SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

	IN	THE	SUPREME	COURT	OF	THE	UNITED	STATES
					-		_	
CARLOS	VE	GΑ,)	
			Petitio	oner,)	
		v.) No. 2	21-499
TERENCI	ΞВ	. TE	KOH,)	
			Respond	dent.)	

Pages: 1 through 82

Place: Washington, D.C.

Date: April 20, 2022

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1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE	UNITED STATES
2		
3	CARLOS VEGA,)
4	Petitioner,)
5	v.) No. 21-499
6	TERENCE B. TEKOH,)
7	Respondent.)
8		
9		
10	Washington, D.	C.
11	Wednesday, April	20, 2022
12		
13	The above-entitled matt	er came on for
14	oral argument before the Supre	me Court of the
15	United States at 10:00 a.m.	
16		
17	APPEARANCES:	
18	ROMAN MARTINEZ, ESQUIRE, Washi	ngton, D.C.; on behalf
19	of the Petitioner.	
20	VIVEK SURI, Assistant to the S	olicitor General,
21	Department of Justice, Was	hington, D.C.; for the
22	United States, as amicus c	uriae, supporting the
23	Petitioner.	
24	PAUL L. HOFFMAN, ESQUIRE, Herm	osa Beach, California;
25	on behalf of the Responden	t.

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:00 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We will hear
4	argument this morning in Case 21-499, Vega
5	versus Tekoh.
6	Mr. Martinez.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF ROMAN MARTINEZ
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
9	MR. MARTINEZ: Mr. Chief Justice, and
10	may it please the Court:
11	The Ninth Circuit's extension of
12	Miranda into 1983 litigation is inconsistent
13	with settled precedent and sound policy. For
14	two reasons, you should reverse.
15	First, Miranda is a judicially crafted
16	prophylactic rule, and the violation of such a
17	rule doesn't violate the constitutional rights
18	of any person. That's what the Chavez plurality
19	said, reiterating pre-Dickerson holdings that
20	Miranda violations result in no constitutional
21	deprivation, that's Payne, and no identifiable
22	constitutional harm, that's Elstad.
23	Tekoh and the Ninth Circuit say that
24	Dickerson abandoned these cases. But, in fact,
25	Dickerson reaffirmed their limits on Miranda's

- 1 scope. The cases show that Miranda's
- 2 presumption of coercion applies only when courts
- 3 assess whether a statement is admissible in the
- 4 prosecution's case-in-chief at trial. In that
- 5 context, when a defendant's liberty is at stake,
- 6 Miranda creates a protective fence around the
- 7 Fifth Amendment. It gives defendants a windfall
- 8 benefit by excluding statements that are
- 9 completely voluntary. A trial court's Miranda
- 10 violation taking away that windfall is
- 11 reversible error, but it doesn't violate the
- 12 defendant's actual Fifth Amendment rights, and
- it doesn't trigger a right to money damages.
- 14 Second, as Tekoh now concedes, the
- Ninth Circuit's proximate causation holding is
- 16 wrong. That concession provides a complete
- 17 basis for reversal here. Officers can't be held
- 18 liable when the mistakes are made by prosecutors
- 19 and judges.
- 20 Tekoh tries to rescue his case with a
- 21 brand-new causation theory based on alleged
- 22 lies. But that theory can't work for him here.
- 23 It's inconsistent with his jury instruction. It
- 24 was forfeited below. Its factual premise was
- 25 rejected by the jury. And it's legally baseless

- 1 in any event.
- 2 Sergeant Vega's conduct has been
- 3 exonerated from every angle by four different
- 4 fact finders. Two judges said Miranda warnings
- 5 weren't required. A jury said there was no
- 6 fabrication of evidence. Both juries said there
- 7 was no coercion. This case should end.
- 8 Unless the Court has questions, I'll
- 9 start with our view of what --
- 10 JUSTICE THOMAS: Mr. Martinez, the --
- in -- in Dickerson, we held -- the Court held
- that Miranda could not be displaced by a federal
- 13 statute by Congress.
- If that's the case, then why is it not
- 15 a constitutional -- a -- a right secured by the
- 16 Constitution and, hence, actionable under 1983?
- 17 MR. MARTINEZ: Your Honor, we -- we
- 18 read Dickerson as saying that -- that -- that
- 19 Miranda has constitutional status,
- 20 constitutional underpinnings, and we agree with
- 21 the other side --
- JUSTICE THOMAS: What does that mean?
- MR. MARTINEZ: I think what that means
- is that it can't be -- it can't be overturned by
- 25 statute. But I think Dickerson was very clear

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1 that it was not -- you know, there was a dispute
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- 2 in Dickerson between the majority opinion and
- 3 Justice Scalia, where Justice Scalia was saying
- 4 the majority's theory here is basically that
- 5 Miranda violates -- that a Miranda violation is
- 6 a violation of Fifth Amendment rights. And the
- 7 Court very clearly didn't -- was not willing to
- 8 say that.
- 9 I think the dispute between us here on
- 10 what Dickerson does is whether Dickerson
- 11 essentially changes the status quo and overturns
- 12 the line of pre-Dickerson cases, the cases that
- 13 came between Miranda and Dickerson, which
- 14 repeatedly said that a violation of Miranda
- doesn't violate anyone's constitutional rights.
- And the Chavez plurality, I think,
- 17 addresses this issue head on, and it says that
- 18 because Miranda's a judicially created
- 19 prophylactic rule, the violation of that rule
- doesn't violate anyone's constitutional rights.
- 21 And that's consistent, as I was saying earlier,
- 22 with what the Court had previously said in cases
- 23 like Payne and Elstad.
- JUSTICE THOMAS: Yeah, but I couldn't
- get a majority in Chavez, so the -- that -- I

- don't know how much that does for you.
- 2 Would you tell me, what is the -- how
- 3 could something be both -- a rule be both
- 4 prophylactic and constitutional?
- 5 MR. MARTINEZ: I think it can be
- 6 prophylactic and constitutional because the
- 7 whole purpose of the rule is to protect the
- 8 underlying constitutional right against
- 9 compelled self-incrimination.
- 10 So what this Court has said repeatedly
- in the cases between Miranda and Dickerson but
- 12 also in -- in the Chavez plurality is that,
- essentially, the -- the rule is prophylactic in
- the sense that it sweeps more broadly than the
- 15 Fifth Amendment itself. It excludes statements
- that are voluntary and therefore themselves
- 17 would not violate the Fifth Amendment.
- 18 And the Court has said in Dickerson
- 19 that this extra measure of protection is needed
- 20 for a reason, because it's hard to know what
- 21 goes on inside the interrogation room, and when
- 22 a defendant's liberty is at stake in a criminal
- 23 trial and when the prosecution's trying to use a
- 24 statement as part of its case-in-chief at trial,
- we're essentially going to presume coercion.

- 1 We're going to presume a Fifth Amendment
- 2 violation in that context.
- 3 So what the cases do essentially is
- 4 create a presumption of coercion in that one
- 5 context. But the presumption of coercion is
- 6 very different from actual coercion, and we know
- 7 that from all of the pre-Dickerson cases, which
- 8 essentially say that statements that would be
- 9 excludable under Miranda because they are
- 10 presumed to have been coerced can nonetheless be
- 11 used in other ways that would be impermissible
- if they were actually coerced.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Martinez,
- if I could focus just for a minute on the
- language of the cause of action here, 1983. It
- 16 gives individuals a right against the
- 17 "deprivation of any rights, privileges, or
- 18 immunities secured by the Constitution and
- 19 laws."
- Now, under Miranda, you have a right
- 21 not to have unwarned confessions admitted into
- 22 evidence. You wouldn't have that right if it
- 23 weren't for the Constitution. So why isn't that
- 24 right one secured by the Constitution?
- MR. MARTINEZ: Well, I think for a

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1 couple reasons, Your Honor.
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- I think, first of all, you have a
- 3 precedential reason, which is that both before
- 4 and after Dickerson, the Court has made clear or
- 5 at least a majority before Dickerson and then
- 6 the plurality in Chavez, I think, interpreting
- 7 the whole line of cases, including Dickerson --
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Right. Well,
- 9 let's focus on the -- on the text.
- 10 MR. MARTINEZ: Okay.
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It seems to me
- 12 that you -- you wouldn't have a Miranda right if
- it weren't for the Constitution.
- MR. MARTINEZ: Well, we don't --
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The right is
- 16 secured by the Constitution.
- 17 MR. MARTINEZ: -- we don't think that
- 18 Miranda creates a Fifth Amendment right in the
- 19 sense that's relevant here in the 1983 context.
- 20 And I think one way to think about
- 21 this is we -- there are all sorts of evidentiary
- 22 rules that are out there that a defendant can
- 23 invoke at a criminal trial or a party can invoke
- 24 in litigation. There are all sorts of
- evidentiary rules that can be invoked, but no

- one thinks that the -- that those evidentiary
- 2 rules create rights that are enforceable in
- 3 1983.
- I think the two examples that I'll
- 5 give you, the exclusionary rule under the Fourth
- 6 Amendment is a -- is a rule of law that can be
- 7 invoked by the defendant, but in Calandra, this
- 8 Court recognized that it doesn't create a
- 9 personal constitutional right in the relevant
- 10 sense.
- 11 Federal Rules of Evidence is another
- 12 example. If I sue a state government under
- 13 Title VII on an employment discrimination claim
- and the opposing counsel for the state
- introduces a statement that was in violation of
- the hearsay rule or in violation of the rule
- 17 against character evidence, that violates a rule
- 18 of evidence that -- that's a law of the United
- 19 States.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Right. A
- 21 right -- a right --
- MR. MARTINEZ: But it's not a right
- under 1983. You can't get damages for that.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It's a right
- 25 secured by the Federal Rules of Evidence. What

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1 is the comparable provision that secures the
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- 2 Miranda right? Under your example, it's the
- 3 Federal Rule of Evidence that secures the right.
- What's comparable in your --
- 5 MR. MARTINEZ: We just don't think
- 6 it's -- it -- we think -- we think the
- 7 Constitution secures the ability to block the
- 8 statement. We don't dispute that. What we're
- 9 saying is that the Constitution doesn't -- in
- 10 here, the claim that's being brought is that
- it's the Fifth Amendment and that's the only
- 12 argument that the other side has made.
- We just don't think that the Fifth
- 14 Amendment creates that -- that -- creates a
- 15 right that is, you know, enforceable or that --
- 16 that is violated when Miranda -- an unwarned
- 17 statement is admitted.
- And, again, that's consistent with how
- 19 the Chavez plurality, I think, correctly read
- 20 Dickerson and the pre-Dickerson cases to -- to
- 21 kind of come up with a -- a coherent
- 22 harmonization of this Court's cases starting
- with Miranda, taking the intervening cases
- 24 between Miranda and Dickerson, and then
- 25 Dickerson itself. All those cases, I think, are

