1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES						
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3	JUAN SMITH, :						
4	Petitioner :						
5	v. : No. 10-8145						
6	BURL CAIN, WARDEN :						
7	x						
8	Washington, D.C.						
9	Tuesday, November 8, 2011						
10							
11	The above-entitled matter came on for ora						
12	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States						
13	at 11:11 a.m.						
14	APPEARANCES:						
15	KANNON K. SHANMUGAM, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; on						
16	behalf of Petitioner.						
17	DONNA R. ANDRIEU, ESQ., Assistant District Attorney, New						
18	Orleans, Louisiana; on behalf of Respondent.						
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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(11:11 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	next this morning in Case 10-8145, Smith v. Cain.
5	Mr. Shanmugam.
6	ORAL ARGUMENT OF KANNON K. SHANMUGAM
7	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
8	MR. SHANMUGAM: Thank you, Mr. Chief
9	Justice, and may it please the Court:
-0	In Brady v. Maryland, this Court established
.1	the now-familiar principle that the prosecution must
_2	hand over all favorable material evidence to the defense
_3	before trial. This case presents a flagrant violation
_4	of that principle.
.5	The Orleans Parish district attorney's
-6	office produced almost no relevant evidence to the
_7	defense before Petitioner's trial, and Petitioner was
-8	convicted of first-degree murder based solely on the
_9	testimony of a single eyewitness. Unbeknownst to the
20	defense, however, that eyewitness had told the police on
21	multiple occasions that he could not identify any of the
22	perpetrators or, as he put it, that he would not know
23	them if he saw them.
24	The suppression of those statements alone
25	justifies a new trial, but the district attorney's

- 1 office in this case also engaged in the wholesale
- 2 suppression of statements of numerous other witnesses,
- 3 statements that further undermined the sole eyewitness
- 4 identification of Petitioner and, more broadly, cast
- 5 doubt on Petitioner's involvement and role in the
- 6 shootings.
- 7 If all of that information had been
- 8 disclosed to the defense before trial, the jury surely
- 9 would have viewed this case in a completely different
- 10 light. The trial court therefore erred by rejecting
- 11 Petitioner's Brady claim, and its judgment should be
- 12 reversed.
- 13 In our view, in order to conclude that
- 14 Petitioner is entitled to a new trial here, this Court
- 15 need do nothing more than to consider the suppressed
- 16 statements of the key eyewitness, Larry Boatner.
- 17 Respondent concedes that those statements were withheld
- 18 from the defense before trial, and argues only that the
- 19 failure to disclose those statements was not
- 20 prejudicial.
- 21 Those statements, however, could not have
- 22 more clearly contradicted Boatner's confident
- 23 identification of Petitioner at trial --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, he saw a picture.
- 25 Boatner saw a picture in a newspaper, and that turned on

- 1 the light for him, right? It wasn't any police
- 2 suggestion.
- 3 MR. SHANMUGAM: That is correct. The basis
- 4 for Boatner's identification was that he saw a
- 5 photograph in the New Orleans newspaper of Petitioner.
- 6 It was in connection with an article describing the
- 7 shootings and suggesting that Petitioner was one of the
- 8 suspects in the case. And that was what led to his
- 9 prior identification out of court.
- 10 But just to be clear, Justice Ginsburg,
- 11 we're not arguing today that the identification was
- 12 somehow constitutionally problematic. At most, we're
- 13 arguing that the identification was of questionable
- 14 validity in light of the fact that Boatner had only a
- 15 limited opportunity to see the perpetrators and in light
- 16 of the circumstances that led to his identification.
- Now, even if his identification were more
- 18 clearly reliable, our argument today would be the same.
- 19 In a case such as this one, in which the sole basis for
- 20 linking the defendant to the crime is the testimony of a
- 21 single eyewitness, and there is evidence that the single
- 22 eyewitness said on multiple occasions that he couldn't
- 23 identify anyone, we believe that, absent extraordinary
- 24 circumstances, that will be sufficient to --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, aren't you

- 1 exaggerating a little bit about the value of the
- 2 impeachment evidence regarding Boatner? Now, my
- 3 understanding is that he made his first statement to the
- 4 effect that he couldn't identify anybody at the scene
- 5 when he had been at the scene where five people that he
- 6 knew very well had been killed.
- 7 He was lying on the floor with a big gash on
- 8 his head. He was questioned at the scene, and at that
- 9 time -- and this was in the evening -- he said: I can't
- 10 identify anybody. But then, later that very day, wasn't
- it, that very evening, after midnight, he was questioned
- 12 at the police station; am I correct?
- 13 MR. SHANMUGAM: Yes, that's correct.
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: And at that point he gave a
- 15 description. He did make an -- he did provide a
- 16 description of the person that he said was the one who
- 17 first came through the door. So, you know, that -- I
- 18 don't know -- and then later, he said he -- there were
- 19 statements to the effect that he couldn't identify
- anybody.
- 21 But in light of the fact that he did provide
- 22 a pretty, you know, somewhat detailed description on the
- 23 very evening of the event, doesn't that -- aren't you
- 24 exaggerating when you say that he said numerous times --
- 25 the effect of these statements that he couldn't

- 1 identify --
- 2 MR. SHANMUGAM: Justice Alito, it is true
- 3 that Boatner provided identifying details in the later
- 4 statement that night. I would respectfully submit that
- 5 they were relatively limited identifying details, simply
- 6 the fact that the first man through the door had a
- 7 low-cut haircut and gold teeth. And as we indicate in
- 8 our brief, those were characteristics shared by numerous
- 9 other suspects in the case.
- 10 But I think more broadly, with regard to
- 11 both sets of statements at issue here, the State's
- 12 explanations for those statements are at best plausible.
- 13 And we really think that in a case such as this one, in
- 14 which the evidence on its face is so clearly of high
- 15 exculpatory or impeaching values, it takes something
- 16 more than that. It is not sufficient for Respondent to
- 17 argue here simply that, even taking into account these
- 18 statements, a rational juror could still reach the same
- 19 result and return a verdict of quilty here, because this
- 20 Court made clear in Kyles v. Whitley that the standard
- 21 for Brady claims is not a Jackson v. Virginia type
- 22 sufficiency of the evidence standard.
- So, again, where you have statements that on
- their face are not simply statements calling a witness's
- 25 credibility into question, but statements that really

- 1 directly contradict the confident in-court
- 2 identification, it would take an exceedingly persuasive
- 3 explanation for those statements to defeat a showing of
- 4 materiality. Now, with regard --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: The standard is a
- 6 reasonable probability that the result would have been
- 7 different, reasonable probability?
- 8 MR. SHANMUGAM: Yes, that's correct. And
- 9 this Court made clear in Kyles v. Whitley that that's
- 10 not a more likely than not standard. That is
- 11 essentially the same standard that this Court has
- 12 articulated for prejudice for ineffective assistance of
- 13 counsel claims under Strickland v. Washington, and by
- 14 now it's a quite clearly established standard. And,
- 15 again, it requires something less than a showing of more
- 16 likely than not and perhaps something slightly more than
- 17 the showing required for harmless error under Chapman v.
- 18 California.
- 19 But I do want to touch upon the State's
- 20 explanations for these statements and explain very
- 21 briefly why we think that those explanations are frankly
- 22 not even plausible. With regard to the first statement
- 23 to which Justice Alito referred, the statement that was
- 24 made at the scene approximately half an hour after
- 25 initial -- officers initially responded to the scene,

- 1 the State's argument is that Boatner was somehow too
- 2 traumatized to make an identification at the time.
- 3 But not only did Boatner not so testify at
- 4 the postconviction hearing -- in fact he testified that
- 5 he couldn't recall the statement at all -- but the very
- 6 officer who took the statement himself testified at
- 7 trial in this case that at the time of the statement
- 8 Boatner was, quote, "coherent and articulated very well
- 9 the events that transpired." And that is at pages 137
- 10 to 138 of the joint appendix.
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: That may be true, but if you
- 12 were a juror and Boatner testified and he was
- 13 cross-examined and they attempted to impeach him based
- on his failure to make an identification right at the
- 15 scene, and he said, well, that was because five of my
- 16 friends had just been killed and I was lying on the
- 17 floor and I thought I was going to be shot too and I had
- 18 a big gash on my head, and then a couple of hours later
- 19 when I collected myself and they asked me the same
- 20 question at the police station, I provided a description
- 21 and didn't say I couldn't identify anybody -- do you
- 22 think jurors would just dismiss that and say, well, he
- 23 couldn't identify him at the scene so he must have been
- 24 lying when he identified -- when he provided a
- 25 description later at the police station?

