1	IN THE SUPREME COURT (OF THE UNITED STATES
2		x
3	ANDRE WALLACE,	:
4	Petitioner	:
5	V.	: No. 05-1240
6	CHICAGO POLICE OFFICERS	:
7	KRISTEN KATO AND EUGENE	:
8	ROY.	:
9		x
10		Washington, D.C.
11		Monday, November 6, 2006
12	The above-e	entitled matter came on for oral
13	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States	
14	at 11:05 a.m.	
15	APPEARANCES:	
16	KENNETH N. FLAXMAN, ESQ.,	Chicago, Ill; on behalf of
17	the Petitioner.	
18	BENNA RUTH SOLOMON, ESQ.,	Deputy Corporation Counsel;
19	Chicago, Ill.; on beha	alf of the Respondents.
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21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1	CONTENTS	
2	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	PAGE
3	KENNETH N. FLAXMAN, ESQ.	
4	On behalf of the Petitioner	3
5	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	
6	BENNA RUTH SOLOMON, ESQ.	
7	On behalf of the Respondents	27
8	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF	
9	KENNETH N. FLAXMAN, ESQ.	
10	On behalf of Petitioner	49
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(11:05 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	next in Wallace versus Kato and Roy.
5	Mr. Flaxman.
6	ORAL ARGUMENT OF KENNETH N. FLAXMAN
7	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
8	MR. FLAXMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice,
9	and may it please the Court:
LO	This case presents the Court with the
L1	question it addressed in Heck versus Humphrey raised in
L2	a slightly different context.
L3	The context in Heck was of a prisoner whose
L 4	conviction had been affirmed who was in prison, who had
L5	filed a civil rights case that would have had the
L6	practical effect of collaterally challenging his
L7	criminal conviction. The context in this case is of a
L8	civil rights plaintiff who has prevailed in his criminal
L9	case, who was imprisoned for $8-1/2$ years fighting the
20	criminal case and comes to Federal court with a Section
21	1983 action saying, I now seek a remedy for my
22	unconstitutional incarceration, and files his lawsuit.
23	The court in Heck held that this action, an
24	action to recover damages for unconstitutional
25	conviction or imprisonment, accrues when the conviction

- 1 is set aside. That's the principle that we asked the
- 2 court of appeals to apply and the court of appeals said:
- 3 We're not going to apply that because we will adopt a
- 4 categorical rule without any implied exceptions
- 5 whatsoever that says when you're arrested you have 2
- 6 years, which is the statute of limitations in 1983 cases
- 7 in Illinois, to file your claim for damages.
- 8 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Flaxman, one starting
- 9 point. You say that this case should be just like Heck,
- 10 but in Heck the core problem was the line between 1983
- 11 and habeas, right?
- MR. FLAXMAN: Well, that was one view of the
- 13 core problem.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: But at least this case
- 15 involves no such concern about habeas.
- 16 MR. FLAXMAN: That's correct. In Heck the
- 17 Court solves the core problem by concluding -- by
- 18 denying the existence of a cause of action for damages
- 19 until the criminal case had been resolved in favor of
- 20 the civil rights claimant, which is the rule, the common
- 21 law rule for malicious prosecution. That's the solution
- 22 that the Court came up with in Heck, which is the
- 23 solution that the petitioner believes should be applied
- 24 in this case.
- 25 JUSTICE SCALIA: But only if, only if the

- 1 challenged evidence, the challenge to the evidence, if
- 2 sustained, would necessarily -- and this is the crucial
- 3 language -- invalidate the criminal conviction.
- 4 MR. FLAXMAN: That's what would have
- 5 happened in this case, as the dissenting judge in the
- 6 petition for rehearing --
- 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: Would necessarily have?
- 8 You could have said that ex ante?
- 9 MR. FLAXMAN: Absolutely. In criminal cases
- 10 there's discovery and the criminal defendant knows what
- 11 the prosecution --
- 12 JUSTICE SCALIA: You don't know what other
- 13 evidence there might have been in the criminal case. Ex
- 14 ante you can't tell.
- 15 MR. FLAXMAN: You do know because it's
- 16 disclosed in discovery. We don't do trial by ambush any
- 17 more in criminal cases. The defendant knew that all the
- 18 evidence against him was the alleged --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, but he did
- 20 not know that for years later. I mean, they don't have
- 21 to bring a prosecution immediately. They can wait until
- 22 the day before the statute of limitations runs.
- MR. FLAXMAN: Well, there is no statute of
- 24 limitations for murder in Illinois.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, then they can

- 1 wait a long time. 2 (Laughter.) 3 MR. FLAXMAN: If he's incarcerated that whole time awaiting the filing of charges, then his 4 5 cause of action would not have accrued. But the more 6 likely scenario is that he would be arrested --7 JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, is that -- I mean, 8 your friend on the other side says that the cause of action would have accrued at the moment at which he was 9 10 bound over by the decision of an independent magistrate. 11 At that point the false arrest and the incarceration 12 incident to the false arrest is over and if there is 13 ever going to be a claim for what happens next, I gather 14 it'ss going to be a common law action for false 15 imprisonment, and that, I guess, would not accrue until 16 the imprisonment is over. But so far as the arrest is 17 concerned, whatever whatever wrong is done, that wrong 18 is completed at the point at which an independent
- 20 MR. FLAXMAN: If the claim was solely

magistrate takes over.

19

- 21 directed at the arrest, then Your Honor would be
- 22 absolutely correct. The claim in this case, the cause
- of action, is not that he was taken off the street
- 24 without probable cause. The core of the cause of action
- 25 is that the respondent police officers exploited that

- 1 arrest to get this untruthful confession that was used
- 2 to hold Mr. Wallace in custody for 8-1/2 years, to seize
- 3 him for 8-1/2 years. It's not just the arrest. It's
- 4 the arrest plus exploiting it.
- 5 JUSTICE SOUTER: But all of that occurred,
- 6 as I -- correct me if I'm wrong on the facts, but I
- 7 thought all of that occurred prior to -- I don't know
- 8 what they call it in Illinois, but prior to a bind-over
- 9 hearing or prior to the point at which the judiciary
- 10 steps in, breaking the, as it were, the chain of
- 11 causation between what the police do and the subsequent
- 12 incarceration.
- MR. FLAXMAN: Under Malley versus Briggs, it
- 14 doesn't break the chain of causation if we adhere --
- 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: No, but just as a factual
- 16 matter is it correct -- is it correct as a factual
- 17 matter that the confession that was given was a
- 18 confession that was given before there was any judicial
- 19 intervention, before he was brought before a magistrate?
- MR. FLAXMAN: That's correct.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay.
- MR. FLAXMAN: There was no other evidence
- 23 presented to the magistrate or that could have been
- 24 presented to the magistrate other than the confession to
- 25 show --

- 1 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, Mr. Flaxman, is your
- 2 argument limited to that situation, where there is no
- 3 evidence whatsoever against the criminal defendant other
- 4 than the illegally seized evidence? Or would it apply
- 5 in some situations in which there is some additional
- 6 evidence?
- 7 MR. FLAXMAN: If there's some additional
- 8 evidence, we could not say was necessarily -- would
- 9 necessarily imply the invalidity of the conviction. And
- 10 would be -- that's not our situation.
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: Any additional evidence,
- 12 even if it would be insufficient to support a
- 13 conviction, takes -- makes make this -- would make this
- 14 a different case.
- MR. FLAXMAN: I would not say -- well, it
- 16 would make it a different case. But if I was arguing in
- 17 a case where there was a little bit of evidence, but not
- 18 enough to say there's probable cause to accuse him of a
- 19 crime, I would say that suppressing or eliminating the
- 20 confession would necessarily imply the invalidity of any
- 21 conviction.
- JUSTICE ALITO: What, what does necessarily
- 23 mean? Does it mean no additional evidence? Does it
- 24 mean no additional evidence that is insufficient to
- 25 support a conviction? Does it mean no additional

- 1 evidence that would be likely to persuade a trier of
- 2 fact?
- 3 MR. FLAXMAN: What I think it means is that
- 4 there's no conviction -- what I think it should mean --
- 5 and I'm not trying to debate the dictionary, what I
- 6 think it should mean is that if there is no evidence
- 7 other than after -- that is excluded, to base a
- 8 prosecution on, as in this case where the man is let go,
- 9 because there is no evidence to prosecute him, that that
- 10 does imply the invalidity of the conviction.
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, in this case, let me
- 12 just me more question on it. In this case, suppose
- 13 there had been a witness who said at about the time when
- 14 this murder took place, I saw somebody who was between,
- 15 I would judge as between the age of 15 and 25, average
- 16 height, average build, running away. And let's say that
- 17 your client fits that description. Now would that be
- 18 enough to take this case out of the rule that you're
- 19 arguing for?
- MR. FLAXMAN: No. Unless that witness could
- 21 say and the man who I saw then is the defendant in
- 22 this -- is the criminal defendant, Mr. Wallace. There
- 23 was an eyewitness in this case. And he could not make
- 24 an in-court identification of Mr. Wallace. And the
- 25 prosecutor realized that that wasn't enough evidence on

- 1 which to base a criminal prosecution, and gave up.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Again, you didn't, you
- 3 didn't know that at the time the arrest was made, or at
- 4 the time the confession was extorted, or at the time he
- 5 was bound over. You really didn't know that until the
- 6 trial. For all you knew, they might have found in
- 7 addition to the confession, they might have found
- 8 eyewitnesss who would have identified your client. You
- 9 couldn't tell that until the trial.
- 10 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, that would have been
- 11 very unfair if they withheld -- they ambushed the
- 12 defendant with --
- JUSTICE ALITO: No, well -- until the trial
- 14 --
- 15 JUSTICE SCALIA: Until the trial, until the
- 16 process of trial began.
- 17 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, we didn't know that
- 18 because there weren't any, because this man didn't
- 19 commit that crime. We are talking -- in the
- 20 hypothetical, I think we should set, start with
- 21 Mr. Wallace being an innocent man, who was arrested
- 22 unlawfully, who gives an involuntarily -- an involuntary
- 23 false confession. And on the basis of that is held for
- 24 eight and a half years, finally wins the case, is set
- 25 free, and then sues the --

- 1 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But, but you presume in
- 2 your last answer that other than that, there is an
- 3 absolutely fair prosecution.
- 4 MR. FLAXMAN: Other than the fact --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I mean, why do we make
- 6 that assumption when we start out with the allegation of
- 7 a tort and a violation of the Constitution? I don't
- 8 understand.
- 9 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, the tort is against the
- 10 police officers who made an unlawful arrest and
- 11 exploited it to get the evidence that was used to hold
- 12 Mr. Wallace. The, the problem with saying that
- 13 Mr. Wallace has to sue, as soon as he files his motion
- 14 to suppress, he should have filed his Section 1983
- 15 action, would produce a multitude of 1983 actions.
- 16 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What about the fact --
- 17 suppose that there were even a more serious battery
- 18 here, a broken limb or something. Would you have to sue
- 19 for the damages for the battery right away? The police
- 20 officers injured --
- 21 MR. FLAXMAN: No. If excessive force was
- used against somebody when they're being arrested,
- 23 that's a claim that everyone agrees accrues at the time
- 24 of the injury.
- 25 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, what about this

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1	case?
2	MR. FLAXMAN: This case would necessarily
3	impair the validity of the conviction. If
4	JUSTICE SCALIA: But the conviction in Heck
5	existed at the time of the alleged tort. And what Heck
6	said is where you have an outstanding conviction, and
7	you have a constitutional tort, you can't sue on that
8	constitutional and where you cannot sue on that
9	constitutional tort if the decision on the tort would
10	effectively contradict your conviction. Until the
11	conviction has been set aside.
12	Well, this is not that situation. There was
13	no outstanding conviction involved. So why did you have
14	to wait?
15	MR. FLAXMAN: Well, you had to wait because
16	it would it would be a fruitless act to file the case
17	while the case file a Federal case while the state
18	criminal case was pending. But
19	JUSTICE KENNEDY: I'm still, I'm still
20	puzzled about my question. Suppose there's a battery
21	resulting in a serious injury to the defendant.
22	MR. FLAXMAN: That claim would

JUSTICE KENNED: But there's other evidence

and so forth. Can you sue for the battery at once?

