addresses, Exhibit 131?
- A. I didn't provide that IP address. That was given to me in the search warrant. The records were, you know, pulled based on that IP address.

11:49:08

- 11:50:16 20

- Q. Once you were given the IP address, you were able to do a search of your files and provide the government with the information that is in this exhibit?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And so when the postings that were obviously to go through this -- to summarize, the postings that were made on 4chan, you were able to provide IP addresses on activity from that certain IP address, right?
- A. Yes. I mean, these records are the web server logs. They are not all postings, but they are just activity from the IP address that was provided.
- Q. Okay. And then in the government 26, if you were given someone else's IP address and asked to figure out what postings they made on 4chan either in this thread or another at the same time, you could have gone through that same exercise, right?
 - A. Yes, correct.
- Q. One of the reasons then that I guess that 4chan collects IP addresses and the user activity is because you do ban people from the site for violating your terms, right?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And that way you can tell from the IP addresses and their activity who it is that you need to

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	1	ban?
	2	A. Yes.
	3	Q. And you ban them by IP address?
	4	A. Yes.
	5	MR. DAVIES: No further, Your Honor.
	6	THE COURT: Anything further,
	7	Mr. Krotoski?
	8	MR. KROTOSKI: No further, Your Honor.
	9	THE COURT: May this witness be excused?
11:51:26	10	MR. KROTOSKI: Yes.
	11	(End of witness)
	12	I CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS AN ACCURATE TRANSCRIPT OF THE RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS IN THE
	13	ABOVE-ENTITLED MATTER, THIS THE 6th DAY OF August, 2010.
	14	s/ <u>I. Qwn</u> Jolene owen.
	15	Registered Professional Reporter
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