1	MR.	SHANMUGAM:	Justice	Alito	, I	think	that

- 2 it's possible that a juror could credit that explanation
- 3 in any retrial, though I --
- 4 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Wasn't there also an
- 5 intervening -- didn't he say 5 days after that he
- 6 couldn't identify? And that was after what he said on
- 7 the night, the same night.
- 8 MR. SHANMUGAM: That is --
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Five days later he said:
- 10 I couldn't -- I couldn't identify him.
- 11 MR. SHANMUGAM: That is correct, Justice
- 12 Ginsburg. But even if we didn't have the March 6th
- 13 statement or statements, I would frankly be happy to
- 14 take my chances with the jury, even with regard solely
- 15 to the March 1st statement, in light of that testimony
- 16 of Officer Ronquillo that Boatner was in fact coherent,
- 17 articulated very well the events that transpired, just
- 18 like any witness, and so on and so forth.
- 19 So, again -- -
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counselor --
- 21 MR. SHANMUGAM: -- we don't think that it's
- 22 our burden to show that no juror could credit the
- 23 State's explanation. It's simply that we think that
- 24 that explanation doesn't hold water.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counselor, your argument

- 1 now and in your brief suggests that you're relying most
- 2 heavily on the failure to provide the impeachment
- 3 materials of the only witness to this crime and the only
- 4 piece of evidence that ties your client to the crime.
- 5 But you also mention other things, and Respondents spend
- 6 90 percent of their brief arguing against the other
- 7 things. But I just want to clarify those other things.
- Number one, was the testimony mixed
- 9 testimony about whether the assailants wore a mask
- 10 across their face or over their entire head?
- MR. SHANMUGAM: There --
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: What's the best take on
- 13 what the evidence showed that was presented on that
- 14 issue?
- 15 MR. SHANMUGAM: There was some degree of
- 16 variation in what the witnesses said. Now, in the main,
- 17 we're talking, again, about statements that were
- 18 withheld. And I want to lay out those statements very
- 19 briefly, if I may. There were two eyewitnesses who made
- 20 statements to the police indicating that some or all of
- 21 the perpetrators, including the first man through the
- 22 door, were wearing masks. Those were the statements of
- 23 Shelita Russel and the statement of Dale Mims.
- Now, with regard to the statement of Shelita
- 25 Russell -- and this was what we believe was the dying

- 1 declaration that she made at the scene in the immediate
- 2 aftermath of having been shot multiple times -- Russell
- 3 said she saw people barge into the kitchen; one had a
- 4 black cloth across the face, first one through the door.
- 5 So, it is at least theoretically possible --
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could I ask you
- 7 something? Who determines that issue of whether that's
- 8 a dying declaration? Do we determine that in deciding
- 9 whether the withholding of the Brady materials was
- 10 harmful or not? Do we give deference to the lower
- 11 court's determination of that? Do they have to decide
- 12 whether it was a dying declaration? What's the standard
- 13 on something like this?
- MR. SHANMUGAM: The lower court did not make
- 15 such a determination in this case on this or any of the
- 16 other evidentiary issues that Respondent now advances,
- 17 at least in part because it does not appear that
- 18 Respondent advanced any of those arguments below. But I
- 19 think more broadly, Justice Sotomayor, in terms of the
- 20 role of this Court or any other court considering a
- 21 Brady claim, this Court hasn't quite spoken to the
- 22 specific issue of whether a Brady court is supposed to
- 23 itself make an evidentiary determination where there's a
- 24 question about admissibility, but the closest that this
- 25 Court came was in Wood v. Bartholomew, in which this

- 1 Court indicated that with regard to Brady material, it
- 2 either has to itself be admissible or be reasonably
- 3 likely to lead to admissible evidence. And the Court's
- 4 reasoning in Wood v. Bartholomew was somewhat spare on
- 5 that score. That was a summary reversal in a per curiam
- 6 opinion.
- 7 But I do think that it would be appropriate
- 8 for a Brady court to make that determination itself or,
- 9 at a minimum, make a determination as to whether it
- 10 appears that it's reasonably likely that the evidence
- 11 would be admissible.
- Here, we really don't think that it's a
- 13 close question, particularly with regard to the
- 14 statement of Shelita Russell, because the context of the
- 15 handwritten notes makes clear that the statement was
- 16 taken at the scene of the crime. Shelita Russell was
- 17 taken to the hospital approximately a half an hour after
- 18 the shootings occurred. She told two witnesses that she
- 19 believed that she was dying. And so, under the law on
- 20 dying declarations -- and I have no reason to believe
- 21 that the law is any different in Louisiana from the
- 22 Federal system or the 49 other States -- that would
- 23 comfortably satisfy that requirement.
- 24 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Now, Mr. Mims was the
- 25 neighbor who saw the two -- there were three assailants

- 1 in total, right, and two left the scene?
- 2 MR. SHANMUGAM: There's some doubt as to
- 3 whether or not there were three or four assailants. And
- 4 Mims himself, in all candor, was a little bit
- 5 inconsistent on that point. But he consistently said,
- 6 both in the handwritten notes and in his testimony at
- 7 the postconviction hearing, that all of the assailants,
- 8 however many there were, were wearing masks and that --
- 9 that he saw them as they were getting into the car. He
- 10 didn't say anything further other than that the masks
- 11 were ski-type masks.
- But the State's argument with regard to the
- 13 materiality of Mims's statement is that it is possible
- 14 that the men would not have been wearing masks when they
- 15 entered the house to allegedly commit the armed robbery;
- 16 and, therefore, the fact that Boatner saw the first man
- 17 unmasked can be reconciled with his statement. And,
- 18 again, we would be happy to take our chances with the
- 19 jury and make the argument that that would be an
- 20 exceedingly unconventional way to go about committing an
- 21 armed robbery.
- 22 And, again, with regard to the Russell and
- 23 Mims statements, I think it's important to remember that
- 24 we view those statements as going directly to and
- 25 contradicting Boatner's in-court identification. And

- 1 so, in some sense, we view those statements as being of
- 2 a piece with Boatner's own prior statements in which he
- 3 indicated that he could not identify anyone and that he
- 4 did not --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Does the defense have any
- 6 theory as to why Boatner would lie about whether he
- 7 could identify this individual?
- 8 MR. SHANMUGAM: First of all, Justice Alito,
- 9 it would, of course, not be the defense's burden in any
- 10 subsequent retrial to come up with a theory of its own.
- 11 The defense could simply argue, as it did at the first
- 12 trial, that the prosecution simply didn't bear its
- 13 burden on reasonable doubt. But --
- JUSTICE ALITO: But, yes -- but the -- the
- 15 impact of your impeachment evidence would be related
- 16 certainly to if a juror would ask, well, why would he
- 17 lie about this? And I -- I'm just asking, would -- did
- 18 the defense have any theory about what his motive would
- 19 be about whether he could identify somebody, whether
- 20 this first person had a mask or not?
- 21 MR. SHANMUGAM: As this Court will be aware
- 22 from its recent consideration of eyewitness evidence, it
- 23 doesn't necessarily follow from the fact that an
- 24 eyewitness identification is mistaken that the
- 25 eyewitness was somehow lying about it. It may very well

