1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
2	x
3	EDWARD NATHANIEL BELL, :
4	Petitioner :
5	v. : No. 07-1223
6	LORETTA K. KELLY, WARDEN. :
7	x
8	Washington, D.C.
9	Wednesday, November 12, 2008
10	
11	The above-entitled matter came on for oral
12	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States
13	at 11:15 a.m.
14	APPEARANCES:
15	RICHARD P. BRESS, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; on behalf of
16	the Petitioner.
17	KATHERINE BURNETT, ESQ., Senior Assistant Attorney
18	General, Richmond, Va.; on behalf of the Respondent.
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1	CONTENTS	
2	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	PAGE
3	RICHARD P. BRESS, ESQ.	
4	On behalf of the Petitioner	3
5	KATHERINE BURNETT, ESQ.	
6	On behalf of the Respondent	27
7	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF	
8	RICHARD P. BRESS, ESQ.	
9	On behalf of the Petitioner	51
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(11:15 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	next in Case 07-1223, Bell versus Kelly.
5	Mr. Bress.
6	ORAL ARGUMENT OF RICHARD P. BRESS
7	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
8	MR. BRESS: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice,
9	and may it please the Court:
10	The problem at the heart of this case is
11	construing subsections (d) and (e) of 28 U.S.C. 2254
12	together in a way that makes sense. The last time that
13	this Court construed those two provisions together was
14	in Michael Williams. Michael Williams presented a
15	different issue.
16	But we believe that looking at how Michael
17	Williams would play out with a small change in the facts
18	will help frame the issue that's before the court today.
19	Now, as the Court recalls, in Michael
20	Williams the Virginia Supreme Court denied Williams the
21	investigative assistance he needed in order to help
22	develop a claim based on his suspicions of jury
23	misconduct. He, therefore, didn't make the claim in
24	State court.
25	On in Federal court he got investigative

- 1 assistance; and, in speaking with the investigator, two
- 2 of the jurors referred to the foreperson, Bonnie
- 3 Stinette, as Bonnie Minehart.
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Mr. Bress, before we get
- 5 into that, could I just ask you a threshold question?
- 6 We took this case to decide a question, and one of the
- 7 factual predicates of the question is that the State
- 8 court refused to consider certain evidence. And I'm
- 9 puzzled about that.
- 10 What was the evidence that the State court
- 11 -- do you say that the State court refused to consider
- 12 evidence that was proffered to it?
- MR. BRESS: No, Your Honor. The State court
- 14 did not refuse to consider evidence proffered to it.
- 15 The State court refused to permit the full development
- 16 of the evidence. And it -- I mean it misled the court
- 17 --
- 18 JUSTICE GINSBURG: I didn't hear the -- the
- 19 last part.
- 20 MR. BRESS: The State court refused to
- 21 permit the evidence to be fully developed, Your Honor.
- 22 They didn't refuse to consider evidence.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: What do you mean by that?
- 24 What specifically did they --
- 25 MR. BRESS: Specifically, Your Honor, the

- 1 State provided 120 days to develop the State habeas
- 2 petition. The Petitioners during that time developed 14
- 3 different claims, including the claim that's at issue
- 4 here today.
- In the course of that they interviewed, I
- 6 think, 11 different witnesses. For the ineffective-
- 7 assistance-of-counsel claim they got affidavits. They
- 8 also interviewed all 12 jurors for five different claims
- 9 of juror misconduct. They interviewed five different
- 10 witnesses for Brady claims, et cetera.
- 11 They ran out of time, Your Honor, and they
- 12 asked the court for more time on repeated occasions.
- 13 They asked the court to investigate --
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: But that really does not
- 15 present the question that you asked the Court to decide.
- 16 MR. BRESS: Well, Your Honor, if you read it
- 17 that way, it would not, but I don't read the question
- 18 presented that way. I read the question presented to
- 19 present the question of when the district court properly
- 20 hears evidence after a finding of diligence by the
- 21 prisoner and holds that the State court didn't provide a
- 22 full and fair opportunity to that prisoner to develop
- 23 the facts in State court, that where the evidence is
- 24 important the -- the district court may consider that
- 25 evidence, rather than giving deference to the State

- 1 court.
- 2 And giving deference to the State court is
- 3 not even on the table any longer in this case. It was
- 4 -- what the Fourth Circuit did, the Fourth Circuit took
- 5 the new evidence into account and deferred to the State
- 6 court nonetheless.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Why wouldn't he have
- 8 brought that new evidence to the attention of the State
- 9 court first? Why wasn't he obliged to bring it to the
- 10 attention of the State court?
- 11 MR. BRESS: He didn't have the new evidence,
- 12 Your Honor.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, he could have a
- 14 post-conviction proceeding in the State court.
- 15 MR. BRESS: Actually, no, he couldn't, Your
- 16 Honor.
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: A State habeas.
- 18 MR. BRESS: I'm sorry. The -- as the
- 19 Virginia Commonwealth attorneys point out in their
- 20 amicus brief, there is a rule in the Virginia State
- 21 court that any facts not set out in the habeas petition
- 22 at the State level can't be brought in later. He wasn't
- 23 able to bring the facts in afterwards.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, weren't the
- 25 facts merely cumulative evidence of his claim that was

- before the State court?
- 2 MR. BRESS: No, they weren't, Your Honor.
- 3 There were three categories of new facts or new evidence
- 4 that came in on Federal habeas.
- 5 And if I may, the first -- the first of them
- 6 had to do with facts that undermined the State's claim
- 7 of aggravation. The State relied on only one
- 8 aggravating factor. That was future dangerousness. And
- 9 in the course of that, in developing it, their number
- 10 one emphasis was on one adjudicated -- unadjudicated bad
- 11 act, and this was a story told by Billy Jo Swartz about
- 12 an alleged horrific assault on her and of Tracy
- 13 Nicholson, who was a girlfriend of the Petitioner.
- 14 What the jury didn't know at the time was
- 15 that both Tracy and her mother, who were there, said
- 16 that the incident did not occur, that there was no
- 17 assault there, and Billy Jo Swartz was a liar.
- 18 Now, on State habeas, Joanne did submit an
- 19 affidavit and, in that affidavit, said that Billy Jo
- 20 Swartz had lied. That created a dispute of fact at the
- 21 State level, but unfortunately rather than hear the
- 22 witnesses to determine the credibility and -- the
- 23 Virginia Supreme Court instead decided against
- 24 Petitioner.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I think that

- 1 supports my suggestion, which is that the evidence was
- 2 cumulative. There was a dispute on that issue. There
- 3 was evidence on both sides. And now you say, hey, we've
- 4 got more evidence.
- 5 MR. BRESS: Well, it's not more evidence,
- 6 Your Honor; it's just that a dispute over the facts
- 7 where credibility is at issue shouldn't be decided on
- 8 the papers.
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But the Virginia Supreme
- 10 Court, on habeas, said we are going to accept as true
- 11 all the facts as the Petitioner alleged them. They said
- 12 specifically "all facts alleged in the petition will be
- 13 taken as true."
- MR. BRESS: And if they had done that, Your
- 15 Honor, I think that we'd be in a different position.
- 16 JUSTICE GINSBURG: They said they did.
- MR. BRESS: They said, on the one hand, they
- 18 did, and yet, on the other hand, when they were looking,
- 19 for example, at Joanne Nicholson's testimony, they said
- 20 she could have been effectively impeached by other
- 21 statements that she had made, that in their household,
- 22 she had never seen Bell be physically abusive to her
- 23 daughter. Now, Joanne Nicholson and Tracy Nicholson
- 24 have said throughout that he was never physically
- 25 abusive to Tracy. The supposed impeachment would have

- 1 come from police court records that have never been
- 2 introduced in this case. So the Virginia Supreme Court,
- 3 without a hearing, just said, on the one hand, we accept
- 4 these facts as true and, on the other hand, even though
- 5 Joanne Nicholson would testify that this event never
- 6 occurred that way, she would have been impeached so the
- 7 jury wouldn't have believed it.
- 8 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, your argument is
- 9 dependent on the proposition that the claim that was
- 10 advanced in the Federal habeas proceeding is a different
- 11 claim from a claim that was adjudicated on the merits in
- 12 the State court?
- MR. BRESS: That's right, Your Honor.
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: And if that's the case, I
- 15 don't understand why your adversary is not correct that
- 16 it will always be possible in capital cases for an
- 17 ineffective assistance of counsel claim that has been
- 18 adjudicated on the merits in the State court to be
- 19 advanced and get de novo review in Federal habeas, where
- 20 every aspect of the defendant's life that is potentially
- 21 favorable can be advanced as a basis for mitigation.
- 22 You know, when your firm with all of its expertise and
- 23 resources comes into the case at the Federal habeas
- 24 level, will it not always be the case that you will be
- 25 able to find some additional mitigation evidence and

- 1 then, under your theory, that will be a new claim and it
- 2 well get de novo review?
- 3 MR. BRESS: I'd like to answer that
- 4 question, Justice Alito, in two ways: One very
- 5 practical, which is that the Ninth and Tenth Circuits
- 6 have adopted the rule that we advocated for years. The
- 7 Sixth Circuit and the Fourth Circuit have adopted that
- 8 rule for Brady claims, and we haven't seen the flood
- 9 that supposedly is going to come through the gates.
- 10 Secondly, on a more theoretical level, for
- 11 someone to be able to introduce this new evidence on
- 12 Federal habeas, they have to first be able to
- demonstrate that they were diligent in attempting
- 14 formulate it in the State court. Second, they've got to
- 15 be able to demonstrate that it's important and
- 16 importantly changes the overall factual mix. Now --
- 17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: I don't get the diligence
- 18 part because the whole ineffective assistance of counsel
- 19 is the client isn't expected to do any of this; it's
- 20 counsel that's been ineffective.
- 21 MR. BRESS: Your Honor, I'm referring to
- 22 Michael Williams, which talks about diligence by the
- 23 State habeas counsel.
- 24 JUSTICE GINSBURG: So, it doesn't translate
- 25 into ineffective assistance of counsel because the

- 1 client is not the one -- the lawyer has been -- has not
- 2 been diligent, but there is nothing that the client
- 3 could do. I just don't see how --
- 4 MR. BRESS: Well --
- 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- how you could talk
- 6 about the diligent -- the diligent client bringing up
- 7 the ineffectiveness of his lawyer.
- 8 MR. BRESS: Your Honor, we understand and
- 9 appreciate the diligence of habeas counsel is not any
- 10 kind of excuse and can't be -- statutorily it can't be,
- 11 actually under 2554, but what we are talking about is
- 12 whether the prisoner and his counsel were diligent in
- 13 seeking to develop the facts for their claim when they
- 14 were on State habeas. That's what Michael Williams had
- 15 to do with it. Michael Williams equated diligence with
- 16 reasonable efforts and said that the contrary would be
- 17 negligence.
- In this case we've got a finding by the
- 19 district court that Bell and his lawyers were diligent
- 20 in seeking to develop their ineffective assistance of
- 21 counsel claim at State habeas. And that's what allows
- 22 them under (e), that's what says that they didn't fail
- 23 to develop the evidence under (e)(2) and allows them to
- 24 go through the gate of (e).
- Now, in order to get here, you have to

- 1 demonstrate that diligence. You also have to
- 2 demonstrate that you're able to develop new facts that
- 3 matter, that are important, that are significant.
- 4 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But you use the -- to say
- 5 that it's a new claim, because that's what it has to be,
- 6 right, but it's such an extraordinary use of "claim." I
- 7 mean, we have exhibit cases, the notion is a claim, is a
- 8 tort claim or a contract claim, but not additional
- 9 evidence in support of the basic claim. The basic claim
- 10 is ineffective assistance of counsel.
- 11 MR. BRESS: Your Honor, I appreciate that
- 12 it's not "claim" as it's used ordinarily in the Rules of
- 13 Civil Procedure or when you're talking about making
- 14 claims in that sort of a complaint. However, this
- 15 Court, including an opinion -- Banks v. Dretke, for
- 16 example, talked about the two different Brady claims in
- 17 that case as separate claims, even though they were
- 18 withholdings by the same prosecutor. More closely even,
- in Michael Williams, there were two separate
- 20 withholdings of evidence to impeach the same witness.
- 21 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. So I'm trying
- 22 to figure out how the statute works.
- MR. BRESS: Yes.
- 24 JUSTICE BREYER: And it seems to me that the
- 25 way it's supposed to work -- have you read, by the way,

- 1 the facts of the case for December in Bell v. Cohen?
- 2 No? Okay. Forget that. I was going to shorthand that
- 3 because it's similar to the hypothetical I'm thinking
- 4 of.
- 5 What happens is that the -- the State court
- 6 now says, okay, I assume all the facts in your favor and
- 7 you don't prevail. All right. Now, he goes into
- 8 Federal court and he has some new facts. Now, either
- 9 they are such that they transform the claim and it's a
- 10 new claim. I mean, in that case there is an argument
- 11 for that, maybe not in yours, or they aren't. Now, if
- 12 they aren't, then what he is supposed to do, the judge,
- is go look and decide on the basis of what they
- 14 presented to the State. That's the end of it.
- 15 Now, if they are, he is supposed to exhaust.
- 16 You go back, you exhaust this new claim like any other
- 17 new claim, and if the State bars it, then you go and see
- 18 if there was cause and prejudice. And that's how it's
- 19 supposed to work. And if there was cause and prejudice,
- 20 then you have the hearing. Okay? That's how it's
- 21 supposed to work factually.
- I have no idea if that's what went on here,
- 23 but if it -- it didn't seem to me -- there was some
- 24 confusion about whether the procedures are adequate in
- 25 the State. Then there is some other thing that this

- 1 might be the same claim. I mean, I don't see how we get
- 2 to the question we took this case to decide, frankly,
- 3 without knowing what the basis was and whether it was
- 4 correct for the district court to give him any hearing
- 5 at all.
- 6 MR. BRESS: Okay, Your Honor. I'd like to
- 7 address that. I think that that's essentially how this
- 8 works in this case. What the district -- what the
- 9 district court did here is it first made a finding of
- 10 was there diligence? Because it has to do that under
- 11 Michael Williams to even take the next step. Did the
- 12 Petitioner --
- JUSTICE BREYER: That's the first step. The
- 14 first step, I'd go and see -- but at any rate, you go
- 15 ahead.
- 16 MR. BRESS: Right. But it had to take that
- 17 step. And it had to take that step, by the way, of
- 18 course, with (d) in mind as well, because this Court in
- 19 Schriro said there is no reason to have hearing if it is
- 20 separately precluded by another predicate. In Schriro,
- 21 obviously, it was the refusal to -- to allow mitigating
- 22 evidence. So it does that. Then it determines
- 23 separately under Townsend, was there a problem in State
- 24 court that -- did you have a full and fair hearing, and
- 25 if you can prove the facts that you state, would you