23

24

25

- 1 sue for the battery immediately.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Why is that the situation?
- 3 MR. FLAXMAN: Why is that different?
- 4 Because this --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEY: And -- or is it just
- 6 because of the assumption that the conviction might
- 7 stand anyway.
- 8 MR. FLAXMAN: Well the conviction generally
- 9 does stand with -- the battery generally has nothing to
- 10 with the conviction.
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But if does, then you
- 12 wait?
- 13 MR. FLAXMAN: If it is an element of the
- 14 offense, you wait. Or if it is an element of what could
- 15 be the defense in a criminal case.
- 16 But getting back to the Heck guestion, in
- 17 Heck the court looked to the common law for the
- 18 appropriate rule to apply to the cause of action that
- 19 Mr. Heck was applying.
- If we look to the common law for the
- 21 appropriate rule for Mr. Wallace, we don't come up with
- 22 the Seventh Circuit's rule of immediate accrual. We
- 23 come up with the rule --
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But the point, the
- 25 whole point of Heck was to avoid 1983 becoming an end

- 1 run around habeas. But here you don't have that problem
- 2 because you don't have any available relief under habeas
- 3 under Stone versus Powell.
- 4 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, we don't know before the
- 5 criminal case starts whether Mr. Wallace will receive a
- 6 full and fair hearing on his Fourth Amendment claim.
- 7 And until we know that we don't say Stone versus Powell
- 8 would bar a Fourth Amendment claim. We don't know that
- 9 the state will give Mr. Wallace an attorney who can stay
- 10 awake, who can file a motion, who knows that there is a
- 11 Fourth Amendment, and Mr. Wallace might end up not
- 12 getting a full and fair hearing and might have a valid
- 13 claim cognizable with Federal habeas corpus that --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Are there many cases in
- 15 which the rule of Stone versus Powell is inapplicable
- 16 for that reason?
- MR. FLAXMAN: No. But there are some. It
- 18 is not a non-existent occurrence in.
- 19 JUSTICE BREYER: What happens -- I'm trying
- 20 to think of what the problem is for you. On January 1,
- 21 your client's arrested unlawfully. Now suppose the rule
- 22 was you have two years to file it, starting now. What
- 23 is the problem for you? The problem is maybe in a year,
- 24 or maybe less, the police start to prosecute him. In
- 25 the meantime, your trial is going forward because you

- 1 filed it on time. So when they start to prosecute him,
- 2 you don't yet know what's going to happen. And it could
- 3 happen that he's convicted and you think it's illegal
- 4 because of the arrest and necessarily so.
- 5 And therefore you have to stop the trial, I
- 6 guess, because of Heck.
- 7 MR. FLAXMAN: The civil trial will be stayed
- 8 pending the --
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: That would work, I guess.
- 10 They'd stop it and then they'd have to bring it -- you'd
- 11 have to stop it and then you'd have to go through these
- 12 other remedies and they you'd have to go back to it.
- 13 MR. FLAXMAN: It would be on the district
- 14 court's docket for ten years waiting the final --
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: But that would work.
- 16 MR. FLAXMAN: It would, well, it would be a
- 17 horrible --
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: A mess.
- 19 MR. FLAXMAN: -- a horrible mess for the
- 20 district court. It would not work because --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Suppose I modify it.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Why would it be a mess? I
- 23 mean, it seems to me that the district court, once it is
- 24 filed -- something is filed within the two year statute,
- 25 the district court can tell virtually immediately

- 1 whether there are criminal proceedings that are yet to
- 2 be held, and the district court can simply, it can
- 3 simply stay further proceedings until those criminal
- 4 proceedings are over. If there's a possibility of
- 5 collateral attacks, the district court can simply say
- 6 hey, are you going to file a collateral attack? And if
- 7 the answer is yes, stay it further. If the answer is
- 8 no, go ahead with it then. What's tough about that?
- 9 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, the district judge will
- 10 not allow a civil case to go forward because it would
- 11 allow the criminal defendant --
- 12 JUSTICE SOUTER: That's the premise of my
- 13 question. But I mean it seems to me to be fairly easily
- 14 administered.
- 15 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, I mean, I, I shudder to
- 16 think of 20,000 cases on district court dockets being
- 17 stayed while criminal cases are being resolved.
- 18 JUSTICE SOUTER: 20,000 might make me
- 19 shudder. But we got one.
- 20 (Laughter.)
- 21 MR. FLAXMAN: We have one. The criminal
- 22 defendant will be disinclined to file his civil rights
- 23 case on time because it will be used against him in his
- 24 criminal case to impeach his bias.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Well -- explain that.

- 1 MR. FLAXMAN: It will impeach his bias. If
- 2 he, when he testifies in the criminal case, he will be
- 3 cross-examined, aren't you seeking money damage from the
- 4 police officers? Don't you want to make money from this
- 5 case? And the jury will consider that when they weigh
- 6 the truthfulness of the --
- 7 JUSTICE SOUTER: And don't you think that a
- 8 civil action which necessarily has to be stayed, might
- 9 be a basis for, for the court in the criminal case to
- 10 limit that kind of cross-examination?
- 11 MR. FLAXMAN: Not in the Circuit Court of
- 12 Cook County. That cross-examination will occur every
- 13 time a civil --
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Are there appeals from the
- 15 Circuit Court of Cook County?
- 16 MR. FLAXMAN: There are appeals and.
- 17 JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay, don't you -- don't
- 18 you think ultimately you could get that issue resolved?
- MR. FLAXMAN: No. I am absolutely confident
- 20 the Illinois courts at the highest level will say that
- 21 is proper cross-examination.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Come -- come back here.
- 23 (Laughter.)
- JUSTICE BREYER: Suppose it is complicated.
- 25 I want to suggest a modification with this suit here.

- 1 You say you have to file within two years. But wait,
- 2 you have -- we tolled the statute. If the person is
- 3 arrested and charged, and convicted, for all the time
- 4 that is going on, it is just tolled, equitably. And
- 5 after the conviction, if he's acquitted, by the way, or
- 6 he isn't arrested, the statute starts to run again.
- Now if he's convicted, as long as you have
- 8 filed, proceeding to challenge the conviction, it is
- 9 tolled.
- 10 Now, would that -- that it seems to me would
- 11 help every problem you have, and it would be called
- 12 equitable tolling. And that's been suggested by judges
- in different forums and many states have it.
- And what's the problem? That just solves
- 15 the problem, doesn't it?
- MR. FLAXMAN: Well, I have four answers. I
- 17 hope I can get them out.
- 18 If Heck instead of adopting a rule of
- 19 accrual and denying existence of a cause of action had
- 20 established the Federal tolling rule, saying that these
- 21 causes of action are tolled while you're in custody,
- 22 that would have solved the problem.
- JUSTICE BREYER: All right, well, we could
- 24 do it in this case.
- MR. FLAXMAN: Well, I, I -- the Court

- 1 certainly can do it. It would require carving a hole
- 2 into, into Tomiano with this --
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yeah, it would
- 4 require overruling our cases that say for tolling, your
- 5 borrow state law --
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: What cases require
- 7 overruling?
- 8 MR. FLAXMAN: Unless state law is
- 9 inconsistent with Federal Board of Regents versus
- 10 Tomiano, I think the Court could say that. The other
- 11 thing that the Court should be aware of is that the
- 12 Seventh Circuit, and I think four other circuits follow
- 13 the common law rule that you can't have a 1983 action
- 14 about a false arrest if you have been convicted of the
- 15 charge on which you were arrested. So these cases would
- 16 not be brought in the Seventh Circuit and the --
- 17 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, it seems to me
- 18 identical to the rule you are advocating but with one
- 19 difference. The difference with the rule you are
- 20 advocating is a judge who is going to be judge at time A
- 21 with your first case, is going to have to guess whether
- 22 it is in this case or not in this case necessarily
- 23 related to some kind of challenge to conviction you're
- 24 going to bring later if you happen to get convicted.
- 25 MR. FLAXMAN: I think --

- 1 JUSTICE BREYER: There is no way to guess
- 2 that.
- 3 MR. FLAXMAN: I think tolling, a Federal
- 4 tolling rule for this cause of action, while someone in
- 5 custody although a criminal conviction is, has not been
- 6 resolved in favor of the defendant, criminal defendant,
- 7 would be an excellent solution.
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: And is there anything that
- 9 you are aware of that it would be contrary to? I know
- 10 there are cases that say you look to states but you only
- 11 look to states where the state law is, in fact,
- 12 consistent with the Federal right.
- MR. FLAXMAN: No, I think the Court could
- 14 say without overruling anything that there, in this the
- 15 state law does not fully reflect or protect the Federal
- 16 rights at stake here.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So then you deny the
- 18 officers the purpose you have for the reason you have
- 19 statutes of limitation, which is repose. They are going
- 20 to wait ten years instead of the two years to find out
- 21 if they are going to have to answer any claim for
- damages.
- MR. FLAXMAN: Well, but the officers will
- 24 also get the benefit of not being sued if there is a
- 25 conviction based on the charge for which the person was

- 1 arrested. That case would not be brought, especially in
- 2 the Seventh Circuit where there is no cause of action --
- 3 and it wouldn't be brought anywhere because there's no
- 4 damages if you are arrested and properly convicted and
- 5 serving sentence. Those cases just are not going to
- 6 exist; the officers would have that benefit.
- 7 JUSTICE GINSBURG: I thought the Seventh
- 8 Circuit said in -- quickly in passing that the damages
- 9 would run only from the time of the allegedly unlawful
- 10 arrest until the time of arraignment. That would, that
- 11 would be the -- be all of your damages. If there wasn't
- 12 an arraignment, whatever happens is not attributed to
- 13 the seizure.
- MR. FLAXMAN: That's the Seventh Circuit's
- 15 view about what the cause of action is, which goes back
- 16 to what is the cause of action and when does it accrue?
- 17 In the Seventh Circuit the cause of action starts when
- 18 you're arrested and -- either at the time of arraignment
- 19 of, as they said in a subsequent case, when there's a
- 20 Gerstein probable cause hearing. In I think every other
- 21 circuit, the cause of action doesn't end at the time of
- 22 arraignment. It continues until the time that you're
- 23 released from being in custody.
- 24 JUSTICE GINSBURG: You asked us to take that
- 25 case and we didn't.

- 1 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, I asked you to consider
- 2 damages but I think -- as a question of damages, and
- 3 there are many issues related to damages that would have
- 4 been presented in question to --
- 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But if that's the
- 6 boundaries of the false arrest claim, then why does one
- 7 happen later matter?
- 8 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, the common law false
- 9 arrest claim would allow damages up until the time you
- 10 were released from the imprisonment, which is not at the
- 11 time of --
- 12 JUSTICE SOUTER: Even on the basis of
- 13 innocence?
- MR. FLAXMAN: Not for a false arrest. As
- 15 long as you're not convicted. So malicious prosecution,
- 16 you would --
- 17 JUSTICE SOUTER: The common law would give
- 18 damages in a case like this in which the release was
- 19 basically governed by a suppression which has nothing to
- 20 do one way or the other with the innocence of that
- 21 person?
- MR. FLAXMAN: That's correct. The common
- 23 law element -- malicious prosecution requires that the
- 24 innocence or grounds not consistent with guilt, but
- 25 there's no such element in the common law false

- 1 imprisonment, which would accrue when you are released
- 2 from being in prison, which would benefit Mr. Wallace in
- 3 this case. When the Seventh Circuit talked about there
- 4 are three alternatives that we have to choose from, the
- 5 proof immediately, the case by case of when it accrues,
- or it only accrues at the end of the case, they didn't
- 7 consider the fourth possibility of the common law rule
- 8 that it occurs when the imprisonment ends.
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: What does somebody like
- 10 Mr. Wallace do under your rule if he's in a jurisdiction
- 11 where there's not a lot of discovery in criminal cases.
- 12 He isn't going to know until trial whether his cause of
- 13 action accrued sometime earlier or whether it waited.
- MR. FLAXMAN: But he's not going to file his
- 15 civil rights claim until his criminal case is over,
- 16 because he knows and his lawyer will tell him, that's
- 17 going to hurt you in winning the criminal case, and you
- 18 should be concerned about that.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But he's never going
- 20 to know, in the case where there's no statute of
- 21 limitations, he's never going to know when his criminal
- 22 case is going to be over because he may never know when
- 23 it's going to start.
- 24 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, if Mr. Wallace had been
- 25 arrested and released, he would have had two years from

- 1 when he was released to bring a civil rights action,
- 2 that being false imprisonment
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So what happens if
- 4 he files a suit after one year and then after one year
- 5 and 350 days he's prosecuted? His action accrued but
- 6 then it didn't accrue?
- 7 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, I would suggest that it
- 8 would be the same as when someone is convicted of
- 9 battery, and then 10 years later, the victim of the
- 10 battery dies from the injury caused by the battery.
- 11 There would be a second prosecution for murder that
- 12 would not be barred from double jeopardy. I think
- 13 that's Diaz versus United States. I think --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So his action
- 15 accrued and maybe it's even over, but then it turns out
- 16 when they bring the prosecution, it should have never
- 17 have been brought because it never accrued.
- 18 MR. FLAXMAN: No, I think he would have two
- 19 actions. He'd have the action for being arrested and
- 20 then he'd have the action later when the -- when he was
- 21 seized because of the unlawful -- the fruits of the
- 22 unlawful arrest.
- As a practical matter, though, those cases
- 24 are going to arise even less frequently than the Stone
- 25 versus Powell cases that are brought properly in Federal

- 1 habeas corpus.
- 2 JUSTICE BREYER: That problem is solved too
- 3 if you simply say bring it, day one, you are arrested,
- 4 and if in fact before the statute of limitations
- 5 expires, your client is brought to the court and is
- 6 going to be prosecuted. Tolled. They don't need two
- 7 actions.
- 8 MR. FLAXMAN: A Federal tolling rule would
- 9 solve these problems.
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: I want to be sure I
- 11 understood your position with regard to Justice
- 12 Kennedy's hypothetical where the defendant is arrested
- 13 and excessive force is used by the police, they beat him
- 14 up or something like that. When does that cause of
- 15 action accrue?
- 16 MR. FLAXMAN: At the time they beat him up,
- 17 unless the beating up relates to an element of the
- 18 offense.
- 19 JUSTICE STEVENS: Suppose that they had beat
- 20 him up two or three times. The first time it didn't
- 21 relate to it, but then they took him into the
- 22 interrogation room and they beat him up again. What
- 23 about that case?
- MR. FLAXMAN: If the beating up is -- if the
- 25 beating up is related to, used to extort a confession

- 1 and the confession is used against him, then there would
- 2 be a cause of action when the confession is used.
- 3 JUSTICE STEVENS: So there would be two
- 4 causes of action?
- 5 MR. FLAXMAN: Multiple causes, yes. There
- 6 could be at least two.
- 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: Would he have to sue on the
- 8 first one right away?
- 9 MR. FLAXMAN: If you want to get damages for
- 10 being beaten up, I would tell my client to sue right
- 11 away. I would also tell my client if he's being charged
- 12 with a serious criminal crime offense, to wait until the
- 13 criminal case is over, because it will hurt you.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Flaxman, before you
- 15 save your time, I didn't understand why you're content
- 16 with Justice Breyer's tolling situation, bearing in mind
- 17 that the way he put it is, so long as the -- as the
- 18 criminal case is commenced within the two-year statute
- 19 of limitations, how does that help you when the statute
- 20 of limitations has passed? Then there's no tolling.
- 21 MR. FLAXMAN: But criminal cases are not
- 22 commenced many, many years after the unlawful arrest, as
- 23 a practical matter.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: And two years doesn't seem
- 25 to be unheard of.