- 1 best read the way that the Chavez plurality read
- 2 them to essentially say, yeah, Miranda is
- 3 important and it's constitutionalized, you can't
- 4 overturn it, but, at the same time, a
- 5 depravation of a judicially created prophylactic
- 6 rule like the one in Miranda doesn't violate the
- 7 constitutional rights of any person.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I mean, it does strike
- 9 me, Mr. Martinez, that you -- you keep on
- saying, like, both before and after Dickerson.
- 11 Now, after Dickerson, you're relying mostly on a
- 12 plurality, which, as Justice Thomas said, is a
- 13 plurality. And before Dickerson, you know, you
- 14 definitely have some good cases on your side.
- But then there's Dickerson, and
- 16 Dickerson says something that's quite different
- 17 from the before Dickerson cases, where, you
- 18 know, even though Chief Justice Rehnquist didn't
- 19 do exactly -- you know, state in exactly so many
- 20 words, as -- as you suggested, that there was,
- 21 you know, a right to -- of -- that Miranda gave
- 22 rise to, he -- he said all but that in exactly
- the way Justice Thomas suggested.
- MR. MARTINEZ: Justice Kagan, I
- 25 respectfully would disagree with that, but I

- 1 think you have put your finger on the kind of
- issue, which is what exactly does Dickerson do.
- 3 And just to frame this issue, if you look at
- 4 what the Ninth Circuit said, this is at page 20a
- 5 of the petition appendix.
- 6 The Ninth Circuit says that "the
- 7 Supreme Court in no way maintained the status
- 8 quo" and "it affirmatively backed away from" the
- 9 prior cases. So it reads Dickerson as a -- as a
- 10 decision that -- that creates this evulsive
- 11 change, rejects the earlier cases, comes up with
- 12 something new.
- 13 If you look at the language of
- 14 Dickerson itself, it's exactly the opposite, and
- 15 I would refer the Court to page 443 of
- 16 Dickerson. When Dickerson is talking about this
- 17 alleged discrepancy between the Miranda rule and
- 18 the post-Miranda cases, Justice Scalia had --
- 19 and others had argued that Miranda should be
- 20 overturned because there's the -- the case law
- 21 is incoherent. And the -- the -- the Court in
- 22 Dickerson says no. The theoretical
- 23 underpinnings of Miranda are perfectly
- 24 consistent with the post-Miranda cases that
- 25 we're relying on, and it says that -- that these

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are all consistent, it's one harmonious --
1
                JUSTICE KAGAN: But, in fact, what --
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 3
               MR. MARTINEZ: -- you don't see a --
                JUSTICE KAGAN: -- Dickerson does is
 4
      Dickerson says there's a constitutional baseline
 5
 6
     here, and, you know, it might be that Congress
7
      could come up with something that's just as
      effective as Miranda or more so, but that's what
 8
 9
      Congress would have to do. If Congress wants to
      intervene in this area, there is a
10
11
      constitutional baseline of procedures that are
12
      constitutionally necessary to secure the
     constitutional Fifth Amendment right.
13
14
               MR. MARTINEZ: That's exactly right,
15
     Your Honor, but -- but the justification
16
     Dickerson gave was not that this is do -- we're
17
     now -- we're doing something new. In fact, it
     was the opposite. It said that we've always
18
19
     done this. It looked back and it said Miranda
20
     was always a constitutional decision --
21
                JUSTICE KAGAN: To the extent it does
2.2
     that, it essentially recasts the precedent in
23
      its own light. But it's the relevant precedent
24
     here.
25
               MR. MARTINEZ: I -- I agree with that,
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- 1 but I just think that you need to read the -- or
- 2 focus on the part of the precedent where it says
- 3 that the post-Miranda cases that clarify the
- 4 rule and -- and what it means, the post-Miranda
- 5 cases that we're relying on, that those are
- 6 perfectly consistent with the theoretical
- 7 underpinnings of Miranda itself.
- 8 And so I think Dickerson very
- 9 consciously is saying -- you know, it's not
- 10 saying, hey, we zigzagged a couple times and
- 11 we've got to zigzag back. It's saying, no, this
- is actually a consistent, common-sense, coherent
- 13 line of cases.
- I think it's really driven by Justice
- Rehnquist's and Chief Justice Rehnquist's votes
- and opinions throughout this entire line of
- 17 doctrine, including Dickerson and Chavez and in
- 18 the earlier cases as well, and it
- 19 basically says, yeah, Miranda is
- 20 constitutionalized, it's very important.
- 21 It's -- you know, you can't overturn it by
- 22 statute, but that doesn't mean that it creates a
- 23 kind of presumption of coercion that applies in
- 24 every single context.
- 25 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, if that's

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1 the case, then what do we do with Dickerson's
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- 2 observation that if we don't view it as
- 3 having -- as being constitutionally required,
- 4 that -- I'm using the language of Dickerson, all
- 5 right -- what do we do with calling it a
- 6 prophylactic rule, which Dickerson rejected
- 7 expressly?
- 8 It said that language is loosely used
- 9 and doesn't suggest that it's not
- 10 constitutionally required. If it's
- 11 constitutionally required, why does it bind
- 12 state courts? Why do we have habeas review?
- MR. MARTINEZ: We --
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If we do what
- 15 you're suggesting and go back to the
- 16 prophylactic language, we are suggesting that
- 17 you want us to overturn --
- MR. MARTINEZ: Your Honor --
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- the essence of
- 20 Dickerson and Miranda.
- MR. MARTINEZ: No. We -- we have no
- 22 quarrel with those cases. We have no objection
- 23 to any of those cases at all. We think -- we
- 24 don't think that Dickerson rejected the
- 25 prophylactic rule language, and we know that

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1 because Dickerson said it was consistent with
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- 2 the -- the pre-Dickerson cases.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, it said --
- 4 MR. MARTINEZ: We know that as --
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I -- I'll quote
- 6 Dickerson. Conceded that there is language in
- 7 some of our opinions that supports the view
- 8 taken by the court of appeals suggesting that
- 9 the court's earlier statement suggesting that
- 10 Miranda was merely prophylactic and its
- 11 conclusion that Miranda protections were not
- 12 constitutionally required, and it rejected the
- 13 prophylactic description.
- MR. MARTINEZ: No, Your Honor, I think
- it rejected the conclusion that the Constitution
- 16 doesn't require it.
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All right.
- MR. MARTINEZ: And -- and just --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, then we go
- 20 back to the Chief's question.
- MR. MARTINEZ: Sure.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But I -- if we say
- 23 the Constitution doesn't require it --
- MR. MARTINEZ: We're -- we're not
- 25 arguing that.

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1
                JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- how do we have
 2
     habeas review and how do we get to tell state
      courts that they have to follow a rule that's
 3
 4
     not constitutionally required?
               MR. MARTINEZ: Your -- Your Honor,
 5
 6
      just to be very clear, we are not asking you to
 7
      overturn Dickerson. We think that -- that
     Dickerson is -- is what it is. We think it's
8
 9
     perfectly good law. In fact, I think we said
      some nice things about it --
10
11
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Just answer --
12
               MR. MARTINEZ: -- in our brief.
13
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- my question.
14
               MR. MARTINEZ: But I'm -- I --
15
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If it's a
16
     prophylactic rule --
17
               MR. MARTINEZ: Sure.
18
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- not required by
19
      the Constitution, is it required by the
20
     Constitution or not?
21
               MR. MARTINEZ: I think Dickerson says
2.2
     that it -- that it has to --
23
               JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If it's required,
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then we go back to the Chief's reading of the

language of 1983, but I still don't understand

24

1 how using the word "prophylactic" gets you out

- 2 of 1983.
- 3 MR. MARTINEZ: So I think what
- 4 "prophylactic" means is that -- what the Court
- 5 has said is that we need this prophylactic rule.
- 6 We need to go broader than the Constitution
- 7 itself. We need to presume coercion in this
- 8 context in order to protect the underlying right
- 9 against compelled self-incrimination.
- 10 And so it's kind of an adjunct.
- 11 It's -- but that's different from saying that it
- 12 violates the actual constitutional rights of
- 13 someone if a statement is admitted.
- 14 And that's why the Court said that
- 15 repeatedly in Payne and Elstad, and that's why I
- think the Chavez plurality correctly harmonized
- 17 the case law and recognized that that was true
- 18 even after Dickerson.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Can you tell me
- 20 why we're here? You have two -- I don't want
- 21 you to stop before you get to the second, the
- 22 proximate cause, okay?
- 23 You are right that the other side
- 24 never gave the trial courts below an instruction
- 25 consistent with its position today that the only

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1 statements that it could rely upon are -- as
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- 2 giving it a cause of action are statements that
- 3 were falsely made by the police. So there's
- 4 some sort of estoppel going on here. So I'm not
- 5 sure how they can win no matter what we find.
- 6 MR. MARTINEZ: We agree with that,
- 7 Your Honor.
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All right. And so
- 9 assuming that we don't touch Miranda or
- 10 Dickerson and take it at its face and we go to
- 11 your second point, proximate causation, you win
- 12 because there's some sort of estoppel here?
- MR. MARTINEZ: So I -- I think just to
- 14 be very clear because I want to make sure that
- analytically we're -- we're all set, on the
- 16 first issue, we agree, we don't have to touch
- 17 Miranda or Dickerson. You don't have to
- overturn those decisions, but we can still win
- 19 based on the understanding of Miranda and
- 20 Dickerson that was put forth in the Chavez
- 21 plurality and that we think is right.
- 22 If you agree with us on that, you can
- 23 stop there, we win the case. If you want to
- then turn to proximate causation, I think the
- 25 most straightforward way to resolve the case is

- 1 to say that the Ninth Circuit decided this case
- 2 based on the instruction that was proposed and
- 3 the theory that was put forward that the Ninth
- 4 Circuit's analysis of that is wrong for the --
- 5 for the reasons that we argued in our brief and
- 6 that they essentially concede. And I think you
- 7 could just end it right there if you wanted to
- 8 reach a holding on proximate causation.
- 9 But just to be clear, we do think we
- 10 have an independent basis to win on our first
- 11 argument. If you want to go beyond that on
- 12 proximate causation, I'm happy to talk about why
- we think that theory both was not preserved
- 14 below, not preserved at the cert stage here,
- inconsistent with their jury instructions --
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If --
- 17 MR. MARTINEZ: -- factually --
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If --
- MR. MARTINEZ: -- unsupported. We can
- 20 talk about all that too.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Two prosecutors
- 22 below and a judge at trial permitted the
- 23 statement to come in. But, in my experience,
- 24 the prosecutor offers a statement based on what
- 25 the police officer says, and it's not until a

