

# THE VERDICT



VOLUME II, ISSUE I

## *Editor's Note*

Thanks for picking up *The Verdict* today! The mission of *The Verdict* is to make law accessible and comprehensible for all HM students. The law isn't something that concerns only lawyers. Your favorite brands, artists, and shows are engaged in legal matters all the time. In our current political climate, it's become urgent for young people to understand and cultivate an interest in the law. Although the system certainly has its flaws, the justice system was created with the intention of preserving fairness and establishing clear boundaries between right and wrong. In this new era of political restlessness, augmented by the press and the instantaneous sharing of information, it's up to all of us to be able to distinguish between right and wrong on our own, and to act on it when we believe something to be wrong. That said, enjoy this issue of *The Verdict*; it covers a wide range of articles, all of which are fascinating and significant.



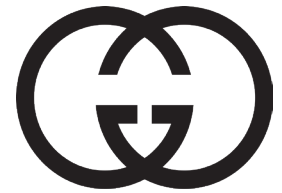
- Leonora Gogos, Editor-in-Chief





# Gucci Gangs up on Forever 21

*"Gucci should not be allowed to claim that Gucci, alone, has a wrongful monopoly on all blue-red-blue and green-red-green striped clothing and accessory items." -Forever 21*



Forever 21, the famous Los Angeles-based fashion retail chain, features trendy, inexpensive clothing loved by people all ages from around the world. One of the reasons for this widespread appreciation of Forever 21 is how on-trend its clothes are in the context of high-end fashion. For the many people who cannot afford designer labels, Forever 21 provides an alternative that follows the same trends as the designer houses, but with a far lower price tag attached.

In December 2016, the high-end Italian fashion house Gucci sent Forever 21 a cease and desist letter demanding that the chain stop selling clothing and accessories that feature green-red-green or blue-red-blue stripes. The reason for this is that these stripe patterns have long been associated with the Gucci brand. In fact, since 1988, Gucci has federal trademark protections for those stripe combinations. More likely than not, Forever 21 was aware of this signature Gucci style, and knew it could earn more money selling clothes that resembled Gucci ones at an incredibly lower price. So, in January and February 2017, Gucci sent the chain two additional letters threatening to sue Forever 21 if they did not remove from their stores and online site particular articles of clothing that feature Gucci's signature stripes. Specifically, Gucci demanded that three bomber jackets, one sweater, and one choker no longer be sold by the retailer.

In June 2017, as a result of Gucci's letters, Forever 21 took preemptive action against Gucci's threats of trademark infringement litigation and filed a lawsuit against the luxury fashion house seeking a declaratory judgment in the United States District Court for the Central District of California. The chain asked the Court to declare that its clothing and accessories do not infringe on Gucci's stripe combinations and thus that Gucci would not have a viable trademark infringement action against them. Forever 21 also asked the Court to cancel Gucci's trademark registrations. In August 2017, Gucci responded to Forever 21's lawsuit by filing counterclaims and a motion to dismiss the lawsuit, seeking protection of its stripe combinations. Gucci contended that the striping patterns have been "iconic codes" of the designer brand for over 50 years and are recognizable to the public as Gucci's, and Gucci's alone. Gucci's counterclaims included trademark infringement, trademark dilution and unfair competition. Gucci also argued that that Forever 21 failed to prove that any other brands were using the striped designs.

On November 6, 2017, the Federal Court partially dismissed Forever 21's claims against Gucci but allowed the fast fashion chain to file an amended complaint so that it could plead additional facts. On November 17, 2017, Forever 21 filed a First Amended Complaint. In this complaint, Forever 21 stated that other brands such as J. Crew, Tory Burch, Urban Outfitters, Louis Vuitton and Balenciaga have all used these specific striping combinations in the past and that Gucci should not be allowed to have a monopoly on the designs. The chain stated that it believed that in permitting Gucci to monopolize the combinations, consumers and designers will be harmed.

In February 2018, the Court rejected Gucci's request to dismiss Forever 21's claims to cancel the fashion house's trademarks. The judge stated that the issue regarding cancellation of the claims should be decided at trial which was set for February 12, 2019.

In November 2018, Gucci and Forever 21 ultimately ended their dispute. The District Court's docket indicated that the matter was settled and an order was entered which vacated all pretrial and trial dates. The parties are required to appear in Court in January 2019, for hearing on the settlement. To date, the details of the settlement are unknown. However, it can be reasonably inferred that whatever the settlement may be, it's incredibly unlikely that it would include an agreement in which Gucci would give up any of its trademarks. For luxury fashion houses like Gucci, their trademarks are invaluable – what would Louboutin shoes be without their red soles, or Louis Vuitton bags without their signature logo? While the law is clearly spelled out, it must be interpreted and applied uniquely and case-by-case.

## ***Cases Referenced***

Gucci vs. Forever 21

by Sarah Acocelli

# Kavanaugh as the New Supreme Court Justice

The appointment of the new Supreme Court Justice, Judge Brett Kavanaugh, has caused conflict, anger, and outrage in people living all over the United States. On July 9th 2018, Kavanaugh was appointed as Supreme Court Justice by President Donald Trump to replace Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, who was set to retire. Justice Kennedy had historically controlled the swing vote on controversial cases, including abortion rights and the death penalty. Although Justice Kennedy was appointed by Republican president Ronald Reagan, he earned a reputation for not following precisely one political ideology, and rather evaluating each case individually. Justice Kavanaugh, on the other hand, is known for his conservative views, and his confirmation swayed the Court to a more conservative majority.

Justice Kavanaugh's initial appointment incited arguments across America and the rest of the world as many different people from various backgrounds spoke out against him and protested his coming into power. One of these individuals was Christine Blasey Ford, who wrote to a senior Democratic lawmaker stating that Kavanaugh had sexually assaulted her when they were both in high school. Both parties attended elite, single-gender schools in the Washington D.C. area; Kavanaugh attended Georgetown Preparatory School (or Georgetown Prep), and Ford attended The Holton-Arms School. The alleged attack occurred at a high school party which both Dr. Ford and Justice Kavanaugh attended. Dr. Ford agreed to speak about her experience in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee. To them, she said that in the summer of 1982 in Montgomery County, Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her. She was 15 at the time, and he was 17. "I thought he might inadvertently kill me," Ford said. When her story became public, Kavanaugh denied the claims, and said, "I did not do this back in high school or at any time."

September 27th, 2018 marked the day on which Dr. Christine Blasey Ford testified about the alleged sexual assault. The trial was loud, chaotic, and riddled with shouts and interruptions from observing senators. Over the course of Kavanaugh's hearings, the protests were so forceful and frequent that over 70 arrests of protesters around the country were made.

Dr. Ford stated that she was 100% certain that it was Justice Kavanaugh who had assaulted her, regardless of the time that had passed since the incident. Justice Kavanaugh sought to clear his name and reputation in front of the Judiciary Committee. Thousands of people watched the trial on their televisions, and it was far from placid. Justice Kavanaugh seemed to be holding back tears as he swore that he had never committed such an act, but then quickly steered off topic and went after the Democrats, yelling at them for playing "dangerous games". Both Ford and Kavanaugh swore that their stories were their truth, but due to the lack of concrete evidence to support either side, the conflict quickly deteriorated into a very emotionally and politically charged case of "he-said-she-said".

After more and more days of tears and frustration, an FBI investigation into the events of 1982 was finally commenced. However, this investigation elicited even more anger by government officials and the highly-involved public alike, due to its seemingly exclusive selection of who would be interviewed, and who would not be. Yet, public outcry erupted with more force than ever when the results of the investigation were published: there was no definitive conclusion reached from the investigation due to the short time period the FBI had.

The FBI investigation was unusual in two ways. First of all, it was technically a background check, not a criminal investigation, because sexual assault allegations are not normally something the FBI investigates. This background check was simply supposed to supplement the previously-conducted background check on behalf of the White House. In fact, since it was on behalf of the White House, the investigation's parameters were set by them. Inherently, background checks are less thorough than criminal investigations, and generally don't go further than interviewing the person in question's colleagues and going through public records.

Secondly, the White House imposed a one-week time limit on the investigation. The FBI could've asked for more time if they needed it. However, White House and Senate Republicans were insistent on the FBI finishing the report quickly. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell would repeatedly tell the public that the vote would conclude within the week. Initially, the White House had also restricted the people the FBI could speak to to only two of Justice Kavanaugh's high school friends, but after pressure from the Democrats, this limit was lifted – however, the one-week time limit remained. In fact, also due to pressure from the Republican White House, the FBI never spoke to Dr. Ford or Justice Kavanaugh, although former FBI special agent James Gagliano says he would have. Lastly, due to the investigation not being a criminal one, the FBI was unable to issue subpoenas – meaning, they were unable to legally force people to talk.

It's also important to note that the FBI was unable to draw a conclusion in this case. Their job was to present their evidence to the White House and the Senate, and allow them to create their own conclusion. The White House and the Senate are not required by law to release the full FBI report to the public.

After the investigation was concluded, the Senate voted 50-48 in favor of confirming Kavanaugh. This margin of votes is one of the closest in American history. Justice Kavanaugh was very soon after sworn in by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and Justice Anthony M. Kennedy. President Trump was thrilled about this result and shared how confident he was in his decision to nominate and back newly appointed Justice Brett Kavanaugh. President Trump tweeted, "Judge Kavanaugh showed America exactly why I nominated him," right after the confirmation. President Trump had been supporting Justice Kavanaugh through Twitter throughout the entire trial, even sharing his skepticism over the truthfulness of Dr. Ford's allegations. He had tweeted, "I have no doubt that, if the attack on Dr. Ford was as bad as she says, charges would have been immediately filed with local Law Enforcement Authorities by either her or her loving parents."

Other people were less thrilled than President Trump about the confirmation – specifically, groups of sexual assault survivors and protesters all over the nation. One particularly poignant comment was made by a woman protesting in the gallery as Vice President Mike Pence attempted to regain order in the Capitol building: "This is a stain on American history. Do you understand that?"

Regardless of political views or affiliations, one thing is absolutely certain. The Kavanaugh confirmation hearings, sexual assault allegations, subsequent FBI investigation, and his eventual appointment to the Supreme Court changed the trajectory of our nation's legal system and our nation as a whole. Whether or not the confirmation was a "stain," it was certainly a mark on American history. However, as is the case with all political situations, it is the responsibility of each individual to decide for themselves whether they think that it has changed America for the better or for the worse.



[https://www.flickr.com/photos/ninian\\_reid/44252275034/in/photostream/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/ninian_reid/44252275034/in/photostream/)

***Case Referenced:***  
Kavanaugh Confirmation

By:  
Madi Four-Garcia  
and  
Juliette Shang



# 21 Savage, your favorite British rapper

*"My situation is important 'cause I represent poor black Americans and I represent poor immigrant Americans," - 21 Savage*

*"Mr. Abraham-Joseph was taken into ICE custody as he is unlawfully present in the U.S. and also a convicted felon," - ICE spokesman Bryan Cox*

21 Savage -- anyone who's at all involved in pop culture, has turned on the radio, or has browsed the Spotify charts in the last few years has probably heard the name. While 21 Savage's "name" was fake (his real name is Shéyaa Bin Abraham-Joseph), his origins and persona were certainly not. 21 Savage's entire musical persona revolved around his beginnings -- he rapped about and marketed the fact that he was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, and that he endured intense gang and drug cultures there. In fact, he managed to build an entire brand around the fact that he had genuinely started from the bottom and worked his way to the top, and that he was one of the few rappers who truly retained that authenticity.

That's why when, on February 3rd, an ICE spokesman declared "[21 Savage's] whole public persona is false. He actually came to the U.S. from the U.K. as a teen and overstayed his visa," the youth and music fanatics of the world were shaken. 21 Savage's entire brand revolved around being born and raised in Atlanta. For 21 Savage to be not only from outside of Atlanta, but also from England, seemed impossible. Immediately, and naturally, the internet took to making memes about it, photoshopping the clothes of the British aristocracy on 21 Savage. However, the actual issue runs deeper, because 21 Savage was detained and is now facing deportation.

21 Savage himself, and his representatives, confirmed that he was born in the U.K. Photos of his birth certificate surfaced as well, confirming that he was born in London on October 22, 1992. On Sunday, February 3, the rapper was arrested by ICE on the grounds that he was a British citizen who overstayed his 2005 visa. Therefore, he was "unlawfully present" in the United States. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, aka ICE, is a law enforcement agency of the U.S. government which enforces the United States' immigration laws and terrorist activity of transnational organisations. However, ICE has recently been in the news for their harsh policies and their targeting and arrests of immigrants. 21 Savage was one of these immigrants that was detained by ICE. 21 Savage was detained at the Irwin County Detention Center, near Atlanta. This particular detention center was listed, by immigration activists, to be one of the worst detention facilities in regards to its alleged sexual abuse, arbitrary solitary confinement, and lack of standard medical attention.

A shift in perspective occurred rapidly on the internet when the people that had been making memes realized that this issue was actually important and wasn't simply a joke. Offset, one of Migos three members, wrote on Twitter "All the memes and sh\*t ain't funny when somebody going through some praying for my dawg ain't sh\*t funny his family depending on him." In fact, 21 Savage's ICE detention had quickly began garnering support from his community, friends, fans, and immigration activists as well. Black Lives Matter has partnered with several immigration groups to form a petition for 21 Savage's release. Georgia Representative Hank Johnson wrote a letter to the immigration judge assigned to 21 Savage's case to support 21 Savage's character. Fellow musicians have supported 21 Savage personally or through social media, some writing messages on Instagram calling for his release.



21 Savage's attorneys maintain that he "has never hidden his immigration status from the U.S. government." They claim that 21 Savage was, at the time, applying for a U visa, which defends immigrant victims of violent crimes who agree to testify and participate in criminal investigations alongside law enforcement. Under the conditions of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program (created by President Obama in 2012), particular undocumented immigrants can apply for work permits and a two-year stay on deportation proceedings; 21 Savage, however, could not apply for DACA protection, because he did not meet the program's requirements. He never received a GED (as he dropped out of high school), he had a 2014 felony charge, and he was expelled from his country school district in seventh grade because he possessed a gun on school grounds.

21 Savage was granted bond by ICE ahead of release. While it was spectacular to witness the immense amount of support garnered for 21 Savage as he was targeted by ICE under the USA's new, harsher immigration policies, it is also crucial to think of the times when such support was not given to people arrested and detained by ICE. Not everyone receives early bond, or even has somebody to represent them in court. In the wake of this entire case against 21 Savage, it is essential to acknowledge each and every one of the multiple major themes (political and non-political) that it has brought to the surface.

by Leonora Gogos



# Operating within Regulations

Michael Singer, a local physician and aspiring entrepreneur living in Newton, Massachusetts, sought to revolutionize the use of unmanned aircraft within his own hometown. Hoping to deliver medical services to those in need, Singer sought to use small drones. The idea has been taking off as search and rescue teams used small unmanned aircraft to attempt to locate people or animals. However, in December 2016, the City of Newton approved legislation that essentially made the use of drones impossible within the city limits. As this was local legislation proposed by the City of Newton, it had to work in conjunction with existing Federal Aviation Administration restrictions, but instead, overlap occurred. These new restrictions would have completely prevented Michael Singer from delivering medical supplies using drones and banned the usage of all drones in the City of Newton.

While taking legal action against the city to prevent them from enforcing and finalizing the ordinance, Michael Singer named four specific parts of the ordinance that he believed violated existing legislature. First, the city intended to force all owners of commercial unmanned aircraft to register with the city clerk. Next, they imposed a ban on the flight of drones under 400 feet without the property owner's consent. The city also attempted to ban the flight of drones over public property without the city's consent. Finally, Singer challenged Newton's requirement of forcing controllers to maintain a line of sight with their aircraft without any exceptions. In their ruling, the US District Court for Massachusetts found that the ordinance proposed by the City of Newton conflicted with federal regulations put in place by the FAA. Judge William G. Young prevented Newton from enforcing the four challenged points, but let the rest of the regulations stand. First, Judge Young invalidated Newton's provision that drones must be registered with the local city clerk. The DC Circuit Court found that the FAA already required unmanned aircraft to be registered with the FAA through either a commercial or recreational license. Pilots are also required to read a list of rules and receive a certificate. However, through the FAA prohibits additional registration of drones without its explicit approval, a provision that was clearly violated by the City of Newton. Judge Young even criticized the City of Newton for their negligence and disregard of the FAA's authority.





The Court also found the ordinance of forcing drones to fly 400 feet over private property, and the ban of all drones over public property without the court's consent, to violate the FAA's domain in a few ways. First, the FAA mandates that drones must be flown under 400 feet, which, when combined with Newton's mandates, effectively creates a ban on all drones. The Judge found that this hurt the goal of the FAA to regulate airspace as the City of Newton was encroaching on its regulations. Additionally, the Judge also found these two provisions hindered Congress' effort to allow for the usage of drones in federal airspace. Problematically, these restrictions would have theoretically prevented planes from flying over public land because there were no limits to the provisions, thus encroaching on federal airspace.

Finally, Judge Young found the line-of-sight ordinance to be problematic because there were no provisions to waive the requirement, even though there are waivers for the FAA's line of sight requirement. The ordinance also does not allow for a designated-observer, which means FPV goggles like DJI's immersive goggles cannot be used. Without these two possibilities, this line-of-sight provision was deemed to be harsh and excessive, causing it to be stricken from the legislature.

Although parts of Newton's proposed drone legislature were stricken, the meriting for why these laws were needed still stands. The FAA solely focuses on the operation of drones and their licensing, ensuring that drones are not a menace to society. However, they do not regulate how drones are used, requiring collaboration with the local legislature to create a more comprehensive authority. Originally proposed to protect the privacy of its citizens, limit nuisances, and prevent trespassing, the City of Newton must produce smarter ordinance because, without them, the problem will continue to exist. Without local legislation, drones may be used to spy on people through windows, follow people outside, or carry out other malicious intents. The City of Newton must propose revised ordinance but also beware of infringing on the interests of the FAA to protect its citizens and ensure their privacy. However, the laws cannot be too restrictive, or they would prevent people like Michael Singer from using drones to benefit the community.



<https://www.goodfreephotos.com/other-photos/drone-flying-over-the-lake.jpg.php>

***Cases Referenced:***  
*Singer v. City of Newton*

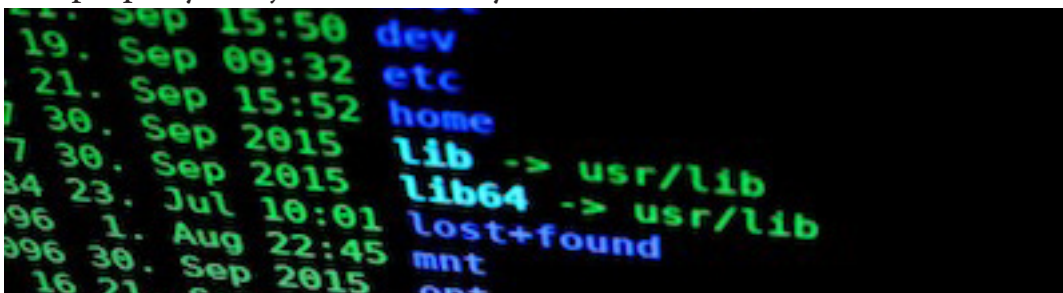
By Sam Chiang

# Soveriengty in a Connected World

In a ground-breaking court-case, an unnamed American citizen under the pseudonym Kidane brought the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the DC Circuit Courts over spyware on his laptop that he alleges was installed by the Ethiopian National Intelligence and Security Service. Born in Ethiopia, Kidane sought and received asylum in the United States in the 1990s and settled in Maryland. While browsing websites of human rights activists fighting and advocating for displaced peoples in and around Ethiopia, Kidane was placed on an Ethiopian intelligence watchlist and FinSpy malware was downloaded onto his laptop. Also known as FinFisher, the program was founded in Germany in 2008 as a tool for law enforcement and intelligence agencies. The FinFisher program collects and analyzes intelligence, serves as a consultant, and uncovers possible exploitation methods.

In an updated ruling, the DC District Court repealed the previous ruling in which it sided with Kidane, blaming Ethiopia for a violation of the Wiretap Act in favor of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of 1976. Finding that the tort or wrongful action did not solely occur in the United States, but rather in other nations including Ethiopia, the acts of Ethiopian Intelligence did not fall under the jurisdiction of the United States. The court found that the intent to install malware on Kidane's laptop and monitor his activity was formulated abroad, and thus the actions were not committed on American soil.

In the ruling, the DC Circuit rolled back a previous effort to hold an Ethiopian Intelligence Service accountable. In the new findings, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia gained immunity through the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of 1976. Through claiming to have administered the malware from Ethiopia, it would technically have been within Ethiopia's sovereign power to collect intelligence on people within its borders. Conflict emerges as Ethiopia was spying on an American citizen in the United States -- an area that would be illegal for Ethiopian intelligence to operate on. Originally intended to protect diplomats from minor offenses, the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FSIA) defines the extent to which a foreign nation may be brought to court in the United States, or what they are liable for. The exception to which Kidane argues is that the FSIA may not protect a state or its diplomats when somebody is injured or killed or their property is injured or destroyed.



As the only American legislature regarding the matter and thus the sole legal precedent concerning a foreign nation obtaining sovereignty in the United States, the FSIA is outdated. In the court documents, the DC Circuit found that, had an agent of the Ethiopian Intelligence Service broke into Kidane's house and manually installed the malware, it would have been in American jurisdiction. However, the malware was installed when an email sent from an Ethiopian server was opened by Kidane on his laptop. Through clicking on a link or downloading a file, FinSpy was installed on Kidane's laptop in a Trojan-horse style without him realizing until later. The problem emerges with precedent and the FSIA itself. The Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of 1976 is an outdated precedent in which hacking was not prevalent, which was created in a world without fear of cyber attacks and cyber warfare. In today's increasingly technologically dependant world, the FSIA does not function adequately. According to this new precedent, any hacking which is initiated abroad does not fall under the jurisdiction of the United States. Following the rationale, private US citizens are vulnerable by law to any hacking initiated overseas.

Imagine the problems that could occur because the FSIA was not created with cyber attacks in mind -- but, its vague wording does make it the only relevant legal precedent. However, this problem is not confined only to the United States. In Europe, the European Convention on State Immunity is the presiding law, which dictates that the immunity of sovereign nations is only repealed if the offending actor is in a nation which has the European Convention on State Immunity. In other words, it is quite similar to the FSIA as the state-sponsored hacking would only be illegal if the malware was manually installed. Thus, both works of legislature are outdated in today's world and promote state-sponsored hacking with their broad language. In today's world of massive technological presence, hacks can be initiated from anywhere in the world. However, if performed in the state that is actually sponsoring the attacks, these hacks are considered legal. This loophole allows for oppressive nations to abuse it, and spy on not only their citizens, but the citizens of foreign nations as long as they remain in their sovereign state.

Even with these drastic problems, change in the legislature is unlikely. Researchers from the Citizen Lab report that the United States routinely hacks and surveils the citizens of foreign nations using FinSpy and other sophisticated spyware. Creating and promoting any legislation restricting this technological access would be against the greater interests of the United States, and thus will most likely not be proposed in public forum in the near future. Additionally, if the US were to bring up the issues with Ethiopia on an international level, the US would only appear to be hypocritical, and would further lose reputation in the eyes of other nations. Seeking to avoid international attention on their own cyber intelligence collection, the US will most probably continue to downplay this instance and will not take any legal action.

