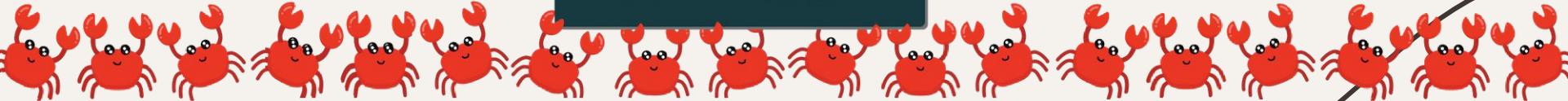
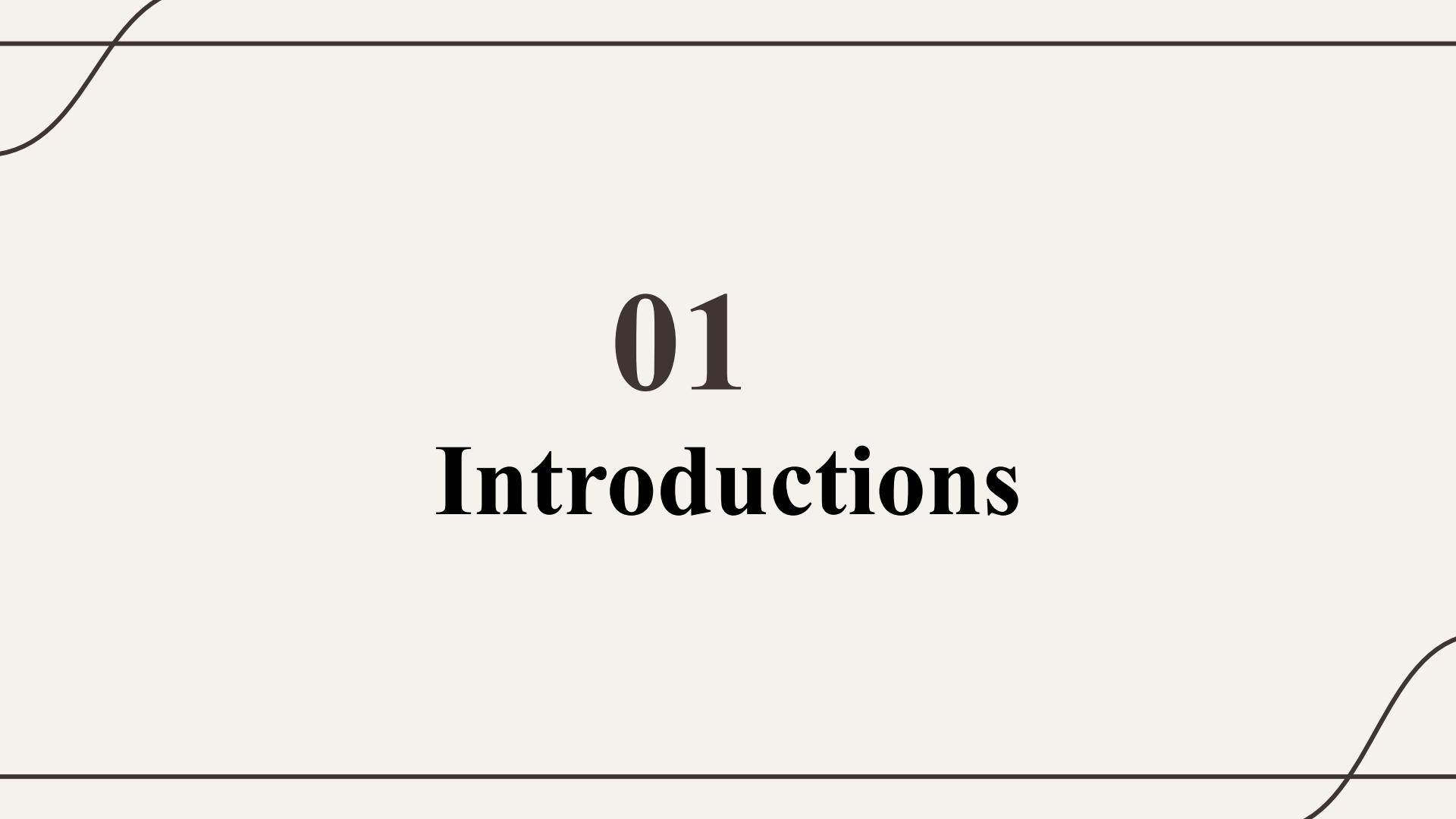


How to be a Court Listener

NICAR24

March 7-10 • Baltimore





01

Introductions

Presenters:



Coulter Jones

Journalist
Wall Street Journal

 @coulterjones

Coulter.Jones@wsj.com



Mollie Simon

Research Reporter
ProPublica

 @mrsimon22

mollie.simon@propublica.org



Michael Lissner

Executive Director
Free Law Project



@michaeljaylissner.com
mike@free.law



William Palin

Lead for Case Law
Free Law Project
 @flooie
bill@free.law

What types of
reporting are you
doing?