- 1 hearing or the trial that the defense puts on
- 2 his or her side of the story. And then it's the
- 3 jury who decides whether or not that confession
- 4 was, in fact, coerced. If there's a conviction,
- 5 clearly, the defense's story has not been
- 6 believed. If there's an acquittal, like there
- 7 was here, it's an open question as to whether or
- 8 not the police officer was believed or not.
- 9 But I don't understand how you can say
- 10 that there's an intervening cause by a judge or
- 11 a prosecutor in introducing a statement if
- they're not the ultimate arbiter of who's
- 13 telling the truth.
- 14 MR. MARTINEZ: Well, I -- I think two
- points on that if I can answer, Mr. Chief
- 16 Justice.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Certainly.
- MR. MARTINEZ: I think two points on
- 19 that.
- 20 First of all, here, there was a
- 21 suppression hearing. There was a full-blown
- 22 adversarial suppressing hearing. Both sides --
- that was the -- that's the point in time in the
- 24 case in which both sides have to come forward
- 25 with their best evidence to argue about the

- 1 admissibility of the statement. And twice in
- 2 front of both criminal trial judges, because
- 3 this was done twice, twice the trial judge
- 4 agreed with us that there was no Miranda warning
- 5 that was required here.
- 6 And so I think that in and of itself
- 7 is significant, and I think, you know, this
- 8 Section 1983 litigation really is an attempt to
- 9 relitigate that sort of fundamental point.
- 10 And so I -- I guess I'll -- I'll leave
- it there, but I'm happy to come back to it in
- 12 the seriatim questioning.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 14 counsel.
- Justice Thomas, anything?
- Justice Breyer?
- 17 Justice Sotomayor?
- 18 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Martinez, you
- 19 mentioned before Chief Justice Rehnquist's
- 20 journey in these cases. I just want to talk a
- 21 little bit about that. I appreciate that you
- 22 think that your position does not undermine or
- isn't consistent with Dickerson, but I kind of
- 24 want to assume that that's not true or at least
- 25 have you assume that people could think that it

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1 was not true. And -- and --
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- 2 MR. MARTINEZ: Sorry. To -- to assume
- 3 that -- that it -- that --
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: That it does --
- 5 MR. MARTINEZ: -- there was
- 6 ziqzaqqinq?
- 7 JUSTICE KAGAN: That -- that if we
- 8 come out your way, it will undermine Dickerson,
- 9 it will be understood as inconsistent with
- 10 Dickerson. I mean, that's what I think, and I
- 11 know you don't think it, but I want to put that
- 12 aside and -- and -- and to have you at least
- acknowledge that there are many people who will
- 14 think of this as utterly inconsistent with
- 15 Dickerson.
- 16 And I just wonder how -- your reaction
- 17 to what Dickerson was all about and what it said
- 18 about the Court as an institution, in part
- 19 through the lens of Chief Justice Rehnquist's
- 20 progress through these cases, because, you know,
- 21 I think what people think about Dickerson is
- that, essentially, the Chief Justice understood
- that Miranda had come to mean something
- 24 extremely important in the way people understood
- 25 the law and the way people understood the

- 1 Constitution and that whatever he might have
- 2 thought about the original bases of Miranda,
- 3 that it, you know, was sort of central to
- 4 people's understanding of the law and that if
- 5 you overturned it or undermined it or denigrated
- 6 it, it would be -- you know, it had -- would
- 7 have a kind of unsettling effect not only on
- 8 people's understanding of the criminal justice
- 9 system but on people's understanding of the
- 10 Court itself and the legitimacy of the Court and
- 11 the way the Court operates and the way the Court
- 12 sticks to what it says, you know, not just in a
- 13 kind of technical stare decisis sense but in a
- 14 more profound -- in a -- in a more profound
- sense about the Court as an institution and the
- 16 role it plays in society.
- So I -- I guess I just -- that might
- 18 be above your pay grade, and I'm sorry if it is,
- 19 but if you would just react to that.
- 20 MR. MARTINEZ: Your Honor, I think
- 21 those are important points, and I think that the
- 22 best way to write an opinion that's consistent
- 23 with those points and -- and takes proper
- 24 account of them is to say very clearly that --
- 25 that Dickerson remains good law. It stays on

- 1 the books. Miranda and Dickerson are important
- 2 constitutional decisions of this Court but that
- 3 those decisions do not go so far as to require a
- 4 -- the recognition of -- that -- of some -- a
- 5 Fifth Amendment right has been violated in such
- 6 a way as to trigger 1983 liability.
- 7 So I think it's perfectly consistent
- 8 and is perfectly consistent with what Chief
- 9 Justice Rehnquist himself voted to do a couple
- 10 years later in Chavez, perfectly consistent with
- 11 Dickerson to say both of those things
- 12 simultaneously.
- 13 And to the people out there who might
- 14 be confused about this line of case law,
- obviously, it's been a very controversial line
- of case law. All these cases have dissents
- 17 going back. The dissents are always saying that
- the majority's opinion is inconsistent with the
- 19 prior cases. But the through line that runs
- through them is a consistent common-sense
- 21 approach by Chief Justice Rehnquist to recognize
- 22 the importance of Miranda but also to recognize
- 23 its important limits.
- 24 And I think you can write an opinion
- 25 that says both of those things, that doesn't do

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1 any harm to Dickerson, but does say that -- that
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- 2 the presumption of coercion that was recognized
- 3 in those cases doesn't mean that you have to
- 4 presume a Fifth Amendment violation when it
- 5 comes to 1983.
- 6 JUSTICE KAGAN: Thank you.
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 8 Gorsuch?
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Yeah, counsel, I --
- 10 I'd just like to get your reaction to some of
- 11 the scholarship that we received in the amicus
- briefs from a variety of historians suggesting
- 13 that whether or not Miranda intended to or aimed
- 14 at the original meaning of the Constitution,
- there is a fair amount of evidence that by the
- time of the founding, warnings were considered
- an important prophylactic rule to protect the
- 18 right against self-incrimination.
- 19 MR. MARTINEZ: Right. Your Honor, I
- 20 think those are important points to consider. I
- 21 think that this is not the case in which to
- 22 consider them, mainly --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: All right.
- MR. MARTINEZ: But -- but --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: If you'd just spot

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1 me that, all right?
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- 2 MR. MARTINEZ: Sure.
- 3 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Address it on the
- 4 merits.
- 5 MR. MARTINEZ: On the merits, I think
- 6 the historians' brief helps us. I think what
- 7 the historians' brief says is that it -- it has
- 8 exhaustively looked at a whole bunch of evidence
- 9 that hadn't been considered before. And if you
- 10 read closely at what it says that evidence
- 11 shows, I think what it says is that in a lot of
- 12 cases people were encouraged to give warnings
- 13 because it would help protect the admissibility
- of statements under a totality-of-circumstances
- 15 analysis.
- 16 What the cases don't show -- or what
- the examples don't show, what the historical
- 18 evidence does not show is that there is a
- 19 mandatory rule of exclusion, which is what
- 20 Miranda recognized. And it certainly doesn't
- 21 show that there's a mandatory rule of exclusion
- that somehow gives right to a private cause of
- 23 action for money damages.
- 24 So I think that the evidence is
- actually telling in what it doesn't show, and

- 1 what it doesn't show is the key point of Miranda
- and Dickerson, which is that there has to be as
- 3 an original matter at least this underlying, you
- 4 know, exclusionary rule. It doesn't say that
- 5 there's a -- the evidence doesn't support an
- 6 exclusionary rule.
- 7 I think the final thing I'd say on
- 8 this, though, Your Honor, is that if the Court
- 9 were inclined to take a serious originalist look
- 10 at this -- at this language, I think, again, you
- should do it in a case where it's more properly
- 12 presented, but I also think you would have to
- grapple with, of course, the actual text of the
- 14 Fifth Amendment, which does require compulsion
- and only bars compelled statements.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 17 Kavanaugh?
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: What would you say
- 19 about Withrow, where a lot of the arguments that
- 20 you're advancing today were similarly --
- MR. MARTINEZ: Yeah.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- advanced as a
- 23 basis for saying that Miranda claims should not
- 24 be cognizable in habeas?
- 25 MR. MARTINEZ: I think the best way to

- 1 understand Withrow is that it's essentially
- 2 treating -- Withrow is the habeas case, of
- 3 course, and it's essentially -- the issue in
- 4 that case is whether the statement was properly
- 5 admitted at trial, whether the trial judge made
- 6 a mistake by -- by not excluding the statement.
- 7 And I think it's very similar to the direct
- 8 appeal context, and I think it's consistent with
- 9 the underlying purposes of Miranda and
- 10 Dickerson, which basically limit the presumption
- of coercion to the admissibility decision by the
- 12 trial judge at the criminal trial.
- 13 And I think Withrow says, essentially,
- 14 recognizing that -- that that's where liberty
- matters most, we're going to apply the
- 16 presumption of coercion in that circumstance and
- 17 we're -- we're going to allow habeas relief.
- 18 The text of the -- of the habeas
- 19 statute is different from the text of 1983. We
- don't think that simply because something is
- 21 cognizable in habeas it's necessarily cognizable
- 22 in 1983.
- 23 If you agree with us and our position
- 24 based on the Chavez plurality and Justice
- 25 Rehnquist, you can conclude that there's no

- 1 Fifth Amendment right that's been violated by a
- 2 Miranda violation, and, therefore, there's no
- 3 1983 liability even if there is a habeas -- a
- 4 violation that's cognizable in habeas.
- 5 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Thank you.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 7 Barrett?
- 8 JUSTICE BARRETT: Mr. Martinez, I want
- 9 to present something to you and see if it's
- 10 consistent with your understanding. I think
- 11 Justice Kagan makes some good points, and, you
- 12 know, there are points made by your friend on
- 13 the other side about your position being
- 14 inconsistent with Dickerson. But I wonder
- whether this is a way that you would agree with
- 16 characterizing it.
- 17 So Dickerson didn't ever use the word
- 18 "constitutional right." It seemed very
- 19 carefully worded to say "constitutional rule" or
- 20 "constitutionally required." And I've always
- 21 taken one of the reasons why Dickerson was
- 22 controversial was that it asserted a right
- vis-à-vis state courts and vis-à-vis Congress
- 24 for the court to announce constitutional
- 25 prophylactic rules that it could impose on state