- 1 MR. FLAXMAN: Well, if we're talking about
- 2 complicated financial crimes, that's not unusual.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: You're willing to let those
- 4 people go?
- 5 MR. FLAXMAN: If we're talking about the
- 6 kinds of crimes that are involved with this kind of,
- 7 with street crime, with murder, armed robbery, rape, the
- 8 defendant is not allowed to let them run over two years.
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: Those are the only
- 10 defendants you are concerned about?
- 11 MR. FLAXMAN: Those are the defendants who
- 12 get unlawfully arrested and are forced to give
- 13 confessions.
- If I may reserve my time?
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 16 Mr. Flaxman. Ms. Solomon.
- 17 ORAL ARGUMENT OF BENNA RUTH SOLOMON
- ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS
- 19 MS. SOLOMON: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice,
- 20 and may it please the Court:
- 21 Our submission this morning rests on the
- 22 proposition that the victim of an unreasonable search or
- 23 seizure has the right to sue as soon as that Fourth
- 24 Amendment violation occurs. For purposes of accrual of
- 25 that claim, it does not matter whether the victim is

- 1 subsequently prosecuted or whether he is subsequently
- 2 convicted. Accordingly, petitioner's Fourth Amendment
- 3 claim accrued for purposes of the two-year statute of
- 4 limitations as soon as his unlawful arrest and detention
- 5 occurred, and his lawsuit filed some nine years later is
- 6 time barred. The claim accrued --
- 7 JUSTICE STEVENS: May I ask, just to get it
- 8 straight at the beginning, what if the claim includes a
- 9 Fifth Amendment claim for extorting a conviction and
- 10 it's mixed up with a Fourth Amendment claim? What about
- 11 that claim?
- 12 MS. SOLOMON: I believe that the rule for
- 13 the Fifth Amendment claim, I believe the Court's view in
- 14 Chavez is that a coerced confession claim has as an
- 15 element of the claim, the use of that claim at trial.
- 16 So it would be our view if that is an element of the
- 17 claim, that that claim would not accrue until trial.
- 18 A claim --
- 19 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What about the beating of
- 20 the defendant?
- 21 MS. SOLOMON: Exactly. A claim for
- 22 conscience shocking techniques to obtain the confession
- 23 or the excessive force to obtain the confession, both of
- 24 those claims, and use of the confession at trial is not
- 25 an element of those claims, and those claims would

- 1 accrue at the time of those acts, just like the Fourth
- 2 Amendment rule that we urge in this case.
- 3 Only where there is a trial right and use of
- 4 some evidence at trial, suppression of evidence at
- 5 trial, something of that order, if the trial right is
- 6 implicated, that claim would not accrue until at trial.
- 7 That is different from the Fourth Amendment claim, of
- 8 course, because --
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Miss Solomon, do I gather
- 10 from your response to Justice Stevens about the Fifth
- 11 Amendment claim, that under Chavez it wouldn't accrue
- 12 until it is used at trial, is this case therefore a
- 13 pleading slip on petitioner's part? That is, if he had
- 14 alleged a Fifth Amendment claim based on the coerced
- 15 confession, then he wouldn't have a statute of
- 16 limitations problem?
- MS. SOLOMON: He brought two claims in his
- 18 criminal case. He lost them both in the Illinois
- 19 Circuit Court at the time of his suppression motion. He
- 20 pursued only one of those on appeal to the Illinois
- 21 Appellate Court, and the circuit court made findings
- 22 that the confession was voluntary. So at the outset,
- 23 there were problems with that claim going into Federal
- 24 court.
- 25 JUSTICE GINSBURG: That's a puzzling feature

- 1 of it, too, because I thought at the end the second time
- 2 around, the Court of Appeals held that the confession
- 3 was no good.
- 4 MS. SOLOMON: The Illinois Appellate Court
- 5 overturned the conviction on the basis that it was
- 6 obtained through use of a confession in violation of the
- 7 Fourth Amendment only. The only findings that have ever
- 8 been made regarding Mr. Wallace's confession, the
- 9 voluntariness of the confession, were made in the
- 10 Illinois Circuit Court, and the finding was that the
- 11 confession was voluntary, that it was not coerced. That
- 12 finding has never been reviewed. Petitioner did file
- 13 both Fourth and Fifth Amendment claims in this civil
- 14 case, but we did not assert statute of limitations to
- 15 the Fifth Amendment claim for precisely the reasons that
- 16 I indicated to Justice Stevens.
- 17 And for that reason, although the question
- 18 was presented in the petition, we did not acquiesce in
- 19 the Fifth Amendment portion of question 1 of the
- 20 petition, and the court did not grant the Fifth
- 21 Amendment claim. So I do not believe -- a short answer,
- 22 sorry -- I do not believe it was a pleading error. It
- 23 is simply that that claim as the litigation developed is
- 24 not before this Court now, but not through a simple
- 25 pleading error. It is a far more weighty problem than

- 1 that.
- 2 JUSTICE SOUTER: But if the Fifth Amendment
- 3 claim were before us, do I understand you to have said
- 4 before that the Fourth Amendment claim of false arrest
- 5 would also be subject to litigation as part of the Fifth
- 6 Amendment claim or under the umbrella of the Fifth
- 7 Amendment claim, so that the statute would not have run
- 8 on that?
- 9 MS. SOLOMON: I'm sorry. If I indicated
- 10 that, I definitely misspoke. In our view, all Fourth
- 11 Amendment claims except for those that do negate an
- 12 element of the offense, and those are described in
- 13 footnote 6 of Heck, with that exception, all Fourth
- 14 Amendment claims should be regarded as accruing at the
- 15 time that the act that actually violates the Fourth
- 16 Amendment occurs.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well then, my question is
- 18 going to be along the same lines. Suppose -- I assume
- 19 this is a rather frequent case -- the confession is
- 20 alleged to be the product of a beating. The two are
- 21 merged. If we have to wait for the Fifth Amendment
- 22 claim anyway, then as a matter of policy, matter of
- 23 convenience, why don't we wait for the Fourth Amendment
- 24 as well?
- MS. SOLOMON: Because the rule of accrual is

- 1 that the act -- the claim accrues when the plaintiff
- 2 experiences an injury.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, we're making up the
- 4 rule of accrual, Ms. Solomon. I'm asking, if we have to
- 5 wait for one, why not wait for the other?
- 6 MS. SOLOMON: Well, with respect, Justice
- 7 Kennedy, I don't believe the Court is making up a rule
- 8 of accrual. I think those rules are quite well settled.
- 9 Cases like Ricks and Chardon make clear, and the Fourth
- 10 Amendment cases make clear that a Fourth Amendment
- 11 violation, unlike the Fifth, where evidence is used at
- 12 trial, the Fourth Amendment claim violation is fully
- 13 accomplished at the time of the illegal search or
- 14 seizure. Anything --
- 15 JUSTICE SCALIA: Who is the defendant in a
- 16 Fifth Amendment claim? Is it the policemen who
- 17 extracted the confession or is it the prosecutor who
- 18 introduced it at trial, since that is the offense?
- MS. SOLOMON: Well, the prosecutor would be
- 20 absolutely immune, of course.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Right.
- 22 MS. SOLOMON: And some of those cases are
- 23 brought against the police officers. But, the reasons
- that would suggest a certain accrual date for the Fifth
- 25 Amendment claim are very different from the reasons that

- 1 dictate the accrual of the Fourth Amendment claim at the
- 2 time -- the only action the petitioner alleges violated
- 3 the Fourth Amendment in this case was when his detention
- 4 at the police station, which was consensual at the
- 5 outset, became unconsensual, became involuntary at some
- 6 point before he confessed.
- 7 JUSTICE SOUTER: But if he had also brought
- 8 a Fifth Amendment claim, your view as I take it would be
- 9 as follows:
- 10 Number one, his Fourth Amendment claim, the
- 11 running of the statute, the Fourth Amendment claim would
- 12 be unaffected by that, so that would have to have been
- 13 brought within the two-year period.
- MS. SOLOMON: That's correct.
- 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: Number two, I'm assuming,
- 16 and this is what I want you to tell me whether my
- 17 assumption is right -- I am assuming that if a Fifth
- 18 Amendment claim were brought by -- no, strike the
- 19 assumption.
- You, I take it, would -- let me ask a
- 21 different question. I take it you would agree that so
- long as a criminal case was pending, that it would be
- 23 sensible and maybe required for the court simply to
- 24 abstain from any proceedings on the Fourth Amendment
- 25 claim.

- 1 MS. SOLOMON: We do -- our position is that
- 2 they do occur when they happen and they must be filed
- 3 within the limitations, yes.
- 4 JUSTICE SOUTER: But you would agree that
- 5 the court, if there's a criminal case going on, I take
- 6 it you would agree that the court should not proceed to
- 7 trial in the 1983 action.
- 8 MS. SOLOMON: If there is a Fourth Amendment
- 9 claim being raised in the criminal case, and of course,
- 10 it might not be, but that is a very easy --
- JUSTICE BREYER: But that's the problem. I
- 12 don't know if it is easy. It seems to me if you take
- 13 your point of view, now, on January 1, some, let's call
- 14 it an unconstitutional action allegedly. So, I don't
- 15 want to distinguish for the moment between Fourth and
- 16 Fifth. On January 1 the event occurs.
- 17 Then you say you have two years to file your
- 18 claim in the Federal court of a violation of 1983, for
- 19 example.
- Then that happens. Let's say two months
- 21 later they file it. The defendant files it. A month
- 22 after that, there is a state criminal proceeding. Now,
- you're the Federal judge. What's supposed to happen?
- 24 It sounds to me as if the judge sitting there, under
- 25 your theory, is going to have to make a decision. He's

- 1 going to have to say now, is the kind of claim that's
- 2 being argued in my court that the policemen did
- 3 something unconstitutional, if I say that's correct,
- 4 that the plaintiff wins, I have to go on to say does the
- 5 correctness of that, there was a violation, mean that
- 6 the conviction if there is a conviction in the state
- 7 court later, will necessarily be vitiated. If the
- 8 answer to that question is yes, he shouldn't go ahead;
- 9 is that right?
- 10 MS. SOLOMON: Justice Breyer, that is
- 11 correct.
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. If that's
- 13 correct, we're getting to exactly the same problem,
- 14 whether we do it through a set of abstention rules,
- 15 which we have to have Federal abstention rules or it
- 16 won't be worked out properly, or we have to have Federal
- 17 tolling rules.
- I don't see any way to get to a sensible
- 19 result here without either having clear abstention
- 20 rules, just as you say, having clear tolling rules, as I
- 21 suggested before. Am I right? If I'm wrong, let me
- 22 know why; and if I'm right, which do you prefer?
- MS. SOLOMON: I think those are essentially
- 24 the two choices, with one caveat. We would call it an
- 25 accrual rule as opposed to a tolling rule, for the

- 1 reason that this court has always respected the tolling
- 2 rules that states have whereas accrual is a Federal
- 3 question.
- But with that slight caveat, I do believe
- 5 that those are the two main options. But I don't
- 6 believe the Court should be indifferent as between them.
- 7 There are very serious practical reasons weighing down
- 8 on our rule, which is a rule of immediate accrual and
- 9 filing not immediately, of course -- the case need only
- 10 be filed within the period of the statute of
- 11 limitations.
- 12 Thereafter it might well be that some cases,
- 13 maybe many cases, maybe nearly all cases, would need a
- 14 stay of some sort while the Federal -- excuse me --
- 15 while the criminal case is ongoing.
- 16 But that question, figuring out whether a
- 17 stay is warranted in order to avoid interference with a
- 18 ongoing state prosecution, is far easier to figure out
- 19 than whether the evidence is the only evidence, whether
- 20 it's critical evidence, whether there was other
- 21 evidence.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: I suppose -- correct me if
- 23 I'm wrong -- when the district court wants to determine
- 24 if he should hold something in abeyance, this is not
- 25 necessarily abstention; this is what courts always do

- 1 when there are multiple actions. Other action pending
- 2 is a general ground for a court to stay its hand.
- 3 MS. SOLOMON: That's exactly right, Justice
- 4 Kennedy, and it's also --
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I suppose it would
- 6 make a difference to the officers, a principle of
- 7 equitable tolling. They don't know if they're going to
- 8 be sued for 10 years, 12 years, however long. Under an
- 9 accrual rule with a stay, they know whether they're
- 10 going to be facing a civil action or not.
- 11 MS. SOLOMON: That is the second major
- 12 advantage that we see to our rule, Chief Justice
- 13 Roberts.
- JUSTICE BREYER: If you do it with a stay, I
- 15 mean, I see that disadvantage. If you do it with a
- 16 stay, the Federal judge is going to have to sit there
- 17 with the papers in front of him, look at that evidence,
- 18 think what's going to happen in the trial at the
- 19 criminal case which I'm not quite certain yet, and then
- 20 make a determination. It sounds like a very difficult
- 21 decision and it sounds like sometimes they'll get it
- 22 wrong, sometimes they'll get it right. The defendant
- 23 might be arguing two different things, you know, one in
- 24 the state court to try to get them to go ahead, and the
- 25 other to try to get them to go ahead in the Federal

- 1 court.
- 2 What do you --
- MS. SOLOMON: Accepting your earlier
- 4 construct where there really are essentially two rules,
- 5 we either delay accrual or we --
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: If you delay accrual by
- 7 tolling, you do have the disadvantage that in some
- 8 instances the policemen won't know for quite a while
- 9 whether the case is being brought. That's true; and in
- 10 the other instance, he won't know for quite a while how
- 11 the case is going to come out, which may be worse. But
- 12 you don't have any uncertainty. You have no
- 13 uncertainty. You would know once the man is released.
- 14 It's no tolling. Once he's convicted, it's tolled.
- 15 Then the conviction comes in. Not tolled until they
- 16 bring a proceeding.
- MS. SOLOMON: The rule that we propose,
- 18 which is immediate accrual coupled with a stay of some
- 19 sort if the Fourth Amendment claim is being actively
- 20 litigated in the state court at that time, has two
- 21 advantages.
- The first is that it does serve the purposes
- 23 that all statutes of limitations serve, which is it puts
- 24 the defendant on notice you are now the defendant in a
- 25 lawsuit, you should be marshalling your evidence, you