02 Court Basics

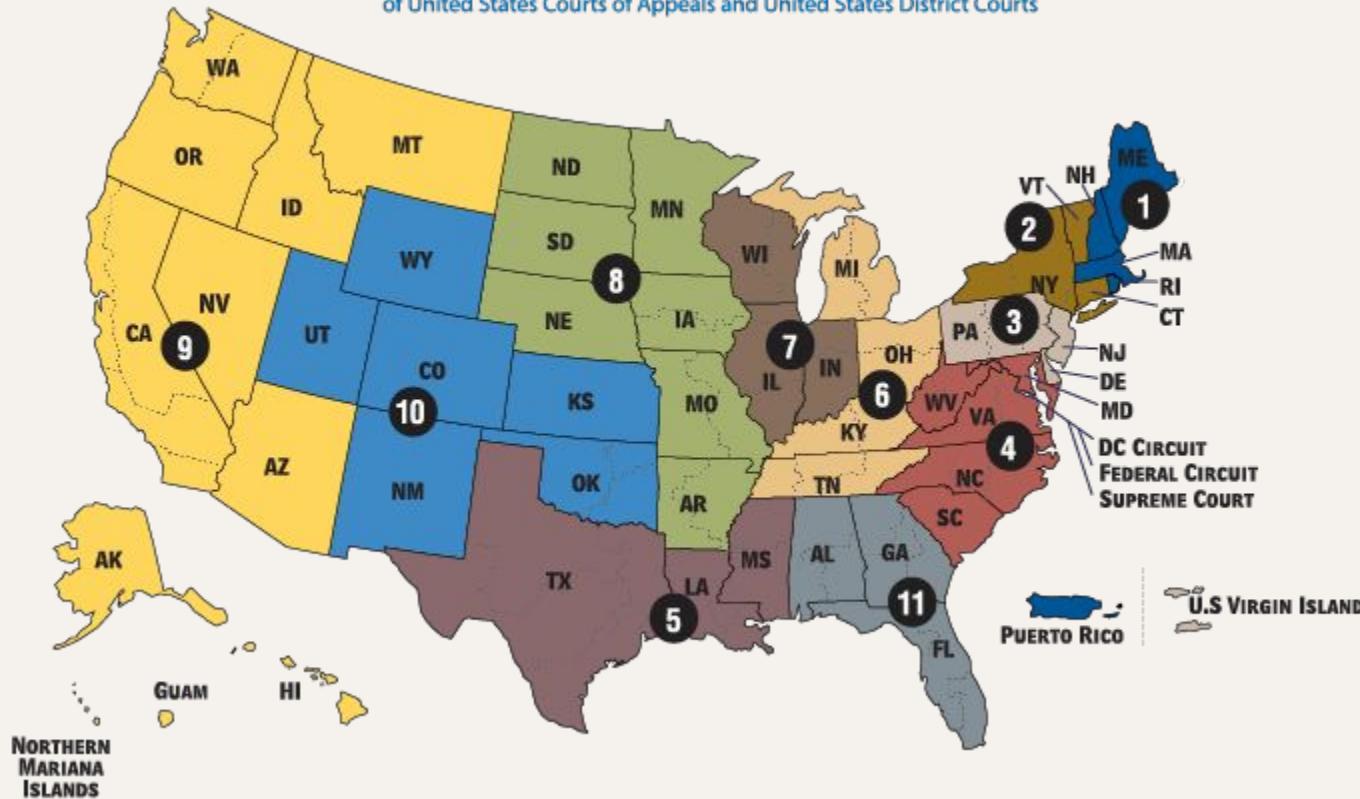


What is the Federal Judicial Branch?

- ~200 courts: district, bankruptcy, appellate, special
- Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
- Judicial Conference of the U.S.
- Federal Judicial Center (FJC)
- 81 Federal Public Defender Organizations
- U.S. Sentencing Commission
- Supreme Court Police

Geographic Boundaries

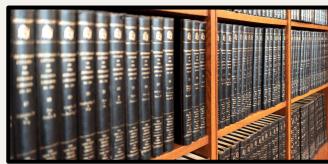
of United States Courts of Appeals and United States District Courts



What about State Courts?

- This is where 98% of cases are filed
- 50M cases/year vs. < 400k in federal
- *Thousands* of state courthouses (mayoral, city, county, state appellate, supreme, etc.)
- Data access varies, can be expensive, difficult, non-existent

Documents vs. Dockets: Know What You Are Looking At



Dockets

This is like looking through the table of contents for a book.

- Easier to access
- Basics of a case
- Give you a roadmap

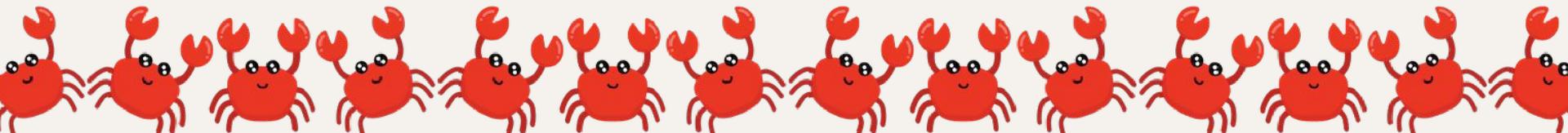


Documents

This is where you actually read the book.

- Not every document is equally relevant: learn which ones matter

What does it take to get
information on a case in
your state?



03

How to Gather Data





What is PACER?

- The Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) service provides electronic public access to every federal court record.
- About 1.5B records — the largest paywall on the planet.
- Access to case information costs \$0.10 per page, capped at \$3.00 for most documents.
- Criticisms: out of date, hard to use, expensive, anti-democratic, illegal.

- RECAP is a response that crowdsources documents and makes them freely available.
- Metadata about 350M documents, but only 10M docs.
- Full text searchable.
- Free



Finding a case on PACER

- DOJ announces before PACER has it or it's sealed
- 98 search engines:
 - Central search only updated once daily
 - District search is very bad
 - No full text
- Eventually has everything

Vs. on RECAP

- Very powerful search engine
 - Updated in real time
 - Full text
 - Case name search
 - Date ranges
- Built into RECAP extension
- Only has what is crowdsourced or scrapable



How can you get data out of PACER?

Alerts

- PACER users can keep track of newly docketed events by subscribing to a court's RSS feed, which is free and includes automatic notification of case activity, summarized text, and links to the document and docket report.
- Sign up for email alerts through some courts in pacer as a “Special Mailing Group”
- RECAP alerts for PACER

Creating a RECAP Alert

To create a RECAP Alert, simply find the docket you are interested in following, and look for the button on the top that says, “ Get Alerts”.

Get Alerts

How to get PACER Data for Free

- Fee waivers



Find the RSS feed and other RSS Feeds
contact information

New York Southern District Court

- Voice Case Information System: [866-222-8029](tel:866-222-8029) ext. 6262
- CM/ECF Help Desk (White Plains): [914-390-4240](tel:914-390-4240)
- CM/ECF Help Desk (NYC): [212-805-0800](tel:212-805-0800)
- <https://www.nysd.uscourts.gov/electronic-case-filing>
- [RSS](#)

[Login to CM/ECF](#)

CM/ECF Information +

Court Locations and Contact Information +

Counties in this District +

Flag Definitions +

pacer.uscourts.gov/file-case/court-cmecf-lookup



PACER Email Alerts

Sign up as a Special Mailing Group (SMG)

- Receive notices the same time as attorneys
- Charged to view/download filings but not for the alerts
- Requires registration (about a 24 hour delay)
- Have to register each court **separately**
- All appellate courts and ***most*** district courts

Account Number	4586853
Username	coulterjones
Account Balance	\$0.00
Case Search Status	Active
Account Type	Upgraded PACER Account

Settings Maintenance Payments Usage

[Update Personal Information](#)

[Update Address Information](#)

[Attorney Admissions / E-File Registration](#)

[Non-Attorney E-File Registration](#)



PACER Email Alerts

Sign up as a Special Mailing Group (SMG)

Complete all sections of E-File Registration

Filer Information

Please note that not all courts accept non-attorney filers and some accept only specific types of non-attorney filers. If the selected court does not allow a specific type of non-attorney filer, you will not be able to register for filing privileges at that court.

* Required Information

Court Type *

U.S. District Courts

Court *

California Northern District Cou

[Before continuing, view the local Policies and Procedures on Electronic Filing for the selected court](#)

Welcome to the US District Court, Northern District of California CA Attorneys: On the following screen, under Additional Filer Information, please enter your CA State Bar ID.

Non-CA Attorneys: On the following screen, under Additional Filer Information, please enter your local State Bar ID, if you have one or your state and N/A if not.

Pro se: Please only register once; if you already have an ECF account but have new cases, please email us with your name and new case number at ECFHELPDESK@CAND.USCOURTS.GOV. For Role in Court, please select Party. You must enter your case number under Most Recent Case.

Special Mailing Group (SMG): Please only register once; type SMG in the box that says Other Names Used.

Role in Court *

Party

Name

Coulter Jones

I acknowledge that I am submitting the e-file registration for the individual listed above. Note: If more than one individual uses this account, you must create a new PACER account for the individual who needs e-filing privileges, if she or he does not already have one.*

Additional Filer Information

Other Names Used

SMG

Most Recent Case
(in court where you
are registering)

Delivery Method and Formatting

Use a different email. Checking this will clear the primary email fields below.

Primary Email *

coulter.jones@wsj.com



Confirm Email *

coulter.jones@wsj.com



Email Frequency *

At The Time of Filing (One E

Email Format *

Select Email Format

Next

Reset

Cancel

Using Statistics

- TRAC: <https://trac.syr.edu/>
- FJC Integrated Database: <https://www.fjc.gov/research/idb>
- State level
 - [Example report from Alabama](#)

Circuit	County	Jurisdiction	Cases Filed					Change	
			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	# +/-	%
6TH	Tuscaloosa	Criminal	4,773	4,588	3,400	3,892	4,285	-488	-10.2%
		Felony	2,305	2,266	1,325	1,999	2,438	133	5.8%
		Other	2,468	2,322	2,075	1,893	1,847	-621	-25.2%
		Civil	1,763	1,835	1,428	1,391	1,330	-433	-24.6%
		Domestic	1,884	1,724	1,605	1,693	1,672	-212	-11.3%
		Original	1,541	1,432	1,341	1,363	1,363	-178	-11.6%
		Modification	343	292	264	330	309	-34	-9.9%
		Juvenile	1,275	1,099	1029	949	1,083	-192	-15.1%
		Child Support	1,066	900	642	692	677	-389	-36.5%
		Total	10,761	10,146	8,104	8,617	9,047	-1,714	-15.9%

COURT LISTENER

What is CourtListener, and how is it helpful?

- CourtListener is a free legal research website containing millions of legal opinions from federal and state courts.
- Fully searchable using real expressions, natural language, and emojis.
- 9M opinions from over a thousand jurisdictions
- Nearly complete SCOTUS record
- More opinions scraped from court websites daily (about 300/day)
- Search and docket alerts for journalists, lawyers, and the public
- API, bulk data, searchable interface

www.courtlistener.com



RECAP The Law – “Turning PACER Around” since 2009

- Browser extensions for Chrome, Safari, Edge, and Firefox that save you money while you use PACER.
- Everything you purchase gets added to our public archive and gets a permalink.
- Everything anybody else purchased you get for free.
- Use RECAP to save money and contribute to a public archive.
- Over 20k users



👉 <https://free.law/recap/> 👈

CourtListener.com - RECAP Archive

- Biggest open collection of federal filings online — 60M cases and 350M items
- Sourced from:
 - Crawling free opinions from PACER
 - RECAP Extension and @recap.email
 - PACER RSS feeds
 - Bulk data gathering services
 - Big Cases Twitter bot & handful of topical case bots
- Full text searchable including scanned docs

CourtListener.com - RECAP Archive

- Excellent for investigative research:
 - Full text search makes background checks more complete
 - Biggest open and searchable collection of federal court filings
- Innumerable historical documents from federal cases:
 - U.S. v. Manafort, U.S. v. Gates, U.S. v. Michael Cohen
 - The “Citizenship on the Census” case
 - “DNC v. Russian Trolls” case
 - Trump Emoluments
- Alerts for dockets to know when new filings are available
- Services available for bulk research without having interns click thousands of PACER documents

RECAP Demo



Recorded Demo: <https://youtu.be/NdfuLlcL1CU>

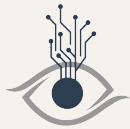
APIs & Webhooks

- An API is like a digital mediator that enables different software applications to talk to each other and exchange information. It defines the methods, parameters, and data formats you can use to access certain features or retrieve data from an application or service.
- A webhook can be thought of as a type of API that is driven by events rather than requests. Instead of one application making a request to another to receive a response, a webhook is a service that allows one program to send data to another as soon as a particular event takes place.

Links to some helpful APIs & Webhooks

- CourtListener REST API: <https://www.courtlistener.com/help/api/rest/>
- CourtListener Webhooks: <https://www.courtlistener.com/help/api/webhooks/>

Other Tools from Free Law Project:



Eyecite

An open source tool for extracting legal citations from text.



Doctor

A microservice for converting and extracting documents and audio files.



Juriscraper

A data gathering library written in Python that collects legal opinions, PACER content, and oral arguments from the American court system.

<https://free.law/projects/eyecite>

<https://free.law/projects/doctor>

<https://free.law/projects/juriscraper>

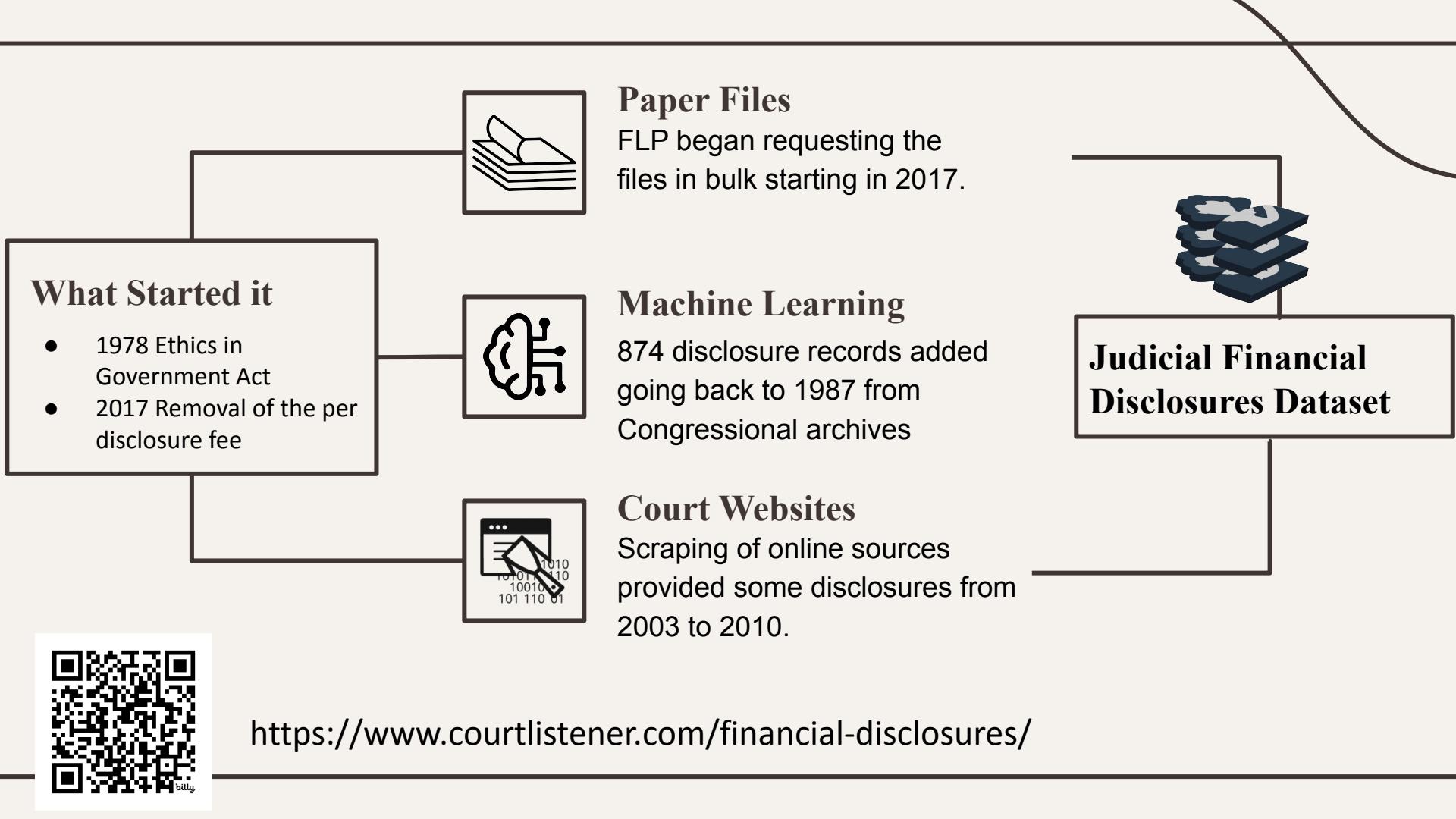
What tools do you like to use?





04

Big Data



How the Data Arrived:



Y4.J89/21 S.HRG.102-505, pt.5

S. Hrg. 102-505, Pr. 5

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS ON FEDERAL APPOINTMENTS

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
ON
CONFIRMATION HEARINGS ON APPOINTMENTS TO THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY

JULY 24, 29, 31, AND SEPTEMBER 26, 1991

Part 5

Serial No. J-102-7

Printed for the use of the Committee on the Judiciary

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JUL 21 1992
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U.S. GOVERNMENT COPY

Digitalized by Google

794

AIG-1B
Rev. 3/87

Annual Report Due by May 15 from Federal Officers and
certain Judicial Employees (28 USC App. L, §§ 301-09)

Person Reporting (Last name, first, middle initial)	Court or Organization	Date of Report
Smith, Fern M.	U.S. Dist. Ct. N.D. Cal.	5/10/88
Judge	Date of Entry/Recommencement/Termination (only if initial or final report)	Reporting Period (Covered Period, or Indefinite term)
Superior Court - Dept 25 Hall of Justice - 850 Bryant St. San Francisco, Ca. 94108	May 9, 1988	1/1/87 5/30/88

IMPORTANT NOTES: Please read the instructions accompanying this form. The report should include information pertaining to your spouse and dependent children, if any. Attach additional sheets if needed, identifying each person covered by the report, and the section(s) being completed. Complete all sections, checking the "NONE" box for each section if you have no reportable information. Compare and reconcile this report with last year's and list items in the same order as last year. Type or print clearly. Sign on last page.

II. POSITIONS. (Reporting individual only; see pp. 15-16 of Instructions.)

POSITION	NAME OF ORGANIZATION/ENTITY
<input type="checkbox"/> NONE (No reportable positions)	
Judge	Superior Court, San Francisco
Trustee	Fern M. Smith Trust

II. AGREEMENTS. (Reporting individual only; see p. 17 of Instructions.)

DATE	PARTIES AND TERMS
<input type="checkbox"/> NONE (No reportable agreements)	
Sept 1986	Fern M. Smith and Bronson Bronsen & McKenna - Part of Partnership Share as of Sept 1986 to be made in annual installments over 5 year period.

III. NON-INVESTMENT INCOME. (Partial disclosure for spouse; see pp. 18-20 of Instructions.)

DATE (Honorary only)	SOURCE AND TYPE	GROSS INCOME (yours, not spouse's)
<input type="checkbox"/> NONE (No reportable non-investment income)		
1	State of California - Wages	\$ 88,600
2	City/County of San Francisco - Wages	\$ 12,760
3	Williams & Burrows, Inc. (S)	\$ -
4	Bronson, Bronsen & McKenna	\$ 1,000
5		\$

Enhancing the Data:

- Free Law Project developed a parsing system for the disclosures.
 - Takes the disclosure, whether it's a single-page TIFF, multi-page TIFF or PDF, scanned document or text, and converts it into machine-readable JSON data.
- A machine learning model to identify pages in the Senate hearing records that looked like financial disclosure documents.
 - Extracted 843 Financial Disclosure from over 250k pages of documents.
- Disclosures were converted into good PDF files and ingested the data into the database
- All data available via CourtListener APIs and website
- Connection of Financial Disclosures dataset with FLP's Judges database

Financial Disclosures for J. Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Download

</>

[2004](#) [2005](#) [2006](#) [2007](#) [2008](#) [2009](#) [2010](#) [2011](#)

[2011 \(2\)](#) [2012](#) [2013](#) [2014](#) [2015](#) [2016](#) [2017](#) [2018](#)

Investments

</>

Admin	Description	Gross Val. Code	Gross Val. Method	Income Code	Income Type	Trans. Date	Trans. Value
edit	Checking account-JP Morgan formerly Morgan Guaranty Trust Co, NYC	100,001-250,000 (M)	Cash Market (T)		None		
edit	TIAA CREF Retirement Accounts (H)						
edit	Columbia Universiv Retirement Plan (H)						
edit	TIAA Traditional		Cash Market (T)	15,001-50,000 (E)	Interest	03/28/18	15,001-50,000 (K)
edit	NJ ABP Pre 1995 303(B) Plan (H)						
edit	TIAA Traditional	250.001-500.000	Cash	5.001-15.000	Interest	03/28/18	15.001-50.000

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2018

Form Reporting Name, Last, first, middle Initial, Suffix
Ginsburg, Ruth

Address of principal place of residence
1 New York Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20530

Date of birth
Born January 16, 1933

Employment
Supreme Court Justice
Term Expires June 30, 2024

REPORT OF INTERESTS: The information contained in this section is limited to assets, debts and other financial interests which are held directly or indirectly by the filer or his/her spouse.

EMPLOYMENT: Name(s) of employer(s) and title(s) held
 Not in employable position POSITION NAME OF ORGANIZATION/ENTITy

AGREEMENTS: Name(s) of person(s) to whom the agreement was made
 Not in employable position DATE PARTIES AND TERMS

Notes

</>

The data in this file was extracted with OCR technology and may contain typos.

- Links to the PDF row (if possible).
- The row may contain a redaction.
- Indicates failed extraction in the cell.

What's in the Dataset?

32,336 disclosures documenting:

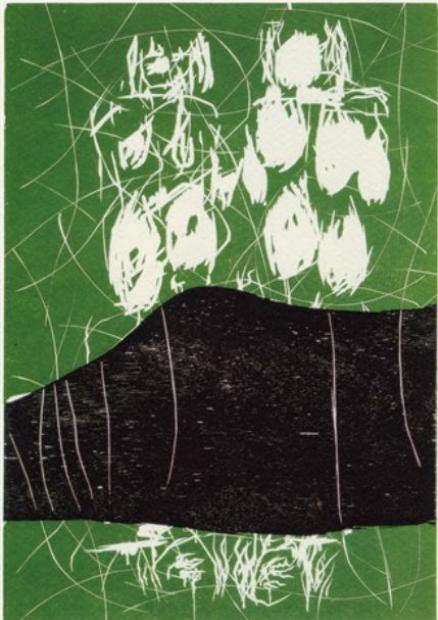
- **1,901,720** investments
- **37,050** positions held outside of the judiciary
- **10,007** legal agreements
- **15,302** sources of non-investment income
- **20,175** sources of spousal income
- **33,472** reimbursements
- **2,028** gifts to judges and judicial employees
- **18,775** debts



Coverage Page: www.courtlistener.com/help/coverage/financial-disclosures/

Inside the Data: Art Collections

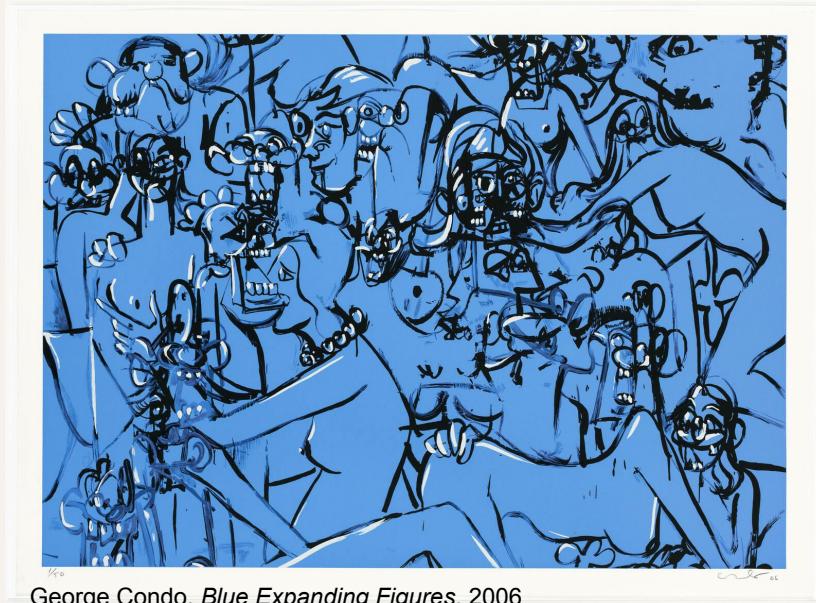
Millions of dollars in art investments



Georg Baselitz, *Der Berg*, 1991



George Condo, *Conversations*, 2011



George Condo, *Blue Expanding Figures*, 2006

Owned by Judge Helene N. White, U. S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

Inside the Data: World Travelers

Travel Reimbursements of just 592 of the 33,472
reimbursements globe.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORT

Page 3 of 6

Name of Person Reporting	Davis, Michael J	Date of Report
		04/18/2008

V. GIFTS* (Includes those to spouse and dependent children; see pp. 28-31 of filing instructions.)

NONE (No reportable gifts.)

SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	VALUE
1. Minneapolis Club	Honorary Membership	\$ 4,500.00
2. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Government	2 brief cases, Figs, crystal obelisk	\$ 150.00
3.		



13.	Japanese Government	Nov. 17-22, 2007	Tokyo, Japan	Educational conference	travel and lodging
14.	Judicial Yuan of Taiwanese Government	Nov. 23-27, 2007	Taipei, China	Educational conference	travel and lodging

Money of the 1% of the 1%

9,653 investments greater than \$1,000,001

- 8,588 investments between \$1,000,001 and \$5,000,000
- 613 investments between \$5,000,001 and \$25,000,000
- 64 investments between \$25,000,001 and \$50,000,000
- 118 investments above \$50,000,001



*This does not account for duplicate investments over multiple years

Redactions (*Ridiculous and others*)

<https://storage.courtlistener.com/us/federal/judicial/financial-disclosures/8587/matthew-joseph-kacsmaryk-disclosure.2016.pdf>

https://storage.courtlistener.com/us/federal/judicial/financial-disclosures/8587/matthew-joseph-kacsmaryk-disclosure.2021_1.pdf

10. College Invest 529 Aggressive Growth Allocation	A	Distribution	J	T			
11. Publix Supermarkets, Inc., Common Stock . (Private)	G	Distribution	P1	U			
12. Wells Fargo Bank Accounts	A	Interest	K	T			
13.							

13. CollegeInvest Age-Based Aggressive Growth	B	Dividend	K	T		
14. [REDACTED] Common Stock	G	Dividend	P2	T		
15.						

Flaws in the Data

- **Self-reported**
 - Misspellings
 - Old companies
 - Different names for same asset or company (The “Wells Fargo” problem)
 - OCR’d from PDFS
- **Investments are reported in ranges so you don’t have an exact dollar amount**
 - How much was really made on a sale or comparing total value of investments may be impossible

A	B	C
	records	judges
1 description		
2 Wells Fargo Bank	34	19
3 Wells Fargo Cash Accounts	33	9
4 Wells Fargo (cash)	32	16
5 Wells Fargo Emerg. Mkts. Equity Mut. Fund	25	1
6 Wells Fargo Short Term Mini. Bond Mut. Fund	25	1
7 Wells Fargo	23	15
8 Wells Fargo & Co (WFC)	23	6
9 Wells Fargo Bank (cash)	22	8
10 WFC	21	7
11 WELLS FARGO BK N A - WFC	20	1
12 Wells Fargo Bank Accounts	20	10
13 Wells Fargo Account	15	7
14 Select Bond (MSA/Wells Capital Mgmt)	13	3
15 Wells Fargo Bank Deposit Sweep	13	2
16 Wells Fargo cash account	13	3
17 WELLS FARGO EMERGING MARKETS EQUITY INSTL CL (EMGNX)	12	2
18 Wells Fargo & Co	12	6
19 Wells Fargo 2.6% Jul 2020	12	1
20 Wells Fargo Cash Account	12	8
21 Wells Fargo Common Stock (WFC)	12	1
22 Wells Fargo Muni Bond Fund - Administration Class	12	1
23 Wells Fargo Sweep Account	12	1
24 Wells Fargo & Co New Common	10	2
25 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.	10	1
26 Wells Fargo CD	10	4
27 Wells Fargo Stock	10	4
28 Wells Fargo Sweep Account (cash)	10	1

Flaws in the Data

IV. REIMBURSEMENTS -- transportation, lodging, food, entertainment.

(Includes those to spouse and dependent children; see pp. 25-27 of filing instructions.)

NONE (No reportable reimbursements.)

SOURCE	DATES	LOCATION	PURPOSE	ITEMS PAID OR PROVIDED
1. University of San Diego	06/17/2019 to 06/28/2019	Paris, France	Teaching	Per Diem

IV. REIMBURSEMENTS -- transportation, lodging, food, entertainment.

(Includes those to spouse and dependent children; see pp. 25-27 of filing instructions.)