- 1 courts and that it could assert as against
- 2 Congress so Congress couldn't overrule it by
- 3 statute but that it didn't think were
- 4 constitutionally required.
- 5 So there was inherent tension in
- 6 Dickerson, and Chief Justice Rehnquist said
- 7 we're not overruling Miranda and we're living
- 8 with that tension but never characterized it as
- 9 a right. And that's an important power, it
- 10 seems to me, that Dickerson recognized and
- 11 asserted and that you're not asking us to -- to
- 12 overturn, right?
- MR. MARTINEZ: Correct.
- JUSTICE BARRETT: And so would that
- description of Dickerson be consistent with your
- view that Dickerson acknowledged a power on the
- 17 Court that you want us to leave undisturbed,
- 18 that it could implement the Fifth Amendment
- 19 right or that it could prophylactically protect
- 20 it in a powerful way against the states and
- 21 Congress but that isn't a definition of the
- 22 right itself?
- MR. MARTINEZ: Yes, I think that's
- 24 exactly right, Justice Barrett. And I think the
- only additional point I would make is that

- 1 although this power has been recognized not just
- 2 in the Miranda line of cases but in a couple
- 3 others as well, the -- the power to create a
- 4 kind of prophylactic rule to protect a
- 5 constitutional guarantee, I think it -- the
- 6 Court has always recognized that it's doing
- 7 something very unusual when it creates these
- 8 rules and that it needs to be very careful and
- 9 limited and focused on what are -- what is the
- 10 core underlying real-life constitutional right
- 11 that you're protecting.
- 12 And so whether it's Patane saying --
- the Patane plurality saying that there needs to
- 14 be a close-as-possible fit between the -- the --
- 15 the application of the Miranda rule and the
- 16 underlying right against compelled
- 17 incrimination -- self-incrimination at trial or
- 18 Tucker saying the same thing, you really need to
- do a very rigorous cost/benefit analysis and
- 20 show that expand -- expanding or creating a
- 21 prophylactic rule is really necessary.
- Here, we think it's necessary or the
- 23 Court has said it's necessary when you're
- introducing evidence in the prosecution's
- 25 case-in-chief at trial, but the Court has

- 1 repeatedly refused to go beyond that, and we
- 2 respectfully would submit that you shouldn't go
- 3 beyond it in this case.
- 4 JUSTICE BARRETT: Thank you.
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: I'd like to ask you
- if there is any analogy you've come across that
- 7 would have these characteristics: One -- A,
- 8 there is a constitutional rule; B, there is a
- 9 prophylactic rule to enforce the constitutional
- 10 rule; C, Congress does not have the power under
- 11 the Constitution to change the prophylactic
- 12 rule; and, D, you can enforce the prophylactic
- 13 rule in habeas but not in 1983.
- MR. MARTINEZ: I -- Your Honor, that's
- 15 a great question. I don't have a specific
- 16 example that -- that I know for certain sort of
- 17 checks all four of those boxes.
- I do think, though, I will point you
- 19 to the context, I think the Stovall case and the
- 20 Manson case recognized a prophylactic
- 21 evidentiary rule of exclusion that allows
- 22 people -- allows defendants to -- to exclude
- overly suggestive police lineups, and that
- 24 was -- has been understood by the lower courts
- 25 correctly as a prophylactic constitutional rule

- 1 and the lower -- although I don't think that
- that could be overturned by Congress -- I don't
- 3 think that Congress could overturn the
- 4 Supreme Court's -- this Court's decision, I
- 5 think the lower courts have correctly recognized
- 6 that's a prophylactic rule that doesn't give
- 7 right to a -- rise to a right that can be
- 8 enforced in 1983.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: Maybe you could add
- one other thing because, if it's so skimpy, the
- 11 analogies, I don't know where I'm going if I
- 12 adopt your position.
- 13 That is to say, I don't know what
- other rules there are which may or may not fall
- 15 within -- I don't know what the distinctions
- 16 would be, I don't know where we're going, I
- don't know how many prophylactic rules there
- 18 are, I don't know how many have fallen within
- 19 1983, I don't know what the courts have said
- about prophylactic.
- I mean, we could stay here a long
- time, which we won't, listing things I don't
- 23 know.
- MR. MARTINEZ: Right.
- JUSTICE BREYER: All right. So what

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1 do you think?
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- MR. MARTINEZ: Well, I think, on that,
- 3 I think -- like I was suggesting earlier, I
- 4 think you can write an opinion that makes very
- 5 clear that you're talking about this particular
- 6 prophylactic rule and that you're not talking
- 7 about other -- other circumstances.
- I think, in this -- with respect to
- 9 this particular rule --
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. If we
- 11 take that approach, we have to have --
- 12 unfortunately, we cannot write -- we can say the
- words, this statute -- this -- rather, this
- opinion applies only to, now fill in the blank.
- MR. MARTINEZ: But -- but there --
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: Today's case, not
- 17 tomorrow's. It just doesn't work --
- MR. MARTINEZ: It doesn't work --
- 19 JUSTICE BREYER: -- because the law
- doesn't work that way.
- 21 MR. MARTINEZ: -- it doesn't work if
- 22 you stop there, but I think you would say, and
- 23 here's the two reasons why. Number one, in this
- 24 unique context, we have a lot of precedent that
- 25 has repeatedly made clear that constitutional

- 1 rights aren't violated when Miranda's violated,
- and number two, even if you didn't have that
- 3 precedent, we have to do -- we would have to do
- 4 a kind of cost/benefit analysis that is specific
- 5 to this particular right.
- And, here, the cost/benefit analysis
- 7 supports excluding it from the prosecution's
- 8 case-in-chief at trial, but it doesn't support
- 9 treating the -- the completely voluntary
- 10 statement as coerced in -- in other contexts.
- 11 And I think that would distinguish other cases
- 12 that you could then decide when they come up.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 14 counsel.
- 15 Mr. Suri.
- 16 ORAL ARGUMENT OF VIVEK SURI
- 17 FOR THE UNITED STATES, AS AMICUS CURIAE,
- 18 SUPPORTING THE PETITIONER
- 19 MR. SURI: Mr. Chief Justice, and may
- 20 it please the Court:
- 21 Miranda recognized a constitutional
- 22 right, but it's a trial right concerning the
- 23 exclusion of evidence at a criminal trial. It
- 24 isn't a substantive right to receive the Miranda
- warnings themselves.

Τ	A police officer who falls to provide
2	the Miranda warnings accordingly doesn't himself
3	violate the constitutional right, and he also
4	isn't legally responsible for any violation that
5	might occur later at the trial. The Ninth
6	Circuit's contrary decision should be reversed.
7	JUSTICE THOMAS: What if the police
8	officer purposely lies in order to convince the
9	prosecutor to use the statement?
LO	MR. SURI: We would still say that
L1	there is no Miranda claim, but I have to be
L2	clear that that issue is not properly presented
L3	in this case.
L4	Taking that as a hypothetical,
L5	however, we would say that there is no Miranda
L6	liability because we don't see how the causation
L7	problem can be solved without creating a witness
L8	immunity problem in its place.
L9	There are two actors that lie between
20	the police officer and any Miranda violation:
21	the prosecutor who offers the statement into
22	evidence and the judge who admits it at the
23	suppression hearing.
24	And in order to show that the judge
25	has been misled into admitting the evidence, you

- 1 have to presumably argue that the police officer
- 2 lied on the witness stand and thereby convinced
- 3 the judge to introduce the evidence. But, under
- 4 absolute witness immunity, that can't be a
- 5 predicate for liability.
- 6 JUSTICE KAGAN: I mean, take an
- 7 outlandish example, and -- and it is outlandish,
- 8 but, you know, suppose the police officer, you
- 9 know, bribed the prosecutor and the judge. What
- 10 then?
- I mean, at that point, I'll tell you
- what it seems to me, is your causation problem
- disappears but that there must be some way of
- 14 saying that that's such an unusual case that
- we're not going to bend or -- or change the rule
- 16 for it. But I don't exactly quite know how that
- argument works legally, so I guess I'm asking
- 18 you to provide the missing pieces.
- 19 MR. SURI: Okay. This Court has said
- that in applying causation principles or other
- 21 common law principles, it isn't tied exactly to
- 22 the old common law rules. It can adjust those
- 23 approaches as necessary in light of the nature
- of the right at issue.
- In addition, the Court sometimes

- 1 adopts categorical rules that may fit
- 2 imperfectly in some extreme cases, but it
- 3 acknowledges that those cases are so unlikely to
- 4 arise that it's not worth trying to deal with
- 5 them.
- And the two best examples I can think
- 7 of are the retaliatory inducement to prosecute
- 8 case, Hartman against Moore, and Nieves against
- 9 Bartlett, which is retaliatory arrest.
- In both of those cases, the Court said
- that because of causation problems, we're going
- 12 to adopt a categorical rule requiring the
- 13 plaintiff to show the absence of proximate -- of
- 14 probable cause in order to allow that case to
- 15 come forward.
- Now it's true, theoretically, you can
- 17 think of some outlandish hypotheticals where
- 18 there is probable cause, yet there should be a
- 19 retaliatory arrest or prosecution claim, and the
- 20 Court still said, we -- we're going to adopt a
- 21 categorical rule.
- 22 And we suggest that the Court could
- 23 adopt a similar categorical rule here because,
- as you say, the only circumstances that we can
- think of where there's no causation problem are

1 so outlandish, it's not worth trying to preserve

- 2 those.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, I -- I'm
- 4 not sure what witness immunity has to do with
- 5 this issue. Yes, you're immune from prosecution
- 6 for any testimony you give at a trial. But, if
- 7 you're testifying falsely and that's what
- 8 induces a judge or a prosecutor to use your
- 9 statement, I -- I don't understand why that
- 10 should be immune from 1983.
- 11 MR. SURI: Your Honor, that view is
- 12 contrary to this Court's previous decision in
- 13 Briscoe against LaHue. In that case, the Court
- held that witnesses enjoy absolute immunity from
- 15 1983 claims for their testimony and it
- 16 specifically held that that extends even to
- 17 perjured testimony.
- 18 The reasoning of the decision is that
- 19 the appropriate remedy for perjury is a criminal
- 20 prosecution for perjury, but we don't want to
- 21 discourage witnesses by exposing them to the
- 22 specter of civil liability.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Counsel, you -- your
- 24 -- your argument for a -- a firm proximate cause
- 25 rule has some appeal, obviously, the clarity of