- 1 have been that Boatner made a mistaken identification in
- 2 good faith out of a desire to identify the person who
- 3 killed several of his friends.
- And, indeed, as the amicus brief of the
- 5 Innocence Project explains in this case, there is a
- 6 phenomenon known as "mug shot exposure effect," where an
- 7 individual who sees a mug shot in some other context is
- 8 more likely to identify that same person when confronted
- 9 with a subsequent line-up. Of course, where, as here,
- 10 the individual is exposed to the mug shot for the first
- 11 time in seeing a newspaper article that depicts the
- 12 individual in question and suggests that that individual
- is a suspect in the crime, it would not at all be
- 14 unusual for the individual, when confronted with that
- 15 photograph again in a line-up a few weeks later, to pick
- 16 that individual.
- 17 JUSTICE ALITO: But the first time he -- he
- 18 said that the person wasn't masked and provided a
- 19 description was long before he saw any mug shots. It
- 20 was the evening of the event. It was when he was
- 21 questioned at the police station.
- 22 MR. SHANMUGAM: Well, on the evening of the
- 23 event, he provided those limited details about the gold
- 24 teeth and the low-cut haircut.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Yes, but by doing that he's

- 1 saying this person wasn't wearing a mask. That's the
- 2 critical point.
- 3 MR. SHANMUGAM: Well, that may suggest that
- 4 the person was not wearing a mask. Of course, it's
- 5 possible that the person somehow had part of his face
- 6 covered.
- 7 But I think it's important to realize,
- 8 Justice Alito, that even with regard to that statement,
- 9 while it is true that Boatner provided those limiting
- 10 details, he also made statements suggesting that he was
- 11 not confident of his ability to actually make an
- 12 identification. And in that statement, which is found
- 13 at page 296 of the joint appendix, he says: I was too
- 14 scared to look at anybody. I wish I could give y'all a
- 15 description.
- 16 So, in some sense, we think that the focus
- on the gold teeth and the low-cut haircut in this case
- 18 is a bit of an aside, because the question here is not
- 19 whether he saw enough to support the subsequent
- 20 identification; the question is whether his suppressed
- 21 statements in which he repeatedly said, I can't make an
- 22 identification, contradict his in-court confident
- 23 identification of Petitioner.
- 24 And we think that in order to decide this
- 25 case, all that the Court essentially need say in an

- 1 opinion is that in a case such as this one, in which all
- 2 you have is the identification of a single eyewitness,
- 3 where you have statements in which that eyewitness said
- 4 I can't make an identification, and those statements
- 5 have concededly been suppressed, the Brady materiality
- 6 threshold is satisfied.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Am I right --
- 8 JUSTICE KENNEDY: In looking at the
- 9 appendix, there are some asterisks. Were these
- 10 statements, the first two -- the one at 252 in the joint
- 11 appendix and then the statement on March the 2nd, which
- 12 is the one you just referred to, 296, were parts of
- 13 those statements given to the defense counsel or none of
- 14 the statements? And how long were the documents? Were
- 15 they 20 or 30 pages? Can you tell me a little bit about
- 16 that?
- 17 MR. SHANMUGAM: First of all, none of those
- 18 statements were given to the defense. The only
- 19 relevant --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: I shouldn't have said
- 21 "statements." None of the reports.
- MR. SHANMUGAM: Yes. None of the statements
- 23 or the surrounding materials was given to the defense at
- 24 all. The only even remotely relevant thing that was
- 25 given to the defense was the initial police report,

- 1 which was a five-page document prepared by the officers
- 2 who initially responded to the scene, with a one-page
- 3 narrative of what took place. And that document, for
- 4 the Court's reference, is in volume 10 of the initial
- 5 record that was received from the district court at
- 6 pages R1907 to 1911.
- Now, with regard to these specific
- 8 statements, both the narrative statements and the
- 9 handwritten notes, the narrative statements were
- 10 contained in a relatively voluminous document -- I
- 11 believe it was an 83-page document -- that was a
- 12 narrative prepared by Officer Ronquillo that set out
- 13 everything that took place over the course of the
- 14 investigation. And none of that was disclosed.
- 15 Respondent makes the argument that the trial
- 16 court reviewed that document in camera, but we think
- 17 that it is somewhat unclear what, if anything, the trial
- 18 court actually reviewed in camera. There's no dispute
- 19 that that document was not handed over to the defense.
- 20 With regard to the handwritten notes, there
- 21 actually are a relatively small number of relevant
- 22 handwritten notes in this case, but all of them were
- 23 contained in the police files, and none of them, none of
- the ones at issue on which we're relying, was handed
- 25 over before trial.

- So, this is not a case in which selective
- 2 materials were handed over. None of this material was
- 3 handed over, and that's why we really think that this is
- 4 a case that involves the categorical withholding of
- 5 documents and not simply the withholding of selected
- 6 documents that may subsequently turn out to be relevant.
- 7 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Can you just tell me, how
- 8 does Brady work? Is there some obligation for the
- 9 defense counsel to say please give me all relevant
- 10 reports?
- 11 MR. SHANMUGAM: No. This Court has made
- 12 clear that a request is unnecessary to trigger the Brady
- obligation, and this Court has made clear in cases
- 14 dating back to Brady itself that the good faith or bad
- 15 faith of the prosecutor is irrelevant. And, of course,
- 16 the prosecutor has a duty under Brady to hand over not
- 17 only materials in the prosecutor's own possession but
- 18 also materials in the possession of the police as well.
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, is -- this
- 20 group or gang, all of them had gold teeth and faded hair
- 21 cuts?
- 22 MR. SHANMUGAM: There were five other
- 23 suspects who had gold teeth or -- and low-cut haircuts.
- 24 Three of the other individuals who were primarily in the
- 25 frame for this murder had those characteristics. I

- 1 believe that the three were Bannister, Phillips, and
- 2 Young. The only other suspect who is a reasonably
- 3 likely suspect who didn't was Robert Trackling, the
- 4 suspect whose confession to involvement in these
- 5 shootings was withheld.
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: In short, faded hair
- 7 cuts and gold teeth were not a unique characteristic.
- 8 MR. SHANMUGAM: They were not uncommon in
- 9 the 1990s.
- 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: Yes, what were these --
- 11 (Laughter.)
- 12 JUSTICE SCALIA: They're uncommon to me.
- 13 These --
- 14 (Laughter.)
- 15 JUSTICE SCALIA: These were not gold teeth
- 16 that were implanted, right? They -- what was it? Some
- 17 kind of a mouthpiece of gold?
- 18 MR. SHANMUGAM: I have to admit that my
- 19 familiarity with this practice is perhaps not that much
- 20 greater than yours, Justice Scalia. But my
- 21 understanding is --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: I'm sorry to hear that.
- 23 (Laughter.)
- MR. SHANMUGAM: My understanding is that
- 25 these are gold teeth that are worn either as temporary

- 1 or perhaps semipermanent implants, and that in hip-hop
- 2 culture in the 1990s, this was relatively common. But
- 3 whatever the provenance of this practice, it is
- 4 undisputed on this record that multiple other suspects
- 5 had those characteristics.
- Justice Sotomayor, there was one thing you
- 7 asked that I just want to get back to with regard to the
- 8 remaining categories of evidence. I just want to set
- 9 them out, and then I'd be happy to answer any questions
- 10 that the Court has about them. And if there are no
- 11 further questions, I'll reserve the balance of my time.
- 12 As we explain in our brief, there are three
- 13 other categories of evidence at issue here. There was
- 14 the statement of Phillip Young, Petitioner's
- 15 co-defendant, suggesting that Petitioner was not
- 16 involved in the shootings. There were also the
- 17 statements that would have called into question the
- 18 prosecution's theory that Petitioner was one of the
- 19 shooters, a theory that was essential to establishing
- 20 the intent required for first-degree murder under
- 21 Louisiana law. Louisiana is somewhat different from
- 22 other States in that it doesn't require premeditation,
- 23 but that it -- but it does require a specific intent to
- 24 kill or inflict great bodily harm.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, on that point, the

- 1 State says that you're drawing a meaningless distinction
- 2 between a hand -- a 9-millimeter handgun and a
- 3 9-millimeter automatic pistol.
- 4 MR. SHANMUGAM: Well, we don't think that
- 5 that's a meaningless distinction, and we cite numerous
- 6 sources in our brief that draw precisely that
- 7 distinction.
- 8 But I think that what's noteworthy with
- 9 regard to the statements at issue is that both Boatner,
- 10 who identified the weapon that the perpetrator whom he
- 11 believed to be Petitioner was carrying, and the State's
- 12 ballistics expert, Kenneth Leary, who identified the
- 13 weapon that was responsible for the firing of the
- 14 casings at issue, conspicuously failed to say that the
- 15 weapon at issue was a 9- millimeter handgun. But at
- 16 trial their testimonies suddenly converged, and Boatner,
- 17 who had previously said only that the perpetrator was
- 18 carrying a handgun, said that the perpetrator was
- 19 carrying a 9-millimeter handgun; and Leary, who said
- 20 that the casings at issue had come from a machine pistol
- 21 of the Intratec or MAC-11 type, suddenly said that they
- 22 came from a 9-millimeter handgun instead.
- And so, at a minimum, if the defense had
- 24 possessed those statements, it could have sown doubt on
- 25 whether the firearm was in fact one and the same and,

- 1 therefore, sown doubt on a critical element of the
- 2 offense at issue.
- 3 And finally, the only other category --
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'd just like to go back
- 5 to that because I'm not sure I understand the argument.
- 6 Both the ballistics expert at trial said that the
- 7 casings were consistent with a 9-millimeter? And I know
- 8 that Boatner said that it was a 9-millimeter that was
- 9 used. And the issue was whether anybody would call a
- 10 MAC gun a handgun as opposed to an automatic pistol,
- 11 correct?
- MR. SHANMUGAM: Well, that's right with
- 13 regard to Leary's testimony. I think the thing that was
- 14 a little bit odd with regard to Boatner's testimony was
- 15 the sudden degree of specificity. Having said only that
- 16 it was a handgun or a chrome automatic in his prior
- 17 statements, he said at trial that it was a 9-millimeter
- 18 handgun, which he had not previously said in the
- 19 statements that were withheld.
- 20 And, finally, the last category of evidence
- 21 consists of the notes of the interview in which Eric
- 22 Rogers relayed Robert Trackling's confession to
- 23 involvement in the shootings. As the amicus brief of
- 24 the NACDL points out, courts have routinely held that
- 25 confessions by other perpetrators constitute exculpatory

- 1 evidence, even with regard to offenses that may have had
- 2 multiple perpetrators. And we certainly believe that at
- 3 a minimum the suppression of those notes, when
- 4 considered in conjunction with all of the other
- 5 evidence, comfortably satisfies the Brady materiality
- 6 standard, and it's for that reason that we think that
- 7 the judgment of the trial court should be reversed.
- 8 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Shanmugam, just a quick
- 9 one. Was -- is all the evidence that you're discussing
- 10 here today -- was that presented to the State
- 11 postconviction court?
- 12 MR. SHANMUGAM: Yes. We believe that all of
- 13 this evidence was before the State postconviction court.
- 14 Thank you, and I'll reserve the balance of
- 15 my time.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- Ms. Andrieu.
- 18 ORAL ARGUMENT OF DONNA R. ANDRIEU
- 19 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
- 20 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes. Mr. Chief Justice, and
- 21 may it please the Court:
- The only survivor who could identify the
- 23 assailant who led the massacre in the small home at 2230
- 24 North Roman Street was Larry Boatner. He identified --
- 25 Larry -- he identified the Petitioner after having

- 1 searched the faces of 72 individuals who were presented
- 2 to him in photo line-ups, one after the other. And,
- 3 yes, Justice Sotomayor, several of the -- those faces or
- 4 several of those individuals bore short fade haircuts.
- 5 And, yes, some of the individuals who were pictured in
- 6 those photo line-ups were other suspects. The record
- 7 reflects that Mr. Boatner scrutinized those 72 faces.
- 8 At one point, line-up 11 was shown to him on March 22nd,
- 9 and he remarked about the haircut. He said: My
- 10 assailant wore his hair like this --
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Does this -- was this
- 12 line-up -- was this after Boatner saw the photograph in
- 13 the newspaper?
- MS. ANDRIEU: No, it was not. I believe
- 15 the -- Mr. Smith's photograph was pictured in the
- 16 Times-Picayune newspaper on June 7th, and this
- 17 particular line-up was shown to Mr. Boatner on March
- 18 22nd. So, at that point, line-up 8, he stopped and
- 19 remarked about the hair --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could you tell me why
- 21 Boatner waited 2 weeks to -- or never told the police
- 22 that the face that he saw in the newspaper was the face
- 23 of his assailant? I -- as I understand the facts, he
- 24 says he saw the newspaper, recognized his assailant, and
- 25 remained silent.

- 1 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes, he did.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: It wasn't until they
- 3 presented him with the line-up including Mr. Smith's
- 4 face that he identified Mr. Smith. What's the reason
- 5 for the delay?
- 6 MS. ANDRIEU: His reason, Your Honor, is --
- 7 it's contained most specifically on page 191 of the
- 8 joint appendix, and it is frankly that he was afraid.
- 9 He -- and I think the jury would have understood that.
- 10 He obviously knew what Mr. Smith was capable of. He --
- 11 I'm sure he feared --
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And so what turned --
- 13 what changed his mind once the police showed him the
- 14 line-up?
- 15 MS. ANDRIEU: Well, I don't know that he
- 16 changed his mind, but he was presented with a line-up,
- and when he was presented with the line-up, he very
- 18 quickly identified Juan Smith and said: That is him; I
- 19 will never forget his face. So --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: And that was before or
- 21 after the picture in the paper?
- 22 MS. ANDRIEU: That was after. And all of
- 23 this, by the way, was vetted during -- during a motion
- 24 to suppress hearing. When the trial judge learned or --
- 25 that the photograph had been shown in the newspaper, he

- 1 reopened the hearing on the motion to suppress to
- 2 determine -- and over the State's objection. We argued
- 3 that this was not State action. But he reopened the
- 4 motion to suppress to determine for himself whether or
- 5 not that newspaper had in any way tainted the later
- 6 identification of Juan Smith.
- 7 JUSTICE BREYER: What is this? I mean, I
- 8 thought -- I may -- I thought the issue is that there
- 9 were some notes, and the first note, which was made on
- 10 the day, the policeman says that Boatner said he could
- 11 not supply a description of the perpetrator, other than
- 12 to say they were black males. Then he said they had
- 13 golden teeth and a low-cut haircut.
- 14 And 5 days later, he said he could not ID
- 15 anyone because he couldn't see faces. Then he said he'd
- 16 only glanced at the first man. He couldn't tell if they
- 17 had their faces covered and didn't see anyone. Then he
- 18 said, I could not ID, would not know them if I saw them.
- 19 And another set of police notes says he said that he
- 20 could not identify any of the perpetrators of the
- 21 murder.
- So, I guess those are all notes that the --
- 23 the prosecution did not give to the defense. So, if you
- 24 were a defense lawyer, whatever this other stuff is, I
- 25 guess you would have been pretty happy to have those

- 1 notes because you might have tried to impeach his
- 2 identification.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes, and --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: And so, what are -- you're
- 5 saying that I guess it would have made no difference?
- 6 MS. ANDRIEU: That's correct, Your Honor.
- 7 JUSTICE BREYER: Then I'd like to hear that
- 8 because it seems on its face that it certainly could
- 9 have made a difference, that if he had those notes that
- 10 he could have tried to impeach him and said where did
- 11 this sudden recognition come from.
- 12 MS. ANDRIEU: And I can appreciate your
- 13 concern. This Court has held that favorable evidence --
- 14 well, this Court has held that favorable evidence which
- is not material need not be turned over to the defense.
- 16 And if I could --
- 17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But how could it not be
- 18 material? Here is the only eyewitness --
- 19 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- and we have
- 21 inconsistent statements. Are you really urging that the
- 22 prior statements were immaterial?
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes, Your Honor. If I may put
- 24 them in perspective. Mr. Boatner provided two
- 25 statements -- I'm sorry. Mr. Boatner provided a

- 1 statement on the scene, two statements the day of the
- 2 incident. To a first responding officer who was not
- 3 Detective Ronquillo, he gave a description, and that
- 4 description was heavy built, with a hair with a fade
- 5 with a little small top, with a lot of gold in his
- 6 mouth. That was while he was at the scene.
- 7 Later, homicide Detective John Ronquillo
- 8 arrived at the scene, and apparently, according to his
- 9 notes and, most importantly, according to his
- 10 postconviction testimony, he asked Larry -- he asked
- 11 Larry Boatner for a description. And Larry Boatner
- 12 said, I can't give you a description.
- 13 I'll put them all in perspective and then go
- 14 back to what Detective Ronquillo and Mr. Boatner had to
- 15 say about that. But in any case, Mr. Boatner's severe
- 16 laceration was treated, and then he was escorted to the
- 17 homicide office, where he gave his formal statement.
- 18 And in that statement, part of which has been reproduced
- 19 here by opposing counsel, Mr. Boatner said: I can tell
- 20 you about the one, the one who put the pistol in my
- 21 face. He was a black male with a low cut, golds in his
- 22 mouth. I don't know how many; that's all. I was too
- 23 scared to look at anybody. All of them had guns, one
- 24 with an AK; one with a TEC-9. The one who hit me had a
- 25 chrome automatic. It was big. So --

- 1 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, and you
- 2 could argue, presumably you did argue, that before the
- 3 jury, and that would be compelling evidence for the
- 4 jury. And if you were the defense lawyer, you really
- 5 would like to have that statement where he said: I
- 6 couldn't identify them.
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: You would like to have it, but
- 8 it's not material because, sandwiched between two
- 9 descriptions -- and he's -- between two descriptions, he
- 10 says, I can't identify. And taken in --
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: How does that make it not
- 12 material? You can argue that it should be given
- 13 diminished weight. But an inconsistent statement by the
- 14 only eyewitness seems to me most material and useful to
- 15 the defense in cross-examining the eyewitness. I really
- 16 don't understand how you can -- you can argue that the
- jury shouldn't put much weight on it because there were
- 18 these other things; but to say that it's immaterial I
- 19 find that that is -- is not plausible.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: And not only the only
- 21 eyewitness but, if I understand it correctly, the only
- 22 evidence against the defendant. This was the only
- 23 evidence against him, this one eyewitness
- 24 identification, right? Was there anything else?
- MS. ANDRIEU: There was -- the

- 1 identification of Juan Smith was bolstered by evidence,
- 2 by testimony of the brother of Phillip Young. The
- 3 perpetrator who was left at the scene is an aphasic
- 4 amnesiac. So, he established a link that the two were
- 5 known to each other, Juan Smith and --
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well --
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: -- but yes.
- 8 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But just on the
- 9 materiality point, I -- I just have to agree with
- 10 Justice Ginsburg. What you're telling us is that when
- 11 the defense stands up and said, and isn't it true that,
- 12 in this statement which you just have testified to on
- 13 direct and which the police have put in on direct, you
- 14 also said you could not identify any perpetrators of the
- 15 murder -- and then the prosecutor says immaterial, and
- 16 the judge says strike it.
- MS. ANDRIEU: But that's not --
- 18 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I just can't believe that.
- MS. ANDRIEU: But that's not what he says.
- 20 He says: I can tell you about the one, the one who put
- 21 the pistol in my face.
- JUSTICE BREYER: So, I take it that your --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: I'm talking about the
- 24 Boatner statement of 3/6/95, in which Boatner told
- 25 police he could not identify any of the perpetrators of

- 1 the murder, JA 259-60.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: And you say that's
- 4 immaterial. I find that just incredible.
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: Is it that you mean
- 6 immaterial, or is it that you mean that it wasn't
- 7 prejudicial because there's so much other evidence,
- 8 there was no reasonable probability it would have made a
- 9 difference in the trial?
- 10 MS. ANDRIEU: That is what I mean, yes.
- 11 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. So, we can forget
- 12 the word "material."
- Now, you're saying there's so much other
- 14 evidence here against him that it wouldn't have made any
- 15 difference.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Now, I can understand that
- 18 argument.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, I --
- JUSTICE BREYER: But I don't know if it's
- 21 right. That is -- that is -- now I think I can go back
- 22 to Justice Kennedy's question, put it in those terms,
- 23 and say, well, why wouldn't -- this could have made a
- 24 difference. I mean, here, we have this witness who said
- 25 all of these great things for your side, and within a

- 1 space of hours, he has been telling the policemen that
- 2 he can't identify anybody, he doesn't know. I mean,
- 3 what -- that sounds like there's a probability that
- 4 would have made a difference. Why not?
- 5 MS. ANDRIEU: The -- among the most
- 6 important evidence in this case is the testimony or the
- 7 transcript from the postconviction relief hearing. John
- 8 Ronquillo, whose notes these are, was asked about the
- 9 March 6th statement. And I guess we are
- 10 fast-forwarding. The next -- the statement after the
- 11 statement made -- the one made in the homicide office
- 12 was made on March 6th. And at that time, Detective
- 13 Ronquillo called Larry Boatner, and Larry Boatner said,
- 14 I can't identify anyone.
- 15 Based -- and what Detective Ronquillo had to
- 16 say about that -- first of all, Larry Boatner didn't
- 17 remember saying that. But what Detective Ronguillo had
- 18 to say about it -- and he was the person who was --
- 19 whose impressions -- about whose impressions we're
- 20 speaking -- was that at that point, Mr. Boatner, like
- 21 many murder witnesses, was retreating, temporarily
- 22 equivocating, as we wrote in brief. He was retreating
- 23 somewhat from his assistance with the police. Not an --
- 24 not an abnormal phenomenon --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: What if -- what if --

- 1 could the jury be entitled to reject that conclusion?
- 2 They have four statements by this man who Ronquillo
- 3 described as very coherent, very with it at the scene of
- 4 the crime. Would a jury be entitled to -- to reject
- 5 that excuse by Ronquillo?
- 6 MS. ANDRIEU: They would, Your Honor.
- 7 And --
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And if they were
- 9 entitled to do that, why would the absence of four
- 10 statements that I can't identify someone not have been
- 11 an argument that defense counsel could have used, number
- 12 one, and that had a reasonable probability of making a
- 13 difference?
- MS. ANDRIEU: First of all, there were not
- 15 four statements that were made where Boatner said he
- 16 couldn't identify anyone, again. He gave two statements
- 17 the day of where he described, and one statement --
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: At different hours.
- MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: At different hours.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- 22 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And to different
- 23 officers.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, that's two

- 1 statements. My math is wrong?
- MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry. Those are
- 3 statements where he inculpated the defendant. There are
- 4 two statements. Starting on the scene, there is a
- 5 statement provided to the first responding officer,
- 6 where he provides a description. Larry Boatner provides
- 7 a description --
- 8 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But it is a description
- 9 that others, other suspects, fit. The close-cut hair,
- 10 the gold teeth. That didn't identify Smith, as opposed
- 11 to the other suspects who had those same
- 12 characteristics.
- 13 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes. And those other
- 14 suspects' photographs were all contained -- were
- 15 contained in photo IDs -- in photo line-ups, and
- 16 Mr. Boatner never selected one of them.
- 17 The other thing is he -- gold teeth. He
- 18 knew that his perpetrator had gold teeth. The next time
- 19 he saw Mr. Smith was at trial in court. Mr. Smith
- 20 revealed his teeth, and he had gold teeth. But as far
- 21 as the other suspects having the haircut or physical --
- 22 similar physical attributes --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: It was a prior
- 24 inconsistent statement, and we can argue about whether
- 25 there were more consistent statements than inconsistent

- 1 statements, but to say that this was not Brady material,
- 2 we -- we're not saying that Larry Boatner made up a
- 3 story on the stand that wasn't -- didn't conform to the
- 4 truth. The question is, should the prosecutor -- should
- 5 the defense attorney have access to a prior inconsistent
- 6 statement?
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: And this Court has said that
- 8 Brady is a reflective -- is a reflective analysis. He
- 9 did not --
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, can you explain how
- 11 this -- how this took place? You have a case in which
- 12 you're -- you're relying almost entirely on the
- 13 testimony of one witness, and you have these notes that
- 14 were taken by, and are presumably in the possession of,
- 15 the lead investigator. Wouldn't any prosecutor ask the
- 16 lead -- the lead investigator, do you have any
- 17 statements of this witness?
- MS. ANDRIEU: Absolutely.
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: They have to be examined,
- 20 and if there's anything in them that's -- that is
- 21 impeachment material, they have to be turned over to the
- 22 defense. And under Louisiana law, is there are a rule
- 23 that requires the turning over of statements by
- 24 witnesses, prior statements by witnesses?
- 25 MS. ANDRIEU: Under Louisiana law, prior

- 1 statements of witnesses are not discoverable. But of
- 2 course, under this Court's decision in Brady v.
- 3 Maryland, if the prosecutor makes a determination that
- 4 they would materially affect the outcome of --
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But you have to --
- 6 MS. ANDRIEU: -- guilt or innocence --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You have to supply
- 8 statements by a witness when they take the stand, don't
- 9 you? Those are immaterial? Don't you have to turn
- 10 over --
- MS. ANDRIEU: No. No.
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Not in the State of
- 13 Louisiana?
- MS. ANDRIEU: No. Not --
- 15 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You don't have to turn
- 16 over witness statements when they're taking the stand?
- MS. ANDRIEU: No. And these statements were
- 18 provided in camera. There was -- defense filed a motion
- 19 for discovery, and he asked for Brady material. He
- 20 asked specifically for the supplemental report, which is
- 21 where these statements are contained.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, you -- are you
- 23 claiming that the judge's failure to catch these
- 24 inconsistencies excuses your Brady obligation?
- 25 MS. ANDRIEU: Not at all. The Brady

- 1 obligation is ours. In fact, we believe that that's
- 2 actually a poor practice. But it is one --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Ms. Andrieu, if I could go
- 4 back to Justice Alito's question, was the problem here
- 5 that the prosecutors never received these statements
- 6 from the police officers, or did the prosecutors make a
- 7 determination similar to the kind of argument that
- 8 you're making today -- make a determination that these
- 9 statements simply should not be turned over because they
- 10 are not material?
- 11 MS. ANDRIEU: The prosecutor in this case
- 12 actually turned them over to the trial court for an in
- 13 camera inspection. And article -- Louisiana Code of
- 14 Criminal Procedure article 718 actually provides for
- 15 that practice.
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: It's so odd that -- I mean,
- 17 look, it seems like here it is 5 days after the shooting
- 18 and well before, I guess, that this witness saw any mug
- 19 shots or did anything. And he says, I could not
- 20 identify anyone, because he couldn't see the faces of
- 21 the people. And now you're saying later, which you
- 22 introduce into trial, his having looked at the faces of
- 23 people and identified them from their faces.
- Now, previously, he said he couldn't see
- 25 their faces. All right. And in Louisiana, the State of

- 1 Louisiana, the prosecution and the judges say that
- 2 isn't -- you don't have to turn over that statement that
- 3 he couldn't see the faces made earlier.
- 4 MS. ANDRIEU: No. What he --
- JUSTICE BREYER: What?
- 6 MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry. When he's saying
- 7 that he could not see the faces, he is not referring to
- 8 Juan Smith. He and Detective Ronquillo testified at
- 9 postconviction that he always said he could identify the
- one, the one whose face appeared a handgun's length from
- 11 his own, unmasked, when he opened that front door at
- 12 2230 North Roman.
- 13 Detective Ronquillo put this in perspective
- 14 at postconviction. And as I said, he --
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: Oh, you mean all these --
- 16 all these statements that we have here, you're saying,
- 17 all referred to people other than the defendant.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Juan. Yes.
- 19 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. Well, was there
- 20 a finding on that?
- 21 MS. ANDRIEU: There was -- the judge did not
- 22 give express findings of fact or finding of law, but --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Perhaps the defense would
- 24 have liked to say they did apply to the defendant.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: You don't say all of them.

- 1 All of them didn't apply to the --
- 2 MS. ANDRIEU: No. The one at the scene,
- 3 when he says I can't describe anyone here, clearly --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: This was not at the scene.
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: That applied to everyone,
- 6 right?
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry.
- 8 JUSTICE SCALIA: The one at the scene
- 9 applied to everyone.
- MS. ANDRIEU: To everyone.
- 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: "I can't identify anyone."
- MS. ANDRIEU: March 6th --
- 13 JUSTICE SCALIA: Yes.
- MS. ANDRIEU: -- applied to everyone --
- 15 everyone except Juan Smith.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Okay.
- JUSTICE BREYER: So, you're --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Wait, wait. I'm
- 19 sorry. You've lost me there. When he says I can't
- 20 identify anyone, Smith is out of that group already?
- 21 MS. ANDRIEU: Oh, I'm sorry. No. He's --
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Okay.
- MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry. In both
- 24 circumstances, he is saying -- the first time, he's
- 25 saying, I can't describe. The second time, he is

- 1 saying, I can't help you; I can't identify everyone.
- 2 But the jury would have --
- JUSTICE BREYER: All right. He says, I
- 4 can't identify --
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Excuse me. I can't
- 6 identify everyone or everyone?
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: Anyone.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Okay.
- 9 MS. ANDRIEU: And the jury would have
- 10 heard --
- JUSTICE BREYER: He says, I can't identify
- 12 anyone because I couldn't see faces. Okay? That's what
- 13 it says here, at least in my notes that my law clerks
- 14 gathered. And --
- 15 (Laughter.)
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: All right, I -- and my
- 17 point then is this seems very odd, I mean, really
- 18 unusual that in the State of Louisiana that they have
- 19 some kind of system that doesn't turn that statement
- 20 over to the defense.
- 21 MS. ANDRIEU: It was turned over to the
- judge under article 718 for in-camera inspection.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Where's that reflected in
- 24 the record? I --
- 25 MS. ANDRIEU: That's on October 31st of

- 1 1995. There is a hearing.
- 2 JUSTICE ALITO: What you said in your brief
- 3 was that the judge determined that the supplemental
- 4 report relating to the North Roman Street murders
- 5 contains no Brady material.
- 6 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes. Mr. Smith --
- 7 JUSTICE ALITO: I didn't understand the
- 8 record to be that all of Boatner's statements -- that
- 9 all the statements of Boatner that we're concerned about
- 10 now were examined by the judge before--
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: -- trial?
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: And the record reflects that
- 15 where?
- 16 MS. ANDRIEU: The transcript of October
- 17 31st, 1995. The --
- 18 JUSTICE KAGAN: And is it the view of the
- 19 prosecutor's office that because those materials were
- 20 turned over to the judge, assuming that they were turned
- 21 over to the judge, that that obviates the Brady
- 22 obligation?
- MS. ANDRIEU: Not at all.
- 24 JUSTICE KAGAN: Is that the view of the
- 25 prosecutor's office?

- 1 MS. ANDRIEU: Not at all. We believe it's a
- 2 bad practice. But it is --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Did you concede there was
- 4 a Brady violation in this case?
- 5 MS. ANDRIEU: Did we concede?
- 6 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Do you now concede--
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: No.
- 8 JUSTICE KENNEDY: -- there was a Brady
- 9 violation in the case?
- 10 MS. ANDRIEU: No. If the --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: You're telling the Court
- 12 that this should have been kept from the defense, all of
- 13 it?
- MS. ANDRIEU: Under this --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Under Brady.
- 16 MS. ANDRIEU: -- Court's decision in Kyles,
- 17 I believe a prudent prosecutor would have disclosed it.
- 18 I do not --
- 19 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But Kyles is a decision
- 20 saying what the prosecutor must disclose, not it's a
- 21 good practice.
- MS. ANDRIEU: No. But --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, is there a violation
- 24 under our holding in Kyles?
- MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry.

1	JUSTICE	SOTOMAYOR:	Ts	there	а	Bradv

- 2 violation under our holding in Kyles?
- MS. ANDRIEU: No, there is not.
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, explain why what is
- 5 on its face seemingly inconsistent statements are not
- 6 required to be turned over.
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: With regard to the March 6th
- 8 statement where Larry Boatner tells John Ronquillo at
- 9 that point, I can't identify anyone, what Mr. -- what
- 10 Detective Ronquillo had to say about that is
- 11 dispositive. And he said, at that point Larry Boatner
- 12 was withdrawing from -- he was afraid -- he was
- 13 withdrawing from police assistance.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I don't understand how
- 15 he becomes the arbiter of what's Brady. You said to me
- 16 earlier that a jury would be entitled to reject his
- 17 conclusion. All right? Tell me what -- how his
- 18 conclusion makes it non-Brady if a juror could decide
- 19 differently.
- MS. ANDRIEU: The -- the postconviction
- 21 testimony is pivotal because there is a petition that's
- 22 filed with attachments, with exhibits. That is what
- 23 gets, and that is what got, Mr. Smith his day in court,
- 24 his four-day postconviction hearing testimony --
- 25 postconviction hearing. Larry Boatner took the stand.

- 1 What Larry Boatner had to say and what John Ronquillo
- 2 had to say -- because after all, these are John
- 3 Ronquillo's notes -- I think they are important. And I
- 4 think they're important in a Brady analysis because
- 5 those are --
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: There are two components
- 7 to Brady. Should they have been turned over? And if
- 8 they had, is there a reasonable probability of a
- 9 different outcome?
- 10 MS. ANDRIEU: There is not.
- 11 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Should they have been
- 12 turned over? That's the question that I think my
- 13 colleague asked you, and you're saying no.
- MS. ANDRIEU: No. I believe that a prudent
- 15 prosecutor would have. I believe we're tacking a little
- 16 bit too close to the wind, but a prudent prosecutor
- 17 would have. I also think that --
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All right. Now
- 19 articulate what legal theory --
- MS. ANDRIEU: Because it -- because Mr. --
- 21 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- would say these are
- 22 not -- these are not materials that needed to be turned
- 23 over, when they say: Could not ID; would not know them
- 24 if I saw them; can't tell if had faces covered; didn't
- 25 see anyone. That's one of the notes. The other one: I

- 1 don't know how many, that's all; I was too scared to
- 2 look at anybody. And --
- What makes any of those statements --
- 4 MS. ANDRIEU: If Mr. Boatner could not
- 5 identify anyone, Mr. Boatner would not have viewed 15
- 6 lineups. When the lineups were presented to him --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: This is all a jury
- 8 argument.
- 9 MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Tell me why they didn't
- 11 on their face constitute Brady materials that needed to
- 12 be turned over. What's the legal principle that doesn't
- make them Brady?
- MS. ANDRIEU: Because if they had been
- 15 presented -- if those statements had been presented to
- 16 defense -- or presented to a jury, the -- the outcome
- 17 would have remained the same. The jury --
- 18 JUSTICE GINSBURG: How do you know? How do
- 19 you know? How can you possibly know? The jury is
- 20 supposed to decide on the credibility of this witness.
- 21 There's a statement that he made a prior inconsistent
- 22 statement. The -- Mr. Shanmuqam outlined five
- 23 categories of what he called Brady material. Is -- are
- 24 you maintaining that none of those categories, that
- 25 there was no Brady material at all in this case?

- 1 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes. You're speaking of the
- 2 other pieces of evidence?
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Yes.
- 4 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes. Well, I'm -- I'm not
- 5 sure if the Charity Hospital's medical records of
- 6 Mr. Boatner are still being urged to this Court as --
- 7 JUSTICE GINSBURG: I'm talking about Mims
- 8 and -- what was the woman's name? Russell?
- 9 MS. ANDRIEU: Shelita Russell. Well --
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And Young and the snitch,
- 11 the one who said that his cellmate told him that his
- 12 cellmate was the perpetrator.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Well, to be clear, Ms. Russell
- 14 never made a dying declaration. What the defense is
- 15 presenting to this Court as evidence of a dying
- 16 declaration are words and dashes of Detective Ronquillo
- 17 written at some point where he -- written at some
- 18 point --
- 19 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Was it a determination by
- 20 the judge that it wasn't a dying declaration?
- 21 MS. ANDRIEU: The judge, again, did not make
- 22 specific facts of finding or law. The judge -- I'm
- 23 sorry.
- 24 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And how about Mims?
- 25 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Because it was not --

- 1 because it was not turned over. And with all respect, I
- 2 think you misspoke when you -- you were asked what is --
- 3 what is the test for when Brady material must be turned
- 4 over. And you said whether or not there's a reasonable
- 5 probability -- a reasonable likelihood -- pardon me -- a
- 6 reasonable probability that the result would have been
- 7 different. That's the test for when there has been a
- 8 Brady violation. You don't determine your Brady
- 9 obligation by the test for the Brady violation. You're
- 10 transposing two very different things.
- 11 And so, that's incorrect.
- 12 MS. ANDRIEU: And I'm sorry, Justice
- 13 Ginsburg, your -- Shelita Russell did not give a dying
- 14 declaration. The notes are --
- 15 JUDGE GINSBURG: All right. Let's go to
- 16 Mims, who said, I saw them -- I saw the perpetrators go
- 17 to their car when they were exiting. They had ski
- 18 masks.
- 19 MS. ANDRIEU: And that information -- Dale
- 20 Mims testified at postconviction. He testified he did
- 21 not see the assailants arrive. He did not see them --
- 22 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But isn't it most
- 23 unlikely, as your -- as Mr. Shanmugam said, that
- 24 robbers -- I mean, the people who are entering,
- 25 intruding on another's premises to rob, or whatever else

- 1 they're going to do, would wear masks going out but not
- 2 going in? I mean, they don't want anybody -- they don't
- 3 want anybody to be able to identify them.
- 4 MS. ANDRIEU: And it's plausible that
- 5 Mr. Boatner -- I'm sorry -- that Mr. Smith masked
- 6 himself upon escape after --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, is that maybe --
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I thought -- I'm
- 9 sorry. I thought the idea was they were going to kill
- 10 everybody who might have seen them inside. Their only
- 11 worry would be someone who would see them outside,
- 12 right?
- 13 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes. So worried that the car
- 14 that they arrived in had no license plate. They were
- 15 definitely looking not to be identified.
- 16 JUSTICE KAGAN: Ms. Andrieu, did your office
- 17 ever consider just confessing error in this case?
- MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: Did your office ever
- 20 consider just confessing error in this case? You've had
- 21 a bunch of time to think about it. You know? We took
- 22 cert a while ago. I'm just wondering whether you've
- 23 ever considered confessing error.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Your Honor, we believe that we
- 25 have an argument that these statements of Larry Boatner

- 1 are not material. The other evidence that Mr. Shanmugam
- 2 has put before this Court were either not suppressed or
- 3 not favorable. The -- Larry Boatner gave several -- he
- 4 -- he did describe Juan Smith. He described him on
- 5 several occasions, and he ultimately identified him, and
- 6 he identified him after scrupulously viewing 13
- 7 line-ups.
- 8 So, the suggestion that he said at one
- 9 point -- because he's equivocating because his name is
- 10 on -- his name, address, contact information are on the
- 11 police report. It is not a surprise -- and I don't
- 12 think it would be a surprise to Orleans Parish jurors --
- 13 to find that, early in an investigation, a murder
- 14 witness equivocates. He --
- 15 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But you're taking that
- 16 judgment away from the jury. There was a prior
- inconsistent statement. Shouldn't that be the end of
- 18 it? A prior inconsistent statement, one that is
- 19 favorable to the defense, has to be turned over, period.
- 20 I thought was what Brady requires.
- MS. ANDRIEU: And in this case --
- 22 JUSTICE SCALIA: I -- may I suggest that --
- MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: -- you stop fighting as to
- 25 whether it should be turned over? Of course, it should

- 1 have been turned over. I think the case you're making
- 2 is that it wouldn't have made a difference.
- MS. ANDRIEU: Made a difference. Yes.
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: And -- and that's a closer
- 5 case, perhaps, but surely it should have been turned
- 6 over. Why don't you give that up?
- 7 MS. ANDRIEU: Well, I -- and I actually
- 8 thought I had when I said a prudent prosecutor would,
- 9 but in making a sort of over-the-shoulder, rear-window
- 10 Brady analysis, I don't think that these statements --
- 11 that the statements made to -- the statement made to
- 12 Ronquillo at the scene where he's all shook up and he
- 13 says, I can't describe anybody; then he goes to the
- 14 hospital, gets his severe laceration taken care of --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, my worry is the
- 16 following: You've read Cullen.
- MS. ANDRIEU: I'm sorry?
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You read Cullen.
- 19 MS. ANDRIEU: Yes.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You read the dissent in
- 21 Cullen. There has been serious accusations against the
- 22 practices of your office, not yours in particular but
- 23 prior ones. It is disconcerting to me that when I asked
- 24 you the question directly should this material have been
- 25 turned over, you gave an absolute no. It didn't need to

- 1 be. It would have been prudent, but it didn't need to
- 2 be. That's really troubling.
- 3 MS. ANDRIEU: And I think I misunderstood
- 4 your question -- I think I misunderstood your question.
- 5 Should it have been turned over? Yes. Now that we are
- 6 here 16 years later, and the Court is making --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That's the second prong
- 8 of Brady. I said there were two prongs to Brady. Do
- 9 you have to turn it over, and, second, does it cause
- 10 harm. And the first one you said not. That -- it is
- 11 somewhat disconcerting that your office is still
- 12 answering equivocally on a basic obligation as one that
- 13 requires you to have turned these materials over --
- MS. ANDRIEU: Your Honor --
- 15 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- whether it caused
- 16 harm or not.
- 17 MS. ANDRIEU: If -- if I may explain. I
- 18 obviously misunderstood your question. Present-day
- 19 prosecutors -- oh, I'm sorry. May I --
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You can, very
- 21 briefly.
- MS. ANDRIEU: We would have -- today we turn
- 23 all of this over. Our only concern is redacting victim
- 24 information, identifying information, so that -- for
- 25 victims' safety. But it -- it should have been turned

- 1 over. I guess what I was addressing or attempting to
- 2 address was the materiality prong of Brady.
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 4 MS. ANDRIEU: Thank you.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Shanmugam, 4
- 6 minutes.
- 7 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF KANNON K. SHANMUGAM
- 8 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- 9 MR. SHANMUGAM: Thank you, Mr. Chief
- 10 Justice.
- Just three very quick points. First of all,
- 12 with regard to Larry Boatner's statements on March the
- 13 6th, Justice Breyer, you'll be happy to know that your
- 14 law clerks' notes were correct. Boatner on March the
- 15 6th said -- and this is at page 308 of the joint
- 16 appendix -- could not ID anyone because couldn't see
- 17 faces; can't tell if had faces covered; didn't see
- 18 anyone; would not know them if I saw them.
- JUSTICE BREYER: I'm not surprised they're
- 20 correct.
- 21 (Laughter.)
- 22 MR. SHANMUGAM: It is quite clear that that
- 23 statement applies to all of the perpetrators. The State
- 24 advances the argument today, as it did in its brief,
- 25 that Boatner must have been too scared to cooperate by

- 1 March the 6th, but that is utterly belied by the record
- 2 in this case. Boatner continued to cooperate with the
- 3 police investigation in the following weeks, reviewing
- 4 police line-ups. He even testified that he wanted to go
- 5 looking for Petitioner after seeing his photograph in
- 6 the New Orleans newspaper, pages 489 and 494 of the
- 7 joint appendix. He didn't leave New Orleans until June,
- 8 3 months later, and he actually returned to New Orleans
- 9 before Petitioner was even apprehended. So, again --
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: It is your understanding
- 11 that the -- that all of Boatner's -- all the notes about
- 12 Boatner's statements were turned over to the judge
- 13 before trial for in camera inspection?
- MR. SHANMUGAM: Justice Alito, it is
- 15 entirely unclear based on this record. Counsel for
- 16 Respondent cites the transcript from October 31st, 1995,
- 17 a transcript that wasn't even prepared until after cert
- 18 was granted in this case.
- 19 It's clear that the court reviewed
- 20 something, but it is entirely unclear from that
- 21 transcript what the court reviewed. And, of course,
- 22 even if the court had made an in camera determination,
- 23 it would no way -- in no way affect our claim after the
- 24 fact here.
- 25 My second point: The State today for the

- 1 first time says, in response to the question from
- 2 Justice Scalia, that there was more evidence here
- 3 linking Petitioner to the crime and relies on the
- 4 testimony of Eddie Young, the brother of Phillip Young,
- 5 the individual who was found at the scene. But the sole
- 6 substance of that testimony was that Phillip Young knew
- 7 Petitioner. And we would respectfully submit that that
- 8 is scarcely inculpatory, and if it was, anyone in New
- 9 Orleans who knows a felon ought to be worried. And,
- 10 therefore, we really don't think that that adds anything
- 11 to the evidence in this case. The sole evidence linking
- 12 Petitioner to the crime was the statement -- the
- 13 testimony of Larry Boatner.
- 14 Third, there has been some discussion about
- 15 the language in this Court's cases in Kyles and Agurs
- 16 suggesting that prosecutors should err on the side of
- 17 caution. That is part of the constitutional standard
- 18 because, after all, the materiality requirement is part
- 19 of the requirement for a constitutional violation under
- 20 Brady. But all of the evidence at issue here, including
- 21 Boatner's statements, was withheld from the defense,
- 22 leaving aside this question of what the trial court may
- 23 have reviewed in camera.
- 24 And the prosecutor's conduct in this case,
- 25 with all due respect to Ms. Andrieu, was not, quote, "a

1	little too close to the wind." The Orleans Parish
2	district attorney's office acted with flagrant disregard
3	for its obligations under Brady in this case. The Brady
4	standard has been around for half a century. There is
5	no real ambiguity about what that standard requires, and
6	we think that the conduct in this case was in fact
7	egregious and clearly violated that standard. We think
8	that the trial court erred by rejecting Petitioner's
9	Brady claim, and for that reason, we think that its
10	judgment should be reversed.
11	Thank you.
12	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel,
13	counsel.
14	The case is submitted.
15	(Whereupon, at 12:12 p.m., the case in the
16	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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