### *Cases Referenced:*

John Doe, Kidane vs  
The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

By Sam Chiang







# Jussie Smollett: A Timeline



On an early Chicago morning on January 29th, an attack on Empire star Jussie Smollett took place -- allegedly. According to Smollett, the attackers began hurling racist and homophobic slurs at the Black and gay actor, then physically beat him up, before tying a rope around his neck as they poured an unidentified chemical on him. Allegedly, the attackers repeated the phrase "This is MAGA country," referring to "Make America Great Again," President Donald Trump's campaign slogan. Immediately, the attack gained media coverage. The world was shocked at the blatant racism and homophobia portrayed through the crime, and the resemblance it carried to the lynchings that were so prominent in the 1800s. Smollett is openly gay, and the character who he portrays on the TV show Empire is also gay.

However, nearly a month later, the entire case took a wild turn. On February 21, the Chicago Police declared Smollett's story to be fake. They arrested him for filing a false police claim, and proceeded to indict him on 16 felony counts. The world was shocked once again that the accusation was a hoax. It seemed incredibly insensitive on Smollett's side to use his race and sexuality to fake a hate crime when so many genuine ones were occurring at all times.

Eddie Johnson, a Chicago Police Superintendent, felt very strongly about the nature of Smollett's crime. "Jussie Smollett took advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career," he said. He said this because the police department had come to the conclusion that Smollett faked the attack to raise his salary on Empire, with which he was unsatisfied. Clearly, abusing his identity in such a way, and playing with the emotions of so many who felt personally affected by the attack, for monetary gain, caused widespread upset.

Let's backtrack a little bit. On February 13th, after Smollett had already reached out to the public and made his first public appearance again, thanking everyone for their love and prayers, the police made an advancement in the case. The police arrested two Nigerian men -- brothers -- named Abel and Ola Osundairo. Later on, Smollett's attorneys identified one of the men as Smollett's personal trainer, who had been hired to help Smollett get in shape to film his latest music video. Two days before this, on February 11th, Smollett had handed over phone records to the police, but they were too heavily redacted (to "protect the privacy of personal contacts or high-profile individuals not relevant to the attack," according to Smollett) to be useful to the case.

On February 14th, Smollett spoke about his experience on Good Morning America. He said he felt his life had been forever altered after the attack, and that he was "pissed off" that people were doubting its veracity.

On February 15th, the Osundairo brothers were released without charges, and on February 16th, Smollett was called in for another interview. A day later, the police revealed that the direction of the investigation had "shifted."

Two days later, the police revealed that they had received a tip claiming that Smollett had been in the elevator with the Osundairo brothers on the night of the attack, but that they were discounting it due to lack of credibility. With such high public involvement and many people believing that the attack was, indeed, a hoax, lack of credibility meant more than ever that the evidence had to be discounted.

Then, back to February 21st, when the police officially declared that the attack was a hoax. According to Johnson, Smollett paid off the Osundairo brothers -- \$3,500, in fact, to carry out the crime. According to Johnson, Smollett had previously sent himself a letter with racist and homophobic language to start gathering attention and making the attack more believable. In this case, it was premeditated on multiple levels. Smollett stuck his ground throughout the Chicago Police Department's claims that he lied. During his emergency court hearing, he claimed that he "wouldn't be his mother's son" if he had truly faked this attack.



# Jussie Smollett: A Timeline



But, the surprises didn't end that February. On March 26, a little over a month later, the Chicago Police Department suddenly dropped all charges against Smollett after a surprise emergency court hearing. The CPD gave little explanation other than saying that "After reviewing all of the facts and circumstances of the case, including Mr. Smollett's volunteer service in the community and agreement to forfeit his bond to the City of Chicago, we believe this outcome is a just disposition and appropriate resolution to this case. We stand by the Chicago Police Department's investigation and our decision to approve charges in this case."

According to Smollett's lawyers, Smollett's record "has been wiped clean." Smollett still stands by his claim that all of this was true and did, in fact, happen. Chicago's mayor, Rahm Emanuel, disagrees heavily. He angrily stated in a press conference that Smollett's release is a "whitewash of justice," and that Smollett was let off with "no sense of accountability of the moral and ethical wrong of his actions."