NONE (No reportable reimbursements.)

SOURCE	DATES	LOCATION	PURPOSE	ITEMS PAID OR PROVIDED
1. California Bankruptcy Forum	05/17/19-05/19/19	Rancho Mirage, CA	Education Panelist	Hotel / Registration / Meals
2. UCSD	11/10/19-11/17/19	Paris, France	Education Panelist / Lecturer in Sorbonne Winter Symposium	Airfare / Hotel / Other Transportation

- Values not reported at all for reimbursements

SOURCE	DATES	LOCATION	PURPOSE	ITEMS PAID OR PROVIDED
American Law Institute	Jan 16-18, 2019	Philadelphia, PA	Council Meeting	Transportation, meals
American Bar Association	Jan 26-27, 2019	Las Vegas, NV	ROLI Board Meeting	Transportation, lodging, meals
American Bar Association	Mar 28-31, 2019	Seattle, WA	Litigation Magazine Panel	Transportation, lodging, meals
American Law Institute	May 19-22, 2019	Washington, D.C.	Council Meeting	Transportation, meals
University of San Diego	Jun 3-13, 2019	Paris, France	Teaching	Lodging, meals
American Bar Association	Jun 29-Jul 2, 2019	Prague, Czechoslovakia	Speaker, Central European Law Conf. Meeting	Transportation, lodging, meals
American Bar Association	Jul 14-18, 2019	Bogota, Colombia	Judicial Training	Transportation, lodging, meals

Flaws in the Data

- Redactions
 - Corrections

	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA	6170 200 U.S. COURTHOUSE PITTSBURGH, PA 15219 (412) 208-7430
WILLIAM L. STANDISH DISTRICT JUDGE		
July 10, 2008		
		RECEIVED U.S. DISTRICT COURT DISCLOSURE OFFICE 200 JUL 17 A 10 59
<p>Honorable Ortrie Smith, Chair Judicial Conference of the United States Committee on Financial Disclosure Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts One Columbus Circle, N.E. Washington, D.C. 20544</p> <p>RE: Calendar Year 2007 Filing</p> <p>Dear Judge Smith:</p> <p>In response to your June 23, 2008, letter, I have made the following <u>corrections</u> to my Financial Disclosure Report for the calendar year 2007:</p> <p>1. In the Second Part, No. 1, I removed the position of "Co-Trustee of Trust No. 16" from the report. Copies are enclosed for your review. This Trust has been fully Distributed.</p> <p>2. In the Second Part, No. 2, I accidentally deleted Pepsico, Inc., from Page 21, lines 300 and 301. Pepsico, Inc., now appears on the enclosed revision of Page 18, lines 249 and 250.</p> <p>3. In the Second Part, No. 3, I corrected the omissions and enclose herewith three copies of corrected Pages 1, 43, 71, 73, 74 and 100.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Very truly yours,</p> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: black; width: 150px; height: 50px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"></div>		

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORT			Name of Person Reporting			Date of Report
Page 5 of 39			Stein, Sidney H			8/16/2005
VII. INVESTMENTS and TRUSTS – income, value, transactions (includes those of the spouse and dependent children. See pp. 34-57 of filing instructions.)						
A. Description of Assets (including trust assets)	B. Income during reporting period		C. Gross value at end of reporting period		D. Transactions during reporting period	
	(1) Amount Code 1 (A-H)	(2) Type (e.g. div, rent, or int.)	(1) Value Code 2 (I-P)	(2) Value Method Code 3 (Q-W)	(1) Type (e.g. buy, sell, merger, redemption)	(2) Date Month Year (A-H) (3) Value Code 2 (I-P) (4) Value Method Code 3 (Q-W) (5) Identify of hypercaller (if private transaction)
Place "XX" after each asset exempt from prior disclosure						
73. CHINA TELECOM CORP. LTD.						
74. CHINA TELECOM CORP. LTD.	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
75. CIGNA CORP.	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
76. CISCO SYSTEMS					[REDACTED]	
77. CISCO SYSTEMS	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
78. CONOCO PHILLIPS					[REDACTED]	
79. CONOCO PHILLIPS	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
80. CONSTELLATION ENERGY	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
81. COOPER INDUSTRIES CL. A	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
82. DELL COMPUTERS	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
83. EMC CORP. MASS.					[REDACTED]	
84. EMC CORP. MASS.	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
85. EBAY INC.					[REDACTED]	
86. EBAY INC.					[REDACTED]	
87. EBAY INC.	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	
88. FOREST LABS CL. A					[REDACTED]	
89. FOREST LABS CL. A					[REDACTED]	
90. FOREST LABS CL. A	[REDACTED]				[REDACTED]	

Flaws in the Data

Newer forms: pub.jefs.uscourts.gov/

Get Access and Search

You must agree to the following to access and search reports.

I understand that it is unlawful to obtain or use this or these reports for: any unlawful purpose; any commercial purpose other than by news and communication media for dissemination to the general public; determining or establishing of the credit rating of any individual; or use, directly or indirectly, in the solicitation of money for any political, charitable, or other purpose (5 U.S.C. § 13107).

I understand that whoever, in any manner within the jurisdiction of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the Government of the United States, knowingly and willfully (1) fabricates, conceals, or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact; (2) makes any materially false fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation; or (3) makes or uses any false writing or document, knowing the same to contain any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry, shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. [Register for Access to the Database](#)

Section 13107 of title 5, United States Code :
requested. Failure to comply with these statu
of the Financial Disclosure Requirements of f
be disclosed to members of the Judicial Con
judicial officers and employees who have a
the individuals whose reports are accessed, i
information in the performance of their duty:

Your Name (First Last) * * Indicates Required Field
Occupation *
Email
Telephone
Address Line 1 *
Address Line 2
City *
State / Province *
Zip / Postal Code *
Requesting on Behalf of *

 I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. (28 U.S.C. § 1746)
Please note, section 13107(b)(2)(A) of title 5, U.S. Code requires that you provide your name, occupation and address. Section 13107
(b)(2)(B) requires that if you are obtaining a report at the request of, or on behalf of, another individual or an organization, you must
specifically list that individual or organization. Failure to comply with these statutory requirements is cause to deny your request.

Note: Users must register each time they acc
[Begin Registration](#)

[Cancel](#) [Enter Database](#)

X

Year	Report Type	Court Name	Position	Sort By
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Relevance <input type="button" value="Best Matches First"/>

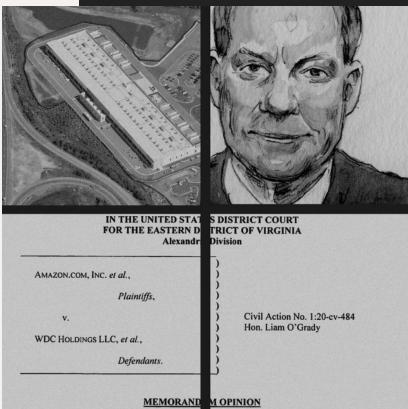
Check the box to the left for each financial disclosure report you wish to download. Refine your search to narrow by categories or adjust your keywords for search. Multiple options in each category may be selected.

Gilstrap, James R.
District Judge
U.S. District Court - Texas Eastern

Annual, 2022 Periodic Transaction Report, Oct 11, 2022 Periodic Transaction Report, Sep 21, 2022 Periodic Transaction Report, Sep 1, 2022 Annual, 2021

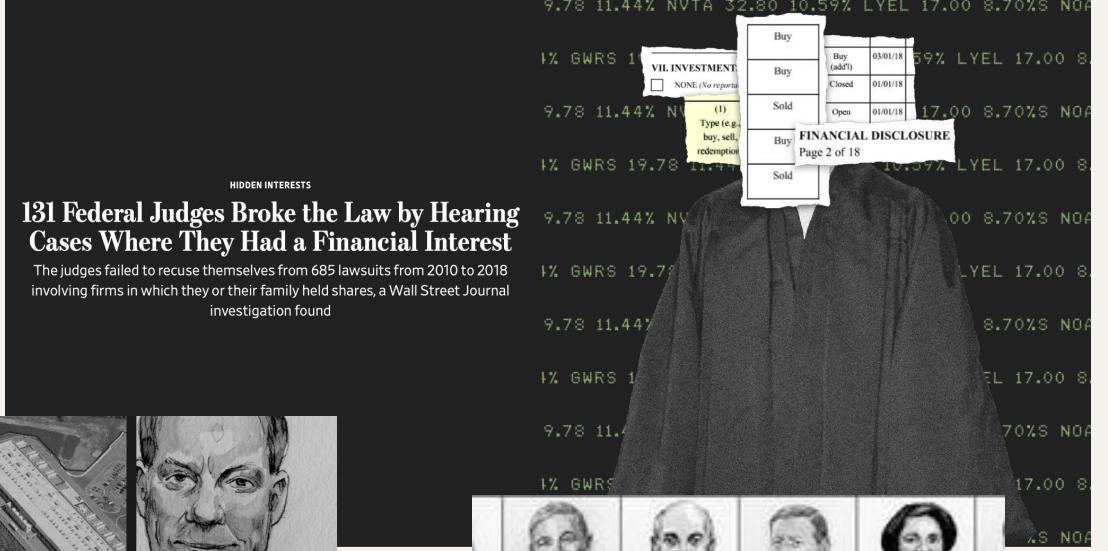
Coulter Jones

To discover recusal violations, The Wall Street Journal reviewed the financial holdings of roughly 700 federal district and appellate judges and compared them against tens of thousands of court cases.



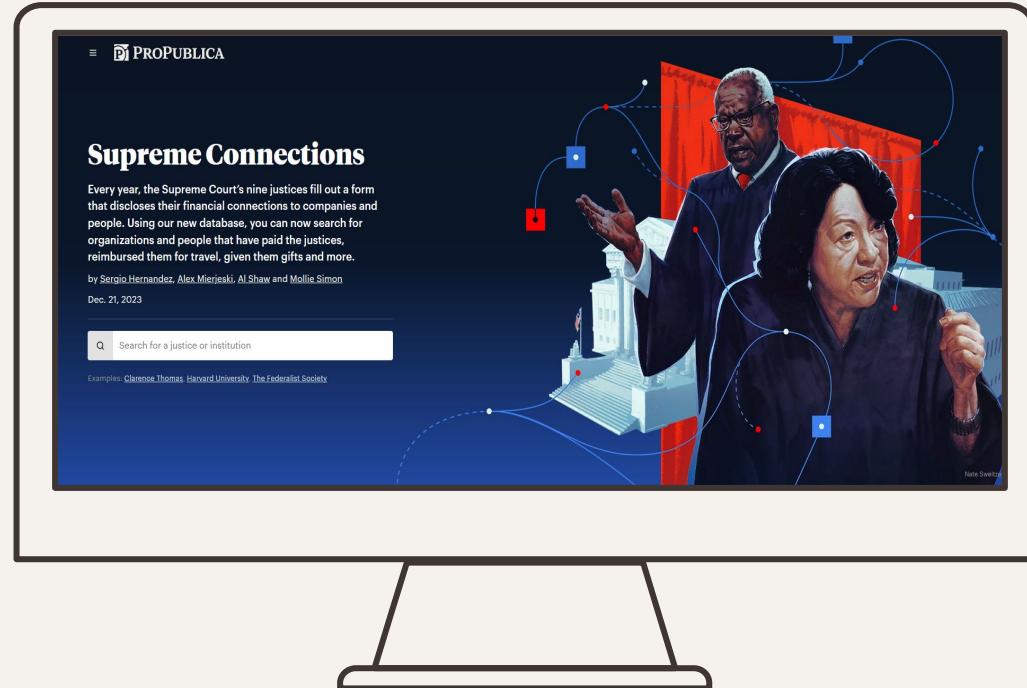
131 Federal Judges Broke the Law by Hearing Cases Where They Had a Financial Interest

The judges failed to recuse themselves from 685 lawsuits from 2010 to 2018 involving firms in which they or their family held shares, a Wall Street Journal investigation found



Mollie Simon

ProPublica's database: you can now search for organizations and people that have paid the justices, reimbursed them for travel, given them gifts and more.



<https://projects.propublica.org/supreme-connections/>

Bulk Data from Free Law Project

Bulk Data Download

- Free monthly dataset
- Full data for case law, disclosures, judges, and more
- Massive CSVs

Replication

- Complete database accessible via SQL
- Incredible for building custom tools
- Updated in real time

Custom Data Gathering

- Can do almost anything
- Win-win-win
- PACER fees get expensive

What questions
can you ask to
contextualize a case?



05 Other Ways to Gather Data



Hitting the Digital Wall

Interrogate Your Search

- Name variations
- Court jurisdiction
- Available time period

Talk to People

- Clerks
- Attorneys
- Prosecutors
- Academics

Look Offline

- Public terminals
- Archives

Consult Outside Resources

- Law review articles
- News coverage
- Press releases
- Public records

FOIA: The Status Quo

- Secretive culture; difficult to get anything beyond court docs
- Common Law right of access
 - Frequently used for court records
 - Little (visible) use on administrative records
- Common Law's two tenets:
 - Is it a public document?
 - Is the public's need greater than the gov't privacy?

What Could We Get - Top Ten (1/2)

1.

Disciplinary actions and complaints for judges and attorneys, whistleblower reports, disbarment proceedings, admission records

2.

Financial records and contracts

3.

Fines and fees levied

4.

AO court guidance letters

5.

Security audits, recovery plans, and incident reports

What Could We Get - Top Ten (2/2)

6.

SCOTUS public
calendar

7.

Judicial Conference
committee membership
and minutes

8.

List of all judges past
and present

9.

FJC Integrated DB but
with judge information

10.

The next top ten list



Include/Exclude?

- Sealed documents?
- Court documents (e.g. trial exhibits)?
- Judicial papers?
- Clerk selection criteria?
- Retirement letters to the president?
- FISA courts?

Problems to Overcome

- How do you appeal rejected requests?
- How close to judicial proceedings and papers do you go?
- Will judges sour on FOIA oversight?
- Huge requests: “I want all filings, please.”



Bad Redactions: Sharpies

ng bank records obtained from East West Bank (.25); research
ng [REDACTED]

Bad Redactions: Side Channel

The screenshot shows a news article from SLATE. The header features the word "SLATE" in large white letters on a dark background, with "News & Politics" underlined. Below the header is a sub-headline: "EVERYDAY BLAH BLAH BLAH AND THE KITCHEN-TABLE ZZZZZZZZ". The main title of the article is "THE SLATEST" followed by "We Cracked the Redactions in the Ghislaine Maxwell Deposition". A subtitle below the main title reads: "Here's what it says about Bill Clinton, Alan Dershowitz, and Prince Andrew. Plus: Help us decode more names." The URL of the article is visible at the bottom of the screenshot.

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/10/ghislaine-maxwell-deposition-redactions-epstein-how-to-crack.html>

Bad Redactions: Font Metrics

MATT BURGESS

SECURITY NOV 25, 2022 7:00 AM

Redacted Documents Are Not as Secure as You Think

Popular redaction tools don't always work as promised, and new attacks can reveal hidden information, researchers say.

<https://www.wired.com/story/redact-pdf-online-privacy/>

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2206.02285v2.pdf>

Bad Redactions: Rectangles

She answered ████. (Ex. 1 at p. 61 of 68; Ex. 2 at p. 45 of 52).

<https://www.wired.com/story/redact-pdf-online-privacy/>

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2206.02285v2.pdf>

For Example:

The screenshot shows a BBC News article page. At the top is the BBC logo (three black squares with white letters 'B', 'B', 'C'). Below it is a navigation bar with links: Home, News, Sport, Business, Innovation, Culture, Travel, Earth, Video, and Live. The main title of the article is "Failed redaction reveals Paul Manafort's 'lies to FBI'". Below the title is the publication date: "8th January 2019, 02:30 PST". To the right of the date is a "Share" button with a small icon.

BBC

Home News Sport Business Innovation Culture Travel Earth Video Live

Failed redaction reveals Paul Manafort's 'lies to FBI'

8th January 2019, 02:30 PST

Share

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-46804127>

<https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/6183591/471/united-states-v-manafort/>

X-RAY

- Fast and effective tool to identify bad redactions in PDF files.
- Released as a well-maintained open source utility
- API coming soon!

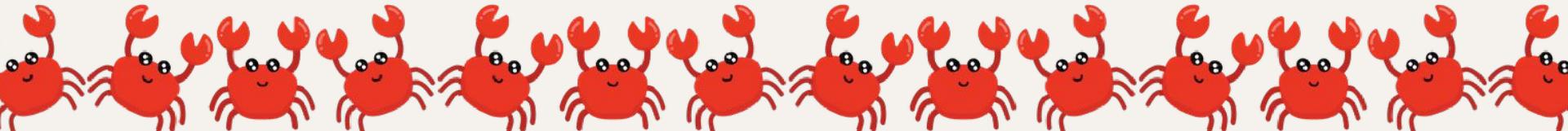


<https://free.law/projects/x-ray>

What do you do when you
hit walls in the courts?



What sorts of cases might involve Universities?





06

Example Stories

Mollie Simon

Story Examples & Discussion

www.propublica.org/series/the-title-pawn-trap



Debt

**TitleMax
Demands High-
Interest Payments
From Borrowers
in Bankruptcy**

by Margaret Coker, The Current, and Joel Jacobs and Mollie Simon, ProPublica,
Illustrations by Laila Milevski, special to
ProPublica

July 13, 2023, 5 a.m. EDT

Coulter Jones

Story Examples & Discussion

U.S.

Baltimore Felony Conviction Rates Fall Under State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby

City's top prosecutor says her results are good and blames police in part for rise in cases dropped by DA's office

By Scott Calvert [Follow](#) and Coulter Jones [Follow](#)

Updated Nov. 22, 2016 8:28 pm ET

⎙ [Bookmark](#) [A A](#) [Resize](#) [60](#)

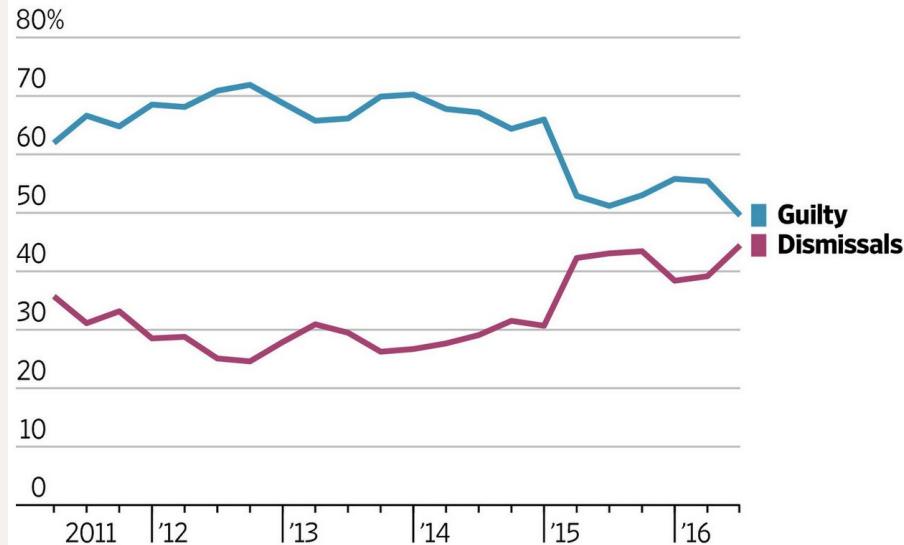
[Gift unlocked article](#)



Baltimore State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby, center, shown in September 2015. PHOTO: BRYAN WOOLSTON/REUTERS

Convictions Decline

Fewer closed felony cases in Baltimore are ending in convictions, as charges dropped or set aside by prosecutors have increased since 2015.



Note: Dismissals include those where charges were dropped or placed on the inactive docket.

Source: Journal analysis of closed felony cases in Baltimore City Circuit Court

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Download the Tips Sheet with Links:

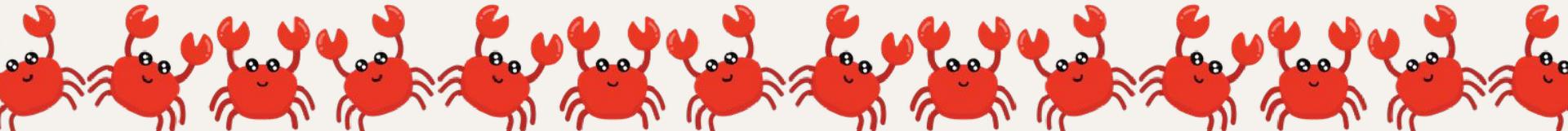


<https://bit.ly/TipSheetNICARbecomingCL>

Questions?



Breakout into Smaller Groups/Hands on Help



Thank you!!



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