- 1 it, but I wonder have you thought about -- and
- 2 I'm sure you have and you can help us think
- 3 about -- how it would apply outside the Miranda
- 4 context and how it might bleed into other
- 5 constitutional rights and make them more
- 6 difficult to assert under 1983. An involuntary
- 7 confession under -- forget about Miranda. You
- 8 know, a tortured confession being admitted.
- 9 Are you concerned, is the government
- 10 concerned, that its rule would -- would place
- 11 the onus on the prosecutor to deal with that and
- 12 not allow recovery against a police officer who
- 13 conducted the -- the -- the torture confession?
- MR. SURI: Justice Gorsuch, let me
- 15 first explain why the logic of our position
- 16 would indeed affect some other constitutional
- 17 rights and then turn to, if you're uncomfortable
- 18 with that, how you can cabin the logic so that
- 19 it applies only to this particular right.
- So, to take the first part first, yes,
- it's true our logic does apply, for example, to
- 22 self-incrimination claims, but that shouldn't
- trouble you because this Court has recognized an
- 24 independent substantive due process limit on
- 25 what the police can do in the interrogation

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1 itself. If the police torture an individual or
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- even beat him, that's a substantive due process
- 3 violation that is actionable under Section 1983.
- 4 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I get that argument.
- 5 But there's an additional quantum of harm surely
- 6 associated with its introduction at trial and a
- 7 potential conviction wrongfully. And your rule,
- 8 I think, would take that out of play, and maybe
- 9 it won't, but I'd like to hear your thoughts.
- 10 MR. SURI: No, it would take that out
- of play, Justice Gorsuch. And the reason the
- 12 Court shouldn't be troubled by that is that the
- 13 appropriate forum for redressing harms that
- occur in the trial itself is the appeal process
- in habeas corpus, not a collateral civil suit
- 16 attacking the trial ruling. But let's say --
- 17 JUSTICE GORSUCH: One might say that
- about almost anything that happens at trial, but
- 19 we have 1983 actions all the time about things
- 20 that happen at trial.
- 21 MR. SURI: I -- I don't think that's
- 22 right, Justice Gorsuch. You have 1983 thing --
- 23 actions about things that happen outside trial,
- 24 like unreasonable searches and seizures. But
- you don't have 1983 claims about things that

- 1 happen in the trial itself, like ineffective
- 2 assistance of counsel or denial of a jury trial
- 3 right. Those are traditionally enforced through
- 4 the appellate process.
- 5 And if I can offer an analogy --
- 6 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Sure.
- 7 MR. SURI: -- to show why this makes
- 8 sense. Think of this Court's Confrontation
- 9 Clause jurisprudence. The Court has held that
- 10 the introduction of a forensic analyst's report
- 11 at trial can be a confrontation violation if the
- 12 analyst isn't put on the stand.
- Now we would say that you can't sue
- 14 the analyst under Section 1983 on the theory
- that he proximately caused the prosecutor's
- 16 violation of the Confrontation Clause. Your
- 17 remedy would be an appeal, not a 1983 claim.
- So, yes, that is one consequence of
- our theory, but that's a perfectly reasonable
- 20 consequence. We don't think it makes sense to
- 21 allow collateral Confrontation Clause
- 22 challenges.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Let's say I'm a
- little worried about that. You said you had a
- 25 narrower approach.

Τ	MR. SURI: Yean.
2	JUSTICE GORSUCH: What what's that?
3	MR. SURI: This Court has said most
4	recently in the Thompson opinion that Justice
5	Kavanaugh wrote earlier this term that common
6	law principles must be applied in light of the
7	"values and purposes of the right at issue."
8	And the right at issue here, the
9	Miranda right, has always been based on an
LO	analysis of what is necessary in practice to
L1	enforce the self-incrimination right. And the
L2	Court has enforced it as far as it is necessary,
L3	but it hasn't taken it any further.
L4	It said that Miranda applies, for
L5	example, only in the case-in-chief in a criminal
L6	prosecution. It doesn't apply to impeachment.
L7	It doesn't apply to the fruits of the evidence.
L8	It doesn't apply in public safety cases. And
L9	the Court could say similarly that it's not
20	necessary to apply in in a civil trial.
21	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Thank you.
22	JUSTICE BARRETT: You just said you
23	just talked about enforcing the right. But the
24	government, as I understand it, has taken the
25	position that this is a Fifth Amendment right,

- 1 although, in your brief, you kind of -- which
- 2 strikes me as probably careful language --
- 3 characterize it as a federal right. You don't
- 4 actually say Fifth Amendment right that I saw.
- 5 Could you elaborate on the
- 6 government's position there?
- 7 MR. SURI: Yes. We think Miranda is a
- 8 constitutional right. To use the language of
- 9 Section 1983, it is any right, privilege, or
- 10 immunity secured by the Constitution. And if I
- 11 could divide that into two parts, secured by the
- 12 Constitution because Dickerson says it is a
- 13 constitutional rule, and right, privilege, or
- immunity is drawing a distinction between rights
- and structural provisions, like separation of
- 16 powers or federalism provisions. But Miranda is
- 17 pretty clearly a right rather than a structural
- 18 provision.
- 19 In addition, if you look at this
- 20 Court's past 1983 cases, the Court has defined
- 21 the term "right" in the constitutional context
- 22 extremely broadly. For example, in Dennis
- 23 against Higgins, the Court held that the
- 24 negative Commerce Clause gives rise to rights
- 25 enforceable under Section 1983 even though one

- 1 might think of the Commerce Clause as a
- 2 structural provision rather than a rights
- 3 provision.
- So, if -- if that's a right, then,
- 5 surely, we think Miranda is a right. And, of
- 6 course, it's constitutional because Dickerson
- 7 says so.
- 8 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Can you address
- 9 Justice Kagan's question to Mr. Martinez about
- 10 the precedent and how we should think about the
- 11 precedent?
- 12 MR. SURI: Yes. I -- I think one of
- the reasons we have not relied on the theory
- 14 that Miranda is not a constitutional right is
- 15 precisely the concern that Justice Kagan has
- 16 raised that would seem to undermine the -- what
- the Court has said all these years, especially
- in Dickerson. But even apart from that, we just
- don't think that that theory is correct as an
- original matter, and we don't think it's
- 21 necessary in order for the Court to foreclose
- 22 Miranda claims from Section 1983.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Would you care to
- 24 comment on the historians' briefs and the
- 25 suggestion that Miranda might have a better

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1 original provenance than had previously been
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- 2 thought?
- 3 MR. SURI: I -- I wish, Justice
- 4 Gorsuch, I could say that Miranda in its
- 5 totality is supported by the original meaning of
- 6 the Constitution. I -- I -- I'm afraid I
- 7 cannot in all candor go quite that far.
- 8 The historians' brief supports one
- 9 aspect of Miranda, which is the warning
- 10 requirement. Miranda, of course, goes beyond
- 11 warnings. It also talks about having counsel
- 12 present at the interrogation. And in all
- 13 candor, I have to concede that the historians'
- 14 brief doesn't provide support for that aspect of
- the Miranda decision, that, instead, we think
- 16 it's still correct because it's -- it's been
- found necessary to implement the
- 18 self-incrimination right as a practical matter.
- But, with respect to the warnings, it
- 20 -- it's certainly the case that warnings were
- 21 much more commonplace than one might have
- 22 imagined. If you look at Chief Justice White's
- opinion in Bram against United States, he talks
- about these warning requirements. So it isn't
- 25 just the original meaning at the time of the

- 1 founding. It's also the 19th Century case law
- 2 that recognizes that warnings are an important
- 3 part of implementing the Fifth Amendment.
- 4 Nevertheless, that doesn't affect our
- 5 argument in this case because the issue in this
- 6 case, of course, is whether Miranda is civilly
- 7 enforceable. And if you look back to
- 8 founding-era sources, I've seen no evidence that
- 9 you would bring collateral civil actions saying
- 10 that an involuntary confession or other type of
- improper evidence was introduced at a criminal
- trial. The appropriate remedy would have been
- 13 the exclusion of that evidence at the trial
- itself, not some collateral civil proceeding.
- In contrast, we have lots of history
- of civil suits about the equivalent of the
- 17 Fourth Amendment. Unreasonable searches were at
- 18 issue in Entick against Carrington, Wilkes
- 19 against Wood, cases like that. The absence of
- any comparable history here should give you some
- 21 comfort that this is indeed not the kind of
- thing that is meant to be civilly enforceable.
- JUSTICE ALITO: If you have the
- situation where a police officer does something
- 25 that violates a constitutional right but that

- 1 later a prosecutor makes an independent decision
- 2 about whether the prosecution will attempt to
- 3 obtain any advantage at trial as a result of the
- 4 conduct of the police officer, that, I take it,
- 5 is what you think is the situation here.
- 6 Could you state in general terms the
- 7 rule that you think applies as to the creation
- 8 of a categorical rule regarding the absence of
- 9 proximate cause?
- 10 MR. SURI: I'm sorry, Justice Alito, I
- 11 think I have to take issue with the premise of
- the question, which is we don't accept that the
- 13 police officer has done anything unlawful. Our
- 14 theory is that the unlawful act is committed
- 15 entirely at the trial itself.
- But our rule is that when a police
- 17 officer --
- JUSTICE ALITO: All right. Well, so
- 19 we're getting back to the issue of -- of the
- 20 nature of the Miranda violation. When something
- 21 is done by the police officer, but the
- 22 prosecution seeks to obtain some advantage at
- trial as a result of something that was done or
- 24 was not done and should have been done by the
- 25 police officer, what is your general -- how

- 1 would you state in general terms the rule about
- 2 cutting off proximate cause?
- 3 MR. SURI: The rule is that when a
- 4 police officer does not himself engage in any
- 5 legal violation, then, in the absence of some
- 6 special circumstance I can't think of right now,
- 7 the prosecutors' and the judges' independent
- 8 decision about the action constitute superseding
- 9 causes that cut off liability.
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 11 Thomas?
- 12 JUSTICE THOMAS: No.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: All right.
- 14 Justice Kavanaugh?
- 15 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Just the same
- 16 question that I asked Mr. Martinez about Withrow
- 17 and how you would deal with that.
- 18 MR. SURI: Withrow supports our
- 19 position. Withrow described the Fifth Amendment
- 20 right and Miranda as trial-focused rights. That
- 21 suggests that Miranda is about what happens at
- the trial, whether the evidence is admitted or
- 23 not admitted. It's not about what the police
- 24 officer himself does.
- 25 And, indeed, Withrow contrasted the

- 1 Miranda right with the Fourth Amendment right on
- 2 precisely that reasoning. It said the Fourth
- 3 Amendment is about what happens outside the
- 4 trial and that's why it isn't enforceable in
- 5 habeas corpus.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Thank you.
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 8 counsel.
- 9 Mr. Hoffman.
- 10 ORAL ARGUMENT OF PAUL L. HOFFMAN
- 11 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
- MR. HOFFMAN: Mr. Chief Justice, and
- 13 may it please the Court:
- 14 Petitioner asked this Court to find
- that a police officer can never be found liable
- 16 under Section 1983 for a Miranda violation.
- 17 This is so even where an officer elicits an
- 18 unwarned custodial statement, lies about the
- 19 circumstances, and the statement is introduced
- in the prosecution's case-in-chief. That
- 21 categorical approach is counter to precedent,
- the text of Section 1983, and common sense.
- 23 This case presents two distinct
- 24 issues. On the first issue, the introduction of
- 25 an unwarned custodial statement is a violation

- of a defendant's Fifth Amendment rights and,
- therefore, the basis for Section 1983 liability.
- 3 If Miranda violations lead to habeas
- 4 relief based on a violation of the Constitution
- 5 or to the reversal of state criminal convictions
- 6 on the same basis, the same violations fall
- 7 within the broad remedial sweep of Section 1983.
- 8 On the second issue, police officers,
- 9 like any other state actor, can be sued under
- 10 Section 1983 if their acts proximately cause a
- 11 violation of constitutional rights. At a
- 12 minimum, when an officer takes an unwarned
- 13 custodial statement and deceives the prosecutor
- 14 about the circumstances of the interrogation, a
- jury can find that proximate cause exists.
- Mr. Tekoh has always argued that
- 17 Deputy Vega gave a false account of the
- 18 circumstances of the interrogation in this case.
- 19 The court of appeals correctly found that
- 20 Mr. Tekoh has a Section 1983 claim based on the
- 21 Miranda violation and that a reasonable jury, if
- they believe Mr. Tekoh's testimony, could find
- 23 that Deputy Vega was the proximate cause of this
- 24 violation.
- I welcome the Court's questions.

In the trials that

JUSTICE THOMAS:

- 2 we've had in this so far, have there been any 3 findings by the jury that the officer lied? MR. HOFFMAN: The -- there -- no, 4 there's no -- there hasn't been a finding that 5 the officer lied. That issue hasn't really been 6 7 presented to the jury. And the -- there were no find -- there were no -- there was never a 8 finding in this case about whether Mr. Tekoh was 9 in custody or not. None of the -- none of the 10 11 juries were required to find that. 12 And, in fact, the -- from the beginning of this case, it was argued that the 13 claim was that a violation of -- a core Miranda 14 15 violation, the introduction of the statement at 16 trial, gave rise to a 1983 violation. 17 And the judge -- the district judge
- of liability because he thought that the Chavez

refused to give that instruction on that theory

- 20 case overturned -- made -- made that claim
- 21 unviable.

18

- 22 And so the -- the appeal to the Ninth
- 23 Circuit that we made was to allow us to go
- 24 forward with that claim. That's the -- that's
- 25 the -- the issue that we raised in addition to

- 1 an issue about an expert.
- 2 But there's never been a finding one
- 3 way or the other about whether the officer lied
- 4 about the circumstances of the -- of the
- 5 interrogation, which is at the heart of the
- 6 case. That's always been the dispute --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So can you --
- 8 MR. HOFFMAN: -- in this case.
- 9 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- so you -- can
- 10 you point me to somewhere in the record on
- 11 either trial before the district courts where
- 12 you presented that theory of your case? I've
- 13 looked in vain, number one.
- 14 And, number two, in the first trial,
- it was a fabrication of evidence case.
- 16 MR. HOFFMAN: That's right.
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So tell me if they
- 18 found against you on the fabrication of the
- 19 evidence. Isn't that a finding that Mr. Vega
- 20 didn't fabricate?
- MR. HOFFMAN: No. I mean, what --
- 22 what it was -- what -- what the -- what the jury
- 23 was asked to find under standards that are much
- 24 higher than the standards that would apply to a
- 25 Fifth Amendment claim, it was a Fourteenth

- 1 Amendment substantive due process claim.
- But, at most, and what the district
- 3 court found, was that there was a finding that
- 4 the -- that the officer did not fabricate the
- 5 report and that a different officer didn't
- 6 fabricate certain statements attributable to Mr.
- 7 Tekoh in one of his supplemental reports.
- 8 That's all they found.
- 9 They didn't find -- they weren't asked
- 10 to find anything about custody. They weren't
- 11 asked to determine the difference between
- 12 Mister --
- 13 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: It doesn't -- it
- doesn't matter, does it? If they found that he
- didn't fabricate the statements by your client,
- 16 that was the whole basis of the decision about
- there, A, not being coercion or, B, that he
- 18 wasn't in custody.
- MR. HOFFMAN: Well, no. I mean, the
- 20 -- the custody part it wasn't a part of, and --
- and the district court properly found that we
- 22 were able to go forward with a Fifth Amendment
- 23 trial after the fabrication case and said --
- that argument was made to the judge, and they
- 25 said -- said no, the -- the -- the jury hasn't

- 1 made that finding.
- 2 And -- and -- and the -- whether the
- 3 report was fabricated or not doesn't affect the
- 4 Miranda violation. It could be a true
- 5 statement.
- 6 JUSTICE BARRETT: But doesn't it
- 7 affect -- I'm -- I'm just confused because I had
- 8 the same understanding as Justice Sotomayor.
- 9 I understood your causation argument
- 10 that you're pressing here, which is, as I
- 11 understand it, narrower than the jury
- instruction that your client asked for below, to
- depend on this falsification of evidence claim
- 14 --
- 15 MR. HOFFMAN: Well --
- 16 JUSTICE BARRETT: -- and that that was
- important to your proximate cause argument, but,
- 18 as Justice Sotomayor said, it was my
- 19 understanding that you lost on a fabrication of
- 20 evidence claim.
- MR. HOFFMAN: No. No, our -- our --
- 22 what -- and -- and it may be useful, it
- seems to me, to clear up how the proximate cause
- issue happened here. There -- there's a
- 25 separate causation instruction that was a joint

- 1 instruction from the Defendant and the
- 2 Plaintiff. That's found on page 118a of the
- 3 Petitioner's appendix, and it's a moving force
- 4 causation instruction and it requires the
- 5 Plaintiff to show that the Defendants were so
- 6 closely related to the depravation of the
- 7 Plaintiff's rights as to be the moving force
- 8 that caused the ultimate injury. That was the
- 9 agreed-upon instruction.
- 10 And -- and we never got to that point
- on the Miranda claim because the Miranda claim
- was never presented to the jury. So there
- wasn't any issue about proximate cause because
- it wasn't -- it didn't ever get to the jury.
- That was the agreed-upon instruction
- 16 for the Fifth Amendment claim that the judge
- 17 actually allowed to go forward. There's
- 18 never -- the -- the Defendant never asked for a
- 19 superseding cause instruction. The Defendant
- 20 never raised any of the issues that have been
- 21 raised in this Court in the district court.
- There was an agreed-upon instruction.
- The Defendant never made any claim in the Ninth
- 24 Circuit about proximate cause. You can read all
- of the briefs. There's not a word about

- 1 causation. In --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, but still, what
- 3 is your -- I mean, suppose I think
- 4 hypothetically that when a improperly obtained
- 5 confession is introduced into the trial, the
- 6 person who does it is the prosecutor and he has
- 7 immunity and he is the superseding cause of
- 8 however this bad thing happened to occur, unless
- 9 the policeman's there, and then he has immunity
- 10 because there's a witness.
- 11 MR. HOFFMAN: Well, yeah.
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: But there might be a
- 13 case where that policeman outside of court said
- 14 to the prosecutor, this is what happened, I gave
- 15 him 92 Miranda warnings, and he is deliberately
- lying, that policeman, in which case maybe --
- 17 maybe you can bring a case against him.
- Now suppose I start from that and say
- 19 what did you say here to say this falls into the
- 20 latter category in the lower courts.
- MR. HOFFMAN: Well, what -- well, in
- the lower court, what our -- what our -- and --
- 23 and let me back up. The -- our --
- JUSTICE BREYER: No, no. Or here. I
- 25 mean, I haven't seen anything even here that

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1 says that.
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- 2 MR. HOFFMAN: Well, our -- our
- 3 argument is in response to the Petitioner's
- 4 argument that there can never be proximate
- 5 cause, which is a completely different argument.
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: No, no, but if that
- 7 were -- that's his -- they say never, okay?
- 8 MR. HOFFMAN: They say never.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: I'd say -- suppose I
- 10 said hypothetically hardly ever.
- 11 MR. HOFFMAN: Well --
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: But there could be a
- 13 situation where the policeman is lying through
- 14 his teeth to the prosecutor, dot, dot, dot, fill
- 15 in the blanks. But there is no indication that
- that is what happened in this case.
- 17 MR. HOFFMAN: That's exact --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Now that last part is
- 19 what you think is wrong.
- 20 MR. HOFFMAN: That's --
- JUSTICE BREYER: So I'm asking you
- 22 what to look at to show that you are right and
- that last part's wrong.
- 24 MR. HOFFMAN: We've -- both sides have
- 25 pointed to the testimony at trial. The

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1 testimony at trial was Mr. -- Deputy Vega said
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- 2 this was a -- this was a statement that was
- 3 utterly voluntary, that it -- that he came --
- 4 you know, that Mr. Tekoh came and said, I made a
- 5 mistake. I wrote down the confession. Mr.
- 6 Tekoh's testimony --
- JUSTICE BREYER: All right. At trial,
- 8 you have the witness immunity problem.
- 9 MR. HOFFMAN: Well, no, that was --
- JUSTICE BREYER: So was there anything
- 11 other than that out -- outside of trial?
- MR. HOFFMAN: Well, the -- well, first
- 13 of all --
- JUSTICE BREYER: I'm not saying you
- lose on the witness immunity thing. I'm just
- 16 boxing it in my mind.
- 17 MR. HOFFMAN: Well, right. What I'm
- 18 saying -- there -- the question about the -- the
- 19 steps at -- the first thing, you asked me where
- 20 this was in the trial. In the trial, there has
- 21 always been this complete dispute between what
- happened in that room. Mr. Tekoh says he's put
- in a -- in a closed room for an hour. He has
- 24 berated and basically threatened with
- 25 deportation with -- with an officer with a --

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1 with a -- with his hand on a gun.
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- 2 JUSTICE BARRETT: But didn't you lose
- 3 that claim? Didn't --
- 4 MR. HOFFMAN: No.
- 5 JUSTICE BARRETT: -- wasn't that part
- 6 of -- because you lost -- didn't you bring a
- 7 claim, another Fifth Amendment claim, for
- 8 coercion that you lost and another fabrication
- 9 of evidence --
- 10 MR. HOFFMAN: Well --
- 11 JUSTICE BARRETT: -- claim that you
- 12 lost, which would preclude --
- MR. HOFFMAN: Well, we -- we lost the
- 14 fabrication of evidence claim, but that's a
- 15 claim that -- that the evidence was false --
- deliberately falsified by the officer with --
- 17 meaning the report -- the argument that -- that
- 18 the -- that the officer actually did the report
- or falsified it, which is different from this
- 20 claim.
- 21 And -- and on the coercion claim, it
- is true that the second jury found no coercion,
- 23 and we had an argument that the expert was
- 24 wrongfully excluded that the Ninth Circuit
- 25 didn't deal with. But the Ninth Circuit also

