

tion, the “Due Process Clause forbids a State to use a punitive damages award to punish a defendant for injury that it inflicts upon nonparties . . . .”<sup>981</sup>

***Statutes of Limitation.***—A statute of limitations does not deprive one of property without due process of law, unless, in its application to an existing right of action, it unreasonably limits the opportunity to enforce the right by suit. By the same token, a state may shorten an existing period of limitation, provided a reasonable time is allowed for bringing an action after the passage of the statute and before the bar takes effect. What is a reasonable period, however, is dependent on the nature of the right and particular circumstances.<sup>982</sup>

Thus, where a receiver for property is appointed 13 years after the disappearance of the owner and notice is made by publication, it is not a violation of due process to bar actions relative to that property after an interval of only one year after such appointment.<sup>983</sup> When a state, by law, suddenly prohibits all actions to contest tax deeds which have been of record for two years unless they are brought within six months after its passage, no unconstitutional deprivation is effected.<sup>984</sup> No less valid is a statute which provides that when a person has been in possession of wild lands under a recorded deed continuously for 20 years and had paid taxes thereon during the same, and the former owner in that interval pays nothing, no action to recover such land shall be entertained unless commenced within 20 years, or before the expiration of five years following enactment of said provision.<sup>985</sup> Similarly, an amendment to a workmen’s compensation act, limiting to three years the time within which a case may be reopened for readjustment of compensation on account of aggravation of a disability, does not deny due process to one who sustained his injury at a time when the statute contained no limitation. A limitation is deemed to affect the remedy only, and the period of its operation in this instance was viewed as neither arbitrary nor oppressive.<sup>986</sup>

<sup>981</sup> Philip Morris USA v. Williams, 549 U.S. 346, 353 (2007) (punitive damages award overturned because trial court had allowed jury to consider the effect of defendant’s conduct on smokers who were not parties to the lawsuit).

<sup>982</sup> Wheeler v. Jackson, 137 U.S. 245, 258 (1890); Kentucky Union Co. v. Kentucky, 219 U.S. 140, 156 (1911). Cf. Logan v. Zimmerman Brush Co., 455 U.S. 422, 437 (1982) (discussing discretion of states in erecting reasonable procedural requirements for triggering or foreclosing the right to an adjudication).

<sup>983</sup> Blinn v. Nelson, 222 U.S. 1 (1911).

<sup>984</sup> Turner v. New York, 168 U.S. 90, 94 (1897).

<sup>985</sup> Soper v. Lawrence Brothers, 201 U.S. 359 (1906). Nor is a former owner who had not been in possession for five years after and fifteen years before said enactment thereby deprived of property without due process.

<sup>986</sup> Mattson v. Department of Labor, 293 U.S. 151, 154 (1934).