

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Gregory Scott VanHuissen v. Warner Bros., et al.

VanHuissen v. Warner Bros. · No. 24-cv-05788-PCP · Decided March 26, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California dismissed Gregory Scott Van Huissen’s pro se action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against Warner Bros., Time Warner, and Leonardo DiCaprio. The court held that the defendants were not alleged to have acted under color of state law and that the complaint failed to provide sufficient factual allegations supporting any claim for relief. The court denied leave to amend as futile, certified that any appeal was not taken in good faith, and ordered the case closed.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
WRITING FOR THE COURT	P. Casey Pitts
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of California
DECIDED	March 26, 2025
DOCKET	24-cv-05788-PCP
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A pro se state prisoner filed a civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The district court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A and dismissed it with prejudice and without leave to amend for failure to state a claim.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Mandatory screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A; the complaint must be dismissed if it is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant. Pro se pleadings are liberally construed.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; precedential status not stated
PARTIES	Gregory Scott VanHuissen v. Warner Bros., Time Warner, Leonardo DiCaprio

TOPICS

section 1983

prisoners rights

pleadings

civil procedure

cruel and unusual punishment

PRACTICE AREAS

prisoner civil rights

constitutional law

civil procedure

pleading and screening

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the complaint stated a claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 when it did not allege that any defendant acted under color of state law.
2. Whether the complaint stated any cognizable claim for relief when its allegations were unclear, unsupported by factual detail, and failed to identify an actionable injury.
3. Whether the plaintiff should be granted leave to amend.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to state a § 1983 claim because it did not allege facts showing that any defendant acted under color of state law.
2. The complaint failed to state a claim for relief because it did not identify a legally cognizable injury or provide factual allegations explaining who injured the plaintiff, how he was injured, where and when the injury occurred, or why the conduct was unlawful.
3. Leave to amend was properly denied because amendment would be futile.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To state a claim under § 1983, a plaintiff must allege two essential elements: (1) that a right secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States was violated and (2) that the alleged violation was committed by a person acting under the color of state law.”

“The Complaint does not inform the Court who injured Mr. Van Huisen, how he was injured, where and when he was injured, and why he believes this injury was unlawful.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The plaintiff, an inmate at Mule Creek State Prison, sued Warner Bros., Time Warner, and Leonardo DiCaprio under § 1983. He alleged, in difficult-to-decipher terms, Eighth Amendment violations, negligence, theft by deception, and other undefined misconduct, and sought \$27 million. The complaint did not identify facts showing that any defendant acted under color of state law or explain who injured him, how the injury occurred, or why the conduct was unlawful.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

VanHuissen filed a complaint alleging constitutional and miscellaneous tort-related misconduct by Warner Bros., Time Warner, and Leonardo DiCaprio. The court previously gave the plaintiff an opportunity and detailed instructions to amend in other similarly deficient litigation, but concluded that amendment in this action would

be futile because the defendants were not state actors and the complaint contained no comprehensible factual basis for relief. The action was dismissed, pending motions were terminated, and the file was closed.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- *Balistreri v. Pacifica Police Department*, 901 F.2d 696, 699 (9th Cir. 1990)
- *Wilder v. Virginia Hospital Association*, 496 U.S. 498, 508 (1990)
- *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386, 393-94 (1989)
- *West v. Atkins*, 487 U.S. 42, 48 (1988)
- *Ketchum v. Alameda County*, 811 F.2d 1243, 1245 (9th Cir. 1987)
- *Allen v. City of Beverly Hills*, 911 F.2d 367, 373 (9th Cir. 1990)
- *Janicki Logging Co. v. Mateer*, 42 F.3d 561, 566 (9th Cir. 1994)
- *Van Huisen v. Lafrades*, Case No. 23-cv-4800-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. Goss*, Case No. 23-cv-4210-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. Gates*, Case No. 23-4447-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. Central Intelligence Agency*, Case No. 23-4591-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. United States Air Force*, Case No. 23-cv-4753-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. Volkswagen Motors*, Case No. 23-cv-4866-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. Burns*, Case No. 23-cv-4914-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. DiCaprio*, Case No. 23-cv-5081-PCP
- *Van Huisen v. Chief of Staff Navy*, Case No. 24-cv-7015-PCP

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