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1 vacated that -- that -- that judgment. And so
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- 2 it's not clear what that status is.
- 3 And -- and -- and our argument is that
- 4 if -- if the district judge had -- had -- had
- 5 instructed the jury on the Miranda theory, we
- 6 wouldn't have to have gone through any of these.
- 7 We'd be done by now. But either -- either --
- 9 MR. HOFFMAN: -- either it's a
- 10 custodial interrogation or not, and either
- 11 Deputy Vega lied or he didn't.
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, I guess
- my problem has been your brief says, if the
- 14 police officer told the truth and the government
- 15 and the prosecutor admitted the statement based
- on truthful information, there's no liability
- 17 under 1983.
- 18 MR. HOFFMAN: Correct.
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Correct?
- MR. HOFFMAN: Yes, we agree.
- 21 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If the police
- officer, however, was the inducing cause by
- 23 lying for an admission of the evidence that
- 24 should otherwise not have been admitted, then I
- 25 win. I don't see anywhere in the record below

- 1 before either judge in the two trials you had
- where you made that statement in that way.
- 3 MR. HOFFMAN: We didn't make that
- 4 statement in that way because both sides were
- 5 operating under Ninth Circuit precedent, which
- 6 didn't require you to make that statement. We
- 7 didn't elevate the standard for proximate cause
- 8 on our own.
- 9 What -- what -- what we've responded
- 10 to in this Court is their argument that it
- 11 should be a categorical exclusion. And what
- we're saying is, when there's officer
- 13 misconduct, as we claim happened here, that that
- should be the -- the basis for proximate cause.
- In the -- in the -- in the
- 16 court below, both sides argued on that causation
- 17 instruction, which doesn't include that. We
- 18 didn't ask to have an elevated causation
- 19 instruction that would make it harder for us to
- 20 prove our case. We accepted the Defendant's
- 21 instruction.
- 22 You know, and I -- I'm -- I'm sure
- 23 the -- you know, what's confusing about all this
- is that the procedural history with respect to
- 25 proximate causation is that no one really

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1 thought this was a serious issue in the district
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- 2 court. I don't think the defense even made a
- 3 serious contention that --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, what about now?
- 5 Can you say to us right now that you have some
- 6 evidence you would like to introduce that the
- 7 policeman did mislead the prosecutor about what
- 8 happened, other than the policeman speaking as a
- 9 witness?
- 10 MR. HOFFMAN: Well, the -- the -- the
- 11 evidence that -- that I would submit to the
- 12 Court would be, first of all, the reports. The
- 13 reports omit the true circumstances of the
- interrogation, make it seem like a completely
- voluntary statement and that he confessed
- willingly, and don't say anything about the fact
- 17 that there's an hour-long interrogation in a
- 18 closed room with threats and -- and all the rest
- 19 that would make it clearly a custodial
- 20 interrogation.
- There's some evidence -- and -- and
- 22 the record is spotty on this because the -- none
- of the parties focused on it -- that the
- 24 prosecutor got the information about the
- 25 statements from Deputy Vega, and Deputy Vega

- 1 then testified about this other story throughout
- 2 the proceedings.
- Whether or not that's covered by
- 4 witness immunity is nothing -- that's never been
- 5 argued before. At no point did the defense ever
- 6 say, well, you -- it can't be proximate cause
- 7 because your evidence is barred by witness
- 8 immunity. And that issue never got litigated as
- 9 to whether each of the steps in which Deputy
- 10 Vega gave the same false account throughout the
- 11 proceedings.
- 12 And so what would happen -- I mean,
- 13 under the -- the question I guess is, if the
- 14 Court is inclined to believe that the Ninth
- 15 Circuit's view of proximate cause, which seems
- to be based on Monroe natural, unforeseeable
- 17 consequences and -- and common law principles of
- 18 proximate cause, if that sweeps too broadly,
- 19 what we're saying is that in this case at least,
- it's really a binary choice.
- 21 If -- if Deputy Vega is believed,
- there's no violation. So we don't even get to
- 23 proximate cause. If our client's believed, then
- 24 we believe that should be the basis for
- 25 proximate cause because you can't allow officer

- 1 misconduct that deceives the circuit breakers in
- 2 the system. The prosecutor and the judge --
- judge are the circuit breakers, right? They're
- 4 the ones supposed to exercise independent
- 5 judgment to make sure that constitutionally
- 6 impermissible evidence is not introduced in
- 7 violation of the Fifth Amendment. If the
- 8 officer actually causes -- causes the person to
- 9 be subjected to the violation, which is the
- 10 language of Section 1983, by deceiving the
- 11 prosecutor, then that should be at least one of
- the circumstances in which this could happen.
- Now what would happen, I think, if --
- if the Court agrees with our first position,
- 15 that a Miranda violation isn't the violation of
- 16 a right secured by the Constitution for 1983
- 17 purposes, the case would go back for further
- 18 proceedings with respect to proximate cause, and
- 19 I assume that the defense would raise a lot of
- the issues that they're now raising here that
- 21 they've never raised before.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Counsel, this
- was a huge issue in the late '70s, early '80s.
- 24 This was a -- a staple of panel discussions in
- 25 criminal law, partly because Miranda was a

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1 little more controversial back then than it may
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- 2 be now. And Assistant Attorney General
- Rehnquist, Justice Rehnquist, he would have been
- 4 very aware of the debate we're having today.
- 5 And when it came to Dickerson, he was
- 6 also somebody careful with his words, he didn't
- 7 say Miranda is in the Constitution. He talked
- 8 about constitutional underpinnings,
- 9 constitutional basis.
- 10 And I'm -- I don't know, of course,
- 11 but it would surprise me if that -- those
- 12 particular formulations were just happenstance.
- 13 And I doubt that he'd be surprised that we were
- 14 having this debate now, 20 years later, after
- 15 Dickerson. Don't you think that if, in fact,
- 16 Dickerson said what you say it said, you could
- 17 point to something in that opinion that said
- 18 expressly that and did not have a particular
- 19 nuance like basis underpinning all that?
- MR. HOFFMAN: Well, I am not sure why
- 21 Chief Justice Rehnquist wrote in the nuanced way
- 22 that he did. Our position is that the -- the
- 23 consequence of his analysis is that Miranda is a
- 24 constitutional decision and that Miranda defines
- 25 the circumstances in which custodial statements

- 1 can be introduced in -- in a criminal trial and
- 2 that if Miranda's violated, the violation has to
- 3 be of the Fifth Amendment.
- 4 And I think this goes to Justice
- 5 Barrett's question, which is what is the -- what
- 6 is the power that the Court has, right? Is --
- 7 is this a power that the Court has that even
- 8 goes beyond specific constitutional rights, that
- 9 there's a -- an ability that the Court has to
- 10 create any rules that it wants independent of a
- 11 -- of a violation?
- 12 I think the -- the narrower and I
- think better constitutionally based argument
- would be that that's what Dickerson has to mean,
- 15 that -- that the violation of the Miranda --
- 16 core Miranda rule -- which is what we're talking
- 17 about here. We're not talking about any of the
- 18 periphery. We're talking about the core Miranda
- 19 rule, that that -- that that -- what -- what
- 20 Miranda meant was that they're defining the
- 21 circumstances where there's a Fifth Amendment
- 22 violation.
- 23 If you violate these -- Miranda and
- you introduce that statement in a case-in-chief,
- 25 a Fifth Amendment violation has occurred. And

1 if --JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: In thinking about 3 MR. HOFFMAN: Sorry. 4 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Keep going, sorry. 5 6 MR. HOFFMAN: No, sorry, Justice --7 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: In thinking about the status of Miranda and Dickerson, it seems 8 9 that the other side's position is accept it, but don't extend it, if I could boil it down. 10 11 Accept it, but don't extend it. And we've done 12 that with other precedents of that era even, like Bivens, we accept it. We haven't declined 13 14 to extend it. We've declined to extend it. 15 And then that -- then they argue, I 16 think, that this seems like an extension of 17 Miranda and Dickerson to a new context, 1983 18 suits, that it has not previously extended to. 19 So why isn't that the right way to 20 think about that case? Where -- where would you get off --21 2.2 MR. HOFFMAN: Well --23 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- on -- on that 24 analysis?

MR. HOFFMAN: Well, what we would say

- is that, to be sure, the Court has considered
- 2 the circumstances in which the Miranda rule
- 3 applies in a variety of ways.
- 4 And I think Chief Justice Rehnquist
- 5 dealt with that issue in Dickerson and said,
- 6 yeah, I mean, the fact that there are exceptions
- 7 and -- and changes to the Miranda rule is just
- 8 the natural evolution of a constitutional rule.
- 9 We're not talking about an extension
- of the Miranda rule. We're talking about the
- 11 core principle of the Miranda rule, the
- 12 introduction of a custodial statement in the
- 13 prosecution's case-in-chief.
- Now, with respect to Section 1983, our
- position is that 1983 provides the authority for
- 16 a -- a -- a cause of action for the violation of
- 17 that right. In other words, once the -- the
- 18 core Miranda right is violated and the Fifth
- 19 Amendment right is violated, Section 1983
- 20 applies to give someone a remedy for the
- 21 deprivation of a right secured by the
- 22 Constitution which is that violation.
- 23 And so Congress has done that.
- 24 Congress could decide not to do that. Congress
- 25 could decide to limit it. And, to be sure, I

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1 know my colleague talked about the -- the
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- 2 Thompson case, for example.
- Well, the Thompson case was about the
- 4 elements of that cause of action, right? I
- 5 mean, it was about whether you had to prove
- 6 innocence or not for that. And -- and the Court
- 7 has always gone back to common law principles
- 8 and, if necessary, adjusted them and dealt with
- 9 them.
- 10 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I think the --
- MR. HOFFMAN: But it hasn't excluded
- 12 an entire right like -- I mean, the Fifth
- 13 Amendment right is one of the fundamental rights
- in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Why
- 15 would you exclude this if a police officer
- 16 causes someone to be subjected to it?
- 17 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: But I think their
- 18 response and the Solicitor General's office said
- 19 this as well, which is that the right is fully
- 20 remedied -- a violation of the right is fully
- 21 remedied by the exclusion of the evidence at
- 22 trial, and this would be some -- some extension
- of that, something new that would go beyond the
- 24 way the right has ordinarily been characterized.
- MR. HOFFMAN: But -- but -- but,

- 1 clearly, that isn't a complete remedy. I'm
- 2 standing here on behalf of -- of Mr. Tekoh, who
- 3 was acquitted and has absolutely no other remedy
- 4 than a Section 1983 violation.
- 5 His life was destroyed by these
- 6 actions. He gets acquitted. When the full
- 7 story comes out, he is contending that the
- 8 officer set him up for this and basically set up
- 9 the prosecutor and the -- and the court too.
- 10 What remedy does he have? That's what
- 11 Section 1983 is for. There may not be a lot of
- 12 these cases. There haven't been a lot of these
- 13 cases since Sornberger, which was one of the
- 14 first cases in the Seventh Circuit to agree to
- this proposition. There are a handful of cases.
- 16 So the other side's contention that
- 17 all of a sudden there's going to be a ground
- swell of people filing these cases, that's not
- 19 going to happen. But, in this -- in the cases
- 20 where there is officer misconduct, claims of
- officer misconduct, it doesn't make any sense to
- 22 withdraw that -- that Section 1983 remedy
- 23 because policing that kind of conduct guarantees
- 24 the integrity of the entire system that
- 25 Miranda's based on.