- 1 should be preserving your records, and you are not in
- 2 repose.
- 3 This Court has respected those as very
- 4 important interests. They are absolutely not served by
- 5 a rule of delayed accrual. At the same time, the rule
- 6 to allow a stay where necessary as I indicated, it's
- 7 not going to be all of the cases, and it's far easier to
- 8 figure it out. The Federal district court figures it
- 9 out by having the defendant, the criminal defendant, who
- 10 is a plaintiff in his court, come in and is asked a
- 11 question: Are you currently --
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: They're not going to
- 13 waste a lot of time figuring out whether to grant a stay
- 14 or not when you have a criminal prosecution pending in
- 15 state court. I think in most cases -- I mean, it's not
- 16 like they're looking for cases. They're going to say in
- 17 most cases: Stay granted, come back when this is over.
- 18 They don't have to be -- unlike perhaps the situation
- 19 with an equitable tolling rule, it doesn't matter
- 20 whether they're precisely right or wrong. I mean, if
- 21 it's close enough just stay it, and it doesn't seem to
- 22 me there's much prejudice from that.
- MS. SOLOMON: Well, that's correct, Your
- 24 Honor, and we wouldn't have any objection to a rule
- 25 that --

- 1 JUSTICE STEVENS: But isn't there this
- 2 practical problem? I think what you say fits together
- 3 beautifully with regard to the law, but isn't it true
- 4 that this will give an incentive in every criminal case
- 5 for the defendant to file a 1983 action. So we may
- 6 multiply the number of Federal cases that are filed and
- 7 then sit there while a criminal case proceeds.
- MS. SOLOMON: I think the assumption, Your
- 9 Honor, should be that the number of cases is going to be
- 10 the same either way. It's just a question of when are
- 11 they filed and, moreover --
- 12 JUSTICE STEVENS: Well, if your opponent's
- 13 rule is adopted, they wouldn't file unless -- if they
- 14 get convicted and the conviction stands up, the case
- 15 would never be filed.
- MS. SOLOMON: Well, it's curious that they
- 17 make that argument, because of course every victim of a
- 18 Fourth Amendment violation has the right to damages for
- 19 at least the invasion of their privacy, for the
- 20 antecedent conduct between the time of arrest and
- 21 charging. At a minimum, Mr. Wallace had that coming to
- 22 him because he was, according to the Illinois appellate
- 23 court, illegally seized.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: The thing I just want you
- 25 to comment on is, my thought is every person arrested

- 1 has a potential, and something follows and so forth, has
- 2 a potential Fourth Amendment claim, even though he may
- 3 not have one on the merits. It just seems to me that
- 4 there's a potential here of an awful lot of what may
- 5 turn out to be frivolous claims filed, but it would seem
- 6 to be routine procedure for defense lawyers who want to
- 7 make a suppression motion to say, well, I better file my
- 8 1983 case at the same time. So you might get literally
- 9 hundreds and hundreds of cases.
- 10 MS. SOLOMON: With respect, Your Honor,
- 11 we'll take that chance for the benefits that the statute
- 12 of limitations does bring to the officer. And as far as
- 13 the burden on the court, whether all cases are stayed or
- 14 some cases are stayed, of course, we're content to have
- 15 this Court or the district court handling the case
- 16 figure that out.
- But the main point that I would make is that
- 18 a rule of delayed accrual wholly undermines the purposes
- 19 of the statute of limitations, and where the plaintiff's
- 20 interest, the claimant's interests, can be served, as I
- 21 indicated, at a minimum every victim of a Fourth
- 22 Amendment violation has the right to some damages. That
- is actually precisely why we say that Fourth Amendment
- 24 claims do not necessarily imply the invalidity of the
- 25 conviction.

- 1 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I had missed Mr. Flaxman's
- 2 point that this would an advantage to the prosecutor to
- 3 say, aren't you going to make a lot of money about this
- 4 case? My initial reaction as the defense counsel, I
- 5 would love that comment. I would tell the jury: Of
- 6 course, it's our duty as counsel to point out that my
- 7 client was beaten, he was terrified, he was beaten
- 8 again, he had a false confession, and the damages we're
- 9 not interested in; we'll get much more damages if you
- 10 convict and we show this 15 years later because the
- 11 policemen lied as they always do. You know, you hear
- 12 it.
- MS. SOLOMON: It may be not in a --
- 14 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But he has tried more of
- 15 these cases than I have and he indicates this is a
- 16 serious concern.
- MS. SOLOMON: He has tried way more of them
- 18 than I have as well, and I can't speak to that
- 19 specifically. It's not an argument that was ever made
- 20 in the briefs. But again, I have no reason to believe
- 21 that the Federal district court can't take account of
- 22 whatever it needs to take account of in order to
- 23 avoid --
- 24 JUSTICE KENNEDY: No, no. This is the Cook
- 25 County. This is the Cook County court.

- 1 MS. SOLOMON: Yes. Yes, I understand. But
- 2 all that has to happen, of course, is that the complaint
- 3 be put on file in the Federal court. It's notice
- 4 pleading. It can be a very, very long complaint.
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: No, but he says the fact
- of the complaint the prosecutor's going to use in order
- 7 to show that they're trying to profit from a false claim
- 8 of a beating.
- 9 MS. SOLOMON: Well, but as I indicated,
- 10 every victim of a Fourth Amendment rights, even those
- 11 who are guilty, even those who are convicted -- that's
- 12 the Herring case. Herring exactly shows --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: No, but the point is if
- 14 the complaint is filed then the prosecution can makes
- 15 that point.
- 16 MS. SOLOMON: I would imagine that it would
- 17 cut both ways in many cases, Your Honor. I'm sorry, I
- 18 can't speak to it more specifically than that.
- 19 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Does your position in
- 20 this case leave any reason at all for equitable tolling?
- MS. SOLOMON: It does, Your Honor,
- 22 absolutely. Equitable tolling is always available in an
- 23 extraordinary case when the plaintiff could not put a
- 24 complaint on file within the period of the statute of
- 25 limitations. And unlike the accrual question, as

- 1 indicated a moment ago, the tolling is governed by the
- 2 states. In this case, for example, because Mr. Wallace
- 3 was only 15 years old at the time of the arrest, his
- 4 claim was tolled. He actually had nearly four years
- 5 beyond the two-year statute of limitations to put a
- 6 complaint on file and it still would have been toll --
- 7 would have been timely. He filed outside even that
- 8 time.
- 9 Illinois does not toll for prisoners, but
- 10 many states do, as the Court indicated in the Hardin
- 11 case. So there's all sorts of tolling available, or
- 12 could be under state law. Mr. Wallace has actually
- 13 never urged tolling in this case and I assume that
- 14 that's because there is no basis for that under state
- 15 law. He did get the advantage already of the time when
- 16 he was a minor and there is no other basis under
- 17 Illinois law that would allow him any basis for tolling.
- But of course, tolling is proper when the
- 19 plaintiff does not know and could not know that his
- 20 rights were violated. If Mr. Wallace was illegally
- 21 seized, he was right there when it happened. He might
- 22 not have known that a court would ultimately accept his
- 23 argument on that, but of course the plaintiff never has
- 24 a right to be told that he has a successful claim before
- 25 he brings that claim.

Τ	JUSTICE GINSBURG: IS there any remedy that
2	Illinois law provides for a case like this where a
3	person spends, what was it, eight years in prison and is
4	ultimately released because the state never had enough
5	evidence to try him in the first place?
6	MS. SOLOMON: In many cases, the state law
7	of malicious prosecution will provide a remedy. Of
8	course, in Illinois and in all states, it requires
9	favorable termination. In this case, of course,
LO	petitioner conceded long ago that he cannot show
L1	favorable termination because the circumstances under
L2	which the criminal case ended did not were not
L3	consistent with a favorable termination.
L 4	But, of course, he would have had a Fourth
L5	Amendment claim if he had filed it timely. He would
L6	have had a state law malicious prosecution claim if he
L7	had been able to show favorable termination. In states
L8	that don't have malicious prosecution, perhaps there
L9	would be a due process claim as well.
20	The result that there are no damages
21	available to somebody when the conviction is overturned
22	solely by operation of the exclusionary rule, however,
23	should not be troubling because the conviction itself,
24	of course, was not an independent violation of the
25	Constitution. Petitioner did receive the benefit of the

- 1 exclusionary rule. His conviction was overturned.
- 2 We're not aware of any case indicating that deterrence
- 3 purposes would require both the exclusion of evidence
- 4 and a damages claim.
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Would it ever be proper
- 6 for a district court to insist on proceeding to the
- 7 merits of the claim, to dispose of the merits of the
- 8 claim, while the prosecution was pending? Suppose the
- 9 district court thought that it was seeing too many of
- 10 these claims and it wanted to get to the bottom of them?
- 11 MS. SOLOMON: Well, in our experience the
- 12 district courts don't tend to want to go ahead. But I
- 13 would suppose that if the -- if the court did, rules of
- 14 comity are sufficient to allow the state courts to have
- 15 the first crack at issues that are arising in the
- 16 criminal cases, to be the ones that --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: We haven't written about
- 18 that other than in Heck explicitly and implicitly, and
- 19 in Younger? That's about it?
- MS. SOLOMON: In Heck and in Younger.
- 21 There's the concurrence in Deacons against Monahan
- 22 indicates that a claim for damages should be stayed and
- 23 not dismissed or gone forward with. Justice White's
- 24 concurrence specifically addressed the difference
- 25 between dismissing and going forward with the claim. Of

- 1 course, the footnotes 8 and 9 in the Heck opinion are
- 2 very powerful indications of the weighty reasons. We
- 3 have no reason to think that the district court would
- 4 want to charge ahead with a claim that would -- with a
- 5 case that will only get simpler if it waits for the
- 6 state court proceedings to conclude, as well as of
- 7 course the comity and respect for the state courts.
- 8 In this case, of course, as I mentioned,
- 9 the -- Mr. Wallace always had a claim available to him
- 10 for his initial seizure regardless of the outcome of his
- 11 criminal prosecution. If he wanted to seek damages for
- 12 that prosecution and our primary submission, part one of
- our brief is even assuming those damage might be
- 14 available on a Fourth Amendment claim, he was
- 15 nevertheless obligated to bring that claim within the
- 16 period of the statute of limitations, because otherwise
- 17 it would be time barred.
- 18 In our view, petitioner does not have
- 19 one claim for that arrest and another claim for his
- 20 trial and prosecution. He has one claim for a Fourth
- 21 Amendment violation with two elements of damages. But
- 22 mounting future or delayed damages do not delay accrual.
- 23 Even where the plaintiff does not know the full extent
- 24 of his injuries, he still must sue within the period of
- 25 the statute of limitations.

1	In fact, petitioner does not cite a
2	single case including the ones newly arrived in the
3	reply brief that uses either his accrual rule or his
4	damages rule to award damages for the entire time of a
5	lengthy period of incarceration. And as I indicated
6	petitioner conceded long ago that he cannot show
7	favorable termination. And although he could have
8	obtained some damages had he brought his claim timely,
9	his claim did accrue he was seized and not when the
10	charges
11	JUSTICE GINSBURG: Do you agree with Judge
12	Wood that the limitation on damages would be from the
13	period, from the time of the arrest until the
14	arraignment? That would be the measure and nothing
15	after?
16	MS. SOLOMON: A number of courts have
17	reached that result, Your Honor. Footnote 25 recites
18	five court of appeals decisions to that effect. But our
19	primary submission in this Court is that regardless of
20	the damages that are available on a Fourth Amendment
21	claim, that the mounting of damages did not delay
22	accrual, and without a timely claim, it doesn't matter
23	what damages the plaintiff is seeking.
24	The reference in Heck to a claim for damages
25	for unconstitutional conviction, we take to be a

- 1 shorthand for a claim of some sort of constitutional
- 2 violation that can be brought through the vehicle of
- 3 Section 1983 that would enable the plaintiff to recover
- 4 damages for the incarceration. 1983 of course itself
- 5 does not create any substantive rights. The plaintiff
- 6 needs an underlying claim and in this case of course the
- 7 plaintiff only has the Fourth Amendment claim.
- We do have, in our brief and argument why
- 9 the Fourth Amendment should not be regarded as allowing
- 10 those damages, but our primary submission and we do
- 11 think the Court can decide the case without -- without
- 12 reaching that issue.
- The only date to delay an accrual in this
- 14 case was the date that the charges were nol prossed.
- 15 But that date is meaningless for the Fourth Amendment
- 16 and it is therefore meaningless for accrual. We would
- 17 the judgment be affirmed.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 19 Ms. Solomon.
- Mr. Flaxman, you have four minutes
- 21 remaining.
- 22 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF KENNETH N. FLAXMAN
- ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER
- 24 MR. FLAXMAN: The issue that has been
- 25 sitting in this case like the elephant in the room is

- 1 what is Mr. Wallace's cause of action? Is it a cause of
- 2 action for being seized until he was arraigned? Or is
- 3 it a cause of action for being seized for the eight and
- 4 a half years that he was locked up until he was, the
- 5 criminal case was resolved in his favor?
- 6 My sister argues that it was just, the
- 7 Federal remedy is only until you're being arraigned, and
- 8 that the state remedy for malicious prosecution doesn't
- 9 exist if the Seventh Circuit has construed Illinois law
- 10 to say that there is no malicious prosecution when you
- 11 win the Federal case, when you win the criminal case,
- 12 because the evidence has been suppressed. The false
- imprisonment, state false imprisonment was dismissed by
- 14 the district court, under his reading of Illinois law
- 15 that the cause of action accrued at the time of the
- 16 arrest. Not at the time he was released. And the
- 17 Seventh Circuit when that issue was raised on appeal to
- 18 them in a brief by both sides chose to reject it without
- 19 discussion.
- 20 What, the cause of action that respondent
- 21 proposes is none, for the eight and a half year seizure.
- 22 There is no state cause of action in Illinois. And
- 23 there is no Federal cause of action. It is just tough.
- 24 You are seized for eight and a half years, and you can't
- 25 go to state court, you can't go to Federal court. You

