

# Perez Hilton Beats MTV's '16 and Pregnant' Star in Court

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The blogger was sued for libel after reporting that a reality TV star "may have been involved in the murder of her late fiancé."



Perez Hilton

**Kristina Head**, who appeared on the fourth season of MTV's *16 and Pregnant*, has lost a libel lawsuit against **Perez Hilton** in a case that dealt with a murder insinuation made on Facebook and how a social media comment was framed on a gossip blog.

Head, who is also known as Kristina Robinson, was featured on the MTV show in the aftermath of the death of her fiancé **Todd Hight, Jr.**, the father of her child. On the show, she focused on Todd's untimely death and its effect on her.

A few weeks before Head's season premiered on MTV in March 2012, **Tina Hight**, her late fiancé's mother, made cryptic comments on her son's Facebook page about the fateful beach trip that took Todd's life.

Among other things, the mother commented, "They killed him" and "We feel like they all planned this" and "I wonder if she cared @ all."

On March 16, 2012, the comments made it onto Perezitos (Hilton's site that covers celebrity families) under the title, "16 and Pregnant Murder Mystery!" In reaction, the MTV star sued for defamation in Texas, but the lawsuit against the blogger has failed to make it to trial.

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The judge in the case hasn't articulated the reasons for throwing out the case, but since the dismissal happened on an anti-SLAPP motion, it suggests that the judge agreed with the defendant that the subject of the blogger's report was a matter of public concern

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and that Head was unlikely to win her lawsuit. In the lawsuit, Perez Hilton attorneys argued that Head "thrust herself into the public eye and brought public attention to Todd Hight's death" as a result of participating on the MTV show and publicizing it.

This made a Facebook post by her would-be mother-in-law fair game.

"As a direct result of Plaintiff's actions, Tina Hight was given a microphone and a spotlight to discuss her son's death," says the motion to dismiss.

Assuming the judge accepted that the blog post was a matter of public concern, the burden shifted to Head to establish a presumption that defamation took place.

In the post, **it was reported** that "Kristina Robinson and newcomer on this season's *16 and Pregnant*, may have been involved in the murder of her late fiancé, Todd Hight Jr!"

The key word above is "may." The motion to dismiss said the posting was "substantially true."

"It does not assert as fact that Plaintiff was criminally involved in any crime," Hilton's lawyers argued. "Instead it merely expresses the 'possibility' of Plaintiff's involvement... In addition to the literal truth of the statement, its substantial truth is readily apparent when viewed in context. As the Posting makes clear: (1) Todd Hight drowned when Plaintiff was pregnant with his child, (2) Tina Hight does not think his death was an accident, and (3) Tina Hight accused Plaintiff of involvement in Todd's death."

The purpose of Texas' anti-SLAPP statute is to avoid meritless litigation when the First Amendment is implicated.

Hilton was represented by **Bryan Freedman, Jesse Kaplan** and **Jordan Susman** at Freedman + Taitelman.

Freedman says about the ruling, "We are pleased the court granted Perez Hilton's anti-SLAPP motion. It is unfortunate that this so called 'reality star' had little reality of her own when it came to this case. I am sure it will now start to sink in as we move to collect the legal fees and costs incurred defending this frivolous case."

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