- 1 win, and so those allowed the court the discretion to
- 2 hold a hearing.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, why wouldn't you say
- 4 right off the bat, new claim, go present it to the State
- 5 court, and exhausts it?
- 6 MR. BRESS: Well this couldn't have been
- 7 presented in the State court.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Why not?
- 9 MR. BRESS: Well as the State argued below,
- 10 it would have been procedurally deficient.
- 11 JUSTICE BREYER: No, no, no. Suppose we
- 12 have -- that's what I want, not these facts, but I want
- 13 the facts where really, he couldn't have discovered
- 14 this, because the first time that the district attorney
- 15 opened his files for the Brady claim was 140 days after.
- 16 So we now have some totally new, which he couldn't have
- 17 gotten; no one disputes it. Where, that kind of
- 18 thing -- I think he would have to present it to the
- 19 State court, wouldn't he?
- MR. BRESS: Well, Your Honor, according to
- 21 the warden at least, in this case if you took let's say
- 22 the facts of Banks v Dretke, which this Court decided,
- 23 where when you were in front of the State court, what
- 24 you knew was that the girlfriend of the prisoner had
- 25 said that one of the witnesses was particularly close to

- 1 law enforcement, and on that basis they made a claim, a
- 2 Brady claim in State court. It was denied because it
- 3 wasn't factually developed enough, all right?
- 4 So they went to Federal court and in Federal
- 5 court they got a lot more evidence that supported that
- 6 claim. They actually found out that in fact this person
- 7 was a Government informant, and on that basis this Court
- 8 found cause and prejudice and addressed that that
- 9 claim --
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, you must have been
- 11 assuming then that the State would not give that person
- 12 a -- a new opportunity to consider the new evidence.
- MR. BRESS: Well, that's absolutely true --
- 14 JUSTICE BREYER: Suppose it were really new.
- 15 MR. BRESS: The State statute is
- 16 unequivocal.
- 17 JUSTICE BREYER: Yes, but so is it in
- 18 Tennessee, and in Tennessee there is an exception where
- 19 you could bring the thing up because you couldn't
- 20 possibly have gotten over it.
- MR. BRESS: Your Honor, there is no
- 22 exception here in Virginia.
- JUSTICE BREYER: So in Virginia a person
- 24 discovers for the first time, 140 days later looks at
- 25 the D.A.'s files, and discovers something that shows the

- 1 whole trial was a farce -- I mean, something
- 2 unbelievable, and there is no way for the person under
- 3 Virginia law to bring that up in a State court?
- 4 MR. BRESS: Not in this sort of a claim.
- 5 No, Your Honor, there isn't.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Bress, your --
- 7 you're argument that this can't be brought up assumes
- 8 that it is a new claim rather than the same claim,
- 9 right? Because if it were just the same claim then the
- 10 question would be it is simply cumulative rather than
- 11 new?
- 12 MR. BRESS: If it's the same claim for
- 13 2254(d) purposes, yes, Your Honor.
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Right. And I quess
- 15 it gets back to Justice Ginsburg's question. We usually
- 16 don't consider claims different if there is just new
- 17 evidence, but here didn't the Fourth Circuit necessarily
- 18 determine that this was the same claim in deciding to
- 19 defer to the State court findings?
- 20 MR. BRESS: Yes, it did, Your Honor. The
- 21 Fourth Circuit viewed this as the same claim and that's
- the root of some of our disagreement with them.
- 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And if fact you got
- 24 more than you were entitled to, because it did look at
- 25 the new evidence, albeit through the guise of deference,

- 1 but it shouldn't have even looked at that at all.
- MR. BRESS: Your Honor. We would agree that
- 3 that -- that interim solution is not a plausible
- 4 solution, so we would agree with that, on the new
- 5 evidence --
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So if we think that
- 7 they were right -- and we are, I think we are getting
- 8 away from the question presented -- if we agree that
- 9 they are right, that this is the same claim and it's
- 10 just additional evidence, then you lose.
- 11 MR. BRESS: No, not necessarily, Your Honor.
- 12 We also argued on separate grounds where the State's
- 13 procedure is inadequate, then the -- the State's
- 14 application of -- of Federal law would have been
- 15 unreasonable.
- 16 JUSTICE SOUTER: Mr. Bress, may I ask you a
- 17 question --
- MR. BRESS: And if that's true --
- 19 JUSTICE SOUTER: May I ask you a question
- 20 which sort of goes to the utility of raising that issue
- 21 here, and it's a preliminary, not a doctrinal question.
- 22 But --
- MR. BRESS: Sure.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: -- my understanding is that
- 25 in the United States District Court on the Federal habe

- 1 -- the district court made a -- drew a conclusion based
- 2 on the evidence before it, no deference to the State
- 3 court, that in fact your client did not demonstrate
- 4 prejudice. And my understanding is that that --
- 5 although the Fourth Circuit did not rely upon that, my
- 6 understanding is that that -- that finding remains
- 7 undisturbed. Is that correct?
- 8 MR. BRESS: Your Honor, what the district
- 9 court found, as the Fourth Circuit saw it and as we see
- 10 it, was that the State court's finding of prejudice was
- 11 not unreasonable. Now, I acknowledge that when you read
- 12 the district court's oral ruling you won't see a
- 13 reference to 2254(d).
- JUSTICE SOUTER: No.
- 15 MR. BRESS: However, when you look at what
- 16 the State court wrote in its written ruling, what it
- 17 says is there is a colorable claim that the State court
- 18 was unreasonable, on -- in application of law to the
- 19 facts and development of the facts, and then it said
- 20 that they will -- that the court would not decide this
- 21 issue yet, until it has a hearing; and so the Fourth
- 22 Circuit looked at what the district court wrote and
- 23 presumed that consistent with what it had written, it
- 24 then confronted this issue, the issue of reasonability,
- 25 orally; and it didn't require that when a judge is

- 1 saying something orally, as opposed to putting it in a
- 2 written opinion, that it dot every i and cross every t.
- 3 It assumed that it meant what it had said earlier. If
- 4 this Court has any doubt about that, however, it could
- 5 certainly remand with instructions.
- 6 JUSTICE GINSBURG: I that what it was saying
- 7 is there is legitimate -- this is a Strickland question.
- 8 Strickland has two parts. Part A is were counsel
- 9 inadequate; and Part B is did it make any difference?
- 10 It seemed to me the district court was just making a
- 11 straight out Strickland determination and not deferring
- 12 to anything else. It was just saying no, I've looked at
- 13 all the evidence, and yes -- they certainly were -- they
- 14 were not effective. On the other hand, there is no
- 15 prejudice because using the strict Strickland test,
- 16 there was no reasonable likelihood that a jury would
- 17 have come out differently.
- 18 MR. BRESS: Your Honor, consistent with the
- 19 Fourth Circuit, we don't read him to say that. But even
- 20 if he meant that, the Fourth Circuit certainly on --
- 21 looked at this from a reasonableness standpoint, and not
- 22 from a de novo standpoint. So even had the district
- 23 court meant a de novo review and engaged in it, we still
- 24 didn't get the correct standard or review on appeal.
- 25 JUSTICE SOUTER: Oh, that may be. I didn't

- 1 mean to imply you didn't have a Fourth Circuit question.
- 2 I -- I quess I was raising a question to whether it is
- 3 wise to make this the case to decide the Fourth Circuit
- 4 issue.
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Bress, this case
- 6 involves Section 2254(d), right? Does that appear
- 7 somewhere in the briefs? It would be nice to have it in
- 8 front of me.
- 9 MR. BRESS: Yes, Your Honor.
- 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: I mean, it's a central
- 11 thing the case is about. I cannot find it in any of the
- 12 briefs. Appendix to the petition for cert; I got -- I
- 13 got to go back to that. Don't you think it's important
- 14 enough to be in your brief?
- 15 MR. BRESS: If I may return to the Chief
- 16 Judge's -- Chief Justice's question from earlier, there
- 17 are other new claims, new facts here that are equally
- 18 important in deciding whether this is a new claim. For
- 19 example, physical child abuse first came into this case,
- 20 and really was first discovered --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I know, but they're
- 22 -- your underlying theory is that if you get a lot of
- 23 new evidence, that somehow changes the claim. And
- 24 again, I think Justice Ginsburg -- I'm having trouble
- 25 getting my arms around that, and particularly since it's

- 1 problematic in this area where there is always new
- 2 evidence.
- You're looking at someone's childhood. You
- 4 can always find a new anecdote, a new concern going
- 5 either way, that you know, this was unusual because he
- 6 was a good child, or this is excused because he had such
- 7 a bad upbringing.
- 8 MR. BRESS: Mr. Chief Justice, two responses
- 9 to this. Number one -- and you know, as I've said
- 10 before, this Court has used claim I think in similar
- 11 ways. It may have been colloquial but it at least
- 12 demonstrates that it can use it.
- I'm not saying it's the most normal, or the
- 14 ordinary course definition, but I am saying that it's
- 15 the definition that's necessary to read (d) and (e)
- 16 together in a way that makes sense; and if I can just
- 17 explain why I think that's true.
- 18 If you look at (e), (e) says that you can
- 19 get a hearing even if you weren't diligent in State
- 20 court, if the facts that you need to develop were not
- 21 reasonably available in State court and if they would
- 22 prove by clear and convincing evidence that you are
- 23 innocent.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: All right, well
- 25 just -- we've got two but just to stop you on one. The

- 1 fact that they excuse your failure to raise and present
- 2 the evidence in State court doesn't mean that when you
- 3 get the evidence you have a new claim. It just means
- 4 that they are going to let you raise a claim you could
- 5 have raised before.
- 6 MR. BRESS: Well, if what they are talking
- 7 about is -- if that includes the ability when you are in
- 8 State court -- assume, for instance, House versus Bell,
- 9 just if can take that as an example.
- 10 I'm sorry, Your Honor.
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I've gotten over it.
- 12 MR. BRESS: I don't know, but if we can --
- 13 if we can just look at the facts of that case briefly:
- 14 Assume that in State court, despite diligent a effort,
- 15 they were able to come up with some of the evidence but
- 16 not all of the evidence that they later came up with in
- terms of the blood spattering, the DNA, and such.
- 18 Their claim is denied on the -- on the
- 19 merits because they weren't able to get much of the
- 20 evidence in and denied in State courts. They couldn't
- 21 go to Federal courts where they were able to bring in
- 22 all of that evidence, and let's say even more, enough to
- 23 prove by clear and convincing evidence that they were
- 24 innocent.
- Under the warden's view, you'd still go back

- 1 to the State court opinion and decide whether it was
- 2 intrinsically reasonable. And so long as it is, you
- 3 wouldn't -- the State court gets affirmed, and none of
- 4 that new evidence of innocence comes in.
- Now, I guess it's a possible solution, but
- 6 the question is: Is that what Congress really intended
- 7 here?
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: I might say the new claim
- 9 -- okay, so it's a new claim. I don't know if yours is,
- 10 by the way, but suppose it's a new claim. Then what you
- 11 ought to do is go back to the State court and exhaust.
- 12 So now what you show is that that's futile.
- Now we get to your question before us.
- 14 Okay. So it's an imaginary case. It's less imaginary
- 15 in December than here. But, anyway, the -- the -- you
- 16 get back to the State court. Now, what is supposed to
- 17 happen?
- 18 At that point I guess the statute leaves the
- 19 judge free to develop the facts. It doesn't say you
- 20 can't. Okay. So then you do it.
- 21 Now we have the question, which when we took
- this we thought we could reach, but I don't know if we
- 23 can -- now we have the question: When the judge makes
- 24 the decision on the basis of those facts, if they have
- 25 never developed any of this in State court, fine. Then

- 1 have -- then just do it. If it is a regular case, don't
- 2 defer it.
- 3 But suppose some of the things have been in
- 4 State court related to this but not others. Now what do
- 5 we do?
- 6 MR. BRESS: Well, Your Honor --
- 7 JUSTICE BREYER: I mean that's not an
- 8 obvious answer to that one.
- 9 MR. BRESS: I -- I think that in -- in that
- 10 case, by the way, you still have to defer to the State
- 11 factfinding. I think you always have to when the State
- 12 determines particular facts.
- 13 JUSTICE BREYER: What it's going to do is
- 14 it's going to be finding facts on the basis of certain
- 15 evidence. And what you will have gotten your new claim
- 16 granted on is the fact that you found some new evidence
- 17 that's very significant, and you couldn't possibly have
- 18 found it before.
- 19 Now what do we do? Do we defer in part; do
- 20 we defer -- I mean now what does the district judge do?
- 21 MR. BRESS: Well, I think that, again, you
- 22 have to defer under (e)(1) presumably to particular fact
- 23 findings and find that by clear and convincing evidence
- 24 you've disproved those facts. But, otherwise, I don't
- 25 think you could find the application of law to fact. I

- 1 don't think you can under Holland, et cetera.
- Now, you know, just to make this a little
- 3 bit clearer, hopefully, in -- in Keeney, upon which this
- 4 Court drew in Michael Williams, the Court looked -- the
- 5 Court did -- looked at a potential distinction between
- 6 the failure properly to make a claim in State court and
- 7 the failure properly to develop the facts for that
- 8 claim.
- 9 Now, the Court looked at that distinction in
- 10 the context of seeing whether cause and prejudice, which
- 11 applied to certainly the major claim in the State court,
- 12 should apply to the failure to fully develop it. And
- 13 what it said is that distinguishing between those two
- 14 circumstances is irrational.
- 15 Now, I would submit that it's similarly
- 16 irrational to attribute to Congress the intent to
- 17 distinguish between the circumstances, or because of
- 18 these limitations you have in State court, despite your
- 19 effort, you weren't able to fully develop the record.
- 20 And the State decided the case on an
- 21 inadequate record. It comes to Federal court. Do you
- 22 simply defer? I mean do you simply stop when you say
- 23 the State court reasonably decided this case based on an
- 24 inadequate State court record, or do you allow that
- 25 record to be fully developed and decide it on its

- 1 merits?
- 2 That's, I think, the issue that we are
- 3 presenting today. I'd like to reserve --
- 4 JUSTICE SOUTER: May I just ask one quick
- 5 question? The -- the answer, I take it, on -- based on
- 6 what you just said, the answer to the -- the need-
- 7 to-exhaust point is you don't have to exhaust because
- 8 you already tried to exhaust in the State court, and
- 9 they didn't give you enough time to get your evidence
- 10 in. That is --
- 11 MR. BRESS: That's precisely it, Your Honor.
- 12 Thank you.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 14 Mr. Bress.
- Ms. Burnett.
- 16 ORAL ARGUMENT OF KATHERINE BURNETT
- 17 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
- MS. BURNETT: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
- 19 please the Court:
- The claim in Bell's case is the textbook
- 21 example of a claim that the effective death penalty
- 22 intended for 2254(d) to apply to. In the Virginia
- 23 Supreme Court, Bell presented his claim with his
- 24 allegations of what he says counsel didn't present and
- 25 didn't find at trial. And the Virginia Supreme Court

- 1 assumed the truth of all of those allegations and did
- 2 not contest any of them. There were never any facts in
- 3 dispute. The State never contested any facts.
- The State court assumed them all true, and
- 5 then applied -- faithfully applied this Court's
- 6 established precedent under Strickland and Wiggins, in
- 7 particular, and weighed that evidence that he had
- 8 claimed had not been found by his counsel against the
- 9 aggravating evidence in this case of a drug dealer who
- 10 killed premeditatedly a police officer in a small town
- 11 and upon weighing that found as a -- as a matter -- as a
- 12 de novo matter on the merits that he could not show
- 13 prejudice. Because there was no reasonable probability
- 14 that a jury would have found a life sentence giving --
- 15 assuming the truth of everything he alleged.
- Now, when he went to Federal court, the
- 17 Fourth Circuit faithfully applied 2254(d) to that after
- 18 addressing all of the same evidence and also agreeing
- 19 that there was no prejudice, and then said that the
- 20 State court decision was not unreasonable under 2254(d).
- 21 Now, Bell comes to this Court and says for
- 22 the first time that I have a new claim, and that was not
- 23 made below, and this is not a new claim. Everything
- 24 that he presented in Federal court was presented to the
- 25 State court. There is absolutely no difference. In

- 1 fact, to the effect that there was some difference in
- 2 the district court and the State alleged -- we pleaded
- 3 default because he presented a few new affidavits.
- 4 The district court resolved that and said:
- 5 I'm not even going to look at those because they aren't
- 6 critical to my decision. I am only going to look at --
- 7 and he described in particular the exact same record
- 8 that the Virginia Supreme Court had found. And then the
- 9 district court --
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, what about the
- 11 point that Mr. Bress made that there wasn't enough time
- 12 in the Virginia Supreme Court on habeas to develop
- 13 everything that was later put before the district court;
- 14 that there was a very short time to get the petition in,
- 15 and there were many issues other than ineffective
- 16 assistance of counsel?
- MS. BURNETT: Well, Justice Ginsburg, there
- 18 were approximately 12 issues in this case that the
- 19 district court disposed of in a very lengthy opinion.
- 20 It was only this one issue that the district court found
- 21 -- believed that he needed to have a hearing on, we
- 22 believe erroneously. But, nevertheless, he had the
- 23 hearing and -- and listened to all the same evidence.
- Nothing, Justice Ginsburg -- in our opinion
- 25 nothing prevented Bell from presenting the allegations

- 1 that were presented to the Federal court and all the
- 2 allegations that he presented to the State court. There
- 3 was no State court procedure or denial of anything.
- 4 JUSTICE SOUTER: Did he make any request
- 5 from the State court for more time?
- 6 MS. BURNETT: Your Honor, I don't -- I don't
- 7 --
- 8 JUSTICE SOUTER: Your brother is nodding
- 9 yes.
- 10 MS. BURNETT: He may very well have, but the
- 11 point is that there was nothing that he presented to the
- 12 Federal court that he didn't also present to the State
- 13 court. So he was not prevented from -- that -- that's a
- 14 red herring in this case.
- Now, he had some very strong arguments that
- 16 he made in both the State court and in the district
- 17 court on other claims; not on this claim but on other
- 18 claims, that he believed that he should have been able
- 19 to develop certain evidence. And the district court
- 20 actually on those other claims -- some of them, it found
- 21 faulted and some not. But not on this claim. On this
- 22 claim --
- JUSTICE SOUTER: If we had -- if we had --
- 24 and I -- I emphasize I'm -- I'm not suggesting this is
- 25 your case. But if we had a case in which with respect

- 1 to the disputed issue he had asked for more time -- I'll
- 2 make it easy. He had asked for more time and -- and had
- 3 -- had indicated that there were leads that needed to be
- 4 followed that couldn't be followed unless he got more
- 5 time and so on, and the State court refused. Could he
- 6 then come into the Federal court and say: My claim here
- 7 is not only ineffective assistance, but ineffective
- 8 assistance with the overlay of the refusal of the State
- 9 courts to give me an adequate opportunity to develop my
- 10 -- my ineffective assistance claim? And if he made a
- 11 colorable showing on those two issues, would he then
- 12 have an opportunity for a Federal evidentiary issue, and
- 13 would the findings that eventuated from that be subject
- 14 to -- in effect, to -- to being short- circuited by
- 15 deference to the State court findings?
- 16 MS. BURNETT: I think my answer to that has
- 17 to be that it depends because the statute before the
- 18 effective Death Penalty Act in 1996 had clearly had what
- 19 we would call the Chandler v. Dane factors in which
- 20 would you look at the adequacy of a State court process.
- 21 Those were removed after 1996, so the statute does not
- 22 provide authority for a Federal court to go in and
- 23 determine was the process adequate if the decision,
- 24 itself, was reasonable. Now if we are talking -- this
- 25 is why this case --

1 JUSTICE SOUTER: But if you don't -- I guess 2 what I'm getting at is if we don't in that circumstance recognize that there is a legitimately different claim 3 4 which is not, for the reason I suggested to Mr. Bress, 5 not subject to further exhaustion requirements because they tried and the State court wouldn't let them do 6 7 it -- if we don't in that case recognize that there is a 8 claim that can be litigated in the Federal court, which will not be subject to deference to State court 9 10 findings, then there is a very clear hole in the law, 11 and I assume Congress didn't mean to leave it. I 12 understand you're saying that is not this case. But 13 isn't that a legitimate problem to-- to face at some 14 point. 15 MS. BURNETT: Justice Souter, we don't 16 believe so and here's why: Because it is true, Congress 17 did not change the procedural default doctrine. 18 Effective Death Penalty Act Congress left that alone. 19 In fact, this Court recognized that in House v. Bell. So when we are talking about new facts or new claims, 20 21 either one, you're talking about unexhausted or defaulted matters, which the district courts are very 22 familiar how to handle that. Has he shown cause and 23 24 prejudice? Has he shown diligence? 25 JUSTICE SOUTER: I think you're right in the

- 1 main. I think that's generally correct. The case that
- 2 I'm concerned with is the case of the -- of the Brady
- 3 claim, because if we are proceeding under (e) then as I
- 4 understand the cause and prejudice can only be
- 5 established in the case we are talking about if there
- 6 can be shown a probability of a different verdict.
- 7 The Brady standard, however, does not
- 8 require the probability of a different verdict. Brady
- 9 uses the term "reasonable probability that there would
- 10 have been a different result, "but that has been clearly
- 11 defined in the cases to mean reasonable possibility. So
- 12 that in fact with respect to Brady claims subsection (e)
- 13 is imposing a higher requirement than Brady did and a
- 14 higher requirement than would have been applied before
- 15 Brady. And that is the case, it seems to me, that we --
- 16 it may not be this case, but that's the case that we've
- 17 got to be concerned about in coming up with doctrine
- 18 here. Isn't that a legitimate concern?
- 19 MS. BURNETT: Justice Souter -- and I agree
- 20 that's not this case. But this Court's already crossed
- 21 that bridge. That was Michael Williams. Michael
- 22 Williams was where the individual comes to Federal court
- 23 with brand new evidence and he has no remedy left in
- 24 State court. It is defaulted, and what do we do with
- 25 that? And this Court very clearly -- now, as the issue

- 1 was presented to this Court in that case it was whether
- 2 he gets a hearing or not, so that's what was addressed.
- 3 But this Court also addressed the fact that it most
- 4 likely was and was a defaulted claim and that it --
- 5 JUSTICE SOUTER: But I don't, I don't think
- 6 this Court understood the implication of it when you get
- 7 into the Brady issue. And my only concern is we've got
- 8 to leave that door open because I don't think Williams
- 9 confronted that.
- 10 MS. BURNETT: And I -- I agree with Your
- 11 Honor that it's not this case. I think Michael Williams
- 12 addresses it and I think that the current existing in
- 13 place cause and prejudice and actual innocence
- 14 exceptions to default answer all of that. And I believe
- 15 that --
- 16 JUSTICE SOUTER: I understand your position.
- JUSTICE BREYER: I'm still trying to
- 18 understand the statute. I think their point is we get
- 19 around (d), (d) doesn't bar us because the district
- 20 court here, the Federal district court, found that it
- 21 was an unreasonable determination of the facts, not
- 22 unreasonable on the substance, but unreasonable because
- 23 of the procedure. In other words, the State that barred
- 24 this evidence was having an unreasonable procedure and
- 25 therefore the determination of the facts is

- 1 unreasonable. So you're saying that isn't what those
- 2 words "unreasonable determination of the facts" mean.
- MS. BURNETT: Well, what I'm saying --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: You mean you're saying that
- 5 (d)(2), "unreasonable determination of the facts," means
- 6 the factual outcome. In other words, if the factual
- 7 outcome is reasonable it doesn't matter if the
- 8 procedures are inadequate; is that your claim.
- 9 MS. BURNETT: Well, no. I believe that --
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: No? I thought you just
- 11 said that in answer to Justice Souter.
- 12 MS. BURNETT: I believe that (d)(2) very
- 13 clearly -- yes, I think I'm agreeing with you that
- 14 (d)(2) addresses the actual facts which underlay the
- 15 State court decision.
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: And not whether their
- 17 procedures are correct?
- MS. BURNETT: Correct.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay.
- MS. BURNETT: Correct.
- 21 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. So that's the first
- 22 thing we have to decide to get to the question. If your
- 23 wrong on that -- and I doesn't know the answer to it --
- 24 if you're wrong on that, then they're rid of (d). So
- 25 they say then, we're rid of (e) because it falls within

- 1 (a)(2), the factual predicate and due diligence, okay.
- 2 They say we are rid of (e) because of that. Now, how
- 3 they get around capital (B) I'm not sure, but that isn't
- 4 in the case.
- 5 MS. BURNETT: Justice Breyer, I'm not sure
- 6 they they've argued those exceptions (a)(2) at (i) and
- 7 (ii). I believe they're simply arguing --
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: They're arguing due
- 9 diligence.
- 10 MS. BURNETT: My reading of their brief is
- 11 they are saying: We are Michael Williams and all
- 12 Michael Williams dealt with was the opening sentence of
- 13 (e)(2).
- JUSTICE BREYER: (I). You mean of (e)(2) --
- MS. BURNETT: Of (e)(2).
- JUSTICE BREYER: (E)(2).
- MS. BURNETT: "If the applicant has failed
- 18 to develop, " and Michael Williams interpreted that as
- 19 someone who has not been diligent in developing the
- 20 record.
- 21 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. So we also get --
- 22 they get around that because they say the due diligence.
- 23 You also have an argument about how (2) applies. And if
- 24 you're wrong about both of those then we get to the
- 25 question, which would be: If the -- if the hearing's

- 1 properly before us and it's a new claim -- it's also
- 2 saying it's a new claim -- if it's a new claim it has to
- 3 be exhausted. So under Virginia law, under Virginia
- 4 law, is it really true that -- suppose, not this case,
- 5 but suppose a Defendant 140 days after discovers the DA
- 6 says, makes some remark. He couldn't have known about
- 7 it. He goes to a special file. He couldn't have found
- 8 out about. And lo and behold, it's the worst thing you
- 9 can imagine, and you can imagine some pretty bad ones
- 10 but this is even worse. Now under Virginia law are
- 11 you -- is it your view that Virginia courts would say
- 12 you're out of luck, good-bye?
- MS. BURNETT: Yes, Your Honor, and this
- 14 Court has recognized that --
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: No matter what, it's
- 16 goodbye?
- MS. BURNETT: Yes, and here's why: Because
- 18 Virginia has twin statutes that would bar any further
- 19 applications to State court. One is the statute of
- 20 limitations that is strictly applied and the other is a
- 21 statute which says in essence --
- 22 JUSTICE BREYER: No excuse? Even if --
- MS. BURNETT: That's correct.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay.
- MS. BURNETT: And this Court has --

- 1 JUSTICE BREYER: So they are right about,
- 2 they are right about the exhaustion being futile.
- MS. BURNETT: It is defaulted, yes, Your
- 4 Honor. In Virginia those are defaulted claims, and now
- 5 we are in Federal court with those claims. The Federal
- 6 court judges are very familiar with how to do with them.
- 7 Has he shown cause and prejudice?
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: The first time he discovers
- 9 DNA evidence in the DA's file that shows he couldn't
- 10 have done it, there is no way to get relief under
- 11 Virginia law?
- MS. BURNETT: Not in State court.
- 13 JUSTICE BREYER: Not in State court.
- MS. BURNETT: No, Your Honor.
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay, then they're right
- 16 about that.
- 17 MS. BURNETT: That's correct. So now he is
- 18 in Federal court and he has -- he has the thresholds of
- 19 cause and prejudice or actual innocence. And that's a
- 20 very familiar thing, is what I'm saying, is that the
- 21 district courts are familiar with.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay, then let me ask you
- 23 on the merits. If he's right there and it's exhaustion
- 24 and it really was a new claim, then wouldn't we apply a
- 25 decision that does not defer to the State court, because

- 1 after all the State court never heard this issue?
- 2 MS. BURNETT: That's not this case. But in
- 3 a hypothetical case where there are new facts,
- 4 unexhausted defaulted claims or facts that are presented
- 5 to a Federal court --
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. There is no real
- 7 argument between the two of you as to the -- as to the
- 8 issue that we thought was presented.
- 9 MS. BURNETT: Well, I think not.
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: But there's certainly an
- 11 argument --
- MS. BURNETT: The argument is --
- JUSTICE BREYER: If it's really a new claim,
- 14 you're going to say they applied --
- MS. BURNETT: Well, our argument is that,
- 16 Court, don't use this case to say that, because if the
- 17 Court uses this case to say that it will be putting its
- 18 imprimatur on what the district court did in holding a
- 19 hearing when we don't think it was appropriate.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The Fourth Circuit
- 21 -- I'm sorry to interrupt you, but the Fourth Circuit
- 22 didn't decide that question either.
- MS. BURNETT: They did not. It was not
- 24 presented to them, Your Honor.
- Nothing --

- 1 JUSTICE SCALIA: How do you want us to
- 2 dispose of the case that doesn't, that doesn't do that?
- 3 What do you want us to do?
- 4 MS. BURNETT: I think the Court could
- 5 dismiss this as improvidently granted.
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's it?
- 7 MS. BURNETT: I think the Court could do
- 8 that.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: May I ask you, so I
- 10 understand your position on the underlying question if
- 11 we don't dismiss. Am I correct that the granting of an
- 12 evidentiary hearing was based on a showing by the
- 13 Petitioner that he failed to develop facts which might
- 14 change the result?
- 15 MS. BURNETT: Justice Stevens, there was
- 16 never any showing, there was never any showing of
- 17 diligence.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: Why did the -- why did the
- 19 Federal court grant a hearing?
- 20 MS. BURNETT: The Federal court simply
- 21 announced that he was going to hold a hearing on this
- 22 claim and decide later --
- JUSTICE STEVENS: Wasn't he only entitled to
- 24 do that on the basis of a showing that there was more
- 25 evidence that the State court did not consider?

- 1 MS. BURNETT: Yes, Your Honor. I believe
- 2 first he had --
- JUSTICE STEVENS: So maybe the district
- 4 court was dead wrong, but the assumption I think we made
- 5 when we took the case was that there was a body of
- 6 evidence that had not been available in the State
- 7 proceeding that might be available in the Federal
- 8 proceeding.
- 9 MS. BURNETT: I think that was the
- 10 misunderstanding.
- 11 JUSTICE STEVENS: And if that were true -- I
- 12 know you disagree with that and I understand your
- 13 argument. Maybe we shouldn't have taken the case. But
- 14 if that were true and the Federal court then had to
- 15 decide on the basis of all the evidence, do you read the
- 16 statute to say at that time he may only rely on the
- 17 evidence presented to the State court?
- 18 MS. BURNETT: The way I read the statute is
- 19 that that is the first thing that the judge was required
- 20 to do. He had to first determine whether the State
- 21 court's decision was reasonable.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: All right. Suppose he
- 23 looked at the State court evidence and he says, that was
- 24 not enough. The State court's decision on the merits
- 25 was reasonable based on that record. I have a different

- 1 record before me. May he look at the different record?
- 2 MS. BURNETT: He can -- I think -- I think
- 3 then we are talking about what I was just saying, new
- 4 facts, new claims.
- 5 JUSTICE STEVENS: That's what we're talking
- 6 about. May he look at it?
- 7 MS. BURNETT: And then the judge has to go
- 8 through the determination, before he can decide whether
- 9 he can look at it, of whether these new facts or new
- 10 claims meet cause and prejudice or actual innocence.
- 11 JUSTICE STEVENS: All right. Forget the
- 12 cause and prejudice for just a moment. But if he looks
- 13 at that new evidence and he decides that any neutral
- 14 judge would have reached a different result from the
- 15 State judge on that evidence, may he reach that result?
- 16 MS. BURNETT: I don't think just -- I do not
- 17 believe the judge can do that --
- 18 JUSTICE STEVENS: Then what's the point --
- 19 MS. BURNETT: -- just simply to say I'm
- 20 going to look at just the correctness of the decision
- 21 first, and then decide whether it's correct.
- 22 JUSTICE STEVENS: What you're saying is the
- 23 correctness of decision based on the State court record.
- 24 And if he decides there was a sound decision on that
- 25 record, that's the end of the ball game; is that your

- 1 position?
- MS. BURNETT: Well, I think it is, unless --
- 3 unless there are actually new matters that are presented
- 4 to the Federal court that the Federal court now is going
- 5 to --
- 6 JUSTICE STEVENS: It's the same claim. It's
- 7 the same claim.
- 8 MS. BURNETT: Yes. Even on the same claim.
- 9 JUSTICE STEVENS: Then it seems to me the
- 10 statute has constructed a pointless procedure.
- 11 MS. BURNETT: Your Honor, I -- I don't see
- 12 that at all. It seems to me it's a very orderly
- 13 progression, that the -- that the -- the Effective Death
- 14 Penalty Act is now telling district court judges, and
- 15 has made clear that it's doing this for judicial -- for
- 16 purposes of judicial economy, for finality, for --
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: Why shouldn't the district
- 18 judge in light of the new evidence decide whether the
- 19 judgment of the State court was -- would have been
- 20 reasonable if it came out the same way, including this
- 21 new evidence in the -- in the consideration? Why
- 22 shouldn't he do it that way.
- MS. BURNETT: It could do that, Justice
- 24 Scalia.
- 25 JUSTICE SCALIA: I know it could. But I'm

- 1 asking whether it should.
- 2 MS. BURNETT: I think -- I think that
- 3 doesn't really fit with the statute -- with the
- 4 statutory language.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, it seems to me the
- 6 statute certainly contemplates that the States have the
- 7 first --
- 8 MS. BURNETT: Yes.
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: -- the first cut at this
- 10 thing, right? How else do you give them the first cut?
- 11 MS. BURNETT: Yes. Absolutely. And that's
- 12 what I'm saying, and I think that -- to -- if the claim
- is going to in any way differ, it's going to change from
- 14 what was presented to the State court. On one level,
- 15 that is all new matters that are defaulted, and in a
- 16 very literal sense how can -- and I don't believe
- 17 Congress intended for Federal courts to look at new
- 18 matters, however they got to them, that were not
- 19 presented to the State court, and on that basis
- 20 determine whether the State court's decision was
- 21 reached.
- 22 JUSTICE SCALIA: So the Federal court is
- 23 supposed to do what?
- MS. BURNETT: The Federal court is supposed
- 25 to first look at the claim that was presented to the

- 1 State court, under 2254(d), and the claimants before it.
- 2 If it's the same claim, if it's the same matters that
- 3 were adjudicated on the merits in the State court, it
- 4 has to make the decision up front, was it reasonable or
- 5 not?
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: Okay.
- 7 MS. BURNETT: Okay. Now it makes that
- 8 decision, and then after that, if the Petitioner says
- 9 well, I have new matters, that I never presented to the
- 10 State court, the Federal court has a -- a road map.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Now -- but the road map
- 12 that you are now saying could be followed is the same
- 13 road map implied by -- in your earlier answer to Justice
- 14 Scalia, your reference to the new claim as being a
- 15 defaulted claim.
- MS. BURNETT: Yes.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: But we are concerned -- I
- 18 think we are all concerned with the -- with the claim in
- 19 which it is not defaulted, in the sense that he is at
- 20 fault in any way for failing to get it into the Federal
- 21 court -- I'm sorry -- get his entire presentation now
- 22 into the State court then. So that it is not a
- 23 defaulted claim in the classic sense. It is not a claim
- 24 in which he is at fault by having failed to present it
- 25 in the State court.

- 1 And in that case, if it cannot go back, if
- 2 the State court will not take it back, don't we have to
- 3 find at least implicit in the totality of subsections
- 4 (d) and (e) the possibility of litigating the -- the
- 5 fully developed claim in the Federal court without a
- 6 need to defer to the State court findings?
- 7 MS. BURNETT: If implicit in your question
- 8 is -- yes, implicit in your question is that the
- 9 Petitioner has demonstrated cause; and he may or may not
- 10 have depending on the facts.
- 11 JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, he -- I agree with
- 12 you on the -- on the cause part; but the -- up to this
- 13 point. He has got to demonstrate cause and prejudice or
- 14 at least he has got to develop cause. Let me put it --
- 15 ask you this question. If he simply says look, I tried
- 16 to get this in to the State court, and he shows that,
- 17 but the State court for whatever reason just would not
- 18 take the evidence that he wanted to put in, is that
- 19 enough for him to have --
- 20 MS. BURNETT: It may be. It may be. And
- 21 once again, that's certainly not this case.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: I'm -- I'm not asking to
- 23 you stipulate --
- MS. BURNETT: Right.
- 25 JUSTICE SOUTER: -- that it's this case.

- 1 But it's the case we are worried about around the
- 2 corner.
- 3 MS. BURNETT: It may be.
- 4 JUSTICE SOUTER: If that is -- this Court --
- 5 that's why I'm saying it's a very established law as to
- 6 what cause is, and external impediments. I mean, this
- 7 Court has many cases that describe that. The lower
- 8 courts are very familiar with determining that, and so
- 9 they can -- they are capable to making that
- 10 determination as to whether the Federal court can now
- 11 look at a new matter whether it's a new claim or --
- 12 JUSTICE SOUTER: But all we are -- I think
- 13 all we are really getting at is that there are different
- 14 kinds of new matters. There are some new matters of
- 15 which he absolutely knew nothing at the State court
- 16 stage, and he is now saying don't hold that against me:
- 17 i.e., I'm showing cause and I'll show prejudice. This
- 18 is new matter that he did or potentially know about and
- 19 tried to get into, and under our hypothesis, the State
- 20 court says no, I'm not going to hear it, or I won't give
- 21 you the time, whatever the case may be.
- 22 In that case, isn't it -- don't we have to
- 23 say under the statute all he has got to show is cause in
- 24 the sense that he tried and the State court wouldn't let
- 25 him? In order to --

- 1 MS. BURNETT: And that may -- and that may
- 2 very well constitute an external impediment --
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay.
- 4 MS. BURNETT: -- to him being able to
- 5 present it.
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: Having established cause,
- 7 he would then in your view not have the Federal court
- 8 decide the matter de novo. But the only question before
- 9 the Federal court was whether there was in addition
- 10 prejudice.
- MS. BURNETT: Correct.
- 12 JUSTICE SCALIA: That is to say, whether --
- 13 but for the error, any reasonable factfinder would find
- 14 by clear and convincing evidence that he was innocent --
- MS. BURNETT: Correct.
- 16 JUSTICE SCALIA: -- right?
- 17 MS. BURNETT: Correct. And --
- 18 JUSTICE KENNEDY: In that instance is there
- 19 room for the district court to hold an evidentiary
- 20 hearing?
- 21 MS. BURNETT: Well, I think then you get --
- 22 that's -- I think it's actually a separate matter. We
- 23 first have to get to whether the Federal court can look
- 24 at a new matter de novo. If it can look at it de novo
- 25 then I think we go to the pre-Effective Death Penalty

- 1 Act law about when you have a hearing. Are there
- 2 disputed facts? Are they -- that make a difference?
- 3 Is it something that actually, you know, needs to have
- 4 resolution in a hearing?
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Can you envisage
- 6 circumstances in which an ineffective counsel
- 7 assistance, an ineffective assistance of counsel claim
- 8 was presented in the State court and then there is a
- 9 second ineffective assistance in counsel's claims or a
- 10 further supplemental ineffective assistance of counsel
- 11 claim based on new evidence that the district court
- 12 might hear? Does that ever happen?
- MS. BURNETT: I think it can happen,
- 14 certainly. I don't think it's restricted just to Brady.
- 15 I mean, I think that it -- it is -- it is the same
- 16 analysis, no matter what the claim is, it's the same
- 17 analysis that the Federal court needs to go through to
- 18 look -- to see whether it can consider new matter.
- 19 JUSTICE KENNEDY: So you think there could
- 20 be instances, we might imagine, in which there could be
- 21 two ineffective assistance of counsel claims, the second
- of which could be heard in the district court with
- 23 evidentiary -- with an evidentiary hearing?
- 24 MS. BURNETT: I think it's certainly
- 25 possible. I think that the statutory setup and this

- 1 Court's established habeas procedures that it had in
- 2 place for decades permits that.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: I guess the State court can
- 4 say, you know, 60 days after the trial is -- is
- 5 doomsday. No more new evidence. We are not going to
- 6 consider anything new after that, even if you find Brady
- 7 stuff or anything else. Suppose that's
- 8 unconstitutional -- but it isn't. I mean, is that
- 9 unconstitutional?
- 10 MS. BURNETT: Well, no, Your Honor, I don't
- 11 believe it is. In fact, the State court -- we don't
- 12 have to provide for direct appeals.
- 13 JUSTICE SCALIA: Right. So if it's not
- 14 unconstitutional, then you just provide what you say,
- 15 that the district court sees whether by clear and
- 16 convincing evidence the case would have come out the
- 17 other way.
- 18 If it were unconstitutional, and I guess
- 19 this is what is sticking in our craw -- my craw,
- 20 anyway -- if it were unconstitutional, it seems to me
- 21 there ought to be a way to make the State take the first
- 22 cut at it. Make the State say oh, yes, even with this
- 23 new evidence we would still find this person guilty; and
- 24 then in Federal habeas you would -- you would apply the
- 25 deference that 2254(d) requires. You'd ask whether that

- 1 was a reasonable determination.
- MS. BURNETT: Right. And all I can say to
- 3 that, Justice Scalia, is this Court has never held that
- 4 the Constitution applies anywhere after the direct
- 5 appeal, and that's only the right to cancel.
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's the fallacy in my --
- 7 in my reasoning. Or you're saying I shouldn't be
- 8 troubled by what has been troubling me, namely that he
- 9 had no way to get this before the State court. They are
- 10 entitled to close -- close the gates?
- 11 MS. BURNETT: Yes, Your Honor. And as a
- 12 collateral review; that's where they are closing the
- 13 gate, not on direct review.
- If there are no further questions, I simply
- 15 ask to affirm.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- MR. BRESS: I'd like to start where --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You have three
- 19 minute remaining.
- 20 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF RICHARD P. BRESS
- ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- MR. BRESS: I'd like to start where --
- 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You have three
- 24 minutes remaining.
- 25 MR. BRESS: I'd like to start where the

- 1 General left off. In McNeal and Claudy, this Court did
- 2 hold that, in certain instances, a State habeas court
- 3 must hold a hearing if there are facts in dispute and
- 4 they are not willing to assume them. I agree that a
- 5 State doesn't have to have a proceeding at all, but if
- 6 it has one, it has to be fair.
- 7 I know that my time is short. I'd like to
- 8 go through some of the questions you've asked.
- 9 The State did deny us additional time,
- 10 expert assistance discovery, and a hearing in this case.
- 11 The Federal court specifically found that we were
- 12 diligent. That's at 84a. And in Michael Williams, this
- 13 court said that the finding of diligence also
- 14 constituted a finding of cause for purposes of cause and
- 15 prejudice, which makes sense because you've got a
- 16 prisoner who has done the most they can and yet hasn't
- 17 been able to fully develop the record. There was no
- 18 external impediment. As you'll recall, in Michael
- 19 Williams, the information was there; it was just very
- 20 hard to find.
- 21 Finally, we presented very substantial new
- 22 evidence on the Federal level here. It's simply not
- 23 true that there is no new evidence. The new evidence
- 24 included evidence undermining the sole aggravating
- 25 factor, both the live testimony of Joanne Nicholson,

- 1 which allowed the court actually to determine whether
- 2 she would have been a credible person to undermine the
- 3 testimony. The State had held on the papers she wasn't
- 4 credible, which the State can't do on the papers.
- 5 Secondly, the evidence said he was
- 6 physically abused as a child. He was beaten with
- 7 electrical cords, with planks, with a belt, leaving the
- 8 scars on his body that he bears today. He saw his
- 9 father knock his mother's teeth out for trying to
- 10 protect him.
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: What is the test for
- 12 determining whether the addition of new evidence is
- 13 sufficient to make it a new claim?
- 14 MR. BRESS: Your Honor, I think the test
- 15 really ought to be whether an objectively reasonable
- 16 jurist could find it important in the overall mix of
- 17 information. And it just strikes me that, if you're the
- 18 judge in that kind of a case, what you're going to go
- 19 through is -- if I accept that the State court was right
- 20 with the evidence that it had and I sort of put myself
- 21 in that frame, would I, nonetheless, if I were that
- 22 State court, have found this evidence important when I'm
- 23 making this decision?
- JUSTICE SOUTER: It's a materiality
- 25 standard, really.

1 MR. BRESS: Exactly, Your Honor. 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So, it's a new claim 3 if it is one on which you would have prevailed, but it's 4 the same claim if the result would be the same. 5 MR. BRESS: I don't -- I don't think it necessarily has to be that way, Your Honor. I think you 6 7 can have a case where the evidence that was before them 8 was absolutely nil; now they're offering a good bit of evidence that you would at least want to weigh as an 9 10 objective jurist, even though you decide against them. 11 I think that's possible. 12 I think the reason you've got to adopt this 13 position, however, is that there is no DNA -- I mean, no 14 innocence exception that the General has put forward. If the General is right, it isn't a new claim just 15 16 because you now have DNA evidence that proves you're 17 innocent. You made that claim of innocence earlier in 18 the proceeding, in your earlier ineffective assistance 19 of counsel claim. What you have new now is you've got 20 the DNA evidence. In her view, it's the same claim. 21 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, you know, it does 22 read -- 2254(e) -- it does read, "a factual predicate 23 that could not have been previously discovered through 24 the exercise of due diligence." That sounds like 25 exactly what you're describing, the discovery of DNA

- 1 evidence you didn't know about.
- 2 MR. BRESS: And I agree completely, Your
- 3 Honor, that (e) says you can hear it, but the Attorney
- 4 General says you can't because under (d), she'd say,
- 5 you'd already be foreclose because the State court has
- 6 already adjudicated your claim on the merits --
- 7 JUSTICE GINSBURG: I think she said --
- 8 MR. BRESS: -- and these new facts don't
- 9 count.
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- she answered -- the
- 11 answer that I wrote is the same thing that you could
- 12 have on the Brady claim you could also have for
- ineffective assistance of counsel. It's a wholly new
- 14 matter. I thought that's what she said.
- 15 MR. BRESS: Your Honor, I think she said
- 16 that what you would have to look for, I think, is
- 17 whether "wholly new matter" means "new evidence." If
- 18 she says it's new evidence, such as new DNA evidence, we
- 19 agree completely. That's not what she said previously
- 20 in this case. Previously, she had said that new
- 21 evidence in that sense, like DNA evidence, can't make
- 22 that claim a new claim and, therefore, you're foreclosed
- 23 under 2254(d), so long as the State court's opinion is
- 24 intrinsically reasonable based on its inadequate record.
- 25 JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Bress, I want to

1	apologize to you for accusing you of not printing
2	2254(d) and (e) in your brief. You indeed did.
3	MR. BRESS: Well, thank you, Your Honor. I
4	thought
5	JUSTICE SCALIA: I'm grateful for your not
6	throwing it in my teeth.
7	(Laughter.)
8	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
9	The case is submitted.
10	(Whereupon, at 12:12 p.m., the case in the
11	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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17	
18	
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20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

<b>A</b>	adopted 10:6,7	anyway 24:15	asking 44:1	<b>bar</b> 34:19 37:18
	advanced 9:10	50:20	46:22	barred 34:23
ability 23:7	9:19,21	apologize 56:1	aspect 9:20	bars 13:17
able 6:23 9:25	adversary 9:15	appeal 20:24	assault 7:12,17	based 3:22 19:1
10:11,12,15	adversary 5.15 advocated 10:6	51:5	assistance 3:21	26:23 27:5
12:2 23:15,19	affidavit 7:19,19	appeals 50:12	4:1 9:17 10:18	40:12 41:25
23:21 26:19	affidavits 5:7	appear 21:6	10:25 11:20	42:23 49:11
30:18 48:4	29:3	APPEARAN	12:10 29:16	55:24
52:17	<b>affirm</b> 51:15	1:14	31:7,8,10 49:7	basic 12:9,9
above-entitled	affirmed 24:3	<b>Appendix</b> 21:12	49:7,9,10,21	basis 9:21 13:13
1:11 56:11	aggravating 7:8	applicant 36:17	52:10 54:18	14:3 16:1,7
absolutely 16:13	28:9 52:24	application	55:13	24:24 25:14
28:25 44:11		18:14 19:18	assistance-of	40:24 41:15
47:15 54:8	aggravation 7:7	25:25	5:7	44:19
<b>abuse</b> 21:19	<b>agree</b> 18:2,4,8			
abused 53:6	33:19 34:10 46:11 52:4	applications 37:19	Assistant 1:17	bat 15:4
<b>abusive</b> 8:22,25			<b>assume</b> 13:6	bears 53:8
accept 8:10 9:3	55:2,19	<b>applied</b> 26:11	23:8,14 32:11	beaten 53:6
53:19	<b>agreeing</b> 28:18	28:5,5,17	52:4	<b>behalf</b> 1:15,18
account 6:5	35:13	33:14 37:20	assumed 20:3	2:4,6,9 3:7
accusing 56:1	ahead 14:15	39:14	28:1,4	27:17 51:21
acknowledge	albeit 17:25	applies 36:23	assumes 17:7	behold 37:8
19:11	<b>Alito</b> 4:4 5:14	51:4	assuming 16:11	believe 3:16
act 7:11 31:18	9:8,14 10:4	apply 26:12	28:15	29:22 32:16
32:18 43:14	53:11	27:22 38:24	assumption 41:4	34:14 35:9,12
49:1	allegations	50:24	attempting	36:7 41:1
actual 34:13	27:24 28:1	appreciate 11:9	10:13	42:17 44:16
35:14 38:19	29:25 30:2	12:11	attention 6:8,10	50:11
42:10	alleged 7:12	appropriate	attorney 1:17	believed 9:7
addition 48:9	8:11,12 28:15	39:19	15:14 55:3	29:21 30:18
53:12	29:2	approximately	attorneys 6:19	<b>Bell</b> 1:3 3:4 8:22
additional 9:25	<b>allow</b> 14:21	29:18	attribute 26:16	11:19 13:1
12:8 18:10	26:24	area 22:1	authority 31:22	23:8 27:23
52:9	allowed 15:1	argued 15:9	available 22:21	28:21 29:25
address 14:7	53:1	18:12 36:6	41:6,7	32:19
addressed 16:8	allows 11:21,23	<b>arguing</b> 36:7,8	<b>a.m</b> 1:13 3:2	Bell's 27:20
34:2,3	amicus 6:20	argument 1:12		<b>belt</b> 53:7
addresses 34:12	analysis 49:16	2:2,7 3:3,6 9:8	B	<b>Billy</b> 7:11,17,19
35:14	49:17	13:10 17:7	<b>B</b> 20:9 36:3	<b>bit</b> 26:3 54:8
addressing	anecdote 22:4	27:16 36:23	<b>back</b> 13:16	<b>blood</b> 23:17
28:18	announced	39:7,11,12,15	17:15 21:13	<b>body</b> 41:5 53:8
adequacy 31:20	40:21	41:13 51:20	23:25 24:11,16	<b>Bonnie</b> 4:2,3
adequate 13:24	answer 10:3	arguments	46:1,2	<b>Brady</b> 5:10 10:8
31:9,23	25:8 27:5,6	30:15	<b>bad</b> 7:10 22:7	12:16 15:15
adjudicated	31:16 34:14	arms 21:25	37:9	16:2 33:2,7,8
7:10 9:11,18	35:11,23 45:13	asked 5:12,13	<b>ball</b> 42:25	33:12,13,15
45:3 55:6	55:11	5:15 31:1,2	<b>Banks</b> 12:15	34:7 49:14
adopt 54:12	answered 55:10	52:8	15:22	50:6 55:12
auopi 34.12				00.000.12
	•	•	'	•

	1	1	Ī	Ī
<b>brand</b> 33:23	27:15,16,18	46:21,25 47:1	21:1,3 28:17	33:12 38:4,5
<b>Bress</b> 1:15 2:3,8	29:17 30:6,10	47:21,22 50:16	39:20,21	39:4 42:4,10
3:5,6,8 4:4,13	31:16 32:15	52:10 53:18	circuited 31:14	49:9,21
4:20,25 5:16	33:19 34:10	54:7 55:20	Circuits 10:5	classic 45:23
6:11,15,18 7:2	35:3,9,12,18	56:9,10	circumstance	Claudy 52:1
8:5,14,17 9:13	35:20 36:5,10	cases 9:16 12:7	32:2	clear 22:22
10:3,21 11:4,8	36:15,17 37:13	33:11 47:7	circumstances	23:23 25:23
12:11,23 14:6	37:17,23,25	categories 7:3	26:14,17 49:6	32:10 43:15
14:16 15:6,9	38:3,12,14,17	cause 13:18,19	Civil 12:13	48:14 50:15
15:20 16:13,15	39:2,9,12,15	16:8 26:10	<b>claim</b> 3:22,23	clearer 26:3
16:21 17:4,6	39:23 40:4,7	32:23 33:4	5:3,7 6:25 7:6	clearly 31:18
17:12,20 18:2	40:15,20 41:1	34:13 38:7,19	9:9,11,11,17	33:10,25 35:13
18:11,16,18,23	41:9,18 42:2,7	42:10,12 46:9	10:1 11:13,21	<b>client</b> 10:19 11:1
19:8,15 20:18	42:16,19 43:2	46:12,13,14	12:5,6,7,8,8,9	11:2,6 19:3
21:5,9,15 22:8	43:8,11,23	47:6,17,23	12:9,12 13:9	<b>close</b> 15:25
23:6,12 25:6,9	44:2,8,11,24	48:6 52:14,14	13:10,16,17	51:10,10
25:21 27:11,14	45:7,16 46:7	central 21:10	14:1 15:4,15	closely 12:18
29:11 32:4	46:20,24 47:3	cert 21:12	16:1,2,6,9 17:4	closing 51:12
51:17,20,22,25	48:1,4,11,15	certain 4:8	17:8,8,9,12,18	<b>Cohen</b> 13:1
53:14 54:1,5	48:17,21 49:13	25:14 30:19	17:21 18:9	collateral 51:12
55:2,8,15,25	49:24 50:10	52:2	19:17 21:18,23	colloquial 22:11
56:3	51:2,11	certainly 20:5	22:10 23:3,4	colorable 19:17
<b>Breyer</b> 12:21,24		20:13,20 26:11	23:18 24:8,9	31:11
14:13 15:3,8	C	39:10 44:6	24:10 25:15	<b>come</b> 9:1 10:9
15:11 16:10,14	<b>C</b> 2:1 3:1	46:21 49:14,24	26:6,8,11	20:17 23:15
16:17,23 24:8	<b>call</b> 31:19	cetera 5:10 26:1	27:20,21,23	31:6 50:16
25:7,13 34:17	cancel 51:5	Chandler 31:19	28:22,23 30:17	comes 9:23 24:4
35:4,10,16,19	capable 47:9	change 3:17	30:21,22 31:6	26:21 28:21
35:21 36:5,8	<b>capital</b> 9:16 36:3	32:17 40:14	31:10 32:3,8	33:22
36:14,16,21	case 3:4,10 4:6	44:13	33:3 34:4 35:8	<b>coming</b> 33:17
37:15,22,24	6:3 9:2,14,23	changes 10:16	37:1,2,2 38:24	Commonwealth
38:1,8,13,15	9:24 11:18	21:23	39:13 40:22	6:19
38:22 39:6,10	12:17 13:1,10	Chief 3:3,8 6:24	43:6,7,8 44:12	complaint 12:14
39:13	14:2,8 15:21	7:25 17:6,14	44:25 45:2,14	completely 55:2
<b>bridge</b> 33:21	21:3,5,11,19	17:23 18:6	45:15,18,23,23	55:19
<b>brief</b> 6:20 21:14	23:13 24:14	21:15,16,21	46:5 47:11	concern 22:4
36:10 56:2	25:1,10 26:20	22:8,24 23:11	49:7,11,16	33:18 34:7
briefly 23:13	26:23 27:20	27:13,18 39:20	53:13 54:2,4	concerned 33:2
<b>briefs</b> 21:7,12	28:9 29:18	51:16,18,23	54:15,17,19,20	33:17 45:17,18
<b>bring</b> 6:9,23	30:14,25,25	54:2 56:8	55:6,12,22,22	conclusion 19:1
16:19 17:3	31:25 32:7,12	<b>child</b> 21:19 22:6	claimants 45:1	confronted
23:21	33:1,2,5,15,16	53:6	claimed 28:8	19:24 34:9
<b>bringing</b> 11:6	33:16,20 34:1	childhood 22:3	<b>claims</b> 5:3,8,10	confusion 13:24
brother 30:8	34:11 36:4	Circuit 6:4,4	10:8 12:14,16	Congress 24:6
<b>brought</b> 6:8,22	37:4 39:2,3,16	10:7,7 17:17	12:17 17:16	26:16 32:11,16
17:7	39:17 40:2	17:21 19:5,9	21:17 30:17,18	32:18 44:17
<b>Burnett</b> 1:17 2:5	41:5,13 46:1	19:22 20:19,20	30:20 32:20	consider 4:8,11

	1	1	1	
4:14,22 5:24	56:8	40:25 41:4,14	days 5:1 15:15	25:10,19,20,22
16:12 17:16	counsel's 49:9	41:17,23 42:23	16:24 37:5	26:22 38:25
40:25 49:18	<b>count</b> 55:9	43:4,4,14,19	50:4	46:6
50:6	<b>course</b> 5:5 7:9	44:14,19,22,24	<b>DA's</b> 38:9	deference 5:25
consideration	14:18 22:14	45:1,3,10,10	<b>de</b> 9:19 10:2	6:2 17:25 19:2
43:21	<b>court</b> 1:1,12 3:9	45:21,22,25	20:22,23 28:12	31:15 32:9
consistent 19:23	3:13,18,19,20	46:2,5,6,16,17	48:8,24,24	50:25
20:18	3:24,25 4:8,10	47:4,7,10,15	<b>dead</b> 41:4	deferred 6:5
constitute 48:2	4:11,13,15,16	47:20,24 48:7	dealer 28:9	deferring 20:11
constituted	4:20 5:12,13	48:9,19,23	<b>dealt</b> 36:12	deficient 15:10
52:14	5:15,19,21,23	49:8,11,17,22	<b>death</b> 27:21	defined 33:11
Constitution	5:24 6:1,2,6,9	50:3,11,15	31:18 32:18	definition 22:14
51:4	6:10,14,21 7:1	51:3,9 52:1,2	43:13 48:25	22:15
constructed	7:23 8:10 9:1,2	52:11,13 53:1	decades 50:2	demonstrate
43:10	9:12,18 10:14	53:19,22 55:5	<b>December</b> 13:1	10:13,15 12:1
construed 3:13	11:19 12:15	courts 23:20,21	24:15	12:2 19:3
construing 3:11	13:5,8 14:4,9	31:9 32:22	<b>decide</b> 4:6 5:15	46:13
contemplates	14:18,24 15:1	37:11 38:21	13:13 14:2	demonstrated
44:6	15:5,7,19,22	44:17 47:8	19:20 21:3	46:9
contest 28:2	15:23 16:2,4,5	court's 19:10,12	24:1 26:25	demonstrates
contested 28:3	16:7 17:3,19	28:5 33:20	35:22 39:22	22:12
context 26:10	18:25 19:1,3,9	41:21,24 44:20	40:22 41:15	denial 30:3
contract 12:8	19:16,17,20,22	50:1 55:23	42:8,21 43:18	<b>denied</b> 3:20 16:2
contrary 11:16	20:4,10,23	craw 50:19,19	48:8 54:10	23:18,20
convincing	22:10,20,21	created 7:20	<b>decided</b> 7:23 8:7	deny 52:9
22:22 23:23	23:2,8,14 24:1	credibility 7:22	15:22 26:20,23	dependent 9:9
25:23 48:14	24:3,11,16,25	8:7	decides 42:13,24	depending
50:16	25:4 26:4,4,5,6	credible 53:2,4	deciding 17:18	46:10
<b>cords</b> 53:7	26:9,11,18,21	critical 29:6	21:18	depends 31:17
corner 47:2	26:23,24 27:8	cross 20:2	decision 24:24	describe 47:7
correct 9:15	27:19,23,25	crossed 33:20	28:20 29:6	described 29:7
14:4 19:7	28:4,16,20,21	cumulative 6:25	31:23 35:15	describing
20:24 33:1	28:24,25 29:2	8:2 17:10	38:25 41:21,24	54:25
35:17,18,20	29:4,8,9,12,13	<b>current</b> 34:12	42:20,23,24	<b>despite</b> 23:14
37:23 38:17	29:19,20 30:1	cut 44:9,10	44:20 45:4,8	26:18
40:11 42:21	30:2,3,5,12,13	50:22	53:23	determination
48:11,15,17	30:16,17,19		default 29:3	20:11 34:21,25
correctness	31:5,6,15,20	D	32:17 34:14	35:2,5 42:8
42:20,23	31:22 32:6,8,9	<b>d</b> 3:1,11 14:18	defaulted 32:22	47:10 51:1
counsel 9:17	32:19 33:22,24	22:15 34:19,19	33:24 34:4	determine 7:22
10:18,20,23,25	33:25 34:1,3,6	35:5,12,14,24	38:3,4 39:4	17:18 31:23
11:9,12,21	34:20,20 35:15	46:4 55:4	44:15 45:15,19	41:20 44:20
12:10 20:8	37:14,19,25	<b>DA</b> 37:5	45:23	53:1
27:24 28:8	38:5,6,12,13	<b>Dane</b> 31:19	Defendant 37:5	determines
29:16 49:6,7	38:18,25 39:1	dangerousness	defendant's	14:22 25:12
49:10,21 51:16	39:5,16,17,18	7:8	9:20	determining
54:19 55:13	40:4,7,19,20	daughter 8:23	<b>defer</b> 17:19 25:2	47:8 53:12
2 2 20.13	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		20101 17117 2012	
	•	•	•	

	ı	l	Ī	Ī
<b>develop</b> 3:22 5:1	54:23	drew 19:1 26:4	<b>ESQ</b> 1:15,17 2:3	12:16 21:19
5:22 11:13,20	discovers 16:24	<b>drug</b> 28:9	2:5,8	23:9 27:21
11:23 12:2	16:25 37:5	<b>due</b> 36:1,8,22	essence 37:21	exception 16:18
22:20 24:19	38:8	54:24	essentially 14:7	16:22 54:14
26:7,12,19	discovery 52:10	<b>D.A</b> 16:25	established 28:6	exceptions
29:12 30:19	54:25	<b>D.C</b> 1:8,15	33:5 47:5 48:6	34:14 36:6
31:9 36:18	discretion 15:1		50:1	excuse 11:10
40:13 46:14	dismiss 40:5,11	E	et 5:10 26:1	23:1 37:22
52:17	dispose 40:2	<b>e</b> 2:1 3:1,1,11	event 9:5	excused 22:6
developed 4:21	disposed 29:19	11:22,23,24	eventuated	exercise 54:24
5:2 16:3 24:25	disproved 25:24	22:15,18,18	31:13	exhaust 13:15
26:25 46:5	<b>dispute</b> 7:20 8:2	25:22 33:3,12	evidence 4:8,10	13:16 24:11
developing 7:9	8:6 28:3 52:3	35:25 36:2,13	4:12,14,16,21	27:7,8
36:19	disputed 31:1	36:14,15,16	4:22 5:20,23	exhausted 37:3
development	49:2	46:4 55:3 56:2	5:25 6:5,8,11	exhaustion 32:5
4:15 19:19	disputes 15:17	earlier 20:3	6:25 7:3 8:1,3	38:2,23
<b>differ</b> 44:13	distinction 26:5	21:16 45:13	8:4,5 9:25	exhausts 15:5
difference 20:9	26:9	54:17,18	10:11 11:23	exhibit 12:7
28:25 29:1	distinguish	easy 31:2	12:9,20 14:22	existing 34:12
49:2	26:17	economy 43:16	16:5,12 17:17	expected 10:19
different 3:15	distinguishing	<b>EDWARD</b> 1:3	17:25 18:5,10	expert 52:10
5:3,6,8,9 8:15	26:13	<b>effect</b> 29:1 31:14	19:2 20:13	expertise 9:22
9:10 12:16	<b>district</b> 5:19,24	effective 20:14	21:23 22:2,22	explain 22:17
17:16 32:3	11:19 14:4,8,9	27:21 31:18	23:2,3,15,16	external 47:6
33:6,8,10	15:14 18:25	32:18 43:13	23:20,22,23	48:2 52:18
41:25 42:1,14	19:1,8,12,22	effectively 8:20	24:4 25:15,16	extraordinary
47:13	20:10,22 25:20	<b>effort</b> 23:14	25:23 27:9	12:6
differently	29:2,4,9,13,19	26:19	28:7,9,18	
20:17	29:20 30:16,19	efforts 11:16	29:23 30:19	<u> </u>
diligence 5:20	32:22 34:19,20	either 13:8 22:5	33:23 34:24	face 32:13
10:17,22 11:9	38:21 39:18	32:21 39:22	38:9 40:25	<b>fact</b> 7:20 16:6
11:15 12:1	41:3 43:14,17	electrical 53:7	41:6,15,17,23	17:23 19:3
14:10 32:24	48:19 49:11,22	emphasis 7:10	42:13,15 43:18	23:1 25:16,22
36:1,9,22	50:15	emphasize	43:21 46:18	25:25 29:1
40:17 52:13	<b>DNA</b> 23:17 38:9	30:24	48:14 49:11	32:19 33:12
54:24	54:13,16,20,25	enforcement	50:5,16,23	34:3 50:11
diligent 10:13	55:18,21	16:1	52:22,23,23,24	factfinder 48:13
11:2,6,6,12,19	doctrinal 18:21	engaged 20:23	53:5,12,20,22	factfinding
22:19 23:14	doctrine 32:17	entire 45:21	54:7,9,16,20	25:11
36:19 52:12	33:17	entitled 17:24	55:1,17,18,18	factor 7:8 52:25
<b>direct</b> 50:12	<b>doing</b> 43:15	40:23 51:10	55:21,21	<b>factors</b> 31:19
51:4,13	doomsday 50:5	envisage 49:5	evidentiary	facts 3:17 5:23
disagree 41:12	<b>door</b> 34:8	equally 21:17	31:12 40:12	6:21,23,25 7:3
disagreement	<b>dot</b> 20:2	equated 11:15	48:19 49:23,23	7:6 8:6,11,12
17:22	<b>doubt</b> 20:4	erroneously	exact 29:7	9:4 11:13 12:2
discovered	<b>Dretke</b> 12:15	29:22	<b>exactly</b> 54:1,25	13:1,6,8 14:25
15:13 21:20	15:22	error 48:13	example 8:19	15:12,13,22
	l	l		

	1	1	1	ı
19:19,19 21:17	41:14 43:4,4	19:9 25:16,18	17:15	habe 18:25
22:20 23:13	44:17,22,24	28:8,11,14	girlfriend 7:13	habeas 5:1 6:17
24:19,24 25:12	45:10,20 46:5	29:8,20 30:20	15:24	6:21 7:4,18
25:14,24 26:7	47:10 48:7,9	34:20 37:7	give 14:4 16:11	8:10 9:10,19
28:2,3 32:20	48:23 49:17	52:11 53:22	27:9 31:9	9:23 10:12,23
34:21,25 35:2	50:24 52:11,22	<b>Fourth</b> 6:4,4	44:10 47:20	11:9,14,21
35:5,14 39:3,4	figure 12:22	10:7 17:17,21	giving 5:25 6:2	29:12 50:1,24
40:13 42:4,9	<b>file</b> 37:7 38:9	19:5,9,21	28:14	52:2
46:10 49:2	<b>files</b> 15:15 16:25	20:19,20 21:1	<b>go</b> 11:24 13:13	<b>hand</b> 8:17,18
52:3 55:8	finality 43:16	21:3 28:17	13:16,17 14:14	9:3,4 20:14
factual 4:7	Finally 52:21	39:20,21	14:14 15:4	<b>handle</b> 32:23
10:16 35:6,6	<b>find</b> 9:25 21:11	<b>frame</b> 3:18	21:13 23:21,25	<b>happen</b> 24:17
36:1 54:22	22:4 25:23,25	53:21	24:11 31:22	49:12,13
factually 13:21	27:25 46:3	frankly 14:2	42:7 46:1	happens 13:5
16:3	48:13 50:6,23	<b>free</b> 24:19	48:25 49:17	hard 52:20
<b>fail</b> 11:22	52:20 53:16	<b>front</b> 15:23 21:8	52:8 53:18	hear 3:3 4:18
<b>failed</b> 36:17	finding 5:20	45:4	goes 13:7 18:20	7:21 47:20
40:13 45:24	11:18 14:9	<b>full</b> 4:15 5:22	37:7	49:12 55:3
failing 45:20	19:6,10 25:14	14:24	<b>going</b> 8:10 10:9	<b>heard</b> 39:1
<b>failure</b> 23:1 26:6	52:13,14	<b>fully</b> 4:21 26:12	13:2 22:4 23:4	49:22
26:7,12	findings 17:19	26:19,25 46:5	25:13,14 29:5	hearing 9:3
<b>fair</b> 5:22 14:24	25:23 31:13,15	52:17	29:6 39:14	13:20 14:4,19
52:6	32:10 46:6	further 32:5	40:21 42:20	14:24 15:2
faithfully 28:5	fine 24:25	37:18 49:10	43:4 44:13,13	19:21 22:19
28:17	<b>firm</b> 9:22	51:14	47:20 50:5	29:21,23 34:2
fallacy 51:6	<b>first</b> 6:9 7:5,5	<b>futile</b> 24:12 38:2	53:18	39:19 40:12,19
falls 35:25	10:12 14:9,13	future 7:8	<b>good</b> 22:6 54:8	40:21 48:20
familiar 32:23	14:14 15:14		<b>goodbye</b> 37:16	49:1,4,23 52:3
38:6,20,21	16:24 21:19,20	G	<b>good-bye</b> 37:12	52:10
47:8	28:22 35:21	<b>G</b> 3:1	gotten 15:17	hearing's 36:25
farce 17:1	38:8 41:2,19	game 42:25	16:20 23:11	hears 5:20
father 53:9	41:20 42:21	gate 11:24 51:13	25:15	heart 3:10
<b>fault</b> 45:20,24	44:7,9,10,25	gates 10:9 51:10	Government	held 51:3 53:3
faulted 30:21	48:23 50:21	General 1:18	16:7	<b>help</b> 3:18,21
<b>favor</b> 13:6	<b>fit</b> 44:3	52:1 54:14,15	<b>grant</b> 40:19	herring 30:14
favorable 9:21	<b>five</b> 5:8,9	55:4	granted 25:16	hey 8:3
<b>Federal</b> 3:25 7:4	<b>flood</b> 10:8	generally 33:1	40:5	<b>higher</b> 33:13,14
9:10,19,23	<b>followed</b> 31:4,4	getting 18:7	granting 40:11	<b>hold</b> 15:2 40:21
10:12 13:8	45:12	21:25 32:2	grateful 56:5	47:16 48:19
16:4,4 18:14	foreclose 55:5	47:13	grounds 18:12	52:2,3
18:25 23:21	foreclosed 55:22	<b>Ginsburg</b> 4:18	guess 17:14 21:2	holding 39:18
26:21 28:16,24	foreperson 4:2	8:9,16 10:17	24:5,18 32:1	<b>holds</b> 5:21
30:1,12 31:6	Forget 13:2	10:24 11:5	50:3,18	hole 32:10
31:12,22 32:8	42:11	12:4 20:6	<b>guilty</b> 50:23	Holland 26:1
33:22 34:20	formulate 10:14	21:24 29:10,17	<b>guise</b> 17:25	<b>Honor</b> 4:13,21
38:5,5,18 39:5	forward 54:14	29:24 55:7,10		4:25 5:11,16
40:19,20 41:7	<b>found</b> 16:6,8	Ginsburg's	<u> </u>	6:12,16 7:2 8:6
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

	I	I		I
8:15 9:13	21:13,18 53:16	interim 18:3	<b>jurors</b> 4:2 5:8	55:25 56:5,8
10:21 11:8	53:22	interpreted	<b>jury</b> 3:22 7:14	Justice's 21:16
12:11 14:6	importantly	36:18	9:7 20:16	
15:20 16:21	10:16	interrupt 39:21	28:14	K
17:5,13,20	imposing 33:13	interviewed 5:5	<b>Justice</b> 3:3,8 4:4	<b>K</b> 1:6
18:2,11 19:8	imprimatur	5:8,9	4:18,23 5:14	KATHERINE
20:18 21:9	39:18	intrinsically	6:7,13,17,24	1:17 2:5 27:16
23:10 25:6	improvidently	24:2 55:24	7:25 8:9,16 9:8	Keeney 26:3
27:11 30:6	40:5	introduce 10:11	9:14 10:4,17	<b>Kelly</b> 1:6 3:4
34:11 37:13	inadequate	introduced 9:2	10:24 11:5	KENNEDY
38:4,14 39:24	18:13 20:9	investigate 5:13	12:4,21,24	48:18 49:5,19
41:1 43:11	26:21,24 35:8	investigative	14:13 15:3,8	<b>killed</b> 28:10
50:10 51:11	55:24	3:21,25	15:11 16:10,14	<b>kind</b> 11:10
53:14 54:1,6	incident 7:16	investigator 4:1	16:17,23 17:6	15:17 53:18
55:3,15 56:3	included 52:24	involves 21:6	17:14,15,23	kinds 47:14
hopefully 26:3	includes 23:7	irrational 26:14	18:6,16,19,24	knew 15:24
horrific 7:12	including 5:3	26:16	19:14 20:6,25	47:15
<b>House</b> 23:8	12:15 43:20	<b>issue</b> 3:15,18 5:3	21:5,10,21,24	knock 53:9
32:19	indicated 31:3	8:2,7 18:20	22:8,24 23:11	know 7:14 9:22
household 8:21	individual 33:22	19:21,24,24	24:8 25:7,13	21:21 22:5,9
hypothesis	ineffective 5:6	21:4 27:2	27:4,13,18	23:12 24:9,22
47:19	9:17 10:18,20	29:20 31:1,12	29:10,17,24	26:2 35:23
hypothetical	10:25 11:20	33:25 34:7	30:4,8,23 32:1	41:12 43:25
13:3 39:3	12:10 29:15	39:1,8	32:15,25 33:19	47:18 49:3
	31:7,7,10 49:6	issues 29:15,18	34:5,16,17	50:4 52:7
I	49:7,9,10,21	31:11	35:4,10,11,16	54:21 55:1
idea 13:22	54:18 55:13	<b>i.e</b> 47:17	35:19,21 36:5	knowing 14:3
<b>ii</b> 36:7	ineffectiveness		36:8,14,16,21	<b>known</b> 37:6
imaginary 24:14	11:7	J	37:15,22,24	
24:14	informant 16:7	<b>Jo</b> 7:11,17,19	38:1,8,13,15	
<b>imagine</b> 37:9,9	information	Joanne 7:18	38:22 39:6,10	language 44:4
49:20	52:19 53:17	8:19,23 9:5	39:13,20 40:1	Laughter 56:7
impeach 12:20	innocence 24:4	52:25	40:6,9,15,18	law 16:1 17:3
impeached 8:20	34:13 38:19	<b>judge</b> 13:12	40:23 41:3,11	18:14 19:18
9:6	42:10 54:14,17	19:25 24:19,23	41:22 42:5,11	25:25 32:10
impeachment	innocent 22:23	25:20 41:19	42:18,22 43:6	37:3,4,10
8:25	23:24 48:14	42:7,14,15,17	43:9,17,23,25	38:11 47:5
impediment	54:17	43:18 53:18	44:5,9,22 45:6	49:1
48:2 52:18	instance 23:8	judges 38:6	45:11,13,17	lawyer 11:1,7
impediments	48:18	43:14	46:11,22,25	lawyers 11:19
47:6	instances 49:20	Judge's 21:16	47:4,12 48:3,6	leads 31:3
implication 34:6	52:2	<b>judgment</b> 43:19	48:12,16,18	leave 32:11 34:8
implicit 46:3,7,8	instructions	judicial 43:15	49:5,19 50:3	leaves 24:18
<b>implied</b> 45:13	20:5	43:16	50:13 51:3,6	leaving 53:7
imply 21:1	intended 24:6	jurist 53:16	51:16,18,23	<b>left</b> 32:18 33:23 52:1
important 5:24	27:22 44:17	54:10	53:11,24 54:2	legitimate 20:7
10:15 12:3	<b>intent</b> 26:16	juror 5:9	54:21 55:7,10	regiumate 20.7
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>

	<u> </u>	l	 	<u> </u>
32:13 33:18	<b>major</b> 26:11	<b>minute</b> 51:19	24:4,8,9,10	<b>oh</b> 20:25 50:22
legitimately	<b>making</b> 12:13	minutes 51:24	25:15,16 28:22	okay 13:2,6,20
32:3	20:10 47:9	misconduct 3:23	28:23 29:3	14:6 24:9,14
<b>lengthy</b> 29:19	53:23	5:9	32:20,20 33:23	24:20 35:19,21
let's 15:21 23:22	map 45:10,11,13	misled 4:16	37:1,2,2 38:24	36:1,21 37:24
level 6:22 7:21	materiality	misunderstan	39:3,13 42:3,4	38:15,22 39:6
9:24 10:10	53:24	41:10	42:9,9,13 43:3	45:6,7 48:3
44:14 52:22	matter 1:11 12:3	mitigating 14:21	43:18,21 44:15	once 46:21
<b>liar</b> 7:17	28:11,12 35:7	mitigation 9:21	44:17 45:9,14	ones 37:9
lied 7:20	37:15 47:11,18	9:25	47:11,11,14,14	<b>open</b> 34:8
<b>life</b> 9:20 28:14	48:8,22,24	<b>mix</b> 10:16 53:16	47:18 48:24	opened 15:15
<b>light</b> 43:18	49:16,18 55:14	<b>moment</b> 42:12	49:11,18 50:5	opening 36:12
likelihood 20:16	55:17 56:11	mother 7:15	50:6,23 52:21	opinion 12:15
limitations	matters 32:22	mother's 53:9	52:23,23 53:12	20:2 24:1
26:18 37:20	43:3 44:15,18		53:13 54:2,15	29:19,24 55:23
listened 29:23	45:2,9 47:14	N	54:19 55:8,13	opportunity
literal 44:16	47:14	N 2:1,1 3:1	55:17,17,18,18	5:22 16:12
litigated 32:8	McNeal 52:1	NATHANIEL	55:20,22	31:9,12
litigating 46:4	mean 4:16,23	1:3	nice 21:7	opposed 20:1
little 26:2	12:7 13:10	necessarily	Nicholson 7:13	oral 1:11 2:2 3:6
live 52:25	14:1 17:1 21:1	17:17 18:11	8:23,23 9:5	19:12 27:16
<b>lo</b> 37:8	21:10 23:2	54:6	52:25	orally 19:25
long 24:2 55:23	25:7,20 26:22	necessary 22:15	Nicholson's 8:19	20:1
longer 6:3	32:11 33:11	need 22:20 27:6	nil 54:8	<b>order</b> 3:21 11:25
look 13:13 17:24	35:2,4 36:14	46:6	<b>Ninth</b> 10:5	47:25
19:15 22:18	47:6 49:15	needed 3:21	nodding 30:8	orderly 43:12
23:13 29:5,6	50:8 54:13	29:21 31:3	<b>normal</b> 22:13	ordinarily 12:12
31:20 42:1,6,9	means 23:3 35:5	needs 49:3,17	notion 12:7	ordinary 22:14
42:20 44:17,25	55:17	negligence	November 1:9	ought 24:11
46:15 47:11	meant 20:3,20	11:17	<b>novo</b> 9:19 10:2	50:21 53:15
48:23,24 49:18	20:23	neutral 42:13	20:22,23 28:12	<b>outcome</b> 35:6,7
55:16	meet 42:10	never 8:22,24	48:8,24,24	overall 10:16
looked 18:1	merely 6:25	9:1,5 24:25	<b>number</b> 7:9 22:9	53:16
19:22 20:12,21	merits 9:11,18	28:2,3 39:1		overlay 31:8
26:4,5,9 41:23	23:19 27:1	40:16,16 45:9	$\frac{0}{0.2121}$	P
looking 3:16	28:12 38:23	51:3	O 2:1 3:1	
8:18 22:3	41:24 45:3	nevertheless	objective 54:10	<b>P</b> 1:15 2:3,8 3:1
looks 16:24	55:6	29:22	objectively	3:6 51:20
42:12	<b>Michael</b> 3:14,14	new 6:5,8,11 7:3	53:15	PAGE 2:2
LORETTA 1:6	3:16,19 10:22	7:3 10:1,11	obliged 6:9	papers 8:8 53:3
lose 18:10	11:14,15 12:19	12:2,5 13:8,10	obvious 25:8	53:4
lot 16:5 21:22	14:11 26:4	13:16,17 15:4	obviously 14:21	part 4:19 10:18
lower 47:7	33:21,21 34:11	15:16 16:12,12	occasions 5:12	20:8,9 25:19
luck 37:12	36:11,12,18	16:14 17:8,11	occur 7:16	46:12
	52:12,18	17:16,25 18:4	occurred 9:6	particular 25:12
	mind 14:18	21:17,17,18,23	offering 54:8	25:22 28:7
main 33:1	Minehart 4:3	22:1,4,4 23:3	officer 28:10	29:7
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

4. 1. 1	l , .,.	9.10.7	21 22 50 12 14	120.6
particularly	post-conviction	prevail 13:7	31:22 50:12,14	real 39:6
15:25 21:25	6:14	prevailed 54:3	provided 5:1	really 5:14
parts 20:8	potential 26:5	prevented 29:25	provisions 3:13	15:13 16:14
penalty 27:21	potentially 9:20	30:13	purposes 17:13	21:20 24:6
31:18 32:18	47:18	previously	43:16 52:14	37:4 38:24
43:14 48:25	practical 10:5	54:23 55:19,20	put 29:13 46:14	39:13 44:3
permit 4:15,21	precedent 28:6	pre-Effective	46:18 53:20	47:13 53:15,25
permits 50:2	precisely 27:11	48:25	54:14	reason 14:19
<b>person</b> 16:6,11	precluded 14:20	printing 56:1	putting 20:1	32:4 46:17
16:23 17:2	predicate 14:20	<b>prisoner</b> 5:21,22	39:17	54:12
50:23 53:2	36:1 54:22	11:12 15:24	puzzled 4:9	reasonability
<b>petition</b> 5:2 6:21	predicates 4:7	52:16	<b>p.m</b> 56:10	19:24
8:12 21:12	prejudice 13:18	probability	0	reasonable
29:14	13:19 16:8	28:13 33:6,8,9		11:16 20:16
Petitioner 1:4	19:4,10 20:15	problem 3:10	question 4:5,6,7	24:2 28:13
1:16 2:4,9 3:7	26:10 28:13,19	14:23 32:13	5:15,17,18,19	31:24 33:9,11
7:13,24 8:11	32:24 33:4	problematic	10:4 14:2	35:7 41:21,25
14:12 40:13	34:13 38:7,19	22:1	17:10,15 18:8	43:20 45:4
45:8 46:9	42:10,12 46:13	procedural	18:17,19,21	48:13 51:1
51:21	47:17 48:10	32:17	20:7 21:1,2,16	53:15 55:24
Petitioners 5:2	52:15	procedurally	24:6,13,21,23	reasonableness
physical 21:19	preliminary	15:10	27:5 35:22	20:21
physically 8:22	18:21	procedure 12:13	36:25 39:22	reasonably
8:24 53:6	premeditatedly	18:13 30:3	40:10 46:7,8	22:21 26:23
<b>place</b> 34:13 50:2	28:10	34:23,24 43:10	46:15 48:8	reasoning 51:7
planks 53:7	<b>present</b> 5:15,19	procedures	questions 51:14	REBUTTAL
plausible 18:3	15:4,18 23:1	13:24 35:8,17	52:8	2:7 51:20
<b>play</b> 3:17	27:24 30:12	50:1	quick 27:4	recall 52:18
pleaded 29:2	45:24 48:5	proceeding 6:14	R	recalls 3:19
<b>please</b> 3:9 27:19	presentation	9:10 33:3 41:7	$\frac{\mathbf{R}}{\mathbf{R}}$ 3:1	recognize 32:3,7
<b>point</b> 6:19 24:18	45:21	41:8 52:5	raise 23:1,4	recognized
27:7 29:11	presented 3:14	54:18	raised 23:5	32:19 37:14
30:11 32:14	5:18,18 13:14	<b>process</b> 31:20,23	raising 18:20	record 26:19,21
34:18 42:18	15:7 18:8	proffered 4:12	21:2	26:24,25 29:7
46:13	27:23 28:24,24	4:14	ran 5:11	36:20 41:25
pointless 43:10	29:3 30:1,2,11	progression	rate 14:14	42:1,1,23,25
<b>police</b> 9:1 28:10	34:1 39:4,8,24	43:13	reach 24:22	52:17 55:24
position 8:15	41:17 43:3	properly 5:19	42:15	records 9:1
34:16 40:10	44:14,19,25	26:6,7 37:1	reached 42:14	red 30:14
43:1 54:13	45:9 49:8	<b>proposition</b> 9:9	44:21	reference 19:13
possibility 33:11	52:21	prosecutor		45:14
46:4	presenting 27:3	12:18	read 5:16,17,18 12:25 19:11	referred 4:2
possible 9:16	29:25	protect 53:10	20:19 22:15	referring 10:21
24:5 49:25	presumably	<b>prove</b> 14:25		refusal 14:21
54:11	25:22	22:22 23:23	41:15,18 54:22 54:22	31:8
possibly 16:20	presumed 19:23	proves 54:16		<b>refuse</b> 4:14,22
25:17	pretty 37:9	provide 5:21	reading 36:10	<b>refused</b> 4:8,11
			l	