- 1 should have sued immediately after you were arrested to
- 2 get a little bit of damages, but that's all you can get.
- 3 And have a nice day; we're sorry.
- 4 That, I don't think is consistent with Heck.
- 5 I don't think it is consistent with this Court's
- 6 jurisprudence about the meaning of Section 1983. I
- 7 don't think it is consistent with the Fourth Amendment
- 8 and it should not be the rule that the Court adopts.
- 9 The statute of limitations problem isn't
- 10 really a problem because all of the evidence that's
- 11 material to the legality of the arrest, to the legality
- 12 and the -- whether the confession was the proximate --
- 13 was proximately caused by the arrest or proximately
- 14 caused by the incarceration, has been developed in the
- 15 criminal case. When there's very strong interest in
- 16 seeing that the facts are fully determined and fairly
- 17 determined for both sides. It is not that the police
- 18 officer who sued eight -- eight and a half years later
- 19 is much less is much less prejudiced than Mr. Wallace
- 20 is, who comes out of prison after eight and a half years
- 21 with no remedy.
- The questions about the multiple causes of
- 23 action that can arise: if you're beaten, you have to
- 24 sue immediately after you're beaten; if you're beaten
- 25 but a confession is extorted from you, your right to sue

- 1 starts with the confession is used against you at
- 2 trial -- and if there's some constitutional violation
- 3 which necessarily impairs the conviction, then you can
- 4 sue after you successfully defended a criminal case --
- 5 is really an administrative nightmare that really could
- 6 be solved by a Federal tolling rule that all Section
- 7 1983 cases are tolled; the statute does not start to run
- 8 until the criminal case has been resolved.
- 9 In most cases, then, instead of being filed
- 10 in district court --
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: That in effect is saying
- 12 we can't have a statute of limitations rule; we're just
- 13 going to laches, we're just going to an equitable rule.
- MR. FLAXMAN: Well --
- 15 JUSTICE KENNEDY: We're just throwing up our
- 16 hands and saying there is statute of limitations statute
- 17 of limitations.
- 18 MR. FLAXMAN: No, there is a statute of
- 19 limitations. It starts to run when the criminal case is
- 20 over. That will weed out all of the really nonsensical
- 21 cases that would otherwise be filed under respondent's
- 22 rule, when you file the 1983 action the same day you
- 23 file the motion to suppress and the district judge says
- 24 well, this goes on my state calendar of 5,000 cases and
- the clerk's office is troubled with collecting the \$350

1	filing fee in installments, and the jails are troubled
2	by paying those installments every time there's \$10 in
3	the prisoner's account. It's it would there are
4	more important things for the courts, the prisons to do
5	Thank you.
6	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, Counsel.
7	The case is submitted.
8	(Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the case in the
9	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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22	
23	
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	1	<u> </u>		ı
A	action 3:21,23	34:6 48:11	antecedent	10:21 11:22
abeyance 36:24	3:24 4:18 6:5,9	agrees 11:23	40:20	14:21 18:3,6
able 45:17	6:14,23,24	ahead 16:8 35:8	anyway 13:7	19:15 21:1,4
above-entitled	11:15 13:18	37:24,25 46:12	31:22	21:18 23:25
1:12 53:9	17:8 18:19,21	47:4	appeal 29:20	24:19 25:3,12
absolutely 5:9	19:13 20:4	ALITO 8:1,11	50:17	27:12 40:25
6:22 11:3	21:2,15,16,17	8:22 9:11	appeals 4:2,2	51:1
17:19 32:20	21:21 23:13	10:13 23:9	17:14,16 30:2	arrived 48:2
39:4 43:22	24:1,5,14,19	allegation 11:6	48:18	aside 4:1 12:11
abstain 33:24	24:20 25:15	alleged 5:18	APPEARAN	asked 4:1 21:24
abstention	26:2,4 33:2	12:5 29:14	1:15	22:1 39:10
35:14,15,19	34:7,14 37:1	31:20	appellate 29:21	asking 32:4
36:25	37:10 40:5	allegedly 21:9	30:4 40:22	assert 30:14
accept 44:22	50:1,2,3,15,20	34:14	applied 4:23	assume 31:18
Accepting 38:3	50:22,23 51:23	alleges 33:2	apply 4:2,3 8:4	44:13
accomplished	52:22	allow 16:10,11	13:18	assuming 33:15
32:13	actions 11:15	22:9 39:6	applying 13:19	33:17 47:13
account 42:21	24:19 25:7	44:17 46:14	appropriate	assumption 11:6
42:22 53:3	37:1	allowed 27:8	13:18,21	13:6 33:17,19
accrual 13:22	actively 38:19	allowing 49:9	argued 35:2	40:8
18:19 27:24	acts 29:1	alternatives	argues 50:6	attack 16:6
31:25 32:4,8	addition 10:7	23:4	arguing 8:16	attacks 16:5
32:24 33:1	additional 8:5,7	ambush 5:16	9:19 37:23	attorney 14:9
35:25 36:2,8	8:11,23,24,25	ambushed 10:11	argument 1:13	attributed 21:12
37:9 38:5,6,18	addressed 3:11	Amendment	2:2,5,8 3:3,6	available 14:2
39:5 41:18	46:24	14:6,8,11	8:2 27:17	43:22 44:11
43:25 47:22	adhere 7:14	27:24 28:2,9	40:17 42:19	45:21 47:9,14
48:3,22 49:13	administered	28:10,13 29:2	44:23 49:8,22	48:20
49:16	16:14	29:7,11,14	arising 46:15	average 9:15,16
accrue 6:15	administrative	30:7,13,15,19	armed 27:7	avoid 13:25
21:16 23:1	52:5	30:21 31:2,4,6	arraigned 50:2	36:17 42:23
24:6 25:15	adopt 4:3	31:7,11,14,16	50:7	awaiting 6:4
28:17 29:1,6	adopted 40:13	31:21,23 32:10	arraignment	awake 14:10
29:11 48:9	adopting 18:18	32:10,12,16,25	21:10,12,18,22	award 48:4
accrued 6:5,9	adopts 51:8	33:1,3,8,10,11	48:14	aware 19:11
,	advantage 37:12	33:18,24 34:8	arrest 6:11,12	20:9 46:2
23:13 24:5,15 24:17 28:3,6	42:2 44:15	38:19 40:18	6:16,21 7:1,3,4	awful 41:4
50:15	advantages	41:2,22,23	10:3 11:10	a.m 1:14 3:2
accrues 3:25	38:21	43:10 45:15	15:4 19:14	
11:23 23:5,6	advocating	47:14,21 48:20	21:10 22:6,9	B
32:1	19:18,20	49:7,9,15 51:7	22:14 24:22	back 13:16
	affirmed 3:14	ANDRE 1:3	26:22 28:4	15:12 17:22
accruing 31:14 accuse 8:18	49:17	answer 11:2	31:4 40:20	21:15 39:17
acquiesce 30:18	age 9:15	16:7,7 20:21	44:3 47:19	bar 14:8
_	ago 44:1 45:10	30:21 35:8	48:13 50:16	barred 24:12
acquitted 18:5 act 12:16 31:15	48:6	answers 18:16	51:11,13	28:6 47:17
32:1	agree 33:21 34:4	ante 5:8,14	arrested 4:5 6:6	base 9:7 10:1
34.1	S-2200.2101.1			
L	1	l	1	ı

based 20:25 breaking 7:10 21:25 22:18 causes 18:21 4:20 15:7 basically 22:19 15:9,15,18,21 23:3,5,5,6,15 26:4,5 51:22 16:10,22 17:13 23:15 basis 10:23 17:9 17:24 18:23 25:23 26:13,18 36:4 24:1 30:13 22:12 30:5 44:14,16,17 25:2,10 34:11 30:14 31:19 37:19 certain 32:24 37:10 battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 33:3,22 34:5,9 36:9,15 37:19 certainly 19:1 6:20,22 11:2 13:9 24:9,10 Breyer's 26:16 38:9,11 40:4,7 24:14 41:8,15 22:24 43:12,20 bearing 26:16 brief 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 beat 25:13,16,19 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 42:4 43:12,20 43:23 44:2,11 42:14 13 45:2,9 42:4 43:12,20 43:23 44:2,11 45:12 46:2 45:12 46:2 45:12 46:2 45:12 46:2 45:12 46:2 47:5,8 48:2 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15 beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 50:5,11,11 50:25,12,13 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15
29:14 Breyer 14:19 23:3,5,5,6,15 26:4,5 51:22 16:10,22 17:13 23:15 basically 22:19 15:9,15,18,21 23:17,20,22 caveat 35:24 17:13 23:15 basis 10:23 17:9 17:24 18:23 25:23 26:13,18 36:4 24:1 30:13 22:12 30:5 19:6,17 20:1,8 29:2,12,18 36:4 certain 32:24 37:10 battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 30:14 31:19 37:19 claim 4:7 6:13 battery 11:17,19 38:6 36:9,15 37:19 certainly 19:1 6:20,22 11:2 13:9 24:9,10 Breyer's 26:16 38:9,11 40:4,7 challenge 5:1 14:13 20:21 bearing 26:16 49:8 50:18 42:4 43:12,20 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beat 25:13,16,19 Briggs 7:13 44:13 45:2,9 chance 41:11 28:14,15,15, beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:17,18,21 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3
basically 22:19 15:9,15,18,21 23:17,20,22 caveat 35:24 17:13 23:15 basis 10:23 17:9 17:24 18:23 25:23 26:13,18 36:4 24:1 30:13 22:12 30:5 19:6,17 20:1,8 29:2,12,18 certain 32:24 37:10 battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 30:14 31:19 37:19 claim 4:7 6:13 battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 38:6 36:9,15 37:19 chain 7:10,14 6:20,22 11:2 13:9 24:9,10 Breyer's 26:16 Breyer's 26:16 40:14 41:8,15 challenge 5:1 14:13 20:21 bearing 26:16 briefs 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 beate 25:13,16,19 Briggs 7:13 44:13 45:2,9 challenged 5:1 28:9,10,11,1 beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:17,18,21 42:7,7 51:23 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15 beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
basis 10:23 17:9 17:24 18:23 25:23 26:13,18 36:4 24:1 30:13 22:12 30:5 19:6,17 20:1,8 29:2,12,18 37:10 44:14,16,17 25:2,10 34:11 30:14 31:19 37:19 battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 33:3,22 34:5,9 certainly 19:1 6:20,22 11:2 12:20,24 13:1 38:6 36:9,15 37:19 chain 7:10,14 12:22 14:6,8 13:9 24:9,10 brief 47:13 48:3 49:8 50:18 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 bearing 26:16 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:17,18,21 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15 beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
44:14,16,17 25:2,10 34:11 30:14 31:19 37:19 claim 4:7 6:13 battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 33:3,22 34:5,9 certainly 19:1 6:20,22 11:2 12:20,24 13:1 38:6 36:9,15 37:19 chain 7:10,14 12:22 14:6,8 13:9 24:9,10 brief 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 bearing 26:16 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:17,18,21 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15, beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
44:14,16,17 25:2,10 34:11 30:14 31:19 37:19 claim 4:7 6:13 battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 33:3,22 34:5,9 certainly 19:1 6:20,22 11:2 12:20,24 13:1 38:6 36:9,15 37:19 chain 7:10,14 12:22 14:6,8 13:9 24:9,10 Breyer's 26:16 38:9,11 40:4,7 challenge 5:1 14:13 20:21 24:10 brief 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 bearing 26:16 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beate 25:13,16,19 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenging 3:16 28:9,10,11,1 25:22 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:14,15,15, beaten 26:10 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15, beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
battery 11:17,19 35:10,12 37:14 33:3,22 34:5,9 certainly 19:1 6:20,22 11:2 12:20,24 13:1 38:6 36:9,15 37:19 chain 7:10,14 12:22 14:6,8 13:9 24:9,10 Breyer's 26:16 38:9,11 40:4,7 challenge 5:1 14:13 20:21 24:10 brief 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 bearing 26:16 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:14,15,15, 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15, beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
12:20,24 13:1 38:6 36:9,15 37:19 chain 7:10,14 12:22 14:6,8 13:9 24:9,10 brief 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 bearing 26:16 49:8 50:18 42:4 43:12,20 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beat 25:13,16,19 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenging 3:16 28:9,10,11,1 beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:17,18,21 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15, beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
13:9 24:9,10 Breyer's 26:16 38:9,11 40:4,7 challenge 5:1 14:13 20:21 24:10 brief 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 bearing 26:16 49:8 50:18 42:4 43:12,20 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beat 25:13,16,19 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenging 3:16 28:9,10,11,1 25:22 bring 5:21 15:10 44:13 45:2,9 chance 41:11 28:14,15,15, beaten 26:10 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15, beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charge 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
24:10 brief 47:13 48:3 40:14 41:8,15 18:8 19:23 22:6,9 23:15 bearing 26:16 49:8 50:18 42:4 43:12,20 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beat 25:13,16,19 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenging 3:16 28:9,10,11,1 25:22 Briggs 7:13 44:13 45:2,9 chance 41:11 28:14,15,15, beaten 26:10 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15, beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charge 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
bearing 26:16 49:8 50:18 42:4 43:12,20 challenged 5:1 27:25 28:3,6 beat 25:13,16,19 briefs 42:20 43:23 44:2,11 challenging 3:16 28:9,10,11,1 25:22 Briggs 7:13 44:13 45:2,9 chance 41:11 28:14,15,15, beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:17,18,21 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15 beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
25:22 Briggs 7:13 44:13 45:2,9 chance 41:11 28:14,15,15, 5, 6 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 charge 19:15 29:23 30:15, 6 beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
25:22 Briggs 7:13 44:13 45:2,9 chance 41:11 28:14,15,15, 5, 6 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 charge 19:15 29:23 30:15, 6 beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
beaten 26:10 bring 5:21 15:10 45:12 46:2 Chardon 32:9 28:17,18,21 42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15 beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
42:7,7 51:23 19:24 24:1,16 47:5,8 48:2 charge 19:15 29:6,7,11,14 51:24,24 25:3 38:16 49:6,11,14,25 20:25 47:4 29:23 30:15, beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
51:24,24
beating 25:17,24 41:12 47:15 50:5,11,11 charged 18:3 30:23 31:3,4
-20.20 ± 0.17 $0.11160 + 0.1.20 \pm 0.10 + 0.11$ $0.1.7,22.32.1$
31:20 43:8 broken 11:18 52:19 53:7,8 charges 6:4 32:12,16,25
beautifully 40:3 brought 7:19 cases 4:6 5:9,17 48:10 49:14 33:1,8,10,11
becoming 13:25 19:16 21:1,3 14:14 16:16,17 charging 40:21 33:18,25 34:
began 10:16
beginning 28:8 29:17 32:23 20:10 21:5 29:11 38:19 41:2
behalf 1:16,19 33:7,13,18 23:11 24:23,25 Chicago 1:6,16 43:7 44:4,24
2:4,7,10 3:7 38:9 48:8 49:2 26:21 32:9,10 1:19 44:25 45:15
27:18 49:23 build 9:16 32:22 36:12,13 Chief 3:3,8 5:19 45:19 46:4,7
believe 28:12,13 burden 41:13 36:13 39:7,15 5:25 13:24 46:22,25 47:
30:21,22 32:7 39:16,17 40:6 19:3 20:17 47:9,14,15,1
36:4,6 42:20 — C 40:9 41:9,13 23:19 24:3,14 47:19,20 48:
believes 4:23 C 2:1 3:1 41:14 42:15 27:15,19 37:5 48:9,21,22,2
benefit 20:24 calendar 52:24 43:17 45:6 37:12 39:12 49:1,6,7
21:6 23:2 call 7:8 34:13 46:16 52:7,9 49:18 53:6 claimant 4:20
45:25 35:24 choices 35:24 claimant's 41:
benefits 41:11 called 18:11 categorical 4:4 choose 23:4 claims 28:24,2
BENNA 1:18 carving 19:1 causation 7:11 chose 50:18 28:25 29:17
2:6 27:17 case 3:10,15,17 7:14 circuit 17:11,15 30:13 31:11,
better 41:7 3:19,20 4:9,14 cause 4:18 6:5,8 19:12,16 21:2 41:5,24 46:1
beyond 44:5 4:19,24 5:5,13 6:22,24,24 21:8,17,21 clear 32:9,10
bias 16:24 17:1 6:22 8:14,16 8:18 13:18 23:3 29:19,21 35:19,20
bind-over 7:8 8:17 9:8,11,12 18:19 20:4 30:10 50:9,17 clerk's 52:25
bit 8:17 51:2 9:18,23 10:24 21:2,15,16,17 circuits 19:12 client 9:17 10:
Board 19:9 12:1,2,16,17 21:20,21 23:12 Circuit's 13:22 25:5 26:10,1
borrow 19:5 12:17,18 13:15 25:14 26:2 21:14 42:7
bottom 46:10 14:5 16:10,23 50:1,1,3,15,20 circumstances client's 14:21
bound 6:10 10:5 16:24 17:2,5,9 50:22,23 45:11 close 39:21
boundaries 22:6 18:24 19:21,22 caused 24:10 cite 48:1 coerced 28:14
break 7:14 19:22 21:1,19 51:13,14 civil 3:15,18 29:14 30:11

