

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

William Young v. Griffin

Young v. Griffin · No. 8:25-00762 MRA (ADS) · Decided August 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Central District of California accepted a magistrate judge’s Report and Recommendation and granted Defendants’ motions to dismiss. The court held that the plaintiffs’ claims were barred or foreclosed by the Rooker-Feldman doctrine, judicial and quasi-judicial immunity, lack of state action, lack of viable federal claims, and the absence of a private right of action for alleged federal criminal violations. The case was dismissed in its entirety without leave to amend, and a motion for preliminary injunction and restitution was denied as moot.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Central District of California
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Central District of California
DECIDED	August 18, 2025
DOCKET	8:25-00762 MRA (ADS)
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court reviewed and accepted a magistrate judge's report and recommendation recommending dismissal of the First Amended Complaint without leave to amend. After de novo review of the portions challenged in Plaintiffs' objections, the court granted Defendants' motions to dismiss and dismissed the action in its entirety.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The district court conducted de novo review of the portions of the magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation to which Plaintiffs objected. The court also applied the abuse-of-discretion standard to the challenge to declining supplemental jurisdiction.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown; district court order with no published reporter citation identified in the source.
PARTIES	William Young, et al. v. Griffin, et al.

TOPICS

- motions to dismiss
- subject matter jurisdiction
- section 1983
- civil procedure
- injunctions

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

constitutional law

federal jurisdiction

judicial immunity

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the Rooker-Feldman doctrine barred Plaintiffs' federal claims because they alleged injury from legal errors in state-court judgments and sought relief from those judgments.
2. Whether the state-court judge was entitled to absolute judicial immunity despite Plaintiffs' assertion that he acted without jurisdiction.
3. Whether the state-court clerks were entitled to absolute quasi-judicial immunity for alleged acts involving court hearings and calendar administration.
4. Whether private defendants acted under color of state law merely by litigating their defenses in court.
5. Whether the court properly declined supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiffs' state-law claims after finding no viable federal claims.
6. Whether Plaintiffs' claims for declaratory and injunctive relief and elder financial abuse stated cognizable causes of action.
7. Whether Plaintiffs should have been granted leave to amend.

HOLDINGS

1. Rooker-Feldman barred the claims because Plaintiffs alleged injury from legal errors by the state court and sought rescission and expungement of the state-court orders.
2. The state-court judge was entitled to absolute judicial immunity; an erroneous or excessive exercise of authority, including a mistaken assumption about jurisdiction, does not defeat that immunity.
3. The state-court clerks were entitled to absolute quasi-judicial immunity for the alleged acts of blocking an online hearing and changing a court calendar.
4. Private defendants did not become state actors merely by litigating their defense in court.
5. The court properly declined supplemental jurisdiction over the state-law claims because no viable federal claims remained.
6. A claim seeking declaratory and injunctive relief was not a separate cause of action.
7. Plaintiffs could not pursue the alleged federal criminal violations because they had no private right of action in federal court.
8. Leave to amend was properly denied because the pleading deficiencies could not be cured by amendment.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Rooker-Feldman applies where, as here, “the federal plaintiff both asserts as her injury legal error or errors by the state court and seeks as her remedy relief from the state court judgment.”” (at 1)

“Even a “mistaken assumption” by a judge about the limits of jurisdiction (which has not been shown here) would not deprive the judge of absolute immunity.” (at 1)

“The Court agrees with the Report that the pleading deficiencies, “including lack of subject matter jurisdiction, immunity of defendants, incognizable claims, and the impossibility of asserting facts to plausibly allege a claim, cannot be cured.”” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiffs challenged state-court orders rejecting their attempts to invalidate an assignment of their state-court judgment to a collection service. Their federal claims alleged that the state-court judge and clerks acted improperly and that private defendants acted under color of state law. Plaintiffs sought rescission and expungement of the state-court orders, along with declaratory, injunctive, and other relief.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs filed a First Amended Complaint challenging state-court rulings rejecting their efforts to invalidate an assignment of their state-court judgment to a collection service. Defendants moved to dismiss, and the magistrate judge recommended dismissal without leave to amend. The district court overruled Plaintiffs' objections, accepted the recommendation, granted the motions to dismiss, denied a motion for preliminary injunction and restitution as moot, and ordered judgment entered.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Miroth v. County of Trinity, 136 F.4th 1141, 1151 (9th Cir. 2025)
- Sadoski v. Mosley, 435 F.3d 1076, 1079 (9th Cir. 2006)
- Stump v. Sparkman, 435 U.S. 349, 356 (1978)
- Moore v. Brewster, 96 F.3d 1240, 1244 (9th Cir. 1996)
- Nordin v. Scott, 2023 WL 4418595, at *1 (9th Cir. 2023)
- Mitchell v. Kinney, 2024 WL 4113735, at *5 n.12 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 6, 2024)
- Dennis v. Sparks, 449 U.S. 24, 28 (1980)
- United Mine Workers of America v. Gibbs, 383 U.S. 715, 726 (1966)

OPINION

William Young v. Griffin

PER CURIAM.