However, the latest news in the case is that Smollett wasn't let off entirely scot-free; even if he doesn't have an ethical price to pay, as Emanuel believes, he certainly has a quantitative one. The City of Chicago sent Smollett a letter on March 28th demanding he pay \$130,106.15 to pay for the costs of the investigation. This sum is independent of the \$10,000 bond he forfeited when the charges were dropped. The letter explained that over 24 detectives spent weeks and weeks investigating this crime, and that "ultimately, the Chicago police investigation revealed that you knowingly filed a police report and had in fact orchestrated your own attack." Smollett's lawyer, Tina Glandian, attempted to defend Smollett on NBC's Today Show, saying that he just wanted to move on with his life. She said that "what he's been through after the fact has really been a much harsher attack than what he endured that night."

But of course, no major political or legal scandal in America would be complete without some signature Twitter commentary from President Donald Trump. Here it is: "FBI & DOJ to review the outrageous Jussie Smollett case in Chicago. It is an embarrassment to our Nation!"

## *Cases References*

City of Chicago vs. Jussie Smollett

By Leonora Gogos



# That's Actually a Law???

**ALABAMA** - You may not impersonate a member of the clergy, unless you want to pay a \$500 fee and/or serve jail time.

**ARIZONA** - We need permits to do lots of things. Drive cars, boats, motorcycles... In Arizona, you also need a permit to feed garbage to a pig.

**ARKANSAS** - If you ever happen to find yourself in Arkansas, in your car, in front of an open cold drink or sandwich shop after 9pm, don't even *think* of honking your car horn. It's illegal!

**CALIFORNIA** - Eating frogs is strictly prohibited.

**CONNECTICUT** - No silly string in public. Keep it inside your home.

**DELAWARE** - Picture this. You're with your friends, thinking about organizing a nice afternoon picnic in the park. But, for the sake of spontaneity, you decide to instead have your picnic between the hours of midnight and 6am, right in front of your car. Not in Delaware you're not! Very illegal.

**IDAHO** - Sure, you can throw snowballs in Idaho, but please watch it. If that snowball seems just a little too violent, you just broke the law.

**ILLINOIS** - Fan of falling asleep in cheese shops? Very illegal. Don't consider it.

**INDIANA** - Of course you're allowed to go fishing in Indiana! Just please remember the two ways with which you cannot catch fish: a) with "a firearm," or b) with "the hands alone."

**IOWA** - Imagine some poor butter-lover trying to purchase some nice, creamy, real butter, and instead, they go home with *fake butter*! It is for this reason precisely that, in Iowa, imitation butter must be labeled as oleomargarine - no exceptions.



# That's Actually a Law???

**KANSAS** - Is one of your dearest childhood memories of you splashing around in a public fountain with your friends on a balmy summer day? Well, you're clearly not from Kansas, where such an action is strictly prohibited.

**LOUISIANA** - Want to surprise your Valentine by sending them a box of chocolates to their house? Don't do it in Louisiana! It's illegal to order goods or services for someone who wasn't anticipating them.

**MINNESOTA** - You may not, under absolutely no circumstances, with precisely zero exceptions, *e-ver*, throw turkeys or chickens into the air with the intention of catching them. Ever.

**MONTANA** - You're singing karaoke with your friends in Montana. You're excited to get up on stage and belt your heart out. The music starts. The crowd cheers you on. You're a few lines in and -- you forget the lyrics. You run off stage, and seconds later, police sirens are blaring. You forgot (How could you!) -- in Montana, it's illegal to abandon an onstage performance without completing it.

**NEW MEXICO** - Singing the national or state anthems without serious and earnest love and respect for your country and state? Humming it playfully? Forget about it. Misusing the national or state anthems is a petty misdemeanor.

**NEW YORK** - Taking selfies with a tiger? Or any other type of big cat? 'Doing it for the Gram,' so to speak? Not in the Empire State you're not - that's illegal here.

**OHIO** - Legally-trained petty criminals in Ohio must be having a field day, because their state gives them two pretty sizeable loopholes. Those who commit less-severe crimes in this state cannot be arrested on a Sunday, or July 4, or unless they're on a river. If it's all three of those things, you're practically invincible.

**PENNSYLVANIA** - It's illegal to catch a fish with your mouth. Enough said.

by Leonora Gogos

<https://www.thrillist.com/entertainment/nation/weird-state-laws>

# THE VERDICT

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