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I mean, officers are always going to
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- 2 be involved in the interrogation process.
- 3 They're the ones that get the statements.
- 4 Nobody else gets them. And so, if they're not
- 5 completely honest, then the system breaks down.
- But, when they are completely honest,
- 7 I mean, you can look at the Fifth Circuit's
- 8 decision in Murray versus Earle, where the court
- 9 in Murray versus Earle says, when an officer
- 10 gives a completely honest account to an
- independent neutral intermediary, like a judge,
- 12 then proximate cause is cut off.
- 13 They could have asked for a -- a -- a
- 14 superseding cause instruction. They could have
- 15 made arguments about proximate causation. They
- never did. So that's why we're making it here,
- 17 which doesn't make any sense, but, you know, the
- 18 Court granted cert, so we're here.
- 19 (Laughter.)
- 20 MR. HOFFMAN: We -- we -- we
- tried to say that you shouldn't do it, but what
- 22 can we say? I don't know if there are other
- 23 questions. I'm just -- just have a second.
- 24 I -- I think that the -- the Solicitor
- 25 General's position is important in the sense

- 1 that I think, although the Solicitor General
- 2 tries to limit Section 1983 liability to trial
- 3 rights, I think the Solicitor General of the
- 4 United States understands what Dickerson means
- 5 and that it is a constitutional rule. If
- 6 there's a constitutional violation, Section 1983
- 7 provides remedies in that situation.
- 8 And I think, as Justice Scalia said in
- 9 Hudson versus Michigan, Section 1983 plays a
- 10 very important remedial -- a remedial role and a
- 11 deterrent role, and that we think that for --
- 12 for the violation of fundamental rights like
- this, if our client is believed, there should be
- 14 a remedy.
- 15 And -- and I'm sorry for the confusion
- 16 about the fabrication and the way that the
- 17 procedure happened, but it's been a -- it was
- 18 a -- the procedural history is obviously very
- 19 complex in this. But it would have been a lot
- 20 simpler if Judge Wu had just agreed that
- 21 Dickerson gave us the right to make this claim,
- 22 which is what the Ninth Circuit said that we
- 23 had.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Doesn't your
- 25 argument that the officer can be liable for the

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decision of the prosecutor, or involved in that,
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- 2 present difficult factual questions about who's
- 3 going to examine the people involved?
- 4 MR. HOFFMAN: I don't think it
- 5 presents any more difficult factual or discovery
- 6 issues than many other cases.
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I mean,
- 8 you say that, okay, you're -- you're -- the
- 9 officer, you're subject to liability because you
- 10 prevailed upon the prosecutor to put the
- 11 evidence in, to put the statement in. You
- 12 misrepresented the circumstances of the
- 13 statement, you know, and the officer or the
- 14 prosecutor, are you going to ask him, well, why
- did you put this evidence in? You're going to
- 16 ask -- ask the officer what did you tell the
- 17 prosecutor?
- MR. HOFFMAN: I mean, in fact, there
- 19 was -- there was evidence from the prosecutor in
- 20 the case, in the trial. The prosecutor
- 21 testified about --
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Is that -- I
- 23 mean, I guess I'm asking whether that's a good
- thing, to be able to go back and examine the
- 25 prosecutor about his conduct of the -- of the

- 1 litigation.
- 2 MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, I think that when
- 3 you have a claim like this of -- of misconduct
- 4 that leads to this kind of fundamental violation
- 5 that -- that it is a good thing to -- to give
- 6 someone in Mr. Tekoh's position a chance to
- 7 vindicate his rights. I think that's what
- 8 Congress meant in Section 1983.
- 9 There are a lot of cases where there
- 10 are difficulties of discovery or immunity or --
- 11 or those issues, and we understand that. I
- mean, it could be that we can't prove our case
- 13 because of those issues. I mean, that's
- 14 possible. We think we can, but it's possible
- 15 that we can't. And, you know, we accept the
- 16 fact that there are -- there are constitutional
- 17 rules or rules of immunity in Section 1983 that
- 18 could create difficulties.
- 19 But those are the kinds of
- 20 difficulties that civil rights lawyers deal with
- 21 every day and -- and defense lawyers deal with
- every day, and I don't think they were any more
- 23 unusual in this case than many cases that I've
- been a part of.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, if you

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1 can ask the prosecutor, did you get discovery
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- into his notes, because they might say, you
- 3 know, this is what Joe says -- we ought -- we
- 4 ought to use this, or Joe says, look, I beat --
- beat the confession out of the guy, but I'm not
- 6 going to testify to that effect or --
- 7 MR. HOFFMAN: Well, I -- I don't know
- 8 whether you could get the prosecutor's notes, I
- 9 mean, whether there would be a -- there
- 10 obviously would be a discovery dispute about
- 11 that, I assume, since that happens in most of
- 12 these cases.
- I think that -- it seems to me that
- 14 there are tools in the discovery process that
- are handled every day across the country in
- 16 district courts dealing with civil rights cases
- 17 that are adequate to handle any of those issues.
- I think there's also issues relating
- 19 to -- I mean, the -- Heck versus Humphrey will
- 20 make these kind of cases, you know, less
- 21 numerous because, if you are convicted, then you
- 22 have to go through the whole appellate process.
- 23 Qualified immunity may apply in some
- 24 circumstances to limit the circumstances in
- 25 which officers can be found liable.

1	ii officers come forward, as they
2	should do, to give an honest and complete
3	account of their the circumstances of an
4	interrogation and the prosecutor decides to go
5	forward and the error is in the court accepting
6	something that it shouldn't have accepted, I
7	don't think the officer is responsible there.
8	So we're not saying that.
9	You know, our our position is that
LO	at least in the context of this case, there's a
L1	stark choice between a a deputy who, from our
L2	standpoint, told a completely false story to get
L3	this statement in versus our client, who tells a
L4	completely different story supported by
L5	co-workers, you know, to also contradict the
L6	the officer.
L7	And in that kind of situation, what
L8	we're suggesting is that the rules of proximate
L9	cause should at least allow for that. And
20	and we think that if the Court remands the case
21	accepts our first principle so that we can
22	actually go forward with that claim, the Ninth
23	Circuit could obviously consider whatever rules
24	this Court deems necessary for proximate cause
25	or ask the Ninth Circuit to start all over and

- 1 -- and do another analysis.
- 2 But we think we can meet any principle
- 3 of proximate cause other than the categorical
- 4 "you can't show proximate cause" principle.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Okay, counsel.
- 6 Justice -- anything?
- 7 Okay. Thank you, counsel.
- 8 MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Rebuttal,
- 10 Mr. Martinez?
- 11 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF ROMAN MARTINEZ
- 12 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- MR. MARTINEZ: My friend on the other
- 14 side is trying to preserve Dickerson by
- interpreting it in a way that was rejected by
- 16 Dickerson's own author and is inconsistent with
- 17 decisions of this Court both predating Dickerson
- 18 and postdating Dickerson.
- 19 Dickerson gives Miranda constitutional
- status, but it doesn't say that Miranda creates
- 21 a Fifth Amendment right. Our reading of
- 22 Dickerson and the case law as a whole harmonizes
- the doctrine, and it's consistent with the
- language of Dickerson itself; the prior cases,
- 25 Harris, Quarles, Tucker, Elstad, Payne; the

- 1 Chavez plurality; and five justices in their
- 2 votes in the Patane case, where five justices
- 3 agreed that Dickerson did not undermine the
- 4 pre-Dickerson post-Miranda cases.
- 5 We think you should adopt Chief
- 6 Justice Rehnquist's consistent, common-sense,
- 7 middle-ground approach to Miranda. You should
- 8 preserve Dickerson, but you should hold there's
- 9 no Fifth Amendment right here giving rise to
- 10 1983.
- 11 As to causation, they've raised a
- 12 totally new theory here. It wasn't raised
- 13 below. They described their own jury
- instruction, the one at issue here, at the
- 15 charge conference as -- in causation terms.
- 16 That's at JA 296. Everyone has always
- 17 understood their causation theory not to require
- 18 a lie. That's how the Ninth Circuit understood
- 19 it. That's why the Ninth Circuit addressed this
- 20 issue this way.
- Their new theory, even if it weren't
- forfeited, it would be factually untenable
- 23 because there's no evidence of any lies that --
- 24 that is actionable here. Their brief points
- 25 repeatedly to lies that were allegedly told at

- 1 the suppression hearing, but the testimony at
- 2 the suppression hearing is immunized.
- 3 They also point to the statement of
- 4 possible -- proximate cause and to the incident
- 5 report. But the alleged lies there don't bear
- 6 on the custody issue that is at the core --
- 7 that's at the core of this Miranda case. And,
- 8 in any event, you have a jury that said that
- 9 there weren't lies there. A jury rejected the
- 10 fabrication of evidence claim based on those
- 11 exact same reports.
- 12 Ultimately, Your Honors, their --
- their claim here is that they need a remedy,
- 14 they need a chance to get relief for this
- 15 alleged misconduct. They had two chances to do
- 16 that. They brought a Fourteenth Amendment due
- 17 process theory. They brought a coercion theory.
- 18 The jury agreed with us on both theories. This
- 19 case should end.
- We respectfully ask you to reverse.
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 22 counsel. The case is submitted.
- 23 (Whereupon, at 11:21 a.m., the case
- was submitted.)

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