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8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

9 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10 11 WILLIAM YOUNG, et al., Case No. 8:25-00762 MRA (ADS) 12 Plaintiffs,
13 v. ORDER ACCEPTING UNITED STATES

MAGISTRATE JUDGE’S REPORT AND

14 GRIFFIN, et al., RECOMMENDATION 15 Defendants. 16 17 Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636, the
Court has reviewed the First Amended 18 Complaint (Dkt. No. 5), Defendants’ Motions to
Dismiss (Dkt. Nos. 8, 32, 48), the 19 opposing and reply papers, (Dkt. Nos. 36, 38, 44, 46, 64, 66),
the Report and 20 Recommendation of United States Magistrate Judge, (Dkt. No. 74) and
Plaintiffs’ 21 Objections to Report and Recommendation (Dkt. No. 81). 22 The Report
recommends the dismissal of the First Amended Complaint without 23 leave to amend. (Dkt. No.
74.) The gravamen of the First Amended Complaint was 24 Plaintiffs’ challenge to the rejection of
their attempts in state court to invalidate their 1 assignment of their state court judgment to a
collection service. (Dkt. No. 5 at ¶¶ 28-30; 2 Dkt. No. 81-1 at 1.) Plaintiffs’ objections to the
Report (Dkt. No. 81) do not merit any 3 change to the Report’s findings or recommendations. 4
Plaintiffs object that the Rooker-Feldman doctrine does not bar their claims. 5 (Dkt. No. 81 at 11-
13.) On the contrary, the gravamen of their allegations was that the 6 state court’s judge’s orders
were improperly decided and legally wrong. (Dkt. No. 5 at ¶¶ 7 31, 33, 44, 47, 58.) And as relief,
they sought the “rescission and expungement” of the 8 state court’s orders (Id. at 50-51.) Rooker-
Feldman applies where, as here, “the federal 9 plaintiff both asserts as her injury legal error or
errors by the state court and seeks as 10 her remedy relief from the state court judgment.” *Miroth*
v. County of Trinity, 136 11 F.4th 1141, 1151 (9th Cir. 2025) (emphasis in original). 12 Plaintiffs
objects that the state court judge does not have judicial immunity 13 because he acted without
jurisdiction in issuing his rulings. (Dkt. No. 81 at 13-16.) On 14 the contrary, Plaintiffs have not
overcome the Report’s finding that the state court judge 15 has absolute immunity. Even a
“mistaken assumption” by a judge about the limits of 16 jurisdiction (which has not been shown
here) would not deprive the judge of absolute 17 immunity. See *Sadoski v. Mosley*, 435 F.3d 1076,
1079 (9th Cir. 2006) (citing *Stump v. 18 Sparkman*, 435 U.S. 349, 356 (1978) (“[a] judge will not
be deprived of immunity 19 because the action he took was in error, was done maliciously, or was
in excess of his 20 authority. . . .”). 21 Plaintiffs object that the “ultra vires acts” of the state court
clerks are not shielded 22 by quasi-judicial immunity. (Dkt. No. 81 at 16-18.) On the contrary, the
alleged acts of 23 the state court clerks, such as improperly blocking an online hearing or changing
a court 24 calendar, were quasi-judicial acts that are shielded by absolute immunity. See *Moore v.*
1 Brewster, 96 F.3d 1240, 1244 (9th Cir. 1996) (court clerk was entitled to absolute quasi- 2
judicial immunity for allegedly deceiving plaintiff regarding the status of a bond and 3 improperly
conducting hearings to assess costs), superseded by statute on other ground 4 as stated by *Nordin*
v. Scott, 2023 WL 4418595, at *1 (9th Cir. 2023). 5 Plaintiffs object that the private Defendants
acted under color of law. (Dkt. No. 6 81 at 18-20.) On the contrary, the private Defendants were
not state actors merely 7 because they litigated their defense in court. See *Mitchell v. Kinney*, 2024
WL 4113735, 8 at *5 n.12 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 6, 2024) (“Defendant’s role as a private litigant does

not make 9 him a state actor within the meaning of Section 1983.”) (citing *Dennis v. Sparks*, 449
10 U.S. 24, 28 (1980)). 11 Plaintiffs object that the decline of supplemental jurisdiction over their
state law 12 claims was an abuse of discretion. (Dkt. No. 81 at 20-21.) On the contrary, because 13
there are no viable federal claims, “the state claims should be dismissed as well.” *United 14 Mine*
Workers of America v. Gibbs, 383 U.S. 715, 726 (1966). 15 Plaintiffs object that the Report
mischaracterized their Eighth and Tenth causes 16 of action. (Dkt. No. 81 at 21-23.) The Court
agrees with the Report that the Eighth 17 cause of action, for “declaratory and injunctive relief”
(Dkt. No. 5 at ¶¶ 140-45), is not a 18 separate cause of action. (Dkt. No. 74 at 10.) The Court also
agrees with the Report that 19 the Tenth cause of action, for elder financial abuse (Dkt. No. 5 at ¶¶
154-62), alleges 20 federal criminal violations for which Plaintiffs have no private right of action
in federal 21 court. (Dkt. No. 74 at 11.) 22 Plaintiffs object that they should have been granted
leave to amend. (Dkt. No. 81 23 at 26-27.) The Court agrees with the Report that the pleading
deficiencies, “including 24 lack of subject matter jurisdiction, immunity of defendants,
incognizable claims, and the 1 || impossibility of asserting facts to plausibly allege a claim, cannot
be cured.” (Dkt. No. 2 ||74 at 13.) Thus, leave to amend is denied. 3 The Court has engaged in a de
novo review of those portions of the Report and 4 || Recommendation to which objections were
made and overrules the objections. The 5 || Court accepts the findings and recommendations of the
Magistrate Judge. 6 Accordingly, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED: 7 1. The Report and
Recommendation of United States Magistrate Judge (Dkt. No. 74) is accepted; 8 2. Defendants’
Motions to Dismiss (Dkt. No. 8, 32, 48) are granted; 9 3. Defendants’ Motion for Preliminary
Injunction and Restitution (Dkt. No. 10 50) is DENIED as moot; u 4. The case is dismissed in its
entirety; and

5. Judgment is to be entered accordingly.

13 DATED: August 18, 2025 fe R A f_: 15 ee. 6 United States District Judge 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
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