	•			•
4:15,20 31:5	14:16 15:4	45:14 48:6,12	sides 8:3	4:11,13,15,20
regular 25:1	16:3 17:9,14	48:16 50:3,13	significant 12:3	5:1,1,21,23,25
related 25:4	18:7,9 21:6	51:3,6 54:21	25:17	6:2,5,8,10,14
relied 7:7	22:24 32:25	55:25 56:5	similar 13:3	6:17,20,22 7:1
<b>relief</b> 38:10	38:1,2,15,23	scars 53:8	22:10	7:7,18,21 9:12
rely 19:5 41:16	41:22 42:11	<b>Schriro</b> 14:19	similarly 26:15	9:18 10:14,23
remaining 51:19	44:10 46:24	14:20	simply 17:10	11:14,21 13:5
51:24	48:16 50:13	second 10:14	26:22,22 36:7	13:14,17,25
remains 19:6	51:2,5 53:19	49:9,21	40:20 42:19	14:23,25 15:4
remand 20:5	54:15	Secondly 10:10	46:15 51:14	15:7,9,19,23
remark 37:6	road 45:10,11	53:5	52:22	16:2,11,15
<b>remedy</b> 33:23	45:13	Section 21:6	<b>Sixth</b> 10:7	17:3,19 19:2
removed 31:21	ROBERTS 3:3	see 11:3 13:17	small 3:17 28:10	19:10,16,17
repeated 5:12	6:24 7:25 17:6	14:1,14 19:9	sole 52:24	22:19,21 23:2
request 30:4	17:14,23 18:6	19:12 43:11	<b>solution</b> 18:3,4	23:8,14,20
require 19:25	21:21 22:24	49:18	24:5	24:1,3,11,16
33:8	23:11 27:13	seeing 26:10	someone's 22:3	24:25 25:4,10
required 41:19	39:20 51:16,18	seeking 11:13,20	sorry 6:18 23:10	25:11 26:6,11
requirement	51:23 54:2	seen 8:22 10:8	39:21 45:21	26:18,20,23,24
33:13,14	56:8	sees 50:15	sort 12:14 17:4	27:8 28:3,4,20
requirements	<b>room</b> 48:19	Senior 1:17	18:20 53:20	28:25 29:2
32:5	root 17:22	sense 3:12 22:16	sound 42:24	30:2,3,5,12,16
requires 50:25	rule 6:20 10:6,8	44:16 45:19,23	sounds 54:24	31:5,8,15,20
reserve 27:3	Rules 12:12	47:24 52:15	<b>Souter</b> 4:23	32:6,9 33:24
resolution 49:4	ruling 19:12,16	55:21	18:16,19,24	34:23 35:15
resolved 29:4		sentence 28:14	19:14 20:25	37:19 38:12,13
resources 9:23	S	36:12	27:4 30:4,8,23	38:25 39:1
respect 30:25	s 2:1 3:1 16:25	separate 12:17	32:1,15,25	40:25 41:6,17
33:12	saw 19:9 53:8	12:19 18:12	33:19 34:5,16	41:20,23,24
Respondent	saying 20:1,6,12	48:22	35:11 45:11,17	42:15,23 43:19
1:18 2:6 27:17	22:13,14 32:12	separately 14:20	46:11,22,25	44:14,19,20
responses 22:8	35:1,3,4 36:11	14:23	47:4,12 48:3	45:1,3,10,22
restricted 49:14	37:2 38:20	set 6:21	53:24	45:25 46:2,6
result 33:10	42:3,22 44:12	<b>setup</b> 49:25	spattering 23:17	46:16,17 47:15
40:14 42:14,15	45:12 47:5,16	she'd 55:4	speaking 4:1	47:19,24 49:8
54:4	51:7	<b>short</b> 29:14	special 37:7	50:3,11,21,22
return 21:15	says 11:22 13:6	31:14 52:7	specifically 4:24	51:9 52:2,5,9
review 9:19 10:2	19:17 22:18	shorthand 13:2	4:25 8:12	53:3,4,19,22
20:23,24 51:12	27:24 28:21	show 24:12	52:11	55:5,23
51:13	37:6,21 41:23	28:12 47:17,23	stage 47:16	statements 8:21
RICHARD 1:15	45:8 46:15	showing 31:11	standard 20:24	<b>States</b> 1:1,12
2:3,8 3:6 51:20	47:20 55:3,4	40:12,16,16,24	33:7 53:25	18:25 44:6
Richmond 1:18	55:18	47:17	standpoint	<b>State's</b> 7:6 18:12
rid 35:24,25	<b>Scalia</b> 6:7,13,17	shown 32:23,24	20:21,22	18:13
36:2	21:5,10 40:1,6	33:6 38:7	start 51:17,22	statute 12:22
<b>right</b> 9:13 12:6	43:17,24,25	shows 16:25	51:25	16:15 24:18
12:21 13:7	44:5,9,22 45:6	38:9 46:16	<b>state</b> 3:24 4:7,10	31:17,21 34:18
		_		,

27 10 21 11 16				
37:19,21 41:16	supplemental	testify 9:5	throwing 56:6	unbelievable
41:18 43:10	49:10	testimony 8:19	time 3:12 5:2,11	17:2
44:3,6 47:23	support 12:9	52:25 53:3	5:12 7:14	unconstitutio
statutes 37:18	supported 16:5	textbook 27:20	15:14 16:24	50:8,9,14,18
statutorily	supports 8:1	thank 3:8 27:12	27:9 28:22	50:20
11:10	suppose 15:11	27:13 51:16	29:11,14 30:5	underlay 35:14
statutory 44:4	16:14 24:10	56:3,8	31:1,2,5 38:8	underlying
49:25	25:3 37:4,5	theoretical	41:16 47:21	21:22 40:10
step 14:11,13,14	41:22 50:7	10:10	52:7,9	undermine 53:2
14:17,17	supposed 8:25	theory 10:1	today 3:18 5:4	undermined 7:6
<b>Stevens</b> 40:9,15	12:25 13:12,15	21:22	27:3 53:8	undermining
40:18,23 41:3	13:19,21 24:16	thing 13:25	told 7:11	52:24
41:11,22 42:5	44:23,24	15:18 16:19	tort 12:8	understand 9:15
42:11,18,22	supposedly 10:9	21:11 35:22	totality 46:3	11:8 32:12
43:6,9	<b>Supreme</b> 1:1,12	37:8 38:20	totally 15:16	33:4 34:16,18
sticking 50:19	3:20 7:23 8:9	41:19 44:10	town 28:10	40:10 41:12
Stinette 4:3	9:2 27:23,25	55:11	Townsend 14:23	understanding
stipulate 46:23	29:8,12	things 25:3	to-exhaust 27:7	18:24 19:4,6
stop 22:25 26:22	sure 18:23 36:3	think 5:6 7:25	<b>Tracy</b> 7:12,15	understood 34:6
<b>story</b> 7:11	36:5	8:15 14:7	8:23,25	undisturbed
straight 20:11	suspicions 3:22	15:18 18:6,7	transform 13:9	19:7
Strickland 20:7	Swartz 7:11,17	21:13,24 22:10	translate 10:24	unequivocal
20:8,11,15	7:20	22:17 25:9,11	trial 17:1 27:25	16:16
28:6	T	25:21,25 26:1	50:4	unexhausted
<b>strict</b> 20:15		27:2 31:16	<b>tried</b> 27:8 32:6	32:21 39:4
strictly 37:20	t 2:1,1 20:2	32:25 33:1	46:15 47:19,24	unfortunately
strikes 53:17	table 6:3	34:5,8,11,12	trouble 21:24	7:21
strong 30:15	take 14:11,16,17	34:18 35:13	troubled 51:8	<b>United</b> 1:1,12
<b>stuff</b> 50:7	23:9 27:5 46:2	39:9,19 40:4,7	troubling 51:8	18:25
subject 31:13	46:18 50:21	41:4,9 42:2,2	true 8:10,13 9:4	unreasonable
32:5,9	taken 8:13 41:13	42:16 43:2	16:13 18:18	18:15 19:11,18
submit 7:18	talk 11:5	44:2,2,12	22:17 28:4	28:20 34:21,22
26:15	talked 12:16	45:18 47:12	32:16 37:4	34:22,24 35:1
submitted 56:9	talking 11:11	48:21,22,25	41:11,14 52:23	35:2,5
56:11	12:13 23:6	49:13,14,15,19	<b>truth</b> 28:1,15	unusual 22:5
subsection	31:24 32:20,21	49:24,25 53:14	trying 12:21	upbringing 22:7
33:12	33:5 42:3,5	54:5,6,11,12	34:17 53:9	use 12:4,6 22:12
subsections 3:11	talks 10:22	55:7,15,16	twin 37:18	39:16
46:3	teeth 53:9 56:6	thinking 13:3	two 3:13 4:1	uses 33:9 39:17
substance 34:22	telling 43:14	thought 24:22	10:4 12:16,19	usually 17:15
substantial	Tennessee 16:18	35:10 39:8	20:8 22:8,25	utility 18:20
52:21	16:18	55:14 56:4	26:13 31:11	<b>U.S.C</b> 3:11
sufficient 53:13	<b>Tenth</b> 10:5	three 7:3 51:18	39:7 49:21	$oxed{ oxed{ oxed{V}}}$
suggested 32:4	term 33:9	51:23		<del></del>
suggesting	terms 23:17	threshold 4:5	U	v 1:5 12:15 13:1
30:24	test 20:15 53:11	thresholds	unadjudicated	15:22 31:19
suggestion 8:1	53:14	38:18	7:10	32:19
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	

	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<b>Va</b> 1:18	26:19	Y
<b>verdict</b> 33:6,8	<b>We'll</b> 3:3	years 10:6
versus 3:4 23:8	we're 35:25 42:5	
view 23:25	we've 8:3 11:18	0
37:11 48:7	22:25 33:16	<b>07-1223</b> 1:5 3:4
54:20	34:7	
<b>viewed</b> 17:21	wholly 55:13,17	1
Virginia 3:20	Wiggins 28:6	1 25:22
6:19,20 7:23	Williams 3:14	<b>11</b> 5:6
8:9 9:2 16:22	3:14,17,20,20	<b>11:15</b> 1:13 3:2
16:23 17:3	10:22 11:14,15	<b>12</b> 1:9 5:8 29:18
27:22,25 29:8	12:19 14:11	<b>12:12</b> 56:10
29:12 37:3,3	26:4 33:21,22	<b>120</b> 5:1
37:10,11,18	34:8,11 36:11	<b>14</b> 5:2
38:4,11	36:12,18 52:12	<b>140</b> 15:15 16:24
	52:19	37:5
$oldsymbol{\mathbf{W}}$	willing 52:4	<b>1996</b> 31:18,21
want 15:12,12	win 15:1	
40:1,3 54:9	wise 21:3	2
55:25	withholdings	<b>2</b> 11:23 35:5,12
<b>wanted</b> 46:18	12:18,20	35:14 36:1,6
warden 1:6	witness 12:20	36:13,14,15,16
15:21	witnesses 5:6,10	36:23
warden's 23:25	7:22 15:25	<b>2008</b> 1:9
Washington 1:8	words 34:23	<b>2254</b> 3:11
1:15	35:2,6	<b>2254(d)</b> 17:13
wasn't 6:9,22	work 12:25	19:13 21:6
16:3 29:11	13:19,21	27:22 28:17,20
40:23 53:3	works 12:22	45:1 50:25
way 3:12 5:17	14:8	55:23 56:2
5:18 9:6 12:25		<b>2254(e)</b> 54:22
12:25 14:17	worried 47:1	<b>2554</b> 11:11
17:2 22:5,16	worse 37:10	<b>27</b> 2:6
24:10 25:10	worst 37:8	<b>28</b> 3:11
38:10 41:18	wouldn't 6:7 9:7	
43:20,22 44:13	15:3,19 24:3	3
45:20 50:17,21	32:6 38:24	<b>3</b> 2:4
51:9 54:6	47:24	
ways 10:4 22:11	written 19:16,23	5
Wednesday 1:9	20:2	<b>51</b> 2:9
•	wrong 35:23,24	
weigh 54:9	36:24 41:4	6
weighed 28:7 weighing 28:11	wrote 19:16,22	<b>60</b> 50:4
weighing 28.11 went 13:22 16:4	55:11	
28:16	X	8
weren't 6:24 7:2	$\frac{x}{x 1:2,7}$	<b>84a</b> 52:12
	X 1.2,7	
22:19 23:19		