

SUPREME COURT OF CONNECTICUT

State v. Crawford

257 Conn. 769 (2001) · Decided August 28, 2001

SUMMARY

The Connecticut Supreme Court considered whether the defendant presented a colorable double-jeopardy claim permitting an interlocutory appeal from the denial of his motion to dismiss a first-degree manslaughter charge. The court held that a claim based on multiple punishments, rather than successive prosecution, does not support interlocutory review because the defendant may still be tried and can challenge any punishment after final judgment. The court also rejected the defendant’s collateral-estoppel argument because his prior conviction followed a guilty plea rather than a trial and acquittal, and dismissed the appeal.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Connecticut
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Borden, J.
JURISDICTION	Connecticut
DECIDED	August 28, 2001
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Interlocutory appeal from the denial of the defendant's motion to dismiss a manslaughter charge on double-jeopardy and due-process grounds.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court determined de novo whether the defendant presented a colorable double-jeopardy claim sufficient to establish appellate jurisdiction over an interlocutory appeal.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Connecticut Supreme Court opinion; precedential.
PARTIES	Jarrell Crawford v. State

TOPICS

- double jeopardy
- appellate jurisdiction
- interlocutory appeal
- criminal procedure
- constitutional law

PRACTICE AREAS

- criminal procedure
- constitutional law
- appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the defendant's claim that a later manslaughter prosecution would result in multiple punishment for the same offense was a colorable double-jeopardy claim supporting an interlocutory appeal.
2. Whether the defendant's collateral-estoppel claim based on his prior guilty plea and conviction presented a colorable double-jeopardy claim supporting interlocutory appellate jurisdiction.

HOLDINGS

1. A claim alleging only multiple punishments, rather than successive prosecution, does not present a colorable double-jeopardy claim supporting an interlocutory appeal because the multiple-punishments protection applies to punishments imposed in a single trial and does not protect against being tried.
2. The defendant did not present a colorable collateral-estoppel claim because collateral estoppel requires an issue of ultimate fact to have been necessarily determined in the defendant's favor in a valid prior judgment, and the defendant's prior proceeding resulted in a guilty plea and conviction rather than a trial and acquittal.
3. Because the defendant's claims were not colorable double-jeopardy claims within the interlocutory-appeal exception to the final-judgment rule, the court lacked subject-matter jurisdiction over the appeal.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The only real question is whether the double jeopardy claim is colorable.” (at 775-776)

“To the extent, however, that these cases suggest that a double jeopardy claim of multiple punishment, rather than successive prosecution, may be appealed interlocutorily, they are overruled because a multiple punishment claim is simply inconsistent with the rationale for such an interlocutory appeal.” (at 779-780)

“The very foundation of a colorable double jeopardy collateral estoppel claim is that the defendant was tried and acquitted on the issue that he now seeks to prevent the state from relitigating.” (at 781)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Crawford participated in a July 1995 assault that caused the victim severe craniocerebral trauma, a prolonged coma, and a persistent vegetative condition. In 1997, while the victim remained hospitalized, Crawford pleaded guilty to assault, kidnapping, and related conspiracy offenses and received a total effective sentence of twenty-five years, execution suspended after eleven years, followed by probation. The state expressly reserved the right to bring appropriate homicide charges if the victim died. The victim died in November 1998 from delayed medical complications of the trauma, after which the state charged Crawford with first-degree manslaughter.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Crawford pleaded guilty to assault, kidnapping, and conspiracy charges arising from a beating that left the victim in a vegetative state. After the victim died, the state charged Crawford with first-degree manslaughter. The trial court denied his motion to dismiss, and the Appellate Court appeal was transferred to the Connecticut Supreme Court.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- *Benton v. Maryland*, 395 U.S. 784, 794 (1969)
- *State v. Chicano*, 216 Conn. 699, 706, 584 A.2d 425 (1990)
- *State v. Nixon*, 231 Conn. 545, 550, 651 A.2d 1264 (1995)
- *Waterbury Teachers Assn. v. Freedom of Information Commission*, 230 Conn. 441, 447-448, 645 A.2d 978 (1994)
- *State v. Moeller*, 178 Conn. 67, 420 A.2d 1153 (1979)
- *State v. Curcio*, 191 Conn. 27, 31, 463 A.2d 566 (1983)
- *Shay v. Rossi*, 253 Conn. 134, 167, 749 A.2d 1147 (2000)
- *State v. Tate*, 256 Conn. 262, 275-277, 773 A.2d 308 (2001)
- *North Carolina v. Pearce*, 395 U.S. 711, 717 (1969)
- *Alabama v. Smith*, 490 U.S. 794, 109 S. Ct. 2201, 104 L. Ed. 2d 865 (1989)
- *State v. Hill*, 237 Conn. 81, 99, 675 A.2d 866 (1996)
- *State v. Boyd*, 221 Conn. 685, 698, 607 A.2d 376 (1992)
- *Ashe v. Swenson*, 397 U.S. 436, 443, 445 (1970)
- *State v. Aparo*, 223 Conn. 384, 388, 614 A.2d 401 (1992)
- *State v. Hope*, 215 Conn. 570, 584, 577 A.2d 1000 (1990)
- *State v. James*, 247 Conn. 662, 675, 725 A.2d 316 (1999)
- *Jones v. Thomas*, 491 U.S. 376, 381 (1989)
- *State v. Greco*, 216 Conn. 282, 290, 579 A.2d 84 (1990)
- *State v. Kruelski*, 250 Conn. 1, 737 A.2d 377 (1999)
- *State v. Ledbetter*, 240 Conn. 317, 692 A.2d 713 (1997)
- *State v. McDowell*, 242 Conn. 648, 699 A.2d 987 (1997)