	1	1	·	
cognizable	31:19 32:17	41:25 45:21,23	40:23 41:13,15	18:21 20:5
14:13	42:8 51:12,25	46:1 48:25	41:15 42:21,25	21:23
collateral 16:5,6	52:1	52:3	43:3 44:10,22	cut 43:17
collaterally 3:16	confessions	Cook 17:12,15	46:6,9,13 47:3	
collecting 52:25	27:13	42:24,25	47:6 48:18,19	D
come 13:21,23	confident 17:19	core 4:10,13,17	49:11 50:14,25	D 3:1
17:22,22 38:11	conscience	6:24	50:25 51:8	damage 17:3
39:10,17	28:22	Corporation	52:10	47:13
comes 3:20	consensual 33:4	1:18	courts 17:20	damages 3:24
38:15 51:20	consider 17:5	corpus 14:13	36:25 46:12,14	4:7,18 11:19
coming 40:21	22:1 23:7	25:1	47:7 48:16	20:22 21:4,8
comity 46:14	consistent 20:12	correct 4:16	53:4	21:11 22:2,2,3
47:7	22:24 45:13	6:22 7:6,16,16	court's 15:14	22:9,18 26:9
commenced	51:4,5,7	7:20 22:22	28:13 51:5	40:18 41:22
26:18,22	Constitution	33:14 35:3,11	crack 46:15	42:8,9 45:20
comment 40:25	11:7 45:25	35:13 36:22	create 49:5	46:4,22 47:11
42:5	constitutional	39:23	crime 8:19	47:21,22 48:4
commit 10:19	12:7,8,9 49:1	correctness 35:5	10:19 26:12	48:4,8,12,20
common 4:20	52:2	counsel 1:18	27:7	48:21,23,24
6:14 13:17,20	construct 38:4	42:4,6 53:6	crimes 27:2,6	49:4,10 51:2
19:13 22:8,17	construed 50:9	County 17:12,15	criminal 3:17,18	date 32:24 49:13
22:22,25 23:7	content 26:15	42:25,25	3:20 4:19 5:3,9	49:14,15
complaint 43:2	41:14	coupled 38:18	5:10,13,17 8:3	day 5:22 25:3
43:4,6,14,24	context 3:12,13	course 29:8	9:22 10:1	51:3 52:22
44:6	3:17	32:20 34:9	12:18 13:15	days 24:5
completed 6:18	continues 21:22	36:9 40:17	14:5 16:1,3,11	Deacons 46:21
complicated	contradict 12:10	41:14 42:6	16:17,21,24	debate 9:5
17:24 27:2	contrary 20:9	43:2 44:18,23	17:2,9 20:5,6	decide 49:11
conceded 45:10	convenience	45:8,9,14,24	23:11,15,17,21	decision 6:10
48:6	31:23	47:1,7,8 49:4,6	26:12,13,18,21	12:9 34:25
concern 4:15	convict 42:10	court 1:1,13 3:9	29:18 33:22	37:21
42:16	convicted 15:3	3:10,20,23 4:2	34:5,9,22	decisions 48:18
concerned 6:17	18:3,7 19:14	4:2,17,22	36:15 37:19	defendant 5:10
23:18 27:10	19:24 21:4	13:17 15:20,23	39:9,14 40:4,7	5:17 8:3 9:21
conclude 47:6	22:15 24:8	15:25 16:2,5	45:12 46:16	9:22 10:12
concluding 4:17	28:2 38:14	16:16 17:9,11	47:11 50:5,11	12:21 16:11,22
concurrence	40:14 43:11	17:15 18:25	51:15 52:4,8	20:6,6 25:12 27:8 28:20
46:21,24	conviction 3:14	19:10,11 20:13	52:19	32:15 34:21
conduct 40:20	3:17,25,25 5:3	25:5 27:20	critical 36:20	37:22 38:24,24
confessed 33:6	8:9,13,21,25	29:19,21,21,24	cross-examina	39:9,9 40:5
confession 7:1	9:4,10 12:3,4,6	30:2,4,10,20	17:10,12,21	defendants
7:17,18,24	12:10,11,13	30:24 32:7	cross-examined	27:10,11
8:20 10:4,7,23	13:6,8,10 18:5	33:23 34:5,6	17:3	defended 52:4
25:25 26:1,2	18:8 19:23	34:18 35:2,7	crucial 5:2	defense 13:15
28:14,22,23,24	20:5,25 28:9	36:1,6,23 37:2	curious 40:16	41:6 42:4
29:15,22 30:2	30:5 35:6,6	37:24 38:1,20	currently 39:11	definitely 31:10
30:6,8,9,11	38:15 40:14	39:3,8,10,15	custody 7:2	definitely 31.10
			<u> </u>	l

delay 38:5,6	dispose 46:7	37:7 39:19	32:2	29:23 34:18,23
47:22 48:21	dispose 40.7 dissenting 5:5	43:20,22 52:13	expires 25:5	35:15,16 36:2
49:13	distinguish	equitably 18:4	explices 25.5 explain 16:25	36:14 37:16,25
delayed 39:5	34:15	error 30:22,25	explicitly 46:18	39:8 40:6
41:18 47:22	district 15:13,20	especially 21:1	explicitly 40.18 exploited 6:25	42:21 43:3
deny 20:17	15:23,25 16:2	ESQ 1:16,18 2:3	11:11	
	·	_ ′		50:7,11,23,25 52:6
denying 4:18 18:19	16:5,9,16	2:6,9	exploiting 7:4 extent 47:23	fee 53:1
Deputy 1:18	36:23 39:8 41:15 42:21	essentially 35:23 38:4	extent 47.25 extort 25:25	Fifth 28:9,13
described 31:12				,
description 9:17	46:6,9,12 47:3 50:14 52:10,23	established 18:20	extorted 10:4 51:25	29:10,14 30:13 30:15,19,20
detention 28:4	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	EUGENE 1:7		
33:3	docket 15:14	event 34:16	extorting 28:9 extracted 32:17	31:2,5,6,21
	dockets 16:16			32:11,16,24
determination 37:20	double 24:12 due 45:19	evidence 5:1,1	extraordinary 43:23	33:8,17 34:16
		5:13,18 7:22		fighting 3:19
determine 36:23 determined	duty 42:6 D.C 1:10	8:3,4,6,8,11,17	eyewitness 9:23	figure 36:18 39:8 41:16
	D.C 1.10	8:23,24 9:1,6,9	eyewitnesss 10:8	
51:16,17		9:25 11:11	F	figures 39:8
deterrence 46:2	E 2:1 3:1,1	12:23 29:4,4	facing 37:10	figuring 36:16
developed 30:23	earlier 23:13	32:11 36:19,19	fact 9:2 11:4,16	39:13
51:14 D :== 24:12	38:3	36:20,21 37:17	20:11 25:4	file 4:7 12:16,17
Diaz 24:13	easier 36:18	38:25 45:5	43:5 48:1	14:10,22 16:6
dictate 33:1	39:7	46:3 50:12	facts 7:6 51:16	16:22 18:1
dictionary 9:5	easily 16:13	51:10	factual 7:15,16	23:14 30:12
dies 24:10	easily 10.13 easy 34:10,12	ex 5:8,13	fair 11:3 14:6,12	34:17,21 40:5
difference 19:19	effect 3:16 48:18	exactly 28:21	fairly 16:13	40:13 41:7
19:19 37:6	52:11	35:13 37:3	51:16	43:3,24 44:6
46:24	effectively 12:10	43:12	false 6:11,12,14	52:22,23
different 3:12	eight 10:24 45:3	example 34:19	10:23 19:14	filed 3:15 11:14
8:14,16 13:3	50:3,21,24	44:2	22:6,8,14,25	15:1,24,24
18:13 29:7		excellent 20:7	24:2 31:4 42:8	18:8 28:5 34:2
32:25 33:21	51:18,18,20 either 21:18	exception 31:13	43:7 50:12,13	36:10 40:6,11
37:23	35:19 38:5	exceptions 4:4	far 6:16 30:25	40:15 41:5
difficult 37:20	40:10 48:3	excessive 11:21	36:18 39:7	43:14 44:7
directed 6:21	element 13:13	25:13 28:23	41:12	45:15 52:9,21
disadvantage	13:14 22:23,25	excluded 9:7	favor 4:19 20:6	files 3:22 11:13
37:15 38:7	25:17 28:15,16	exclusion 46:3	50:5	24:4 34:21
disclosed 5:16	28:25 31:12	exclusionary	favorable 45:9	filing 6:4 36:9
discovery 5:10	elements 47:21	45:22 46:1	45:11,13,17	53:1
5:16 23:11	elephant 49:25	excuse 36:14	48:7	final 15:14
discussion 50:19		exist 21:6 50:9	48:7 feature 29:25	finally 10:24
disinclined	eliminating 8:19 enable 49:3	existed 12:5	Federal 3:20	financial 27:2
16:22	ended 45:12	existence 4:18	12:17 14:13	find 20:20
dismissed 46:23	ended 43.12 ends 23:8	18:19	18:20 19:9	finding 30:10,12
50:13	enus 23:8 entire 48:4	experience		findings 29:21
dismissing		46:11	20:3,12,15 24:25 25:8	30:7
46:25	equitable 18:12	experiences	24.23 23.0	first 19:21 25:20
	l	l		l

