

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA, HAMMOND DIVISION

Kendrick v. CNN Inc. and CNN Corporation

Kendrick · No. 2:25-CV-513-PPS-APR · Decided December 1, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana dismissed DeAndre L. Kendrick’s prisoner complaint against CNN Inc. and CNN Corporation under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. The court held that the complaint’s allegations were factually frivolous and denied leave to amend as futile.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, Hammond Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Philip P. Simon
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, Hammond Division
DECIDED	December 1, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-CV-513-PPS-APR
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A pro se prisoner filed a civil rights complaint against CNN Inc. and CNN Corporation. The district court screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A before service and dismissed it as factually frivolous.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, the court must review a prisoner complaint and dismiss it if it is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a claim, or seeks monetary relief from an immune defendant. The allegations are liberally construed, but a court may dismiss claims whose factual contentions are clearly baseless, irrational, fanciful, fantastic, or wholly incredible.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished district court opinion; nonprecedential
PARTIES	DeAndre L. Kendrick v. CNN Inc., CNN Corporation

TOPICS

- prisoners rights
- civil procedure
- fourteenth amendment
- cruel and unusual punishment

PRACTICE AREAS

Federal civil procedure

Prisoner civil rights

Frivolous litigation screening

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the prisoner's complaint should be dismissed at the screening stage under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A because its factual allegations were clearly baseless and factually frivolous.
2. Whether the plaintiff should be granted leave to amend the complaint.

HOLDINGS

1. A district court may dismiss a prisoner complaint at the screening stage as factually frivolous when its factual allegations are clearly baseless, irrational, fanciful, fantastic, or wholly incredible. Kendrick's allegations were not credible and therefore warranted dismissal.
2. Leave to amend may be denied when amendment would be futile, and amendment would be futile here because the complaint's factual basis was not credible.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A case can be dismissed without a response from the defendants where “the facts alleged in the complaint are . . . unbelievable, even though there has been no evidentiary hearing to determine their truth or falsity.””
(Opinion and Order)

“This complaint is based on allegations that are not credible and will be dismissed as factually frivolous.”
(Opinion and Order)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Kendrick, a prisoner proceeding without counsel, alleged that CNN broadcast an international news report about him on or about February 14, 2025. He claimed the report used bizarre labels and statements concerning him and involved several public figures. He alleged that the statements violated his Eighth and Fourteenth Amendment rights and caused emotional distress and mental anguish. The court found the alleged news report and its content not credible.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Kendrick filed a complaint alleging that a CNN news broadcast made bizarre statements about him and violated his Eighth and Fourteenth Amendment rights. The court conducted the required prisoner-complaint screening, concluded that the factual allegations were clearly baseless and not credible, denied leave to amend as futile, and dismissed the case under § 1915A.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007)
- Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25, 32–33 (1992)
- Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 327 (1989)
- Gladney v. Pendleton Correctional Facility, 302 F.3d 773, 774 (7th Cir. 2002)
- Lee v. Clinton, 209 F.3d 1025 (7th Cir. 2000)
- Abu-Shawish v. United States, 898 F.3d 726, 738 (7th Cir. 2018)
- Russell v. Zimmer, Inc., 82 F.4th 564, 572 (7th Cir. 2023)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA HAMMOND DIVISION DeANDRE L. KENDRICK, Plaintiff, v. CAUSE NO. 2:25-CV-513-PPS-APR CNN INC. and CNN CORPORATION, Defendants. OPINION AND ORDER DeAndre L. Kendrick, a prisoner without a lawyer, filed a factually frivolous complaint. ECF 1.

Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, I must review the merits of a prisoner complaint and dismiss it if the action is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief. I am required to give the allegations in the complaint a liberal construction. Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007) (quotation marks and citations omitted).

But even so, a court may dismiss a claim as factually frivolous “if the facts alleged are clearly baseless,” which includes allegations that are “fanciful” or “fantastic.” Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25, 32–33 (1992) (quotation marks and citations omitted).

Here, Kendrick alleges that he was the subject of a news report that was broadcast on CNN, but the details of that alleged story are not credible. The factual allegations in Kendrick’s complaint are as follows: On approximately February 14, 2025, CNN News Corporation broadcasted on international news that the pro se Plaintiff De’Andre L. Kendrick (D.O.C. # 167253) was a certified macaroni withholding Big Bacon, clarified by National Human Resource as Gsnap.

CNN News Corporation went as far as to say pro se Plaintiff De’Andre L. Kendrick (D.O.C. # 167253) also known as King Zay Zay and Pharoah the Godd, is a Lover-Boi and genuine compassionate lover. These words and discussion were being held by individuals such as Nancy Grace, Maxine Waters, Abby Philips, Anderson Cooper, and Corey Booker. ECF 1 at 2 (cleaned up for clarity).

He alleges these statements violated his Eighth and Fourteenth Amendment rights and caused him distress and mental anguish. Typically, a court must assume the facts of a complaint are true. However, courts have “[t]he unusual power [for cases filed in forma pauperis] to pierce the veil of the complaint’s factual allegations and dismiss those claims whose factual contentions are clearly baseless.” Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 327 (1989). “[A] finding of factual frivolousness is

appropriate when the facts alleged rise to the level of the irrational or the wholly incredible, whether or not there are judicially noticeable facts available to contradict them.” Denton, 504 U.S. at 32–33.

A case can be dismissed without a response from the defendants where “the facts alleged in the complaint are... unbelievable, even though there has been no evidentiary hearing to determine their truth or falsity.” Gladney v. Pendleton Correctional Facility, 302 F.3d 773, 774 (7th Cir. 2002); see also Lee v. Clinton, 209 F.3d 1025 (7th Cir. 2000). I find it unbelievable that Kendrick was the subject of a CNN news story in which he was called a “Lover-Boi” and labeled a genuine compassionate lover.

This complaint is based on allegations that are not credible and will be dismissed as factually frivolous. “The usual standard in civil cases is to allow defective pleadings to be corrected, especially in early stages, at least where amendment would not be futile.” Abu-Shawish v. United States, 898 F.3d 726, 738 (7th Cir. 2018). “District courts, however, have broad discretion to deny leave to amend a complaint where the amendment would be futile.” Russell v. Zimmer, Inc., 82 F.4th 564, 572 (7th Cir.

2023). For the reasons previously explained, such is the case here. For these reasons, this case is DISMISSED under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. ENTERED: December 1, 2025. /s/ Philip P. Simon
PHILIP P. SIMON, JUDGE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT