

Opinion: Jurors in Johnny Depp and Amber Heard case face choice over which actor to believe

Opinion by [Paul Callan](#)

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(CNN) [...]

The trial (proces) of Depp's defamation case (sprawa o zniesławienie) against Heard entered its 15th day on Thursday. Depp claims that Heard falsely and maliciously accused him of domestic abuse (**falszywie i w złej wierze/zamiarze oskarżyła go o przemoc domową**), damaging his career and reputation in the amount of \$50 million. Heard has **countersued (wniosła pozew wzajemny)** to the tune of \$100 million for nuisance. Both Heard and Depp have **denied each other's allegations of abuse. (zaprzeczyli wzajemnym zarzutom o przemoc domową)**

The first 15 days of this trial have often looked more like a reality television show than a Virginia lawsuit. [...]



In the lead-up to the trial, many lawyers I talked to who were following the case felt that Depp didn't have a chance of winning. **Defamation cases brought (sprawy wniesione przez) by a public figure such as Depp are harder to prove (udowodnić)** because **the plaintiff (powód) must prove not only that an offensive statement (obraźliwe stwierdzenie) about him was false (nieprawdziwe) but also that it was made with "malice." (w złym zamiarze)**. Depp had also lost a **libel case (zniesławienie pisemne, slander – ustne)** against a British tabloid in 2020 that described him as a "**wife beater**."

During the first 13 days of the trial, Depp's attorneys systematically **attempted (usiłowali)** to shatter Heard's reputation by calling numerous **witnesses who testified (świadków, którzy zeznawali)** that things they'd seen and heard suggested that **she had been abusive (stosowała przemoc) toward Depp**. Depp testified in an odd, mumbling fashion, rarely making eye contact with anyone in the courtroom, but the story he told seemed **compelling (przekonywująca)** to many, particularly his fans.

Backed up by **(poparty) live testimony (zeznania w sądzie) and deposition video (nagrane na video zeznania pod przysięgą poza sądem)** from his bodyguard, Malcolm Connolly, and others, Depp's lawyers **claimed (utrzymywali)** that Heard's abuse of Depp began on their honeymoon trip on the Orient Express. Connolly **testified (zeznał)** that he observed **scratches (zadrapania)** on Depp's neck along with **bruising (zasiniaczenia)** on his eye socket and nose as well as a fat lip after an **alleged (rzekomy, domniemany)** particularly

violent attack (agresywny,/brutalny atak) by Heard during the trip. The [bodyguard said](#) it looked like "he walked into a door, or a door walked into him."

Depp's direct testimony painted the marriage as a chamber of horrors. He recalled hiding in a bathroom for protection once after being hit in the skull by Heard, who **admits (przyznać)** on audiotape she cannot **deny (zaprzeczać)** this because she was "under the influence of (**pod wpływem**) Ambien" at the time.

In yet another incident, Depp **alleged (utrzymywał/ zarzucal, że)** Heard threw a vodka bottle at him, which almost **severed (odciela)** his finger, leaving "the bone sticking out." Bodyguard Travis McGivern added to the litany of **violent act allegations (zarzuty popelnienia czynów agresywnych)**, recounting that he saw Heard throw a can of Red Bull at the actor's back and **spit (napluć)** on him as well.

These are only a partial list of violent attacks graphically described during three days of testimony presented by Depp's lawyers, with Depp **indicating (wykazujące)** that he sometimes had to [defend himself](#) from Heard.

This testimony was further **buttressed (podparte)** by a psychologist, Shannon Curry, **retained (wynajęta)** by Depp's lawyers, who examined Heard for 12 hours. She concluded that Heard suffers from a borderline personality disorder and a histrionic personality disorder. A borderline personality disorder, Curry said, "seems to be a predictive factor for women who implement violence against their partner." As for histrionic personality disorder, the symptoms display "drama and shallowness," [she said](#).



[Amber Heard testifies: 'Nothing I did made him stop hitting me'](#)

Heard's legal team would later respond to Curry's claims with testimony from its retained expert, a **forensic psychologist (psychology sądowy)**, Dawn Hughes, who had previously said the actress had been subjected to sexual violence by Depp and believed Heard has **post-traumatic stress disorder (zespół stresu pourazowego)** as a result of the **alleged abuse (domniemana przemoc)**.

When Heard **took the witness stand (zajęła miejsce dla świadków)** after Depp's lawyers had **rested their case (zakończyli prezentację dowodów)**, her **demeanor (zachowanie)** markedly contrasted with that of Depp's. She made eye contact with the jurors and her questioners, shedding tears and sometimes smiles at regular intervals, openly displaying a range of emotions.

Depp, on the other hand, seemed to make most of his eye contact with a monitor attached to **the witness box (miejsce dla świadka)**, often mumbling and rarely changing his tone of voice or displaying emotion of any kind. Depp almost appeared to be playing one of his odd movie characters rather than himself.

Heard **recounted (opisać)** a particularly **harrowing (wstrząsający)** story of Depp ripping her clothes and subjecting her to a "[cavity search](#)" for drugs while on a vacation with friends in 2013.

According to her testimony, the group of friends had been using mushrooms -- "[laughy drugs](#)," as Heard called them, and she had ingested one mushroom cap -- before this event

occurred. She said she made no attempt to leave when Depp finished this particularly **vile (nikczemny, haniebny)** act or when he smashed the inside of the trailer where they were staying in a frightening rage, though she did describe her emotional **distress (ból, cierpienie)**. They then continued the vacation at the trailer park with friends.

Heard fluctuated between testifying to stories of Depp abusing her with descriptions of how much she loved him. Experts in domestic abuse cases often testify that this is not abnormal behavior for an **abuse victim (ofiara przemocy)**. Ultimately the jury has to **evaluate(ocenić) the relevance (znaczenie)** of the behavior in each individual case.

Evaluating witness tears can be particularly difficult for jurors in any case. Heard shed **(wylała)** quite a few in her testimony when she narrated her **claims of Depp's alleged sexual, physical and emotional abuse (zarzuty o przemoc seksualną, fizyczną i emocjonalną)** against her. The question jurors will face is whether the tears and the emotional displays were an authentic, understandable response to real **inflicted (wyrządzonej, zadanej)** trauma and abuse or "the performance of a lifetime," as **alleged (zarzuczone przez) by Depp's lawyers.** When **the case resumes (sprawa zostanie wznowiona) on May 16**, it is likely to last for at least another two weeks as both Depp and Heard seek **to corroborate (potwierdzać zeznania)** their claims with **credible witnesses and other evidence (wiarygodni świadkowie oraz inne dowody)**. More testimony and headlines can be expected, causing **substantial and permanent damage (znaczną i trwałą szkodę)** to the reputation and careers of both these famous actors. Unlike their successful movies, the trial of a defamation case rarely has a happy ending.