	ı		1	1
26:8 38:22	23:7 27:23	35:4,8 37:24	44:21	32:13
45:5 46:15	28:2,10 29:1,7	37:25 46:12	happens 6:13	illegally 8:4
fits 9:17 40:2	30:7,13 31:4	50:25,25	14:19 21:12	40:23 44:20
five 48:18	31:10,13,15,23	goes 21:15 52:24	24:3 34:20	Illinois 4:7 5:24
Flaxman 1:16	32:9,10,12	going 4:3 6:13	Hardin 44:10	7:8 17:20
2:3,9 3:5,6,8	33:1,3,10,11	6:14 14:25	hear 3:3 42:11	29:18,20 30:4
4:8,12,16 5:4,9	33:24 34:8,15	15:2 16:6 18:4	hearing 7:9 14:6	30:10 40:22
5:15,23 6:3,20	38:19 40:18	19:20,21,24	14:12 21:20	44:9,17 45:2,8
7:13,20,22 8:1	41:2,21,23	20:19,21 21:5	Heck 3:11,13,23	50:9,14,22
8:7,15 9:3,20	43:10 45:14	23:12,14,17,19	4:9,10,16,22	imagine 43:16
10:10,17 11:4	47:14,20 48:20	23:21,22,23	12:4,5 13:16	immediate
11:9,21 12:2	49:7,9,15 51:7	24:24 25:6	13:17,19,25	13:22 36:8
12:15,22,25	free 10:25	29:23 31:18	15:6 18:18	38:18
13:3,8,13 14:4	frequent 31:19	34:5,25 35:1	31:13 46:18,20	immediately
14:17 15:7,13	frequently	37:7,10,16,18	47:1 48:24	5:21 13:1
15:16,19 16:9	24:24	38:11 39:7,12	51:4	15:25 23:5
16:15,21 17:1	friend 6:8	39:16 40:9	height 9:16	36:9 51:1,24
17:11,16,19	frivolous 41:5	42:3 43:6	held 3:23 10:23	immune 32:20
18:16,25 19:8	front 37:17	46:25 52:13,13	16:2 30:2	impair 12:3
19:25 20:3,13	fruitless 12:16	good 30:3	help 18:11 26:19	impairs 52:3
20:23 21:14	fruits 24:21	governed 22:19	Herring 43:12	impeach 16:24
22:1,8,14,22	full 14:6,12	44:1	43:12	17:1
23:14,24 24:7	47:23	grant 30:20	hey 16:6	implicated 29:6
24:18 25:8,16	fully 20:15	39:13	highest 17:20	implicitly 46:18
25:24 26:5,9	32:12 51:16	granted 39:17	hold 7:2 11:11	implied 4:4
26:14,21 27:1	further 16:3,7	ground 37:2	36:24	imply 8:9,20
27:5,11,16	future 47:22	grounds 22:24	hole 19:1	9:10 41:24
49:20,22,24		guess 6:15 15:6	Honor 6:21	important 39:4
52:14,18	G	15:9 19:21	39:24 40:9	53:4
Flaxman's 42:1	G 3:1	20:1	41:10 43:17,21	imprisoned 3:19
follow 19:12	gather 6:13 29:9	guilt 22:24	48:17	imprisonment
follows 33:9	general 37:2	guilty 43:11	hope 18:17	3:25 6:15,16
41:1	generally 13:8,9		horrible 15:17	22:10 23:1,8
footnote 31:13	Gerstein 21:20	H	15:19	24:2 50:13,13
48:17	getting 13:16	habeas 4:11,15	Humphrey 3:11	inapplicable
footnotes 47:1	14:12 35:13	14:1,2,13 25:1	hundreds 41:9,9	14:15
force 11:21	GINSBURG 4:8	half 10:24 50:4	hurt 23:17 26:13	incarcerated 6:3
25:13 28:23	4:14 21:7,24	50:21,24 51:18	hypothetical	incarceration
forced 27:12	22:5 29:9,25	51:20	10:20 25:12	3:22 6:11 7:12
forth 12:24 41:1	43:19 45:1	hand 37:2		48:5 49:4
forums 18:13	48:11	handling 41:15	<u> </u>	51:14
forward 14:25	give 14:9 22:17	hands 52:16	identical 19:18	incentive 40:4
16:10 46:23,25	27:12 40:4	happen 15:2,3	identification	incident 6:12
found 10:6,7	given 7:17,18	19:24 22:7	9:24	includes 28:8
four 18:16 19:12	gives 10:22	34:2,23 37:18	identified 10:8	including 48:2
44:4 49:20	go 9:8 15:11,12	43:2	III 1:16,19	inconsistent
fourth 14:6,8,11	16:8,10 27:4	happened 5:5	illegal 15:3	19:9
		-	-	-

independent	involuntary	22:17 23:9,19	14:4,7,8 15:2	44:5 47:16,25
6:10,18 45:24	10:22 33:5	24:3,14 25:2	20:9 23:12,20	51:9 52:12,16
indicated 30:16	involved 12:13	25:10,11,19	23:21,22 34:12	52:17,19
31:9 39:6	27:6	26:3,7,14,16	35:22 37:7,9	limited 8:2
41:21 43:9	involves 4:15	26:24 27:3,9	37:23 38:8,10	line 4:10
44:1,10 48:5	in-court 9:24	27:15,19 28:7	38:13 42:11	lines 31:18
indicates 42:15	issue 17:18	28:19 29:9,10	44:19,19 47:23	literally 41:8
46:22	49:12,24 50:17	29:25 30:16	known 44:22	litigated 38:20
indicating 46:2	issues 22:3	31:2,17 32:3,6	knows 5:10	litigation 30:23
indications 47:2	46:15	32:15,21 33:7	14:10 23:16	31:5
indifferent 36:6	it'ss 6:14	33:15 34:4,11	KRISTEN 1:7	little 8:17 51:2
initial 42:4		35:10,12 36:22		locked 50:4
47:10	J	37:3,5,12,14	L	long 6:1 18:7
injured 11:20	jails 53:1	38:6 39:12	laches 52:13	22:15 26:17
injuries 47:24	January 14:20	40:1,12,24	language 5:3	33:22 37:8
injury 11:24	34:13,16	42:1,14,24	Laughter 6:2	43:4 45:10
12:21 24:10	jeopardy 24:12	43:5,13,19	16:20 17:23	48:6
32:2	judge 5:5 9:15	45:1 46:5,17	law 4:21 6:14	look 13:20 20:10
innocence 22:13	16:9 19:20,20	46:23 48:11	13:17,20 19:5	20:11 37:17
22:20,24	34:23,24 37:16	49:18 52:11,15	19:8,13 20:11	looked 13:17
innocent 10:21	48:11 52:23	53:6	20:15 22:8,17	looking 39:16
insist 46:6	judges 18:12		22:23,25 23:7	lost 29:18
installments	judgment 49:17	K	40:3 44:12,15	lot 23:11 39:13
53:1,2	judicial 7:18	Kato 1:7 3:4	44:17 45:2,6	41:4 42:3
instance 38:10	judiciary 7:9	KENNED 12:23	45:16 50:9,14	love 42:5
instances 38:8	jurisdiction	Kennedy 11:1,5	lawsuit 3:22	
insufficient 8:12	23:10	11:16,25 12:19	28:5 38:25	M
8:24	jurisprudence	13:2,11 14:14	lawyer 23:16	magistrate 6:10
interest 41:20	51:6	28:19 31:17	lawyers 41:6	6:19 7:19,23
51:15	jury 17:5 42:5	32:3,7 36:22	leave 43:20	7:24
interested 42:9	Justice 3:3,8 4:8	37:4 42:1,14	legality 51:11,11	main 36:5 41:17
interests 39:4	4:14,25 5:7,12	42:24 43:5,13	lengthy 48:5	major 37:11
41:20	5:19,25 6:7 7:5	46:5,17 52:11	let's 9:16 34:13	making 32:3,7
interference	7:15,21 8:1,11	52:15	34:20	malicious 4:21
36:17	8:22 9:11 10:2	Kennedy's	level 17:20	22:15,23 45:7
interrogation	10:13,15 11:1	25:12	lied 42:11	45:16,18 50:8
25:22	11:5,16,25	KENNETH	limb 11:18	50:10
intervention	12:4,19,23	1:16 2:3,9 3:6	limit 17:10	Malley 7:13
7:19	13:2,5,11,24	49:22	limitation 20:19	man 9:8,21
introduced	14:14,19 15:9	KENNEY 13:5	48:12	10:18,21 38:13
32:18	15:15,18,21,22	kind 17:10	limitations 4:6	marshalling
invalidate 5:3	16:12,18,25	19:23 27:6	5:22,24 23:21	38:25
invalidity 8:9,20	17:7,14,17,22	35:1	25:4 26:19,20	material 51:11
9:10 41:24	17:24 18:23	kinds 27:6	28:4 29:16	matter 1:12 7:16
invasion 40:19	19:3,6,17 20:1	knew 5:17 10:6	30:14 34:3	7:17 22:7
involuntarily	20:8,17 21:7	know 5:12,15,20	36:11 38:23	24:23 26:23
10:22	21:24 22:5,12	7:7 10:3,5,17	41:12,19 43:25	27:25 31:22,22
I	1			

	I	I		
39:19 48:22	multitude 11:15	obtained 30:6	P	43:15
53:9	murder 5:24	48:8	P 3:1	police 1:6 6:25
mean 5:20 6:7	9:14 24:11	occur 17:12 34:2	PAGE 2:2	7:11 11:10,19
8:23,23,24,25	27:7	occurred 7:5,7	papers 37:17	14:24 17:4
9:4,6 11:5		28:5	part 29:13 31:5	25:13 32:23
15:23 16:13,15	N	occurrence	47:12	33:4 51:17
35:5 37:15	N 1:16 2:1,1,3,9	14:18	passed 26:20	policemen 32:16
39:15,20	3:1,6 49:22	occurs 23:8	passing 21:8	35:2 38:8
meaning 51:6	nearly 36:13	27:24 31:16	paying 53:2	42:11
meaningless	44:4	34:16	pending 12:18	policy 31:22
49:15,16	necessarily 5:2,7	offense 13:14	15:8 33:22	portion 30:19
means 9:3	8:8,9,20,22	25:18 26:12	37:1 39:14	position 25:11
measure 48:14	12:2 15:4 17:8	31:12 32:18	46:8	34:1 43:19
mentioned 47:8	19:22 35:7	office 52:25	people 27:4	possibility 16:4
merged 31:21	36:25 41:24	officer 41:12	period 33:13	23:7
merits 41:3 46:7	52:3	51:18	36:10 43:24	potential 41:1,2
46:7	necessary 39:6	officers 1:6 6:25	47:16,24 48:5	41:4
mess 15:18,19	need 25:6 36:9	11:10,20 17:4	48:13	Powell 14:3,7,15
15:22	36:13	20:18,23 21:6	person 18:2	24:25
mind 26:16	needs 42:22 49:6	32:23 37:6	20:25 22:21	powerful 47:2
minimum 40:21	negate 31:11	Okay 7:21 17:17	40:25 45:3	practical 3:16
41:21	never 23:19,21	old 44:3	persuade 9:1	24:23 26:23
minor 44:16	23:22 24:16,17	once 12:24	petition 5:6	36:7 40:2
minutes 49:20	30:12 40:15	15:23 38:13,14	30:18,20	precisely 30:15
missed 42:1	44:13,23 45:4	ones 46:16 48:2	petitioner 1:4,17	39:20 41:23
misspoke 31:10	nevertheless	ongoing 36:15	2:4,10 3:7 4:23	prefer 35:22
mixed 28:10	47:15	36:18	30:12 33:2	prejudice 39:22
modification	newly 48:2	operation 45:22	45:10,25 47:18	prejudiced
17:25	nice 51:3	opinion 47:1	48:1,6 49:23	51:19
modify 15:21	nightmare 52:5	opponent's	petitioner's 28:2	premise 16:12
moment 6:9	nine 28:5	40:12	29:13	presented 7:23
34:15 44:1	nol 49:14	opposed 35:25	place 9:14 45:5	7:24 22:4
Monahan 46:21	nonsensical	options 36:5	plaintiff 3:18	30:18
Monday 1:11	52:20	oral 1:12 2:2,5	32:1 35:4	presents 3:10
money 17:3,4	non-existent	3:6 27:17	39:10 43:23	preserving 39:1
42:3	14:18	order 29:5 36:17	44:19,23 47:23	presume 11:1
month 34:21	notice 38:24	42:22 43:6	48:23 49:3,5,7	prevailed 3:18
months 34:20	43:3	outcome 47:10	plaintiff's 41:19	primary 47:12
morning 27:21	November 1:11	outset 29:22	pleading 29:13	48:19 49:10
motion 11:13	number 33:10	33:5	30:22,25 43:4	principle 4:1
14:10 29:19	33:15 40:6,9	outside 44:7	please 3:9 27:20	37:6
41:7 52:23	48:16	outstanding	plus 7:4	prior 7:7,8,9
mounting 47:22	0	12:6,13	point 4:9 6:11	prison 3:14 23:2
48:21	$\frac{0}{0}$ 2:1 3:1	overruling 19:4	6:18 7:9 13:24	45:3 51:20
multiple 26:5	objection 39:24	19:7 20:14	13:25 33:6	prisoner 3:13
37:1 51:22	obligated 47:15	overturned 30:5	34:13 41:17	prisoners 44:9
multiply 40:6	obtain 28:22,23	45:21 46:1	42:2,6 43:13	prisoner's 53:3
		<u> </u>	<u>l</u>	<u>l</u>

prisons 53:4	45:7,16,18	reading 50:14	reply 48:3	23:19 24:3,14
privacy 40:19	46:8 47:11,12	realized 9:25	repose 20:19	27:15 37:5,13
probable 6:24	47:20 50:8,10	really 10:5 38:4	39:2	39:12 49:18
8:18 21:20	prosecutor 9:25	51:10 52:5,5	require 19:1,4,6	53:6
problem 4:10,13	32:17,19 42:2	52:20	46:3	room 25:22
4:17 11:12	prosecutor's	reason 14:16	required 33:23	49:25
14:1,20,23,23	43:6	20:18 30:17	requires 22:23	routine 41:6
18:11,14,15,22	prossed 49:14	36:1 42:20	45:8	Roy 1:8 3:4
25:2 29:16	protect 20:15	43:20 47:3	reserve 27:14	rule 4:4,20,21
30:25 34:11	provide 45:7	reasons 30:15	resolved 4:19	9:18 13:18,21
35:13 40:2	provides 45:2	32:23,25 36:7	16:17 17:18	13:22,23 14:15
51:9,10	proximate 51:12	47:2	20:6 50:5 52:8	14:21 18:18,20
problems 25:9	proximately	REBUTTAL	respect 32:6	19:13,18,19
29:23	51:13,13	2:8 49:22	41:10 47:7	20:4 23:7,10
procedure 41:6	purpose 20:18	receive 14:5	respected 36:1	25:8 28:12
proceed 34:6	purposes 27:24	45:25	39:3	29:2 31:25
proceeding 18:8	28:3 38:22	recites 48:17	respondent 6:25	32:4,7 35:25
34:22 38:16	41:18 46:3	records 39:1	50:20	35:25 36:8,8
46:6	pursued 29:20	recover 3:24	Respondents	37:9,12 38:17
proceedings	put 26:17 43:3	49:3	1:19 2:7 27:18	39:5,5,19,24
16:1,3,4 33:24	43:23 44:5	reference 48:24	respondent's	40:13 41:18
47:6	puts 38:23	reflect 20:15	52:21	45:22 46:1
proceeds 40:7	puzzled 12:20	regard 25:11	response 29:10	48:3,4 51:8
process 10:16	puzzling 29:25	40:3	rests 27:21	52:6,12,13,22
45:19	p.m 53:8	regarded 31:14	result 35:19	rules 32:8 35:14
produce 11:15		49:9	45:20 48:17	35:15,17,20,20
product 31:20	Q	regarding 30:8	resulting 12:21	36:2 38:4
profit 43:7	question 3:11	regardless 47:10	reviewed 30:12	46:13
proof 23:5	9:12 12:20	48:19	Ricks 32:9	run 14:1 18:6
proper 17:21	13:16 16:13	Regents 19:9	right 4:11 11:19	21:9 27:8 31:7
44:18 46:5	22:2,4 30:17	rehearing 5:6	18:23 20:12	52:7,19
properly 21:4	30:19 31:17	reject 50:18	26:8,10 27:23	running 9:16
24:25 35:16	33:21 35:8	relate 25:21	29:3,5 32:21	33:11
propose 38:17	36:3,16 39:11	related 19:23	33:17 35:9,12	runs 5:22
proposes 50:21	40:10 43:25	22:3 25:25	35:21,22 37:3	RUTH 1:18 2:6
proposition	questions 51:22	relates 25:17	37:22 39:20	27:17
27:22	quickly 21:8	release 22:18	40:18 41:22	
prosecute 9:9	quite 32:8 37:19	released 21:23	44:21,24 51:25	S
14:24 15:1	38:8,10	22:10 23:1,25	rights 3:15,18	S 2:1 3:1
prosecuted 24:5	R	24:1 38:13	4:20 16:22	save 26:15
25:6 28:1		45:4 50:16	20:16 23:15	saw 9:14,21
prosecution	R3:1	relief 14:2	24:1 43:10	saying 3:21
4:21 5:11,21	raised 3:11 34:9	remaining 49:21	44:20 49:5	11:12 18:20
9:8 10:1 11:3	50:17	remedies 15:12	robbery 27:7	52:11,16
22:15,23 24:11	rape 27:7	remedy 3:21	Roberts 3:3 5:19	says 4:5 6:8 43:5
24:16 36:18	reached 48:17	45:1,7 50:7,8	5:25 13:24	52:23
39:14 43:14	reaching 49:12	51:21	19:3 20:17	SCALIA 4:25
	reaction 42:4			

		_	_	_
5:7,12 10:2,15	43:7 45:10,17	somebody 9:14	24:13 36:2	substantive 49:5
12:4 26:7,14	48:6	11:22 23:9	44:2,10 45:8	successful 44:24
26:24 27:3,9	shows 43:12	45:21	45:17	successfully
32:15,21	shudder 16:15	soon 11:13	station 33:4	52:4
scenario 6:6	16:19	27:23 28:4	statute 4:6 5:22	sue 11:13,18
search 27:22	side 6:8	sorry 30:22 31:9	5:23 15:24	12:7,8,24,25
32:13	sides 50:18	43:17 51:3	18:2,6 23:20	13:1 26:7,10
second 24:11	51:17	sort 36:14 38:19	25:4 26:18,19	27:23 47:24
30:1 37:11	simple 30:24	49:1	28:3 29:15	51:24,25 52:4
Section 3:20	simpler 47:5	sorts 44:11	30:14 31:7	sued 20:24 37:8
11:14 49:3	simply 16:2,3,5	sounds 34:24	33:11 36:10	51:1,18
51:6 52:6	25:3 30:23	37:20,21	41:11,19 43:24	sues 10:25
see 35:18 37:12	33:23	SOUTER 6:7	44:5 47:16,25	sufficient 46:14
37:15	single 48:2	7:5,15,21	51:9 52:7,12	suggest 17:25
seeing 46:9	sister 50:6	15:22 16:12,18	52:16,16,18	24:7 32:24
51:16	sit 37:16 40:7	16:25 17:7,14	statutes 20:19	suggested 18:12
seek 3:21 47:11	sitting 34:24	17:17,22 22:12	38:23	35:21
seeking 17:3	49:25	22:17 31:2	stay 14:9 16:3,7	suit 17:25 24:4
48:23	situation 8:2,10	33:7,15 34:4	36:14,17 37:2	support 8:12,25
seize 7:2	12:12 13:2	speak 42:18	37:9,14,16	suppose 9:12
seized 8:4 24:21	26:16 39:18	43:18	38:18 39:6,13	11:17 12:20
40:23 44:21	situations 8:5	specifically	39:17,21	14:21 15:21
48:9 50:2,3,24	slight 36:4	42:19 43:18	stayed 15:7	17:24 25:19
seizure 21:13	slightly 3:12	46:24	16:17 17:8	31:18 36:22
27:23 32:14	slip 29:13	spends 45:3	41:13,14 46:22	37:5 46:8,13
47:10 50:21	solely 6:20 45:22	stake 20:16	steps 7:10	supposed 34:23
sensible 33:23	Solomon 1:18	stand 13:7,9	Stevens 25:19	suppress 11:14
35:18	2:6 27:16,17	stands 40:14	26:3 28:7	52:23
sentence 21:5	27:19 28:12,21	start 10:20 11:6	29:10 30:16	suppressed
serious 11:17	29:9,17 30:4	14:24 15:1	40:1,12,24	50:12
12:21 26:12	31:9,25 32:4,6	23:23 52:7	Stone 14:3,7,15	suppressing
36:7 42:16	32:19,22 33:14	starting 4:8	24:24	8:19
serve 38:22,23	34:1,8 35:10	14:22	stop 15:5,10,11	suppression
served 39:4	35:23 37:3,11	starts 14:5 18:6	straight 28:8	22:19 29:4,19
41:20	38:3,17 39:23	21:17 52:1,19	street 6:23 27:7	41:7
serving 21:5	40:8,16 41:10	state 12:17 14:9	strike 33:18	Supreme 1:1,13
set 4:1 10:20,24	42:13,17 43:1	19:5,8 20:11	strong 51:15	sure 25:10
12:11 35:14	43:9,16,21	20:15 34:22	subject 31:5	sustained 5:2
settled 32:8	45:6 46:11,20	35:6 36:18	submission	
Seventh 13:22	48:16 49:19	37:24 38:20	27:21 47:12	T
19:12,16 21:2	solution 4:21,23	39:15 44:12,14	48:19 49:10	T 2:1,1
21:7,14,17	20:7	45:4,6,16	submitted 53:7	take 9:18 21:24
23:3 50:9,17	solve 25:9	46:14 47:6,7	53:9	33:8,20,21
shocking 28:22	solved 18:22	50:8,13,22,25	subsequent 7:11	34:5,12 41:11
short 30:21	25:2 52:6	52:24	21:19	42:21,22 48:25
shorthand 49:1	solves 4:17	states 1:1,13	subsequently	taken 6:23
show 7:25 42:10	18:14	18:13 20:10,11	28:1,1	takes 6:19 8:13
	-	-	-	•

	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	ı	<u> </u>
talked 23:3	21:9,10,18,21	53:1	unheard 26:25	30:9
talking 10:19	21:22 22:9,11	troubling 45:23	United 1:1,13	voluntary 29:22
27:1,5	25:16,20 26:15	true 38:9 40:3	24:13	30:11
techniques	27:14 28:6	truthfulness	unlawful 11:10	***
28:22	29:1,19 30:1	17:6	21:9 24:21,22	W
tell 5:14 10:9	31:15 32:13	try 37:24,25	26:22 28:4	wait 5:21 6:1
15:25 23:16	33:2 38:20	45:5	unlawfully	12:14,15 13:12
26:10,11 33:16	39:5,13 40:20	trying 9:5 14:19	10:22 14:21	13:14 18:1
42:5	41:8 44:3,8,15	43:7	27:12	20:20 26:12
ten 15:14 20:20	47:17 48:4,13	turn 41:5	unreasonable	31:21,23 32:5
tend 46:12	50:15,16 53:2	turns 24:15	27:22	32:5
termination	timely 44:7	two 14:22 15:24	untruthful 7:1	waited 23:13
45:9,11,13,17	45:15 48:8,22	18:1 20:20	unusual 27:2	waiting 15:14
48:7	times 25:20	23:25 24:18	urge 29:2	waits 47:5
terrified 42:7	told 44:24	25:6,20 26:3,6	urged 44:13	Wallace 1:3 3:4
testifies 17:2	toll 44:6,9	26:24 27:8	use 28:15,24	7:2 9:22,24
Thank 3:8 27:15	tolled 18:2,4,9	29:17 31:20	29:3 30:6 43:6	10:21 11:12,13
27:19 49:18	18:21 25:6	33:15 34:17,20	uses 48:3	13:21 14:5,9
53:5,6	38:14,15 44:4	35:24 36:5	V	14:11 23:2,10
theory 34:25	52:7	37:23 38:4,20		23:24 40:21
they'd 15:10,10	tolling 18:12,20	47:21	v 1:5	44:2,12,20
thing 19:11	19:4 20:3,4	two-year 26:18	valid 14:12	47:9 51:19
40:24	25:8 26:16,20	28:3 33:13	validity 12:3	Wallace's 30:8
things 37:23	35:17,20,25	44:5	vehicle 49:2	50:1
53:4	36:1 37:7 38:7	U	versus 3:4,11	want 17:4,25
think 9:3,4,6	38:14 39:19		7:13 14:3,7,15	25:10 26:9 33:16 34:15
10:20 14:20	43:20,22 44:1	ultimately 17:18 44:22 45:4	19:9 24:13,25 victim 24:9	40:24 41:6
15:3 16:16	44:11,13,17,18	umbrella 31:6	27:22,25 40:17	46:12 47:4
17:7,18 19:10	52:6	unaffected	41:21 43:10	wanted 46:10
19:12,25 20:3	Tomiano 19:2	33:12	view 4:12 21:15	47:11
20:13 21:20	19:10	uncertainty	28:13,16 31:10	wants 36:23
22:2 24:12,13	tort 11:7,9 12:5	38:12,13	33:8 34:13	warranted
24:18 32:8	12:7,9,9	unconsensual	47:18	36:17
35:23 37:18	tough 16:8	33:5	violated 33:2	Washington
39:15 40:2,8 47:3 49:11	50:23	unconstitutio	44:20	1:10
51:4,5,7	trial 5:16 10:6,9 10:13,15,16	3:22,24 34:14	violates 31:15	wasn't 9:25
1 1	14:25 15:5,7	35:3 48:25	violation 11:7	21:11
thought 7:7 21:7 30:1 40:25	23:12 28:15,17	underlying 49:6	27:24 30:6	waste 39:13
46:9	28:24 29:3,4,5	undermines	32:11,12 34:18	way 18:5 20:1
three 23:4 25:20	29:5,6,12	41:18	35:5 40:18	22:20 26:17
three 25.4 25.20 throwing 52:15	32:12,18 34:7	understand 11:8	41:22 45:24	35:18 40:10
time 6:1,4 9:13	37:18 47:20	26:15 31:3	47:21 49:2	42:17
10:3,4,4 11:23	52:2	43:1	52:2	ways 43:17
12:5 15:1	tried 42:14,17	understood	virtually 15:25	weed 52:20
16:23 17:13	trier 9:1	25:11	vitiated 35:7	weigh 17:5
18:3 19:20	troubled 52:25	unfair 10:11	voluntariness	weighing 36:7
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	l .	<u> </u>

. 14 20 25	12 10 44 2 4			
weighty 30:25	42:10 44:3,4	8		
47:2	45:3 50:4,24	8 47:1		
weren't 10:18	51:18,20	8-1/2 3:19 7:2,3		
we'll 3:3 41:11	Younger 46:19	, 		
42:9	46:20	9		
we're 4:3 27:1,5		9 47:1		
32:3 35:13	\$			
41:14 42:8	\$10 53:2			
46:2 51:3	\$350 52:25			
52:12,13,15	· 			
whatsoever 4:5	0			
	05-1240 1:5			
8:3				
White's 46:23	1			
wholly 41:18	1 14:20 30:19			
willing 27:3	34:13,16			
win 50:11,11	10 24:9 37:8			
winning 23:17	11:05 1:14 3:2			
wins 10:24 35:4	12 37:8			
withheld 10:11	12:03 53:8			
witness 9:13,20	15 9:15 42:10			
Wood 48:12	44:3			
work 15:9,15,20				
worked 35:16	1983 3:21 4:6,10			
worse 38:11	11:14,15 13:25			
wouldn't 21:3	19:13 34:7,18			
29:11,15 39:24	40:5 41:8 49:3			
40:13	49:4 51:6 52:7			
written 46:17	52:22			
wrong 6:17,17				
7:6 35:21	2			
36:23 37:22	2 4:5			
	20,000 16:16,18			
39:20	2006 1:11			
X	25 9:15 48:17			
$\frac{x}{x \cdot 1:2,9}$	27 2:7			
A 1.4,7				
<u> </u>	3			
Yeah 19:3	3 2:4			
year 14:23 15:24	350 24:5			
24:4,4 50:21				
•	4			
years 3:19 4:6	49 2:10			
5:20 7:2,3				
10:24 14:22	5			
15:14 18:1	5,000 52:24			
20:20,20 23:25				
24:9 26:22,24	6			
27:8 28:5	6 1:11 31:13			
34:17 37:8,8				
	I	<u> </u>	l	1